

CHAPTER 2

LITERARY REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer explains deeper about Feminism that is used to analyze about the representation of girl power in Gretel within *Hansel and Gretel witch Hunter* film. The writer focuses on a term namely Girl Power emerges in Third Wave Feminism era. Moreover, the writer also serves some related studies that are used to obtain the difference between this study and other related studies proving that this study is original. Some related studies that are going to explain have similarity with this study especially the object which use fairytale film.

2.1. Feminism

Many people know by gazing in a glimpse that feminism must deal with a word called women. By looking at the word, feminism, people are easily able to guess that it also relates with sex. However, academic explanation does not define the word only that simple since the word appears and develops historically. Feminism is a belief of having equal rights insisted by women for all areas of life, such as; social, political, professional, personal, economical, aesthetic and psychological (Bressler 167). It has a very wide understanding that put women as the main role. Women have faced some difficulties to explore their life and being freed with their own self. For instance, since society are dominated by patriarchal value which positions men higher than women in almost all aspect of life, women

face public underestimation about feminism because of patriarchal mass media (Hooks 1). Concerning to the power of media that can succeed to blow up an idea in public, indeed it makes women hard to collect their power due to reach their rights equality goal. Hence, the condition makes feminism keeps developing through decades until now in order to pursue the goal.

In first wave feminism, women start to realize about having equal position as men socially, economically and politically. Women want to be given space as same as society gives to man. Women's awareness as an oppressed group is triggered by some construct applied in society, such as traditional gender role, toward women in which the construct limits women's movement. First wave feminism or the earliest movement of feminism is begun by gaining awareness about rights to vote. This movement took place in the late of nineteenth to the early of twentieth centuries emerging to the industrialism, liberal and social politics (Rampton). As explained by Wood that in first wave feminism some activists attempts to enlarge political rights (61). Women start to build their awareness that they are supposed to have rights to vote in political purpose. Moreover, Wollstonecraft also explains in Parker that women in this era concern in the matter of education, owning property, giving vote in political purpose (149). Women in this era also attempt to have higher education that they begin to build awareness about the important of it. There are some feminists who give their influential role in this era such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth C. Stanton that three of them come from white-middle class women.

After some goals and accomplishment achieve in this era, it paves further development leading to second wave feminism.

In second wave feminism ,which began in 1960s, there are many ideas emerge in this era such as Radical Feminism, Liberal Feminism and Lesbian Feminism as the advanced development from first wave feminism. Unlike the first wave feminism which is dominated by white-middle class women, second wave feminism draws in women of color and developing nations, seeking sisterhood and solidarity (Rampton). There are many activists appear in this era and one of them is Kate Millet. Being well-known by the idea of *Sexual Politics*, Millet attempts to challenge the ideological characteristic both male and female.

Third wave feminism is further development from first and second wave feminism which firstly emerged the beginning of 1990s (Parker 150). In this wave, many constructs in previous waves that are destabilized including the notion of “universal womanhood”, body, gender, sexuality, and heteronormativity (Rampton). This wave sees woman as universal womanhood means that every woman in all over the world has the same position in fighting for feminism without looking for different class and race. As explained by Hayes that third wave feminism gives more focus rather than the second wave feminism does about how race interacts with one’s experience as a woman (17). This third wave feminist movement avoids essentialist trends about female definition in the second wave and the trend is still dominant with white color women's issues belong to middleclass. The third wave feminism movement are colored by post-structuralist interpretation of the concept of women and sexuality that emphasizes the diversity

of women's experiences, including the experience of black women or other races as well as the experiences of women associated with post-colonial studies (Hardiman 203).

2.1.1 Traditional Gender Role

Traditional Gender Role is a traditional view constructed about society to cast about the determination character between men and women. People believe that between men and women should be differed in the matter of behavior. The notion that is constructed by society implicitly insists women and men to follow that society believe is the best idea. However, there are many feminist criticize about the definition of traditional gender role in which the notion is able to limit women's movement. Hence, traditional gender is the basic issue for women to struggle about their equal rights.

