

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Human beings and their gender identity are one set of ideas which cannot be separated. Until the twentieth century, people still held the notion of human identity, including human sexual identity, as a valid concept. This valid concept of human identity was declared by the long-held humanist essentialism concept (Bressler 256). They stated that the true human identity is in fixed condition and unchangeable. Bressler stated about the essentialist's point of view that "to be human means that we have an unchangeable human nature, that our sexuality and our gender are determined by the human nature" (Bressler 257).

Nevertheless, the movement of marginal people who have different views of sexual orientation or people with their 'queer' identity appears to find their existence in society. *Queer* is a political and theoretical term and a reclamation of the word used as an insult. Tyson said that the word queer is used to indicate a specific theoretical perspective. For queer theory, categories of sexuality cannot be defined by such simple opposition as homosexual or heterosexual (337). The marginal people with their "queer" identity also want to get a place and recognition about their existence in society. This movement of freedom has raised the community of people that in 1990 was known as "LGBT", which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender.

LGBT are people who are positioned inside the Queer Umbrella and there are several of 'queer' people who are not comfortable with their genders and feel that they must live in their opposite gender, and these people are called *transgender*. According to Prince stated in *The Transgender Phenomena*, Transgender is someone who is more comfortable to adopt or behave in their opposite sex but without any or yet doing a sexual surgery (Ekins and Dave, 13). From this explanation, transgender people break rules of traditional conceptions of gender that is held in society for a long time.

The traditional rules have created the hetero-society, in which transgender generally indicates opposition to identity-based categories and signals a strong antipathy for "heterosexual". Corber and Valochi said that the ideology can be called as the heteronormativity where the heterosexual people think that being heterosexual is the "normal" one and queer as the "other" (2-3). Heteronormativity believes that human beings fall into two distinct and complementary categories, male and female. This point of view also created the hierarchical system of sexual value, as Gayle Rubin stated that marital and reproductive heterosexual position at the top of pyramid. On the other side, the transgender people lie at the lowest or bottom of the pyramid (Rubin, 151).

The 'queer' and transgender people who fall at the lower scale get punishment and penalty from the society. They are subjected as people with mental illness, disreputability, criminality, restricted social and physical mobility, loss of institutional support, and economic sanctions (Rubin, 151). The society

also built the sexual stratification to oppress the freedom of sexual activity and identity.

Gayle Rubin stated that sexual stratification is the concept of the heterosexual people to create the regulation for sexuality identity and activity. Through sexual stratification, the people who have sexual 'deviant' will be punished or discriminated. Sexual stratification is supported by the sex laws to regulate the queer identity that their behavior cannot be tolerated in the social life. The punishment from sexual stratification norm for 'queer' people who show their true identity are spread in many aspects, such as economic penalties, discrimination in society, or exiled from their house (Rubin, 160).

Those conditions are happened in a novel entitled *Luna*, written by Julie Anne Peters. The sexual stratification is portrayed in this novel, which shows the effort of transgender to resist the society discrimination, bully, and the rejection from the main character's parent. *Luna* novel published in 2004 and has won many awards; this novel has been nominated for four readers' choice state book awards, including the Vermont Green Mountain Book Award, Rhode Island Teen Book Award, Missouri Gateway Book Award, and the Michigan Thumbs Up! Award. *Luna* also won numerous awards such as 2004 National Book Award Finalist in Young People's Literature, 2005 Stonewall Honor Book, awarded by the GLBTQ Round Table of the American Library Association, An American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults 2005, 2005 Colorado Book Award for Young Adult Literature, 2005 Lambda Literary Award Finalist, and

many others. As what Rubin stated, sexual stratification has a great power to oppress the sexuality and is supported by sex laws. Therefore, the main character's effort to struggle as transgender is not easy because he must face the neighbor and his parent's rejection.

