

Women's Emancipation in Movie: A Feminism Analysis in Birds of Prey by Cathy Yan

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Abstract.

This study aims to determine the results analysis of the emancipation of Harley Quinn in the *Birds Of Prey* movie (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of one Harley Quinn) based on feminism theory. The data analysis, the writer used descriptive analysis techniques. The method used is a descriptive qualitative methods, the writer used data in the form of movie scenes because the data comes from pictures of scenes, dialogue and text. The writer analyzing them by watching and reading the transcripts of the movies, and then describe and present them. The results of this study showed emancipation of Harley Quinn is her struggle to survive and fight against the enemies, even though everyone underestimated because she has been regardless the influence of the Joker who previously always protected her. However in the end she was able to prove her independence to rise from adversity and start a new purpose in life. Then she and her friends formed *Birds of Prey* to quell evil.

Keywords: birds of prey, movie, women's emancipation

Introduction

Birds of Prey (And the fantabulous emancipation of one Harley Quinn) is one of the movies that premiered on February 5, 2020. This movie is an action-adventure crime movie directed by Cathy Yan. Seen from the title (And the fantabulous emancipation of one Harley Quinn) which describes the emancipation of the main character Harley Quinn, showed how her struggles to convince herself to be free from the influence of others, rise from adversity in the past, be independent, and find a new identity. This is not easy for Harley Quinn, because previous time she has always been under the protection of the Joker, but she is still trying to rises from her past adversity, determined to voice emancipation in the Gotham city and fight all her enemies. *Birds of Prey* movie describes the irony of the situation that still occurs in this era, from the main character Harley Quinn who is underestimated by everyone for her decision to end her relationship with the joker and start a new life illustrates that women are still underestimated in making decisions, there is even assumption that women are weak, always under the dominion of men and cannot live independently. The victory of Harley Quinn and her friends in the fight against the black mask consisting of a group of men breaks the notion that women are weak and cannot fight men. *Birds of Prey* showed that women have extraordinary powers within themselves that are even stronger than men. By uniting and working together, women can eradicate crime and enforce emancipation in Gotham city.

This movie is interesting to study because it contains elements of feminism that have not been fully applied in our lives, not only show the story of women's struggles against men but also showing women's struggles in trying to convince herself to start a new life and be

free from the influence of others. According to Jenainati and Groves (2007;3) feminism is a struggle to end oppression of women. Feminism is a movement to fight for gender equality between men and women. Feminism also compiles a declaration of women as a group and a number of theories that have been created by women. Feminism is part of the history of Indonesian independence and revolution. The word feminism was not popular in the early days of independence because of the requirement to be nationalist and indigenous by rejecting Western things such as Marxism, which Soekarno adapted into Marhaenisme and feminism into emancipation. But in principle the same namely for women in the Netherlands East Indies who moved to become Indonesia (Melati, 2019).

Birds of prey is one of the movie that contains feminism in it, because in this modern feminism movement is voiced using various media, one of which is movie. Movie is a tool to convey various messages to audiences through a media story. Movie is also a medium of artistic expression as a tool for artists and directors in expressing story and ideas. Essentially and substantially, Movies have power which will have implications for community communicants (Wibowo, 2006, p. 196). Movies are not only for entertainment, but also as a medium information and education, delivery of information through movie can be done quickly. Interestingly, the educational function is in the form of social criticism regarding the surrounding situation. Film's idiosyncratic modes of presentation—such as camera angle, editing, montage, slow and fast motion—often parallel features of literary texts or can be explained within a textual framework (Klarer, 2004:56). Movie is a kind of literature that uses actors as the main means of expression. Almost have similarities with drama, but movie is made by being recorded and can be replayed. Klarer (2004) states that there are four kinds of literature; poetry, prose or fiction, drama, and film or movie. Literature is one of the main functions of language studies, therefore literary work cannot be separated from social life. Literature is a way of expressing thoughts, concepts, and ideas with the description of experience. The psychological aspect of literary works is not only cognitive but also emotional. People not only like to explore the stories of literary works, but can also convey the information in them, because every literary work usually contains many social values related to the society values of certain times, including the values in movies.

