



**Universidad**  
Zaragoza

**Undergraduate Dissertation**  
**Trabajo Fin de Grado**

**‘You Give Me the Creeps’: The Permeability of Toxic  
Masculinity in Anthony Minghella’s *The Talented Mr Ripley***

**Autor/es**

**Patricia Domínguez Paños**

**Director/es**

**Pablo Gómez Muñoz**

**Facultad de Filosofía y Letras**  
**Universidad de Zaragoza**  
**2020/2021**

## **Resumen**

Este ensayo busca analizar el perjuicio de la masculinidad tóxica en las esferas de la homosexualidad y la feminidad. Para ello, utilizaré como ejemplo la película *El talento de Mr Ripley* de Anthony Minghella. El análisis se llevará a cabo a través del protagonista de la misma: Tom Ripley. Éste servirá como conexión entre la homosexualidad y la masculinidad tóxica además de como ejemplo de cómo la permeabilidad del discurso machista condiciona su relación con el resto de personajes tanto hombres como, especialmente, mujeres. Además, a través de este análisis observaremos la forma en que, tanto la novela original de Patricia Highsmith como sus diferentes adaptaciones, han entendido y representado la homosexualidad siempre teniendo en cuenta sus respectivos contextos históricos.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation will try to analyse the harm that toxic masculinity produces in the spheres of queerness and femininity. For that matter, I will use Anthony Minghella's film *The Talented Mr Ripley* as an example. The analysis will be carried out using the protagonist of the film, Tom Ripley, as conductive thread. This character will be a good example of the narrow connection between toxic masculinity and queerness and of how the permeability of male chauvinist discourse conditions his relationship with the rest of the characters, especially with women. In addition, throughout this dissertation, we will observe the form in which, Patricia Highsmith's original novel and its subsequent adaptations, have understood and represented homosexuality, always bearing in mind their respective historical contexts.

## **Table of Contents**

1. Introduction .....	4
2. Theoretical Framework.....	8
3. Homosexual Desire: Tom and Dickie.....	13
4. Homosexual Relationship: Tom and Peter .....	18
5. Antagonistic Relationships: Tom, Marge and Meredith .....	22
6. Conclusion .....	28
7. References .....	30

## 1. Introduction

*The Talented Mr Ripley* is a film written and directed by Anthony Minghella and based on the namesake novel written by Patricia Highsmith. Released on Christmas day 1999, the film quickly became a commercial hit, and this is, probably, because of its intriguing plot. An American impostor, Tom Ripley, is sent to Italy to retrieve playboy Dickie Greenleaf to America. Nevertheless, Dickie slowly becomes the unfortunate object of desire of Ripley, who will not hesitate when it comes to fulfilling his aspirations—even if that means taking extreme measures along the way. For Bronski (2000), it is complicated to understand why a film of this kind, “featuring a sympathetic gay psychopath, structured around a fairly complicated ‘thriller’ plot, and peppered with what is essentially an antilove interest with Hollywood’s *belle de jour* Gwyneth Paltrow” became such a success (p. 41). Perhaps it is reasonable to confer part of this success to the praise that the novel received when it was published in 1955. However, Minghella introduced a number of alterations when adapting the novel for his screenplay. The first of these changes involved altering Dickie Greenleaf’s passion from painting to music, specifically, to jazz music. Minghella himself explained his decision in an interview with Erik Floren (1999) and argued that sound, and especially jazz, would evoke the late 50’s, the period in which the film is set, more than the original painting motif chosen by Highsmith (in Poluyko, 2011). Additionally, Poluyko (2011) also identifies a second alteration in Highsmith’s original plot: Ripley’s homosexuality is by far way more noticeable and pronounced in the screen than it was in the book (p. 19). This author signals how in Highsmith’s description of the character, Ripley’s homosexuality is nothing but a subtext “that runs beneath the surface of Tom’s strange and often psychopathic behaviour” and that “implicitly explains his murderous actions” (p. 20). Minghella, however, chose to make Ripley’s homosexuality an unconcealed trait. Yet the director also allows his character “to develop a number of complexities that stem from his desire to become something, and someone, he is not—namely a straight socialite

with enough money to buy rather than beg for social acceptance” (Poluyko, 2011, p. 20). In fact, Minghella himself expressed his concern about the reductiveness of Ripley’s sexuality. For him, the film is not about a gay man, or a psychopath and it is definitely not about a homosexual killer in any way, rather it is an investigation of what occurs to anyone who loses faith in themselves and yearns for a life and identity that is not their own (Stayton, 2013, pp. 60-61). However, the explicitness of homosexuality in Minghella’s adaptation is not to be forgotten, as I will explain below.

*The Talented Mr Ripley* is not the only version of Highsmith’s novel, René Clément also adapted Ripley’s tribulations in 1960 and named the film *Plein Soleil*. At this point, thus, it is interesting to mention how homosexuality, which has progressively evolved in its explicitness probably thanks to the gay movements which took place during the 1980s, is represented in each of these films. Interestingly enough, and as Williams (2004) points out, Minghella’s film is not a remake of Clément’s since both of them interpret the source text differently (p. 49). Either way, both directors have been subject to criticism for the closure of their films. They are thought to condemn their respective protagonists and anti-heroes only for their “sexual and social deviation” (Williams, 2004, p. 50). Clément presents Ripley (Alain Delon) in an apparent ‘happy-ending’ after securing both his heterosexuality and social status by establishing a relationship with Philippe’s ex-girlfriend, Marge (Marie Laforêt). This ending, although abruptly disrupted by the apparition of Philippe’s (Maurice Ronet) body, closes possible questions of sexual ambiguity (Williams, 2004, p. 50). Minghella, on the other hand, avoids questions of this nature by making Ripley (Matt Damon) overtly gay. In fact, the director includes a new character completely absent from Clément’s *Plein Soleil*: Peter Smith-Kingsley (Jack Davenport). Smith-Kingsley is a minor character in Highsmith’s novel who, interestingly enough, is given more prominence in Minghella’s work as a fully developed homosexual character. His personality is captivating because he is not only palpably homosexual but because he is openly comfortable with his sexuality—a fact that makes Ripley more uncomfortable

with his own queerness (Stoddart, 2013, p. 227). This character becomes Ripley's unfortunate partner and a victim of Tom's successful maneuvers to avoid the consequences of his actions. Yet, as Minghella (2000) himself points out, the film has "a moral imperative: you can get away with murder, but you don't really get away with anything. Ripley, always looking for love, has to kill his opportunity for love" (para. 16). For the director, Tom's desperate desire of social acceptance might be fulfilled; he might get away with murder, but Minghella is clear about this: Ripley will never be able to fulfill his romantic ambitions.