The author of the novel is Julie Anne Peters who was born in January 16, 1952 in Jamestown, New York. Peters always writes books of fiction for young adult. Peters began her career by writing *The Stinky Sneakers Contest* in 1992 and *Risky Friends* in 1993. She has published other books for young adult, including *Normal* (2000), *Keeping You a Secret* (2003), *Luna* (2004), *Far from Xanadu* (2005), *Between Mom and Jo* (2006), *grl2grl* (2007), *Rage: A Love Story* (2009), *By the Time You Read This, I'll Be Dead* (2010), *She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not ...* (2011) and *I Hope You Dance* (2012). Her young adult fiction frequently deals with "LGBT" issues. Julie Anne Peters also received the award, Best Books for Young Adults selection, ALA, Books for the Teen Age selection, New York Public Library, Stonewall Honor Book and finalist of Lambda Literary Award in 2005 for *Luna*.

The story tells about Regan O'Neill who has brother named Liam. Since childhood, Regan has realized that there was something different with her brother, that Liam has always claimed that he is a girl. However, their parents, especially their mother, ignore Liam's behavior and thinks that it is just kids' jokes. Regan feels pity with Liam's condition where he always pretends to become real man in order to make their father proud. Every night when their parents have slept, Liam

always dresses like a woman in Regan's room and names himself "Luna." Liam always confesses to Regan that one day he will transform into a real woman. The story of the novel is in Regan's point of view. From its dialogue, the writer can analyze the character's problems. As a narrator, Regan shows the sex value and stratification ideology in her society and its effect to Liam.

The writer used sexual stratification concept to analyze the novel because transgender is a subdivision in queer umbrella. The transgender' character has rejected his biological sex to challenge sex stratification assumptions for sexuality and gender binaries. This novel tries to define the impact of sexual stratification in the society to the transgender character. This novel also shows how the transgender struggles and perseveres in his effort to show his 'real' self identity.

To discuss *Luna* novel, the writer used sexual stratification theory by Gayle Rubin, which focuses on transgender character in the story. The issues raised in the novel are sexual stratification, although in the beginning *Luna* explicitly shows issues of the weakness of transgender identity, because transgender character (Liam) is only being 'her' self (Luna) in night when moon has appeared. He is afraid that people will see him dressed as a woman. Queer theory attempts to deconstruct normative concepts of gender which aims to promote "basic freedoms in sexual action and expression" in forming identity (Rubin 23), which the moral judgments that arise from a system of being which isolates the "other" or "queer" people. In the novel, the "queer" identity is imprisoned by sexual stratification and sexual value in the society.

Liam's problem is that he does not want people to know that he is transgender, because of his family, especially his father who has pressured masculinity role in him. *Luna* novel describes the transition of Liam from man to woman and how the society' assumption of sexuality and gender based on sexual stratification has created the problems for him. Although the transgender character does not following the binary of traditional rules, Liam has proclaimed that Luna or woman is his 'real' gender as defying his biological sex. Many people grow up in a society that have sex stratification which inundates them with the message that heterosexuality is the "right" sexual orientation, that heterosexuality is preferred and normal, and anything deviant is considered wrong (Harper & Quaye, 2009). Thus, what happens with Liam as transgender who faces sexual stratification can be analyzed by Rubin's theory in order to reveal the effect of those norms to the main character. Through this thesis, the writer would like to see how sex stratification in society in which Liam lives is portrayed and how Liam deals with sex stratification around him as transgender.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The writer tries to formulate the problems in Julie Anne Peter's *Luna* novel into two questions:

1. How is sexual value and sexual stratification are portrayed in Liam's life?

2. How does Liam negotiate the sexual value and sexual stratification pressure around him?

1.3. Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems in above, the aims of this analysis are:

1. To describe sexual value and sexual stratification portrayed in the novel.
2. To see how Liam as transgender negotiates the sexual value and sexual stratification ideology around him.

1.4. Significance of the Study

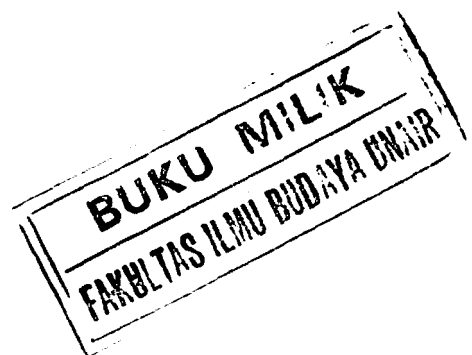
The term “queer” people has been discriminated and marginalized by society for a long time. From this study, the writer shows the ways the society treat the person with their queer identity and how the effect from social environment influences the queer people.

