

**POWER MANIPULATION IN DAVID MAMET'S *OLEANNA*
A GENETIC STRUCTURALISM ANALYSIS**

THESIS

By:
Savira Larasati
NIM 15320149



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG
2022**

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THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S.)

By:
Savira Larasati
NIM 15320149

Advisor:
Asni Furaida, S.S., M.A.
NIP 198807112023212027



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG
2022**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled “**Power Manipulation in David Mamet’s *Oleanna: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis***” is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, June 19th 2022

The Researcher



Savira Larasati

NIM 15320149

APPROVAL SHEET

This to certify that Savira Larasati's thesis entitled **Power Manipulation in David Mamet's *Oleanna*: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis** has been approved for thesis examination at the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.).

Malang, June 19th 2022

Approved by

Advisor



Asni Furaida, S.S., M.A.
NIP 198807112023212027

Head of Department of English Literature



Ribut Wahyudi, S.S., M.Ed, Ph.D.
NIP 198112052011011007

Dean of Faculty of Humanities



LEGITIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that Savira Larasati's thesis, entitled **Power Manipulation in David Mamet's *Oleanna*: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis**, has been approved by the Board of Examiners as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.) in the English Literature Departement.

Malang, June 19th 2022

The Board of Examiners

1. Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A. (Main Examiner)
NIP 198410282015031007
2. Agung Wiranata Kusuma, M.A. (Chair)
NIP 198402072015031004
3. Asni Furaida, S.S., M.A. (Advisor)
NIP 198807112023212027

Signatures



Approved by

The Dean of Faculty of Humanities



M.Ag.

2003121003

MOTTO

لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا

Do not grieve. Indeed, Allah is with us.

Jangan bersedih. Sesungguhnya Allah bersama kita.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, for their endless love, patience, and sacrifices that made this possible.

To my sister, for always being there with unwavering support and encouragement.

To my advisor, whose insightful guidance and encouragement shaped this research and my academic growth.

To my friends and colleagues, for their companionship and belief in me.

And finally, to myself, for not giving up, even when the road was tough.

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May Allah reward you all abundantly for your kindness and efforts.

Malang, June 19th 2022

Savira Larasati

ABSTRACT

Larasati, Savira (2022). *Power Manipulation in David Mamet's Oleanna: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Asni Furaida, S.S., M.A.

Keywords: Worldview, Power manipulation, Genetic structuralism

Power manipulation is a prominent theme in David Mamet's drama *Oleanna*, which explores how characters manipulate power dynamics through authority, communication, and gender relations. This research aims to address two key questions. The first is to examine how Mamet depicts power manipulation through the structural elements of the drama. The second is to uncover Mamet's worldview on power manipulation as reflected in *Oleanna*. This research applies Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism theory and utilizes literary criticism as its primary method. The data consist of expressions taken from David Mamet's *Oleanna*, including dialogues (words, phrases, and sentences spoken by the characters), events, character actions, and narration. The study explores the social conditions of American society in the early 1990s as reflected in the drama. Through a genetic structuralism approach, this research examines the theme of power manipulation in *Oleanna*. The first finding of this research identifies six significant literary elements that represent David Mamet's worldview on power manipulation: theme, character, setting, plot, tone, and genre. The second finding is that Mamet's perspective on power manipulation can be categorized into two aspects. The first relates to education. Similar to the character John in *Oleanna*, Mamet seems to view the educational system as flawed because of how easily it can be manipulated within the educational environment. The second aspect involves political correctness. Through Carol's character, Mamet expresses concern about the potential misuse of political correctness as a tool for manipulation.

ABSTRAK

Larasati, Savira (2022). *Power Manipulation in David Mamet's Oleanna: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis*. Skripsi. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing Asni Furaida, S.S., M.A.

Kata kunci: Pandangan dunia, Manipulasi kekuasaan, Strukturalisme genetik

Manipulasi kekuasaan adalah tema yang menonjol dalam drama *Oleanna* karya David Mamet, yang mengeksplorasi bagaimana karakter memanipulasi dinamika kekuasaan melalui otoritas, komunikasi, dan hubungan gender. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab dua pertanyaan utama. Pertama, untuk menelaah bagaimana Mamet menggambarkan manipulasi kekuasaan melalui elemen struktural dalam drama. Kedua, untuk mengungkap pandangan dunia Mamet tentang manipulasi kekuasaan yang tercermin dalam *Oleanna*. Penelitian ini menerapkan teori strukturalisme genetik dari Lucien Goldmann dan menggunakan kritik sastra sebagai metode utamanya. Data yang digunakan terdiri dari ungkapan-ungkapan yang diambil dari *Oleanna* karya David Mamet, termasuk dialog (kata-kata, frasa, dan kalimat yang diucapkan oleh karakter), peristiwa, tindakan karakter, dan narasi. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kondisi sosial masyarakat Amerika pada awal 1990-an seperti yang tercermin dalam drama tersebut. Melalui pendekatan strukturalisme genetik, penelitian ini menelaah tema manipulasi kekuasaan dalam *Oleanna*. Temuan pertama dari penelitian ini mengidentifikasi enam elemen sastra penting yang mewakili pandangan dunia David Mamet tentang manipulasi kekuasaan: tema, karakter, latar, alur, tone, dan genre. Temuan kedua adalah bahwa perspektif Mamet tentang manipulasi kekuasaan dapat dikategorikan ke dalam dua aspek. Aspek pertama berkaitan dengan pendidikan. Seperti karakter John dalam *Oleanna*, Mamet tampaknya memandang sistem pendidikan sebagai sesuatu yang cacat karena betapa mudahnya sistem tersebut dapat dimanipulasi dalam lingkungan pendidikan. Aspek kedua berkaitan dengan korektif politik. Melalui karakter Carol, Mamet mengungkapkan kekhawatiran tentang potensi penyalahgunaan korektif politik sebagai alat untuk manipulasi.

مستخلص البحث

لاراساتي، سافيرا (2022). التلاعب بالسلطة في مسرحية ديفيد ماميت *Oleanna* : تحليل للبنىوية الجينية. أطروحة جامعية. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة إسلام نيجري مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج. المشرف أسني فريدا، ماجستير في الآداب

الكلمات المفتاحية: النظرة العالمية، التلاعب بالسلطة، العناصر الأدبية

يعد التلاعب بالسلطة موضوعًا بارزًا في مسرحية *Oleanna* لديفيد ماميت، والتي تستكشف كيف تتلاعب الشخصيات بديناميكيات السلطة من خلال السلطة والتواصل والعلاقات بين الجنسين. يهدف هذا البحث إلى الإجابة على سؤالين رئيسيين. الأول هو فحص كيفية تصوير ماميت للتلاعب بالسلطة من خلال العناصر الهيكلية للدراما. والثاني هو الكشف عن وجهة نظر ماميت العالمية حول التلاعب بالسلطة كما تنعكس في *Oleanna*. يطبق هذا البحث نظرية البنىوية الجينية لوسيان جولدمان ويستخدم النقد الأدبي كمنهج أساسي لها. تتكون البيانات من تعبيرات مأخوذة من رواية *Oleanna* لديفيد ماميت، بما في ذلك الحوارات (الكلمات والعبارات والجمل التي تنطق بها الشخصيات)، والأحداث، وأفعال الشخصية، والسرد. وتستكشف الدراسة الأوضاع الاجتماعية للمجتمع الأمريكي في بداية التسعينيات كما انعكست في الدراما. من خلال منهج البنىوية الجينية، يتناول هذا البحث موضوع التلاعب بالسلطة عند *Oleanna*. تحدد النتيجة الأولى لهذا البحث ستة عناصر أدبية مهمة تمثل وجهة نظر ديفيد ماميت العالمية حول التلاعب بالسلطة: الموضوع، والشخصية، والإعداد، والحبكة، والنغمة، والنوع. النتيجة الثانية هي أن وجهة نظر ماميت بشأن التلاعب بالسلطة يمكن تصنيفها إلى جانبيين. الأول يتعلق بالتعليم. على غرار شخصية جون في *Oleanna*، يبدو أن ماميت ينظر إلى النظام التعليمي على أنه معيب بسبب مدى سهولة التلاعب به داخل البيئة التعليمية. أما الجانب الثاني فيتعلق بالصواب السياسي. من خلال شخصية كارول، يعرب ماميت عن قلقه بشأن احتمال إساءة استخدام الصواب السياسي كأداة للتلاعب.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Issues about the power manipulation in academic institutions are considered prevalent until now. In 2016, the National Bureau of Economic Research in the United States discovered a systematic manipulation of test scores in the New York State Regents Examinations dating back to 2004. The discovery was based on a secondary data analysis of administrative enrollment and test score data provided by the New York City Department of Education. This manipulation was done by both students and teachers. Teachers are more likely to inflate approximately 40 percent of students' test scores in order to fulfill the required level of proficiency for the Regents Examinations, which carry significant stakes for students, teachers, and schools and are largely based on students meeting strict score cutoffs. The students' chances of graduating high school are increased by 27% as a result of inflating their score such that it is just marginally higher than the threshold for passing (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2016).

The power manipulation in academic institutions is not only condoned by a group of people, but also an individual for different reasons. There are a lot of cases in which professors at colleges abuse the influence they have over their students by trying to trick them into failing a class so that they can either get money from them or engage them in sexual activity. On the other hand, there are some students who attempt to manipulate their professors into giving them a

passing grade using various means such as bribery or sexual favors. For instance, Transparency International's study found that male lecturers deliberately fail female students to create opportunities for negotiation towards better grades, leading to a rise in sexually transmitted diseases among students. This frequently occurs in the student's final year when they cannot afford to fail any courses and jeopardize graduation. In another survey, the International Journal for Educational Integrity reported that 10% of 733 undergraduate students in a large public university in the United States admitted to attempting to manipulate their professors by appealing to their emotions or personal circumstances, making false claims about their own efforts, and offering bribes or blackmail (Miller, 2013).

Those facts provide an explanation about the power manipulation in academic institutions. The researcher believes that it can be a real portrayal that David Mamet wants to express through his drama, *Oleanna*. Michel Foucault argued that power is present in all human interactions and is subject to negotiation. According to this theory, an individual can utilize their position in a hierarchy to their advantage during such discussions, despite the fact that there is room for opposition (Foucault, 1980). In this case, within the student-lecturer relationship in academic institutions, there is a manifestation of power that can be abused and manipulated. Because the events that happened to John and Carol as the main characters in *Oleanna* can be a similar reflection to the real conditions of society, the researcher is challenged to choose this drama as the object of the study.

David Mamet's play *Oleanna* is a drama that is made up of three acts and had its first premiere in May 1992 at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge,

Massachusetts. This was the first performance of Mamet's new Back Bay Theater Company. The protagonist of this drama is a male educator by the name of John, who is concerned about his tenure committee, and the protagonist of this drama is a female student by the name of Carol, who does not understand his lectures. It is believed that *Oleanna* was written as a reaction to the sexual harassment claims made by Anita Hill, a former employee of the United States Department of Education, against Clarence Thomas, her former supervisor, in the early 1990s (Sauer, 2009). It depicts dramatization about the case using only two characters namely John and Carol that portrays a circumstance in which one's perspective determines whether or not an incident of sexual harassment takes place as a direct outcome of power manipulation.

