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EXPLORING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE 2020 FILM 'ENOLA HOLMES': A FEMINIST ANALYSIS

Abstrak

Film ini berlatar di Inggris zaman Victoria, dan karakter utamanya, Enola Holmes, adalah adik perempuan dari detektif hebat Sherlock Holmes. Dalam film tersebut, Enola Holmes menantang norma-norma patriarki dengan menunjukkan keterampilan luar biasa dan kemandirian yang bahkan melebihi ekspektasi yang umumnya dibebankan pada perempuan pada saat itu. Selain itu, film "Enola Holmes" menggambarkan hubungan ibu-anak yang kuat, dan ibu Enola Holmes, Eudoria Holmes, juga seorang wanita yang cerdas dan berani. Eudria Holmes menjadi inspirasi dan teladan bagi Enola dalam memperjuangkan kebebasan dan pemberdayaan perempuan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui tentang Pemberdayaan Perempuan dalam Film 'Enola Holmes'. Jenis penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan analisis semiotika John Fisk. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang bagaimana film 'Enola Holmes tahun 2020 menggambarkan pemberdayaan perempuan dan bagaimana hal tersebut dapat memberikan inspirasi dan pengaruh positif bagi penontonnya.

Kata Kunci: Enola Holmes, Pemberdayaan Perempuan, Analisis Feminis, Semiotika

Abstract

The movie is set in Victorian England, and the main character, Enola Holmes, is the younger sister of the great detective Sherlock Holmes. In the movie, Enola Holmes challenges patriarchal norms by demonstrating exceptional skills and independence that exceed even the expectations generally placed on women at the time. In addition, the movie "Enola Holmes" depicts a strong mother-daughter relationship, and Enola Holmes' mother, Eudoria Holmes, was also an intelligent and courageous woman. Eudria Holmes became an inspiration and role model for Enola in fighting for women's freedom and empowerment. The purpose of this research is to find out about Women's Empowerment in the Movie 'Enola Holmes'. This type of research uses a qualitative method with John Fisk's semiotic analysis. The results of this study are expected to provide a better understanding of how the 2020 movie 'Enola Holmes depicts women's empowerment and how this can provide inspiration and positive influence for its audience.

Keywords: Enola Holmes, Women Empowerment, Feminist Analysis, Semiotics

INTRODUCTION

Messages regarding truth are communicated through literary works. The author may either explicitly mention these ideas or imply them in a subtle way. By expressing their views of the world around them in literature, writers paint a "portrait" of life. But unlike the reflection in a mirror, this portrait is derived from literary works, which are human creations infused with the author's distinct viewpoint. Writers in literature use their words to convey their opinions about the world. Writing that comes from the author's imagination is imbued with profound admiration and a hint of the soul. Numerous life lessons can be found in literary works, and through reading with appreciation, one can recognize and absorb these lessons.. Additionally, movies are considered one of the most important components of mass media when it comes to conveying a message (Sobur, 2004). In addition to serving as a distraction, a film can also serve as a means of communication to educate its audience. In particular, while making presentations

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about information and education, communicators frequently use storytelling to help explain concepts clearly. Film criticism can influence viewers' perceptions in a cognitive, effective, or non-cognitive way. Many people who don't understand movies very well often use movies as their primary source of inspiration or reference in daily life.

Some films aim to spread their creators' messages to a broad audience as a kind of mass communication. Movies usually leave an effect on viewers, whether it's a good or bad one. Movies have the power to mold an audience's character through their messages. Prasetya (2019). Films are typically able to capture the cultural values of a nation and give the viewer a tangible sense of the scenario portrayed in the film. Through the plot of the film, movies educate their audience in addition to being entertaining. Films are becoming more and more popular right now, and one of those carries a message about how important it is for women to have equality in terms of gender where a woman can prove that women or men have the same rights in various things or activities is a film by director Harry Bradbred entitled *Enola Holmes*.