Highsmith, as Clément and Minghella, also had a complicated relationship with her character's sexual identity. As noted by Highsmith's biographer Andrew Wilson, both directors struggled with Ripley's evasive sexuality in the same way that Highsmith generally denied that Ripley is gay. However, she recognised that he is "a little bit homosexual" but always reminding that "he must never be quite queer" (in Williams, 2004, p. 52). This is considerably interesting if we take into account that Highsmith herself was queer and got the inspiration for *The Talented Mr Ripley* when wandering the streets of Positano with her then-lover Ellen Hill (Prigot, 2014, p. 22). Thus, this absolute negation of queerness surprises us, especially bearing in mind that Highsmith's antiheroes often deviated from society's standards (Prigot, 2014, p. III). In the 1950s, normalcy was clearly described as 'white', 'heterosexual', 'middle or upper-class' and, undoubtedly, 'free of sexual deviation of any kind.' Therefore, this makes us wonder why Highsmith insisted on denying Ripley's homosexuality, especially acknowledging that she intended to construct her anti-heroes as deviant from society's expectations as possible.

Consequently, this BA thesis argues that the film explores several ways in which toxic masculinity impacts the lives of female and queer characters. For that matter, I will examine the different relationships that the protagonists establish and how they affect their behaviour, especially bearing in mind that Minghella's film indeed reaffirms homosexuality as opposed to Highsmith—who tried to

conceal this aspect— and Clément —who eliminated any queer trace in his adaptation. As Minghella brings forth the most sordid aspects of these relationships, I will analyse them separately. First, I will focus on the relationship between Tom and Dickie, then, in that of Tom and Peter and, finally, I will deal with the relationship that Tom has with the women of the film.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **1. 1. Masculinity**

Masculinity is a central, or even a defining, element in many people's lives. It has controlled —and still controls sometimes— many aspects of society. When we think about masculinity, we may define it as the “opposite of femininity” (Reeser, 2011, p. 1) while relating it with words like ‘strong’, ‘macho’, ‘confident’ or ‘power’. Either way, masculinity is no longer characterised by means of this stereotype since towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there has been a shift. According to Haywood et al. (2017), men are being disempowered as a result of several cultural, economic and social transformations (p.12). These authors explain this idea arguing that the collapse of heterosexual marriages and heteronormativity has contributed to the fracture of older and traditional forms of heterosexual masculinities. However, popular and cultural accounts of how masculinity should be reflected offer “a range of confusing and contradictory understandings of what it means to be a man” (Haywood et al., 2017, p. 12). Reeser (2011) gives an example of this and highlights how a crying man might be such an oddity. When thinking about this image, our preconceptions lead us to think about his masculinity —or lack of it. We tend to have a clear idea of what is to be ‘masculine’ or, lacking that, to be ‘effeminate’. That is, the complete absence of masculinity. In words of Reeser (2011), “our assumptions of natural masculinity are greatly complicated” (p. 2). For example, toxic masculinity is still widely present nowadays. For Sculos (2017), toxic masculinity is used “to refer to a loosely interrelated collection of norms, beliefs and behaviours associated with masculinity, which are harmful to women, men, children and society more broadly” (p. 2). Indeed, the term ‘toxic’ foresees the harmfulness of the actions and ideologies that make up this notion of masculinity (Sculos, 2017, p. 2). As signalled by Salter (2019), toxic masculinity has been used as an all-rounder explanation for male violence and misogyny in recent years. In addition, many contemporary forms of entertainment have not contributed to neither a mindful nor a progressive conception of



masculinity since some of them still reinforce patriarchal and heteronormative stereotypes and behaviours. For instance, the increasing popularity of superheroes movies in recent years has supposed the release of several blockbuster films with males in the leading roles. These male-centred films generally revolve around a (super)hero or “lone wolf” who is the only one capable of protecting the world from the myriad threats that it faces as well as it is the only able to protect those who can only be saved by the hero’s extreme force and masculinity (De Dauw & Connell, 2020, p. 6).

Therefore, in the subsequent sections I would like to comment on the idea of masculinity and how it interweaves with gender and queerness since, as Bruzzi (2013) points out, masculinity has a “cobweb form” (p. 5). That is, masculinity does not only determine most of men’s toxic behaviours, but it also has to do with the way in which virile men create bonds with either women or the queer community. To explore this phenomenon, this dissertation will focus on Anthony Minghella’s film *The Talented Mr Ripley* in which toxic masculinity heavily affects the relationship of the protagonists and their decisions.

### **1.1.1. Masculinity and Women**

Undoubtedly, one of the most important accomplishments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the redefinition of gender as a social construction (Gardiner, 2004, p. 35). It has been widely discussed that there are a number of assumptions and presuppositions that are somehow taken for granted. Or in words of Lorber (1991), “gender is so pervasive that [...] we assume it is bred into our genes” (p. 111). Gender constructions claim that women are ‘weak’ or ‘irrational’, that they should take care of children at the same time as they must be passive and, above all, pure. In short, this is reflected in the Victorian notion of “the Angel in the House”. This notion, developed by poet Coventry Patmore, represented an ideal woman that was powerless and submissive but also sympathetic and graceful. On the other hand, men are thought to be ‘masculine’, ‘leaders’ or ‘confident’. Or as Spence &

Helmreich (1979) point out, the division between men and women is generally assumed to have various temperamental characteristics and abilities or “distinctive sets of attributes whose existence is used to justify the perpetuation of gender stereotypes” (p. 4). This type of gender stereotypes are defined by Spence & Helmreich (1979) as “clusters of socially desirable attributes stereotypically considered to differentiate males and females and thus to define the psychological core of masculine and feminine personalities” (p. 3). For these authors, these bipolar opposites have dominated the social paradigm until recently. Nevertheless, the different movements for women’s rights that have predominated the past century, including the #MeToo Movement (2017), the Anita Hall Effect (1991) or the March for Women’s Lives (2004), have contributed to the improvement in both men’s and women’s consciousness and conditions. According to Gardiner (2004) this progress has amended long-standing assumptions about inherent characteristics of both sexes at the same time as it has changed the division of people into the binary categories of ‘men’ and ‘women’ (p. 35).

### **1.1.2. Masculinity and Queerness**

As Edwards (2004) notes, “on the face of it, gay masculinities are a contradiction in terms: gay negates masculine” (p. 51). This long-lasting assumption; however, is sort of paradoxical. Edwards (2004) explains that the defining feature of gay men is that they prefer men over women or, ultimately, that they favour masculine over feminine (p. 51). Indeed, this was further reinforced during the 70’s when many gay men rejected what they deemed as “effeminate” in favour of what they saw as “hyper masculine” or “macho”. Therefore, we might conclude that there is a “sense of contradiction surrounding male homosexuality and masculinity” (Edwards, 2004, p. 51). Homosexuals have been regarded as “a crime against nature” and even as “a manifestation of inherited psychological degeneration” (Greenberg, 1990, p. 14). However, nowadays, these ideas have progressed and there are different and varying perceptions of homosexuality. As stated by

Greenberg (2004), numerous experts have suggested that these perceptions and responses have to do with a “society’s social structure” (p. 14). And this social structure is based and constructed around different and dynamic beliefs and attitudes. Indeed, numerous sociocultural researchers have attempted to analyse and explain the different attitudes towards homosexuality since the very beginning of Christianity. Importantly enough, one of the most studied turning points in history are the gay movements that brought about gay liberation during the 70s and 80s. As stated by Edwards (2004), gay liberation defended “the importance of coming out” (p. 56) or, in other words, of visibility. Queer people were encouraged to defend themselves against the shame and humiliation that surrounded their sexual preference. Gay men and women, long silenced, resurfaced with vengeance on the historical stage (Kissack, 1995, p. 104). Yet, we still find a debate around whether the post-liberation gay man is either “the emblem of a celebration of uninhibited sexual expression or simply the latest incarnation of sexual oppression” (Edwards, 2004, p. 58). Indeed, and as mentioned above, homosexuality is sometimes described as a refutation of masculinity, and given this assumption, homosexuality must be the antagonistic definition of masculinity. Or in words of Herek (1986), “to be ‘a man’ [...] is to be homophobic — that is, to be hostile toward homosexual persons in general and gay men in particular” (p. 563). This stance defines the tension between homosexuality and heteronormativity that has existed until recently —and somehow still exists.

### **1.1.3. Masculinity and Cinema**

The cinematic industry has depicted throughout the years what a man is supposed to be like. According to Peberdy (2011), manliness is something thought to be both proved and acted out (p. 4). Movements, gestures and attitudes are aimed to reassert virility. In addition, this author highlights how varying male identities are indeed defined and portrayed. In fact, these different types of manly performance are used to reinforce masculine discourse. We might find the ‘effeminate’ man, the

‘father and husband’, the ‘bad boy’, the ‘comical’ man or the ‘good-natured’. For Peberdy (2011), thus, “discourse and representation come together via the performance of male social roles, roles that are constructed and maintained by a multitude of cultural and media forms that are then taken up in screen enactments” (p. 4). In addition, Bruzzi (2013) also states that cinema or, more specifically, “men’s cinema”, uses both style and *mise-en-scène* to convey masculinity and not just to represent it (p. 5). Films like *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol* (Brad Bird, 2011) or *Die Hard* (John McTiernan, 1988) transfer Hollywood’s masculine ideology onto their aesthetic.

All of this has been widely studied in Film Studies since, as argued by Powrie et al. (2004), it is impossible to analyse a number of film genres —westerns, film noir, gangster films, etc— without delving into masculinity (p. 1). Yet, as in real life, cinematic ideas of masculinity are in danger. For Peberdy (2011), it is impossible to deny the “instability of the male image” threatened by the permeation of a discourse of masculinity crisis and feminist vindication during the 90’s and 2000’s (p. 4). Furthermore, Powrie et al. (2004) contribute to this idea by stating that both historical and social changes, either based in class, gender or ethnicity, have destabilised patriarchal hegemony by showing that “masculinities are various [and] shifting” (p. 14). Virility should not fall into the reductiveness of labels. Masculinity is bounded to culture, and as such, it evolves with it. Consequently, *The Talented Mr Ripley* will serve as an example to explore and reflect on these issues throughout this essay.

### 3. Homosexual Desire: Tom and Dickie

The importance and weight of Tom Ripley's homosexuality in Minghella's adaptation of *The Talented Mr Ripley* (1999) is unquestionable. Indeed, Shannon (2004) defines Minghella's Tom as "first and foremost a gay man besieged by a hostile, straight world and only secondarily an American social climber on the hunt in Europe" (p. 18). Nevertheless, in a way, the film subverts the sexual connotations of Highsmith's by using Ripley's class to critique contemporary ideas of sexuality where Highsmith used the character's sexuality to critique ideas of class (Shannon, 2004, p. 18). What strikes us most, as a contemporary audience, is the ambiguity of Highsmith's text where Minghella chose to be crystal clear. Perhaps, the most noteworthy (homosexual) relationship in the film is that of Dickie and Tom. In the novel we witness Tom's passion and desire for Dickie, but we are never assured if this passion is purely admiring or if it involves some kind of sexual implication. However, when watching Minghella's adaptation we are left with no doubts about Ripley's sexual orientation: he is gay and, of course, he is in love with Dickie (Jude Law). In fact, and as pointed out by Shannon (2004), Tom kills Dickie in an outburst of passion (p.18). "I have been absolutely honest with you... about my feelings" he confesses to the American playboy whose only response is "boring". Ripley opens his heart but Dickie icily answers that he "loves Marge" and plans to marry her, thus removing any homosexual questions that may have arisen about his sexuality after Tom, too hesitant to verbalize his sentiments, tells Dickie: "you love me". However, there is no chance that Dickie Greenleaf is homosexual or that he would ever choose Tom Ripley over Marge (Gwyneth Paltrow) —or any woman. The film consolidates Dickie's heterosexuality with a romantic relationship with Margaret Sherwood and with an affair with an alluring Italian woman. Interestingly enough, and as signalled by Shannon (2004), Minghella's script added the figure of the Italian woman, missing from Highsmith's pages (p. 18). This Italian character's role might be minor but is certainly significant. Dickie's affair with Silvana (Stefania Rocca) serves to prove his promiscuous

behaviour, leaving no room for the negotiation of his masculinity. In fact, assuring his virility once again, Dickie chooses glamorous and feminine Marge over awkward, “leech-like” Tom. This, then, creates a dichotomy that will haunt Ripley: Marge is Dickie’s lover while he is the scorned and shunned homosexual outsider (Shannon, 2004, p. 18). Yet, these clear-cut distinctions are a creation of the 1990’s screenplay and not a part of the original 1950’s novel.

