

# Unraveling the Web of Power and Corruption: A Crime Fiction Analysis of Nelson DeMille's *The General's Daughter*

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**Abstract:** In "The General's Daughter," Nelson DeMille masterfully weaves a complex narrative that probes the darker aspects of human nature, exploring the intricate relationships between power, corruption, and violence. By analyzing the novel's plot, characters, and themes, this study examines how DeMille employs crime fiction conventions to craft a gripping and thought-provoking tale that challenges readers' perceptions of the military and its institutions. This analysis reveals how DeMille skillfully employs the tropes of crime fiction, including the amateur detective, the isolated setting, and the enigmatic victim, to create a sense of tension and suspense that propels the reader through the narrative. Furthermore, this study highlights how DeMille's use of multiple narrative voices, particularly those of the protagonist, John Corey, and his partner, Kate Mayfield, creates a sense of intimacy and immediacy that draws the reader into the investigation. Through closely reading the novel's themes, this study also explores how DeMille critiques the militarized culture and its tendency to perpetuate a culture of silence and secrecy. By examining how DeMille portrays the relationships between characters, particularly those between men and women, this analysis reveals how the novel challenges traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, exposing the complexities and contradictions inherent in these constructs. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how "The General's Daughter" stands as a model of crime fiction that entertains and engages readers in critically examining the social and cultural forces that shape our world. By exploring how DeMille employs crime fiction conventions to craft a thrilling and thought-provoking narrative, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the genre's power to influence our perceptions of reality and our knowledge of human nature.

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## Introduction

Feminism is a multidisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality, as understood via social theories and political participation. Feminism has evolved from examining gender inequality to a more

sophisticated study of how gender and sexuality are constructed in society and the arts. Feminist theory has recently shifted its attention to the interconnections of ability, class, gender, racism, sex, and sexuality better to understand the root causes of inequality and injustice. If these factors cross in ways that lead to unequal power dynamics, then feminism seeks to remedy the issue.

Writing about rape these days creates a central debate in literature, society, politics, and other branches. Women during the old times search for their shelter to protect themselves from the rapists. Therefore, in Roman law, for instance, fathers and husbands have the authority and right to punish their children and wives physically. Subsequently, as time passed, specifically during the twelfth century, the law gave the right to the victim's family to execute the perpetrator of rape by themselves. After two centuries, they enacted new rules against the rapists. It is quite possible that, during the beginning of the Fourteenth Century, maybe in England, the English government legitimated that the raped woman has the right to either snatch the eyes or cut the testicles of the perpetrator with her own hands. Nevertheless, the scene is a whole of violence, but it reduces the operation of rapists toward their victims (1).

In the modern world, there is what is called rape culture. It is a concept that legitimates rape as something expected to happen. Rape culture is a term that appeared in 1970 in America when American feminists coined this term. It was intended to show how society blamed and criticized the victims of sexual assaults, and rape was normalized in certain circumstances. It is a powerful system where sexual assault is accepted, and victims are held responsible for their ordeals. It fosters the connotation of how culture and institutions enable rapists, normalize impunity, humiliate victims, and force women to make excessive sacrifices to prevent sexual assault.

Rape culture meets the notion of sexual politics, which encompasses the dispute of power-structured relationships concerning sex, gender, and sexuality. According to this context, a woman is only considered a sexual object when she is sexually objectified. The disdain for a woman's uniqueness and intrinsic value in favor of treating her as a commodity would be a more extensive definition of objectification. Even though social objectification garners greater attention, this dehumanization may occur individually. For this reason, Susan Brownmiller published her work titled *Against Our Will*, which stands against sexual violence and the agenda of rape culture (Ibid).

This term is used in literary studies and social studies to show how rape culture has an influential part in our culture. However, it is in social media, the economy, politics, and other branches. Therefore, rape across cultures breaks the rules of traditions of religion and morality. Due to that, Carole. J Sheffield is a professor who specializes in feminism and political issues. She coins a term called "sexual terrorism," which refers to the concept of the use of human tools and conflict that is related to sexual violence and trafficking as a means of 'terrorism.' It means that men use their power and abilities to control women in the cycle of sexual abuse using terrorism (2).

Brian Earp and colleagues define rape culture as a term that has "a rational act of domination, and the perceived gender of the victim is relevant because the type of domination being performed is sexual" (3). Rape, in this sense, is linked with dominance and power relations which place women in the corner of defense against sexual abuse. Jan Jordan further argues that "The rape culture, as an endemic within our society, is reflected in the deafness and denial that, despite all feminist efforts, still largely surrounds this topic." (4). In this context, rape culture is an endemic that resides inside women's bodies.