In the beginning of the drama, Carol is unable to have any influence over John because she is an underprivileged and insecure female student. There is no doubt about John's authority in his role as a male professor. Because of his position of authority, he is in charge of both his own household and the institution, which gives the impression that he is considerably more superior than Carol. On the other hand, as the plot develops, Carol eventually comes to the conclusion that another source of her power is the fact that she is a woman. She is aware of how to take advantage of John by exploiting the fact that she appears to be vulnerable. She was aware of the feminist movement that was going on at the time, and it gave her confidence that the tenure board would look out for those who are vulnerable and will side with her. Therefore, she manipulates through her power to charge John with the allegations of sexual harassment just due to the fact that

she is able to obtain the trust of the tenure board. John and Carol's actions of power manipulation are clearly expressed in this drama, making it the main theme of David Mamet's *Oleanna*. By considering the main theme, the researcher decides to analyze this drama using the theory of power manipulation since it can appropriately cover the problems experienced by Carol and John throughout the drama.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate, through the application of Foucault's theoretical viewpoints on power, how manipulation is closely connected to a variety of forms of power. Michel Foucault questions the notion that individuals or groups acquire power by "episodic" or "sovereign" actions of dominance or oppression. Instead, he views power as being dispersed and pervasive. He makes the observation that power can be found anywhere, not because it embraces everything but rather because it originates from anywhere and everywhere, due to the fact that it is neither an agency nor a structure. Foucault declares that power may establish a "regime of truth" that spreads through society and is perpetually subject to movement and negotiation. This "regime of truth" extends across society. When discussing the relationship between power and knowledge, Foucault employs the word "power/knowledge" to convey the idea that power is produced through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and 'truth' (Foucault, 1998). However, as a result of the process of creating knowledge through discourse, those individuals who have a strong understanding of the topic hold authority over those who lack that information, and they are able to select what should be judged to be correct and incorrect.

Therefore, information and power can be transformed into a weapon because they can be used to manipulate and exert control over others who are naive or innocent.

In this study, the selected drama is intended to be analyzed using Genetic Structuralism by Lucien Goldmann. According to Goldmann's theory, the study of literary works is at its most productive when both of its primary components are combined. He suggests that because literature is the product of humanity, works of literature should always have some sort of connection to the society and history that surround the author of the literary work. In the field of literary studies, Genetic Structuralism is a subfield that concentrates on the investigation of intrinsic and extrinsic aspects that are connected to social and ideological backgrounds or the author's worldview. According to Goldmann's definition, structure is a thematic thing, and the primary structure of a story is the relationship between characters and other characters or between a character and their environment. The structure is built based on the author's perspective. Furthermore, the structure is not built independently. Rather, it is the result of the structural and destructive processes of society where literary work was created (Goldmann, 1980).

Several researchers have studied David Mamet's drama, *Oleanna*, including D. Arjmandi who authored a 2014 journal article titled "Under the Veneer of Words Lies Power: Foucauldian Analysis of *Oleanna*." In the article, Arjmandi asserted that language was a crucial factor in the characters' quest for dominance. Additionally, the author carefully analyzed the characters' dialogue and interactions to uncover the intricate power dynamics in *Oleanna*. The object of

both D. Arjmandi's research and this research is similar, but there are differences in the focus. D. Arjmandi concentrated more on using language to reveal power dynamics, while this study focused on analyzing David Mamet's worldview on power manipulation. Nonetheless, this research is also valuable for gaining insights into power analysis in *Oleanna*.

As no other researchers have analyzed David Mamet's *Oleanna* using Lucien Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism approach, it is crucial to consider previous studies such as Witri Nuraini's 2009 thesis titled "A Genetic Structuralism Analysis on Kingsley Amis' Lucky Jim," Zubaidi's 2011 work entitled "Genetic Structuralism Analysis on Kelleher's Worldview on Iron Star Novel: The Different Point of View in Seeing Terrorist," and a 2015 journal article titled "A Genetic Structuralism Analysis of Transex in Roberta Cowell's Story: An Autobiography Novel" by Miftahul Jannah, Ikwan Setiawan, and Dina Diah. These previous studies are vital in providing a deeper understanding of the genetic structuralism theory and how it applies to analyzing David Mamet's worldview on power manipulation in *Oleanna*.

Based on those explanations, the researcher decides to use Lucien Goldmann's Genetic structuralism to analyze power manipulation based on John and Carol as the main characters in David Mamet's *Oleanna* since it is suitable for this study. The researcher could examine intrinsic elements, the social context behind the literary work, and also the author's worldview which is the result of author's interaction with the environment or the social group as integral aspects of the analysis.

B. Research Question

1. How does David Mamet's *Oleanna* depict power manipulation through structural elements of the drama?
2. What is the author's worldview about power manipulation reflected in *Oleanna*?

C. Significance of the Study

In addition to the aforementioned objectives, this study is expected to deliver both theoretical and practical benefits.

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the enrichment of the theoretical foundations of literary studies, and more specifically that it will demonstrate how literary criticism can be approached from the perspective of genetic structuralism. For practical benefit, this study tries to implement one of the literary theories. The researcher can also reach the appropriately formulated objectives, which will give a deeper understanding of the literary work based on the intrinsic elements, the social context behind the literary work, and also the author's worldview.

It is also expected that this study will serve as a resource and alternative information for other researchers performing comparable studies. This work is also anticipated to contribute significantly to the vast field of literary studies.

D. Scope and Limitation

The researcher highlights its scope and limitations to determine the analysis of power manipulation reflected in the drama *Oleanna* by David Mamet using a

genetic structuralism perspective. This research is focused on exploring the intrinsic elements, the social context behind the literary work, and also the author's worldview in order to evaluate the discussion of power manipulation.

E. Definition of Key Terms

The researcher would like to explain what the meaning of some of the main terms that have been utilized in this research is so that there are no misunderstandings among the writers and the readers. The researcher provides the following definitions for those terms:

1. **Worldview:** a structure of ideas, aspirations, and feelings of the author as a member of a specific social community that acts as the bridge or mediation between literary text and social context. It is fundamentally a form of social consciousness or of analytical expression that reflects the real conditions within a particular social class.
2. **Power Manipulation:** Power manipulation in literature refers to the portrayal and manipulation of power dynamics between characters or groups. It involves examining how power is distributed, gained, lost, and used to influence or control others. The literary techniques used by authors to shape readers' perceptions of power dynamics may include language, narrative structure, and other literary devices.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

A. Sociology of Literature

A research area known as sociology of literature focuses on how social circumstances affect literature as well as how it both reflects and affects society. By emphasizing how literature both reflects and challenges societal norms and values, this method highlights the significance of studying literature in its social context.

British sociologist Alan Swingewood stated that literature is a mirror of societal, cultural, and ideological values. He underlined the significance of truly understanding the social and historical context of literary works in his book "The Myth of Mass Culture." He believed that literature can reveal the unseen power dynamics, conflicts, and contradictions in society (Swingewood, 1977).

According to Swingewood, literature is a cultural product that reflects the dominant ideology of society, and that ideology is shaped by the economic and social structures of the society. Swingewood argued that literature can be used to understand the power structures and social relations within a society. He believed that literature often reflects the experiences and struggles of marginalized groups, and can be a tool for social change by challenging dominant ideologies and advocating for social justice.

Swingewood's theory emphasizes the value of analyzing literature in connection to its social context. We may grasp the intricate connection between literature and society clearly by looking at the ways that literary writings both reflect and influence social reality.

B. Genetic Structuralism Theory

The researcher uses Lucien Goldman's genetic structuralism as the theoretical reference in this research. Genetic structuralism is a subdivision of structuralism in literary research which focuses on the intrinsic part of literary work while also considering the extrinsic elements of it. Taine, who first introduced this theory, argues that a literary work is not only a result of a personal creativity but also a reflection of society which shapes the author's ideology during the creation of the literary work (Endraswara, 2003). This theory is further developed by Goldman, a French Sociologist and philosopher. Since a literary work is a product of the human mind behind it, it is important to look at Goldman's characteristic of human action (Muniroch, 2011), which includes:

- 1) The tendency towards adapting to the surrounding realities of the environment and rationalizing the said environment.
- 2) The tendency towards creating consistent and structural forms.
- 3) The tendency towards modifying and developing the structure that has been made.

Goldman believes that a literary work is a dynamic structure. In accordance with the characteristics of human action that have been stated

previously, those characteristics play a substantial part in all literary research. These tendencies drive researchers to do all the positive research towards literary works because of their tendencies to construct and develop structures in accordance to the realities around them.

Genetic structuralism is a response of the classic structuralism which disregards the societal influence behind the making of a literary work. Overlooking the societal influence around the author will render the meaning of the work incomplete and miss the values that the author believes in. Goldmann argues that texts are not only a product of an individual's way of thinking but it is also based on collective minds belonging to certain groups or classes (Shelden & Widdowson, 1993).

1. Human Fact

Human fact is any outcome of activities and good behavior, in the form of both physical and verbal, that is tried to be understood by science (Faruk, 1994). Human fact is the product of human activity. Hence, human facts can have the shape of varied individual or collective human activities, which includes cultural works like literary works or works of art (Muniroch, 2011). Human fact can be differentiated into two types, individual fact which is related to social class, and social fact which is mostly related with history.

2. Collective Subject

Goldmann argues that texts are not solely a product of an individual consciousness, but rather they originated from a trans-individual subject of

cultural creation. They represent the consciousness of a particular class or group (Pawling, 1984). An author of a literary work is considered as a collective subject due to the influence of his or her social group or class which goes beyond the limits of individuals, also known as trans-individual subject. It means that a literary work not only represents the author's own mind but also the minds of the society where the author lives in.

3. Worldview

Literary works are often deemed as imitations of the real world since the condition at the time heavily influences or even inspires the creation of a literary work. Literary works, essentially, are products of the collective minds of individuals and the ideology that people stand for. Despite them not being an exact copy of real world situations, it is still a decent representation of the worldview of a social group during the creation of the literary work. Worldview is a collection of ideas, aspirations and thoughts that connect people between social groups. It is a collective consciousness that develops as a result of a certain social and economic circumstance that is faced by the collective subject (Faruk, 1994). In essence, worldview is the unified combination of ideas and thoughts developed by a society as a reaction to certain social situations at the time.

4. Significant Structure

According to Goldmann, genetic structuralism is not only a mere structure but it is a meaningful structure i.e. significant structure (Khusnia, 2016). The meaning of a literary work does not only revolve around its internal elements but is also related to the ever-changing world environment surrounding the work. The

concept of generative structuralism is tied with Levi' Strauss structuralism in a way. However, Levi' Strauss views structure as a pair of contradictory elements. Unlike literary works, the social world and culture is formed by elements with opposite meanings, which means that basically literary works have more artistic structure than their real world counterparts.