In *The Talented Mr Ripley* film adaptation there are a number of changes that Minghella decided to introduce in order to reflect the (sexual) reality of the time. In the words of Shannon (2004), in the transition from novel to film, “diametrical oppositions are twisted into new contexts, not entirely in keeping with the spirit of Highsmith's fiction, [but to] serve as ironically apt barometers of the eras that produced both film and novel” (p. 18). Minghella was reluctant with the character of Tom since he feared that Ripley’s crimes would become controversial as connected with his sexual orientation in a time of sexual awakening and recognition. For instance, the film’s climax —and most memorable scene— presents Dickie and Tom sailing in the middle of the sea in a small boat. The pair embarks in a conversation about their friendship that eventually develops into the fatal argument that precipitates Dickie’s murder. The scene quickly unfolds as Tom tries to unmask Dickie’s sexual orientation. Tom says: “The funny thing is I’m not pretending to be somebody else... and you are [...] I know there is something. That evening when we played chess, for instance, it was obvious” (Figures 1 and 2). These accusations question Dickie’s toxic, rooted heterosexuality,



**Figure 1.** Tom’s suggestion of bathing together, while he plays chess with a naked Dickie, attacks Dickie’s masculinity.



**Figure 2.** Dickie, offended by the suggestion, gets out of the bathtub.

unleashing his rage and so his answer is categorical: “You give me the creeps. [Saying] *Dickie, Dickie, Dickie* like a little girl”. It is then, when Tom, whose masculinity has been confronted, explodes. Interestingly enough, Tom does not attack Dickie until his virility has been questioned. In



**Figure 3.** Dickie, on the defensive, positions himself menacingly above Tom, who did not expect this reaction.

fact, as pointed out by Shannon (2004), Dickie strikes Tom (Figure 3) before Tom even lifts a hand against him, making Ripley get defensive (p. 19). However, being compared to a “little girl” by Dickie, Tom is faced with his true identity which is too painful for him to endure, exploiting thus into incommensurable anger and killing Greenleaf in the process. Dickie’s dismissive response to Tom’s admitted love is, for

Shannon (2004), the trigger of both men’s downfall (p. 19). What is particularly interesting about this is Minghella’s presentation of his closeted character; the film does not blame Tom’s homosexuality for his violent reaction, rather, it blames a bigoted society that refuses to allow Ripley to live openly as a gay man (Shannon, 2004, p. 19). Therefore, what the film implies is that Tom’s hasty murders are not a product of his sexuality but rather the result of society’s heteronormative standards, which demand the repression of his homosexual inclination.

Ripley does not identify with heterosexuality; he is disgusted by any expression of it. This thus classifies him as homosexual —something that he deeply resists and denies (Straayer, 2004, p. 370). He craves for Dickie’s attention; he wants to travel alone with him, abandoning Marge in the fictional Italian village of Mongibello. Either way, as signalled by Straayer (2004), Ripley “fantasizes a committed, idyllic bond between Greenleaf and himself that transcends sexuality” (p. 370). This kind of platonic, non-sexual bond has been defined through the concept of *homosociality*. This notion has been traditionally understood as social ties between people of the same sex

(Hammaren & Johansson, 2014, p. 1). Nevertheless, these bonds do not necessarily imply sexual intercourse of any kind. In fact, a common use of the term is as applied on studies of male friendship, male bonding and fraternity orders (Hammaren & Johansson, 2014, p. 1). However, as argued by Hammaren & Johansson (2014), the oversimplification of what homosociality implies as an essentially descriptive term only serves to uphold patriarchy (p. 1). Males compete and identify with other males in order to gain their approbation by displaying such markers of manhood like “occupational achievement, wealth, power and status, physical prowess and sexual achievement” (Kimmel 1997; Flood 2008). Indeed, an especially important aspect within the homosocial construction of male heterosexual relationships is the connection between (hetero)sexual experience and masculine status (Flood, 2008, p. 345). Either way, although as mentioned, homosociality is thought to be non-sexual, the potential homoerotic element is difficult to overlook (Flood, 2008, p. 354). Thus, homosociality might also be understood as the expression of repressed homosexual inclination. Therefore, heterosexual men’s homophobia, their aversion to and hatred of homosexuality, can be explained, in the words of Pease (2002) as the “suppression of homoerotic desire” concealed underneath the notion of homosociality (in Flood, 2008, p 354). In *The Talented Mr Ripley*, Tom desires Dickie’s *dolce-far-niente-life*<sup>1</sup>, but he also desires him sexually. Consequently, as explained by Straayer (2004), homosociality, in the case of Ripley, “precipitates homosexual panic” in his repressed homosexual facet (p. 370). Importantly enough, however, murder is not the enactment of homosexual panic but the means by which Ripley avoids it (Straayer, 2004, p. 370). Homosexual (or gay) panic is defined as the situation in which a straight man, accused of murdering another man, alleges that he killed the man because the latter, as a gay person, made an unsolicited sexual approach (Lee, 2008, p. 471). This is the legal definition. However, the psychiatric understanding of homosexual panic is radically opposite. As pointed out by Comstock (1992), the

---

<sup>1</sup> As defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, *dolce far niente* is the pleasant relaxation in carefree idleness.



patient's gay desires are unrestrained and interfere with his socially acceptable ideals. In fact, same-sex situations [...] to whom the patient might be exposed may trigger or exacerbate gay impulses (in Straayer, 2004, p. 376-377). Therefore, Ripley successfully escapes homosexual panic by murdering Dickie: he will no longer be exposed to same-sex situations that may unleash his homosexual impulses, at least with Dickie. By killing the American playboy, Tom is saving himself. Furthermore, he also obtains his yearned heteronormativity. He becomes Dickie, but not only that, he *is* Dickie and thus he ultimately possesses Greenleaf's desired heterosexuality.

#### **4. Homosexual Relationship: Tom and Peter**

As mentioned, the importance of homosexuality in the film is undeniable. However, homosexuality is confronted with (toxic) masculinity, thus affecting the way in which characters understand their relationships. Minghella chose to make homosexual traits rather more visible than Highsmith or Clément in his film adaptation *Plein Soleil*. In fact, one of the relationships he included and that is fully identifiable as gay is that of Peter Smith-Kingsley and Tom Ripley. After murdering Dickie, Tom has apparently succeeded in his impersonation of the American playboy at the same time as he has secured heterosexuality. In words of Straayer (2004), Ripley does not have to worry about being labelled a 'sissy' as long as he is Greenleaf (p. 378). Nevertheless, the apparition of Smith-Kingsley disrupts his plans; he reawakens in Tom the homosexual passion he thought he had carefully buried away (Polyuko, 2011, p. 33). Therefore, Ripley's homosexual impulses threaten the desired stability he has achieved.

After murdering Greenleaf, Tom moves to Rome where he successfully assumes Dickie's luxurious life. However, he has to face a number of difficulties during his Roman tour. There, Ripley must master the art of evasion; he has to be Dickie or Tom by turns depending on whom he is with, trying to expertly cover his tracks (Segal, 2008, p. 36). Nevertheless, his plans are soon disrupted. Freddie Miles (Philip Seymour Hoffman), Dickie's long-term friend, discovers the scheme when he unexpectedly appears at Greenleaf's home and finds Tom instead. Ripley thus has to return to his role as Dickie's tortured friend and tells Freddie that he will find Dickie having lunch in a restaurant downtown. However, although Freddie has seen far too much already—Ripley is wearing Dickie's shoes and jewelry, Tom hopes he can escape and flee before Freddie ever returns (Straayer, 2004, p. 378). Either way, his plans are frustrated the moment in which Freddie leaves the building and encounters the landlady who greets Dickie from the stairs: "*ciao* Dickie" she says to an astonished Tom Ripley. Resultantly, all the pieces start to fit for Freddie who returns to the apartment thus

hastening his tragic end. There, Tom is waiting for him and without forethought, he hits Freddie to death. On the surface, this second murder could be explained as Ripley's means to protect himself. Freddie has discovered Ripley passing as Dickie, so Tom must kill him. However, on a deeper level, Ripley has been caught wearing Greenleaf's personal objects, which may insinuate that both have a secret, homosexual relationship. To reinforce this suggestion, Freddie spitefully wonders whether Tom and Dickie live together. Freddie has either discovered that "Ripley was passing as Greenleaf, or that Ripley and Greenleaf had been passing as straight" (Straayer. 2004, p. 378). Consequently, Ripley kills Freddie not only because he has discovered his fraud but also because Freddie has found homosexuality in him and Dickie. In words of Straayer (2004), "Ripley kills Freddie for sneering at the man Ripley recently killed" (p. 379). He is not only a psychopath, he is also ashamed of his sexual orientation, which triggers his homicidal impulses.

Nevertheless, Freddie is not the only obstacle he has to face. After this second killing, he, again, gets away with murder and moves to Venice where his new friend Peter Smith-Kingsley lives. Smith-Kingsley is, as mentioned, an openly gay man and orchestra director who quickly becomes Tom's male lover. Indeed, during their first encounter in Rome and in presence of a preoccupied Marge, Minghella leaves little ambiguity about the nature of their attraction to one another (Decker, 2012, p. 193). As can be seen in 'Figure 4' and 'Figure 5', this first encounter occurs at the opera, where, interestingly enough, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Oregon* is being represented leading Tom to shed real tears during the scene in which Onegin shoots his best friend Lensky (Decker, 2012, p. 194).



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

This sensibility surprises both Meredith Lodge (Cate Blanchett), Tom's companion, and her aunt who expresses that Freddie Miles has "I hate opera' tattooed on the chest". This remark suggests that Tom, passing as Dickie, an American, young and carefree man, like Freddie, would not enjoy opera either. As pointed out by Decker (2012), "[t]his declared taste for opera might raise suspicions about his sexuality" (p. 194). Meredith is too naïve to see the implications of Tom's interest but Marge is not so innocent. Neither is Peter, who after just two encounters, receives Tom in Venice with open arms. Their relationship follows, as described by Poluyko (2004), the same pattern as Ripley's relationship with Dickie, with one important difference: Tom's desire is reciprocated this time (p. 34). However, Ripley, closeted and repressed because of heteronormative impositions, tries to keep Peter at a distance by making reference to the "demons" that he keeps in a "basement". For Peter, Tom's words are difficult to read as anything other than the initial steps towards a confession of his romantic attraction for him, and by extension of his homosexual identity (Decker, 2012, p. 195). This interpretation is enhanced by the usage of words like "key", "building" "door" or "basement" that serve as phallic symbols at the same time that point out to a word: closet. In fact, this "basement" functions as one of the many closet symbols that constitute a dominant motif throughout the film. These closet symbols are equally used literally —via shots of doors— and metaphorically —via references to Ripley's secret basement (Straayer, 2004, p. 370). Therefore, Peter does not cease his attempt to seduce Tom "in much the same fashion that Ripley [tried to] pursue Dickie, finally earning the symbolic key to Ripley's [basement], which comes in the form of a key to his apartment" (Poluyko, 2004, p. 33). Nevertheless, this happiness is ephemeral.

The relationship rapidly becomes a hindrance rather than a source of joy for Tom. While Peter is eager and able to provide Ripley with the opportunity to share mutual respect, affection, and acceptance, he barely knows Tom. He only acknowledges him as Tom Ripley. For Poluyko (2004), this supposes a problem "considering that Ripley's performative enactment of Dickie must be

sustained lest someone discover his deceit” (p. 34). And he certainly sustains this enactment, even if it means killing his only chance for love. The film ends with Peter and Tom, passing as himself, travelling on a ship to Greece. Peter, whom Tom has apparently started dating, seems to represent the happy ending he desired: Peter will be able to provide him the luxurious, upper-class life he craves, and their love seems reciprocal. However, perhaps the setting, a vessel in the middle of the sea, might point to another tragic ending —just like Dickie’s. In fact, when Tom thinks he is safe, Meredith Lodge appears in the same ship recognizing him as Dickie Greenleaf. The film positions Tom, then, between Peter, who loves him for whom he is, and Meredith, who might uncover his secret. However, his decision is clear: Peter is alone while Meredith travels with her family. To protect his secret, he must kill his partner. Uncontrollably sobbing, Tom strangles Peter in his cabin. Nevertheless, unlike the other murders in the film, Minghella does not explicitly show this killing. Instead, as pointed out by Decker (2012), the sounds of Peter’s murder are heard over a picture of Tom in his own cabin after the crime has been committed (p. 199). These sounds include Peter’s gentle enumeration of Ripley’s many qualities abruptly interrupted by the strangulation. This killing, although only inferred, proves how Tom wipes off his last remnants of humanity by killing the gentlest and most charming character in the film only to protect his machinations (Greven, 2018, p. 135). In addition, the music that subtly accompanies the scene, ‘You Don’t Know What Love Is’, is, according to Minghella (1999), “a reminder that Ripley’s journey into a nightmare of his own making is motivated by a longing to be loved at any cost” (in Poluyko, 2004, p. 34). For Poluyko (2004), the return of jazz music, which disappeared along with Dickie, suggests Tom’s return to improvisation (p. 34). Ripley, who thought that he had secured his future and somehow embraced his sexual orientation, is forced to kill his only opportunity for love.

## 5. Antagonistic Relationships: Tom, Marge and Meredith

In the last few pages, I have dealt with the weight of homosexuality and how it oppresses the tormented protagonist and his relationships with other men. However, it is also important to delve into the relationships Tom establishes with women throughout the film.

Marge is Dickie's sweetheart and wife-to-be. Interestingly enough, and as signalled by Shannon (2004), Marge and Dickie's non-sexual relationship in the novel is translated into a rather explicit sexual relationship (p. 20). Tom's initial contact with the couple is through his binoculars. Once in Mongibello, he observes the pair sunbathing on the deck of their boat while he practises his Italian. Eventually, the couple rises out of the sea and the camera progressively focuses on Dickie as a means of representing the objectification of the American playboy. "Questa è la mia faccia" <sup>2</sup> Tom repeats as he observes Dickie from his hotel room, somehow anticipating events to come (Williams, 2004, p. 57). Moments later, Tom forces his first encounter with the pair. Ripley wanders down the crowded beach and strikes up a conversation with the couple on the pretext that he knows Dickie from Princeton (Williams, 2004, p. 57). What is interesting about this first encounter is Marge's reaction to it. While Dickie mocks Tom for his white, almost greyish complexion "[implying] that there's something feminine about it as he compares [Ripley's] colouring to that of Marge, in the tradition of thought that deems that women should be pale" (Williams, 2004, p. 58), Marge invites him over for lunch. This innocent invitation points to certain empathy between Tom and Marge. She is the person Dickie intends to marry and thus the one who cements Dickie's heterosexuality. Therefore, we, as audience, might be led to think that the possessive and neurotic Tom may feel threatened by her presence. In the words of Straayer (2004), she is "the only hindrance to [both] men's bonding" (p. 369). Nevertheless, Tom finds in her a sort of support. She, like him, knows how it feels to be Dickie's favourite just to be eventually pushed into the background. Consequently, she consoles Tom

---

<sup>2</sup> Italian for 'this is my face'.

when he is relegated after Freddie Miles' arrival: with Dickie —she says— 'it's like the sun shines on you, and it's glorious. And then he forgets you and it's very, very cold [...] It's always the same whenever someone new comes into his life. Freddie, Fausto [...] Especially you ... and that's just the boys.' Tom seems to have found an ally in Marge. However, this alliance fades rapidly.

Marge does not hesitate when it comes to her relationship with Dickie. In words of Shannon (2004), she is “an independent and self-assured 1990s woman, sexually confident enough to make



**Figure 6**



**Figure 7.** Tom observes the couple's lovemaking which provokes his jealousy.

love to her boyfriend below deck on Dickie's boat while two men acquaintances wait above” (p. 20).

Obviously, this sex scene (Figure 6) awakens Tom's jealousy (Figure 7) teetering their mutual understanding. In addition, when confronted by

Dickie and asked if they really met in Princeton, Tom sees his plan compromised. However, Dickie

reacts compassionately after realizing Ripley's lie; he states that Tom has such good taste for a

Princeton student. "I'll take it as a compliment"

answers Tom, only for Dickie to celebrate his answer: "I knew it! [...] Marge and I had a bet".

This statement might look innocent but its meaning is crucial: it supposes Tom's realization that Marge is not his ally, but rather she is Dickie's. Tom, betrayed, will try to separate the couple. During the infamous boat scene, Tom refers to "the Marge problem" suggesting that she is a burden for their "friendship". Offended, Greenleaf sets forth his plans to marry Marge and unleashes his toxic behaviour. Being accused of homosexuality and seeing his fiancé offended by Tom, Dickie turns to violence. This finds an explanation in the predominant processes of male socialisation. For Hong

(2000) this socialization processes “inculcate in boys and men a hegemonic and limiting code of masculinity that intimately links traditional male gender roles with violence and, therefore, may predispose men to be perpetrators and victims of violence” (p. 269). Therefore, as already mentioned in this essay, this act triggers Dickie’s violence, which in turn precipitates his death at the hands of Tom. Either way, once Tom assumes Dickie’s identity, Marge will be the only threat to his fraud.

As pointed out by Shannon (2004), Marge is the only character in the film that fully identifies Tom as guilty (p. 20). For instance, after Dickie’s murder, Ripley returns to Mongibello in order to justify Dickie’s absence. Surprised, Marge interrogates him for further details about Greenleaf’s plans. He answers that he has been sent to retrieve Dickie’s possessions since the latter plans to stay in Rome for a while. "I don’t understand Dickie, Marge, so your guess is as good as mine" he says. Marge, bewildered, renounces to keep asking questions. However, she has seen something troubling in Tom's story that contradicts her fiancé's nature (Murphy & Walsh, 2018, p. 11). Leaving abruptly and without saying a word to Marge is not Dickie’s way of being. Therefore, from that point on, as stated by Murphy & Walsh (2018), “Marge will more insistently assert her claims, strenuously testing Tom’s deceptive capacities as she comes ever closer to uncovering the crimes Tom has committed” (p. 11). Either way, in spite of her suspicions, she is not believed by other people. Her opinion is devaluated, perhaps because of her condition as a woman. In fact, Shannon (2004) signals how the men of the film, Dickie’s father and investigator Alvin McCaron (Philip Baker Hall) particularly, ignore her speculations (p. 20). Herbert Greenleaf (James Rebhorn) justifies her reticences as simply "female intuition”, scorning her opinion in the affair. Paternally, he explains to Marge the differences between ‘what a fellow says to his sweetheart and what he’ll admit to another fellow’. She is even ignored when she discovers Dickie’s belongings in Tom’s rental house. For Dickie’s father there is no doubt that Dickie killed Freddie before killing himself —Dickie already attempted to murder a classmate while in Princeton. However, Marge is not so naïve: "I know it was



you. [...] I know you killed Dickie!" she tells Tom. But her voice, a female voice, is ignored. This finds an explanation in toxic masculinity since it generally undervalues female's voices and opinions. In fact, (toxic) masculinity is defined by Brittan (1989) as "male domination and as a set of gender relations under which the power of men is taken for granted" (in Ramazanoglu, 1992, p. 339). Thus, women have struggled to empower themselves on the face of subordination and male oppression (Ramazanoglu, 1992, p. 339). Yet, as a 1950's woman, a time in which emancipation was far from achieved, Marge's voice is neglected.

The other important female character in the film is Meredith Lodge. She is described by Williams (2004) as "Tom's unwitting nemesis" (p. 52). And she certainly is. Once in Naples, the pair coincide at the harbor. 'What is your secret?' she innocently asks Ripley referring to his single suitcase; little she knows about the many secrets that indeed haunt him. Startled, Tom responds: "Excuse me?". However, as signaled by Murphy & Walsh (2018), Tom quickly recovers his composure as Meredith changes the subject and introduces herself as "Meredith Randall" (p. 9). Almost instinctively, Tom introduces himself as "Dickie Greenleaf". While seemingly inconsequential, this act of deception proves to be pivotal since Meredith, member of the American expat community in Italy, is familiar with Dickie's name and knows some of his acquaintances (Murphy & Walsh, 2018, p. 10). In addition, she also wonders why he picks up his suitcase from the 'R' stand. Tom's lie seems to be ill-conceived. Impromptu, he answers that he travels under his mother's name. However, this little exchange forges a bond between the pair since Meredith also states that she travels under her mother's name "trying to shrug off the dress" of her real surname. The importance of this encounter seems unsubstantial since Meredith parts to Rome and Tom to Mongibello. However, Meredith will reappear later to upset Tom's plans.

Once in Rome and after killing Dickie, Tom, buying the clothes he needs to accomplish his impersonation of Dickie, is spotted by Meredith, who greets him. After the initial shock, Murphy &

Walsh (2018) explain how “Tom quickly composes himself, performing Dickie and creating a plausible narrative in which he has left Marge, while appearing to reciprocate Meredith’s romantic interest” (p. 11). In fact, as the scenes unfold, Meredith and Tom seem to become more and more intimate. Tom even agrees to attend the opera as Meredith’s companion. Nevertheless, the sudden encounter at the theatre with Marge and Peter Smith-Kingsley, who also knows Meredith, disrupt his plans. He needs to improvise. Thus, he runs away from the theatre with Meredith on the pretext of confessing that he still has feelings for Marge. To secure his plan, he arranges a “coincidental” encounter between Marge (accompanied by Peter) and Meredith in which the latter is taken aback when she learns that they are related not only through Peter, but also through Dickie, with whom she attended the opera (Murphy & Walsh, 2018, p. 12). Marge’s icy reaction surprises Meredith, making her leave hastily not before calming Marge stating that Dickie still loves her and that nothing happened between them at the opera. With this twisted resolution, as pointed out by Murphy & Walsh (2018), “Meredith departs, presumably for good, and [leaves] Tom, liberated, it appears, from both Meredith and suspicion” (p. 12). However, as Tom’s nemesis, Meredith will return to agitate his schemes.

After a couple of months, Tom (as himself), while travelling with Peter Smith-Kingsley to Greece, runs into Meredith who still thinks he is Dickie Greenleaf. He has to manage the situation somehow and, for Murphy & Walsh (2018), Meredith’s presence reawakens the dishonest swindler Peter had erased (p. 12). So, realising that she is accompanied by her family, Tom understands that killing her is not possible so there is only one course of option: he says that he is travelling solo, kisses her and promises to reunite with her later on. He has made a choice: he has to kill the one who loves him back as Tom Ripley. The inconvenient encounter with Meredith Lodge, who still recognises him as Dickie, forces him to destroy his only chance for romantic happiness. Meredith’s character brings to the forefront toxic behaviours that Tom thought he had carefully buried away with the plotted

disappearance of Dickie. Or in words of Murphy & Walsh (2018), the abrupt resurfacing of this character “foils Tom’s attempt to escape his past, ensuring his own tragic defeat and a future of [falsehood] (p. 1). That is, Ripley’s mastery to get away with murder is finally punished; his happy ending with Peter is left in a predicament and the only way out he sees is to resume the impersonation of Dickie he thought he had escaped.

## 6. Conclusion

The Tom Ripley that Highsmith captured in her novel has nothing to do with the Ripley that Minghella portrayed in his film. According to Bronski (2000), “Highsmith's Ripley is not a charming grifter who gets away with a crime, but a psychopathic, deeply disturbed homosexual [...]. Minghella’s Ripley, on the other hand, is far more palatable. He is softened, now more a confused gay man [...] more guilty of looking for love in all the wrong places —and being rejected— than of being an amoral killer” (p. 42). What Minghella wanted was to sever any connection between Tom’s behaviour and his sexuality. In fact, for fear of offending sensibilities, the studios advised him to conceal Tom’s visible orientation (Shannon, 2004, p. 18). He was encouraged to transfer Tom’s desire for Dickie to Marge as audiences would identify more with a heterosexual antihero. However, Minghella chose to adhere to his own vision. What he wanted to portray was, as argued by Shannon (2004), a Tom Ripley that “is a misunderstood casualty of sexual bigotry and provincialism and a victim of his own frustrated sexual desire” (p. 18). He falls for Dickie, whose heterosexuality, interestingly enough, is intensified with a sexual relationship with Marge that Highsmith did not consider. Nevertheless, the homoerotic component of Dickie and Tom’s friendship is irrefutable. In words of Decker (2012), “crucial to this story is Tom’s growing awareness of his sexual identity as a gay man” (p. 198). During the 50’s, it was not safe to live as an openly gay man —neither in the United States nor in Europe— and Tom Ripley, born in poverty, does not have the wealth or protection that may protect him from society’s prejudices and standards. Therefore, Minghella tried to make Tom’s choice visually explicit. One good example is Ripley’s solitary promenade through the streets of Rome. He walks across two men who are touching one other tenderly and one of whom is seated in the other's lap. As he walks by, Tom can't take his gaze away from them. In the next shot, Tom encounters two nuns. The representation of Tom’s conflict is clear-cut: same-sex love in a distant country or public repression of any sexual expression (Decker, 2012, p. 198).

