

Girl Power: Exploring the Characteristics of Nine Female Archetypes Based on the Enneagram in GDH 559 Films

Supamonta Supanan, Bangkok University, Thailand

The European Conference on Arts & Humanities 2025
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The phenomenon of the Thai film “How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies (Boonnitipat, 2024),” one of 15 qualified films for the Longlist for Oscar for the Best Foreign Language Film Academy Award winners, becomes a history of Thai films. One interesting and noticeable aspect is the recent increase in number of female characters in Thai films. This research aimed to analyze the characteristics of female characters in Thai films by GDH 559 based on the Enneagram and media representation concepts. Female characters from nine Thai films: Love Destiny 2 (Trisirikasem, 2022), OMG! (Kerd tongtawee, 2022), You and Me and Me (Hongvivatana & Hongvivatana, 2023), Home For Rent (Sakdaphisit, 2023), Not Friends (Hemwadee, 2023), How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies (Boonnitipat, 2024), The Paradise of Thorns (Kuno, 2024), 404 Run Run (Jarusboonpracha, 2024), and Flat Girls (Wongsutin, 2025) were analyzed. Results illustrated that the characteristics of female characters included strength, leadership, decisiveness, generosity, intelligence, caution, gentleness, vulnerability, and emotional depth. These images of female characters in Thai films have gained more significance than in the past.

Keywords: archetypes, enneagram, film

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

In the past year, one of the Thai films that has created a phenomenon throughout the country and overseas is *Lahn Mah*, produced by the film studio GDH 559. Its title in English is *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* (Boonnitipat, 2024), and the film has become the talk of the town. It was first released on 4 April 2024 (Wong, 2024), debuted with earnings at 21 million baht, and reached the domestic gross of 339 million baht. It was also released in 30 countries worldwide with the international box office gross of around 2,000 million baht (Pow, 2024).

The deep sense of warmth and impression of *Lahn Mah* as a story of love and attachment between “Grandma” and her “Grandson” led to a number of national and international awards. In Thailand, the film received awards from many film competitions and festivals, e.g., the Kom Chad Luek Awards 2025 for Best Picture and Best Screenplay (Sanook.com, 2025) and the Thai Film Director Association Awards 14th in six categories, i.e., Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, and Best Film Editing (One31.net, 2025).

The film also received international awards, e.g., the KinoBravo International Film Festival 2024 in Russia for Best Actress and Best Cinematography (Thairath Online, 2024). Across the sea in the USA, *Lahn Mah* was awarded an Audience Award from the New York Asian Film Festival 23rd Edition-2024 (Rosser, 2024) and Honorable Mention from Gold List Film 2025 (Spring News, 2025).

As a result of the popularity of *Lahn Mah* nationwide and globally, it was selected as the representative of a Thai film for the 97th Academy Awards or Oscars in the category of International Feature Film. (Nation Thailand, 2025). The film was included among the 15 finalists of the Best Foreign Language Film Academy Award winners (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2024).

Despite not being selected as one of the five finalists, it was praised and received awards from other international competitions, e.g., the 61st Asia Pacific Film Festival for Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay, and Best Leading Actor in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and as a runner-up for the GEMS (Gender Equity in Media Society) 2024 (Miami Film Festival, 2024) Audience Award from the 11th Miami Film Festival (Chutiangkul, 2025).

The positive influence of *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* (Boonnitipat, 2024), a film presenting the image of a close-knit family, has brought some notice to previous Thai films because this particular film is distinctive for its simple plot with neither miracles nor fantasies in the love and relationships among family members that are presented. Instead, it is a common story with experiences that might have been similar to ours once in a lifetime.

The screenplay of *Lahn Mah* was inspired by the true story of Thodsapon Thiptinnakorn, the screenwriter. Jira Maligool and Wannaree Pongsittisak, the two producers, stated that he had to go back home and take care of his “Grandma,” who is very old, with an almost 50-year age gap between the two of them. The producers were impressed with this story because they perceived that it communicated the record of attachment in an extended family that is rarely depicted for presentation (Lakshmi, 2024).

As for the attraction of *Lahn Mah*, the main character is an old woman. “Grandma” is Thai-Chinese, living the area of Talat Phlu, Bangkok. Her home is a 2-storey commercial building. She is a vendor, can speak Chinese, and has three children, i.e., two sons and one daughter. She has been the pillar of the family since her husband died. She sells rice porridge and has raised all three children very well. The representation of this woman in *Lahn Mah* brings attention to the representation of women in other films, and therefore, the outstanding depiction of “Grandma” in this film has motivated reviews of the roles of female characters in Thai and international films.

Previously, it seemed that female characters in films were usually not very outstanding or were inferior to the male ones. In those times, the world of films was often perceived as a world of men. Films were generally created by men, as vast majority of the directors were male. Also, there were generally more men than women involved in the film industry (French, 2012; Phuksuk, 2023).

According to the study of Hansawasdi (2001) on “Women In Film: A Reproduction of the Images of the Thai Women” through nine films, it was found that the images or stories of women in the early eras were quite rare, compared with those of men. The images of women were ideal, mostly gentle, soft, and well-behaved with no roles for conflicts, arguments, or questions about life. Male characters were the main characters and more outstanding than the female ones.

This is in contrast to the study of Siengsorn (2014) on 10 Thai films, in which it was found that they present images of women under physical, mental, and sexual violence. However, the characters are brave and fight for themselves with increased confidence and courage to confront risks.

Stories of women in films are almost always related to love and relationships. Saphermsup (2018) conducted a study on “A Social Construction of Abortion in Cinematic Representation,” using seven characters from six films and found that there are two meanings of female characters who have abortions. The first meaning defines them as bad women with an unpleasant destiny in life. On the contrary, the second meaning shows the more positive perspectives toward abortions and an understanding that women have reasons and the necessity to do so, that they can move on after an abortion, and that it does not require a sense of guilt.