Susan Hekman et all explain that traditional gender role is a product of society which associates women as irrational, closer to nature, more emotional and dependent so that women occupy inferior role in society (100). Because of the distinctive role between men and women that is constructed by society, women tend to be classified more inferior and having lower position than man. Moreover, as cited in Bressler, Kate Millett explains that society creates a construct in the different of ideological characteristic between men and women applied in society saying that boys should be aggressive, self-assertive and domineering while girls should be passive, meek and humble (173). The definition says that in order to be called as "boy", society insists boys to have those characteristic, so do for girls.

Millets also explains in Selden et al that women learn to have the characteristic associated with female such as being passive in which the characteristic is constructed culturally so that women are unconscious to accept the characteristic as their nature (123). Since the construction happens culturally in which it is done repeatedly, women are unaware that the notion of being “feminine” is shaped so that anything they do for themselves is indirectly controlled by society. Women are supposed to have freedom to do anything they want in expressing themselves separated from society’s construction which only limits their potential.

In addition, in the matter of occupation, society also determines distinctive job between men and women to have. Mostly, men are defined as the head of a family that they are responsible to fulfil family’s sake so they need to have a good job. The good job is associated to work in a office, company or simply said to work outside home. However, as explained by Charlotte Perkin Gilman in Bressler that in traditional gender role, women have to deal themselves with female tasks such as housework, cooking, ironing clothes and other domestic responsibilities (181). By looking at the definition above, the construction says that the task is more proper for women than men so that they are insisted to spend much their time inside home and taking the domestic responsibilities. Because of the condition, women are unable to work outside home since their task is mostly taken inside home that is also able to be said it is better for women to work inside home.

2.1.2 Girl Power

Girl power signifies a cultural shift in describing what constitutes today's ideal girl. Girl power discourse has been aptly linked to a neoliberal turn in which individualism and choice are prized. The soil becomes fertile for a girl power media culture in the late 1990s at the apex of the popularization of feminist psychosocial studies of girls, the conservative backlash against second wave feminism, third wave feminism and the subcultural movement. The girl power movement is also concerned with experience of race, class and sexuality. As a result, the girl power movement is viewed by those who study girl culture as a prime example of what can be called youth feminism. Girl power as a positive message about the strength and capabilities of females has been appropriated into a variety of children's youth and adults programming (Mitchell and Walsh 302). Girl power's defining characteristic is a reappraisal of femininity including the stereotypical symbols of feminine enculturation such as Barbie dolls, make up and fashion magazines as a meaning of female empowerment and agency.

As a term arisen in third wave feminism, girl power began so popular in about ninetenths delivered by a famous British girl band stating that feminism had been meant negative so the term was introduced to public to make women more powerful by showing their solidarity (The Spice Girl 48). Spice Girl, a well-known girl band with whose hit "wannabe" stayed in the top charts in 1996s, consists of five girls with different characters of each using girl power as its slogan. Lyrics written in the song, "wannabe" promotes the meaning of being women such as:

“I’ll tell you what I really want...if you wannabe my lover, you gotta get with my friends...you gotta get to give...you wanna get with me, you gotta listen carefully”

According to some pieces of the lyric, it attempts to promote to their fans that women have to be able controlling relationship, expressing their willing freely and demanding to others. By looking at the lyric attempts to say, it even strengthens women to build their awareness of controlling their own life freely without any interference. As many people know about the idea of patriarchy which positions men higher than women, the lyric aims to say that women are no longer positioned lower and they have to light their power about controlling and demanding over men such as in the matter of relationship.

Concerning that Spice Girl has power through media such as television to influence their fans about girl power, Whelehan is also agree that “girl power adds fuel to the myth that young women are ‘in control’ of their lives and as such offers a more positive liberatory message to young women than contemporary feminism ever could” (38). The statement shows that the term girl power promotes ideal power for women to have focusing on individual instead of paying attention toward political movement, like the previous wave feminism, because it is lack of social and political commentary or responsibility (Behm 22).