Minghella aimed to criticise, in words of Dixon, “the kind of cinematic performative heterosexu[li]ty” that dominated Hollywood. This cinematic heterogemony<sup>3</sup> sustained that those things that are not heterosexual [...] constitute a threat to the prevailing social structure and, thus, must be eradicated (in Shannon, 2004, p. 20). However, Minghella aimed to challenge this notion. His audience is invited to denounce the conception that only straight culture is acceptable and thus to empathize with Tom’s plight (Shannon, 2004, p. 21). The director wanted to make clear that Tom’s decisions have little to do with his sexuality. In fact, he stresses the most wretched aspects of toxic masculinity that permeabilize society. Tom is not a killer because he is homosexual; he kills because the narrow-mindedness of society has forced him to repress his homosexuality. And not only that, Minghella also aimed to criticise the minor role of women that tend to be silenced. The Marge he portrays is far from naïve, but her findings are labelled as mere speculations because she is a woman. The director thus demonstrates how toxic masculinity is an incredible harm for different spheres like femininity, queerness and for men themselves.

---

<sup>3</sup> The term 'heterogemony' captures the pervasive power of heterosexual privilege, or 'heteronormativity'.

## 7. References

- Bronski, M. (2000). *The Talented Mr Ripley*. *Cinèaste*, 25(3), 41-43. Retrieved April 21, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41689264>
- Bruzzi, S. (2013). *Men's Cinema: Masculinity and Misè-en-scène in Hollywood*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Connell, R. W. (1992). A Very Straight Gay: Masculinity, Homosexual Experience, and the Dynamics of Gender. *American Sociological Review*, 735-751.
- De Dauw, E., & Connell, D. J. (Eds.). (2020). *Toxic Masculinity: Mapping the Monstrous in Our Heroes*. Univ. Press of Mississippi.
- Decker, T. (2012). The Musical Mr Ripley: Closeting a Character in the 1950s and a Film in the 1990s. *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image*, 6(2), 185-207.
- Edwards, T. (2004). Queering the Pitch? Gay Masculinities. In Kimmel, M. S., Hearn, J., & Connell, R. W. (Eds.), *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*. Sage Publications.
- Flood, M. (2008). Men, Sex, and Homosociality. *Men and Masculinities*, 10(3), 339-359.
- Gardiner, J. K., (2004). Men, Masculinities and Feminist Theory. In Kimmel, M. S., Hearn, J., & Connell, R. W. (Eds.), *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*. Sage Publications.
- Greenberg, D. F. (1990). *The Construction of Homosexuality*. University of Chicago Press.
- Greven, D. (2018). Queer Ripley: Minghella, Highsmith, and the Antisocial. *Patricia Highsmith on Screen*, 121-137.
- Hammaren, N., & Johansson, T. (2014). Homosociality: In Between Power and Intimacy. *Sage Open*, 4(1), 2158244013518057.
- Haywood, C., Johansson, T., Hammarén, N., Herz, M., & Ottemo, A. (2017). *The Conundrum of Masculinity: Hegemony, Homosociality, Homophobia and Heteronormativity*. Routledge.
- Herek, G. M. (1986). On Heterosexual Masculinity: Some Psychological Consequences of the Social Construction of Gender and Sexuality. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 29(5), 563-577.

- Hong, L. (2000). Toward a Transformed Approach to Prevention: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence. *Journal of American College Health*, 48(6), 269-279.
- Kissack T. (1995). Freaking Fag Revolutionaries: New York's Gay Liberation Front. *Radical History Review*, 62, 105-134.
- Lee, C. (2008). The Gay Panic Defense. *UC Davis L. Rev.*, 42, 471- 566.
- Minghella, A. (Director). (1999). *The Talented Mr Ripley* [Film] Paramount Pictures.
- Minghella, A. (2000, February 13). Truly, Madly, Ripley. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 21 from <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2000/feb/13/awardsandprizes.anthonyminghella>
- Murphy, T. P., & Walsh, K. S. (2018). Coincidence and Counterfactualty: The Multiple Plot Structure of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999). *Film Criticism*, 42(1).
- Peberdy, D. (2011). *Masculinity and Film Performance: Male Angst in Contemporary American Cinema*. Springer.
- Poluyko, K. (2011). Alternative Music: Jazz and the Performative Resignification of Identity in Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 19(1), 19-36.
- Powrie, P., Davies, A., & Babington, B. (Eds.). (2004). *The Trouble with Men: Masculinities in European and Hollywood Cinema*. Wallflower Press.
- Prigot, R. L. (2014). Murmurs, Masks, and Murder: Deviancy in Patricia Highsmith's "The Price of Salt", "The Talented Mr. Ripley", and "Strangers on a Train" (Senior Thesis). Retrieved July 16 from <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1423&context=theses>
- Ramazanoglu, C. (1992). What Can You Do With a Man?: Feminism and The Critical Appraisal of Masculinity. *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 339-350). Pergamon.
- Reeser, T. W. (2011). *Masculinities in Theory: An Introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Salter, M. (2019). The Problem with a Fight Against Toxic Masculinity. *The Atlantic*, 27.
- Sculos, B. W. (2017). Who's Afraid of 'Toxic Masculinity'. *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, 5(3), 1-5.
- Segal, N. (2014). Daughters, Death and Desire in *Fatal Attraction*, *The Piano* and *The Talented Mr Ripley*. *Acta Neophilologica*, 47(1-2), 31-39.

- Shannon, E. A. (2004). "Where Was the Sex?" Fetishism and Dirty Minds in Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. *Modern Language Studies*, 17-27.
- Spence, J. T., & Helmreich, R. L. (1979). *Masculinity and Femininity: Their Psychological Dimensions, Correlates, and Antecedents*. University of Texas Press
- Stayton, R. (2013). The Talented Mr Minghella. In Falsetto, M. (Ed.), *Anthony Minghella: Interviews*. (pp. 57 - 63). Univ. Press of Mississippi.
- Stoddart, S. F. (2013). The Talented Mr Ripley: A '50s Homme Fatal for the New Millenium. In P. Demory & C. Pullen (Eds.), *Queer Love in Film and Television: Critical Essays*. (pp. 219-232). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Straayer, C. (2004). The Talented Poststructuralist: Hetero-Masculinity, Gay Artifice, and Class Passing. *A Companion to Literature and Film*, 368-384.
- Williams, M. (2004). Plein Soleil and *The Talented Mr Ripley*: Sun, Stars and Highsmith's Queer Periphery. *Journal of Romance Studies*, 4(1), 47-63.