That is why it is important to focus on structures regarding a literary work both internally and externally. The author's worldview and values are also influenced by the situation surrounding him or her. As a result, his or her work will be somewhat related to the conditions or perspective of the author concerning a particular social circumstance. Ultimately, it is safe to say that structures of both a work of fiction and society are the result of human actions all the same

C. Intrinsic Elements

A work of fiction consists of several internal elements called intrinsic elements. Examples of such elements include plot, characters, setting, theme, and genre. These elements are the contributors in developing a story, or in other words, they are the building block of a literary work. This general notion is approved by Nurgiyantoro (Nurgiyantoro, 1998). From the reader's perspective, these elements are tangible, and can be found just by reading the work itself.

1. Theme

Theme is the central idea, the underlying meaning that writers deliberately convey in their literary works. It is built-in in the story as the semantic structure and could involve some values such as moral or social values. Readers can

understand the deeper meaning or the wisdom explored by the writer in a work of fiction (Heffner, 1966).

2. Character

The existence of characters is crucial within a story. Usually, the story revolves around the characters. They are the entity that is presented in a narrative who shows their personal qualities and also acts as the bridge for the readers to understand their subconscious mind including thoughts, feelings, and motivations (Kennedy, 1991). Abrams defines characters as people in a narrative or dramatic work, who have certain moral and dispositional qualities which are expressed through words and actions carried out by the characters themselves (Nurgiyantoro, 1998).

3. Setting

Setting is the situation which includes any information and references related to space and time that surround an action of narrative within a literary work. It is there to help the readers illustrate the condition surrounding the events in the story. According to Kenny (Nurgiyantoro, 1998), setting is the location, time frame and social environment in which events are told.

4. Plot

In writing a literary work, an author provides an arrangement of events in a particular way for a story to be enjoyable. Moore (1966) describes plot as the main pattern of actions in which a conflict is raised and then resolved eventually. It determines what, when and how the story develops in a well-defined sequence.

This idea is supported by Koesnosoebroto (1988) and he adds that this series of chronological events is also divided mainly into three parts namely: the beginning, the middle and the end. These parts are connected in the story in such a way by a causal effect relationship.

5. Tone

Tone is the voice conveyed by the author in which the attitude of the author towards a certain subject can be discerned. Sheridan (1966) mentions that the author's tones are varied including but not limited to authoritative, reflective, neutral, sentimental, sarcastic, neutral, sincere, ironic, referent, and cynical. These tones provide the atmosphere presented in the story that can be felt by the readers of a work of fiction.

6. Genre

Genre is fundamentally a classification or categorization of a work of fiction according to its artistic form, style, or content. It is usually defined by recurring elements in similar works and keeps developing over time as works continue to be made. It is the style used by authors to express themselves and set the expected outcome of their work.

D. Power Manipulation

It is possible to trace the origin of the theory of power back to the work of Michel Foucault. Michel Foucault was a prominent figure in French philosophy, intellectual history, literature, politics, and literary criticism. He is credited as having a significant impact on the development of contemporary concepts

regarding power. Power, in Foucault's view (1982), can be seen to be a network of interactions between different persons and different groups. It is only possible in relation. Power is typically thought of as being one-sided, unidirectional, centralized, and held by one individual over another. In addition to this, he questions the concept of subjectivity. Foucault challenges the idea that power is wielded by individuals or organizations through "episodic" or "sovereign" acts of dominance or coercion. Instead, Foucault sees power as something that is abundant and easily spread throughout society. Instead, he uses the term omnipresent to describe power. It indicates that power can be found everywhere and originates from anywhere. He makes the observation that power can be found anywhere, not because it dominates everything but rather because it originates from anyone and everywhere, due to the fact that it is neither an agency nor a structure (Foucault, 1988).

Foucault's views focus primarily on the relationship between power and knowledge, as well as how both of these things may be utilized by societal institutions as a means of exerting control over individuals. According to Foucault, knowledge is always able to have an impact through power, and power is always able to have an effect through knowledge. In Foucault's view, the construction of knowledge entails the production of knowledge with power serving as the foundation for it at all times. Knowledge is not a vague revelation that results from power relations, but rather, knowledge is situated inside those ties. Because there is no knowledge without power, and there is no power without knowledge, power is what produces knowledge. This Foucault idea has a

consequence, which is that in order to know power, research on the production of knowledge that underlies power is required. Because every authority is organized, developed, and made manifest through the utilization of particular knowledge and discourse. That a given discourse is born from a certain knowledge, with power being the result of it as a consequence of the discourse. Foucault uses the term 'power/knowledge' to emphasize that authority is established through recognized forms of knowledge, scientific comprehension, and 'truth'. This is what he means when he says that power is constituted through knowledge (Foucault, 1991).

Michel Foucault is well-known for focusing on the relationship between knowledge and power, as well as how this relationship operates within the context of various discourses and discursive formations. Discourses are practices that systematically produce the objects about which discourses speak. We participate in social practices, which can be thought of as a social "script" that we both consciously and unconsciously act out. It works in three different ways, namely that it enables, it constrains, and it constitutes. On the other hand, discursive formations are made up of the hierarchical criss-crossing of particular discourse. Michel Foucault uses the development of the concept of "sexuality" as a discursive object as an example to demonstrate his theory. In Volume I, Foucault critiques the repressive hypothesis, which proposes that the Victorians suppressed sexuality because they viewed it as something that was not "essential." He argues that the various conversations we have about sexuality are not about sexuality in and of itself, rather, they are what actually constitute the reality of sexuality. The Victorians were not one that suppressed sexuality, rather, it was one that invented

it. This is the rationale behind his contention that power is productive. Power produces reality, and through many discourses, it produces the "truth" that we base our lives on (Foucault, 1988).

Foucault then argues that power can establish a "regime of truth" that permeates society and is continuously subject to movement and negotiation. This "regime of truth" extends across society. In other words, the kind of discourse that is approved and acts as reality differs from society to society. Every civilization has its own regime of truth. He views society as the arena in which a struggle will take place to establish the regime of truth by developing techniques and procedures, and offering cultural values that are believed to be true. The regime of truth is the result of scientific discourse and the resulting institutions. The education system, the media, and the shifting ideologies that drive political and economic institutions are continuously reinforcing and redefining this regime. In this particular instance, discourse is not the words, clauses, phrases, and sentences that need to be transmitted, rather, it is the knowledge that defines the ordering of truth that has to be created. Regimes of truth do not have to be true. They merely need to be considered true and acted upon in accordance with being true. Ideas, if they are believed, establish particular regimes of truth and lend legitimacy to those regimes (Foucault, 1988).

In addition, power is a major contributor to the context of societal discipline and conformity. Foucault drew attention away from the 'sovereign' and 'episodic' exercise of power, which had traditionally been centered in feudal states to coerce their subjects, to a new type of 'disciplinary power' that could be observed in 18th-

century Europe's administrative systems and social services, such as prisons, schools, and mental institutions. As a result of people becoming more self-disciplined and acting in accordance with expectations, the use of force or violence is no longer necessary for their monitoring and evaluation systems. The outcome of Foucault's interest with the mechanics of jail surveillance, school discipline, and systems for the administration and control of populations is panopticism.

A social philosophy known as panopticism is named after the structure known as the panopticon. Jeremy Bentham, an English philosopher and social theorist, developed the Panopticon in the late 18th century as a sort of institutional architecture and a system of control. He named the structure the Panopticon. The plan for the design is to make it possible for a single watchman to keep an eye (-opticon) on all of the inmates (pan-) at a facility while at the same time preventing the inmates from being able to detect when they are being watched. Because of the sort of institution building that they are housed in and the control system that is in place, prisoners are unaware of whether or not they are being observed. As a result, people develop the habit of acting as though they are constantly being observed. As a direct consequence of this, panopticism is the practice of extending the scope of the monitoring system to cover the entirety of society. From this point on, members of a community should come to the realization that the rules and regulations imposed by the ruler are not perfect. Foucault's methodology challenges the idea that there is one universally accepted truth. He is digging out

the reality that every deviation that occurred in the society was established by the ruler who has knowledge (Foucault, 1991).

Through the process of knowledge creation through discourse, those who have a strong understanding of the subject matter have an advantage over those who do not since they are in a better position to determine what constitutes appropriate behavior and what should be regarded as unethical, as well as deciding on what should be considered as right and wrong. The "battle for truth" does not refer to the search for an absolute truth that can be found and acknowledged, rather, it refers to a conflict over the principles that are followed in order to differentiate between the true and the false, as well as the precise consequences of power that are associated with the truth. Because of this, knowledge and power can be transformed into a weapon because they can be used to manipulate and exert control over those who are naive or innocent.

As stated in the previous chapter, the purpose of this research is to examine the social context of the literary work as well as the author's worldview. Not only that, but the study intends to examine power manipulation based on intrinsic elements, particularly through John and Carol, the main characters in David Mamet's *Oleanna*. As the drama progresses, both characters desire more power than they currently have and will go to any length to obtain it, resulting in both of them attempting to manipulate one another.

E. The Social Condition in American Society in the Early 1990s

Since *Oleanna* was released in 1992, it is undeniable that something that occurred in the early 1990s prompted David Mamet to produce the drama. At the time of its release, sexual assault and consent were the subject of a national debate. These debates and the drama were strongly influenced by the sexual harassment charges against Clarence Thomas. When Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall announced his retirement from the Supreme Court in 1991, President George H. W. Bush nominated federal circuit judge Clarence Thomas to replace him on the court. Despite the fact that Thomas had only been a judge for a little over a year at the time of his initial confirmation hearings in the Senate, his moral uprightness was cited as a primary requirement for a seat on the Supreme Court. However, information on the FBI's private interview with Anita Hill made its way into the public domain that eventually put Thomas in a risk of losing his new position.

In October of that year, Anita Hill testified in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee, where she recounted the alleged sexual harassment she endured when Clarence Thomas served as her supervisor at the Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. When the two of them worked together, Hill claims Thomas made inappropriate comments and asked her to become intimate on several occasions. During her questioning in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee, a number of senators accused her of lying and questioned her mental stability. The all-male, all-white panel insulted and disregarded Hill repeatedly. Several members of Congress slammed Hill's

character, implying that sexually explicit comments were commonplace in the workplace.

The hearings divided the country. Hill's account elicited strong and divisive reactions. Thomas' supporters cast doubt on her credibility, asserting either that she was suffering from delusions or that she had been rejected, which drove her to seek retribution. They also brought up the ten-year gap between the claimed actions of Thomas and Hill's charges, as well as the fact that Hill had followed Thomas to a second position after the initial one. When questioned why she followed Thomas to the second job after he had allegedly harassed her, she responded that her objective had been to work in a prestigious position in the civil rights field. The position was appealing enough to keep her from returning to her previous firm's private practice. Hill's supporters, on the other hand, viewed her treatment by the Senate committee as degrading and misogynistic. When he ruled that supporting witnesses could not be invited, they charged the committee chairman with a cover-up. Four female witnesses were scheduled to testify in support of Hill's credibility, but they were not called due to a pact described by the Los Angeles Times as a confidential agreement between Republicans and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Joe Biden.

The testimony did not have much of an effect on the nomination of Thomas. However, the scandal did encourage a number of women to get involved in politics. As a result, 1992 was dubbed the "Year of the Woman" because a record number of women were elected to Congress. The number of women serving in the Senate and the House of Representatives effectively doubled to 6 and 47,

respectively. It has also been said that Hill's testimony was responsible for raising public awareness of sexual harassment in the workplace. It exposed the "locker room talk" that was frequently normalized in professional situations. While others viewed Hill as a jealous and attention-seeking woman who manufactured false accusations to gain attention, many people were outraged by her treatment and regarded it as an example of what happens to women who accuse men of sexual assault.

