

Patriarchal
Influence on
Christian
Experience





“Being based on a doll really hurt Barbie at the Oscars. Although the film was nominated for best picture, Greta Gerwig was snubbed as director and Margot Robbie left out of the best actress category, omissions that caused a flood of outrage on the internet and from their colleagues. The Associated Press called Gerwig's snub "one of the biggest shocks in recent memory". Some fans took it out on Ken. As pointed out by one viewer, Ryan Gosling being nominated for supporting actor while Gerwig and Robbie were left out "kind of proves the point of the movie", that the patriarchy is still with us. Gosling, Ken himself, said in a statement: "There is no Barbie movie without Greta Gerwig and Margot Robbie, the two people most responsible for this history-making, globally-celebrated film".

What is Patriarchy?

A system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.

A system of

- ▶ social relationships
 - ▶ values
 - ▶ norms and
 - ▶ behaviour patterns

that are predominantly shaped by men and which encourage a privileged position for men.

Unique to each culture and system.

What is Patriarchy?

- ▶ arose in history
 - ▶ is not universal
- ▶ has a history in violence and domination
 - ▶ war
 - ▶ sexual violence
- ▶ a system legitimated by religion

Carol Christ: A New Definition of Patriarchy, 2016

What are Core Elements of Patriarchy?

- ▶ POWER
- ▶ CONTROL
- ▶ DOMINATION

Women's Faith Experience

“Fear of being teased, of appearing superstitious, or being irrational inhibits many from sharing mystical experience that may have been or could have been a turning point if it were acknowledged and supported by others. Parents or clergy would label women as foolish or heretical if they discussed any kind of mystical experience. Even discussing mystical happenings with a therapist could lead to being diagnosed as delusional. Insights gained from experience are not really welcomed as good conversation at gatherings. To speak about your spiritual reality, or tell another about a magical experience of your own philosophical insights, only becomes possible for many when they have found friends with a measure of spiritual depth.”

Jean Barkula, *Sophia Goddess of Spirituality in Mature Women*,
<https://owlcation.com/humanities/Sophia-Greek-Goddess-of-Spiritual-Wisdom>

Sophia

- ▶ Sophia is the Christian spirit of spiritual wisdom in women's spiritual circles, in which she is viewed as the Divine Feminine. Sophia's identity is hidden in the Old Testament by references to her in the lowercase word "wisdom." She was a part of the Judeo-Christian heritage of the West, but forgotten (6-7C AD) within a monotheistic, patriarchal religion that denies feminine divinity. . .
- ▶ It is very important for women to be aware that the worship and knowledge of feminine divinity have disappeared because the patriarchy is based upon negating women's spiritual authority. The historical inferior status of women and the suppression of the goddess are related, just as the dominant position of men is related to monotheism.

Jesus's View of Patriarchy?

Matthew 23:

¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. ¹³ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

The Problem that has No Name

Betty Friedan's research into the lives of 1950s middle-class, white, women within the United States allowed for a new kind of understanding of American women within the 1950s. Friedan's research emphasized that women were in fact, incredibly unhappy. Friedan initially refers to this as 'the problem that has no name'. . . Friedan explains that women are "kept from growing to their full capabilities". . .

Through copious firsthand accounts, Friedan defines the problem as "feelings of failure and nothingness", feelings of "is this all", guilt, and a longing for some unknown absence. Women regularly felt guilty for experiencing such feelings when they were told by society that their happiness relied on the happiness of their children and husband.



The Problem that has No Name



- ▶ feelings of failure and nothingness
- ▶ feelings of “is this all there is”
- ▶ guilt
- ▶ a longing for some unknown absence
- ▶ fear of reprisal
- ▶ kept from growing to one’s full capabilities
- ▶ powerlessness

God of All Time

God of all time,

I believe that my past, present and future are in your hands.

God of all places,

*I believe that there is nowhere I may go
where you are not there before me.*

God of all life,

*I believe that the vastest movements of the cosmos
and the most intimate thoughts of the human heart
are both of concern to you.*

God of all experience,

*I believe that the heights and depths of human aspiration
and anguish are known alike to you.*

***Help me to find my voice and to sing my song;
in the time that you have given me
in the places that I find myself
in the life that is mine to live.***

Nicola Slee

