
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introduction of this research. It consists of background, statement of problem, research objective and significance, and definition of key terms.

1.1. Background

Talking about women closely related to gender issues and emancipation, because the problem is a part of social problem that is always faced by women, especially the problem of freedom. The problem is often banded with gender issues. Butler (11-12) defines -gender as social and cultural productions that produce the illusory effect of being naturall. Women, in this case, have been the focus of freedom, because they are always unfettered by the patriarchal system. They, from the first, are to be people who are always trying to get equality with men, whether in the field of education, social, or political. Then, Tyson (92) says that women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially, and psychologically; patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which they are kept so.

Freedom is a word that is sensitive enough to be discussed, especially when talking about women's liberation. However, it was known long before the

18th century (where feminism emerged as a movement which attempted to get the rights and freedoms of women) women unfettered by patriarchy. Patriarchy posits women in the lowest class position in society and implies oppresses women because is resulted in the loss of power over the production process, in tandem with the emergence of ownership (class) which has the meaning of production and in the society.

Becoming a housewife ultimately not altogether makes women has a more space to aspire their aspiration. They have assumption that they have the same opportunities in doing what men do as liberalism on individual life. As Madsen (35) says that the liberal emphasis on the individual stresses the importance of the individual and individual autonomy which are protected by guaranteed rights, economic justice and equality of opportunity.

Actually, the issue of women or feminism has been discussed much, but the problem is growing from day to day and will never run out and tired to be discussed. The journals are very interesting which has relevancy to my research such as entitled *Betty Friedan and the Radical Past of Liberal Feminism* by Joanne Boucher (2003) and *Nonie Harris (2007) with Comparative, Feminist, and Qualitative: An Uncommon Perspective on Cross-National Social Policy Research*. Meanwhile, in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, feminism is a topic which has been analyzed much, such as by Fitriyani (2007), Jannah (2008), Hayati (2008), Marlina (2007), and Riki (2008). Here, the researcher tries to explore the issues of feminism, especially liberal feminism which is built by the three perspectives of three wives in three short stories, namely Charlotte Perkins

Gilman's -The Yellow Wallpaper, Kate Chopin -A Story of An Hour, and Kay Boyle -Astronomer's Wife.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman presented short story with the story of a wife who had a monotone life. She should stay at home in every time with a rule that was created by her husband. Meanwhile, -A Story of an Hour portrays the view of a man toward a woman (wife). That is a wife in the story are perceived as a tough woman but still dominated by feelings. More, -Astronomer's Wife by Kay Boyle used the views of man character to realize a wife about her duties and her husband has to do.

Talking about feminism means the matter of perspective, interpretation, and point of view. Here, the researcher chooses those three short stories because they representing the three perspectives. First, the perspective of the woman who presented by an author with a feeling or instinct of a woman who was so thick, it described in "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. "A Story of An Hour" itself is the view of man (as a writer/ the female writer positioned herself as a male) in seeing and understanding the problems of women (wives). Meanwhile, Kay Boyle with her short stories entitled "Astronomer's Wife" is a view of the male character in giving description about the issue of wife. The main character (the wife) as the subject was not aware of the problem which was faced. Feminism can be assumed as a worldview, therefore the researcher will analyze those three short stories because they have three views that represent how feminism is interpreted by female own perspective as a writer and main character, the view of female writer who positioned herself as a male, and the perspectives

of author in forming a feminism concept by presenting a depressed female character to look at the issue.

The problem of feminism is divided into two waves. Freedman (31) states that first-wave feminism involved a period of feminist activity during the 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in Europe and in the Anglosphere; it focused primarily on gaining the right of women's suffrage, the right to be educated, better working conditions and double sexual standards. The term, "first-wave", was coined retrospectively after the term *second-wave feminism* began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities as further political inequalities.

For that reason, the researcher is interested in assessing deeply how the feminists efforts in getting freedom which is begun by the movement of liberal feminism. Tong (12) states, -liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminism theory, which primarily focuses on women's ability to show and maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. Therefore, the researcher has tried to analyze the wife's perspectives in the scope of the problem as a housewife in liberal feminism.

1.2. Statement of Problem

Assuming that feminism is the effort of women to get the equality with men in every field as individual right, but it will make the ambiguity when they positioned themselves as a wife and had to do their duties as a housewife. So, the

researcher has tried to investigate the main problem which faced by three wives in three short stories into several questions:

1. How the three wives are represented in those short stories?
2. What are the struggles of three wives in getting freedom in those short stories?

1.3. Research Objective

According to Kothari (2), research objective is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific. Through the research questions above, the researcher wants:

1. To find out the issue actually faced by wives in those short stories and the issue of gender and rhetoric in affecting to women's life.
2. To find out how women solve their problem so that get the freedom as they want. In addition, to see what is actually meant by freedom for a woman in the view of liberal feminism.

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
SUNAN GUNUNG DJATI
BANDUNG

1.4. Research Significance

Academically, this research directed to develop the research in the study of feminism. By analyzing three short stories that have similar issues are expected to reveal the perspectives of women in facing the problems caused by differences in rights between men and women. Then, it is expected to increase the repertoire of

literary research in feminist perspectives. That revealed by analyzing the three works made by three feminist activists. For students of literature and the people who are interested in this research, it is expected to reference for those who want to enrich the literary knowledge, especially about feminism. Practically, it is intended for those who are interested in understanding the context of feminist which is in the midst of society.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

Some terms in this thesis could have a different understanding. To facilitate the reader in understanding and differentiating the key terms used in this thesis, therefore the researcher gave a brief explanation. The explanation has been taken from -A Dictionary of Literary and Thematic Terms¹¹ by Edward Quinn as well as other sources, such as dictionary. Here is a brief description of some of the terms contained in the thesis.

1. Depression: a mental state characterized by a pessimistic sense of inadequacy and despondent lack of activity.
2. Emancipation: the act of setting free from the power of another, from slavery, subjection, dependence, or controlling influence.
3. Equality: a state of being essentially equal or equivalent.
4. Freedom: the condition of being free; the power to act or speak or think without externally imposed restraints.

5. Oppression: The state of being kept down by unjust use of force or authority.
6. Patriarchy: Literally, rule by the father and, by extension, a social system controlled by men. Patriarchy is a central target of feminist criticism, which takes as one of its goals the unveiling of patriarchal structures in societies past and present. Feminists argue that many pervasive aspects of patriarchy are disguised by the assumption of natural differences between men and women.





uin

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
SUNAN GUNUNG DJATI
BANDUNG