



Bachelor Thesis

A textual analysis of traditional representations of women in *The Queen's Gambit*



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Abstract

The following research was conducted to answer its central question: In how far does the representation of the main protagonist in the TV miniseries *The Queen's Gambit* (Netflix, 2020) break with traditional representations of women in audiovisual media? The process of answering the research's main question entailed a textual examination of chosen materials gathered for investigation. The author chose four separate scenes from series' four different episodes. The choice selection of four scenes relied on their connection to each other regarding the show's repeating themes and problematics linked to the concepts related to traditional representations of women in audiovisual media (representation, traditional gender representations, and gender ideals, traditional representations of women in audiovisual media). Chosen scenes were also selected to point out the main protagonist's character development and to help analyze how she deals with and views issues concerning the impact that her gender has on her profession throughout different stages in her life and career in the series. The scenes were analyzed using a textual analysis method based on John Fiske's theory regarding cultural codes and their categorization to levels in television. The analysis's results were based upon further contextualization of the author's detailed analysis of scenes' mise-en-scene elements and dialogues, as per Fiske's television codes theory. Conducting textual research of *The Queen's Gambit's* four scenes showed that the portrayal of a series' protagonist as a highly independent, intelligent, and driven woman goes against traditional representations of gender ideals and women in audiovisual media on a large scale. The results have also shown that contemporary audiovisual media needs more series with unrestrained female protagonists such as Beth Harmon from *The Queen's Gambit* to point out and separate from biased stereotypical representations that are influenced and consolidated by oppressive systems such as patriarchy. The research aims to contribute to the current academic debate on traditional representations of females in audiovisual media through these results.

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1. Introduction

The second feminist wave introduced new, revolutionary times and opportunities for women's rights and strive towards equality; since the 1960s, women slowly began to be empowered enough to take up roles previously reserved exclusively for men. The women's rights movement had a significant influence on the world of audiovisual media, too. Women, for example, started to get more prominent roles as leading actresses and filmmakers.¹ However, despite their growing recognition and success in various "male-dominated" fields and more substantial participation in audiovisual media, issues such as misogyny, women's marginalization, and generally being dominated by men tend to be still present in contemporary popular culture.² This is particularly recognizable regarding depictions of women's intellectuality: smart women remain scarce. Next to a low number of smart women in today's popular culture, this becomes clear when having a look at various examples showing how the portrayal of highly intelligent women is still distorted and rarely the center point of modern television or film narratives: when an actress plays the role of the highly skilled intellectual, she is usually either portrayed as socially awkward (female scientists in *The Big Bang Theory*), is presented as mentally ill (Lisbeth Salander from *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*), is fixated on men (Mindy from *The Mindy Project*), is less attractive, or when she is both intelligent and attractive, is less noteworthy than her male love interest (Dr. Jane Foster from *Thor*).³ The biased depiction of women's intellectual abilities in audiovisual media is, therefore, quite conspicuous. According to scholars such as Amanda Stone, the "constant masculinization of a (scientific) field within popular culture reflects a widespread social consciousness."⁴ Stone additionally argues that the process of masculinizing scientific fields works both ways and has further consequences in real life: she claims that how highly intelligent women have been portrayed within the history of Western television reflects how gendered those fields have become.⁵ As the representation of intelligent women in

¹ Barbican Center, "Activists & Artists: Second Wave Feminist Filmmakers", accessed April 5, 2021.

² Laura Mattoon D'Amore, *Smart chicks on screen: Representing women's intellect in film and television* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 4.

³ Mattoon D'Amore, *Smart Chicks on screen*, 4-6.

⁴ Amanda Stone, "Brains, Beauty, and Feminist Television" in *Smart chicks on screen: Representing women's intellect in film and television*, ed. D'Amore Mattoon (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), chapter 12, 6.

⁵ Amanda Stone, "Brains, Beauty, and Feminist Television", chapter 12, 5-6.

audiovisual media is biased for female protagonists due to the man-dominated power structures within the real-life society, there thus is an ongoing relevance for conducting a critical analysis of the representation of women's portrayal in audiovisual media.

As described in the previous paragraph, biased portrayals of women are likely to create harmful stereotypes regarding women's intellectual potentials and capabilities. This means that representing women or other oppressed minority groups can perpetuate prejudicated societal perceptions and expectations towards a group. Richard Dyer claims that media has a significant influence on both representations and people's perception of others.⁶ However, there are known, successful, contemporary audiovisual narratives that include highly intelligent female protagonists that attempt to break with the negative and demeaning portrayals of women by representing them in more realistic ways (for example, Carrie from *Carrie Pilby* or Shirley from *Shirley*). Furthermore, a recently produced example that tries to live up to such positive claims and depictions of women in audiovisual media is the Netflix TV mini-series, *The Queen's Gambit* (from here on, referred to as *TQG*).

TQG is a 2020 American TV mini-series based on Walter Tevis's 1983 novel of the same name, directed and created by Scott Frank and Allan Scott⁷. The series' plotline is found in the 1950s and 60s in the USA and tells the story of Elizabeth "Beth" Harmon (Anya Taylor-Joy), a young, orphaned girl who reveals superior skills towards the game of chess. When young Beth (Isla Johnston) arrives at a Kentucky orphanage in the late 1950s, she discovers an uncanny talent for chess while becoming addicted to the tranquilizers prescribed for the children. Haunted by her inner demons and painful past and fueled by a dangerous mixture of drugs spiked with her obsessions, she transforms into a uniquely gifted outsider who decides to conquer the conservative and male-dominated world of professional chess. Even though in the series Beth is depicted as a white, young, attractive woman, her character's portrayal challenges common representations of female intellectuals and traditional gender roles in audiovisual media because of the strong individuality of her personality; as a leading female protagonist, she embraces herself without being bothered about what people around her have to say about anything she does, throughout entire show's plot. Thus, Beth's portrayal in *TQG* as an independent female

⁶ Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representation* (Hove: Psychology Press, 2002), 2.

⁷ NETFLIX, "Nseries The Queen's Gambit." Accessed April 5, 2021. <https://www.netflix.com/nl-en/title/80234304>

genius – previously a role almost exclusively reserved for males – can be described as nearly radical. Continuously, how Beth is presented in the show gives alternative perspectives on traditional representations of women and stereotypes built around intelligent females' depiction in audiovisual media, proving that gender is neither an advantage nor an obstacle to achieving success. Because of the following reasons, *TQG* makes an interesting and appropriate case study to analyze how traditional representations of women are challenged within the show. The main question that this thesis aims to answer hence is: in how far does the representation of the main protagonist in the TV miniseries *The Queen's Gambit* (Netflix, 2020) break with the traditional representation of women in audiovisual media? The three different sub-questions should help unpack the question by focusing on:

- How is Beth visually distinguished from other male chess players?
- How is gender addressed in the dialog in the series?
- What are Beth's views on gender ideals?

2. Theoretical Framework

To correctly answer the question of how "in how far does the representation of the main protagonist in the TV miniseries *The Queen's Gambit* (Netflix, 2020) break with traditional representations of women in audiovisual media?", the following concepts need to be established in this section: representation, traditional gender ideals, and traditional representation of women in audiovisual media ('good' women versus 'bad' woman, negatively opposite characteristics to those of men's).

2.1 Representation

According to one of the key authors on this subject, Stuart Hall, representation has to do with connecting meaning and language culture.⁸ The author argues that "representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people."⁹ In other words, representation is a crucial component in producing and exchanging the meaning of what one wants to communicate to another. Hall proposes an approach in which the concept of representation is closely connected with language, signs, and images.¹⁰ According to him, language, signs, and images are tools that humans use to communicate representation, including understanding a particulate object or phenomenon. Therefore, to represent something can be both "to describe or depict it, to call it up in mind by description or portrayal of imagination" and "to symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for," argues Hall.¹¹

Stuart Hall recognizes three approaches to representation: the reflective, the intentional, and the constructionist.¹² However, in his work, he mainly focuses on the constructionist approach, which, according to him, "had the most significant impact on cultural studies in recent years."¹³ The two most relevant variants to the constructionist approach are the semiotic approach shaped by Ferdinand de Saussure and the discursive

⁸ Stuart Hall, "The work of representation." *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (1997) 2, 1.

⁹ Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

¹⁰ Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

¹¹ Hall, "The work of representation", 2-3.

¹² Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

¹³ Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

approach as described by Michel Foucault.¹⁴ De Saussure focuses primarily on how something is represented. He focuses on the meaning of the sign and ideas, or concepts associated with it. He divides the concept of a sign to further elements such as signifier and signified, establishing the relationship between a sign and a receiver. On the other hand, Michel Foucault underlined the importance of representation, focusing on the concept of power relations embedded within the meaning of the concept.¹⁵ Hall explains both theories by highlighting that even though the language is directed to us as a tool used by society, as stated by de Saussure, some people are in a more privileged or powerful position to make their voices heard as according to Foucault's theory. Hall concludes by claiming that how society operates with language and making meaning affects its relations to representation and continuously indicates assigning a specific value.¹⁶ Additionally, he claims that meanings are man-made and that connections between concepts and complex ideas are constructed through language, culture, and representations.¹⁷ Hall points out that meaning-making and representations are not neutral, which can be observed in media, particularly when looking at traditional representations and stereotypes.¹⁸

The critical author regarding the theory behind stereotypical representations, Richard Dyer, argues that media too, as a cultural form, influence representations.¹⁹ Dyer argues that stereotypes and prejudice, as representation, can illustrate how society perceives certain social groups and thus create an idea of what a (minority) group is or should be like.²⁰ Media ethicist, Thomas Bivins, adds that stereotypes, as representational products, "present only a single cultural picture, and reinforce certain cultural expectations."²¹ Bivins' point overlaps with Dyer's, who explains that social groups are perceived in cultural representation, which simultaneously implies how they are treated in everyday life because of less powerful position they find themselves in.²²

¹⁴Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

¹⁵Hall, "The work of representation", 27-28.

¹⁶Hall, "The work of representation", 1.

¹⁷ Hall, "The work of representation", 4-6.

¹⁸ Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans, and Sean Nixon, ed., *Representation*, second edition (London: Sage, 2013), xvii-xxvi, 5-11.

¹⁹ Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representation* (Hove: Psychology Press, 2002), 2.

²⁰Dyer, *The Matter of Images*, 11-14.

²¹ Jane Marcellus, *What's the harm in advertising stereotypes? Advertising and Society: An Introduction* (Oxford: John & Wiley Publishing, 2013), 125.

²² Dyer, *The Matter of Images*, 1.