Women who are trapped by the forces of rape suffer from subjugation, trauma, oppression, depression, degradation, and physical diseases. As such, men use their power and ideologies to commit aggressive violence against women and limit them within the boundaries of patriarchal structure. Hence, rape culture legitimates the sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual asphyxia against women. However, rape and its aftermath are silenced since talking about such an issue is a taboo that goes against different norms. For Brownmiller, rape is noted as a symbol of "the basic male-female struggle" inside the patriarchy (5).

Ann J. Cahill, in her book "Rethinking Rape" (2001), gives a definition of the term rape as "the imposition of a sexually penetrating act on an unwilling person" (6). As such, rape is the way that when one person commits sexual violence against the will of another person. For her, rape is both "rape is sexual, and that the sexuality inherent in it violent" (Ibid). She was against the idea of what Brownmiller observed rape as violent only.

In most circumstances, American society accepts violence as the norm. As a subset of sex, the concept of "rape culture" has been explored in recent media; in such films, the producers use sex to convince the viewer that rape is motivated by passion rather than forceful aggression. As a result, the rape culture persists in its mission to wipe out females. Too often,

these films glorify sexual assault and other acts of physical violence on the basis that they are "hot" and enjoyable. However, filmmakers, especially those in the United States and Canada, aim to convince the public that rape culture has nothing to do with sexual assault. Films like this bolster a belief in a rape culture.

Nelson Richard DeMille is an American novelist born on August 23, 1943, in New York. However, DeMille served in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969, and during these three years, he earned the rank of First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Along with his career in the American Military, he earned the Bronze Star and served in the Vietnam War. However, his recorded history inside the military institution was full of honor, loyalty, and respect, and he has a good reputation in American Military. Subsequently, in 1970, he received a B.A. in Political Science and History from the University of Hofstra. As a former lieutenant in the US Army, he was so affected by the battlefields and wars (7).

For this reason, in most of his works, he used the genres of crime fiction, thriller, action-adventure, and suspense. As a novelist, his first significant work was "The River of Babylon" (1978). However, he writes many different novels such as "The Charm School," "Word of Honour," "Wilde Fire", and other works. As such, because of his experiences in the military, he depicts crime scenes and military terms in most of his works. For example, *The General's Daughter* stands as an essential example of rape scandals inside the American Military.

The present study aims to examine the aspects of rape and the brutal behavior against the female body. It highlights the elements of rape through Nelson DeMille's "The General's Daughter". It shows how this novel stands as a typical example of rape scandals inside the American Military. However, the study follows analytical and descriptive approaches through the lenses of crime fiction and feminist approaches.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Exploring Sexual Assault & Rape in the U.S. Military**

Recent research conducted by feminist experts and individuals who specialize in the study of rape has revealed that the military is the location where most instances of rape culture occur. In the majority of cases, marital rape is more prevalent within American bases. In 2012, the Department of Defense in the United States reported that over 26,000 personnel had been physically and sexually assaulted. Marital rape was subsequently reported in the media, particularly during the Tailhook Scandal from September 5-

8, 1991 (8). In summary, the Tailhook Scandal refers to an operation conducted by the U.S. Marine Corps Aviation of officers and the U.S. Navy. These individuals were accused of assaulting 83 women and at least 7 males at Tailhook.

In summary, Tailhook is the United States association that advocates for the interests of the sea and military aircraft carriers. As a result, the event is subsequently abbreviated as "Tailhook 91" in the media. Nelson DeMille comments on the rape scandal that happened in the Tailhook. He describes it:

"The Tailhook incident was not typical, and the Navy brass should have made that clear and should have stood up for the Navy and prevented the excellent name and reputation of its entire corps of fighter pilots from being dragged through the mud because of one stormy night that involved a relatively small number of individuals". (13).