Literature Review

Movie

Movie is a tool to convey various messages to audiences through a media story. Movie is also a medium of artistic expression as a tool for artists and directors in expressing story and ideas. Essentially and substantially, Movies have power which will have implications for community communicants (Wibowo, 2006, p. 196). Each movie has a message conveyed through moving images, colors and sound. Movie is a medium that can persuade the audience. The message conveyed can be in the form of implied or express messages. Movies have the power and ability to reach all social circles so that they can have a big impact (Marizal, 2017). Different from other mass media, movie is an important social institution. According to Jowett, the contents of the movie are not only able to reflect but also create reality (Shi et al., 2017)

Literature

Klarer (2004) states that there are four kinds of literature; poetry, prose or fiction, drama, and film or movie. Literature is one of the main functions of language studies, therefore

literary work cannot be separated from social life. Literature is a way of expressing thoughts, concepts, and ideas with the description of experience. The psychological aspect of literary works is not only cognitive but also emotional. People not only like to explore the stories of literary works, but can also convey the information in them, because every literary work usually contains many social values related to the society values of certain times, including the values in movies.

Gender

Gender is the inherent nature of men and women constructed by society and culture (Fakih, 2000: 08) Gender is one of the classic issues that have been discussed since ancient times. Regardless, gender has become an indispensable topic, and it still has its own appeal, which can make people wonder how to solve gender issues. Therefore, this issue will never be discussed, as long as there are differences between men and women in this world. Gender inequality creates several notions that demand gender equality justice, one of which is feminism (Festi,2016).

Feminism

Ratna (2004:186-187) says, in contemporary literary theories, feminism is the women's movement that occurs almost in all over the world. This movement was triggered by the consciousness that women's rights are equal to men's rights. For centuries, women have always been under men domination, women as complements, and women as second class beings. Davies (1996: 62) pointed out in "Gender Theories in Education": "Feminism is a claim to equality between women and men, and it is a measure of their access to public life in provinces traditionally regarded as men, role and status requirement". In this study, the writer proposes that feminism is a way to obtain equal rights with women.

Women's Emancipation

Women's emancipation is understood to mean the fight for self-determination and improvements in the legal, social, cultural, and political positions of women (Paletschek,2004:6). Women's emancipation is the process of women's self-liberation in various fields such as, social, political and others, because previously women did not get the same rights as men and had limitations. The actual emancipation of women has been in motion several centuries ago, women began to make movements demanding some rights and justice for gender equality.

Method

Research Method

In this study, the writer used a qualitative research. Basically, qualitative research is one of the types of research that can be used. Qualitative research is a useful method for writer, where the writer does not know the important variables to be checked and needs to be explored. In the data analysis, the writer used descriptive analysis techniques to analyze the emancipation of Harley Quinn in "Birds of Prey Movie". Since the method used is a descriptive qualitative method, the writer used data in the form of movie scenes because the data comes from pictures of scenes, dialogue and text. The writer analyzing them by watching and reading the transcripts of the movies, and then describe and present them.

Research Object

The object of this study is the emancipation of Harley Quinn based of feminism theory in "Birds of Prey" movie directed by Cathy Yan. The result of this study is to find out the emancipation of Harley Quinn based of Feminism Theory that can be applied to education and behavior in daily life and moral learning.

Technique Data Collection

In this study, the writer used material analysis as a method of collecting data. Documents are written or printed paper with original, official or legal content, which can be used to provide decisive evidence or information. In this case, the document is "Bird of Prey" movie. Collect research data by performing the following steps. First, it is important to watch the movie two or more times, and second, make sure to find data relevant to the research. The last is to report the selected data.