2.2 Traditional gender representations and gender ideals ²³

As indicated in the previous paragraph, representation, as a cultural form and transported via media products, is created from a position of power; because of that, any representation is never genuinely neutral, so one should always be critical about them. An excellent example of this phenomenon can refer to the representations regarding scientifically and socially established differences between sex and gender: As Dwight Brooks and Lisa Hebert underline, "while sex differences are rooted in biology, how we come to understand and perform gender is based on culture."²⁴ Although some scholars, such as Judith Butler, claim that gender is performative and thus should not define one's specific set of characteristic traits or behaviors (neither physiological nor physical), according to previous definitions regarding representation, gender remains a social construct that helps society understand, define and act upon its surrounding reality.²⁵

The information provided in the previous paragraph indicates that understanding gender through a social construct and as a man-made category has its consequences in society assigning specific attributes to it and thus defining, and further conditioning, societal (collective) truths around it. Continuously, this logically means that the concepts of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' correspondingly assigned to men and women are culture products. In her book *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir underlines that "not every female human being is necessarily a woman; she must take part in this mysterious and endangered reality called femininity."²⁶ Furthermore, De Beauvoir adds that biological and social sciences no longer define women according to their characteristics but rather consider these characteristics a reaction to a situation women find themselves in.²⁷ Since the definition of femininity is characterized by a culture resulting from women's position in society, it is crucial to specify what kind of position women do have in Western civilization.

In their book, *Media Messages. What Film, Television and Popular Music Teach Us About Race, Class, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*, Linda Holtzman and Leon Sharpe take a

²³ According to modern discourses about sexuality and gender, gender should not be classified as exclusively binary male/female; however, due to the limited scope of this research paper, the representational characteristics of the male and female gender will be used, in the following analysis.

²⁴ Dwight Brooks & Lisa Herbert, "Gender, Race and Media Representations" in *The SAGE Handbook of Gender and Communication*, ed. Bonnie J. Dow & Julia T. Wood (Chapell Hill: Sage Publications Inc, 2006), 297.

²⁵ ²⁵ Dwight Brooks & Herbert Lisa, "Gender, Race and Media Representations", 297-298. ; Judith Butler, *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity* (New York, London: Routledge, 2011), 33-35.

²⁶ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (New York: Vintage Publishing, 1949), 3.

²⁷ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 3-4.

deeper look at why and how males' and females' positions in the society are divided and represented in media and contemporary culture. They underline that "gender socialization is a universal experience," which means that through different processes of cultural impact and socialization, society and media provide cues and thus condition a community/society what it means to be a boy or a girl.²⁸ In Western societies, the traditional and most desirable perception of a male person connects with a concept of hegemonic masculinity, which, according to Rosmarie Buikema, Liedeke Plate, and Kathrin Thiele, can be best defined as "the socially and culturally dominant masculinity that, at that place and time, is the most associated with authority and power."²⁹ Hegemonic masculinity, as understood and portrayed by society and media, is also closely linked to the concept of heteronormativity, which plays a vital role in distinguishing both genders' representations: As Buikema, Plate and Thiele underline, "the idea of heterosexuality as the cultural norm results in the necessity of two complementary genders."³⁰ Continuously, this means that the hegemonic depictions of males in audiovisual media create the need for binary opposition of the portrayal of females. Additionally, as Buikema, Plate, and Thiele point out, "one form of femininity that stands highest in the pecking order is 'emphasized femininity,' which is all about complying with hegemonic masculinity."³¹ De Beauvoir complements authors' claim by declaring that because of these power relations, the society can be described as a male that defines women, simultaneously characterizing females as non-autonomous beings which are nothing more than what a man decided for them to be.³² She describes a man as 'the Subject' and a woman as 'The Other.'³³ De Beauvoir underlines that the self-established absolute position immediately sets up the opposite 'The Other.'³⁴ Thus, the "traditional" and desirable representation of men would entail depictions of men in a more dominant, powerful position than women. Conversely, the "traditional" representation of women or femininity involves opposite, submissive, and thus more negative depictions than those of

²⁸ Linda Holtzman & Leon Sharpe, *Media Messages. What Film, Television and Popular Music Teach Us About the Race, Class, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 66.

²⁹ Rosemarie Buikema, Liedeke Plate & Kathrin Thiele, *Doing Gender in Media, Art and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2018), 112-113.

³⁰ Buikema, Plate, Thiele, *Doing Gender*, 116.

³¹ Buikema, Plate, Thiele, *Doing Gender*, 116.

³² de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 5-6.

³³ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 6.

³⁴ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 6.

men (so, for example, if men are represented as physically strong, women will be depicted as weaker/requiring physical assistance, etc.).³⁵

2.3 Traditional representations of women in audiovisual media

As emphasized in the previous paragraph, because of the societal gender classification and power relations, women are traditionally defined and expected to be the binary opposite of more dominant/powerful and generally more positively attributed men. Because of that, throughout various works in audiovisual media, women have been undeniably underrepresented, portrayed as subordinate or less positive than men. As Mallory Young points out, different cultural works replicate similar schematics and women's depictions, enforcing the distinction, and thus creating a stereotype of the 'good' and the 'bad' woman.³⁶ Young describes the 'good' woman as "passive, voiceless and powerless" and hence worthy of praise, and the 'bad' woman as "vengeful, violent, promiscuous, disruptive" so requiring restraint.³⁷ Regarding the previously mentioned stance by de Beauvoir about that society is dominant (male), it becomes conspicuous that patriarchal system and culture characterized the representation of women in every possible way. It also means that no matter what a woman would do or be like (even if she should remain 'good'), she will most likely always become a subject of criticism or some sort of controversy, as otherwise, she could potentially challenge the dominant, patriarchal structures.

The traditional representations of women can be observed in their various depictions in audiovisual media, which Holtzman and Sharpe define as a "central source of gender socialization."³⁸ Holtzman and Sharpe explicitly focus on television as a tool of culture that shapes our understanding of gender, gender stereotypes, and gender roles since early childhood according to Hall's and Dyer's stances on relations between representations and power.³⁹ Referring to a variety of studies, Holtzman and Sharpe argue that, besides the distinction of the 'good' and 'bad' types, the traditional representations of women in audiovisual media tend to be generally confusing in opposition to the traditional depictions of males. As Holtzman and Sharpe noticed, the 'real' man's depictions tend to be almost

³⁵ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 5.

³⁶ Chapell & Young, "Introduction", 3-4.

³⁷ Chapell & Young, "Introduction", 3.

³⁸ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 92.

³⁹ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 94-97.

always straightforward, representing strength, toughness, demonstration of physical power, work, status, rational thinking, lack of more tender emotions, and being a breadwinner.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the media urges women to be "pliant, cute, sexually available, blond, thin, poreless, wrinkle-free and deferential to men. However, it is easy to forget that media also suggested women could be rebellious, tough, enterprising and shrewd."⁴¹

Holtzman and Sharpe claim that establishing and perpetuating gender ideology and stereotypical representations of both men and women helps not only to preserve the influence of the patriarchal system and power relations but also to sell and generate profits.⁴² What is more, they compare the traditional gender ideology in entertainment media to a hegemony, so the "socialization without using force," as they define it.⁴³ Holtzman and Sharpe point out the consequences of being amused, pacified, or enlightened by popular media by underlining that the visible medial messages "convey about what it means to be masculine or feminine, a real man or a real woman."⁴⁴ This means that by getting accustomed to the various representations of both genders in audiovisual media, we are getting conditioned towards what should be expected and right. Continuously, as indicated earlier, the natural consequence of this phenomenon is that women in real life are expected to be just like their traditional, stereotypical medial depictions: sweet, pretty, tender, in charge at home, sensitive, supportive, sexy, nurturing, patient, emotional, irrational, depended, helpless with a low-status job and in control at home.⁴⁵ However, analyzing the *TQG* TV miniseries as a case study suggests that not all females are depicted as less powerful, negative opposites to men, as some female protagonists in audiovisual media represent traits 'characteristic' for both genders through which they achieve success as defined by their own. Hence, the proposed case study with a female protagonist depicted just in such ways will likely add new perspectives onto existing literature and discourse regarding the ways of breaking with the traditional portrayals.

⁴⁰ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 98.

⁴¹ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 97-98.

⁴² Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 111.

⁴³ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 111.

⁴⁴ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 111.

⁴⁵ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

3. Methodology

3.1 Corpus Selection

To answer how the representation of the main protagonist of *The Queen's Gambit* breaks with traditional representations of women in audiovisual media, four scenes from four different episodes were chosen for closer analysis. All seven episodes of *TQG's* only season were simultaneously released on Netflix on the 23rd of October, 2020.⁴⁶ Netflix is the platform that enabled access to the research material. The combination of the chosen scenes has been selected to point out Beth's character development throughout the show and in what ways does it potentially affect audiences' reception of the main protagonist on ideological levels, according to the chosen methodology. The research's sub-questions have been divided over four selected scenes further in the analysis section to give a coherent view of the results.

With the pre-existing knowledge of the show, the scenes that have been chosen for analysis purpose are sequentially taken from the following episodes: episode one ("Openings"; 47:31-48:31), episode three ("Doubled Pawns"; 13:51-15:36), episode six ("Adjournment"; 20:41-21:34) and from episode seven ("End Game"; 28:20-30:39). The number of chosen scenes has been narrowed to four due to the limited scope of the research. The first scene from "Openings" was selected because of the introduction of the main character in her childhood, so when she discovers her superior skills towards the game of chess. More specifically, the scene depicts young Beth Harmon competing in her first chess tournament at a local high school: Beth plays simultaneous games against many male students from the high school's chess club. Even though the scene doesn't feature any meaningful dialogs, it is the portrayal of male students' negative emotions and mise-en-scene elements that make it interesting for analysis. The second scene was chosen from the episode "Doubled Pawns," teenaged Beth having her severe first interview with *Life* magazine. This scene is essential for the following research purposes mainly due to the dialog and behavior of both Beth and the female interviewer. During the interview, the journalist asks Beth suggestive questions regarding the connection between chess and

⁴⁶ NETFLIX, "Nseries The Queen's Gambit." Accessed April 5, 2021. <https://www.netflix.com/nl-en/title/80234304>

gender roles. The third chosen scene is from the mini-series sixth episode, "Adjournment," and depicts another interview from when the main protagonist is already an adult and has developed a very successful position in the professional competitive chess league. In the presence of male interviewers and other male chess competitors, Beth is again being asked suggestive, gender-biased questions regarding the influence of her gender on her chess career. The fourth scene is chosen from *TQG*'s final episode, "End Game." It portrays Beth playing her last, most important games against the world's best professional chess players (Laev, Borgov) in Moscow, Soviet Union. When the tournament begins, the game presenter starts talking about Beth's match, again underlining the unusualness of her gender regarding having superior chess skills. He continues by adding that it is additionally uncommon for women to play against men in competitive chess; he compares Beth with another professional Russian female player, Nona Gaprindashvili, by remarking how she was never allowed to compete professionally against men.

3.2 Analysis method

To conduct a critical analysis of *TQG*'s chosen scenes, the close reading analysis, described explicitly by John Fiske, has been selected. Since the author performed close reading of the portrayal of *TQG*'s main female protagonist, it makes sense for this research to use Fiske's theory regarding codes of television.