Along with the meaning of their songs’ lyrics, the five girls also presents different kinds of femininity from their each personality. Their each name signs some kinds of femininity such as Baby Spice (Emma), Scary Spice (Melanie B.),

Sporty Spice (Melanie C.), Ginger Spice (Gery) and Posh Spice (Victoria) in which each name offers for fans multiple definition about femininity as well making them as role model of femininity (Lemish 20). By looking at the meaning of the names above, girl power promoted by Spice Girl presents some qualities look so both girly, such as Baby and Posh, and manly, such as Scary and Sporty.

Those things are also argued by Inness that girl power discourse has tendency in describing duality of masculinity and femininity (120). Girl power does not matter even though they have feminine quality over their masculine power. However, it does not mean that girl power accepts their weakness, submissive, passive and so on as the conventional feminine role, but girl power attempts to appreciate to be powerful women as the way they are. As explained by Behm that “girl power products inherently take elements of feminism and espouse messages that girls and women are powerful in their own rite” (3). Moreover, it also explains that girl power underlines masculine characteristic as their personality to be said powerful and it also requires them having feminine characteristic to indeed portrait girl power.

Looking back at the portrayal described by Spice Girl about the term girl power, Lemish reveals that among all of the multiple definition of femininities, the five girls is always shown by media having traditional feminine physical beauty to strengthen their power (29). In order to be shown as heroes, those five girl power figures are always appeared to public of having some qualities call them “beauty”. The meaning of beauty presented through Spice Girl by media deals with physic. As a western girl band, the notion of feminine beauty has been

applied for them follows western people construction. As explained by Weiser in Behm that the definition of beauty is fluctuated, unstable, differs in each period but still applying what is acceptable today (42). Many people agree that feminine beauty of western people deals with the words of slimness, whiteness, and sexiness (43) as well as the notion presented by Spice Girl to public.

Girl power discourse has shown that women are no longer worry about equality between them and men because they believe it had been achieved through first and second wave feminism. Everything that women care about girl power that they are free to demonstrate themselves to be whoever they are. However, Taft has described that the definition of girl power into four versions that are; girl power as anti-feminism, girl power as post feminism, girl power as individual power and girl power as consumer power. As explained before about the phenomenon of girl power through the appearance of Spice Girl, the band wants to deliver a message about girl power regarding to its opinion that the five members refuse to be categorized as feminism activist instead of demonstrating women power since the word feminism, they believe, has been labelled as negative (The Spice Girl 48). This discourse narrows that girl power attempts to put aside feminism and emphasizes that women have already had capacity to be risen up revealing their power as well as what has been presented by Spice Girl. The capacity obtains that girl power is not limited by feminism said as conventional role but women are free to express whatever as well as they are able to be strong as male and feminine at the same time in which indeed those things portrait the power of girl or women. Similarly, Taft's opinion states that the term

of girl power associated with Spice Girl defines that it is not the action of rebels but it contains the expression of strength (71).

The second version about girl power suggested by Taft is the girl power as post-feminism. Taft explains that post-feminism is a movement which believes waves of feminism are over because it is no need to be continued since girls or women are doing fine in this era (72). The successful spreading done by Spice Girl about girl power makes them as the role model of girl power itself. This version of girl power claims that women are no longer need to be rebels as doing so in the three waves of feminism but they are instructed that they already have capacity to be strong in expressing everything they want to do. In post-feminism, it gives the idea that women are no longer categorized as the oppressed group that make them fighting against social, economic and politic construction but all of focuses lays in women's power within themselves. As stated by Taft that in post-feminism some journalists use the term of girl power to demonstrate that women have achieved all of their power and they have to feel satisfied with the social order so they can do whatever they want, but it indeed makes Taft giving opinion that it potentially obstructs women using their power to make social change (72). Therefore, the concept of girl power as post-feminism spread by news defines that equality between men and women are already achieved so women do not need to deal with feminism anymore.