David Mamet took advantage of the heightened emotions surrounding Hill's trial and workplace harassment throughout the debate by writing *Oleanna*. *Oleanna* immersed the audience in the scene by presenting unsettling questions about what constitutes harassment or power abuse. While most discussions of sexual assault and harassment center on charges that one side is lying or exaggerating, audiences in *Oleanna* were able to closely observe and evaluate every private encounter between the accuser and the accused. The drama brought attention to the issue of harassment, not only in the workplace but also in the classroom. However, Mamet's portrayal of the characters has led some critics to argue that he does not comprehend the essence of sexual harassment. As a result, *Oleanna* became one of his most controversial dramas, as it regularly prompted debates and arguments, with people ultimately choosing sides with the drama's protagonists. Insisting that the drama does not purposefully take sides, Mamet has also constantly avoided discussing his exact opinions of the Hill-Thomas hearings or the drama's interpretation of the topics discussed.

Despite the fact that Anita Hill's hearings took place more than three decades ago, the core themes of *Oleanna* continue to have an impact on the ongoing discussion concerning workplace harassment. Since certain components of *Oleanna* are evident, particularly the conversation around class structures at university, the play is more relevant than ever, especially in the wake of the #MeToo movement. As the writer of *Oleanna*, David Mamet has claimed that a drama might serve as a reflection of life. It can play out unconscious collective conflicts in some form, bringing them to the surface for conscious discussion. Perhaps there are deeply ingrained ideas around gender relationships in our individual and collective psyche that need to be addressed in the case of *Oleanna*.

F. David Mamet's Biography

David Alan Mamet, or David Mamet, was born on 30 November 1947. As a Pulitzer Prize winner and Tony Award nominee for his dramas *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1984) and *Speed-the-Plow* (1988), he is considered one of the most well-known American playwrights, directors, and authors. *Oleanna* (1992) was published years after having been awarded the Pulitzer Prize in drama. The two-character drama *Oleanna* shows a struggle for power between a university professor and one of his female pupils, who eventually accuses him of sexual harassment. Although the drama was a success, it consistently aroused debate and controversy, with some viewers concerned that *Oleanna* explores the notion of sexual harassment through the interactions of a professor and his female student.

David Mamet was born in Chicago in 1974 to teacher Lenore June and labor attorney Bernard Morris Mamet. One of his earliest employment was working as a

busboy at Chicago's London House and The Second City. In addition to that, he also worked as an actor, an editor for *Oui* magazine, and as a taxi driver. In his younger years, he received his education in Plainfield, Vermont, at the progressive Francis W. Parker School and at Goddard College. In the 1970s, while attending Goddard College in Vermont, he began creating plays and establishing his own theater group. Even in his youth, he was a prolific author, as his plays frequently attracted enormous crowds.

During the 1970s, David Mamet's dramas finally earned him recognition and popularity. Even more, he received a Pulitzer Prize in drama and a New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1984), a drama about a New York real estate salesman. However, he was also subjected to a significant amount of criticism due to the fact that some people believed that his works contained sexist or misogynistic connotations because his writings typically concentrated on the challenges and the tribulations of modern men. During the publication of *Oleanna*, some critics undoubtedly viewed the drama as controversial. In an effort to address these allegations, David Mamet produced a series of dramas that departed from his signature themes, such as *Boston Marriage* (1999), a comedy about a lesbian couple in the early twentieth century, *Doctor Faustus* (2004), a popular and frequently adapted interpretation of the Faust legend, and *Romance* (2005), which humorously poked fun at the prejudices of a Jewish man and his Protestant attorney.

David Mamet has continued to write and produce plays at a rapid pace throughout the twenty-first century, frequently returning to familiar themes and

approaches. David Mamet has been interested in the role of language in disguising, revealing, and constructing power relations since the beginning of his work. Characters in his dramas frequently utilize colorful, vernacular English and speak with conviction, yet their underlying sentiments and motives are expressed through body language, language patterns, or actions. By placing his protagonists in a constrained environment and allowing the audience to closely observe them, he proceeded to examine relationships in depth via his plays. *The Anarchist* (2012), a drama about a lengthy encounter between a woman's prison official and a parole seeker inmate, is an example of this. He also wrote *Bitter Wheat* (2019), a drama about a powerful director accused of sexual misconduct, influenced by the MeToo movement, which was inspired by sexual assault allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein. The majority of David Mamet's works make use of the rhythms and syntax of everyday dialogue to help define the characters, shed light on complex connections and relationships, as well as elevate dramatic development.

David Mamet's work was not only limited to writing dramas. He has also written several screenplays. *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981), based on James M. Cain's novel, was one of his first screenplays, as well as *The Verdict* (1982), for which he received an Academy Award nomination. He also garnered other Oscar nominations for his screenplays for *Wag The Dog* and *Hannibal*, both of which were released in 1997 and 2001. In certain situations, such as *The Spanish Prisoner* in 1998, David Mamet both wrote and directed the film. David Mamet promoted a manner of storytelling based on Eisenstein's montage theory,

which largely relied on cutting between scenes when directing films. He advised directors to leave out as much narration as possible, focusing instead on expressing the spirit of a scene rather than just following the protagonist or including stunning or visually appealing images.

David Mamet wasn't pleased with just doing that, so he started writing both fiction and non-fiction as well. The social issues that are prevalent in American life are frequently the subject of David Mamet's nonfiction writing and novels. His novel *The Old Religion* (1997) dealt with the most vivid incidents of violent antisemitism in American history, while David Mamet's nonfiction work *The Wicked Son: Anti-Semitism, Self-Hatred, and the Jews* (2006) was a portrayal of the same topic through a nonfiction lens. In addition to this, in the book titled *The Secret Knowledge: The Dismantling of American Culture* (2011), he posed a challenge to the liberal orthodoxy of the United States. Nonfiction works and articles written by David Mamet, such as *Three Uses of the Knife* (1996), regularly included discussions on the author's and director's writing and directing abilities.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

The method employed in this study is described in this section. The descriptions include a research design consisting of the literary criticism and theory used in this study, a data source consisting of the drama's data, a data collection consisting of some steps taken by the researcher in collecting data, and a data analysis consisting of the way the researcher analyzes the data.

A. Research Design

This study's research design is literary criticism. Literary criticism is the study or discussion of literary works that includes analysis, evaluation, and explanation of the relevance or meaning of literary works (Beaty, 2001). The researcher employs genetic structuralism, a sociological approach created by Lucien Goldmann. This study analyzes the work's structure in terms of the intrinsic elements of the drama that represent the subject matter of the research, as well as the socioeconomic state of the author's society that contributed to the work's creation. Both are then combined to interpret the play according to the author's ideology or worldview. Therefore, the researcher takes the theory of genetic structuralism because it is suitable for analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating the discussion of power manipulation through the intrinsic elements, the social context behind the literary work, and also the author's worldview.

B. Data Source

This study's data are presented in the form of texts, including dialogues (words, phrases, and sentences stated by the characters), events, character actions, and narration, which represent the significant structure of the facts and information on the chosen topic.

The primary data source is a 1992 publication of David Mamet's 56 page drama *Oleanna*, which debuted in May 1992 at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts as the first performance of Mamet's new Back Bay Theater Company. To support the primary data of this research, the researcher should find a source of secondary data that correlates with the topic discussed. Secondary data consists of any relevant information about the social condition of American society in the early 1990s obtained from books and journal articles. The other data source is the biography of David Mamet, which consists of primary texts such as letters, diaries, and other records that assist readers comprehend the author's social background and worldview.

C. Data Collection

There are several steps involved in data collection. The researcher begins by conducting a close reading of the drama. Second, the researcher reads all secondary material, which includes books, journal articles, letters, diaries, and other relevant documents. These secondary data are utilized to expand the researcher's understanding of analyzing the drama using genetic structuralism in order to gain a better grasp of the topic. Thirdly, the researcher determines the major characters, events, and concerns to be investigated in the drama dealing

with power manipulation issues. Fourth, the researcher makes some notes on the data in the drama related to the problems of the study. Fifth, the researcher classifies the data in the drama and the data in the secondary data.

D. Data Analysis

Following data collection, the data analysis is conducted according to the stages below. Initially, the researcher classifies the data according to the research questions. The researcher identifies the structure of the drama which covers the power manipulation reflected in the drama. To determine the author's worldview, the researcher then studies secondary data, such as the author's life and the social situation of American society at the time. Thirdly, the researcher discusses the result of the interpretation and analysis that is reflected in the drama *Oleanna* by David Mamet utilizing Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism perspective. Fourth, the researcher formulates a conclusion that appropriately addresses the research questions.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings of the analysis conducted to determine David Mamet's worldview towards power manipulation in his drama *Oleanna*. This chapter also demonstrates how David Mamet portrays power manipulation through the structure of the drama which covers the problems of the power manipulation between John and Carol's character. In addition, the secondary data which is the life of the author and also the social condition in American society at that time is also examined to discover the author's worldview. Therefore, the discussion is divided into two sections: power manipulation represented through the structure of the drama and David Mamet's worldview about power manipulation reflected in the drama.

A. Power Manipulation Reflected in *Oleanna*'s Elements of Literature

It is possible to analyze the author's worldview based on the elements of the literary work. A literary element is any component that makes up a piece of written literature. Theme, character, setting, plot, tone, and genre are all examples of components that fall within this category. These elements are the factors that go into the development of a story, or, to put it another way, they are the main components of any piece of written literature. Through analyzing the intrinsic elements, the researcher can discover the author's worldview, understanding the way David Mamet depicts power manipulation through the structure of the drama.

As a result, the study of power manipulation reflected through the drama's structure will be shown in the following sub-chapter.

1. Theme

David Mamet's *Oleanna* is a three act drama that only has two main characters. As the drama progresses, it becomes blatantly obvious that the central theme of *Oleanna* is power.

In the beginning of the drama, Carol meets one of her professors, John, in his office to ask for some assistance with her class. Carol begins discussing her concerns regarding John's course. She claims that she is unable to comprehend the material of John's teachings from the books produced by him, and that John's choice of words makes her feel unintelligent. She feels powerless due to her inability to comprehend the topics John discusses in the class. In this sense, John holds power over powerless Carol. It is also extremely frustrating for Carol to express herself clearly because of the continual distractions via phone calls about John's real estate problems. Through the phone calls, it is revealed that John has been offered promotion of his career that comes with a pay increase, and as a result, he is currently in the process of purchasing a new house for his family. It further indicates the power that John has over Carol who is not as privileged as John. Because of John's position, he dares to put a hand on her shoulder and even manipulates the educational system with his power by offering her the opportunity to redo the course with private tutoring in his office.

The second act of the drama begins with Carol's return to John's office. However, she is neither present to discuss her problems with John's course, nor does she accept his offer to retake the course in private meetings. She actually has filed a complaint about John's alleged inappropriate behavior. According to her, John is sexually harassing her by touching her shoulder at their earlier encounter, inviting her to his office for a private lesson, and making sexist remarks in class. John is astonished by Carol's charges because he did not believe his prior words and actions were taken in such demeaning manners. John tries to handle the issue privately with her since he is frightened of losing his academic credibility, chance of tenure, and pay increase, as well as his opportunity to purchase a new home for his family. For Carol, however, John's desire to discuss the problem in private is an attempt to get her to retract the report, which she refuses to do. Carol is unable to accept John's pleas and assurances that his intentions were good. When she decides to go, he prevents her from leaving. She feels terrified and hurries out the door to ask for help. In his attempt to restore control over Carol by physically restraining her, he actually lends credibility to her charges. In this act, Carol is now articulate and able to critique him with clarity. Throughout the drama, it becomes evident that Carol gains and utilizes power. She gains confidence in her own judgment and strongly opposes John's values and actions. Carol manipulates her powerlessness in a complex way in order to oppose John. Eventually, Her powerlessness actually gives her some degree of authority.

In the third and final act of the drama, it is revealed that Carol's complaint was approved, and that as a result, John has not only lost his chance at the promotion

of getting tenure, but also his new house. He also faces the possibility of being kicked out of the university in addition to having his teaching privileges revoked. John, acting against his better judgment, invites Carol back to his office to discuss the situation. However, Carol is now more powerful than ever before. Throughout their conversation, Carol corrects John's language and accuses him of supporting a system that facilitates his privilege. She asserts that she is not seeking retribution, but rather has been instructed by her group to remove John's teachings from his required books in the university. She acquires social power by forming alliances with those she refers to as "her group." However, she and her group offer to withdraw their complaint if he agrees to prohibit a list of books from the university, including several that he himself had written. John rejects Carol's demands with contempt and eventually loses his temper. In response to Carol's remark that John should not refer to his wife as "baby," John begins to physically assault Carol. As he puts a chair over Carol's head, it appears like John has regained control, but he eventually discovers that Carol actually has absolute control over him. Through his own action, Carol can gain the trust of the tenure committee to get power over John to prove that all of the accusations towards him are the truth. It appears that Carol is able to predict his actions and manipulates this by guiding him to do actions that benefit her and her group.

In addition, the constant use of the word "power" uttered by the characters also emphasizes the drama's theme, as found in Carol's statements:

CAROL: I don't care what you feel. Do you see? DO YOU SEE? You can't do that anymore. You. Do. Not. Have. The. Power. Did you misuse it? Someone did. Are you part of that group? Yes. Yes. You Are. You've done these things.

And to say, and to say, "Oh. Let me help you with your problem..." (Mamet, 1992, p. 35)

CAROL: Then say it. For Christ's sake. Who the hell do you think that you are? You want a post. You want unlimited power. To do and to say what you want. As it pleases you – Testing, Questioning, Flirting... (Mamet, 1992, p. 46)

To conclude this analysis, it is clear that the underlying theme of the drama is power, which is evident from the story's progression. In the beginning, John, being the professor, holds power over Carol, who is powerless. This is due to John's higher status and superior position within the academic hierarchy as a professor. However, as the plot unfolds, Carol gains power by vigorously challenging John's values and actions, ultimately accusing him of sexual harassment. This turn of events illustrates the central role of power dynamics in the drama's plot.

2. Character

a) John

John is one of *Oleanna's* two primary characters. He is both a university professor and an author, frequently producing his own textbooks for his university courses. Analyzing his characterization is one of the important aspects of understanding David Mamet's worldview toward power manipulation reflected in *Oleanna*.

1) Self-centered

When John's student Carol meets with him to talk about the difficulties she's experiencing in John's class, instead of listening to her, John talks about himself. He spends the majority of his time talking excessively about himself

while paying very little attention to those around him. This self-centered personality is evident when John shifts the conversation to a story about his upbringing rather than addressing Carol's academic struggles.

JOHN: I'll tell you a story about myself. (Pause) Do you mind? (Pause) I was raised to think myself stupid. That's what I want to tell you. (Pause) (Mamet, 1992, p. 11)

Further illustrating his self-centered personality, he also discusses the fundamental problems that exist in higher education as well as the absurdity and idiocy that saturate the academic world as a whole by using his own struggles in education as a justification for his disdain for the traditional university structure. John claims that he had a difficult time throughout his own education, which led to him developing a resentment toward the formalities of a university degree.

JOHN: If I fail all the time, it must be that I think of myself as a failure. If I do not want to think of myself as a failure, perhaps I should begin by succeeding now and again. Look. The tests, you see, which you encounter, in school, in college, in life, were designed, in the most part, for idiots. By idiots. There is no need to fail at them. They are not a test of your worth. They are a test of your ability to retain and spout back misinformation. Of course you fail them. They're nonsense. And I... (Mamet, 1992, p. 16)

John also frequently diverts his focus to the phone calls he is receiving about the issues he is having with his real estate. It was discovered through the phone calls that there will be an increase in John's pay as a result of the promotion to tenure that he has been offered, and that he is already in the process of purchasing a new house as a result of receiving these benefits. This statement below serves as an evidence of his characterization that he is indeed a self-centered individual who loves to talk about himself without regard for Carol's circumstances.

CAROL: I always ... all my life ... I have never told anyone this...

JOHN: Yes. Go on. (Pause) Go on.

CAROL: All of my life... (The phone rings.) (Pause. JOHN goes to the phone and picks it up.)

JOHN (into phone): I can't talk now. (Pause) What? (Pause) Hmm. (Pause) All right, I ... I. Can't. Talk. Now. No, no, no, I Know I did, but ... What? Hello. What? She what? She can't, she said the agreement is void? How, how is the agreement void? That's Our House. (Mamet, 1992, p. 27)

His self-centered personality is also evident when Carol and her group offer John the withdrawal of her complaint in exchange for his agreement to prohibit a list of books including John's book that consist of inappropriate teachings from the university, he strongly denies this because he decides that maintaining his integrity is more essential than recovering a diminished version of the power he once possessed. Even though he is currently put in a difficult position, he is either unable to see the logic behind Carol's actions or is unable to recognize his changing reality since he thinks so highly of himself and believes that he can regain control of the situation.

JOHN: No, no. It's out of the question. I'm sorry. I don't know what I was thinking of. I want to tell you something. I'm a teacher. I am a teacher. Eh? It's my name on the door, and I teach the class, and that's what I do. I've got a book with my name on it. And my son will see that book someday. And I have a respon ... No, I'm sorry I have a responsibility ... to myself, to my son, to my profession... I haven't been home for two days, do you know that? Thinking this out. (Mamet, 1992, p. 49)

As a result of the statement that was presented earlier, it is clear that John does not wish to comply with the suggestion that's been made by Carol and her group to ban list several books that he has written. This is due to the fact that John continues to think highly of himself as a teacher and as the head of the family, and how his teachings from his written books can one day be exposed to his son. Therefore, he doesn't want to embarrass himself because he has responsibilities not just to himself but also to his family and his career.

2) Authoritative

As a result of the privilege that comes with being a member of an academic institution, John has made a conscious effort of cutting Carol off and ignoring her numerous attempts to express her thoughts. John also makes use of the authority that comes with this position in order to appropriate Carol's use of language to consciously or unconsciously establish the power dynamics that exist between them by using highly difficult academic terminology. As may be seen in the examples that follow, Carol has a lot of trouble understanding a lot of the terminology that he deliberately uses.

CAROL: No, no, no. I'm doing what I'm told. It's difficult for me. It's difficult...

JOHN: ...but...

CAROL: I don't ... lots of the language...

JOHN: ...please...

CAROL: The language, the "things" that you say... (Mamet, 1992, p. 4)

In addition, he also flaunts his academic power by easily disregarding the academic rules by offering Carol the opportunity to retake the class in private lessons in his office with an A as the final grade, despite the fact that she is already halfway through the semester and has received poor grades up to this point.

JOHN: Let it ring. I'll make you a deal. You stay here. We'll start the whole course over. I'm going to say it was not you, it was I who was not paying attention. We'll start the whole course over. Your grade is an "A." Your final grade is an "A." (The phone stops ringing.)

CAROL: But the class is only half over... (Mamet, 1992, p. 17)

3) Blind to His Privilege

Despite John's considerable power and influence, he is mostly unaware of the influence of his gender, academic status, and socioeconomic background. It

can be seen through his interactions with Carol. Throughout the play, John consistently overlooks the existing power dynamics and their impact on how Carol perceives their relationship in the course of the play.

For example, John perceives his efforts to assist Carol as a thoughtful and sincere gesture but he fails to recognize that his conduct may be perceived as coercive or patronizing. The potential intimidation or powerlessness that Carol may experience as a result of his status as a professor, as well as the associated privileges based on gender, are not acknowledged by him. John's disregard for Carol's claims of feeling uncomfortable is indicative of a significant lack of awareness, as he assumes that her perspective is either exaggerated or inaccurate.

CAROL: My charges are not trivial. You see that in the haste, I think, with which they were accepted. A joke you have told, with a sexist tinge. The language you use, a verbal or physical caress, yes, yes, I know, you say that it is meaningless. I understand. I differ from you. To lay a hand on someone's shoulder. (Mamet, 1992, p. 45)

Eventually, Carol admits that she is enraged by the power structures that surround her and the systems that prioritize the gifting of even more privilege and power to men like John, while completely ignoring students who are actually in need of university support.

CAROL: All your stories. All your silly weak guilt, it's all about privilege; and you won't know it. Don't you see? You worked twenty years for the right to insult me. And you feel entitled to be paid for it. Your Home. Your Wife ... Your sweet "deposit" on your house... (Mamet, 1992, p. 42)

b) Carol

Oleanna features two main characters, and one of them is Carol. She is one of the female students at the same university that John teaches at in his

position as a professor. Understanding David Mamet's perspective toward power manipulation, as portrayed in *Oleanna*, requires a number of different types of analysis, one of the most significant of which is an examination of the character.

1) Insecure

At the beginning of *Oleanna*, Carol is portrayed as an insecure student and overwhelmed by her academic difficulties. This is especially apparent in Carol's character as she is a college student from a likely disadvantaged socioeconomic background. She admits to John that she does not comprehend the teachings and discussions in his class and that she feels inadequate due to her inability to participate alongside others who appear to have a solid grasp of the subject. When she interacts with John, she frequently displays hesitancy, apprehension, and a tendency to give in to his authority, which suggests her lack of confidence. Carol's dissatisfaction with the course subject is often expressed in Act 1. Carol's statement conveys her feelings of incompetence and her belief that she lacks the ability to achieve academic success.

CAROL: How can I do that if I don't, if I fail? But I don't understand. I don't understand. I don't understand what anything means ... and I walk around. From morning 'til night: with this one thought in my head. I'm stupid. (Mamet, 1992, p. 7)

Carol's desperate desire for validation is also indicative of her insecurity. The fact that she has to do what she's told without question shows that she is afraid of going against what is expected for fear of being rejected or criticized. Because she doesn't think she's good enough, Carol is afraid she can't live up to other people's expectations.

CAROL: I did what you told me. I did, I did everything that, I read your book, you told me to buy your book and read it. Everything you say I... (She gestures to her notebook.) (The phone rings.) I do. ...Ev...

JOHN: ...look:

CAROL: ...everything I'm told... (Mamet, 1992, p. 10)

She also keeps trying to read notes that she writes during the class, unable to form her own thoughts. This moment also hints at Carol's lack of confidence in her own judgment. Instead of trusting her own understanding or knowledge, she relies entirely on John's guidance, further emphasizing her insecurity.

CAROL: You wrote, in your book. About the comparative ... in the comparative ... (She checks her notes.)

JOHN: Are you checking your notes...?

CAROL: Yes.

JOHN: Tell me in your own...

CAROL: I want to make sure that I have it right. (Mamet, 1992, p. 19)

Her submission to John emphasizes her dependence on authority figures to determine her self-worth and lack of self-assurance. She is prone to feeling overwhelmed, as evidenced by her initial reluctance to assert herself, constant questioning, and nervousness. The depiction of Carol as lacking confidence and feeling overwhelmed establishes the basis for changes she undergoes later in the play.

2) Assertive

Throughout the course of the play, Carol experiences a significant transformation, transitioning from an insecure and hesitant student to an assertive individual. This shift becomes apparent in Act 2, where Carol begins to take control of the situation and assert her own perspective. Her tone and demeanor change noticeably, reflecting her growing confidence and determination to stand up for herself.

Carol's newfound assertiveness can be seen by her accusations of academic misconduct and sexual harassment against John. During a critical exchange, she challenges John's authority. As Carol no longer permits John to dominate the conversation or disregard her concerns, this statement represents a significant turning point in the play. She further demonstrates her assertiveness by asserting that John's actions are inappropriate and demanding accountability.

CAROL: What gives you the right. Yes. To speak to a woman in your private... Yes. Yes. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You feel yourself empowered ... you say so yourself. To strut. To posture. To "perform." To "Call me in here..." Eh? You say that higher education is a joke. And treat it as such, you treat it as such. And confess to a taste to play the Patriarch in your class. To grant this. To deny that. To embrace your students.

JOHN: How can you assert. How can you stand there and...

CAROL: How can you deny it. You did it to me. Here. You did... You confess. You love the Power. To deviate. To invent, to transgress ... to transgress whatever norms have been established for us. (Mamet, 1992, p. 23)

Carol's transformation is also apparent in her refusal to be intimidated by John's position of power. She becomes more assertive and vocal, articulating her thoughts without the hesitation that was evident in her previous interactions. This growing assertiveness is in contrast to her previous submissiveness, demonstrating her increasing confidence and empowerment as she obtains control of the narrative.

3) Vindictive

As Carol gains more power, she also becomes increasingly vindictive and unforgiving in her pursuit of what she believes is justice. By Act 3, Carol has wholeheartedly embraced her role as an accuser and is resolute in her determination to hold John responsible for what she perceives as his wrongdoings. The transition from insecurity to vindictiveness in her behavior is a complex

progression, as it demonstrates both her increased confidence and the extreme lengths to which she is willing to go to achieve her goals.

Carol's vindictive nature is most evident in her unwavering opposition to John, despite the fact that his life is beginning to crumble. Carol's accusations are unwavering, despite his pleas for mercy and understanding. She insists in making a claim that increases the tension between them and establishes her status as the aggressor in their conflict. This scene emphasizes Carol's commitment to what she considers to be a moral responsibility, therefore ignoring the personal or professional consequences for John.

CAROL: The issue here is not what I "feel." It is not my "feelings," but the feelings of women. And men. Your superiors, who've been "polled," do you see? To whom evidence has been presented, who have ruled, do you see? Who have weighed the testimony and the evidence, and have ruled, do you see? That you are negligent. That you are guilty, that you are found wanting, and in error; and are not, for the reasons so-told, to be given tenure. That you are to be disciplined. For facts. For facts. Not "alleged," what is the word? But proved. Do you see? By your own actions. (Mamet, 1992, p. 41)

Carol's portrayal in *Oleanna* is characterized by a significant shift from insecurity to assertiveness, and ultimately, to vindictiveness. These characteristics are essential to the play's examination of power dynamics and manipulation, as Carol evolves from an insecure student to a powerful accuser who challenges the established hierarchy and forces a reexamination of the nature of authority, justice, and morality.

3. Setting

a) Setting of Place

The setting of the story is the office of a professor at an academic institution. Due to the fact that *Oleanna* is a drama, it is easy to pinpoint the exact location at which the events of the story take place. It is consistently written at the opening of each act.

JOHN is talking on the phone. CAROL is seated across the desk from him. (Mamet, 1992, p. 1)

JOHN and CAROL seated across the desk from each other. (Mamet, 1992, p. 31)

JOHN: Get the fuck out of my office. (Mamet, 1992, p. 53)

David Mamet cleverly chooses a place in academic institution as the setting in his drama, *Oleanna*, since he is inspired by something that happened in the early 1990s, which is the sexual harassment charges against Clarence Thomas. However, to avoid discussing his exact opinions of the Hill-Thomas hearings or the drama's interpretation of the topics discussed, he chooses similar issues but in different settings. Instead of happening in the workplace, the story of John and Carol as characters happen in the academic institution.

Although the drama drew attention to the issue of harassment because it was heavily influenced by the sexual harassment allegations against Clarence Thomas, *Oleanna* illustrates the power manipulation of a university professor, John, and a student, Carol, who makes sexual harassment claims toward John. Depending on one's perspective, an incident of sexual harassment may or may not occur. The incident deepens the confrontation between John and Carol in such a

way that each of them portrays their own power and ways to manipulate that power to get what they want in order to achieve their goals.

4. Plot

a) Exposition

In the beginning of the drama, John receives a phone call in his office. It is evident from John's phone call that the institution has recently granted him tenure, which results in an increase in monetary compensation. Because of the promotion, he and his wife have decided to start the process of buying a new house, and she has been contacting him continuously to talk about issues that have arisen with their agent. Carol, one of John's students, is seated across the desk from him as he continues to receive a phone call. She has been waiting for the opportunity to address her concerns with John's course. As soon as he hangs up the phone, Carol explains to John that she is having difficulty understanding the material that is being covered in his class, despite having completed all the assignments and even buying and reading the required books for the course. That is why she has come to see him in his office. In response, John tries to alleviate these concerns using compliments and discussing his personal life.

b) Rising Action

Constantly interrupted by the phone calls about John's real estate problems, John can't give his sole attention to Carol's issues. Instead of listening, he keeps talking over Carol and spends the majority of his time talking about himself. Carol's frustration grows as a result of the numerous times she is denied

the opportunity to speak. As a means of reassuring her that she will not fail the course, he tells her that she will receive an A for her grade, as long as she consents to having one-on-one private meetings with him to discuss the lectures. He tells Carol that he likes her and that he himself had similar frustrations as a student. During the course of the conversation, he attempts to console her by placing his hand on her shoulder. The motives that John has in this situation are unclear. This can be read either as a simple good intention of a professor who is willing to help and comfort his students, or an inappropriate advances to Carol. His behavior eventually led Carol to accuse him of sexual misconduct. She has accused John of engaging in sexual harassment toward her by putting his hand on her shoulder during their previous meeting, offering her to visit him in his office for private lessons, and making sexist remarks in class. These allegations put him in a risk of losing his credibility as a professor, losing his granted tenure and his salary rise, as well as his planning on buying a new house for his family.

c) Climax

He invites Carol to his office to address the allegations against him in the hopes that this will result in the sexual harassment claims against him being dropped. However, Carol gives the impression that the tenure committee has already deemed John as guilty. John then shares with Carol the news that he will be dismissed from his position as a result of this accusation. As a response, Carol proposes that she retract her complaint if he will agree to prohibit access to a specific list of books at the university, including some of the books that consisted of his teachings. She explains to John that the lessons included in his books are

being taught at universities despite the fact that they are considered inappropriate. She makes it clear that the members of her group have encouraged her to carry out these actions in order to remove John's ideas from his book. On the other hand, John strongly dismisses her proposal and emphasizes to her that he is unable to fulfill her demands. As Carol leaves the office, John hears the phone ring and picks it up to answer his wife, whom he refers to as "baby." Sarcastically, Carol advises John not to refer to his wife as "baby." John's fury flares as a direct result of Carol's remark, which ultimately results in John physically assaulting Carol.

d) Resolution

The drama finishes with Carol stating, "Yes...that's right," after John explodes over Carol's final comments regarding the way he addresses his wife and eventually makes her beat her violently with him holding a chair over her head as she cowers on the floor. The reason as to why Carol says "Yes...that's right" is because she can now gain the tenure committee's trust by proving that all of the claims against him are true, thanks to John's own actions as he physically abuses Carol.

5. Tone

Tone is a literary device that can be used to indicate the author's attitude toward the topic of the literary work or the audience that will be reading the literary work. By the author's choice of words, the reader is given insight into the author's feelings and opinions, as well as the author's intentions behind writing the piece. This attitude is communicated to the reader through tone, which generates a certain relationship between the writer and the reader and ultimately decides the

goal and meaning of the written words. These tones provide the atmosphere presented in the story that can be felt by the readers of a work of fiction.

The drama deals with the issues of power manipulation, which are portrayed by the allegation of sexual harassment made by a female student to her professor. As the drama progresses, it is clear that the primary tone in this drama is serious and dramatic. This is because the drama deals with these issues throughout. Because David Mamet wants these issues to be taken seriously, he decides to utilize a serious and dramatic tone in the drama through the language that he chooses to use.

In the beginning of the drama, the tone during the conversation between Carol and John as she comes to John's office to ask for his help in regard to her difficulties understanding the material, is serious. Carol discusses her issues with John's course in a serious manner. She claims that she is unable to understand John's teachings and that the terminology he uses makes her feel unintelligent. She feels powerless due to her inability to comprehend the issues John covers in his lectures.

After that, the tone becomes dramatic because of the continual distractions from John's phone calls, resulting in Carol keeps losing her chance to speak and she becomes upset that she can't express herself clearly. At the end of the first act, Carol is so agitated over the fact that she is not being heard that she screams at John to pay attention to what she has to say.

In the following acts, the tone once more becomes serious and dramatic, as Carol has filed a formal complaint against John's misconduct. She claims that John engaged in sexually harassing behavior toward her. John is caught aback by Carol's accusations because he was under the impression that his previous acts had not been carried out in such a condescending manner. John makes an effort to have a conversation with her about the problem, but they are unable to settle on a single outcome. This eventually leads John to lose his temper and attempt to physically restrain and abuse her.

6. Genre

The classification of drama into groups and types defines the genre of the drama. In order to classify them, it is necessary to examine their stylistic and methodological similarities. All literature is categorized into genres, and all theatrical literature is categorized as dramatic literature. There are six categories into which drama can be classified, namely tragedy, heroic drama, domestic drama, melodrama, comedy, and tragicomedy. There are subcategories for a number of these specialized genres.

David Mamet's *Oleanna* clearly fits into the genre of modern tragedy. In contrast to the classical tragedies, modern tragedies frequently focus on everyday people and the challenges they face. As a result, they are more realistic than traditional tragedies. Problems in the individuals, the society, and the legal system all contribute to the conflict that occurs in modern tragedies. The concepts of fate and divine power do not play a significant part in modern tragedies.