A perspective that emerged in Britain during the 1970s and had a significant impact on feminist film theory holds that representation is the result of an active process of choosing and presenting, organizing and sculpting, and creating things that bear meaning; this process is known as the practice of signification (Jackson & Jones, 2009: 367). Rather than simply reflecting reality, true or distorted, representation is a product of this process. This technique of signification has to do with the representation of women in films, which serves as a sign but also acquires significance. as a symbol, but one that takes its meaning from men's dreams and wants rather than the realities of women's existence (Jackson & Jones, 2009:369).

The intricate system of indicators that underpins movies includes words, sounds, images, music, and the act of creating them. Language and literature both contain signs. Semiotics is a common term used to describe these signals. Ferdinand de Saussure described semiotics as the discipline that examines how signs function in society (Sobur, 2013: 12), however Charles Sanders Pierce restricts semiotics to a formal theory of signs. Thus, the idea of the sign forms the foundation of semiotics.

As in the movies, *Zootopia* and *Mad Max Fury Road* indirectly instill patriarchal ideology with the depictions or characteristics shown in the movies because women are considered inferior and under the power of men. Shown in the movie because women are considered inferior and under the power of men. In the movie *Enola Holmes*, Millie managed to make the audience focus on her character as *Enola Holmes*. Her strong, independent, and energetic character succeeded in making *Enola Holmes* get the attention of movie viewers.

Film is an artistic medium that offers viewers a distinctive and enjoyable experience by fusing audiovisual components. Cinema, which is derived from the word kinematic, or motion, is a common term for it. Films serve as a platform for artists to present their ideas for stories and share a variety of themes with a wider audience. A movie that centers on the idea of female empowerment is "*Enola Holmes*," which was written and directed by Jack Thorne and released in 2020. Analyzing the movie from the standpoint of women's empowerment is interesting.

The movie tells the story of *Enola Holmes*, a young woman who struggles to find her identity and fight gender stereotypes that existed at that time. She is portrayed as a smart, brave, and independent woman who shows her ability to solve mysteries and face obstacles that hinder her empowerment. The movie also highlights issues such as gender inequality in access to education, social expectations placed on women, and stereotypes that hinder women's empowerment.

Through the character of *Enola Holmes*, , the movie inspires viewers to challenge patriarchal norms and fight for gender equality. It is a representation of women's struggle to achieve empowerment and freedom in society. The movie '*Enola Holmes*' is a powerful tool to convey the message of female empowerment and inspire women to break through the barriers that hold them back.

In general, people tend to have different views and attitudes towards male and female leaders. The issue of domestication is one of the factors that build society's view of logical men and emotional women. Some of the society considers that women are more suited to household work, which in fact does not employ the brain so much, rather than having to work outside (one of them being a leader) which often involves the rationality of the brain to get the job done while solving various problems. This gender-biased view still plagues the mindset of society

today. Moreover, it is also supported by the social and cultural teachings of society from generation to generation about how men and women should be. From the various forms of injustice that women get from this thinking, movements have emerged that offer the concept of women's rationality that women are beings who have the right and deserve to be critical. One of these movements can be seen through movies. Elements in the movie such as characters, plot, background, and others form a tangle of events that then describe the narrative in a movie. Narrative is like the foundation of a movie that becomes the meaning, purpose, and/or goal of a movie. Narratives can be depicted either through words (dialog in the film) or scenes that appear between characters in the film. *Enola Holmes* is a movie that depicts the rationality of women as a movie that contains a narrative about how the concept of rational men and emotional women is depicted in the movie.

The film '*Enola Holmes*' features a strong mother-daughter relationship between Enola Holmes and her mother, Eudoria Holmes, who is a smart and brave woman that inspires Enola in their struggle for women's freedom and empowerment. The purpose of this study is to explore the representation of women's empowerment in the movie using a descriptive qualitative analysis approach.