The society with their sexual stratification norm has imprisoned and marginalized the queer people. Hopefully, with this study, the reader can reduce the people stigmas that always discriminate queer people. The analysis also defines about the impact that appears with discrimination of people, especially the parents that refuse the “LGBT” teens, which in *Luna*'s topic is teenager

transgender. The writer hopes that this thesis could be useful in literary research for Faculty of Humanities of Airlangga University, especially for the literary texts that use queer theory.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

The topic of analysis in this thesis is limited on the characters of Liam O'Neill (Luna) and how sexual stratification norm from his parent and society, which all are analyzed using sexual stratification concept by Gayle Rubin. The writer focused on how the character of Liam or Luna faces the stratification of sexuality around him and how he negotiates with it as the result to his claiming his identity as transgender. Stratification of sexualities has influenced his identity or demanded the "normal" gender roles, the construction seen from psychological, social, and normative aspect. The novel was analyzed from its intrinsic aspects such as the plot, the setting, the relationship between two characters, Liam and his sister Regan (who becomes the narrator of the story), and especially from their dialog. The narrator's point of view (Regan) is the key for analyzing *Luna* novel by Julie Anne Peters. In the end, the analysis is focused on the sources which have been taken from the novel and other sources that are helpful in analyzing this novel.



1.6. Theoretical Background

The thesis analysis focused on Liam O'Neill, the transgender character on the novel and how he faces the people's judgments around him. Sexual stratification has created a strong stigma in society that heterosexual is normal, and this cause the "LGBT" (which in this topic is transgender) become discriminated in many aspects because they do not behave as their gender role in society. Rubin stated that in hierarchical system of sexual value, LGBT's positions are in the bottom of strata of pyramid while heterosexuals are uppermost strata or the most normal in society. In the case of Liam, he has many conflicts because he is different and he also tries to face his father's pressure.

Based on Gayle Rubin's book, *Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality*, society has created the stratification of sexuality, the formation of what Rubin has called "the sex/gender system" that pierced everything from social class to race into a particular set of sexual and gender identities and roles. The norms delimit accepted masculinity and femininity, that male and female are the proper gender. In hierarchy of sexuality, sexual stratification rule is to oppress people who have queer identity such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered question rarely if at all have any examples of what it means to be LGBTQ, thus leaving them searching for acceptance and affirmation (Harper & Quaye, 2009).

1.7. Method of The Study

The writer used qualitative research method in order to get comprehensive explanation. The direction of qualitative research is to bring an open-ended, in-depth exploration of aspect of life and focus in particular experience's attention (Paterniti). Then, before analyzing the novel, the writer performed data collection process by having close-reading from the literary text; then from close-reading, the writer classified and selected the data which are related with the theory used and sexual stratification issues in the character based on Julie Anne Peters's *Luna*. The analysis is supported by collecting more information from other references, and books. The writer also gathered sources from the internet and some articles which are related with the novel.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

The first chapter of the paper consists of background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical background, method of the study, organization of the paper, and definition of key terms.

The second chapter will elaborate the theoretical framework of the study. Then, the third chapter will focus on the analysis to answer the problems stated in the first chapter. The fourth chapter will summarize and conclude the entire study.

1.9. Definitions of the Key Terms

LGBT : Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender/transsexual people and in use since 1990's.

Queer People : individuals whose sexual orientation does not fit into the norm and/or those who choose not to identify in the norm. Usage problem for LGBT person.

Transgender : persons whose body is physically one single sex but the gender they have (the mind) may not match the physical sex or the mind may be in-between sexes (Have some aspects of both feminine and male roles).

Sexual stratification : a system in society which is give ranking and differential reward system of the sexes. This system is differentiate people based their sexual orientation or their sexual desire.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW