

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Domestic violence can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender. It can happen to couples who are married, living together or who are dating. Domestic violence can be defined as “a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner” (NDVH in Davis 1). It can be inferred that any relationship in which one of the parties is more powerful than another can dominate and control everything. Intimate partner violence itself is a universal phenomenon existing in most countries, occurring across all demographic, ethnic, cultural and economic lines. In this case, women are as the victims of abusive activities by men. Abused women are more likely than their non-abused counterparts to experience negative physical and psychological health symptoms, including stress-related and chronic illnesses.

Abusing women can be determined as a domestic violence because it includes physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person that includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure or wound someone (NDVH in Davis 1). National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) states that “it is an epidemic affecting individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic

status, race, religion, nationality or educational background” (1). Violence against women is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior, and thus is part of a systematic pattern of dominance and control. Domestic violence results in physical injury, psychological trauma, and sometimes death. The consequences of domestic violence can cross generations and truly last a lifetime.

Recently, domestic violence, especially spousal abuse still happens in the United State of America. There are many violent practices which occur among American spouses and they are dominated by men. The data of NCADV states that; 1) One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime, 2) An estimated 1,3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year, 3) Historically, females have been most often victimized by someone they know, 4) Females who are 20-24 years of age are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence, and 5) Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police. The American Bar Association and the Department of Justice also provides the following statistics about domestic violence; about 25 percent of women and 7.6 percent of men are raped or physically assaulted by their spouse, partner, or dating partner in their lifetime and nearly 1.3 million women and about 835,000 men are assaulted by their partner every year in the United State. According to a National Women’s Study that sampled a total of 4,008 women, 13 percent of all adult women become rape victims during their lifetime, about 9

percent of the female victims were raped by their husbands or ex-husbands, nearly 10 percent were raped by their boyfriends or ex-boyfriends. Additionally, 11 percent of the female victims were raped by their fathers or stepfathers, and 16 percent were raped by other relatives.

The data shows that domestic violence, which is perpetrated by men, indicates male dominance in patriarchal society. Robert Dale Parker declared that “it sets out to reverse a pattern and history of not taking women seriously or not respecting women, *misogyny* which is a part of the broader cultural history and practice of centering on men while underestimating women” (149). In this point, a woman who has internalized the norms and values of *patriarchy* as any culture that privileges men traditional gender roles can experience domestic violence. This is a trigger that encourages the attendance of domestic violence. The patriarchal society also prescribes traditional gender role which casts men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive. On the contrary, it casts women as emotional, weak, nurturing, and submissive. These have been used very successfully to justify inequities. *Patriarchy* is thus, by definition, *sexiest*, which means promoting the belief that women are basically inferior to men (Tyson 85). Based on that definition, it can be concluded that the inferior position occupied by women in patriarchal society has been culturally produced and it cannot be avoided by women.

Based on the statement above, the writer can see that there is still a subordinating women practice done by men who hold traditional gender

roles. Men believe that they have different physical size, shape and body chemistry which make them naturally superior to women.

Domestic violence is a tragedy in the United States and around the rest of the world. Even with “increased penalties, changes to custody laws, and increased awareness through community efforts, domestic violence remains a pressing issue in the United States” (Acevedo 1). Men oppressed women because men are in the superior position in patriarchal society which has been culturally produced. According to the statement in Tyson’s book:

Patriarchal ideology works to keep women and men in traditional gender roles and thereby maintain male dominance” (91) with the result that it encourages the domestic violence practice because our society is controlled by patriarchal system, it supports “the male monopoly of positions of economic, political, and social powers, in the other words, to keep women powerless (Tyson 86).

A situation in which “men have highly preferential access, although not always exclusive rights, to those activities to which the society accords the greatest value, and the exercise of which permits a measure of control over other” (Friedl in Sanday 164) positions women as the second sex, meaning that women are more inferior, women do not have any meaning to men, and men can do anything toward women. The term *Second Sex* itself is established by Simone de Beauvoir who argues that women are perceived as less essential and in the secondary level to men. Beauvoir believes that men define what it means to be human, including what it means to be female. Beauvoir in Bressler declares that

“since the female is not male, she becomes the Other, an object whose existence is defined and interpreted by the dominant male” (173). Consequently, the category of woman has no substance except as an extension of male fantasy and fear. Supporting this argument, Kate Millet’s *Sexual Politics* argues that a female is born, but a woman is created. It means that “one’s sex is determined at birth, but one’s gender is a social construct created by cultural norms” (Millet in Bressler 173). Consciously or unconsciously, women and men conform to the societal constructs established by society. Millet also states that patriarchy is responsible for constructing a social system which ascribes a particular sexual status, role, and temperament for each gender, hence ensuring the sex/gender hierarchy (118). As a result, masculine traits are attributed to dominant social roles while feminine is associated with submission and dependence.

In this study, the writer would like to analyze a film entitled *Lovelace*, which is based on true story Linda Lovelace. The writer sees a domestic violence practice in the film, which is perpetrated by the husband. Thus, the writer identifies how the woman character, Linda struggles in dealing with domestic violence that is perpetrated by her abusive husband, Chuck Traynor for maintaining the truth and her right and tries to escape and break the traditional gender roles. In this film, the writer finds physical violence, psychological or emotional abuse, sexual violence, and threat of physical or sexual violence (Saltzman *et al* 11-12)

that are experienced by Linda and indicate the phenomenon of male dominance. The writer also identifies the existing portrayal of the sex industry which can harm the women in patriarchal society.

This film also portrays the process when Linda Susan Boreman who transformed into Linda Lovelace who was employed by her husband, Chuck Traynor and becoming a popular porn legend in *Deep Throat* film. As Fandango infers about *Deep Throat* film that:

“*Deep Throat* becomes the single most lucrative adult film of all the time. It also popularized the technique and term of sexual act, deep-throating. But she shocked the world via her book about what really happened when the cameras were not rolling; she describes the sadistic abuse that she endured at the hands of Traynor and a series of increasingly futile attempts to escape from his clutches, and claims that she was coerced to appear in the movie” (Fandango).

Deep Throat itself is depicted in *Lovelace* film made in 1972. It was directed by Gerard Damiano who managed to show “over ten hard core sex scenes to the American public including: fellatio, cunnilingus, vaginal and anal penetration, a threesome and several *money shot*” (Damiano in pornography history). Finally, the censors shut it down in March, 1973 because it faced legal challenges over its content. In 1976, in Memphis, a series of federal cases brought charges against virtually everyone associated with the film.

However, in 1972, mainstream attention to the adult entertainment world reached all time high when *Deep Throat* became one of the first and only adult films to capture a mainstream audience. The era when *Deep Throat* appeared is called the Golden Age of pornography in America that

“the sexual freedom movement was just catching hold, so everything sexual felt fresh at that time” (Nitke). During this era, people had to go out to real movie theaters to watch sex, which gave it more glamour. Because of its hardcore depictions, Linda Lovelace is considered as a sexual freedom movement icon.

Thus, Co-directors Jeffrey Friedman and Robert Epstein make a movie based on Linda Lovelace’s true story, entitled *Lovelace* which depicts *Deep Throat* and the struggle of Linda Lovelace in dealing with domestic violence and the enslavement of sex industry. Renowned in the independent film world, they are among the most honored directors, writers, and producers. They have received two Academy Awards, multiple Emmy Awards, three Peabody Awards, and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Lovelace premiered at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival on January 22nd, 2013 and opened in a U.S. limited release on August 9, 2013. The movie described Linda as an innocent girl from a conservative family who finally got married. The fact is her marriage does not seem so happy because of her abusive husband who always does domestic violence, domestic sexual, exploitation to her and bring her into the prostitution practice. This film portrays an oppressed woman character who tries to escape from her abusive husband. She wants to break the traditional gender roles which are internalized by her mother to get her right. Then, she becomes a feminist icon and a crusader against domestic violence and

the enslavement of the porn industry. One of the reasons why the writer chooses this work is because Linda Lovelace is considered as a woman who unexpectedly becomes a worldwide celebrity for starring in the highest-grossing pornography film of all time, *Deep Throat*. The content also portrays woman's issue and struggle, especially domestic violence which is perpetrated by her husband and the enslavement of the sex industry.

In analyzing this film, the writer would like to apply the feminist criticism. This is useful to examine the ways in which literary texts reinforce patriarchy because the ability to see when and how patriarchal ideology operates is crucial to our ability to resist it in our own lives. It usually requires reading "against the grain" of the text's apparent intention, for patriarchal literature is usually unconscious of the sexist ideology it promotes, or perhaps more precisely, patriarchal literature sees nothing wrong with its own sexism (Tyson 117) where in this asks the reader to see from the woman's side as a victim of patriarchal system in society. Tyson also stated that "the ultimate goal of feminist criticism is to increase our understanding of women's experience, both in the past and present, and promote our appreciation of women's value in the world" (119). Thus, the core belief of feminist theory and criticism asserts that all people-women and men-are politically, socially, and economically equal. Its adherents are "women (and some men) who are struggling to discover who they are, how they arrived at their present situation, and where they

are going” (Bressler 182). Feminism is divided into first wave feminism, second wave feminism, and third wave feminism. Focusing on the issue in this study, the writer is going to use second wave feminism, particularly radical feminism as one type of second wave feminism. Allan G. Johnson in *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy* stated that “radical feminism pays attention to patriarchy’s consequences and how people experience them” (119). It means that radical feminism carries that attention to the underlying male-dominated, male-identified, male-centered, control-obsessed patriarchal system that produces male privilege and the oppression of women.

Based on statements above, radical feminism is relevant to this film because it deals with woman who experiences male dominance through domestic violence during her marriage life and tries to escape from it. Radical feminists develop a systematic theory of sexual oppression as the root of patriarchy which preceded private property. It aims to “make sense of patriarchy in relation to history and social contexts that help explain not only where it came from, but how and why it persists and affects us so deeply” (Johnson 120) that creates feminine and masculine characteristics, strengthens the divide between public and private, restricts women’s mobility and reinforces male dominance.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Lovelace film is worth to analyze since there is the issue of domestic violence, which occurs because of male domination that believed that man has a better privilege and can control what his wife has to do. Therefore, the statement of the problems that focused in this study are:

1. How does the sex industry appear in *Lovelace* film?
2. How male dominance through the domestic violence is portrayed in *Lovelace* film?
3. How does Linda struggle against the domestic violence perpetrated by Chuck?

1.3. Objective of the Study

After watching *Lovelace* film, the writer concludes that there is an important point found in the statement of the problem which is dealing with the ideological of feminism in the film.

1. To reveal the portrayal of the enslavement of woman in the sex industry,
2. To reveal the portrayal of male dominance through domestic violence,
3. To reveal the struggle of Linda Lovelace in dealing with domestic violence, which is perpetrated by her husband through the use of narrative and non narrative aspects within the elements of film that is depicted in *Lovelace* film.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The writer chooses *Lovelace* film (2013) as the object of the study because this drama film is based on the true story of Linda Lovelace, who is a popular legend in *Deep Throat* adult film, which is in her life dealing with domestic violence perpetrated by her husband and the enslavement of the sex industry. This film is directed by Jeffrey Friedman and Robert Epstein. Renowned in the independent film world, they are among the most honored directors, writers, and producers. This study is expected to give significance for the writer herself, the readers, and give the contribution for the cultural studies. For the writer, it is expected as an academic writing that will improve the critical and analytical skills, the knowledge of feminism, especially radical feminism in maintaining the truth, gaining the equal rights, and improving the awareness of domestic violence issue that still exists nowadays.

For the readers, it is expected to give additional knowledge about woman's issue which deals with domestic violence in United State of America which deals with human rights law. Therefore, people will be aware of the domestic violence that is caused by male dominance in patriarchal society so it is expected people can realize the impact of domestic violence and be the one who refuses the domestic violence practices in society, especially in supporting women who must be treated as well as men.

This thesis provides the references for Cultural Studies of English Department in Universitas Airlangga regarding on the issue of domestic violence that is experienced by woman as the victim of male dominance and the woman's struggle to break the traditional gender roles. In addition, this study is expected to give detail information to the scholars and other researchers who are interested in radical feminism particularly proposed by Simone de Beauvoir about woman who is positioned as second sex and Kate Millet as the focus of sex/gender system.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

There are some primary terms that used in this study to convey the ideas. Hence the definition of key terms will help the readers to understand the meaning easily that will often appear in the analysis. These definitions are retrieved from trustworthy academic sources in order to get the actual definitions.

Domestic violence: violence committed by a spouse, ex-spouse, or current or former boyfriend or girlfriend. It can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples (the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 3).

Patriarchy: any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles, which cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive (Tyson 85).

Male dominance: a situation in which men have highly preferential access, although not always exclusive rights, to those activities to which the

society accords the greatest value, and the exercise of which permits a measure of control over other (Friedl in Sanday 164).

Radical feminism: a politic movement to end male supremacy in all areas of social and economic life, and rejected the whole idea of opposing male and female natures and values as a sexist idea (Willis 91).

Second sex: the understanding of the position, relationship, and gender construction of woman that perceives women less essential and is in the secondary level to men (Beauvoir).