This research aims to identify and explain how women's empowerment is portrayed through the characters, plot, and narrative. By using a qualitative content analysis approach and semiotic analysis, this research can provide a deeper understanding of the representation of women in the film and how it can influence our perception and understanding of the role of women in society. According to John Fiske's semiotic analysis, the study will focus on the signs or symbols used in the movie, the codes or systems in which they are organized, and the culture in which they are based.

Gender issues are still a problem or discussion that is interesting to discuss and research, gender issues are always a problem because of the injustice between women and men which is negative, especially for a woman. The existence of discriminatory treatment and inequality can cause losses in the welfare of life for those who are restricted and subordinated. In this case, to overcome the issue of gender differences, awareness of gender equality is needed. Conveying the importance of equality, researchers do so through one of the mass communications in the form of mass media, namely movies. Film is a media resulting from the development of technology and informatics. In this case, movies can change a person's way of thinking and view of something that is happening in society through the messages in the movie (Yustiana & Ahmad, 2011).

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Semiology, according to Sobur in Silalahi (2018: 12–13), is the study of messages' presence in society. This study's primary goal is to demonstrate the existence of signals and the laws governing them. Not just in terms of language and communication networks, but in everything that is still connected to the human mind. In summary, language is a basic form of human communication, and semiotics may be used to study nonverbal cues like gestures and fashion sense.

Semiotics can be defined as the study of signs and symbols through the analysis of denotative and connotative meanings, as signs and signals are the subject of semiotics. Furthermore, the study of semiotics has benefited from the expansion of perspectives. Balci offers a notion that is in agreement. According to him, semiotics is the area of linguistics that studies signs, the process of creating or producing signs, and how to communicate a sign's meaning to other people. Semiotics is also a part of the communication process. In other words, every communication process may be viewed as a message that is transmitted and received using various social codes and indicators. As a result, any form of expression including advertising, fashion, music, art, and literature can be dissected as a sign system.

The author conducted research for the topic "*Exploring Women's Empowerment in the Film 'Enola Holmes': A Feminist Analysis*" in order to comprehend how the film presents feminism as a pertinent and significant theme in feminist discourse and how it portrays women as active and empowered subjects in society. The film '*Enola Holmes*' is regarded as a

compelling illustration of feminist analysis due to its portrayal of Enola Holmes, a female detective who battles against gender stereotypes and patriarchy. Therefore, a feminist analysis of the movie can aid in comprehending the representation of feminism in the movie as well as how it advances broader feminist debate.

The first prior study, "Representation of Feminism in the Enola Holmes Film," was conducted in 2021 by Chory Angela Wijayanti, Agusly Irawan Aritonang, and Natasha Christa Purnama. The signals and meanings of the system of signs and symbols in the film Enola Holmes are examined in this study using the semiotic technique. The use of John Fiske's semiotic analysis method which consists of three levels: the level of reality, the level of representation, and the level of ideology distinguishes this study from earlier ones. In the meanwhile, this study applies the reception analysis method to examine the significance of feminist messages received by teenage girls.

Aisyah Fatin conducted research for the second prior study in 2013 and labeled it "Analisis Resepsi Penonton Perempuan yang Sudah Menikah Terhadap Kekerasan Pada Perempuan di Film *Die Fremde* (When We Leave) Film." The purpose of this study is to ascertain how married women interpret the violence in the film *Die Fremde* (When We Leave). Reception studies, or the interpretation of media information based on audience perception, are a qualitative approach method used in this research.

Edgar Tidy Genedy's *Divergent* (2016) thesis serves as the third research project that the researcher refers to. It reflects feminism through cultural studies, which focus on the link or relationship between culture and power. Representation of Feminism in *Maleficent* Film, a journal article by Amanda Diani et al. from Telkom University that was published in print and online by Unpad Journal, is the fourth pertinent piece of research from this study. The focus of this study is on using semiotics to analyze feminism.

