

Women Empowerment in Netflix Series *Unbelievable*

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Abstract

This research aims to reveal how *Unbelievable* portrays the differences between male and female detectives handling rape cases, to find out Duvall's, the female detective, factors, and motivation in helping women victims, and to find out the values of women empowerment in *Unbelievable*. The research used qualitative method. Reader response, subjective criticism, and women empowerment were the bases theories used in the research. The data are sentences and conversations that show differences in treatment, mindset, factors and motivation, as well as the empowerment of the female main character. There are three results of this study; (1) three differences covering the victim treatment, investigation model, and the mindset between male and female detectives handling rape cases; sensitivity to the mental condition of the victim, clarity of providing investigative information, the efficiency of the investigation system, and assessment of the case and rape victims. (2) Duvall's factors and motivation include self-confidence, empathy, protestant work ethic, and Christian faith. (3) Duvall's success in bringing justice has given strength to victims and other values such as economic independence, freedom to get an education and career paths, balance roles at home and at work, are a reflection of women empowerment.

Keywords: women empowerment, *Unbelievable*, reader-response, subjective criticism

Introduction

In literature and popular culture, we may find a message that the author or filmmaker wants to deliver to the readers, explicitly or implicitly. The message includes many aspects of life such as socials, politics, and spiritual. Popular culture is influenced by mass media in the modern era that then absorbs in the everyday lives of a certain society (Delaney, 2007). Because of that reason, it has its way of influencing every individual's attitude to certain topics. Popular culture is realized in film, short movies, drama, music, etc. Both literary work and popular culture are



delivering a story and conveying message to educate, criticize as well as to entertain people.

Unbelievable, a Netflix TV Series film that the researchers chose to be analyzed, is based on a true story, this film presents the reality of the rape incidents, and brings viewers to see from various points of view. It is seen from the victims and their psychological condition before, during, and especially post-incident, detectives with every efforts and every decision-making process, the people around the victims, to the bitter reality about the inconsistent justice system that has been experienced by victims of rape. This film contains a lot of feminism elements, which involves women in oppressed and cornered positions, and also strong female characters who have succeeded to help uncovering the rape case.

Focusing on Duvall, the female detective, in the *Unbelievable*, there is something special about this character. Working in the field of law enforcement as a female detective, from the attitudes, thoughts, efforts made, even if viewed from her personal life and values, make the researchers feel that Duvall is a reflection of empowered woman. This film is detailed in various aspects of woman power and gender equality in terms of work, economy, and freedom of life choices. With this film, women are expected to realize that they are able to work without being seen as inferior beings, that they have the same potential, and are able to realize the dreams and lives they want.

Around the world, as a result of overburdened with work and of their lack of power and influence, women are facing threats to their lives, health, and well-being (UNFPA, 2004). Patriarchal ideology brings an understanding of the limitations that women can and cannot do, and that makes women considered weak, inferior, their freedoms are deprived and limited. The depiction through films and mass media of police figures, for example, is always shown as men's job and rarely shown as women. This is a reflection of how society still considers power to be positive for men and negative for women (Muhlhausen, 2019). From 2019 Gallup survey in the United States, the participants refer to an ideal home setting that men work full time and get paid, while women take care of the house and children (Donner, 2020). In this way, women are limited only in the domestic sphere and should not get personal achievements outside the house, because they are accountable for and must focus on household chores. In fact, empowering and giving autonomy to women is essential for the achievement of sustainable development (Tobergte & Curtis, 2004).

To reveal women empowerment in *Unbelievable*, it applies reader-response theory and subjective criticism. Reader-response theory is one of the theories that focuses on the readers or the audiences' response to literary works based on their interpretation and experiences in reading text. According to Rosenblatt (1978), the transactional theory describes the relationship between the text and the reader that the meaning of the text does not dwell only inside the content or inside the reader. She proposed the importance of a text happens because of the exchange between the reader and the written word. The exchange among the reader and the text proposes an equal, or common, relationship between the reader and the literary text. During this exchange, the text acts as a stimulus for the reader, who reacts individually, as emotions, individual connections, and recollections become possibly the most important factors during the reading process (Demeny, 2012).



Iser states that text as a potential structure that is ‘concretized’ by the readers that relate to their personal experiences, values, and norms. The ‘meaning’ in this theory placed on expectations and adaptations which brought in to the reader’s mind in the reading processes (Iser, 1980).

In finding a meaning of a text, reader-response focuses on the reader's interpretation. Reader-response enables readers to create meaning for themselves. The reader here as the film reader that is different from the cinema viewer. The film reader is the active audience that looks for the deeper meaning of the film. On the other hand, the cinema viewer is the passive audience that finds the film as the entertainment. The meaning created by each individual is a legitimate literary meaning. This approach certainly encourages readers to relate the experiences they have had with the text they are reading to get meaning. Subjective criticism, led by David Bleich is one of the reader-response approaches based on psychology. His approach encourages readers to emotionally respond to a literature which then their responses are interpreted into decision about a meaning (Resh, 1987). Bleich distinguished between real objects and symbolic objects. A printed text of literary work is a real object. However, the thoughts, the ideas, and language itself when the reader reads in that printed text is a symbolic object, because it occurs in the conceptual field, by all that mean it is in the reader’s mind. The reason why Bleich mentions reading symbolization that associated with feelings, thoughts, memories that occur when we read as a subjective reaction of the printed words is because our identification and perception of the text create conceptual meaning, symbolic, in our mind as we read. He calls it the interpretation of re-symbolization. Re-symbolization invites us as the reader to explain the symbols in the text that occurs when we read and produce a desire to illustrate. Re-symbolization also includes our explanation of a text; our response to a literary work, whether we like it or not, with the text or our interpretation of that text.