Finding and Discussion

1. Harley Quinn's Emancipation Rises From Past Adversity

- a. Scene 1 Harley cuts her hair to find a new identity 00:02:08,504-00:02:33,321

At the beginning of the movie, she cut her hair short, as if she was about to break away from the past and start again (in frame 1).



Figure 1. Harley Quinn cutting her hair declaring her path of new self-discovery.

Source : Screenshot of the screen

Get rid of the shadow of the Joker, she is finally free to find her own value and support women's empowerment. "I must correct the mistakes I made in the past. I need to find a new identity." This is what she said after telling the story of how she frees herself of the Joker. However, Harley Quinn's journey to find her role in the world does not end here, this is just the beginning. After cutting her hair Harley said "I had to find a new identity, a new me. It wasn't easy." From this statement, Harley admits that to forget her past and start a new life is not easy and requires struggle. In this scene, Harley is seen crying with all her problems, but remains strong and tries to continue a new life.

- b. Scene 2 Harley starts to find new friends 00:02:34,822-00:03:37,802

After opening up Harley adopts a Hyena to be her pet. In the scene, it is seen that the nature of women is compassionate, Harley looks very fond of animals (in Frame 2).



Figure 2 Harley in animal shop Source : Screenshot of the screen

When a person experiences deep sadness then she will find a way to heal her inner wounds, by doing something pleasant. Everyone has a different way of healing their mind. So that each person must recognize herself and see what must be done to speed up the process of inner healing and start a new life. In this scene, Harley is a person who recognizes herself so that she can choose what to do, that is by adopting a Hyena.

In this scene Harley said “But after a while, I even opened myself up to the possibility of new love”. Harley Quinn also started her new life by making new friends and doing new activities. She goes to an ice skating match to try to forget her troubles (in frame 3)



Figure 3 Harley playing skating with her new friends Source : Screenshot of the screen

In this scene Harley said “Soon enough, I was back on my feet, Ready to move on, to make new friends. It was time for Gotham to meet the new Harley Quinn”, from her statement Harley called out to the whole of Gotham city that she had started a new life. She can prove her independence to find a new life and new friends without the influence of the Joker.

- c. Scene 3 Harley throws the necklace and blows up the factory 00:05:47,0569 - 00:07:59,105

After Harley Quinn breaks up with Joker, she still uses the Joker name for the sake of the immunity she gets.



Figure 4 Harley is underestimated by her friends Source: Screenshot of the screen

However, only after people underestimate her by thinking that she is Joker's pet (in frame 4) , does she quickly realize that she no longer wants to depend on Joker and that she needs to

find her own identity to prove them wrong. So, Harley embarks on a journey of herself-discovery. In this scene Harley's friends said

“That's why she's still wearing that tacky "J" necklace.

She is going to be running right back into his arms the minute he snaps his fingers .If not him, the next closest alpha male with a pulse.

Mmm-hmm.

Some people just aren't born to stand on their own.

Oh, girl,”

Hearing the gossip of her friends Harley is very sad to be underestimated, but she proves her independence by finding a new identity. Harley Quinn, who was so devastated, wanted to show her emancipation that she could be alone without the Joker's protection. While she was drunk, she got a crazy idea that is blowing up a chemical factory where Joker and Harley start their love story. The chemical factory is where the love story of Harley Quinn and the joker begins. In order to erase the traces of their love story and throw away the good memories with Joker, she closes her messy relationship by throwing away her J necklace and crashing an oil truck driving into a chemical factory where she drown with Joker, causing it to explode and the entire factory catches fire (in frame 5).



Figure 5 Harley Quinn blowing up the chemical factory to declare her breaking up with Joker Source: Screenshot of the screen

Walking away from the burning factory She said “ It was the closure I needed. A fresh start. A chance to be my own woman.” Women no longer want to always be “locked up” but they fight for their freedom. In this study, she was locked up in the sense that he was still trapped in the influence of the past, to prove her independence despite the protection of the Joker so Harley made a declaration.