Chaichana and Singlumpong (2019) conducted a study on “Representation of Woman through Thai Films.” The films from each particular era were selected based on the political changes in Thailand of that particular era in which seven Thai films, one representing each era, were studied. It was found that the female characters are still related to love stories by showing their desire for good and the greatest love, followed by female characters withstanding physical abuse. Thus, the representation of women in films is still repeated in terms of love stories, relationships, and being victims in society.

Nonetheless, in a recent study on the image of women and fighting in films, i.e., the study of Santawee (2024) on “Creating the Meaning of Female Empowerment in Thai Action Films,” two Thai films presenting the uncommon image of female fighters were analyzed. According to the results, the Thai films *Raging Phoenix* (Limtrakul, 2009) and *Bua Pun: Beauty and the Blade* (Eamaruch, 2023) present strong women who fight for themselves and for what they desire. The films picturize their physical agility and professional martial arts. Both films

disclose the hidden dimensions of Thai female fighters, which breaks with the limited definition about ideal Thai women.

How much Thai films give precedence to the appearance of women and how they are portrayed have been issues for discussion for decades since the industry began. In the past few years, GDH 559 films have had a huge influence that reaches a large number of viewers. GDH 559 Co., Ltd., a large film studio in Thailand, was founded earlier on 5 January 2016 (Marketeer Team, 2016) by the assembly of 59 shareholders, i.e., executives, film directors, cast, and employees with the number of shareholders being the same as the date of company founding (Suchiva, 2017). It is a joint venture between GMM Grammy Public Company Limited and Hub Ho Hin Bangkok Co., Ltd. The name “GDH” is an abbreviation for “Gross Domestic Happiness” (PitchBook, 2025).

More than 10 GDH 559 films have been able to gross over 100 million baht (Prakotkananung, 2025). This information proves that the films of GDH 559 can reach a wide range of viewers based on earnings. Furthermore, the attraction of films from this studio also includes the storytelling about female characters. This can be noticed by the popularity of the latest film *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* (Boonnitipat, 2024), grossing 2,000 million baht. The main character is an old woman, and the story is warm-hearted, simple, and deep (The Guardian, 2024).

For these reasons, the aim of this study is to conduct an investigation about the representation of women in GDH 559 films regarding how their images are presented.

The main objective was to explore the depiction of female characters through media representation and how this representation of those women connects with the Enneagram, a concept applied to describe the characteristics of people.

Studying the representation of women in films can extend the scope of our understanding and can challenge the original concept of storytelling about women in film media. It can also provide insights into the more various and complicated meanings of femininity in the space of contemporary film media, particularly about through which dimensions the discovered characteristics communicate women/girl power.

The theoretical frameworks employed in this study include the concept of media representation, character theory, and the Enneagram personality framework.

Media Representation: This concept refers to the processes through which the media create and present the meaning of a person, a group, or an issue through representation of that specific entity, e.g., gender/sex, age, nationality, or a social concept. Thus, media representation is a construction. Media do not reflect truths or facts straightforwardly; instead, they use composition, i.e., presentation techniques, camera angles, lighting, colors, sounds, and editing, to create the meanings for what they present (TeletonUSA, 2023).

Character Elements: When films create a representation of women, they must illustrate how the personalities of women are communicated. This is why the concept of character elements is used for analysis, i.e., agency, age, occupation/social role, cultural identity, traits, relational role, internal drive/conflict, and character arc (Mathews, 2018; Reich, 2017; Roberts, 2023).

Enneagram: This is a method that is used to understand different personalities or characteristics that describe different thoughts, feelings, or perspectives toward the world. The word “Enneagram” derives from “ennea,” which means “nine” and “gram,” which means “diagram.” Thus, the Enneagram is used to describe the characteristics of people. It has a long history, and categorizes characteristics into nine types as follows (Integrative9 Enneagram Solutions, 2023; Mosley, 2023; Palmer, 1988; Riso & Hudson, 1999).

Type 1 is the Perfectionist: Holds to uprightness, rules, and morality. Type 2 is the Helper: Concerned about and takes care of others. Needs love and acceptance and knows how to be loved. Type 3 is the Achiever: Determined, full of energy, and goal- and success-oriented with a highly positive self-image. Type 4 is the Romantic or Individualist: Deep, sensitive, and searching for personal meanings. Type 5 is the Observer or Investigator: Peaceful and quiet, with deep learning, they keep their distance, hide emotions, and are afraid of disturbance.

Type 6 is the Questioner or Loyalist: They think, question, plan, and apply prudence. Type 7 is the Adventurer: characterized by a joy-oriented personality. They love freedom, pleasure, and trying new things, but avoid sadness and dislike limitations. Type 8 is the Challenger: Strong and brave, they love control and are not afraid of conflicts. Type 9 is the Peacemaker: Peaceful and understanding of the viewpoints of all parties, they avoid conflicts and do not show their desires explicitly.

In this study, nine GDH 559 films were analyzed, i.e., *Love Destiny 2* (Trisirikasem, 2022), *OMG!* (Kerdongtawee, 2022), *You and Me and Me* (Hongvivatana & Hongvivatana, 2023), *Home For Rent* (Sakdaphisit, 2023), *Not Friends* (Hemwadee, 2023), *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* (Boonnitipat, 2024), *The Paradise of Thorns* (Kuno, 2024), *404 Run Run* (Jarusboonpracha, 2024), and *Flat Girls* (Wongsutin, 2025). They are all contemporary films made during the current era, which is significant for the phenomenon of sexual diversity.

The subject films include “women/girls” as those who are the main characters. The analysis did not only focus on describing their representation, but also on understanding their images that are not just contradictory to the male characters but are multi-dimensional and detailed.

Each of their particular characteristics communicate woman/girl power and values in different perspectives. The results revealed the interesting characteristics of female characters from the nine films as follows.

A Girl Who Loves Learning and Is Passionate About Society and Politics

The image of an educated, knowledgeable, and philosophical girl who enjoys reading, writing, and taking notes is one of the represented images of the girl from *Love Destiny 2* (Trisirikasem, 2022). The main female character is “Gaysorn,” who is a Thai girl at the working age range and the daughter of a *Phya* (aristocrat) from the upper class. She was born in the reign of King Rama III in the early Rattanakosin Period of Thailand. She studied with a missionary at a church, so she is literate, embraces her academic qualities, has a passion for history, and keeps up with the political situation. She falls in love but takes part in politics and philosophical debates, which are normally a space for men.

The characteristics of Gaysorn connect with Enneagram 5 - the Observer or Investigator, the personality of girls who like learning and using knowledge for driving their life or achieving their goals through education. Gaysorn represents a Thai girl in the history beyond physical appearances, a sample of a girl who applies her intellectual competencies, by raising questions against power in order to reform society.

Table 1

Analysis of “Gaysorn” From Love Destiny 2

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	Gaysorn chooses her own way, with questions about the traditional values of Thai girls in that era. She uses knowledge as a tool for decision making and participating in intellectual arguments and discussions.
Age	Early working age in the reign of King Rama III, an era/period with a very limited space for girls to be educated or to express their opinions in public.
Occupation Social Role	The daughter of a <i>Phya</i> (aristocrat) from the upper class, she is educated through the missionary system until she becomes a philosophical girl. This is different from the way of other Thai girls in the same era, which focused on being housewives only.
Cultural Identity	A Thai girl who is open to the Western knowledge (though the missionary), while she also firmly protects the roots of her original culture.
Character Traits	Intelligent, calm, emotionally secure, good at observation and analysis; but soft, gentle, charming, and not harsh.
Relational Role	She falls in love but does not jump into love too soon. She takes time to learn before making a decision on a serious romantic relationship.
Internal Drive/Conflict	She is driven by an understanding of the world, facts, history, and politics. She is curious to change and reform rather than to merely obtain knowledge.
Character Arc	While she searches for knowledge, she does not change herself to have a lover, but rather uses knowledge and reasoning as the resources to choose him.

A Girl With Beauty as an Attractive Charm to the People Around

Do beautiful girls have more advantages than other girls? *OMG!* (Kerdtongtawee, 2022), is a film presenting love between “June” and “Guy.” June is a beautiful girl between the age ranges of studying and working and is very friendly, easy-going, and talkative. Almost all the boys around always fall in love with her.

Despite having a boyfriend, she has a love affair with Guy. Regarding the characteristics of June, she is very independent and self-confident. She has had romantic relationships continuously from the time of her studies until work. The representation of June is a girl with beauty as the capital that allows her to reach her goals.

The characteristics of June connect with Enneagram 2 - the Helper, i.e., the personality of charming, beautiful, pretty, and attractive girls. She represents a girl with beauty as a key power.

Table 2*Analysis of “June” From OMG!*

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	She is decisive to love, to break up, and to maintain various kinds of relationships. She is the one who makes decisions, but somehow, she seems to let herself go with feelings and physical attraction.
Age	The late teenage-early working age, the range of the critical points of emotions, identity, and relationships.
Occupation/Social Role	A young girl, whose work life becomes clear in the latter episodes although her occupational role is not the focus in the film. She plays the key roles as “a charming girl” and “a memorable pretty girl.”
Cultural Identity	The representation of a straightforward and assertive girl in the modern era, with confidence in her beauty. However, she is sensitive with regard to love.
Character Traits	Beautiful, charming, friendly, talkative, brave in relationships, independent, sensitive, and cannot cut off some relationships easily.
Relational Role	She is a girlfriend, friend, a fancied one, and a girl who cannot get over “love at a wrong time.” She reflects the role of a girl connected with love all of the time.
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her needs are for love and acceptance. She realizes her influences, and she uses this quality for relationships. Nevertheless, she also feels something is missing, which drives her to get involved with Guy although she already has a boyfriend.
Character Arc	Despite her self-confidence, she does not clearly grow up from relationships in the end. She would rather follow her heart, but she does not truly get out of the loop of the “unresolved relationship.”

A Powerful Girl Who Is Gentle, Deep, Yearning for Love, but Is Also Strong and Protects Herself

For the characteristics of the female twins in *You and Me and Me* (Hongvivatana & Hongvivatana, 2023), the first one is “You,” a gentle girl who yearns for love. She embraces an artistic quality, loves music, and is good at English. She is sweet, with sad and deep eyes.

In contrast, “Me” is a strong and self-confident girl who can ride motorcycles. She is also good at math, fearless, and straightforward, but vulnerable inside.

The two girls are totally different; however, they are students at a junior high school and fall in love with the same boy. They grow up in the Y2K era, the time of transition from analog to the digital world. It is also the time that both girls have learned and grown up as a result of the conflicts in life, with different ways to deal with those conflicts.

When analyzing by Enneagram, the characteristics of You are close to Enneagram 4 - the Romantic or Individualist. She is a dreamy and artistic girl, gentle outside and strong inside, but Me is characterized as Enneagram 8 - the Challenger because she is straightforward and strong, but fragile inside.