Women Empowerment

The following notions are the bases to analyze *Unbelievable* in discussing women empowerment. The main female character of the movie, Detective Duvall is depicted a woman who applies women empowerment values. Here, it discusses the concept and categories of women empowerment.

Women empowerment concept is always exciting and catches researchers’ attention for further discussion. Feminism is closely related to this topic. Women have suffered to fight for their rights to get their freedom to decide their lives for themselves. Different treatment, rights, income gaps, education, and job opportunities, are some of the examples of inequality women faced in society even today. Also, they have become victims of abuse, persecution, violence, rape, human trafficking, poverty, and ill-treatment. Seeing the injustice that befell them, women fight for their right of their freedom; freedom to gain education, freedom to make an income independently, freedom to make life choices without feeling "owned" by others. By the time, the increasing number of women who can get an education which in turn leads to higher self-confidence and knowledge, women realize their capability, power, and potential. “Women Power” is the basis of the women empowerment movement which carries the spirit and encouragement about independence, self-confidence, and strength from within.



The absence of an absolute definition of empowerment makes various fields of study interpret it in a narrow sense. Many academics tried to define empowerment based on their knowledge and interpretations, such as self-control, self-esteem, self-strength, personal choice, self-power, the fighting capability for one's rights, independence, the decision-making power of their own, freedom, etc. These definitions are embedded in the local systems and values. However, there is no straightforward definition of empowerment because it depends on each individual. Batliwala (1993) said that no one has clearly defined empowerment, so it gives us a space to breathe to work it out in action terms before we have to set ourselves on that definition (Kabeer, 2001).

Mandal underlined the concepts of women empowerment, including women's sense of self-worth, the right to determine and have their choice, access to their resources and opportunities, the ability to regulate their own lives both inside and outside the house, and the ability to influence the social change to form a more just social and economic order (Mandal, 2013). It should be acknowledged that education and employment have a big influence on women's empowerment. Opportunities for higher education increase knowledge and criticality in thinking, and employment gives opportunities to work in various fields to improve household economic welfare.

There are five categories of empowerment. Those categories are social empowerment, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, political empowerment, and psychological empowerment (Mandal, 2013).

Social Empowerment

Social empowerment refers to the forces that strengthen women's social relationships and their social structures. The empowerment of women in the social aspect includes problems such as discrimination in society including disability, race, religion, or gender. In this sense, empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional social process that helps women gain control over their lives. This process fosters the power to use in their personal lives and society, by focusing on acting on issues they consider significant. Empowerment is a process whereby people, organizations, or groups that do not have power (1) realize the dynamics of power in their lives, (2) developing skills and gaining the capacity to control their lives, (3) practicing it by themselves, (4) without violating the rights of others, (5) as well as actively supporting the empowerment of others in their community (Mcwhirter, 1998).

Educational Empowerment

Education is believed to be something that can foster one's intellectual insight, welfare, and potential for empowerment. Education has an important role to create individuals' characters (Chakraborty, Chakraborty, Dahiya, & Timajo, 2018). Education produces self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-sufficiency consciousness; broadens the scope of thought, removes all bigotry, narrowness of thinking, superstitions, and creates a sense of friendship, tolerance, etc (Mandal, 2013). Further, women empowerment is a condition reflects a certain level of critical awareness of external reality and awareness of their internal thought construction and belief systems that affect their well-being in terms of gender justice and social justice; and a determination to use their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources to preserve their lives and maintain values that



ensure gender equality and at personal, social, economic, political and institutional levels.

Helpless people will feel the pressure from the outside that seems to rule and intimidate their lives. Due to their limitations in thinking and knowledge, they ultimately depend on the factors of luck, fate, destiny, and various supernatural beliefs. By getting a proper education, all of these problems can possibly be resolved. Empowerment means freedom from deprivation, equality in accessing information and knowledge (Mandal, 2013).

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is still very much needed. By working, women are expected to become “bread earners” and make money to meet at least their own needs, playing a role in an important aspect of the household where they can be economically independent. Economic empowerment is obtained through equality in employment opportunities, equality of benefits in organizations, equality in treatment, and equality of work environment (Mandal, 2013). The opportunity for women to work and earn money independently has a huge impact on household welfare. Not only in terms of meeting needs, but also reducing poverty levels in a sustainable manner. Earning independently, women are expected to improve the welfare of their families and get a better life for themselves and their families.

Political Empowerment

The participation of women in government circles and in all decision-making institutions is very important in empowering women. Women's voice need to be heard in the sphere of government, public policy and debate. From time to time, women have often been victims of mistreatment both inside and outside the house. It will be difficult to get rid of if women do not take roles in government and policy makers (Domingo et al., 2015). Without political participation, it will be increasingly difficult for women to increase the effectiveness, capacity and challenge of existing social structures and patriarchal ideologies.

Keep in mind that no one can empower others if it does not start from within oneself. Empowerment is not something that can be given by others, empowerment is someone's endeavor. The process occurs both individually and collectively because it is through involvement in a group where people begin to realize their potential and begin to develop their awareness to take action change. And it aims not to conquer the opposite sex or to dominate men, not to fight against other groups of women, but to channel equal power and authority between men and women and to create conditions free from the domination and control of certain people (Mandal, 2013).

Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment not only makes women transcend traditional systems and patriarchal ideologies, but also changes themselves and their subjectivity. The effect of the attainment received when women get education, involve themselves in educational institutions, join in the government fields, politics and decision-making institutions, have opportunities to explore various places and determine their life goals, earn their own income, these will have a positive psychological effect on women. They will feel that they have increased strength and self-confidence, recognize the awareness of their self-worth and control their income and bodies.



The opportunity to learn, discover a lot of things, and explore various places, can make women have significant personal development, which will make them more aware of what is happening around them and in the world than those who just live in the house (Mandal, 2013). This growth has given women maturity, self-respect, pride, and resilience because they have relied on independence and removed themselves from the traps of social structures for women traditionally, abandoned old ideas and completely transformed into independent, strong, hardworking and modern women. In the future, women will find it easier to adapt to circumstances and get satisfaction from their efforts in social life, work, household, economy, and personal situations.

Film Theory

Discussing film needs to comprehend the techniques to create it. There are elements of film theory. They are types of film, shots, angles, lighting, color, sound, editing, and mis-en-scene. To support the discussion, shots and angles are discussed below.

To create film needs to use types of shots and angles. There are eight types. They are extreme long shot, long shot, medium long shot, medium shot, close up, extreme close up, dutch angle, and bird's eye shot. Each shot has meaning to deliver to the audience (Heiderich, 2012).

Not only camera shots need to apply, camera angles are also used to create mood or effect. They are high-angle, low-angle, and over the shoulder, bird's eye, and dutch angle/tilt. High-angle is used to make the object look powerless. On the other hand, low-angle is to evoke strong effect. Over the shoulder is used to establish eyeline when characters talk each other. Bird's eye is to capture what happens in a location. Dutch angle or tilt is to create dramatic effect (Filippo, 2019).

Method

This research applied a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. The researchers conducted several research steps. First, the researchers watched the Netflix Mini-Series *Unbelievable* which was the main source to collect data. The researchers observed the shots and angles of the pictures in the film. Second, the researchers also read the film script to assist in gathering data, especially the utterances of Detective Duvall and Detective Parker the researchers wanted to observe. Third, the researchers identified the object observation related to actions and speeches conducted by the female detective. Fourth, the researchers began to identify what were the influencing factors, motivation, and empowerment of Duvall. The last, concluded the findings to find out the meaning of this film.

Findings and Discussions

The Differences of Detective Duvall and Detective Parker in Handling Rape Cases

The differences in treatment shown by Detective Duvall as the female detective and Detective Parker as the male detective in investigating rape cases are very visible in how they approached, collected evidences and testimonies from victims. The ways they investigate the cases show the dichotomy between male and female; rational and emotional. Men are assumed as rational creatures, while women are emotional creatures (Connell, 2005). In *Unbelievable*, the difficulty level and the



absence of evidence found at the crime scene make the only hope in collecting data of the rapist is from the rape victim's testimony. The difference is seen in the way they treat victims. Detective Parker as a man uses his rationality in investigating the case. He approaches the victim in an insensitive way to the victim's psychological condition. Second, he does not provide clarity in providing information of the investigation to the victim. Third, he applies an unsystematic and inefficient investigation system. And finally, his judgmental view on the rape victim.

On the other hand, Detective Duvall treats rape victims in a different way. First, she is very concerned about and sensitive to the psychological condition of the victim post the incident. Second, Detective Duvall shares the detail and the purpose of all of the investigations she conducted. Third, her investigation is very efficient. She takes a refined approach without pressure and always coordinates with her team to ensure all of them work hard and responsibly. And the last, her perspective that pays close attention to the feelings and safety of women victims.

Victim Treatment

Detective Parker mistakenly handles the Marie Adler rape case is demonstrated through his insensitivity to the victim's mental state and does not provide explanation and information to the victim.

First, the way he collects information from Marie, does not pay attention to Marie's mental state. There is no action trying to calm Marie who is still in daze. He does not show an emotional approach to Marie and tends to show insensitive manner by judging from his tone and speaking manner to her at the first time. Collecting the rapist's physical description and the chronology from Marie's testimony is indeed vital. Therefore, Marie's condition needs to be quite stable first. However, Detective Parker seems to miss this. He only focuses on gathering data from Marie's statement. (see app. 1.1.1). The initial statement "*I know this is hard*" sounds like Detective Parker wants to create the image that he feels Marie's pain and suffering, but he is not in that phase because then he bombards Marie in a rush to retell the incident without giving her a break. He just throws questions that sound like a robot. Marie's pain and suffering look in her expressions in the following pictures:



Figure 1. Marie's pain and suffering

The second mistakenly treatment Detective Parker to the victim is that he does not attentively explain the details, inform the objectives of the investigative action that both he and his team are taking, and direct the follow-up investigative action that Marie needs to know and do (see app. 1.1.2). Detective Parker only sounds like a commanding person when viewed from the choice of his words as in what he said



“You need to go to the hospital, they have to examine you. Bring a change of clothes”. He does not provide any instructions or information about the purpose of the examination at the hospital, what to do, and what they will be looking for. All he does is telling Marie to go to the hospital and passing the responsibility, which should still be his to explain Marie the details of the examination.

Detective Duvall takes different steps to approach rape victim in the investigation of Amber Stevenson's rape case. She is fully aware of the importance of making the victim feel safe and comfortable before conducting first interview. She also shares detail information and the purposes of investigation procedures she and her team are going to take.

First act, Detective Duvall is fully aware of the importance of the comfort and security the victim should feel before conducting interview and ensuring that the victim has everything she needs before starting further investigation. (see app. 1.1.3)

Emotional approach Duvall does, with soft and polite language and tone, make Amber feel more cared for and could slowly build trust to Detective Duvall to help investigating her case. (see app. 1.1.4)

Detective Duvall initiates the victim by always asking if the victim objected to the investigation procedures she is going to carry out. (see app. 1.1.5)

Second, every action that Detective Duvall takes, she always provides information and explanation to Amber so that she will feel ready to give the statement needed. She makes sure that Amber knows the purpose of the interview and the importance of her testimony for the investigation. (see app. 1.1.6)

Investigation Model

Another finding of Detective Parker mistakenly conducts the investigation is his unsystematic and inefficient investigative system. The investigative model and the teamwork led by him here seem unsystematic. The testimony that Marie gives to Officer Curran, an officer who helps Parker investigating Marie's case, at the beginning of the investigation is not immediately reported to Detective Parker. Instead of asking to Officer Curran for a report to get an idea of how far the victim can be asked for further interview while waiting for the hospital examination report, Detective Parker asks Marie to come to the police station and repeat her story of rape yet again from the beginning, and tells her to write everything exactly same of what she had said to him. (see app. 1.2.1)

The numerous interviews conducted by Detective Parker to continuously recount the incident and force Marie recalling the details she missed with the same questions and method only makes her dive deeper into her anxiety and trauma. The culmination of the insistence that Detective Parker continues to exert in looking for the evidence and data he needs, in the end, unconsciously, only pressures Marie to the edge and causes slight inconsistency on her statement, but yet, he keeps asking Marie to retell the story. (see app. 1.2.2)

Detective Duvall investigation does not take too many interviews, nor does she ask the victim to rewrite her story on the victim's statement sheet. She uses good words and questioning techniques to gather information, digging from the victim's life background, the chronology of the incident, and the rapist's physical description. (see app. 1.2.3)



She attentively listens to the victim's testimony and appreciates every data the victim can give. (see app. 1.2.4). Also, she makes sure she did not do it hastily (see app. 1.2.5).

To make the interview efficient, when she feels that the first interview with the victim goes well and the victim responds quite steadily, she asks the victim to look at the location of the incident so that other details can emerge immediately (see app. 1.2.6).

Mindset

When it comes to the mindset, Detective Duvall and Detective Parker have a different view on rape cases. Detective Duvall sees the rape case as an important case to be resolved thoroughly and the victim should be treated attentively. She thinks that the rape case has brought physical and mental scars that prevented the victim from living a normal life. Her great sense of responsibility as a detective coupled with her strong sense of empathy make her aware that the victim is mentally injured and desperately needs her help and support, and it is also her duty to protect them and solve the case. Responsibility and empathy she has become parts of women empowerment to help others, especially the rape victim. Her mindset is categorized as social empowerment that she tries to support and help other women who get discrimination or injustice in the society.

Detective Parker, on the other hand, tends to see rape case as trivial and a waste of his time. He thinks that rape case is very likely to allow someone to make up a story for the victim's particular purpose. He uses the background of the victim's personal life to judge whether the victim's statement should be considered true. Duvall and Parker's ways of thinking are influenced by the experiences they had dealing with similar cases. These experiences, according to the researcher, affect their perspective when facing the rape case they are investigating.

Detective Parker has an experience that he receives a report of rape which the victim is a college student that claimed to be raped by her history professor. The lecturer has to spend one week in prison before the student finally admitted that her story is a lie because annoyed that the professor does not take part in caring and providing for the child from their affair result (see app. 1.3.1).

When he finds Marie Adler's report with the similar case, he is not interested and does not take this case seriously because his bitter experience in the past. This then shows how it seems that he does not really prioritize the psychological condition of the victim and tends to gather evidence only. He has a tendency to think that Marie may be committing the same lie due to the lack of authentic evidence he can find and the slightest inconsistency in her statements. Finding Marie's dark past life history and coupled with Parker's judgmental side, he makes it as a reinforcement of his suspicion that Marie may have lied. (see app. 1.3.2)

Meanwhile, Detective Duvall once experiences deep regret in her first year working as a detective. She finds one of the cases she handles does not turn out well due to her insensitivity and has ignored her instinct to check back on the victim. She receives a report of domestic violence of a woman which resulted in injuries to that victim's face. She feels a sense of discomfort after leaving the victim alone at home and she plans to visit her after finishing from her shift, but is caved and decides to spend her time partying with her fellow police officers. She does not expect the victim's husband will return to the house and finish what he has started.



The husband tortures his wife and left her with a permanent brain injury. (see app. 1.3.3)

Since then, she listens more to her heart and uses her feelings when dealing with crime cases that women are the victims. She feels sorry for them and seems to share in the pain, fear, and trauma that experienced by them. (see app. 1.3.4)

Detective Duvall assumes that rape victims have psychological wounds that no one else knows about. Ignoring or trivializing their cases is tantamount to injuring them more deeply. Even though periodically the victim's physical condition recovers, but the memory of the incident and the mental injury will remain. Fear of returning to activities outside the house, having trust issues in other people, difficulty in relationship, sudden panic attacks when meeting someone that reminds them of the rapist, those could put the victims in a state of long-term depression at any time. The fact that rapist is still out there with all the threats to the victim's safety or to other women is a major trigger factor for fear. This way of thinking is the basis for Detective Duvall in handling the case and helping rape victims.

The difficulty in tracing the DNA evidence on the rape case she handles, Duvall tries to expand and deepen her investigation by involving the FBI. She tries to figure out why the data of rape cases are not recorded in detail in the police database (ViCAP) and it tends to be ignored and not fully investigated. (see app. 1.3.5)

In the conversation with Agent Taggart, FBI special agent, he confirms that most of the investigators are motivated and interested in murder cases than with rapes because they are reluctant to write in detail and thorough description into ViCAP if the rapist behavior they consider not unique. (see app. 1.3.6)

This brings to the researcher's mind that there are several possible reasons why investigators tend to underestimate rape case, such as lazy, not interested because it is not challenging enough for them, or they just hate women. (see app. 1.3.7)

This is opposed to what Detective Duvall has planted in her. She believes that handling rapes is not about job activities or personal taste, but their responsibility to provide security and protection for them and do it wholeheartedly. (see app. 1.3.8)

Detective Duvall's Factors and Motivation in Helping Women Rape Victims

Detective Duvall's Factors

Self-confidence

Being confident means believing in your own abilities. Confidence does not mean to be superior and arrogant, but rather the awareness that one can rely on their ability and strength to face every challenges (Education, 2022). Duvall has a strong self-confidence to solve this case. Duvall's confident side is seen as she and her partner, Rasmussen, argued with Agent Taggart about the possibility that the rapist commits another rape in the future. Taggart suggests that they just need to wait the rapist made another hit. However, Duvall confidently denies it and says that this will not happen, as she will catch that rapist before it. (see app. 2.1.1)

She replies with confident that she will not let the rapist roam free for too long. She believes in herself and her ability that she is able to catch the rapist before he has the chance to commit another rape.



Protestant Work Ethic

As a devout Christian, Duvall demonstrates the values of the Protestant faith through her work include hard work, individualism, and honesty. The first value is hard work. In every scene, whether when Duvall is investigating, analyzing data, or when working with her team, she never gives up at all over the difficulties of the case she is handling. In episode 3, she writes a very long list of rape case numbers in the state within the last five years to look for additional data that may have similar case. (see app. 2.2.1)

She is earnestly investigating who this serial rapist by widening the area of her investigation looking for similar case with similar behavior pattern, physical description, and method across the state that may give her more clues. She and Rasmussen also assure the victim that they are working hard this time to find the rapist and solve the case. (see app. 2.2.2)

It proved in episode 7, after finding the suspect's identity, she spends hours in her office meeting room checking all data, making sure everything is in line with the victim's statement and enough as evidence to make the suspect's arrest. She is working hard and dedicated to her job. (see app. 2.2.3). Aware of the responsibility, it is only natural for her that she should give all her abilities and effort when the job has not done.

The second value is individualism. Duvall is an individualist who sees things, believes, and acts through her own lens. It is reflected at the way she sees this rape case and judges it from her point of view. (see app. 2.2.4). When detectives and other investigators downplay or even give up on the case, she sticks to her stand to solve this rape case. She does not participate in trivializing cases or distrusting the victim as other investigators and detectives do. She has her own beliefs that this case has hurt the victim's mentality, and she has his own views on how investigators should carry out their duties and responsibilities in total.

The third value is honesty. She is very transparent on the facts she has and so is what she tells others. She makes sure she always said to the victim about what really happened, especially when it comes to the extent of the investigation results she got. (see app. 2.2.5). Although, she knows it is painful for her when she cannot give a satisfactory answer to the victim, she has to always be honest about what she is also fighting for. (see app. 2.2.6)

Duvall's other honest attitude is also shown when she wants to express her suspicion that the rapist can be a police member. In the scene when she hooks up the FBI for further investigation, Agent Taggart tries to dig up any information she has already obtained that does not include in the report. Duvall is eager to say that she suspects the rapist is one of the police officers which will certainly influence and change Taggart's perspective on her investigation, so Rasmussen gives her gesture code not to say anything by slightly shaking her head. It appears that Duvall is uncomfortable for lying. (see app. 2.2.7)

At first she follows Rasmussen's plan to not to express her suspicion. In the end, she decides to share her thought with Taggart during the joint meeting. (see app. 2.2.8). Duvall feels that she needs to remain honest and open during the investigation because that way she believes the team is able to work optimally by building trust of each member. Honesty is also needed to build the victim's trust in her.



Empathy

Judging from how Duvall treats the victim and how she sees the case, there is a strong sense of empathy. As a fellow woman, Duvall understands the feelings felt by the victim. She tries to always listen to and put her emotional state and thoughts in the victim's shoes. She feels the victim's worry, fear, and weakness post the incident. (see app. 2.3.1). The strong sense of empathy evokes an attitude of compassion that can be seen in the way she treats and approaches the victim, and the soothing tone of her voice. She does not judge the victim with negative thoughts when the victim shares what they feel and what they go through. (see app. 2.3.2)

Duvall understands what the victim goes through is awful, and sometimes, the victims do not know what to do to make them return to normal without worry and fear. Providing such understanding, gives a sense of comfort and reassurance for the victims.

Her empathy does not stop at the victim whose case she is handling. She widens her perspective that the rapist may do the same to other women and injure them. Her widespread thinking and concern for all the women out there make her want to speed up the investigation so that the possibility of a similar incident will be slim. (see app. 2.3.4). In this case, Detective Duvall poses as a woman and a police officer who sees the victim as someone that needs protection and is helpless. Thus, besides her responsibility to protect the victims, she wants to strengthen them by giving support. The development from observing to action can be seen in how she listens carefully to the stories of the victims, focuses her mind on the position of the victim, does not judge, and tries to understand what the victim feels.

Detective Duvall's Motivation

Christianity Faith

Behind Detective Duvall's actions and how she views the rape case, her Christian faith is her motivation to work. The faith of the belief she holds gives Duvall strength, especially to carry out her duties as law enforcement.

In episode 2, she is on Sunday worshiping with her husband at church. She worships earnestly, listens to the sermons given, joins in singing hymns, and prays. Her obedience and faith in God affect how she lives her life on earth, as well as how the way she works. The view that what she received from God, her life, and everything in it is a gift and God's love that makes her work as thanksgiving and service. In one scene in Duvall's car with Amber, there is a note on the dashboard that read "*Here I am. Send me.*", taken from the bible verse Isaiah 6:8. (see app. 2.4.1)

She uses the verse as a reminder of her work as a detective. She is responsible as the "hand of God" to uphold justice which makes her have to work in totality, knowing that this is what God wanted her to do. This belief gives Duvall the strength to live her life, especially in her duties as a detective.

Women Empowerment in *Unbelievable*

After seeing from various sides of the events in *Unbelievable*, from the detective's point of view to delving into the Duvall's character, the researcher finds that Duvall is an empowered woman that also empowers others. She works as a detective in a police department dominated by men, her dedicated actions that fight for justice for rape victims, until when seen from her personal life which she has an equal role as



a mother, wife, and professional detective, and also has economic independence. The researcher's argument is based on a situation which currently society still uses a narrow perspective towards women. Facts in the United States, Law enforcement officers are indisputably male-dominated. The percentage of women who work as full-time law enforcement officers is as much as 12.8% compared to men as much as 87.2% (Duffin, 2020). To become a law enforcer, it takes power. Stereotypes that appear in information media or films tend to think that power is positive for men and negative for women (Muhlhausen, 2019).

The depiction of women power is reflected through the character of Duvall. Karen Duvall in *Unbelievable* is like good news that women have the same power and even able to work better than men. Duvall's success in bringing justice, has set the victim free from the trap of helplessness and motivated the victim to live a better life. Marie speaks to Duvall on the phone, explaining how she has been feeling down and lost because the detective she trusts to solve this case does not believe her and does not pursue it (see app. 3.1.1). In another scene, other victims also feel the same way that they have difficulty living normally (see app. 3.1.2). Duvall has set them free from helplessness and motivated them to live more worthy lives and to have more power over themselves (see app. 3.1.3).

Duvall's strength not only influenced her in her work as a detective, but also in all aspects of her life. This gives her self-freedom and the drive to achieve life's accomplishments. This can be seen from the things she is able to achieve as an empowered woman including freedom to access career and education, the balance roles at home and work, and economic independence.

Freedom to Access Education and Career

Empowerment is a freedom from all deprivation and oppression to gain equality to access information and knowledge (Cornwall, 2016). Evidence that Duvall is able to achieve her career as a detective, of course, is based on the absence of restrictions on getting a proper education. To become a detective, one must at least have an associate degree, besides police academy education, to help sharpen and equip a successful career in crime detection.

Most departments want detectives to have at least college education because they need to know an extensive list of rules and regulations to do their jobs correctly and safely, in addition, communication skills is paramount to write a case report so that it is clear enough to be used by higher-level officials like judges and attorneys. Often police departments want their candidates to have basics covering forensic psychology, judicial administration, criminology, sociology, and criminal justice (Flavin, 2018). Therefore, that is why police department looks for college-educated detectives.

It is safe to assume that Duvall has been through the same requirement to apply as a detective. She may have studied at college to get a degree to support her career. It was seen from her knowledge at how the courts and criminal justice system operates. (see app. 3.2.1)

The researchers assume that Duvall may have earned a degree in criminology because of her knowledge of the legal, judicial and criminal systems. She knows what solid evidence to prepare, as well as the rules of the proceedings that take place.



Economic Independence

Working as a detective, has earned Duvall an income. It indicates that she is economically independent. Earning independently, women are expected to improve the welfare of their family. It proved by the wealth of Duvall. In episode 3 shown, she lives in a nice house and having a personal car.

She is able to pay a sitter for her children when she and her husband have to go out on duty (see app. 3.3.1). Work demands that make her spend more time outside the house require her to hire a sitter and that she is able to pay it to look after her children. That is indicating that she contributes to providing for her family's needs with the ability to be economically independent.

Equal Roles at Home and Professional Job

Unbelievable shows how gender role equality is applied to daily basis by men and women who share responsibilities and roles at home, and pursue their careers at a wholly balanced pace. Duvall is multitasking; dropping groceries while calling each police department looking for the possibility of having the same case, and staying up late to study security footage with a sleeping child on one side. And most importantly, housework and children care are shared equally between her and her husband (see app. 3.4.1). Duvall's husband, who is a police officer, cleans the dining table after having dinner with their children. Duvall is also willing to do household chores such as washing dishes (see app. 3.4.2).

It proves that domestic work, which has been believed to be the main task of women, is not about gender but the responsibility of each member in the house. Duvall and her husband are willing to share the housework without burdening the task on either side.

Caring for and looking after their children is also not solely a woman's job, but is the responsibility of both parents. This is demonstrated by Duvall and her husband when one of them is away on duty (see app. 3.4.3).

Without placing the task of caring for children on either side, Duvall and her husband work together and communicate with one another when it comes to protecting and caring for their children.

Through these findings, the researcher argues that the equality of roles and responsibilities in both home and work occurs equally between Duvall and her husband. None of them is dominating and controlling. Public opinion on women's responsibilities for household affairs and taking care of children can be refuted through this film. And once again, Duvall has proven that women have a freedom to choose and perform a balanced role at home and work.

Conclusion

Unbelievable shows the differences between the female detective and the male detective in treating rape victim. In the victim treatment, Detective Parker, the male detective tends to be insensitive to the victim's mental state by not providing protection or support, and only wants to look for evidence. Detective Duvall, the female detective on the other hand, is very sensitive and aware to the mental state of the victim.

The factors that influence Duvall in helping women rape victim are self-confidence, empathy for women, protestant work ethics that include hard work, individualism, and honesty, and her Christianity faith as her main motivation to



work. These motivation and factors show self-strength in a woman and which also gives encouragement for life's achievements.

Duvall is an empowered woman that also empowering others. With the power she has, she can achieve accomplishments in her life. As a female detective in a male-dominated police department, she is able to work better than other male detectives. Being a detective is also a sign that she has received and succeeded in getting a higher education as a career support in the police department. Independence in terms of earning income has also enabled Duvall to contribute in fulfilling her family's needs without depending on her husband. Duvall demonstrates the balanced role of being a wife, mother, and professional detective through how she does housework, takes care of her children, and keeps being professional at work.

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APPENDIX

1. The Differences of Detective Duvall and Detective Parker in Handling Rape Cases

1.1 Victim Treatment

No.	Category	Time	Data
1.1.1	Detective Parker insensitive manner to the victim	EP 1 00:06:33 – 00:06:47	Parker: “I know this is hard, but I need to ask you some questions about what happened” Marie: “I already told him. Officer Curran.” Parker: “But I’m lead detective on this, so I need to hear what happened directly from you”
1.1.2	Detective Parker does not provide investigative information	EP 1 00:08:00 – 00:08:09	“I’ll need to ask you some more question a little later, down at the station, but right now, you need to go to the hospital. They have to examine you. Bring a change of clothes.”
1.1.3		EP 2 00:05:33-00:05:36	Duvall: “How are you? Are you injured physically? Would you like to see a paramedic?”
1.1.4		EP 2 00:05:41-00:05:48	Duvall: “Let me know if that decision changes. Sometimes pain can sneak up on you. They’re right here. And they are here for you”
1.1.5		(EP 2 00:05:52-00:05:55) (EP 2 00:06:00-00:06:02)	“If it is alright for you, I’d like to ask you some questions.” “It’s a little busy out here. Would you be comfortable talking in my car?”
1.1.6		EP 2 00:06:36-00:06:46 EP 2 00:10:19-00:10:35	Duvall: “Amber, all our research has shown that the sooner a victim of a crime talks about it, the better his or her recall is” “I wanna talk to you about physical evidence. Every rape has three crime scenes. The location of the assault, the body of the attacker, and the body of the victim. Each of them can offer up important information.”

1.2 Investigation Model



No	Category	Time	Data
1.2.1		EP 1 00:12:23-00:12:24 EP 1 00:17:05-00:17:08	“I just want to go over the incident once more.” “This is a witness statement. I just need you to write out the statement you just told me.”
1.2.2		EP 1 00:38:00-00:38:03	Parker: “I found some inconsistencies in your statements... How about you walk me through it again. Tell me exactly how the assault happened.”
1.2.3		EP 2 00:06:38-00:06:46	Duvall: “the sooner a victim of a crime talks about it, the better his or her recall is, so if it’s all right with you, I’d like to dive right in.”
1.2.4		EP 2 00:10:08-00:10:14	Duvall: “This is very helpful, Amber. The level of detail you’re able to remember gives me a lot work to work with. Thank you for that”
1.2.5		EP 2 00:09:28-00:09:31	Amber: “I’m just trying to think if I left anything out.” Duvall: “Take your time”
1.2.6		EP 2 00:13:13-00:13:15	Amber: “Sorry I forgot to tell you that before.” Duvall: “That’s okay. That’s why we are here”

1.3 Mindset

No.	Category	Time	Data
1.3.1	Detective Parker experience on rape case	EP 1 00:43:23 – 00:43:30	Parker: “Remember that case over in King County last year? A college student and the history professor? Guy spent a week in jail before she admitted she made it up.”
1.3.2	Detective Parker trivializing rape case and his judgmental view	EP 1 00:40:45 – 00:41:18	Parker: “Right, so I’m gonna tell you a version that does fit together. Okay? A young woman, been through a ton of bad stuff, on her own for the first time, just broke up with her boyfriend, feeling isolated,



			lonely, might, on the spur of the moment, come up with something, without thinking it through, that would get her the attention she needs. ‘Cause you haven’t gotten enough attention in your life. I can see that.”
1.3.3	Detective Duvall experience on criminal case	EP 7 00:13:43 – 00:15:27	Duvall: “My first year on the job, I got called out to a domestic disturbance in Englewood where the husband had just beat the lights out of his wife... After I finished my shift, I left but I didn’t feel right... All the guys are wantin’ me to go out for a beer. While I was out having my beer with the fellas, the guy went back home, he finished what he started, and left his wife with permanent brain damage.”
1.3.4	Detective Duvall cares about women rape victims	EP 1 00:19:17 – 00:19:30	Duvall: “Because this is not something people get over. This is something they carry with them forever, like bullet in the spine.”
1.3.5	Investigators lack interest	EP 3 00:43:00 – 00:43:14	Duvall: “How much officers do you know who take the time to fill out an A-plus incident report in the first place, let alone go the extra mile of actually typing into it? For murders maybe...but for rape?”
1.3.6		EP 4 00:00:05 – 00:06:57	Duvall: “And safe to assume investigators are more thorough and motivated with murders than with rapes.” Taggart: “Pretty safe, yeah... Plus, ViCAP’s best when your perpetrator has behavior that’s unique...I’m like ViCAP. The data I generate is only as good as the data I receive.”



1.3.7		EP 6 00:01:22 – 00:01:30	“If you’re suggesting that cops fuck up sometimes, that they ignore evidence or dismiss victims ‘cause they’re lazy, or maybe they just don’t like women that much”
1.3.8		EP 3 00:01:21-00:01:45	“Take a second to imagine how you’d feel if one of those sisters was tied up and raped at gunpoint. Think about the commitment you would expect from the detectives working the case. How you would hope that they would do anything they could to assist in the apprehension of the monster who could inflict such irreversible harm on your sister.” (EP 3 00:01:21-00:01:45)

2. Detective Duvall’s Factors and Motivation in Helping Women Rape Victims

No.	Category	Time	Data
2.1.1	Self-confidence	EP 4 00:07:51 – 00:08:03	Taggart: “Maybe next time he gets sloppy. Leaves something behind. Gets spotted by witness” Duvall: “Third option. We make sure next time never happens.”
2.2.1	Protestant work ethic; hard work	EP 3 00:43:58 – 00:44:06	Rasmussen: “Those are case numbers from every rape that’s happened in the county?” Duvall: “State.” Rasmussen: “Within the last three years?” Duvall: “Five.”
2.2.2		EP 6 00:01:36 – 00:01:40	“Right now, you’re talking to the cops who went back to your case and reopened it. We are working it, hard.”
2.2.3		EP 7 00:12:50-00:12:57	“I’m the kind of person who stays ‘til the end of the party. It may not be healthy, but it’s how I do the job.”
2.2.4	Protestant work ethic; individualism	EP 3 00:01:21 – 00:01:45	“Take a second to imagine how you’d feel if one of those sisters was tied up and raped at gunpoint. Think about the commitment you would



			expect from the detectives working the case. How you would hope that they would do anything they could to assist in the apprehension of the monster who could inflict such irreversible harm on your sister.”
2.2.5	Protestant work ethic; honesty	EP 3 00:16:38 - 00:16:48	Amber: “Have you gotten him?” Duvall: “The man who attacked you? Not yet, no. Amber: “Do you know who he is?” Duvall: “Not yet.”
2.2.6		EP 3 00:47:00-00:47:02	Duvall: “It kills me that I don’t have anything to tell her”
2.2.7		EP 4 00:08:09-00:08:11	“For what it’s worth, I would have told him about the cop angle.”
2.2.8		EP 5 00:25:00-00:25:31	Taggart: “That’s an angle you like? Based on what? Which evidence?” Duvall: “Every crime scene’s been pristine. Every attack’s in a different district. The fact that we managed to group them was pure luck.”
2.3.1	Empathy	EP 3 00:19:17-00:19:30	“Because this is not something people get over. This is something they carry with them forever, like bullet in the spine.”
2.3.2		EP 5 00:18:13-00:18:24	“You don’t sound crazy to me. You sound like someone who’s been through a trauma and is looking for a way to feel safe again and in control. And there’s nothing crazy about that.”
2.3.3		EP 4 00:34:40-00:34:51	Ma’am, Detective Rasmussen and I think that what happened to your daughter is very important. That’s why we are here. We think that the man who attacked her might have attacked other women as well.”
2.4.1	Christianity faith	EP 2 00:24:43-00:25:03	“That’s just a little reminder of what I’m doing, I guess. It’s from Isaiah. God shows up looking for someone to be of service. Clean things up a bit. He says, “Whom shall I send?”



3. Women Empowerment in *Unbelievable*

No.	Category	Time	Data
3.1.1		EP 8 00:38:34 – 00:38:51	Marie: “Then this rape happened. It just became harder for me to believe that there was really any good in the world. And I think that that was the hardest part of this whole thing, waking up feeling hopeless.”
3.1.2	The victims helplessness and powerless	EP 8 00:20:53-00:21:36	Lilly: “I’m scared all of the time. My friends try to help me but I have a hard time trusting people. I can’t sleep, I’m in pain. I’ve violent thoughts that I have never had before. You think it’s just one night compared to all of the other minutes of my life, how could this one short incident make a difference? But.. it does.”
3.1.3	Duvall empowering the victims	EP 8 00:39:13-00:40:12	Marie: “But then, out of nowhere, I hear about these two people looking out for me and making things right.. more than anything was hearing that about you guys just changed things completely. And I wake up now, I can imagine good things happening. I just wanna know that you did that for me, and to say thank you.”
3.2.1	Duvall’s freedom to access education and career (working as a detective and got a degree in criminology)	EP 8 00:01:42-00:01:57	Duvall: “There are 77 ’93 white Mazda pickups in Colorado. And I want a couple officers to photograph every one of them. So, when McCharthy’s defense tries to say “How do you know the Mazda in the video is his?” Rosemarie: “We’ll be able to show that McCarthy’s is the only one in the state with those markings.”
		EP 8 00:14:56-00:15:00	Gonzales: “Depending on the judge, it could really reduce his jail time.” Duvall: “So, straight to sentencing”



3.3.1	Economic independence	EP 7 00:11:31 - 00:11:36	Rasmussen: “Hey, don’t you have a couple kids waiting to be tucked in?” Duval: “Sitter already got them to sleep”
3.4.1	Equal roles at home and professional job	EP 2 00:37:28-00:37:37	Duvall: “Uh, sorry.” Max: “That’s okay. They are hungry” Duvall: “Did she eat?” Max: “A little”
3.4.2		EP 3 00:40:12 – 00:40:16	<i>(Duvall washes some dishes accidentally breaks one glass)</i> Max: “Hey, easy, easy. Let me get that.” Duvall: “No, I’ll get that.” Max: “Ma’am, ma’am, back away from the sink.”
3.4.3		EP 2 00:20:46-00:20:54	Duvall: “How is she?” Max: “Better. Her O2 dropped to 91 at 1:00, but it was back up to 93 by 3:00. And she sounds fine, not gaspy or anything. I think we’re good. Duvall: “Okay good.”
		EP 3 00:21:53-00:22:07	Duvall’s daughter: “Mommy, I’m scared” Duvall: “It’s okay, sweetie. I got you. I’m here.”