2. Harley Quinn's Emancipation Against The Enemy

a. Scene 4 Harley Quinn against people she's ever harmed 00:13:58,672 -00:17:40,936

After declaring that her relationship with the joker is over, Harley Quinn tries to live her own life. Even though everyone looked down on her, Harley tried to sort things out on her own. Even so, Harley knows when she needs the help from others. All this time, many criminals have not dared to touch her because of the greatness of the Joker's name, but after the whole Gotham city found out she had broken up, she was targeted by every criminal in the city. Even the police who previously did not dare to chase her, are now chasing Harley Quinn to arrest her (in frame 6). This means Harley is hunted not only by criminals but by the authorities, which means Harley is hunted by almost everyone.



Figure 6 Harley being chased by police Renee Montoya Source : Screenshot of the screen

In pursuit of Renee Montoya, Harley said “Since my little stunt at Ace Chemicals announced to the world that Mr. J and I were dunzo. The immunity I'd enjoyed, for so long was gone. Cops who never would've dared come after me before were suddenly doing this.” Even so Harley still escapes and proves her ability to survive without the influence of the Joker. While she was still being chased by police Renee Montoya for her crimes, each of the people she had harmed attacked her. The first is a Dummy Roller whose nose was broken by Harley Quinn during an ice skating match. The second is Ralph Murray who was bitten by her new Hyena. And the last one is the driver of Roman Zionists because Harley has broken his leg. Harley hangs on to the roof of the building using both her hands with a smiling expression after successfully escaping from Renee, Ralph Murry and Roman Zionist's driver who chases her. When she thought she could escape from the people chasing her, it turned out that there was still Mr. Happy waiting for her because of cosmetics vandalism (in frame 7)



Figure 7 Mr. Happy who wants to catch Harley Quinn Source: Screenshot of the screen

Harley Quinn tries to explain what happened when joker and she commits cosmetics vandalism, even Harley says that she and joker have broken up, Mr. Happy does not care about Harley's reasons and insists on killing Harley. He said “I know that means there's no one here to stop me. You're gonna die, Quinn.” From the statement, it can be seen that the criminal wants to take revenge on Harley because he knows the breakup of Harley and Joker's relationship. With threats from criminals who want to kill her, Harley takes it easy even though she is alone without anyone's protection. She wants to prove to the world that she can live without the Joker and continue to live independently.

- b. Scene 5 Harley faces the Roman Zionists who want to kill her 01:10:56,462 - 01:10:58,255

Troubles are starting to come Harley Quinn becomes the target of a Gotham mobster named Roman Zionists. Roman Zionists is an enemy of Harley Quinn and Mr. Joker, after hearing the news of Harley Quinn and Joker breaking up, Roman Zionists and his troops catches Harley and will kill her (In frame 8).



Figure 8 Harley caught by Roman Zionist Source : Screenshot of the screen

Having no protection from the joker, Roman Zionists thought it would be easy to kill Harley. As in his statement “I wanna kill you, because without the joker around, I can. For all your noise and bluster, you're just a silly little girl with no one around to protect her.” But in her arrest Harley did not give up, she tried to persuade the Roman Zionists by offering to help find the lost Zionists item that is diamond.

In Feminism struggling does not mean being hard on ourselves but we also have to look at the situation in order to solve the problem. When Roman Zionist gives Harley a chance to find the diamond and set it free Harley said “Call me old-fashioned, but I always thought the guy was meant to get the girl a diamond.” From the statement it is implied that men should bring diamonds for women, but not what Harley Quinn should do. She had to find diamonds to turn over to the Roman Zionists. This proves that the Zionist army consisting of men was unable to get the diamond in Cassandra's hands, so Harley needed to intervene to get it. Harley is also being sought by the police for one of her actions. Although Harley had to stealthily look for the diamond that Zionists wanted, Harley passed it casually. She continued to do so madly and carelessly.