The third is girl power as individual power. In this version stated by Taft has relationship with teenagers and the role of media in representing women. Through media, there are many TV program, music video, magazine that

represent teenagers as their role model. Jamieson and Romer found that started in 1974, there are five of ten films use teenagers as their main characters (32). That development becomes more increased in 1990s. Many family that become so enthusiast with television enjoy their time in home watching film. As explained by a reporter in *The New York Times*, Amy Chozick says that a well-known American sitcom aired by Disney Channel, *Good Luck Charlie*, targets not only young teens but also parents to watch and it takes 1,4 million adult viewer while 4,3 million teenage viewers (Chozick)

According to the information, it implies that a television program with teenage characters not only attracts teenagers but also adult people and teenage figures is very interested to society since the sitcom is very welcomed. Zaslow explains that it can be done so because teenagers are associated with more leisure time than adults and their disposable income is the main reason that they are seen as ideal target market with estimation of spending about 85 billion per year (18). For instance, the case of Spice Girl who succeeds in dominating music industry not only in UK. Their power of being role model of girl power is able to influence teenagers or women to imitate them. As stated by Taft that magazine and advertisement are also influential to spread the discourse of girl power which is reflected to the ideology of individualism and personal responsibility (70). Some advertisement spread through media such as magazine and television is very powerful and effective in demonstrating the ideology of individualism. As an example, some taglines of popular Barbie doll's commercial says "you can be anything" "with Barbie, anything is possible" "imagine the possibilities" "teen

talk” (Mattel Inc.). Moreover, Taft also cites from some advertisement of Barbie dolls claim that “you can be a leader, you can be strong, you can be confident” (74). In those advertisements, it seems to give positive view for girls, as targeted market, to be so enthusiastic about what they are going to be. The taglines tone up girls to be free in expressing themselves as powerful girls to achieved everything that they are dreamt about. However, those all advertisement point out that it implicitly attempts to deliver a message about personal responsibilities and individualism. The taglines make girls to give most focus on each of themselves in which each girls has her own business. All of they are care about is only to make their each dream come true without having sensitivity about other girls or women in other countries who may suffer injustice about race, gender, sexuality, class and other reliable issues.

Finally, the last version of girl power suggested by Taft is girl power as consumer power. In this version, the definition of girl power is closely related with girls as potential market as well previously explained. Since the term of girl power becomes so widely popular especially in the ninetenths during the era of Spice Girl, marketers begin to realize about the emerging of opportunity to huge many more costumers. As explained by Taft that their main targets comes from young girls and according to Fortune magazine, eighty eight percent of girls between thirteenth to seventeenth have shopping as their hobby (54). Here, girls are seen to be very potential market to sell their product effectively. In addition, marketers also attempt to build false consciousness toward the girls to buy their product as if they really concerned with girl power or they attempt to say “buy our

products then you will be a model of girl power”. Taft says that those marketers’ purpose in defining girl power make girls’ dynamic is being limited and turning girls’ social power into purchasing power. The essence of girl power discourse disappears but there appears a consuming power. Therefore, girl power discourse is supposed to return girls or women to fight for what they need to fight for.

2.2 Symbols of Power

The word power is very important in this study to reveal the representation of girl power through Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel Witch Hunter* film. The writer believes that the issue of girl power is able to be revealed through Gretel’s characterization. So, along with the term of girl power, there are some symbols appeared in the film to define Gretel as a powerful girl.

Firstly, there is a scene that depicts Gretel in using nail. Moreover, nail is not only a nail with its literal meaning but it contains a symbolism. According to Freud as explained in Selden et al that nail represents penis or phallus which symbolizes male power (130). Similar with the meaning of nail that it is not only a physical metal spark used in construction job, penis is also not only a part of body defined biologically. In literary works including film, the using of nail can be very important to suggest an idea which is shown implicitly.