Table 3*Analysis of “You” and “Me” From You and Me and Me*

Element	The Analysis of “You”	The Analysis of “Me”
Agency	She shows love and preferences in a lovely and gentle way.	She shows love straightforwardly, with self-confidence.
Age	Junior high school (around lower secondary school), the time of transition from a child to a teenager.	Junior high school (around lower secondary school), the time of transition from a child to a teenager.
Occupation /Social Role	Artistic, sensitive, and keen on English and music.	Good at math, self-confident, and can ride motorcycles.
Cultural Identity	She is gentle, yearns for love, and likes showing love.	She crosses over the norm of “ladyhood” to courage, confidence, and independence.
Character Traits	Soft, not straightforward, having sad eyes, loves music, and good at English.	Fearless, strong, straightforward, good at math, can ride motorcycles, and take action.
Relational Role	She needs and yearns for love.	She expresses her needs and desires straightforwardly.
Internal Drive/Conflict	She needs to be loved and is afraid of being neglected.	She is afraid of loss in love, weakness, and comparison.
Character Arc	A girl yearning for love tries to be loved, but can accept the loss of someone she loves.	A daring girl who confronts her own fragility and learns to forgive.

A Prudent Girl With Fears but Also With the Courage to Fight Against Her Fears and Emotional Wounds

Prudence is a key factor for living according to “Ning,” a female character from *Home for Rent* (Sakdaphisit, 2023). She is married with one daughter, works at a private company, goes to work, and comes back home to her child. She can cook and take care of the daughter without any problems. She is observant, and in the case of uncommon situations at home or involving her child, she never lets anyone control her, but instead tries to solve problems on her own. When her daughter and family are threatened by something supernatural, Ning tries to fight for the full protection of her daughter. Despite her fears, she does not give in.

The characteristics of Ning connect with Enneagram 6 - the Questioner or Loyalist. She is a prudent mother who performs her duties to the best of her ability. She fights for her daughter and turns fears into courage. She represents an ordinary girl with a brave heart. When there are threats, she relies on herself rather than others. Her fears that initially seem like a weakness become a forceful driving power.

Table 4*Analysis of “Ning” From Home For Rent*

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	A daring female character who does not wait for help, but rather searches for information and protects her daughter and family on her own.
Age	The working age with family and a small child, with various roles to play.
Occupation/Social Role	An employee of a private company, a housewife, and a wife; representing a smart girl in the modern era with responsibilities in “the world outside” and “the world inside.”
Cultural Identity	A Thai girl from the middle class, likely to live a simple life similar to others. However, when threats arise, she stands up and confronts them on her own.
Character Traits	Prudent, observant, and very careful, but active despite her fears. She is “a prepared observer” and a brave mother, but still reflects a lack of confidence or vigilance deep inside.
Relational Role	A wife, a mother, a daughter, and a neighbor; with various relational roles. However, the most outstanding relationship is “a protective mother.”
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her fears are turned into courage to protect her loved ones, particularly her daughter. She never lets her family be threatened, although she must risk her own life.
Character Arc	From an ordinary girl living safely, she gradually turns into “a fighter” who dares to confront evils for her family.

A Girl With Leadership, Strength, Diligence, Patience, and the Ability in a Male-Dominated Job

The world of films is usually viewed as the world of men. “Bokeh,” the main female character from *Not Friends* (Hemwadee, 2023), is a high school student. Her mother is a camerawoman in a film crew. Bokeh was born in the film crew, so she loves filmmaking. She forms a team with “Pae,” the director, to make a film in order to commemorate a dead fellow student.

Bokeh is a fearless and straightforward girl. She is good at technology, can use film cameras, and can work hard. She shows leadership in the film crew. Although cameramen are usually male, Bokeh can lead the team and stands beside the male director, demonstrating that she is absolutely not a follower.

Her characteristics are close to Enneagram 8 - the Challenger. She is strong, with leadership qualities. She dares to give orders, has technical skills, has courage to fight against harm, loves justice, and is ready to solve the problems at hand. She makes the impossible possible, but hides her fragility inside.

Table 5*Analysis of “Bokeh” From Not Friends*

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	The roles of female leadership and an outstanding camera girl who takes action, makes decisions, and directs the filmmaking of the team on her own.
Age	High school (around the end of secondary school), the critical point of growing up and self-searching.
Occupation/Social Role	A high school student as “a camera girl” of the filming team. This position is usually viewed as “behind the scenes” and “a space for men.” However, Bokeh makes it possible for girls.
Cultural Identity	Bokeh is a young girl who grew up in a film crew. She is truly “a girl in a space for men.” She does not only join the world of men/boys, but also becomes “part of its creation.”
Character Traits	A fearless, quick learner, who is straightforward, good at technology, can endure hard work, and does not care for physical images. She does not act “cute” in order to be part of the group.
Relational Role	She is friends with Pae, the director, as they have the same ideology. She is his buddy rather than lover. This reflects the existence of girls as an ideological partner.
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her life is driven by an obsession with films, attachment with her “lost friend,” and an intention to create something as a memory.
Character Arc	Bokeh starts as “a fearless girl in the filming team.” Then, she gradually reveals some deep and hidden feelings, e.g., sadness, pain, and tenderness for friends as well as team members. She develops from being “a film maker” to “a healer through filming.”

A Disciplined, Diligent, and Unyielding Woman Who Lives With Concern About Her Duties

The representation of “Grandma Meng Ju,” an old woman in *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* (Boonnitipat, 2024) is about an old woman with diligence, patience, and discipline. She has worked hard since she was young. After the death of her husband, her descendants left home to build their own families. Since then, she has lived a lonely life, but never stops working. She wakes up early to sell rice porridge every morning. She is thrifty and saves the money obtained in the account of her grandson.

Noticeably, Grandma is disciplined and very strict with regard to her life, e.g., not eating beef, saving money, waking up early to sell rice porridge, and living in the moment. She rarely relies on her descendants, and despite her pain due to cancer, she still tries to encourage the people around her. The film presents the last stage of her life in a less melancholic image but full of details about her memories of attachment to family members. She can remember the details of her children and grandchildren very well. Before she dies, she gives her property to them, e.g., the house, to help the indebted son. Thus, an older adult like her is not a burden to her children but the pillar that they can still rely on.

The characteristics of Grandma are close to Enneagram 1 - the Perfectionist. She is disciplined, punctual, and meticulous. She wants to live her life in the right way with discipline, morality and duties, as she does not want to be worthless. Despite her illness, she

never gives in, never calls for anything, and never waits for death; but rather chooses to the live life to the fullest until the very last minute.

Table 6

Analysis of “Grandma” From How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	Grandma can manage herself quite efficiently. Despite her weakened body, she still works selling rice porridge to save money for her grandson without relying on anybody. She controls herself through discipline, not external power.
Age	At the end of life, Grandma is at the age range when most people wait for death. But she still moves on, i.e., waking up early to work, create benefits, and pass her love forward through actions.
Occupation/Social Role	Grandma is a rice porridge vendor, an ordinary woman in the grassroots economic system with her role as the spiritual center of the family.
Cultural Identity	The representation of an old Thai-Chinese woman with discipline, thriftiness, and silent sacrifices that strongly imply the value “do for others first,” e.g., not eating beef or indulging in extravagance.
Character Traits	Disciplined, diligent, patient, and easy-going, her actions speak more loudly than words. She is honest and quiet, but powerful inside. She loves her grandson, but does not tell him frankly. She shows her feelings through “money saving” and cooking.
Relational Role	Grandma does not show her love through sweet words but the actions that she takes to care for her descendants. She never interferes with their lives. Despite her illness, she still encourages them and does not ask for compassion. She sells her house for the indebted son.
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her key drives include duties, responsibilities, and unconditional love. With neither fears nor a need for acceptance, she holds on to her principles for living.
Character Arc	Grandma does not have any sudden changes. We see the details of her daily routines and relationships with the descendants and family. She brings a change by making them understand the meanings of love, sacrifice, and the value of family.

A Girl Who Fights Against the Injustice of the System and Society

“Mo” is a poor country girl from *The Paradise of Thorns* (Kuno, 2024). She has been raised by the family of Mother Saeng, whom she takes care of due to an illness. Unfortunately, Mo has no right to receive the heritage of this family despite her status as the wife of Mother Saeng’s son. She is ambitious for a better life, and thus she fights hard to be accepted by the mother. Her goal is to gain possession of the durian orchard. and thus, she tries every way to obtain it.

Mo is likely to be categorized in Enneagram 8 - the Challenger. She is truly a fighter who does everything that she can do to promote her status. She does not give in to obstruction as she wants to control her destiny, not to be controlled or neglected. She is afraid of being powerless, pressured, or unaccepted. Thus, she strives to fight to own the durian orchard.

Although it is the space for men, she tries to show that she has the right of ownership in her fight for a better life.

Table 7

Analysis of “Mo” From The Paradise of Thorns

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	Mo is a girl who does her best. Despite having nothing from the start, she does not give in to the limitations of social class or gender. Her goal is to own the durian orchard. Thus, she does everything to achieve it.
Age	Early–middle adolescence, with the energy to dream and drive her life full of ambitions and the courage to challenge the pressures of the social system.
Occupation/Social Role	A country girl who takes care of a patient, does housework, and helps with the durian orchard. She does not have a legal status in Mother Saeng’s family. She is regarded as the indispensable labor of the family.
Cultural Identity	The representation of a low-class country girl who is obstructed by the heritage structure and love and is regarded as an outsider although she lives in the house.
Character Traits	Brave and determined, with leadership qualities, she is able to survive. She is smart but not tricky, and very patient, with an inner fire to not be neglected.
Relational Role	A caregiver for Mother Saeng, who has a complicated relationship with her son. Mo is the uncertified lover and the neglected daughter-in-law.
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her life is driven by the desires to be accepted and to be the owner of her life. Love is not the only thing she yearns for, but also her own piece of land in the world.
Character Arc	Mo has grown up from a girl with nothing, and has changed her status from the outsider and a poor girl to a girl who stands up for the rights of herself and owns the durian orchard at last.

A Girl Who Gets Stuck With the Past and Disappointment, and Cannot Let It Go

According the representation of the female character of “Lalita Pobsulnirun” from *404 Run Run* (Jarusoornpracha, 2024), she is a girl who cherishes love and dreams. In the past, she and her lover “Ong-ard” built a hotel together. Sadly, he eventually had a love affair with someone else. Afterwards, Lalita unintentionally killed him, so she committed suicide after his death. When she becomes a ghost, she still lives at the hotel and haunts everyone who tries to renovate it until it becomes an abandoned hotel that no one dares to get close to. Lalita loses her lover and career, and gets stuck with the past and the idea that their love will return.

Committing suicide in order to die as a result of the roles and social values she once had reflects the state of a girl who cannot escape from her shredded dreams. Thus, she still lingers in the place that used to be the location of her love, dreams, and success. She does not become a ghost due to malice but her yearning for the past and her inability to accept change.

Lalita is likely to be categorized in Enneagram 4 - the Romantic or Individualist. She is afraid of being abandoned, invisible, or devalued. She expects her love and all she built to be meaningful. She is romantic, idealist, and smart at work. Nevertheless, when love falls apart,

it turns into an unbearable pain, resulting in getting stuck with the past until she cannot let it go.

Table 8

Analysis of “Lalita” From 404 Run Run

Element	Character Analysis
Agency	The owner of the “Sukhee Nirun Hotel,” built with Ong-ard, she is very smart as a young and determined entrepreneur. However, her roles are diminished by the betrayal of her husband.
Age	The late working-age, the age range of getting ready for success in work and love.
Occupation/Social Role	A hotel entrepreneur, reflecting the roles of a girl with power in a family economy.
Cultural Identity	As a girl who believes in love and self-effort, Lalita is the representation of someone who uses her heart and strength as the driving forces in her life.
Character Traits	Sacrifice for love, with self-confidence, but fragile inside in the case of the loss of love.
Relational Role	A wife and a business partner with hope for love and honesty from her lover. However, when their relationship breaks down, she feels that “her self has been destroyed.”
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her wish for success in work and love.
Character Arc	From the determined girl who lost everything at once until becoming a ghost lingering in the hotel, the story reflects getting stuck with the past and a love that will never return.

A Girl Who Seeks to Escape From an Imperfect World and Longs for a Life of Freedom

The story is about the attempt of “P’Ann,” the main character of *Flat Girls* (Wongsutin, 2025), she wants to leave the police flat building in order to live her life more freely. She is a high school student who dreams of being a flight attendant, traveling around the world, and living without worries about money. These are all her dreams that she wishes to become true one day.

P’Ann is the representation of a girl from the lower class of society, having grown up in a police block of flats that is compared to an area of security but with limitations regarding ideas, society, and dreams. Despite the simple environment with no choice, her heart is filled with the power of dreams, hopes, and imagination; particularly becoming a flight attendant, a symbol of freedom, grace, and stepping out of the same old world.

The character living in a bright world is “Nong Jane,” a junior high school girl having grown up with P’ Ann. She comes from a well-to-do family. She is searching for her real self, with ambiguous dreams. She is cheerful, straightforward, and assertive, but she is confused about who she really is, what she wants, what she wants to be, and her sexual orientation. She is at the age of searching, confronting disappointments, and learning from many new experiences.

P'Ann is likely to be categorized in Enneagram 4 - the Romantic or Individualist. She is a girl who craves to live her own life, has her imaginary world deep inside, dreams that are so distant, and searches for her real self. However, Nong Jane is likely to be categorized in Enneagram 7 - the Adventurer. She is optimistic, wants to enjoy life, and wants to try everything. However, she is still afraid of pain and not sure about herself.

Table 9

Analysis of "P'Ann" and "Nong Jane" From Flat Girls

Element	The Analysis of "P'Ann"	The Analysis of "Nong Jane"
Agency	High internal drive. Despite some limitations due to the context of the police flat, she tries to dream and plan her future by working as "a flight attendant."	Her goal is still ambiguous. She is passive rather than active to set her own way, but she seriously starts to have questions for the world and for herself.
Age	High school age, transition from teenage to adulthood.	Junior high school age, the initial transition of self, ideas, and emotions.
Occupation/Social Role	A female student from the lower class with her dream to rise above social class for a better life.	A female student from the middle class, with economic security but ambiguous social roles.
Cultural Identity	She has grown up in a poor family and has to struggle by working all the time.	She has grown up in a well-to-do family, with more opportunities to try new things and to learn.
Character Traits	Determined, quiet, emotionally deep, dreamy, and fragile.	Cheerful, straightforward, assertive, very energetic, but confused inside.
Relational Role	A sister, a daughter, and a burden taker. She helps her mother work for earning and take care of younger sister. She does not live her life the way that she wants.	Cheerful but doubtful toward herself and the world. She respects P' Ann but also has doubts about her chosen way.
Internal Drive/Conflict	Her internal drive is to search for "a new life" that will take her out of the traditional frame. She confronts a conflict between her dreams and the limitation of social class.	Her life is driven by curiosity, with a conflict between an enjoyable life and uncertainty of herself.
Character Arc	From a quiet girl in the limited frame to one who dares to think, to dream, and possibly to step out of the same old world.	From a cheerful and aimless girl to questioning, learning about, and starting to understand herself.

Conclusions

Based on the representation of the eleven female characters from nine films, the findings can be concluded as follows.

The Female Characters With Intellectual and Emotional Maturity and Self-Management

It was found that there are six characters who can make their own decisions clearly. They know what they want and how they want to live their life. To clarify, "Gaysorn" is a girl who loves learning and pursues her life through knowledge. "Ning" lives by questioning and preventing harmful occurrences. "Bokeh" is a girl with leadership and a camera operator of

short films. “Grandma” is an old woman with patience and discipline. “Mo” is a girl who tries to fight for ownership of a durian orchard. “P’ Ann” is a poor high school girl with her dream to be a flight attendant.

These women express their internal power with determination and decision making for their life in challenging situations. These characters reflect “women who determine their own life” amidst the context of Thai society with its limited structure.

Table 10

Conclusions of the Female Characters With Positive Traits, Strengths, and Self-Management

Character	Enneagram	Traits	Girl Power
Gayson (<i>Love Destiny 2</i>)	Type 5 - Observer	Loves learning and drives her life through knowledge.	Knowledge
Ning (<i>Home For Rent</i>)	Type 6 - Questioner	Prudent, preventive, and decisive.	Prudence
Bokeh (<i>Not Friends</i>)	Type 8 - Challenger	Fearless and good at technology, with leadership qualities in the space for men.	Strength
Grandma (<i>How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies</i>)	Type 1 - Perfectionist	Diligent, disciplined, strict with regard to duties, and self-reliant.	Diligence
Mo (<i>The Paradise of Thorns</i>)	Type 8 - Challenger	Fights for her rights and acceptance.	Fighting (Struggling with effort)
P’ Ann (<i>Flat Girls</i>)	Type 4 - Romantic	Has a big dream despite the limitations of social class.	Loves freedom

The Female Characters With Their Unfinished Search and Internal Struggles

The other five characters represent the girls who can make decisions, but still have to make an effort to prove themselves. Moreover, they are more sensitive than the characters in the first group. To clarify, “June” is beautiful, but unable to manage relationships. “You” is gentle and “Me” is strong, but both still have to struggle and learn in order to grow up in their relationships. “Lalita” gets stuck with the depressing past although she can pull through at the end. “Nong Jane” still searches for her real self, but can deal with family problems and the divorce of her parents with awareness.

These characters reflect the images of the girls who obviously cannot get away from external and internal pressures. They refer to regular mental images of femininity, particularly their sensitivity and relationship-oriented qualities. Despite their courage and self-love, they are still under the process of learning, growing, and recovery.

Table 11*Conclusions of the Female Characters With Sensitivity*

Character	Enneagram	Traits	Girl Power
June (<i>OMG!</i>)	Type 2 - Helper	Charming but unable to manage relationships efficiently.	Beauty
You (<i>You and Me and Me</i>)	Type 4 - Romantic	Gentle, artistic, yearning for love, and insecure inside.	Gentleness
Me (<i>You and Me and Me</i>)	Type 8 - Challenger	Strong outside, but sensitive inside.	Courage
Lalita (<i>404 Run Run</i>)	Type 4 - Romantic	Failed due to betrayal, but learns to step over the pain.	Letting go
Nong Jane (<i>Flat Girls</i>)	Type 7 - Adventurer	Cheerful and assertive, but searching for herself as an ambiguous dreamer.	Optimism

Thus, the representation of female characters in Thai films includes the girl who loves learning and studying; the gentle and deep girl yearning for love but who is strong and protective; the prudent girl searching for truths to get rid of fears and emotional wounds; the girl with leadership; the diligent, strong, patient, and disciplined woman; the girl who never gives in and fights against the unfair system and society; the girl stuck with the past disappointment who never lets go; and the girl expecting a life of freedom.

Discussion

Female characters in contemporary Thai films reflect the current diversity of identities, roles, and internal development. Their decision-making skills are presented through various contexts, i.e., as knowledgeable, protective, or dreamy women. In addition, there is a space for those who are still searching and growing, and have questions about life. These all reflect the complexity of femininity in the modern era. Nevertheless, there are still some issues to be discussed as follows.

The Space for Voices of Women in Different Generations As Well as Contexts

Thai films provide the space for female characters of all ages, from high school girls, teenagers, and working women to older adults. The appearance of “Grandma” reflects the roles of a disciplined and strong older adult who is not a social burden. Previously, older adults were rarely placed as the main characters.

Self-Searching and Growing Processes

Films do not judge femininity but provide the space for girls to learn, to grow and to search for themselves. The teenagers like “You,” “Me,” and “Nong Jane” imply that the self-image of girls is not limited by the frame of ideal girls. Their growth refers to the learning process. They are confused, but want to try living their life, and search for new experiences. These settings indicate emotional complications during teenage years while they are searching for themselves.

Dreams, Hopes, and the Limitations of Social Class

Social and economic structures force girls to struggle in order to overcome the limitations of social class. “P’ Ann” and “Mo” reflect that girls’ dreams in Thai society are still confronted by “the frame of social class” and “the structure of power.” They do not give in, but fight to step out of the same old world despite the numerous risks and strong resistance in society.

Complications and Girl/Women Power to Negotiate in the Modern World

The female characters in the subject films communicate that “femininity” cannot no longer be defined with fixed meanings. Instead, it is a space for ideological encounters and girl/women power. Thus, the “self” of women in current Thai films does not include only the images of their beauty, sweetness, or ability to manage households. The films present the broader perspectives that women have courage, dreams, leadership abilities, knowledge, discipline, and even the self-acceptance of their dark side. These are the reasons why valuing the representation of women in the world of films is challenging and delicate, with the space to perceive their values, i.e., psychological space, domestic space, and social space.

References

- Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. (2024). *97th Oscars® shortlist announces 15 films in International Feature Film category*. <https://press.oscars.org/news/97th-oscarsr-shortlists-10-award-categories-announced>
- Boonnitipat, P. (Director). (2024). *How to make millions before grandma dies* [Film]. GDH 559; Jor Kwang Films.
- Chaichana, P., & Singlumpom, O. (2019, December). *Representation of woman through Thai films*. *Ratchaphruek Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Supplementary Issue, 130–144.
- Chutiangkul, Y. (2025, January 23). *'Lahn Mah' doesn't make final 5 shortlist for Best International Feature at the 97th Oscars*. *The Standard*. <https://thestandard.co/lahn-mah-oscars-foreign-film>
- Eamaruch, P. (Director). (2023). *Bua Pan: Beauty and the Blade* [Film]. GDH 559; Netflix.
- French, L. (2012). Women in film: Treading water but fit for the marathon. In T. Carilli & J. Campbell (Eds.), *Challenging images of women in the media: Reinventing women's lives* (pp. 35–46). Lexington Books. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/15625315.pdf>
- The Guardian. (2024, December 24). *How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies review – sad but sweet Thai inheritance tale*. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2024/dec/24/how-to-make-millions-before-grandma-dies-review-lahn-mah-pat-boonnitipat>
- Hansawasdi, P. (2001). *Women in film: A reproduction of the images of Thai women* [Master's thesis, Silpakorn University, Department of Anthropology]. Silpakorn University Institutional Repository. <https://sure.su.ac.th/xmlui/handle/123456789/1670>
- Hemwadee, A. (Director & Writer). (2023). *Not Friends* [Film]. Houseton Films; GDH 559.
- Hongvivatana, W., & Hongvivatana, W. (Directors). (2023). *You & Me & Me* [Film]. GDH 559.
- Integrative9 Enneagram Solutions. (2023, November 29). *Introducing the Enneagram as a personality type model*. <https://www.integrative9.com/enneagram>
- Jarusboonpracha, P. (Director). (2024). *404 Run Run* [Film]. GDH 559; Raruek Production.
- Kerdtongtawee, T. (Director). (2022). *OMG! Oh My Girl* [Film]. Hello Filmmaker; iSM Bangkok; GDH 559.
- Kuno, N. (Director & Screenwriter). (2024). *The paradise of thorns* [Film]. GDH 559; Jor Kwang Films; Jai Studios.

- Lakshmi. (2024, December 28). *Discovering newness in screenwriting: Prominent Thai scriptwriter Thodsapon Thiptinnakorn discusses writing 'How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies'.* One Lash Shot. <https://www.preview.ph/culture/how-to-make-millions-before-grandma-dies-based-on-a-true-story-a5158-20240813>
- Limtrakul, R. (Director). (2009). *Raging Phoenix* [Film]. Sahamongkolfilm International.
- Marketeer Team. (2016, January 5). *GDH 559's launch plan revealed on the company's founding day, January 5, 2016.* Marketeer Online. <https://marketeeronline.co/archives/25919>
- Mathews, P. G. (2018). *It must be love: An exploration of the character arc model in screenwriting practice and theory* [Doctoral dissertation, Bournemouth University]. Bournemouth University Research Online. https://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/31468/9/MATHEWS%2C%20Philip%20Guy_Ph.D._2018_ch%201%202%204.pdf
- Miami Film Festival. (2024, November 7). *GEMS 2024 Audience Award Winners* [News]. <https://miamifilmfestival.com/news/gems-2024-audience-award-winners/>
- Mosley, S. L. (2023). *The narcissist in you and everyone else: Recognizing the 27 types of narcissism.* Rowman & Littlefield.
- Nation Thailand. (2025, January 24). *Hit Thai film fails to be nominated for Oscar.* *The Nation Thailand.* <https://www.nationthailand.com/life/entertainment/40045507>
- One31.net. (2025, April 5). *'Lahn Mah' sweeps multiple awards at the 14th Thai Film Directors Association Awards.* <https://www.one31.net/news/detail/74731>
- Palmer, H. (1988). *The enneagram: Understanding yourself and the others in your life.* HarperCollins.
- Phuksuk, P. (2023). *Women in motion: Women's roles in the global film industry.* The 101 World. <https://www.the101.world/women-in-motion-tiff-2023>
- PitchBook. (2025). *GDH 559 Co., Ltd. (Company ID 465483-88) profile: Investors.* PitchBook platform.
- Pow, R. (2024, July 6). *Golden age for south-east Asian cinema as local films break box office records.* *The Guardian.* <https://www.theguardian.com/film/article/2024/jul/06/golden-age-for-south-east-asian-cinema-as-local-films-break-box-office-records>
- Prakotkananung. (2025, February 9). *10 highest-grossing GDH films* [Facebook post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1009041247946407&id=100065216224377&set=a.459121759605028>

- Reich, J. (2017). *How are the characters portrayed?* In *Exploring movie construction and production: What's so exciting about movies?* (Chapter 4). Open SUNY Textbooks. <https://milnepublishing.geneseo.edu/exploring-movie-construction-and-production/chapter/4-how-are-the-characters-portrayed/>
- Riso, D. R., & Hudson, R. (1999). *The wisdom of the Enneagram: The complete guide to psychological and spiritual growth for the nine personality types*. Bantam Books.
- Roberts, E. (2023, October 27). *Character development: A guide for screenwriters*. *Backstage*. <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/character-development-for-writers-76109/>
- Rosser, M. (2024, July 29). 'Snow in Midsummer', 'How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies' win top awards at New York Asian Film Festival. *Screen Daily*. <https://www.screendaily.com/news/snow-in-midsummer-grandma-win-top-awards-at-new-york-asian-film-festival/5195804.article>
- Sakdaphisit, S. (Director). (2023). *Home for Rent* [Film]. Jor Kwang Films; N8 Studios.
- Sanook.com. (2025, May 19). *Summary of the 21st Kom Chad Luek Awards: Thailand's major award ceremony of the year*. <https://www.sanook.com/news/9791150>
- Santawee, K. (2024). Creating the meaning of female empowerment in Thai action films. *Journal of Development Studies*, 7(1), 45–46. College of Development Studies, Puey Ungphakorn School, Thammasat University.
- Saphernsup, S. (2018). *A social construction of abortion in cinematic* (Master's thesis, Thammasat University, Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication). Thammasat University Institutional Repository. https://ethesisarchive.library.tu.ac.th/thesis/2018/TU_2018_5907030109_8313_9438.pdf
- Siengsorn, P. (2014). *Presentation of women and violence in Thai films* (Master's thesis, National Institute of Development Administration, School of Language and Communication). NIDA Institutional Repository. <https://libdcms.nida.ac.th/thesis6/2557/b186097.pdf>
- Spring News. (2025, January 9). 'Lahn Mah' wins again with Honorable Mention at Gold List Film 2025. <https://www.springnews.co.th/news/entertainment/855219>
- Suchiva, N. (2017, November 13). *GDH 559 in push abroad as 'Bad Genius' wows China*. *Bangkok Post*. <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/general/1359495/gdh-559-in-push-abroad-as-bad-genius-wows-china>
- TeletonUSA. (2023, September 3). *What is media representation?* The Children's Rehabilitation Institute TeletonUSA (CRIT). <https://critusa.org/what-is-media-representation/>
- Thairath Online. (2024, December 21). 'Lahn Mah' keeps winning: Bags two awards from film festival in Russia. <https://www.thairath.co.th/entertain/movie/2832197>

Trisirikasem, A. (Director). (2022). *Love Destiny: The Movie* [Film]. Jor Kwang Films; Broadcast Thai Television; GDH 559.

Wong, S. (2024, April 9). '*How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*' opens as biggest Thai film of 2024. Screen Daily. from <https://www.screendaily.com/news/how-to-make-millions-before-grandma-dies-opens-as-biggest-thai-film-of-2024/5192261.article>

Wongsutin, J. (Director). (2025). *Flat Girls* [Film]. GDH 559; Jor Kwang Films.