Fiske's approach of analyzing specific codes of television and their classification to levels (reality, representation, and ideology) allows recognizing the linking components between the audiovisual text and ideology. In the case of *TQG*, the ideological levels refer to the traditional representation of gender ideals and statements about breaking patriarchal ideologies presented in the series, as explained and described in the paper's previous chapter. As mentioned before, the specifically chosen codes of both the "reality" and "representation" levels produce ideological codes which, in turn, "work to organize the other codes into producing a congruent and coherent set of meanings that constitute the common sense of the society."⁴⁷ However, the 'common sense,' so the audiences' broader acceptance and understanding of audiovisual media's content, can be only produced when all three levels and their codes merge into a seemingly natural unity which, in turn, can be only

⁴⁷ John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 6.

deconstructed by conducting critical semiotic or cultural analysis.⁴⁸ Therefore, ultimately the analysis and findings of the meanings of chosen codes from the "reality" and "representation" levels from scenes from four *TQG*'s episodes can be used to make assumptions about the underlying ideology of the portrayal of the main protagonist in *TQG*. To recognize which codes in *TQG*'s chosen scenes ultimately come to represent the ideological level, each of the four scenes has been analyzed shot by shot. The shot/scene table has been attached as "Appendix 1" at the end of this paper. The table consists of the following categories: lists shot number, shot length, narrative actions, costume/hair/make-up, facial expressions and body language, framing, lightening, and color and dialog/music/sounds. The organization of the table in such a way is based on Fiske's categorization of television components as level one "reality" (costume/hair/make-up; facial expressions and body language categories in the table) and level two "representation" codes (framing, lightening, and color, dialog/music/sounds categories in the table).⁴⁹ The categories from both levels were explicitly chosen according to Fiske's diagram shown in "Figure 1".⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 4-6.

⁴⁹ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

⁵⁰ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

4. Analysis

The following analysis chapter of the thesis is subdivided into three different parts in accordance with the three sub-questions of this project:

- How is Beth visually distinguished from other male chess players?
- How is gender addressed in the dialog in the series?
- What are Beth's views on gender ideals?

Each part is titled conforming to the focus of the sub-question, namely visual portrayal of the main protagonist (4.1), dialogues about gender (4.2), and the protagonist's view on traditional gender ideals (4.3). Every part unpacks the findings of the close reading of the scene corpus laid out in the methodology around the done sub-question. The complete sequential analysis of the corpus can be found in Appendix 1, which the author will occasionally refer back to.

4.1 Visual Portrayal of the Main Protagonist

The difference in visual portrayal between Beth and her male opponents is evident in the chosen scene from the first episode of *TQG* ("The Openings") when young Beth attends her first chess tournament at the local high school. After the orphanage's janitor, Mr. Sheibel (Bill Camp), discovers her talent, he contacts the high-school staff so that Beth can prove her prodigy skills against students from the school's chess club. Beth arrives at the classroom where the tournament takes place before everyone else, waiting for the other children to come. At that very moment in this episode, Beth is eight years old, which tells the audience that she will be competing against students a few years older than her, according to the American school system.⁵¹ However, until then, it has not yet been specified in the episode that the members of the chess club that Beth is supposed to compete against consist entirely of male students.

⁵¹ Brycel Loo, "Education in the United States of America." Accessed May 28, 2021. <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/06/education-in-the-united-states-of-america>

When the boys come into the chess club classroom one by one, it becomes apparent from their reaction that they are not pleased to be competing with Beth; even though there is no meaningful dialogue confirming this observation, their actions suggest they are upset, as described in the scene analysis in Appendix 1.1.⁵² This is indicated by their body language and behavior in shots number 4, 6, 9, and 11: some of them throw their bags impatiently on the floor, some have their arms crossed on the chest, some are standing unnaturally straight trying to make themselves look taller, others are standing with their legs apart.⁵³ Each of the male students stops immediately after entering the room and noticing Beth, assembling a large formation as a group whilst silently staring at their younger, female opponent. As Fiske recognizes behavior and body language as codes of the level one “reality,” which itself are already culturally encoded, it becomes apparent that the students’ behavior is aimed to signal their negative thoughts and emotions at that very moment.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the camera switches from showing the boys coming to the classroom one by one, creating an ever-larger group, while Beth stands alone, calmly and curiously observing the situation. According to Fiske, elements such as editing and camerawork are included as codes from the level of “representation,” and they, in turn, are responsible for shaping representations of the characters on the screen.⁵⁵ In this scene, the camera switching back and forth from calm Beth to the ever-growing gathering of upset teenage boys helps with visualizing the tension between Beth and male students by emphasizing the different characters’ visible emotions.

The way the boys react, and the fact that Beth keeps on staying still, looking straight back at them and thus showing no signs of intimidation or fear, suggests that they feel upset and threatened by her. They want to show their dominant position by standing close to each other in response to those feelings. Beth is perceived as a potential threat due to both her gender and much younger age. Boys’ feelings of intimidation come from Beth challenging their self-proclaimed, dominant position as brilliant, young male chess players; after all, if Beth wins the tournament, she will prove that neither gender nor age matter for one to develop superior skills in chess. As Holtzman and Sharpe point out, according to traditional gender ideology, girls and women are not supposed to be smart, but caring and dependent on men. The fact that the high-school teacher asks eight-year-old Beth to play simultaneous

⁵² See the Table in Appendix 1.1: shots number 4, 6, 9 & 11.

⁵³ See the table in Appendix 1.1: shots number 4, 6, 9 & 11.

⁵⁴ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

⁵⁵ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

games against male students that are older than her all by herself might induce a feeling of inferiority in the boys, and not vice versa, which in turn goes against women's conventional representations and traditional gender ideals.⁵⁶

4.2 Dialogues About Gender

Gender remains a central theme in the series on the level of dialogue. In *Television Culture*, Fiske emphasized that he primarily assigned the "dialogue" to representational level, so as technical code, and "speech" to the social, reality level. However, the author underlines that the dialogue can also be assigned to the social level, as "it is frequently scripted for us by the interactional conventions of our culture."⁵⁷ This means that audience understands and makes sense of what is happening in the television show as a result of a dialogue corresponding to culturally encoded and conventionally accepted representations and schematics.⁵⁸ An example of that can be observed in *TQG*'s third episode ("Doubled Pawns") when teenaged Beth is having her first interview for a magazine. In this scene, Beth is posing for pictures taken by a male photographer and being asked questions by a female reporter at the same time. The action takes place in Beth's bedroom. The female reporter starts the interview by asking Beth how she feels about being a girl among male chess players.⁵⁹ Even though Beth replies that she does not mind it, the interviewer keeps on basing other questions on Beth's gender instead of asking her questions related to her chess career development.⁶⁰ Based on the non-verbal communication of the female reporter (level one, representational codes), it is noticeable that the woman is somewhat uncomfortable with the situation of having to interview a young girl who is successful in a men-dominated field. The woman's body language and behavior (nervously smoking cigarettes, avoiding or over-doing eye contact, tense smiles, and chuckles) suggest she finds herself in an unfamiliar situation and tries to understand it from her own, under-represented perspective so by asking Beth gender-biased questions.⁶¹ By the end of the interview, the reporter refers to Beth being an orphan by making a comparison of chess pieces (king and queen) to her father

⁵⁶ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

⁵⁷ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 4-6.

⁵⁸ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 4-6.

⁵⁹ See the table in Appendix 1.2: shot number 3.

⁶⁰ See the table in Appendix 1.2: shots number 4-7, 9.

⁶¹ See the table in the Appendix 1.2: shots number 9, 11, 13, 15.

and mother. Knowing well that Beth grew up in an orphanage, the female interviewer thereby suggests that the source of Beth's talent is based on the desperation and grief regarding her missing family and lack of parental figure to rely on. This means that the reporter suggests that Beth is unable to think for herself without a person in a background (a parental role model) who would give her support and guide her. Referring to Holtzman's table of popular stereotypical representations of women in audiovisual media, the reporter from *TQG's* episode is perpetuating a common belief about women requiring constant support and guidance, as they are commonly believed to be less skilled/smart/talented than men are believed to be.⁶² The reporter's strong emphasis on underlining how unusual it is for a female to be successful or even allowed to play and compete with men as equals indicates how greatly conventional stereotypes about gender roles, gender ideals, and general acceptance of patriarchy are present and preserved in Western popular culture, especially in the 1960s when the narrative takes place.⁶³

Another example referring to how gender is explicitly addressed in dialogues in *TQG* can be found in the scene from the last episode ("End Game"). The chosen scene depicts adult Beth playing chess in the most important tournament of her chess career in Russia, the Soviet Union. During her first game with a player called Laev, the commentator underlines how other participants did not think of her as a worthy opponent saying that "she is not at all an important player by their standards."⁶⁴ Even though the commentator does not directly refer to Beth's gender in this sentence, it is conspicuous that his approach is gender-biased; in earlier moments of the episode, Beth proves herself to be the best chess player in the United States who has been invited to Moscow to play among other world champions. It was also underlined that participating in this tournament means a great honor as only the best players are granted that opportunity. This already means that anyone participating in the contest possesses a high enough skill set to be treated thoughtfully and respectfully. Hence, the commentator's statement about Beth being disregarded as a worthy opponent by other players denotes his and Beth's opponents' prejudiced and perhaps even xenophobic attitude (regarding that the series' plot was set in 1960s) in regards to her being an American woman who happens to be equally successful in the man-dominated field. This

⁶² Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

⁶³ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

⁶⁴ See the table in Appendix 1.4: shot number 15.

is indirectly confirmed by the commentator himself a moment later when he adds that “the only unusual thing about her, really, is her sex. And even that’s not unique in Russia. There’s Nona Gaprindashvili, but she’s the female world champion that has never faced men”.⁶⁵ The commentator’s statements and spoken comparisons between Beth and Nona Gaprindashvili refer to de Beauvoir’s claim about men having power over defining what women can or cannot be.⁶⁶ By choosing to ignore Beth’s position as the USA’s best champion, her male opponents act upon their own perception of believing that they are right because of their dominant position as males. This also means that no matter how good Beth proves herself to be, her position will always be questioned, which explains the commentator’s remarks and her male opponents’ attitude towards her. Moreover, the commentator’s statement about Nona Gaprindashvili confirms the dominant, patriarchal attitude towards the stereotypical belief in what a woman is or is not supposed to do or represent by herself. Inferring from the commentator’s statement about Gaprindashvili, she must have been first recognized for her chess skills just to be categorized as not worthy of competing with men as equals. Gaprindashvili had a potential to go beyond the metaphorical line indicating where does women’s agency and potentials are supposed to end; to prevent her from crossing that line and thus proving that patriarchy is a system that relies exclusively on power relations, she had to be restrained and put within her “own category.”⁶⁷ This is also shown visually as representational and technical codes in the shot number 16 from Appendix 1.4: when commentator compares Harmon to Gaprindashvili, Beth is visibly illuminated playing her games and thus representing success in proving patriarchy wrong. Nona Gaprindashvili, on the other hand, sits in the shadow of the crowd, with a serious, disappointed, slightly jealous expression, representing all the other women who had not been granted opportunity or were not determined enough to prove that gender is not by any means a defining factor to be skilled and become successful.⁶⁸

4.3 Protagonist’s View on Traditional Gender Ideals

As indicated in previous sub-parts of the following chapter, Beth’s gender is distinctly presented as something unusual throughout *TQG* regarding her exceptional talent in playing

⁶⁵ See the table in Appendix 1.4: shot number 16.

⁶⁶ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 5-6.

⁶⁷ Chapell & Young, “Introduction”, 3-6.