Secondly, there are also many scenes telling that Gretel often uses crossbow pistol during her hunting of witch. Crossbow pistol is a more modern gun inspired by the traditional one that consists of cross or arrow and bow that is almost like a catapult pulled to shot an arrow. Since the occurring of Gretel with

crossbow pistol is often, it suggests an idea about the meaning of crossbow in symbolism. Coomaraswamy says in *the Symbolism of Archery* that archery symbolism verily appears in some scriptures that bow defines the power of God and arrow defines the punishment for the God's enemy (Coomaraswamy). By looking at the previous definition, the application in using bow and arrow simultaneously can represent a very powerful spirit which portrays the user or archer as a powerful figure. Moreover, Chorance also explains in *Symbolic Arrow* that arrow is the instrument of killing ability targeting enemy so the arrow can symbolize the capacity of protecting people (4). Concerning to the definition above, arrow is a weapon that is harmful for someone's life, or in this case is enemy's life, and those who has ability to use arrow are able to be said as capable people to protect other's life. Thus, by looking at the definitions above, the archer is a powerful and threatening person for an enemy who is able to protect people's life.

2.3. Review of related studies

There are three related studies that are going to used by the writer to conduct this study. The first related study is a master thesis by Elizabeth Anne Behm entitled *Where's the Power in Girl Power?: Images of Femininity and Television* published by University of Southern California in 2003. This master thesis takes about Girl Power as its main discussion and it takes two television series, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*, as the object that are analyzed. However, this master thesis uses gender and race as the theory to analyse the

issue. This master thesis finds that Girl Power that is presented within the television series becomes the dominant ideology but it also potentially becomes the commodity culture of television.

This first previous study has a similarity with the writer's study. Both Behm and the writer take Girl Power as the issue of the study. However, the difference is the writer tends to use feminism as the main theory to analyze the issue while Behm tends to analyze Girl Power by using gender and race study which points the role of media to make Girl Power as a commodity culture of television.

The second previous study is a dissertation entitled *Feminism Inc.: Teen Girls' Experiences in Girl Power Media Culture* written by Emilie Zaslow. The dissertation is published by New York University in 2006. The dissertation finds that Girl Power extends far beyond individual texts, characters, pop stars, or celebrities that it is diffused through all media, especially media addressed to, or engage with, by girl audiences, in a postfeminism era. According to the dissertation above, it has similarity with the writer's study that it puts Girl Power as the main discussion. However, the dissertation talks about Girl Power deeper than the writer in which Zaslow does not only talk about Girl Power films but also talk about the girl audiences of the films.

The last review of related study is a thesis by Yoanita (2013) entitled *Representation of Female Lead Characters (Ravenna and Snow White) in Snow White and the Huntsman Film*. That study attempts to examine the representation of female lead characters in *Snow White and the Huntsman* film. The object of

this study, *Snow White and the Huntsman* is one of the other versions of Snow White film which is released in 2012 and brings the different ways to re-telling the Snow White story. This research focuses on the female lead characters, Ravenna and Snow White to find the representation of them in *Snow White and the Huntsman* film and also reveals the implicit hidden messages.

From the data above, it can be concluded that the female lead characters, Ravenna and Snow White cannot be categorized as a good girl or bad girl like what is described in the traditional gender role. However, both of them are portrayed having masculine and feminine characteristics which make it more interesting to be discussed. Moreover, through the mix of those characteristic, they can be called as a symbol of Girl Power which strengthens the women's power without leave their identity as women. In the research of Yoanita, the use of nail can be regarded as a symbol of phallus which signalizes as the symbolism of power. A woman can be regarded has power if she has those symbols. Thus, an extreme close up shoot in her thesis seems to support the justification that the symbolism of a phallus is important for women if they want to be more powerful. It is similar with Gretel character in the scene when Gretel saves Hansel from witch who wants to eat him by nail which symbolizes phallus.

The third related studies above shows about some similarities and differences between the writer's study and the researchers' study mentioned above. By looking at the three previous study above, it shows that Girl Power is never used as the main discussion of the film entitled *Hansel and Gretel Witch Hunter*. Thus, it also proves that the writer's study is original.