Figure 9 Harley uses colorful bullets Source : Screenshot of the screen

In this film, Harley's action is quite fast, fluid, and out of control. Dressed in attractive colorful costumes, he managed to perform evil actions to look fun. Like shooting the contents of a police station with bullets that can emit glittering colors (in frame 9). With her courage Harley Quinn to the police station and fights the armed officers alone to find the diamond brought by a girl named Cassandra Cain. When in prison Harley made a mistake in machine breakdown, so the prison cell opened and all the prisoners wanted to take revenge on Harley. Roman Zionist, who intends to complicate Harley Quinn's struggle to find diamonds, announces that if someone gets Cassandra Cain for him, he will rewards 500.000 dollars. So, Harley Quinn fights the prisoners and people who want to get those rewards alone. With her prowess she managed to get Cassandra and bring her home. Harley Quinn's emancipation is very visible in this scene, how she does all her struggles alone without the help of others to save herself.

Although this film presents a picture of feminism, on the other hand, a patriarchal view of women in which women are considered to be loving, obedient, responsive to sympathy, and kind is still present in this film. A woman is shown as a person who is full of

compassion when she wants to make a decision. This can be seen from Harley Quinn's actions when she was about to take the diamond contained in Cassandra Cain's body. Harley treated Cassandra well when she kidnapped her from prison (in frame 10)



Figure 10 Harley treats Cassandra well Source : Screenshot of the screen

- c. Scene 6 Harley persuade her friends to work together against the Zionists
01:22:51,259 -01:37:33,098

Harley Quinn and other women accidentally meet in a building where she will hand Cassandra to Zionists, feeling they have the same goal, they work together. Of course to face the oppression of Roman Zionist and his accomplice Victor Zsasz (in frame 11)



Figure 11 Harley Persuade her friends to work together Source : Screenshot of the screen

One form of feminism in this film is the rebellion against men to fight for justice and women's freedom by taking the decision to work together against the Zionist forces. The Zionist romance gathers his army to attack Harley Quinn and other women friends to gain power in Gotham City. He wants the diamond that Cassandra Cain brought to get riches, so that he can carry out an evil mission to take over Gotham City.

At this crucial moment, Harley Quinn persuade a group of women there to work together to defeat Zionists, namely Huntress, Renee Montoya, and Canary. Harley Quinn explains that they have the same goal that is to uphold the emancipation in Gotham city and ensure that they can defeat the Roman Zionist forces with the strength they have. They work together to defeat the Zionists and protect Cassandra Cain.

Based on the data findings and analysis of researchers in the film Birds of Prey movie, researchers seen the feminism movement displayed through a woman with intelligence that can do many things based on their respective abilities. It is seen that Harley Quinn and her five friends use their respective abilities to fight the Zionist forces. Renee Montoya with shooting skills, Helena Bertinelli with archery abilities and Black canary who has extraordinary self-defense ability and strong voice (in frame12)



Figure 12 The voice of Black Canary defeating the enemy Source : Screenshot of the screen

Seen the sound of the black canary was able to defeat the Zionist and make the Zionist troops bounce. Cooperation and mutual trust are very visible in this film like what did Renee Montoya said to Harley “Don't let them catch kid, I trust you.” From the dialogue, Renee Montoya gives a gun with one bullet to Harley. Renee trusts Harley if she will use the gun well. By working together and trusting each other that Harley Quinn and her friends do, they can defeat the Zionists. This success proves that the power of women cannot be underestimated. Even against a Zionist army consisting of a group of men, women who are considered weak actually have an inner strength that can defeat anything if used properly and cooperated.

In the end they were able to defeat the Zionist army and win the battle, even though they were just a bunch of women fighting against a lot of men. Feminism is very strong in this scene and illustrates that the power of women cannot be underestimated. By working together, no matter how big the problems faced, all can be solved.