Oleanna belongs to the modern tragedy genre since it portrays the story of two ordinary individuals, a university professor and one of his female students, who are dealing with their own problems. Carol encounters her own issues as a university student at the start of the drama. Despite her best efforts to listen, take notes, and even purchase her professor's books, she is unable to follow her professor's lecture. Because of that, she feels insecure and unintelligent. As the story progresses, John, the professor, is also confronted with his own issues as a result of his behavior toward Carol. Carol accuses him of sexual misconduct, which might damage his reputation as a professor, deprive him of tenure and a salary raise, and cause John to lose his new home for his family. Therefore, because modern tragedies are produced by flaws in the individuals, society, as well as the law, *Oleanna* is far more relevant and realistic than traditional tragedies, thus the drama can be categorized as a modern tragedy drama.

B. David Mamet's Worldview about Power Manipulation Reflected in *Oleanna*

Oleanna is the name given to a settlement that was established in 1852 in the Allegheny mountains in Pennsylvania by Norwegian violinist Ole Bull. David Mamet gives *Oleanna* its title to refer to this settlement. Because the land was unfit for agriculture, the settlement failed after a year despite the fact that he had idealistic objectives and received a lot of publicity in Norway. The project's high-profile failure was the inspiration for the creation of a Norwegian folk song that satirized the utopian dream of the project. Pete Seeger is the one who is largely

responsible for the song's popularity in the English language under the title *Oleanna*.

Perhaps David Mamet writes this drama with the name *Oleanna* in mind since the drama portrays the arrogance and ignorance of the members of educational institutions in assuming that they have established a utopia of learning in their academic institution with their privileges and their own idealistic objectives, but instead it proves to be easily destroyed by the intrusion from the real world. Therefore, one may find a reflection of David Mamet's worldview on power manipulation in *Oleanna* through the lens of the subject of education. In addition to this, the subject of political correctness is also prominently displayed, which is not surprising considering that *Oleanna* was written at the height of the political correctness movement.

1. Education

Oleanna is a drama that takes place in an academic institution. David Mamet wisely selects the university setting to study the power that exists in the environment of higher education in modern America. Power manipulation in the topic of education is based on the belief that there is a great deal of power to manipulate others in the environment of higher education due to the close relationship between power and knowledge, as power is always realized through knowledge and knowledge always has an influence through power. Consequently, those who have a thorough comprehension of the particular subject have authority over those who do not, and they are able to determine what constitutes the right and wrong. In this case, a teacher can show their power to manipulate by utilizing

their expertise. A teacher can also employ their authority to produce teachings, however one cannot be certain of the rightness or wrongness of the teachings if the teacher has a great deal of influence over them. Students, on the other hand, also have the potential to acquire power if they are able to construct information that can support their assertions of authority.

Starting from the beginning of the story, John as one of the characters in *Oleanna* frequently portrays expressions of power manipulation in the context of education. It is clear evidence that John shows his superiority and power to Carol using academic language that makes her feel unintelligent. It is obvious from an exchange of words between John and Carol that John speaks in a complicated language and can effortlessly transition from one subject to the next. The knowledge that John is exceptionally fluent in his utterances and has a large vocabulary boosts his confidence and provides him more authority over her. Carol, on the other hand, uses short, basic, and repeated sentences. Carol feels even more powerless in the face of John's language as a result of this. Carol also has the impression that John's language is intended to alienate and exclude outsiders like herself, whether purposefully or unconsciously.

JOHN: Let's take the mysticism out of it, shall we? Carol? (Pause) Don't you think? I'll tell you: when you have some "thing." Which must be broached.

(Pause) Don't you think...? (Pause)

CAROL: ...don't I think...?

JOHN: Mmm?

CAROL: ...did I...?

JOHN: ...what?

CAROL: Did ... did I ... did I say something wr... (Mamet, 1992, p. 2)

As a result of the sense of privilege that comes with being a member of an academic institution, John has made it a habit of cutting Carol off and ignoring

her numerous repeated requests to listen to her. John also makes use of the authority that comes with this position in order to appropriate Carol's use of language. To intentionally distance himself from her and establish the power dynamics that exist between them, he makes use of highly difficult academic terminologies that Carol doesn't fully understand.

CAROL: No, no, no. I'm doing what I'm told. It's difficult for me. It's difficult...

JOHN: ...but...

CAROL: I don't ... lots of the language...

JOHN: ...please...

CAROL: The language, the "things" that you say... (Mamet, 1992, p. 5)

John, who has a stable career as a university professor and is on the point of becoming tenured at his institution, wields undeniable power at his institution. Using his position and knowledge, he manipulates the perception of his situation by openly criticizing higher education in front of his unprivileged student Carol, despite the fact that he is deemed privileged and set for life due to his education.

JOHN: If I fail all the time, it must be that I think of myself as a failure. If I do not want to think of myself as a failure, perhaps I should begin by succeeding now and again. Look. The tests, you see, which you encounter, in school, in college, in life, were designed, in the most part, for idiots. By idiots. There is no need to fail at them. They are not a test of your worth. They are a test of your ability to retain and spout back misinformation. Of course you fail them. They're nonsense. And I...

CAROL: ...no...

JOHN: Yes. They're garbage. They're a joke. Look at me. Look at me. The Tenure Committee. The Tenure Committee. Come to judge me. The Bad Tenure Committee. (Mamet, 1992, p. 17)

From the statements above, he claims that he had a difficult time in school and that he considers himself to be a failure. In addition to this, he thinks that traditional education is flawed since the tests that are given in school, in college, and in life were designed for idiots by idiots. He even thinks that education has become arbitrary and essentially meaningless to him. Not only that, He also spoke

negatively about the tenure committee that was responsible for awarding him a tenure position.

His remarks about education eventually irritates Carol. She explains how hurt she is by his statements, considering how hard she has worked to get university entrance. She, along with many other students, has fought hard against societal biases and economic difficulties in order to better themselves and secure a successful future. It is too different from John, who, despite his participation in institutional systems that have granted him power and support, nonetheless looks down on and criticizes the educational system.

CAROL: You write that education is just hazing. (Pause) But we worked to get to this school. (Pause) And some of us. (Pause) Overcame prejudices. Economic, sexual, you cannot begin to imagine. And endured humiliations I pray that you and those you love never will encounter. (Pause) To gain admittance here. To pursue that same dream of security you pursue. We, who, who are, at any moment, in danger of being deprived of it. By... (Mamet, 1992, p. 48)

John, on the other hand, is self-aware enough to realize that the power he wields as a professor causes suffering for his students, but he keeps determined to find a solution to this issue within the context of education itself. Through the use of his uncontested power, he is successfully manipulating the educational system in order to force his belief on the course that he is teaching. He writes books and delivers lectures on the concerns faced in higher education, but this just serves to escalate the problem by making it more difficult for students to disagree with his ideas.

*CAROL: (Of notes) Here it is: you wrote of hazing.
JOHN: ...that's correct. Now: I said "hazing." It means ritualized annoyance. We shove this book at you, we say read it. Now, you say you've read it? I think that you're lying. I'll grill you, and when I find you've lied, you'll be disgraced,*

and your life will be ruined. It's a sick game. Why do we do it? Does it educate? In no sense. Well, then, what is higher education? It is something-other-than-useful. (Mamet, 1992, p. 21)

John also uses his full authority as a professor to manipulate educational rules by providing Carol the option to achieve an A for the semester despite the fact that she is halfway through the semester and despite the poor grades she has received thus far. He tells her that she must attend private lessons with him and that the two of them can break the regulations and avoid the regular structure of a university course with ease.

CAROL: But we can't start over.

JOHN: I say we can. (Pause) I say we can.

CAROL: But I don't believe it.

JOHN: Yes, I know that. But it's true. What is The Class but you and me? (Pause)

CAROL: There are rules.

JOHN: Well. We'll break them.

CAROL: How can we?

JOHN: We won't tell anybody.

CAROL: Is that all right?

JOHN: I say that it's fine. (Mamet, 1992, p. 19)

John breaks academic boundaries and even admits to Carol that he likes her. Not only that, but he also puts his hand over Carol's shoulder, supposedly to comfort her. The drama by David Mamet gives the impression that the underlying reason behind John's desire to break the rules is his need to demonstrate, both to himself and to Carol, that the procedures followed by the university are flawed and unimportant.

One can gain insight into David Mamet's worldview regarding power manipulation in the context of education by examining the character of John. Mamet went to a secondary school that was progressive and nontraditional throughout his own education. He then enrolled in a college that offered a low-

residency program and eventually became a professor at the same college from which he had graduated. It's possible that Mamet has an outlook on education that is similar to John's, given that John considers the American university system to be unsuccessful. He considers it a failure because of how easy it is to manipulate the system in the educational environment.

2. Political Correctness

Because *Oleanna* was written during the height of the political correctness movement, it features significantly in the drama. Political correctness is a movement that has a long history with language. Its goal is to create the least amount of harm possible, especially when portraying groups affiliated with gender, culture, sexuality, and race. This drama was written with a strong emphasis on gender and sexuality, with the goal of provoking feminist criticism. However, through Carol's character, political correctness in the drama portrays feminism in a negative light. Her ideas and struggle are portrayed in such an unflattering way, with her being depicted as a cunning and manipulative woman. Carol is shown as a radical feminist who, despite making outrageous claims, manages to manipulate society to believe her.

Oleanna appears to be written by David Mamet in response to Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. *Oleanna* becomes a portrayal of a woman who gains power by manipulating society through sexual harassment allegations, much to the real-life occurrence. Those women, in David Mamet's opinion, appear to be attempting to prevent men from gaining more personal or political power and influence. He portrays real-life

individuals, Thomas and Hill, through the characters of John and Carol. In his play *Oleanna*, David Mamet makes an argument that the rise of political correctness in American society has encouraged women to exploit their own vulnerabilities, as well as the fact that they are women, in order to exact revenge on powerful men for no other reason than to get what they want. Although debatable, power manipulation between John and his student Carol clearly demonstrates this argument.

The inability of John and Carol to communicate with one another leads to the development of political correctness in *Oleanna*. At the beginning of the drama, one of the female students, Carol, approaches her male professor John and asks him for guidance to understand a subject that he teaches her. This action is often a common practice between a professor and student in the educational system.

CAROL: I did what you told me. I did, I did everything that, I read your book, you told me to buy your book and read it. Everything you say I... (She gestures to her notebook.) (The phone rings.) I do. ...Ev...

JOHN: ...look:

CAROL: ...everything I'm told... (Mamet, 1992, p. 7)

CAROL: I read your book. I read it. I don't under...

JOHN: ...you don't understand it.

CAROL: No.

JOHN: Well, perhaps it's not well written...

CAROL (simultaneously with "written"): No. No. No. I want to understand it. (Mamet, 1992, p. 8)

During their meeting, John tells Carol that he likes her and puts his hand on her shoulder. He also offers Carol the opportunity to earn an A for the term by attending private lessons with him in his office.