In certain examples, the American Military and Congress fail to address sexual scandals. This is demonstrated in Nelson DeMille's "The General's Daughter", in which the military authorities and Congress ordered General Joseph Campbell to resolve the case of his daughter's rape and to retain his position as General. Therefore, Congress exemplifies the concept of a "silence policy" by demonstrating that the perpetrators' identities were unknown, rendering it impossible to identify and apprehend them. As a result, Congress convinces General Joseph to remain mute regarding his daughter's rape, and the case is resolved. In reality, the perpetrators do not receive the justice they deserve. No one even endeavors to ascertain their identity. Otherwise, the American military will be perceived as being on a false trajectory by the American populace if the case is made public. General Joseph agrees with their recommendations to maintain his position as a General in the U.S. Military for this purpose. However, this is insufficient justification for concluding the case and concurring with Congress and its commanders. Ultimately, the outcome is as anticipated. Even though numerous soldiers assault his daughter, she fails to protect her rights as a woman serving in the U.S. military. Throughout history, the United States military has been perceived as a masculine culture. Therefore, the stability of the status quo, established by the dominance of males, is contradicted by the presence of women in the various branches of the American U.S. Military. The United States of

America maintains one of the most formidable military forces in the world. Therefore, the U.S. Military forces are comprised of both men and women who serve, protect, and support their country and defend their land from criminals (Ibid).

However, the American Military's most incredible absurdity is that it is not limited to specific categories. It is more probable that a woman who enlists to defend her country will be captured by rapists and raped by multiple soldiers than to be slain by enemy fire. Nevertheless, sexual violence and sexual assaults have been identified as endemic and even prevalent occurrences that can occur in all branches of the American Military. One of the offenses that happened in the U.S. military. Nevertheless, Barack Obama, the president of the United States, asserts that:

“Those who commit sexual assault are not only committing a crime, they threaten the trust and discipline that make our military strong. That’s why we must be determined to stop those crimes, because they have no place in the greatest military on Earth”.

(10).

The American president endeavors to defend and prevent the operations of rape in the American community. Nevertheless, Obama holds those perpetrators accountable for their actions. Consequently, he demonstrates how the experiences of rape can enhance the strength of their soldiers. Additionally, he referenced the American military's capacity to undermine these forces and eliminate the authoritarian elements of rape culture. His speech was a direct message to those who engage in sexual assault against females while serving in the United States military while they are donning their uniforms. Obama initiated a campaign entitled "It's on Us." It is intended to advocate for the rights of American women and women who have been sexually assaulted on campus (11). In reality, the American president endeavors to eradicate the language of rape culture in the United States.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **2.2: Discussing DeMille’s *The General's Daughter*: A Crime Fiction Analysis**

This novel serves as a prominent illustration of rape culture, primarily focusing on political rape. It portrays the heinous acts and rape scandals that occur within the American Military. It also encompasses the

repulsiveness of American individuals within the Armed Forces. In broad terms, the novel explores the theme of sexual assault within the milieu of the American Military. However, the film portrays the implementation of Military law and focuses on women's experiences serving in the American armed forces.

Furthermore, it demonstrates the presence of these operations and elements within Georgia's military base. The American Army, Air Force, Navy, and other branches of the American Military are all subject to the jurisdiction of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Therefore, all these branches, including those in America, are founded upon military legislation. Indeed, women and men who have served in the U.S. Army do not retain the privileges they are protecting. The novel "The General's Daughter" by Nelson DeMille depicts a crime scene in a military field. Furthermore, the book is a work of crime fiction that portrays an inquiry into the details of a crime occurring among American military units during nighttime training exercises. The film depicts a rape scandal within the American military and explores the reactions of the Pentagon and Congress to such incidents.

This is a narrative about a killer who operates within the United States and acts in opposition to the principles of the American flag, duty, honor, and devotion, as defined by military law. Furthermore, it contradicts the prevailing belief in the military community that American men and women are comrades in arms. As quoted in DeMille's work, the American army proverb states that all male siblings are courageous and all female siblings possess admirable qualities. It holds immense importance; nonetheless, it is not the focus of this work. This crime undermines the fundamental structure of the American military and its several divisions. Given that this novel primarily revolves around crime, focusing on the crime fiction genre and how it is portrayed in this particular work is essential. Crime fiction is a genre of literature where the story's central focus is the crime that drives the plot. The beginnings of crime fiction can be traced back to Roman and Greek mythology and ancient times, including events such as the murder of Cain and Abel. Crime fiction is also rooted in biblical tales and war stories (12). Nevertheless, the crime fiction genre originates from Gothic literature. Gothic literature emerged in the late 18th century through the works of Horace Walpole, widely regarded as the genre's progenitor. *The Castle of Otranto*, a renowned piece of literature, is replete with gothic themes and is widely regarded as the inaugural novel to embody the Gothic atmosphere. In contemporary society, emerging

authors have introduced crime fiction as a literary genre that explores the ambiguity of criminal activities and offers resolutions to these mysteries.

Additionally, it provides readers with clues to a mystery and invites them to engage in critical thinking to uncover a solution. Therefore, this literary genre comprises fundamental components. For example, it encompasses the portrayal of a suspect, a detective, an antagonist, a narrative centered around criminal activity, and the environment in which the story takes place. Crime fiction relies on the meticulous investigative methods employed by a detective to uncover and expose the hidden details of a crime scene, encompassing offenses such as rape, murder, sexual assaults, and various other forms of transgressions.

Crime fiction focuses on the perpetrators of crimes and examines their motivations and actions at the crime scenes. Julie Kim notes that crime fiction and other genres like detective fiction have significant benefits when addressing complex modern problems (13). This genre offers superior reading material compared to what is found in news articles or other sources. Furthermore, it represents resolving societal issues and criminal activities in our modern world. Crime fiction has a distinct psychological effect on readers, allowing them to become observers through a medium. It offers a diversion from the reader's personal life with a compelling storyline in a comfortable proximity. *The General's Daughter* commences with a dialogue between investigator Paul Brenner and his former romantic partner Cynthia Sunhill, an expert in sexual assault cases.

Nevertheless, Paul inquires, "Is this seat occupied?" The citation "DeMille 1" refers to a source or reference made by DeMille, likely in a scholarly context. Therefore, the opening of the narrative portrays the lingering emotional scars within Cynthia and the profound sense of brokenness she experiences following their separation. Therefore, the novel portrays these images by utilizing the method of flashback. She remembers by sharing her emotions with other characters or through asides. At the outset of the work, DeMille expresses his initial assessment of the book. Paul assumes the role of the narrator in the story. He asserts his status in the military domain by stating:

"My job is as an officer in the United States Army. My rank is unimportant, and in my line of work, it's also a secret. I am in the Criminal Investigation Division, the CID, and in the Army, which is very rank-conscious, the best rank to have is no rank"

(13).



The tale begins with the depiction of the murder of Ann Campbell, the daughter of General Joseph Campbell. Nevertheless, the deceased individual is interred in a military base in Georgia. She is discovered without any clothing. Paul utters with discomfort:

“Unfortunately, there are some men who get their fun and challenges in other words. Sexual assault. Murder. That's what happened on that hot August night at Forty Hadley, Georgia. The victim was Captain Ann Campbell, daughter of Lieutenant General Joseph “Fighting Joe” Campbell”.

(13).

However, Paul characterizes Ann's personality. His description goes, “She was young, beautiful, talented, bright, and a West Point graduate. She was the pride of Fort Hadley” (13). Before arriving at the crime scene, Paul is contacted by Colonel William Kent, who holds the position of post-provost marshal (13). He notifies him about a criminal incident, stating, “A homicide has occurred. A captain who is female. She was possibly subjected to sexual assault” (13). Paul is in control of this case and is on the verge of assuming leadership. Colonel Kent and Paul encounter one another, and Kent notices the presence of Sergeant St. John. He discovered the body (13). Therefore, the initial suspect in this case is the sergeant. However, additional suspects will be identified and listed as the events unfold. Kent, Paul, and Cynthia are near the deceased body of Ann Campbell at the crime scene. She is unclothed and has been killed by strangulation. Although she is naked and her underwear is tied around her neck, there is no evidence of rape. Paul depicts the scene by stating, “I halted a short distance away from the corpse, which is positioned in a supine position.” The woman was unclothed. (13). Paul illustrates another significant detail: the absence of her uniform at the scene. The absent items included her boots, socks, helmet, pistol, belt, holster, and sidearm” (13).

The completion of the forensic test on Ann's body is causing a delay. Paul inquires Cynthia about the rationale of placing the undergarments around Ann's neck, asking, “Are you aware of the motive behind having her panties positioned beneath the rope encircling her neck?”(13). Her response is negative. Paul clarifies, “Refer to the homicide manual for information on sexual asphyxia” (13). This concept is linked to the phenomenon of rape culture, specifically about the utilization of sexual aggression towards the victim.

Consequently, it reestablished a connection with political rape when the perpetrators subjected their victims to extreme humiliation. Subsequently, Paul and Cynthia proceed to Ann Campbell's residence to gather any pertinent evidence for the case. Paul states, "I discovered the house key on Ann Campbell's keychain and used it to unlock the door." Upon entering the kitchen, I closed the door and securely locked it after that" (13).

Paul and Cynthia are actively seeking tangible evidence within Campbell's residence. Therefore, they describe the Campbell residence, which features three entrances. According to Paul, there were three doors connected to the upstairs hallway, with one door being open and the other two doors being closed. The text is attributed to DeMille39. Therefore, Cynthia expresses her sentiment with a tinge of resentment: "I find it disheartening." She exhibited a high level of tidiness and organization. Now that she has died, chaos and disorder will ensue. The detectives are currently searching for evidence within the premises of the house. Paul states, despite being present at the location, "We conducted a meticulous investigation, thoroughly examining the books, inspecting the desk drawers from all angles, and ultimately scrutinizing the titles of both books and CDs" (13). Cynthia discovered an audio CD and activated it. Ann asserts in the film that no individual desires to perish. However, numerous individuals can be compelled to jeopardize their lives to protect their nations, families, and even abstract concepts or philosophical ideas" (13). Subsequently, they uncover additional items in various locations within the house.

Nevertheless, Cynthia and Paul have established other things. Paul was assigned the responsibility of conducting psychological operations to study the concept of pornographic images. Paul and Cynthia, an expert in sexual assault cases, are searching for evidence when they hear a distinct voice saying, "Ann, this is Colonel Fowler." After completing your duty, you were expected to visit the general's residence this morning. Mrs. Campbell has made breakfast for you. "You are most likely asleep at the moment" (13). So far, Paul is confused about why Colonel Fowler contacted her at this specific moment, and he must be aware that she is deceased. Nevertheless, the detectives discovered a collection of explicit photographs in Ann's concealed chamber, along with other undisclosed findings. Paul and Cynthia activate the television in the concealed chamber, causing Ann's image to occupy the entire screen.

“The screen brightened, and Ann Campbell, dressed in her red-sequined dress with high heels and jewelry, stood in this very room. An off-camera tape or disc was playing “The Stripper,” and she began taking it all off. A male voice, presumably the cameraman, joked, “Do you do this at the general's dinner parties?” Ann Campbell smiled and wiggled her hips at the camera. She was down to her panties”.

(13).

Nelson DeMille's novel portrays multiple issues. Nevertheless, these sentences embody the concept articulated by Kate Millett in her theory of Sexual Politics. She presumes that the woman possesses the prerogative to determine how sexual intercourse occurs and how she participates in a sexual partnership. In addition, her theory explores how females might exert control over males by utilizing specific sexual strategies involving their reproductive systems (14). Ann's activities unveil latent aspects of her character, indicating her desire to accomplish a task conscientiously.

Furthermore, she acquires objects that are concealed. The subsequent chapter of the book delves into these particular situations. The detective and his female aide conduct investigations with a team of several cops and sergeants. Additionally, they investigate Ann's father and mother. At some juncture, they have suspicions that her father is responsible for her homicide. However, he is not. Ann is employed as a psychological consultant at that location.

Besides, they discover that she engages in several sexual encounters with nearly all the officers there. Ann experienced a psychological issue in the past. Therefore, she desires to find a psychological remedy for herself. Nevertheless, there is an element of ambiguity in the psychological report as it fails to address the underlying cause. Furthermore, it encompasses ambiguous elements in the documented history of her psychological evaluation. During the conversation, Paul and Cynthia, an expert in sexual assault, attempt to analyze the circumstances surrounding Ann Campbell's death. Therefore, Paul formulates how she died:

“Well, the panties around her neck were put there so as not to leave a telltale rope mark. That's very specific for sexual asphyxia when it is not meant to lead to death. {Paul} added that is one way to interpret the scene that

represented itself to us, but let's examine the forensic evidence".

(13).

Sexual asphyxia is regarded as a manifestation of rape culture, as rapists exploit their authority to exert control over their victims. Consequently, Ann became entangled in the political conflict of the infiltrators and was unable to prevent their actions. Nevertheless, the act of placing the undergarments around her neck symbolizes the concept of political rape, wherein the perpetrators subjected her to sexual assault and degradation in a profoundly distressing manner. Based on Kent's evidence, he has the belief that Ann Campbell possesses physical attractiveness, which results in a strong desire for sexual encounters with others. However, it is essential to clarify that this does not serve as a justification for her rape, despite any intentions Kent may have had to provide such a justification. Indeed, the narrative of her sexual assault is replete with several particulars. There is a concealed element in the case. It is not an isolated offense that occurs to any individual in civilian society but rather a crime within the American Military, the most influential institution globally. Nevertheless, Cynthia inquires Colonel Charles Moore, who is Ann's superior, about Ann's response to her father. The individual states:

"She went through the expected stages of shock, denial, then feelings of depression, and finally, anger. It wasn't until about six years ago that she decided she had to seek revenge rather than try to cope with it. She becomes somewhat unstable and then obsessed with her theory that only revenge can make things right"

(13).

Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma is exemplified in this scenario, where the moment of trauma remains elusive and incomprehensible until a significant amount of time has elapsed, spanning seconds, minutes, hours, and days. Nevertheless, Caruth experiences a delayed response to the incident when it occurs. Therefore, understanding the occurrence of trauma in the acquisition view is lengthy. But, it refers to the phenomenon where individuals require significant time to comprehend and make sense of their experiences. Furthermore, individuals who are trapped by traumatic experiences are at a higher susceptibility to depression, trauma, stroke, and mortality (14). Ann Campbell experiences a similar situation when her father betrays her for an undisclosed motive.

Consequently, she is profoundly astonished, shattered, and unable to understand it. Furthermore, the process of taking action is time-consuming. Due to this factor, the moment remains indelible. Nevertheless, she seeks retribution against her father by engaging in similar actions with other military personnel. Indeed, they persevered in their investigation until they discovered the truth. During a nocturnal military training session, Ann becomes disoriented and loses her sense of direction. The current weather conditions are characterized by a tumultuous and stormy evening. Only the sound of thunder is audible. Ann is being held captive by a group of six men. Her coworkers are in disguise during the training, making it difficult for her to recognize them. The individuals apprehend her, remove her garments, and place her undergarments around her neck. She is subjected to brutal sexual assault. She is subjected to ridicule since she has not engaged in sexual activity.

“In August, during condo training, the cadets were engaged in night patrols in the wood, and by accident or design, Cadet Campbell was separated from a larger group and found herself with five or six males... {they} grabbed Cadet Campbell, stripped her, and stalked her out... then took turns raping her.”

(13).

Psychologists and the psychological aspects of rape contribute to the perpetuation of rape culture by normalizing consent and sexuality on a psychological level. Nevertheless, those scientists portray men as exhibiting sexual aggression during instances of rape (15). Most instances of sexual assault involve a combination of pleasure and violence when the perpetrator engages in sexual activity with the victim while also committing rape. Put simply, during the act of rape, the perpetrators manipulate their victims by using their emotional reactions, combining their emotions with violent and sexual urges to exert control over them. Given that literature serves as a testament to our reality, it is evident that women who experience rape are profoundly burdened by trauma.

Accordingly, they articulate their encounters with sexual assault and are tormented by the memories of the incidents. In addition, women who experience rape suffer from psychological trauma, which manifests as anxiety, fear, disruption, discomfort, and shame. This leads to the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which severely impacts their mental and physical well-being (16). Paul presents what military law authorizes. He informs the General that his response to his

daughter's actions has resulted in losing his position as a General. Paul notifies him that his actions are offensive and can be penalized under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. General Joseph provides a more extensive account of the rape of his daughter. The individual states:

“She was a virgin, and the men who raped her made fun of this. She told him that the men had pulled off her clothes and staked her on the ground with tent pegs. One of the men had choked her with a rope while he was raping her and told her he’d strangled her to death if she reported the assault”.

(13).

Sexual assault is a significant element in DeMille's story. The author portrays the concept of a woman's loss of virginity within the context of the American military. This activity violates military law. The perpetrators employ their ideology and abilities to manipulate their target (Ann). Threatening, mocking, and accusing are the primary methods of perpetuating rape culture used by the perpetrators in the film "The General's Daughter." She was subjected to a brutal act of sexual assault. They accomplish this by restraining her hands. Within this particular context, the rape scene encompasses elements of sexual suffocation and the forcible taking of her virginity within a nocturnal setting. Ann experienced a similar incident when the attackers not only sexually assaulted her but also forcefully removed her clothing. After uncovering the mysteries of the crime, Paul contemplates the potential consequences if this rape scandal were to be widely disseminated in the media and became a matter of public knowledge. In addition to others, he portrays the scene:

“It came down to the fact that five erect penises penetrated one vagina, and the entire United States Army Military Academy at West Point could be torn apart in the same act that had torn Ann Campbell’s hymen imperforate. These were the times that we lived in; rape was not an act of sex—consensual sex was easily available. Rape was an act of violence, a breach of military order and discipline, an affront to the West Point code of honour, a definitive no vote against a co-ed academy, against women in the Army, against female officers, and against the notion that women could coexist with men in the dark woods of Camp Buckner, or the hostile environment of the battlefield”

(13).

As previously stated, according to military regulations, men and women are considered comrades. Therefore, women possess noble qualities, whereas men are considered brothers. Nevertheless, if Ann's rape case became widely known, it might potentially dismantle and bring an end to the most influential powers in the world. Furthermore, the act of rape not only impacts Ann personally but also undermines the structural integrity of the American Military. Nevertheless, this act of rape is categorized as a 'crime of sex' and serves as a typical illustration of rape scandals within American institutions. It was a violation of human dignity and a breach of military regulations. This action is directed towards the coeducational academy in American universities, particularly during the training sessions. Nevertheless, it contradicts the principles of morality, integrity, and allegiance defined by military law. What truly distresses her is that her father forsakes her in her difficult situation to appease the Pentagon, as they wish to avoid any Army scandal. The case was dismissed without any attempts to ascertain the perpetrators' identification to provide appropriate punishment. Based on Kent's findings, Ann desires to seek retribution against her father for an undisclosed motive. Therefore, she engages in more than just sexual relationships with the majority of the men in the Army. The reluctance of her father to seek justice for her after the rape remains unexplained. Before her demise, she reenacted the scenario and summoned her father to witness her. He arrives. He no longer provides his assistance to her. He abandons her unclothed and immobilized on the ground with a rope, reminiscent of the traumatic incident of her sexual assault. Subsequently, Kent, who harbors a deep affection for her and desires her intensely despite her rejection, discovers her in this state and proceeds to asphyxiate her. Paul asserts, "Bill, we are aware that you are the culprit, you are aware that you are the culprit, and it is common knowledge as to why."(13).

Nevertheless, the novel will shortly reach its conclusion due to Kent's tragic downfall. By applying a feminist lens to the text, Kent's response in the final section of the novel mirrors the repercussions of the perpetrators of sexual assault. Furthermore, it illustrates the inevitable and tragic downfall that awaits rapists and criminals. However, Kent, who ultimately takes his own life by shooting himself in the heart, serves as a prime illustration of a murderer and rapist among the ranks of the American military, donning the uniform of the American armed forces.

## Conclusion

In the analyzed work, rape is shown as a potent force that subjected the female body to domination. This force is exerted onto women without their consent. The literary portrayal of crime fiction and feminist perspectives emphasizes how the ideology of patriarchal standards and its doctrines constrained female protagonists to a confined position. The process starts by validating specific ideals that target the female body and concludes by placing blame on the victim. The study aimed to examine the embodiment of rape issues within the military context. It managed the response of the Pentagon and Congress to such concerns. DeMille employs a distinctive approach in his crime fiction genre, including flashbacks and an investigative procedure. The novel psychologically impacts readers, allowing them to experience and observe the main events vicariously. Ann Campbell is seen as a sexual object by U.S. soldiers. She epitomizes sexual abuse. Due to her being restrained, she was subjected to repeated acts of sexual assault by six individuals, who subjected her to both rape and extreme humiliation.

She experienced sexual abuse perpetrated by unidentified soldiers. The women who have been victimized are captured by powerful beliefs that are exploited by the perpetrators, who enforce a policy of silence upon their victims. Ann, too, had a similar situation, where her father, as well as the Pentagon and Congress, ignored her rape. Despite being the daughter of General Joseph and deserving legal protection, the reality is that her rape incident was highly distressing. Her father approved of the proposals from Congress and the Pentagon, which resulted in him leaving his daughter alone. The novel by DeMille presents the oppressive forces acting upon the female body disturbingly, with the author depicting instances of rape that significantly impact women. These female soldiers experience dual forms of oppression due to both internal resistance and external oppression within their groups. U.S. soldiers and Colonel Kent



demonstrate the force shown in the analyzed novel. These individuals are acting as criminals while wearing U.S. Military uniforms and engaging in sexual abuse. Their actions harm Ann and violate the U.S. Code of Justice within American institutions. The author effectively portrays the concealed aspects of victimized women through the utilization of the crime fiction genre.

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