3. Harley's Emancipation In Finding Life's Purpose

- a. Scene 7 Harley Quinn and Birds of Prey uphold justice in Gotham city 01:40:07,252 - 01:40:22,100

After the Zionists died, Harley Quinn and her friends decided to clean up Gotham City from the inside and outside. Seen when they carry out their actions to fight criminals (in frame 13)



Figure 13 Birds of Prey against criminals Source: Screenshot of the screen

The researcher sees that the feminism movement contained in this film is displayed through the exchange of women's positions with men in the public sphere. Usually women are better known in the domestic sphere, that is taking care of children and being housewives, but this time the position of women is in the public sphere to eradicate crime even though this is done by a group of women against a group of men.

After winning the battle with Zionists, Diamond Bertinelli returns to the Huntress, a descendant of the Bertinelli mafia family and uses it to fund crime-fighting groups. Harley

Quinn and her friends have succeeded in upholding justice in Gotham City. They eradicated crime and formed the Birds of Prey.

b. Scene 8 Harley finds her new identity 01:40:28,690 -01:41:17,155

Deciding to be independent and free from the shackles of the Joker does not mean that she can immediately find her goal in this world. She used to have an identity crisis, which was reflected in one of the scenes where she made handmade business cards. She did not write a career under her name, but wrote a lot of careers, which means that she decided to try different types of jobs, but still not sure of her identity (in frame 14).

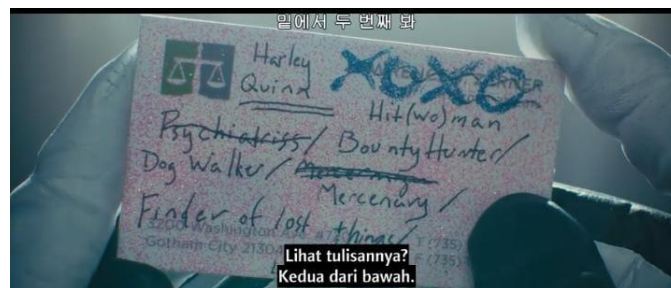


Figure 14 The business card handwritten by Harley Quinn herself showing her dilemma in finding her own purpose. Source: Screenshot of the screen

Finally, after defeating Zionist and getting the diamonds exchanged for money, she finally found what she wanted to do, she founded her own company. There is no mention of what Harley Quinn's business is, but she finds that her company is called "Harley Quinn & Associate", as shown in the business card at the end of the story (in frame 15)



Figure 15 Business card with new identity of Harley Quinn Source : Screenshot of the screen

After her struggle to escape the Joker's protection and fight all her enemies, now Harley Quinn begins to find her identity. Although previously many people doubted her independence, now she has proven that she can live happily without the Joker and start a company. The figure of Harley Quinn in this movie is a manifestation of the depiction of feminism in the form of a very tough woman, she has no fear of any threat and with her courage continues to fight all her enemies in a crazy way, but besides that Harley Quinn still has a sense of empathy and compassion as a woman.

Conclusion

Based on the results of study and analysis that has been carried out from the movie "Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)." by using feminism theory, it can be concluded that the emancipation of Harley Quinn contained in the movie is a description of the struggle of Harley Quinn's life as the main character who is

underestimated by many people because she is has been regardless from the influence of the Joker that previously always protected her. However in the end she was able to prove her independence to rise from adversity and start a new purpose in life. Feminism in the film scene is in the form of struggle, strength, determination, effort, and forms of action Harley Quinn and her friends who dare to fight against a group of strong men to prove that even though they are women who do not have power who can protect them, they can defeat criminals which has great power. So that the myth in today's society which states that women are not able to protect themselves and do not have the power like men is refuted by this film which contains motivational messages and sentences, both through visuals (images) and verbally (text /dialogue) which states that women can also be strong like men. The message of women emancipation in "Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)" is shown from the strength of the main character that is Harley Quinn who tries to free herself from the influence of the Joker and decides to live independently. From the character of Harley Quinn and some of her female friends in the film, she describes the strength in women that can be considered equal to the ability of a man so that women are also able to make themselves strong and able to protect themselves.

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