(He reads.) "He said he 'liked' me. That he 'liked being with me.' He'd let me write my examination paper over, if I could come back oftener to see him in his office." (Mamet, 1992, p. 31)

This is done in an effort to comfort John's insecure student Carol, who is having trouble keeping up with her academic pursuits. Although John's intentions are harmless, due to the lack of understanding between them, she misunderstands what John is trying to do and interprets it as a sexual advance, which lends support to the argument that the issue of political correctness exists in the drama.

CAROL: My charges are not trivial. You see that in the haste, I think, with which they were accepted. A joke you have told, with a sexist tinge. The language you use, a verbal or physical caress, yes, yes, I know, you say that it is meaningless. I understand. I differ from you. To lay a hand on someone's shoulder. (Mamet, 1992, p. 45)

As the story progresses, Carol becomes more and more irritated by John's arrogance with the demonstrations of power and wealth as he is her university professor who is on the brink of getting tenure, a salary raise, and also a new house for his family. In addition to those privileges, John appears ungrateful in Carol's eyes because, despite having been involved in the institutional mechanisms that have granted him power and support, he continues to criticize the educational system.

CAROL: Then why do you question, for one moment, the committee's decision refusing your tenure? Why do you question your suspension? You believe in what you call freedom of thought. Then, fine. You believe in freedom-of-thought and a home, and, and prerogatives for your kid, and tenure. And I'm going to tell you. You believe not in "freedom of thought," but in an elitist, in, in a protected hierarchy which rewards you. And for whom you are the clown. And you mock and exploit the system which pays your rent. You're wrong. I'm not wrong. You're wrong. You think that I'm full of hatred. I know what you think I am. (Mamet, 1992, p. 43)

This causes a disagreement between them, and through their misunderstandings, a power manipulation between them emerges. Carol resolves to flip the situation around by reporting John for sexual harassment, putting him at risk of losing everything he possesses.

CAROL: The issue here is not what I "feel." It is not my "feelings," but the feelings of women. And men. Your superiors, who've been "polled," do you see? To whom evidence has been presented, who have ruled, do you see? Who have weighed the testimony and the evidence, and have ruled, do you see? That you are negligent. That you are guilty, that you are found wanting, and in error; and are not, for the reasons so-told, to be given tenure. That you are to be disciplined. For facts. For facts. Not "alleged," what is the word? But proved. Do you see? By your own actions. (Mamet, 1992, p. 41)

In the drama, Carol's character frequently portrays expressions of power manipulation in the context of political correctness. Carol's idea of what constitutes politically correct behavior is concerned with ensuring the equality of women and individuals who are economically disempowered. She considers the way John treated her to be harassment, and she believes that it has made her feel even less welcomed in the already hostile atmosphere of the university as a result of John's actions. Carol believes that by accusing John of sexual harassment, she is standing up to egotistical and entitled males like John. John, who is unable to see how his words and actions could have been harmful to Carol, is convinced that her accusations are unjustified and only intended to punish him. In a complex way, she uses her own powerlessness as a woman to gain power. In the beginning of the story, Carol is portrayed as an insecure university student who does not even comprehend John's lecture. She even claims to be unfamiliar with the definitions of a number of seemingly simple phrases.

However, as the plot develops, Carol's language becomes refined and even threatening to John. She strategically provokes John with her harsh criticism of him. She even attempts to control John's speech, suggesting in a sarcastic manner that he shouldn't call his wife Grace "baby."

CAROL: ...your wife...?

JOHN: ...who it is is no concern of yours. Get out. (To phone:) No, no, it's going to be all right. I. I can't talk now, Baby. (To CAROL:) Get out of here.

CAROL: I'm going.

JOHN: Good.

CAROL (exiting): ...and don't call your wife "baby." (Mamet, 1992, p. 55)

At this point, she manipulates John into finally losing his temper and has him severely beat her, completing his transition into the violent, dangerous, and unstable man Carol had always wanted to portray him as.

JOHN: What?

CAROL: Don't call your wife baby. You heard what I said.

(CAROL starts to leave the room. JOHN grabs her and begins to beat her.)

JOHN: You vicious little bitch. You think you can come in here with your political correctness and destroy my life?

(He knocks her to the floor.)

After how I treated you...? You should be ... Rape you ...? Are you kidding me...?

(He picks up a chair, raises it above his head, and advances on her.)

I wouldn't touch you with a ten-foot pole. You little cunt... (Mamet, 1992, p. 56)

Carol also manipulates the law using her sexual harassment accusation to get what she and her group want. Carol states that she and her group will drop their sexual harassment complaint if John agrees to prohibit certain books from the curriculum that they find inappropriate, including numerous books written by John.

CAROL: I think that...

JOHN: LOOK. I'm reading your demands. All right?! (He reads) (Pause) You want to ban my book?

CAROL: We do not...

JOHN (Of list): It says here...

CAROL: ...We want it removed from inclusion as a representative example of the university. (Mamet, 1992, p. 52)

This following statement also demonstrates the author's worldview that Carol, with the assistance of her group, is a radical feminist group that uses Carol's gender as a weapon to manipulate the law. The feminist movement, which started out as a movement about women's empowerment and equal rights, has been

tainted in the drama because Mamet portrays Carol as a radical, brainwashed, and extreme feminist who can make baseless and false accusations based on an exaggerated reaction to John's comforting gesture.

CAROL: You tried to rape me. (Pause) According to the law. (Pause)

JOHN: ...what...?

CAROL: You tried to rape me. I was leaving this office, you "pressed" yourself into me. You "pressed" your body into me.

JOHN: ...I...

CAROL: My Group has told your lawyer that we may pursue criminal charges.

JOHN: ...no...

CAROL: ...under the statute. I am told. It was battery.

JOHN: ...no...

CAROL: Yes. And attempted rape. That's right. (Pause) (Mamet, 1992, p. 54)

From the character Carol, one can see the world view of David Mamet in regards to power manipulation in the topic of political correctness. David Mamet portrays Carol as a resentful woman who decides to use his power by manipulating the beliefs that John is actually sexually harassing her just because she disagrees with him and what he stands for. From the start of the story, John as the character is not particularly violent or dangerous. Even though his intentions are unclear, it seems that John actually has good intentions but is not wise enough to stop himself from behaving the way he behaves. The course of actions from John, who is nice enough to offer Carol study sessions and comfort her by putting a hand on Carol's shoulder, is a great reasons for Carol to manipulate his intentions by changing the notion of it and finally accuse him of sexual assault.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of a study that was conducted to describe the worldview that David Mamet displays in his drama *Oleanna* with regard to the subject matter of power manipulation. In this chapter, the chapter is separated into two main sections, the first of which is the conclusion of this research, and the second of which is a suggestion toward the future analysis of David Mamet's *Oleanna*.

A. Conclusion

Based on the previous chapter, the drama contains a number of conclusions regarding the objectives of the study. Through structural elements of the drama, the researcher illustrates how David Mamet's *Oleanna* portrays power manipulation. The researcher employs six significant literary elements to describe the author's worldview.

The first literary element is the theme. Through the analysis, it is obvious that the central theme of *Oleanna* is power. The second literary element is character. *Oleanna* is a two-person drama, therefore there are only two primary characters. John, one of *Oleanna*'s two primary characters, is both a university professor and an author, frequently producing his own textbooks for his university courses. Analyzing his characterization is one of the important aspects of understanding David Mamet's worldview toward power manipulation reflected in *Oleanna*. John is depicted as a self-centered and authoritative individual, as well as someone who

is blind to his privilege but uses his power to manipulate the educational system because of his uncontested power as professor. Carol, on the other hand, is one of John's female students. She is portrayed as a powerless woman who is insecure because of her current situation. However, she gradually evolves into an assertive and vindictive individual who gains power using her own powerlessness by accusing John of sexual misconduct.

The following literary element is setting. Due to the fact that *Oleanna* is a drama, it is easy to pinpoint the exact location at which the events of the story take place, which is the office of a professor at an academic institution. This drama's setting reflects the worldview of the author, David Mamet, who was inspired to write it by the sexual harassment allegations against Clarence Thomas, although it is written in different settings. In *Oleanna*, the plot also heavily depicts the author's worldview since as the reader, one can closely observe the representations of power manipulation reflected in every dialogue in the drama. Not only that, one can also indicate the author's worldview through tone since tone can be used to indicate a writer's attitude toward the particular subject matter which is power manipulation. Because David Mamet wants these issues to be taken seriously, he decides to utilize a serious and dramatic tone in the drama through the language that he chooses to use. *Oleanna* belongs to the modern tragedy genre since it portrays the story of two ordinary individuals, a university professor and one of his female students, who are dealing with their own problems. Through those literary elements, the author shows his stance toward power manipulation reflected in the drama.

In addition, the researcher classifies and explains David Mamet's worldview about power manipulation reflected in *Oleanna* into two categories. The first category is education. Due to the close relationship between power and knowledge, it is believed that there is a significant degree of power to manipulate people in the environment of higher education, as power is always realized through knowledge and knowledge is always deemed persuasive through power. Given that John believes that the American university system is unsuccessful, it is possible that Mamet shares John's perspective on education. David Mamet's educational background, including attending a progressive secondary school and a low-residency college where he later taught, may have shaped his critical outlook on the American university system. Like the character John in *Oleanna*, Mamet might view the system as a failure due to how easy it is to manipulate the system in the educational environment.

The second category is political correctness. Due to the fact that *Oleanna* was written at the height of the political correctness movement, it plays an important role in the drama. This drama was composed with a heavy focus on gender and sexuality in order to provoke feminist criticism. The play, which appears to be a response to Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, critiques the political correctness movement by portraying it negatively through the character of Carol. Carol is portrayed as a radical feminist who manipulates society to believe her sexual assault allegation against her professor John. Through this portrayal, Mamet expresses his concern about how political correctness can be weaponized, showing Carol as someone

who twists John's well-meaning actions into a narrative of harassment to serve her own agenda.

B. Suggestion

It is suggested by the researcher that future researchers who want to conduct the research with the same literary work or issue have a more comprehensive analysis of the drama. Because *Oleanna* has a large number of issues that can still be researched more and discussed in greater depth, the prospective researcher should hopefully be able to examine *Oleanna* from a different point of view. It is necessary to have knowledge not only of the literary work that is being studied, which is *Oleanna*, but also of the notion of power manipulation and the theory of genetic structuralism. The idea that power may be manipulated can be traced back to Michel Foucault's theory of power, which is an extremely useful resource for serving as a guide when examining literary works that are related to power.

Despite the fact that the researcher has made an effort to appropriately examine every aspect in order to answer the objectives of the study, it is undeniable that this research still has a great deal of flaws. As a result of this, the researcher is anticipating that there will be the following researchers who will solve the shortcomings of this study. In addition, the researcher is open to receiving criticism and ideas as a means of improving the level of analysis that will be conducted for the upcoming project and research.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



Savira Larasati, born in Malang on April 14, 1997, has consistently demonstrated a deep interest in English and content creation, guiding both academic and professional paths. She completed her secondary education at MAN Malang 1, where she established a strong foundation in language and literature. Savira further honed her skills at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, majoring in English Literature. This academic journey sharpened her analytical and critical thinking abilities, particularly in literary analysis and writing. With a comprehensive understanding of language, culture, and communication, Savira is well-equipped to contribute effectively to professional environments that prioritize creativity and language proficiency.