⁶⁸ See the table in Appendix 1.4: shot number 16.

chess. Both male and female characters underline that Beth playing chess competitively with men as equals addressed by commentators from the field of chess as abnormal or even inappropriate. However, even though the narrative takes place in the early second half of the 21st century, Beth herself does not seem to conform to what others have to say about what is suitable or not, as she chooses to pursue her chess career despite people regarding it as nonsensical. Beth's view on traditional gender ideals is given voice in the series' third episode ("Doubled Pawns") in the same interview scene described in 4.2. Beth's stance on her gender in relation to her talent is presented in Fiske's reality, level one codes through both the dialogue (Beth's answers to reporter's questions) and her body language.⁶⁹ When an interviewer asks her the first biased question about how it is to be competing against men, Beth keeps still and emotionlessly replying that she does not mind it.⁷⁰ Both her answer and her bodily expressions indicate that Beth genuinely means that she does not recognize gender at all as an important factor in playing chess; she focuses completely on posing for the photographer taking pictures of her, not reacting to the reporter's biased question. In the next part of an interview, when a female reporter underlines that she was not allowed to be competitive and because of that she played with dolls instead of chess, Beth tries to redirect the conversation by saying that she does not perceive chess exclusively as a competitive discipline but mainly sees a beauty in it, instead.⁷¹ Beth is passionate about chess to the extent of her choosing to ignore reporter's gender-prejudicated questions; she either does not realize or simply does not care about societal belief in stereotypical representations of women in regards to the gendered division of 'appropriateness,' as pictured in the series and defined by Holtzman and Sharpe.⁷² Beth recognizes that she is equally smart or even smarter than the majority of chess players despite her being a young woman, which clearly does not interfere with her talent and capabilities. Whether she chooses to ignore or just does not notice the social stigma about women's 'lesser' potential in men-dominated fields such as chess, by relentlessly pursuing her career in professional chess as a teenager, Beth proves that the negative stereotypes around women's intellectual

⁶⁹ Fiske, *Television Culture*, 5.

⁷⁰ See the table in Appendix 1.2: shot number 4.

⁷¹ See the table in Appendix 1.2: shots number 8, 10, 12.

⁷² Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 94-112.

competencies are nothing more than just a conditioned, prejudicated approach passed on to people from generation to generation.⁷³

When Beth is an adult, despite her international recognition and success in the field of professional chess, she still faces discriminatory statements against her gender in relation to her professional career. During a scene from the show's sixth episode ("The Adjournment"), in which Beth and another male chess players participate in the press conference before a major tournament in Paris, Beth is being asked to respond to an 'accusation' by the Chess Federation of being "too glamorous to be a serious chess player."⁷⁴ Being visibly serious and annoyed by the question, Beth replies that it is "much easier to play chess without the burden of an Adam's Apple."⁷⁵ Whether the question asked by the male reporter indicates his own views or represents perspectives of the majority of the male-dominated chess community, Beth's participation and skills are still viewed through the sexist/biased lens of her gender instead of her talent and abilities. Moreover, the part of the question in which the reporter indicates she is "too glamorous" regards de Beauvoir's statement about women's characteristics that are "a reaction to a situation women find themselves in."⁷⁶ Beth's 'glamorosity' is assigned to her as a commonly recognized and desired physical female ideal characteristic that is apparently supposed to hold her back from succeeding and making her an inadequate opponent. However, Beth's reply suggests that if "being too glamorous" as a women's visible quality is supposed to obstruct one's abilities to be successful, then there must be something she is physically missing. She points out an Adam's Apple as a visible male characteristic, simultaneously letting everyone in the room know that if they can be successful having an Adam's Apple, she can be equally good (or even better) being "glamorous." Thus, Beth reverses the reporter's question by pointing out that everyone has equal grounds on being successful or committing mistakes despite their gender nor any other characteristics. However, even Beth's clever response does not clearly bring the message regarding treating someone as a chess player equally across, as reporters continue to ask her questions as if they would still not believe her to have the talents and skills she by now in the storyline has been proving for years; the reporter keeps on asking her whether she 'thinks' she can beat one of her opponents, on which Beth replies

⁷³ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 89- 100.

⁷⁴ See the table in the Appendix 1.3: shot number 2-4.

⁷⁵ See the table in the Appendix 1.3: shot number 5.

⁷⁶ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 3-4.

she does not have much choice in terms of not defeating him.⁷⁷ Beth is answering in the same, demining way stating the obvious to the reporter and by this way pointing out how rude his question is. However, although the reporters and other people keep on showing their prejudicated/sexists attitude, until the end of the show, Beth continues to defend herself both in words and actions. Perhaps it is because she is truly exclusively dedicated to chess, and nothing besides matters to her. Maybe, as she has shown many times in the series, she enjoys being a female loner and/or her yet another addiction which is winning her games. Still, maybe she also realizes that, as Simone de Beauvoir has stated, “no one is more arrogant toward women, more aggressive or more disdainful than a man anxious about his own virility,” which can perhaps be a factor that drives Beth further towards achieving success, not only for herself but also for other women (like for her mothers and her friend from the orphanage) out there.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ See the table in the Appendix 1.3: shots number 10, 11.

⁷⁸ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 13.

5. Conclusion

The following research paper attempted to answer its central question of: in how far does the representation of the main protagonist in the TV miniseries *The Queen's Gambit* (Netflix, 2020) break with traditional representations of women in audiovisual media? The paper's analysis was conducted through textual analysis according to John Fiske's theory about different levels transmitted via various cultural codes in the television. Moreover, the central question was answered with the help of three different sub-questions. The paper's analysis part was divided into three sub-chapters, with each sub-chapter providing a coherent description and discussion of corresponding to its chosen scenes.

The first sub-chapter discusses the scene chosen from the series' first episode, "Openings," based on the first sub-question: how is Beth visually distinguished from other male chess players? Conducting detailed analysis based on differentiating and interpreting cultural codes from level one and two (reality and representational levels) within the visual aspects of the scene helped with pointing out boys' hostility and feelings of being threatened by the young Beth who was invited to the local high school to play simultaneous games alone against twelve older, male students. Boys' behavior was possible to interpret by using codes regarding characters' body language and was further linked and contextualized according to Holtzman and Sharpe's observations about portrayals of women being weak and dependent paired with contrary depictions of men whose "duty" is to represent dominancy, power, and intelligence, in audiovisual media.⁷⁹ The second sub-chapter discusses two scenes from the series' third episode ("Doubled Pawns") and the seventh episode ("End Game") and shows how gender is addressed through the dialogue within the show. The examination of the dialogue in both scenes through the reality and representative levels, as per Fiske, resulted in discovering similarities between both scenes' dialogues. During both scenes, Beth's gender was given much more attention than her chess career and talent. Both the female interviewer from "Doubled Pawns" and the commentator from "End Game" made biased remarks about Beth playing chess professionally as a woman. This observation was further contextualized by connecting it to Holtzman and Sharpe, who underline that the typical representation of women in audiovisual media is of females being

⁷⁹ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

intellectually under-represented in comparison to men.⁸⁰ Both scenes showed that the majority of times, Beth's high intellect and talent are given much less attention than the fact that she is not a man. The final sub-chapter discusses two scenes from "Doubled Pawns" and "Adjournment" episodes and attempts to answer the question of what are Beth's views on gender ideals. Analyzed with the help of reality and representational codes (mainly dialogue, body language/behavior, and lightening), the sub-chapter showed that Beth did not recognize nor believe in gender being an obstacle for someone to develop their talent and become successful in any field. Through her answers during both interviews, her body language and presented difference that she is constantly evolving and moving forwards with her chess abilities and career, Beth is portrayed to show that a woman is not supposed to be a product of men-dominated society but rather a development of herself, just as men are constantly portrayed as and encouraged to do so.⁸¹

As pointed out earlier in the paper, people who interact with Beth throughout the show clearly state that her playing chess professionally and better than anyone else as a woman is considered somewhat strange and inappropriate. According to mentioned discourses around concepts of gender ideals and gender representations, these people represent views directly corresponding to the stereotypes and beliefs conditioned and build around the differences between two binary opposite genders, within of which being a male means a dominant and "better" one. Simultaneously, through her character and actions, Beth represents traits that are mainly assigned to a category regarding characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity.⁸² Throughout her interaction with other people, she shows she is tough, confident, rational, and can take care of herself, which is the exact opposite of traditional representations of women in audiovisual media.⁸³ However, this does not mean that Beth represents the hegemonic masculinity ideal traits only; after all, in one of the scenes, she is accused of being "too glamorous," which is a desired trait assigned to females.⁸⁴ Thus, the most important factor playing a role in Beth's character being different, even radical in her representation as a successful, highly intelligent women is the fact that she realizes that she is being judged and categorized, and yet still decides to pursue her own

⁸⁰ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 108-112.

⁸¹ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 92-97.

⁸² Buikema, Plate, Thiele, *Doing Gender*, 116-117.

⁸³ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

⁸⁴ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

goals, on her very own conditions. Therefore, considering how does Beth pursues her career in the male-dominated field such as professional chess against biased and prejudicated approach of the majority of other, mainly male characters in the show, it can be said that Beth brings a new category of female representation and thus breaks with the traditional portrayals of women in audiovisual media.

As Thomas Bivins argues, "if you are a young woman and you consistently see women portrayed as airheaded 'shopaholics,' you may, over time, begin to adopt that cliché as an actual way of life."⁸⁵ However, suppose we apply Bivins' claim to the reverse, breaking the example of the patriarchal structure, so the representation of Beth Harmon in *TQG*. *In that case*, the outcome should also become altered, making audiences realize the previously inculcated schemas based on oppressive, biased, and power-oriented patriarchal systems. Thus, more portrayals of women such as Beth Harmon are needed in the audiovisual media to make audiences aware of the process of 'othering' and hence oppressing not only women but also, potentially, other minorities; the more portrayals as Beth Harmon there are, the more chance that audiovisual media will affect society's thought patterns and actions on aspects linked with breaking patriarchal, oppressive structures in the society, there is. However, the representation of Beth in *TQG* still requires critique as it is still biased to an extent. The show has been written and produced from the perspective of two white men; even though Beth's "glamorousness" is supposed to make a stand about gender ideals, Beth is still depicted as a white, thin, and gorgeous-looking woman who fits the majority of the beauty standards cast on women by men, for men. Beth's attractiveness has undoubtedly an influence on the show's vast popularity. Moreover, Beth struggles with different addictions and self-destructing habits, which makes her dependent on something besides herself only, which, as per Holtzman and Sharpe, is one of the traditionally recognized women's representational traits to show women's submissiveness towards independent men.⁸⁶ Thus, Beth's physical depiction and dependency on different substances can be considered improvement points for further audiovisual productions to truly break with patriarchal structures and traditional portrayals of women in audiovisual media in every aspect. Yet, despite the following points of criticism, *TQG* and Beth's portrayal can still be considered an initial outset towards breaking with the conditioning of biased and oppressive structures.

⁸⁵ Marcellus, *Advertising and Society*, 127.

⁸⁶ Holtzman & Sharpe, *Media Messages*, 112.

TQG offers an interesting case study for analyzing further aspects present in the series (gendered representation of addictions or genius), mainly if they can be seen as a part of more significant trends in popular culture. Hence, depending on the angle of looking at other themes present in *TQG*, other research such as, for example, comparison of Beth Harmon to Sherlock Holmes from BBC's series *Sherlock* in terms of the representation of genius archetype in audiovisual media, can be investigated and perhaps be further linked to the conclusions of the following research paper.

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Appendix 1: Shot/screen Tables

Appendix 1.1: Table 1, “Openings”

			<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation”</i>
Shot number	Shot length (seconds)	Narrative actions	Costume/hair/makeup	Facial expressions, body language,	Framing	Lightening and color	Dialog	Music and sounds
1.	7 s	After arriving to local high school, young Beth stands in the middle of the chess club’s classroom, where she awaits her opponents to arrive.	Beth wears an ordinary gray skirt, sweater and white shirt underneath the sweater. Her red hair is cut short and is unequally fringed.	Beth slowly turns around after hearing the school bell go off. She has curious and a little frightened expression on her face.	Young Beth is positioned in the middle of the shot. The teacher and the rest of classroom’s objects are in the background which puts the girl in the center of attention.	The dominant colors in the scene are gray and brown because of the classroom’s decoration. Beth’s red hair and pale skin stand out. Even though the room is light, the main light stream is	-	Ring of the school bell, sounds of students clamoring

						directed at her.		
2.	4 s	Her first male opponent goes through the classroom door.	The pupils passing by in the corridor wear black/gray/white color combination of clothes. The first boy who arrives to the classroom wears light shirt and smart trousers with an elegant, dark briefcase and matching shoes. He has neat and short hair.	-	There is an open classroom door in the middle of the shot. Through the door the school's corridor and pupils walking by are seen. There is a window on the corridor.	The light which goes through the window on the corridor takes a central position in the shot because of that. Other colors are barely visible (dark walls, students passing by clothed in dark/light colors).	-	Sounds of students clamoring
3.	2,5 s	The entrance of the first opponent follows more students entering	It is hard to pin points boys' appearance in this shot, as everything is rather dark.	-	The boys come in through the door which is in the center of the frame. The camera represents boys coming in to the	Dark coloration due to lack of light. The part of the gray classroom visible from the door	-	Sounds of students clamoring

		the classroom.			classroom from their perspective (they go from the corridor's side and there is an inside of the classroom and boys' backs shown).	entrance is visible.		
4.	2 s	More male students are entering the room. The first boy who entered seem to be disappointed or annoyed when looking at Beth.	All the boys wear neat, good quality and similar clothing (different shirts, trousers, near shoes and briefcases). Some of them wear glasses. They all look well-groomed and well looked-after.	The first boy who entered put his briefcase impatiently on the floor, letting know that he is not pleased. His facial expression and posture (arms crossed) signalize annoyance.	The boys who one by one enter the classroom, are shown in the center of the shot.	The colors of boys clothing are the main components standing out in the gray, monotonous class room. The window light which shines from the left, surrounds the first boy who entered the classroom	-	Loud sound of the bag being put on the floor, students sounds continue
5.	1,5 s	Beth is observing her opponents	Beth's appearance is the same as described in shot number 1.	It's very hard to read any emotions on Beth's face. She	Beth's face (shoulder line) is in the	The natural light from the window (frame's right	-	Students clamoring sounds

		walking into the classroom.		stares at her opponents coming in observing the situation in silence and focus.	middle of the frame	side) lightens Beth's face.		
6.	2 s	The boys from the chess club continue to gather in the classroom's entrance.	Boys appearance is the same as described in the shot number 3. The boys who joined slightly differ in clothing and appearance but they look generally similar	All the boys are standing up and make one formation in front of Beth. They are clearly annoyed/negatively surprised. All of them are looking directly at Beth. Their posture reveals they feel more dominant over the young Beth.	Same as shot 4 description.	Same as shot 4 description.	-	Students clamoring sounds
7.	2 s	Beth continues to look at her gathering opponents.	Beth's appearance is the same as described in shot number 1.	Beth's emotions are as those described in the shot number 4.	Beth's face (shoulder line level) is in the middle of the frame.	The natural light from the window (frame's right side) lightens Beth's face.	-	Students clamoring sounds
8.	7 s	More boys enter the classroom.	It is again hard to pin points boys' appearance in this	-	Same as shot 4 description. The camera	Dark coloration due to lack of	-	Students clamoring sounds, steps

			shot, as everything is rather dark.		follows the boys entering the class room on the knee-line level.	light. The part of the gray classroom visible from the door entrance is visible.		of the boys entering the classroom
9.	2,5 s	All the boys gathered in front of Beth.	Same description as in the shot number 4.	Same description as in the shot 6. The boys look tall and the formation makes an impression of them being physically very strong and dominant.	Same description as in the shot 4.	Same description as in the shot 4.	-	-
10.	1,5 s	Beth continues to look at her gathering opponents.	Beth's appearance is the same as described in shot number 1.	Beth seems to be slightly overwhelmed. Her lips shakes shortly, her eyes scanning through the boys. She looks as if she is calculating how many opponents she has to confront.	Same description as in the shot 7.	Same description as in the shot 7.	-	-

11.	2 s	Boys looking back at Beth.	Same description as in the shot number 4.	Boys' faces show negative emotions: some of them are starring with their lips clamped, some of them look at Beth as if the situation they are in is not serious, some of them are clearly upset and impatient. There is a prominent, dominant vibe coming from the group of boys.	The boys faces are framed in the middle of the shot, the first line of boys in the group is in the foreground, the rest on the background. Their faces can be observed from the close-up shot which allows spectator to look at their facial expression even more. The camera moves towards the left sight showing some of the boys' faces.	Same as shot 4 description.	-	-
12.	1,5 s	Beth again scanning through	Beth's appearance is the same as	Beth continues looking slightly overwhelmed but	Same description as in the shot 7.	Same description as in the shot 7.	-	-

		her opponents for the last time.	described in shot number 1.	keeps looking and observing the boys despite their negative body language towards her. By the end of the scene she breaks the eye contact by looking down for a short moment.				
13.	4,5 s	The teacher orders everyone to take their seats and gives further instructions to all the players.	The teacher wears black pullover, white shirt underneath it, elegant dark tie and dark trousers. His hair is short, dark and neatly cut.	The teacher speaks up to make sure his instructions are heard by everyone in the room. He looks at all the pupils whilst explaining the steps.	The teacher is standing behind his desk, both of his hands are on the desk's surface. He is positioned in the middle of the shot, (middle close-up).	Because of the classroom's and clothing's coloring, the shot is rather dark. As teacher's clothes are the darkest, he still stands out as the main figure in the shot.	High school teacher: take your seats and be quiet, please. Charles Levy will take the board number one since he's our top player.	-
14.	1 s	Beth looks in the direction of the boy	Beth's appearance is the same as described in shot number 1.	Beth has curious expression on her face; she scans through the boys	Same description as in the shot 7.	Same description as in the shot 7.	High school teacher (continues): Charles Levy	-

		named Charles Levy.		to look at her most difficult opponent, Charles Livy.			will take the board number one since he's our top player.	
15.	2 s	The club's top player, Charles Levy, is revealed.	The chess club's top player, Charles Levy, wears glasses, white T-shirt beneath blue, flannel shirt. His hair are cut short and neat.	Charles Levy's expression is very static, unimpressed. He looks directly at Beth. His eyes reveal he plans to beat Beth in the competition and show her his position as a top player. He is not smiling.	Levy's face (shoulder line level) is positioned in the center of the frame.	As Levy's wearing dark clothes in similarly colored room, his white t-shirt is the color that stands out. Levy's left part of the face is slightly lightened due to the windows being on his left side.	High school teacher (continues): Charles Levy will take the board number one since he's our top player.	-
16.	17,5 s	Boys sit down in assigned seats.	Beth's and boys' appearance stays the same as at the beginning of the scene.	The boys keep observing Beth from their sits. Some of them look now curious, others (like Charles Levy) look confident and	The boys are sited in the sits surrounding young Beth who is standing in the middle of the room. Because	The light enters the room on the right side of the frame. Because of that, frame's right side is	High school teacher: The rest of you can sit where you want to. There will be no talking during play.	Sounds of the boys taking their seats and putting their backpacks on the floor.

				<p>sort of impatient. Beth keeps her standing straight position in the middle scanning through the tables around her trying to understand how the tournament will be conducted.</p>	<p>of Beth's positioning and the fact she does not sit, she is in the dominant the center of the frame.</p>	<p>very light and left one is darker. Having the central position in the frame, Beth receives the balanced amount of light which makes her character stand out even more. The dominant colors of the scene are gray and brown.</p>		
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Appendix 1.2: Table 2 “Doubled Pawns”

			<i>Level 1: “reality”</i>	<i>Level 1: “reality”</i>	<i>Level 2: “representation”</i>	<i>Level 2: “representation”</i>	<i>Level 2: “representation”</i>	<i>Level 2: “representation”</i>
Shot number	Shot length (seconds)	Narrative actions	Costume/hair/makeup	Facial expressions, body language	Framing	Lightening and color	Dialog	Music/sounds
1.	1 s	A male photographer takes a picture.	Photographer wears neat, black suit. His short dark hair is smartly cut and styled. Face (make-up) not visible.	Facial expression not visible due to operating the camera.	Camera man in the center of the shot, the rest of the room is shown in the blurry background. On his left, there is a window. On his right - a shelf with Beth’s possessions.	The room’s walls are light and pink due to the window’s light right next to the actor. Room’s decoration and dominant color is pink. The photographer wearing black suit clearly stands out in the setting thanks to his suit coloration.	Photographer: That’s it honey, hold it up so we can see it.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
2.	1 s	Beth poses for a picture holding a	Beth wears neat, elegant, black dress. Her red hair is	Beth sits straight posing for the picture taken by the male	Beth is in the center of the shot, sat by the	The lightening is clear and neutral. The	Photographer: (finishing his phrase from the	No other sounds than the dialog.

		winning trophy gained from one of the chess tournaments.	maintained casually (jawline cut, fringed). She appears not to be wearing make-up.	photograph. She has serious expression on her face.	end side of her bed which is shown in the background. The bedding's design (pink roses on the light blue/green theme) is visibly shown.	coloration of Beth's black dress in comparison to less explicit (mainly pink, light blue/green), lighter colors of the background visually stands out in the scene.	last shot) That's it honey, hold it up so we can see it.	
3.	7 s	Female interviewer starts the interview with asking Beth a question whilst smoking a cigarette.	The female interviewer wears a smart dress in gray/brown color with large, dark buttons. Her hair is dark colored and tied. She has delicate make-up around her eyes and wears a lot of accessories: triangle-shaped glasses (black-gray colors), large black earrings, black watch.	When formulating the question ("So, can you tell the readers of <i>Life</i> how it feels?") the woman looks at Beth smiling with a proud, disbelieving expression on her face. When she adds "I mean, to be a girl" her eyes turn visibly bigger, as if she was asking Beth additional, suggestive information. She makes a gesture with her hands underlining "to be a girl". When she says "among all	The woman sits leaning towards the left side of the shot by the white desk. There are Beth's chess books and more trophies on the desk. The reporter smokes a cigarette.	The woman is sat in visibly most shadowed corner of the room. Because of that, the originally pink wall appears to be brown, similarly to interviewer's dress.	Female interviewer: So, can you tell the readers of <i>Life</i> how it feels? I mean, to be a girl among all those men?	No other sounds than the dialog. When asking Beth questions, the interviewer verbally emphasizes "all those men" by the end of the sentence.

				those men” her speech speed slows, as she was trying to underline her words. She starts smoking cigarette shortly afterwards.				
4.	3,5 s	Beth looks at the interviewer and answers her question. She holds her position (sitting straight with a trophy) for the photographer.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	When being asked the question, Beth shortly looks at the interviewer as if she was genuinely surprised by it. She quickly returns to her position with a delicate smile and nodding in disagreement.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: I don’t mind it Interviewer: Isn’t it intimidating?	No other sounds than the dialog.
5.	2 s	The interviewer continues talking with Beth when she is sitting still, looking at the camera and posing for pictures taken	All three characters wear the same clothing as described in previous shots. The legs and shoes are reviled: photographer wears elegant black shoes matching his shoes, the interviewer wears elegant black	Beth continues sitting still and looking at the camera with a serious expression, photographer continues to do his job. The interviewer asks Beth a question with visibly growing disbelief/disagreement on her face. When the	The shot includes all three characters in the framing. Beth and photographer are in the foreground, the interviewer is on the background. None of the	Both Beth’s and photographer’s costume coloration (black) stands out in comparison to interviewer’s clothes and room’s coloration. The	Interviewer: I mean, when I was a girl, I wasn’t allowed to be competitive.	Click of the camera making picture, dialog.

		by the male photographer.	heals and Beth wears elegant, white shoes with white socks.	reporter says “when I was a girl” she points at herself.	characters’ positioning changed.	lightening is slightly focused on Beth.		
6.	1,5 s	Beth looks at the interviewer talking to her.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth continues sitting straight and posing for the photographs. She looks at the interviewer with rather perplexed facial expression listening to what she is saying.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Interviewer: (continues telling the same sentence from previous shot) I mean, when I was a girl, I wasn’t allowed to be competitive.	No other sounds than a dialog.
7.	1 s	The interviewer continues talking with Beth and taking new cigarette from a package.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter keeps her sitting position and slightly turned towards Beth. When saying “I played with dolls” she gives Beth suggestive expression in her eyes as if she was trying to underline that it is an appropriate thing to do.	The framing is the same as described in the shot number 3. Cameraman visibly changing position to photograph Beth from the left side.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Female interviewer: I played with dolls.	Camera clicking, dialog.
8.	1,5 s	Beth cooperates with cameraman by changing her slightly	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth’s answer seem to be emotionless, she follows the camera man with her eyes and her positioning (now	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2. A shadow of a cameraman	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: Chess isn’t always competitive.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.

		turning to the left and continues answering reporter's questions.		positioned slightly to the left).	visible from the left side.			
9.	2 s	The reporter takes out another cigarette from a package and continues asking Beth questions.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter focuses her sight entirely on the package of cigarettes where she is taking new one from. She doesn't look at Beth whilst talking.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: No, but you play to win.	Dialog.
10.	2,5 s	Beth answers reporter's question and tries to explain how she perceives a game of chess.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	When saying her line, Beth first looks down for a second to smile at the reporter whilst giving her an answer to what she thinks about chess.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: Yes, but chess can also be...	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
11.	1 s	The reporter asks Beth a question and puts a cigarette in her own mouth.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter looks at Beth with slight anticipation but also misunderstanding on her face.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: What?	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.

12.	3,5 s	Beth tells the reporter what she thinks about chess.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth takes approximately two seconds to think how to describe chess. She is visibly lost in thought for a moment when she tries to find the right word to describe chess. Finally she says “beautiful” with a sort of relief on her face.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: Beautiful	Dialog.
13.	5 s	The reporter lights up her cigarette and immediately changes the subject to Beth’s being an orphan.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter is entirely focused on her new cigarette, she doesn’t look at Beth during the shot. Her face is emotionless.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: You’re an orphan, Beth.	Dialog. Sound of lightening the cigarette.
14.	2,5 s	Beth continues answering reporter’s questions.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks perplexed for a second; her face changes to emotionless whilst staring at the direction where cameraman is.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: Yes, I know that.	Dialog.
15.	3,5 s	The reporter continues an interview with	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as	The reporter smiles seemingly uncomfortably at first.	The framing is the same as	The lightening and coloration of the shot is	Interviewer: No, yes, of course you do. I was	Dialog.

		asking Beth how did she learn how to play chess.	described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	When she starts saying "I was just wondering..." her face turns serious; she doesn't look at Beth but in the direction where the room's door is, possibly observing the photographer.	described in the short number 3.	the same as described in the shot number 3.	wondering how you learned to play chess.	
16.	1,5 s	Beth tells interviewer about her first chess teacher, Mr. Shaibel.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth smiles when pronouncing the name "Shaibel". Her expression turns serious quickly after she hears the click of the camera.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lighting and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: Mr. Shaibel taught me.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
17.	1 s	The shot focuses on the photographer who is seen by the room's door with camera in his hand.	The photographer wears the same black suit as described in the shot 5.	The photographer looks at Beth, it's hard to read any emotions on his face. He is busy with operating the camera in a meanwhile.	The cameraman is positioned on the left side of the frame, behind him there is a large yellow door. In the background, there is a wall and cupboard visible.	The cameraman clearly stands out because of the dark color of his suit in comparison to the light yellow and light pink background.	-	Camera sounds.
18.	3 s	Beth continues with	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot	When describing who her first chess teacher was, Beth looks down	The framing is the same as	The lighting and coloration of the shot is	Beth: He was the janitor at Methuen.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.

		describing who Mr. Sheibel was.	number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	at her knees. When she is finished with talking, she looks straight onto the photographer, her face is emotionless.	described in the short number 2.	the same as described in the shot number 2.		
19.	1,5 s	The reporter continues asking Beth questions about Mr. Sheibel.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter smiles when asking Beth a question. Her facial expressions clearly mark a disbelief with amusement at the same time.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: A janitor taught you how to play?	Dialog.
20.	2,5 s	Beth keeps answering reporter's questions.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks very serious; her face continues to be emotionless, she poses for pictures with very straight back. She looks at the reporter's eyes at the moment when she says "when I was eight".	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Interviewer: Really? Beth: When I was eight.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
21.	6,5 s	The reporter continues with interview.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter looks back and forth at Beth and at the desk when trying to formulate the question. Her face changes to slightly concerned when she	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: I imagine... it must have been such a destruction from life in such	Dialog.

				pronounces a word “depressing”. She keeps on smoking having her cigarette lit in her right hand.			a depressing place.	
22.	6 s	Beth reacts to interviewer’s questions and suggestions.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks down at the trophy she holds in her hands for a moment. She seems concerned and sad. However, when the interviewer tells her “you must have been really lonely”, Beth’s face changes to stern, without emotions again.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Interviewer: You must have been very lonely. Beth: I am fine being alone.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
23.	4,5 s	The reporter seem to be concerned and asks Beth suggestive questions about chess connection to her parents.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The interviewer stares at Beth for first 2 seconds with visible concern, exhaling cigarette smoke. She gesticulates a little when describing “a king as a father”	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: Do you imagine that you saw the king as a father...	Dialog.
24.	2 s	Beth silently reacts to reporter’s question.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same	Beth looks at the reporter surprised and perplexed, to quickly look down and glare at	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as	Interviewer: ... and the queen as a mother?	Dialog.

			stylization and make-up.	the trophy hold by her, with a slight smirk on her face.		described in the shot number 2.		
25.	3 s	The reporter continues suggesting Beth answers.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter gesticulates with both her hands when describing what she means. She looks at Beth all the time and smiles when she is done talking.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: I mean, one to attack, one to protect?	Dialog.
26.	6 s	Beth answers reporter's questions being amused by the idea of comparing people to pieces.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks directly at the reporter and smiles as if she was slightly shocked and amused, at the same time. Her face turns serious again when she begins talking about the board. She turns away from the reporter to pose for the pictures.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: They are just pieces. And anyway, it was the board that I've noticed first.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
27.	3,5 s	Reporter repeats Beth's answer.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter looks at Beth as if she doesn't understand her answer.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: The board? Beth: Yes.	Dialog.

28.	3,5 s	Beth explains what she finds exceptional about chess' board.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks directly at the reporter whilst answering. She smiles by the end as if it would be amusing for her that the reporter does not understand her answer.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: It's an entire world of just 64 squares.	Dialog.
29.	1,5 s	Reporter is listening to Beth's answer.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter looks straight at Beth; her facial expression tells that she is both focused, interested and a little surprised.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Beth: I feel...	Dialog.
30.	13,5 s	Beth describes what she finds fascinating about chess.	Beth wears the same black dress as described in the shot number 2. Same stylization and make-up.	Beth looks down when describing how she feels about the chess board. She plays with the trophy she still holds in her hands. When pronouncing the word "dominated" her face looks determined for a moment. When she says "and it's predictable" she looks directly at the reporter and, with a straight back, starts posing for pictures again.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 2.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 2.	Beth: ... safe in it. I can control it, I can dominate it. And' it's predictable. So if I get hurt, I only have myself to blame.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.

31.	2,5 s	The reporter expresses her reaction towards Beth's reply.	The reporter wears the same dress and accessories as described in the shot 3. Same stylization and make-up.	The reporter looks directly at Beth slightly smiling. Her facial expression and eyes look as if she would know something that Beth does not.	The framing is the same as described in the short number 3.	The lightening and coloration of the shot is the same as described in the shot number 3.	Interviewer: How interesting.	Click of the camera taking picture, dialog.
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Appendix 1.3: Table 3 “Adjournment”

			<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation</i>
Shot number	Shot length (seconds)	Narrative actions	Costume/hair/make-up	Facial expressions, body language	Framing	Lightening and color	Dialog	Music and sounds
1.	1 s	A male interviewer asks Beth a question during an important chess conference in Paris, before the tournament.	The interviewer wears elegant, gray-brown suit with white T-shirt underneath. He has blond, neatly trimmed hair and large moustache. He also wears glasses.	The reporter’s expression is rather serious and curious at the same time. His expression leaves an impression as if he was intentionally trying to corner Beth with his question.	The interviewer is in the middle of the frame, he is the only person in the shot, there are only furniture behind him	Interviewer’s clothes match with the brow, wood interior of the room and objects behind him. Because of the light coloration of the suit, he definitely stands out in the frame however not in very conspicuous manner.	Interviewer 1: Miss Harmon...	Dialog sounds.
2.	5 s	Retrospective scene	Beth has neatly styled, red, neck-	Beth comes out of the	Beth is in the center of the	The coloration of the scene is	Interviewer 1: ... what do you	Dialog sounds.

		where Beth is shopping in Parisian streets, probably before the interview takes place.	long hair. She wears delicate make-up, red lipstick, light, pink coat and gray, elegant dress underneath it.	shop vigorously with plenty of shopping bags in her hands. She smiles when leaving the shop and looks at it when passing by it and going the other direction.	frame, there are passers-by on the right side of the frame. On the left there is a shop which Beth has just left.	mainly gray (gray streets, gray buildings, black/gray/light coloration of passers-by clothing). Coloration of Beth's jacket, lipstick and her makes he stand out in the shot.	say to those in the Chess Federation who accuse you to be too glamorous...	
3.	1 s	One of the male interviewers are observing Beth in anticipation for her answer.	The male interviewer from this shot wears neat gray jumper with white blouse underneath it. He has neatly styled, brown hair and wears glasses.	The look and expression on his face suggests that he is curious about what answer will Beth give to his colleague's question.	Interviewer's face and shoulders are in the center of the frame. He is in the foreground of the frame, there is another, blurred person listening behind him. Close-up shot.	Interviewer's clothing, skin color and glasses' frames color match to the background's coloration. Coloration-wise, he does not stand out in the shot.	-	Clicks of the cameraman taking pictures.

4.	1 s	Another one of the male interviewers are observing Beth in anticipation for her answer.	Like the interviewer from the previous shot, this one also wears neat gray jumper with white blouse underneath it. He has neatly styled, brown hair and wears glasses.	This interviewer looked up from his notes just to look at Beth to listen closely what will she answer. The look and expression on his face suggests that he is curious about what answer will Beth give to his colleague's question. His facial expression suggest that he is slightly amused by the question.	Interviewer's face and shoulders are in the center of the frame. He is in the background of the frame, having another man sitting before him (the other man is blurred out).	Interviewer's clothing, skin color and glasses' frames color match to the background's coloration. Coloration-wise, he does not stand out in the shot.	Interviewer 1: ...to be a serious chess player?	Dialog sounds.
5.	7 s	Beth answers the first	Beth wears an elegant, black turtle neck sweater. She	Beth seems both a little disappointed	Beth is in the middle of the frame. Close-	Beth's red hair matches the coloration of	Beth: I would say that it's much easier	Sounds of the cameramen

		question asked to her.	does wear delicate, natural make-up. Her red, shoulder-length hair is neatly styled.	and annoyed by the question she was asked. She takes two seconds to either think of a reply or calm herself down looking ahead of her. When she says “adam’s apple” she looks directly at the interviewer. She keeps serious expression throughout the shot.	up shot. She has a wooden wall and a poster with chess players’ names behind her.	the wooden wall and brown letters on the poster behind her. The color of the sweater she is wearing stands out in the frame as the darkest element in the shot.	to play chess without a burden of an Adam’s apple.	taking pictures.
6.	1 s	The camera shows the interviewer from the shot number 3 who starts laughing.	The interviewer’s appearance is the same as in shot number 3.	The interviewer is clearly amused.	Same description as in shot number 3.	Same description as in shot number 3.	-	Interviewer’s laugh. Everyone’s chuckle.

7.	1s	The camera briefly show an entire conference room when everyone starts to chuckle in response to Beth's answer.	Everyone's clothing and appearance is elegant (neat suits or jumpers) kept in casual color intonation (black, grey, brown, white). Everyone's hair is also styled and neat. Beth is the only one with unusual (red) hair color.	Everyone is seated and majority of people present are amused of Beth's response. No further details are visible.	The entire scene is shown: interviewers sitting in their desks back to the camera, and chess competitors seated together by the long table in the lowest point of the room, faces front to the camera. Elements such as flowers, welcoming posters, microphones are visible near the contestants. The only females visible in the frame are Beth and female	Besides wooden-brown color of the room, the large welcoming blue poster is the center element of the scene, color-wise. It is also the only colorful element of the frame, as everything else is kept in black, brown and white intonation.	-	Everyone's chuckle.
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					translator sitting next to Borgove by the long table. Cameramen recording the interview are visible on the right frame of the scene.			
8.	1,5 s	The same reporter asks Beth another question.	The reporter's appearance is the same as described in shot number 1.	The reporter's body language and emotions are the same as described in shot number 1.	The same description as in shot number 1.	The same description as in shot number 1.	Interviewer 1: So, how are you feeling about your match with Alec Bergland?	Dialog sounds. Cameraman taking pictures sounds.
9.	2 s	Beth looks curiously towards her right side, so the direction where Alec Bergland sits, on the other end of the table.	Beth's appearance is the same as described in shot number 5.	Beth leans her head as as she is trying to look at Alec Bergland behind another person sitting next to her.	There are two people in the frame: Beth positioned on the right-central side, and another chess player sitting next to her on the far	Similar as description in shot number 5. Additionally: the part of big, blue welcoming poster is now visible behind Beth.	Interviewer 1 (continues): So, how are you feeling about your match with Alec Bergland?	Dialog sounds. Cameraman taking pictures sounds.

				She smiles at his opponent.	left side of the frame.			
10.	3 s	Alec Bergland waves and smiles back at Beth.	Bergland wears neat, black suit. His hair is blond and shortly cut, and he has blond mustache.	Bergland smiles and looks at Beth back. His smile is not just friendly but looks as if he was almost trying to flirt with Beth. At some moment one of his brows goes delicately up as he was trying to signalize something to her.	Bergland sits on the opposite side of the contestants' table positioned on the left side of the frame. Next to him, in the centre of the frame, there is another chess player together with Borgov's female translator. Beth's blurred head takes an entire right-side of the frame.	Color intonation and lightening is kept similar to the shots described before.	Beth: I'm looking forward to it. Interviewer 1: Does that mean...	Dialog sounds.
11.	3,5 s	Beth continues with answering	The appearance of everyone in the scene is the same as	The shot initially shows Bergland who	Firstly the camera shows Bergland in the middle of	Color intonation and lightening maintained as	Interviewer 1: ...that you think you can beat him?	Dialog sounds, cameraman taking pictures sounds.

		interviewer's question.	described in previous shots.	looks at the interviewer smiling, still in a flirty manner. The camera then switches to Beth who lost her smile addressed to Bergland and now has a serious expression on her face when answering the question.	the frame. There is a chess opponent on the right side of the frame. When camera switches, it shows Beth in the center with another opponent sitting next to her.	in previous scenes.	Beth: It means that I have to beat him.	
12.	2,5 s	Another interviewer's reaction shown.	The interviewer has light brown suit with white shirt underneath it. His hair is light and neatly cut.	This interviewer's facial expression clearly shows his disbelief and disregard to Beth's answer. He clearly signalizes that Beth it is	There is only him in the frame. The interviewer has a pad next to him on which he notes something done.	The contrast between light suit of the interviewer and the dark, wooden background marks him as a central figure in the frame.	Interviewer 2: Miss Harmon...	Dialog sounds.

				not Beth's place to show such confidence as she does.				
13.	4 s	Another interviewer asks Beth questions now regarding her match with Grandmaster Borgov.	Similarly to other reporters, a man wears grey elegant suit, white shirt underneath it. His hair is neatly cut, black.	The interviewer looks directly at Beth asking her question. He smiles all the time. He specifically articulates the word "grandmaster" and gesticulates towards Borgov direction when saying his name.	The man is in the middle of the frame. There are other, blurred out interviewers behind him.	Similarly to other interviewers, the contrast between light suit of the interviewer and the dark, wooden background marks him as a central figure in the frame.	Interviewer 2: Do you feel good about your rematch with Grandmaster Borgov?	
14.	2,5 s	Borgov listens to his female assistant who translates	Borgov wears neat, black suit with white shirt underneath it. He makes an impression of	Borgov has serious expression on his face when listening to his assistance	Both Borgov and his assistant are in the middle of the frame. There are	The poster behind assistant wearing white coat is white; the blue,	Beth: Very good.	Cameraman taking pictures sounds. Dialog sounds.

		him the question asked by the interviewer to Beth.	looking the most elegant out of everyone present in the room. His assistant wears a white coat, hair her is put neatly up. She wears light make-up and elegant earrings.	translating the question and whispering to his ear.	posters behind them and microphones and water bottles on the desk in front of them.	darker poster behind Borgov wearing black suit.		
15.	2 s	Beth tells the interviewer how confident she feels.	Beth appearance is the same as described in shot number 5.	Beth has serious expression when answering interviewer's question. She looks and sounds very confident.	Beth's left profile takes half of the right frame's space. She is in the foreground of the frame, there are other, blurred out opponents present in the frame's background.	Beth's red hair is the most dominant color of the scene. The lightening highlights her fair skin which makes her facial expression as the central theme of this shot.	Beth: I slept on the plane so I arrived in Paris with no jet lag.	Dialog sounds.
16.	6,5 s	Beth continues answering the question by describing	Borgov's appearance described in the shot number 14.	Borgov is focused on listening to Beth's answer. He looks as if he	Borgov is shown as the central and the only figure of the plane. His upper part	Same description as in the shot 14.	Beth: I'm very well rested. At night, I stay in my room and study Mr.	Dialog sounds.

		her preparation routine before the tournament begins. Curious and focused Borgov listens to her answer.		is very curious of what she is saying.	of the body is (starting from middle shoulder line) is visible in the frame.		Borgov's old games.	
17.	3 s	Another interviewer asks Beth last question.	This interviewer wears dark blue suit with white shirt underneath it.	The interviewer has confident expression on his face. He acts as he wants to bring Beth down, looking almost as he was a superior to her.	The interviewer is shown in the middle of the frame, there are other reporters blurred out behind him, in the background.	Same description to other shots of this scene depicting interviewers asking Beth questions. Perhaps, the dark coloration of interviewers suit together with his facial expression highlights the impression that he does	Interviewer 3: Including the one against you in Mexico City?	Dialog sounds.

						not wish Beth well.		
18.	6,5 s	After a short pause, Beth answers the question in Russian.	Beth appearance is the same as described in shot number 5.	Beth takes a moment to answer interviewer's question. Throughout entire shot she looks at her microphone.	Same description as in shot number 15.	Same description as in shot number 15.	Beth (speaking in Russian): Especially this one.	Cameras taking pictures sounds. Dialog sounds.
19.	3 s	Borgov smiles to himself hearing Beth's answer.	Same appearance as described in shot number 14.	After hearing Beth answering in Russian, Borgov looks down and smiles to himself in amusement. His facial expression clearly suggests that he understands Beth's reference to the earlier	Same description as in shot number 16.	Same description as in shot number 14.	-	Dialog from the next scene starting sound.

				moment in the episode, when Borgov's Russian bodyguards were talking about her in Russian, in her presence thinking, she does not understand what they are saying.				
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Appendix 1.4: Table 4 “End Game”

			<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 1 „reality”</i>	<i>Level 2 „representation</i>	<i>Level 2 „representati on</i>	<i>Level 2 „representatio n</i>	<i>Level 2 „representati on</i>
Shot number	Shot length (seconds)	Narrative actions	Costume/hair/make-up	Facial expressions, body language	Framing	Lightening and color	Dialog	Music and sounds
1.	6 s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre):</u> Beth sits together with other opponents in the theatre, listening to and watching the string quartet playing, before the tournament.	Beth’s hair is elegantly curled and styled. Her eyes are highlighted with an eyeliner, she is wearing red lipstick. She wears dark jumper with turtle neck.	Beth watches the string quartet play, she looks mesmerized by their performance.	Beth’s face is in the middle of the frame. It’s the only visible object.	Beth’s face is surrounded by shadows; it’s so dark that it’s difficult to grasp the shape of her hair.	Tournament director (in Russian): Ladies and gentlemen, dear comrades, please welcome... Elizabeth Harmon.	String quartet playing dramatic music in the background.
2.	13 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> After hearing her	Beth wears elegant, black and white colored	Beth moves confidently towards the	The corridor with chess tables are in	Each chess table is illuminated by	-	Crowd applauding. String quartet

		name, Beth goes down the corridor to take her seat by the chess table and wait for the rest of the opponents.	dress. Beth's hair is elegantly curled and styled. Her eyes are highlighted with an eyeliner, she is wearing red lipstick.	last chess table to take her seat. She looks ahead of her, she has self-assured expression on her face.	the middle of a long corrido, in the frame. On the right and the left side of the corridor there is an audience awaiting players. Everything, besides Beth, in the frame is symmetrically positioned.	the lamp above. This makes the corridor and Beth walking down towards her own table illuminated too. The audience stays in the dark.		playing dramatic music in the background. Music intensifies.
3.	10 s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre):</u> Beth and other players are still in the theatre watching and listening to the concert.	Beth's hair is elegantly curled and styled. Her eyes are highlighted with an eyeliner, she is wearing red lipstick. Borgov wears dark suit with elegant shirt and tie underneath. His hair is very neatly styled.	Beth keeps looking at the quartet performance. Her lips are slightly opened. Borgov looks worried and nervous. His eyes move and he looks at Beth for a moment, he is clearly not	The frame initially shows Beth from the close-up shot. However, as the camera zooms out, Borgov, who is sitting on Beth's left side in the row behind her, is revealed. As the camera	The room stays very dark, the objects in the frame are still difficult to identify. Beth's an Borgov's faces are illuminated slightly.	Tournament director: [introduces one of the opponents, Laev, in Russian. Introduces another opponent, Hellstrom, in Russian.]	Crowd applauding. String quartet playing dramatic music in the background.

				focus on the concert.	zooms out, Beth's face is blurred out, focusing on Borgov's.			
4.	9 s	<u>Tournament shot</u> : Beth sits in her chess table awaiting for all the opponents to sit down and for the games to begin. One of the opponents takes a sit at the table she sits in.	Beth's appearance described in the shot number 2. Her first opponent wears elegant suit, has neatly cut and styled, blond hair.	Beth awaits her opponent who comes forward and sits at her table. Before sitting down he adjusts his tie. He does not look at Beth.	The positioning of objects in the frame is the same as described in the shot 2. Beth's first opponent comes down the corridor from the right side, so opposite side as Beth did before him. Beth is seated back to the camera, her face is not visible.	Same description as in the shot 2.	-	String quartet continues playing dramatic music in the background.
5.	8, 5s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre)</u> : Beth is seated	Beth's and Borgov's description the same as in the shot	Beth keeps looking at the quartet in the same manner	The frame begins with revealing more	Beth's face is evidently more illuminated	Tournament director: [introduces one of the	String quartet continues playing dramatic

		in a dark room with other opponents, awaiting the tournament. More men participating in the tournament are now exposed.	number 1. The rest of her opponents are wearing neat suits with white shirts underneath. All of them but one have their hair styled neatly, one opponent's hair is long, messy and grey. Some of them are wearing glasses.	as during other retrospective shots. Borgov still looks worried. Other opponents are observing the performance focused.	opponents sitting nearby Beth. Beth is a center figure of the frame. Camera keeps zooming out revealing the inside of the theatre room more.	than her male opponents sitting nearby. Borgov's face is slightly illuminated. Faces of the rest are still visible but much less, they are in the shadow.	opponents, Duhamel, in Russian.]	music in the background.
6.	3 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Tournament director introduces Luchenko.	Tournament director wears neat suit with dark tie and white shirt underneath it. His hair is short and styled, he wears glasses with thick dark frames. He has a moustache.	Tournament director announces Luchenko with a smile on his face.	Tournament director is the central figure of the shot. He stands behind the first two chess tables. On his left and right sides, there are soldiers guarding the entrance to the tournament hall. Behind the director,	As the lamps illuminating the chess tables are on the left side in the frame, the soldiers on the left side are more illuminated than those standing on the right. The light from the lamps illuminates chess tables	Tournament director: [introduces one of the opponents, Luchenko, in Russian.]	Crowd applauding. String quartet continues playing dramatic music in the background.

					there is a row of chess opponents waiting for their name to be called out.	directly. After that the director is the second most highlighted figure in the frame.		
7.	9 s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre):</u> Beth and other tournament's participants continue watching the string quartet concert.	Same description as in shot number 5.	Same description as in shot number 5. The chess player with long, messy gray hair sleeps in the seat in the front row.	Same description as the shot number 5. The camera keeps zooming out revealing an entire room.	Same description as shot number 5.	Tournament director: [introduces one of the opponents, Flento, in Russian.]	Crowd applauding. Dramatic string music continues.
8.	8 s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre):</u> The string quartet continues performing.	Female instrumentalists have their hair neatly styled. Make-up is not visible. Male instrumentalists' hairs are neatly combed and styled.	Four instrumentalists are focused on playing music.	The quartet is in the center of the shot. On the right side of the frame, there are two female artists seated. On the left side of the frame, there are	Female artists wear elegant white dresses, male artists wear dark suits. The quartet is seated on the stage with dark red curtain behind them.	-	Dramatic string music continues.

					male artists seated. All of the instrumentalists have identical, wooden music stands with note sheets on them.			
9.	2,5 s	<u>Retrospective shot (theatre):</u> Close-up shot to Beth's face in the theatre: Beth smiles looking at the quartet.	Same description as in the shot number 1.	Beth closes her lips and smiles looking at the quartet with admiration.	Same description as in the shot number 1.	Same description as in the shot number 1.	Tournament director: [introduces Borgov in Russian.]	Dramatic string music intensifies.
10.	2 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Tournament director introduces Borgov excitedly.	Same description as in the shot number 6.	Tournament director shouts Borgov's name very enthusiastically when introducing him.	Same description as in the shot number 6. There is only one player awaiting to be introduced and waiting behind the	Same description as in the shot number 6.	Tournament director: [continues introducing Borgov in Russian.]	Dramatic string music intensifies. People enthusiastically applauding.

					director: Borgov.			
11.	4,5 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Borgov walks down the tournament hall towards assigned to him chess table.	Appearance of characters is the same as described previously, in <u>tournament shots.</u>	The crowd from both sides of the tournament's hall applause enthusiastically, all looking at Borgov's direction.	The positioning of objects in the frame is the same as described in the shot 2. All the players, besides Borgov who takes his sit in the background from the right frame's side, are seated in pairs in their assigned chess tables.	Same as described in shot number 2.	-	Dramatic string music intensifies. Sounds of thunderous applause.
12.	3,5 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Borgov sits down at his chess table.	Appearance of characters is the same as described previously, in <u>tournament shots.</u>	Borgov looks serious and focused. Tournament director behind him smiles widely, he looks proud to be	Same description as in the shot number 6. The seats by the chess tables are now occupied by	Borgov is the most illuminated person in the frame. The tournament director stands in the	-	Crowd continues applauding.

				representing Borgov.	tournament participants.	shadow besides him.		
13.	5 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Tournament's score boards are being presented.	-	-	The camera moves towards the right side of the frame and is focused on the wall behind the crowd, where chess score boards are situated. By each of the score board there is a man adjusting the board.	Each of the score board is equally illuminated, the rest is covered in the shadows.	Tournament director (in Russian): Thank you.	Crowd continues applauding.
14.	19 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> The tournament director switches on players' clocks and all games begin simultaneously.	Appearance of characters is the same as described previously, in <u>tournament shots</u>	Each of the chess players have serious and focused expression on their faces.	The camera moves towards the right side of the frame following the director who switches all the clocks on, and showing each of the	All the tables are illuminated equally because of the lamps above them. The score boards on the wall in the background,	Commentator (in English): As far as they knew, Harmon wasn't at their level. Someone like Laev probably didn't spend a lot of time preparing	Thrilling music playing. Chess clocks' buttons clicking sounds.

					chess tables and their players, beginning with Borgov's table and ending with Beth's table. The tables are in the center of the frame.	behind the crowds are illuminated too.	for their match.	
15.	4 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Commentator talks about Beth.	The commentator wears neat suit, has dark trimmed hair and mustache.	The commentator looks professional, serious and focused.	The commentator is in the center of the frame. He sits in the separate booth by the desk where all his radio instruments are.	The dominant color of the scene is grey. The commentator has a small desk lamp by his left hand which is the only light source in this shot. Even though his face is visible, the setting is rather dark and shadowy.	Commentator(in English): Elizabeth Harmon's not at all an important player by their standards.	Thrilling music continues playing.
16.	10,5 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Beth is	Nona Gaprindashvili	Beth looks serious and	The shot starts with a	Whilst Beth is illuminated	Commentator(in English): The	-

		being compared to Nona Gaprindashvili by the games' commentator .	wears elegant dress. Her hair is neatly tied up, she doesn't wear visible make-up. She holds elegant purse in her hands. Appearance of the rest of characters is the same as described previously, in <u>tournament shots.</u>	focused on her game. Nona Gaprindashvili looks serious and focused however also upset and disappointed or jealous of Beth.	close-up of Beth's face. The camera moves towards Beth's right profile to blur it and focus on Nona Gaprindashvili who sits near Beth in the crowd.	throughout the entire shot, including when her character is blurred out, Nona Gaprindashvili remains in the shadow.	only unusual thing about her, really, is her sex. And even that's not unique in Russia. There's Nona Gaprindashvili, but she's the female world champion that has never faced men.	
17.	24 s	<u>Tournament shot:</u> Beth wins her first match and leaves the tournament hall as the first player.	Appearance of the characters is the same as described previously, in <u>tournament shots.</u>	Beth wins the game and puts her winning move loudly on the chess board. She looks directly at her opponent with confidence. When the opponent holds out his hand as a sign of resignation	Beth is frame's center figure throughout the entire shot as the camera follows her. She keeps her position to the left side of the frame. She walks out on the same side (left) as she walked in at	During the part when Beth is still by her own table, her face is illuminated. When she walks out and goes down the tournament hall, the lamps illuminating other chess	Commentator(in English): My guess is, Laev was expecting an easy win and not at all the 27-move thrashing Beth Harmon just gave him.	Crowd applauding.

				<p>Beth smiles in a determined way. She smiles at the tournament director who comes to the table to shake her hand, too. Beth leaves the hall walking out proudly, slightly smiling,</p>	<p>the beginning of the tournament. All the other tables are still full showing busy and focused players.</p>	<p>tables are shown. However, Beth remains the central figure of the shot also because of her intense colored hair and black and white, conspicuous dress.</p>		
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Appendix 2: Plagiarism Statement



Faculty of Humanities
Version September 2014

PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



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entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.
Name: Zofia Rucka
Student number: 6606628
Date and signature: 17.06.2021 

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.