The researcher's research differs in that it uses a different semiotic analysis approach and object. The researcher employed Enola Holmes as the object of feminism's portrayal in her research. In the meantime, earlier research included character and movie analysis. Furthermore, the researchers' data sources differ from those of other studies. The Harry Bradbeer film Enola Holmes was used by the researchers. By examining movies, one can solve the problem by applying semiotics from John Fiske's *The Codes of Television* theory to both analyses.

In this study, the researcher sees how the movie "Enola Holmes" raises the issue of feminism. raised the issue of feminism. This was also conveyed by the producer of the movie producer who wants women as helpers in a movie and also the discussion of feminism or gender equality is on the rise. discussion related to feminism or gender equality is on the rise. Therefore Therefore, the researcher wants to see how the young female audience reacts to the movie "Enola Holmes" and the feminism in it.

METHOD

The method used is descriptive qualitative research on the film Enola Holmes (2020) as a research corpus with the design of the John Fiske semiotic model media text analysis method. Simply put, semiotics is a study or an approach to symbols or you. In the semiotic sense, signs can be words, images, sounds, gestures, or objects. According to Chandler, (2007: 55) "Contemporary semioticians use semiotics to study how meaning is created, and reality is represented"

The research employs an advanced strategy for data collection, which involves note-taking and listening. The listening method is a way to gather data by paying attention to how language is used. The fundamental approach to this strategy is tapping. The note-taking technique is the next advanced technique that follows. Using this method, the researcher records the research corpus's language usage after listening. For the data collection itself this research uses the listening method and note-taking technique as its advanced technique. The listening method is a data collection technique data collection technique by listening to the use of language. This method uses tapping technique as the basic technique. Then, the technique then, note-taking is done as a follow-up technique. At this technique, the researcher records the use of language of the research corpus after listening (Rahardi, 2005: 15).

The paradigm and syntagma of moments that highlight feminist ideology in the film Enola Holmes serve as the basis for this study's data analysis. "A paradigm is a set of characters

from which selection is made, and only one unit is selected," claims Fiske in Sarah, 2022, 34. An assortment of paradigms is called a syntagm. In grammar, syntagms are sentences made up of sets of vocabulary, if paradigms are the vocabulary. An illustration of a clothing syntax would be a collection of multiple paradigms, like a hat, tie, shirt, jacket, etc.

A set of presumptions or ideas that can guide research methodology is known as the research paradigm. With a critical paradigm, this study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology. Through thorough critical examination, the critical paradigm seeks to explain how people communicate in the form of free, open, and logical speech. The repressive effects of the dominant in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and other social identities are criticized using the traditional critical viewpoint. (Cobley and Schulz 2013, pp. 51–52)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on John Fiske's semiotic analysis, the research on how feminism is shown in the character of Enola Holmes in the movie *Enola Holmes* has produced the following results: a description of how feminism is portrayed in a number of the movie's sequences. Semiotic analysis was used to collect data, drawing on John Fiske's theory of *The Codes of Television* (see Vera 2014:35). Two research findings—the degree of reality and the degree of feminism ideology—are derived from the data collected. The code for the degree of realism in Enola Holmes's persona is as follows:

1. Costume

Enola Holmes' costume also highlights the feminist message portrayed by the character. Enola's views on women's corsets are encapsulated in her refusal to wear one that shapes her hips and supports her breasts. According to Enola, the waist only supports the legs and does not need to be reinforced with a corset. She sees the corset as a symbol of oppression against women who are forced to wear it, and therefore, refuses to conform to the beauty standards dictated by European society.

2. Appearance

Enola Holmes is a young girl living in England in the 1840s, as evidenced by the story at the beginning of the movie and the first impression she leaves on the audience. She belongs to the upper-middle social class, as seen through the clothes she wears and the house she lives in. Enola also owns a bicycle, which is shown in the prologue sequence of *Enola Holmes*. However, in the realization stage, Enola often disguises herself as a man to more easily complete her mission. This reality of feminism in terms of appearance is due to the need to hide her identity as a woman.

3. Behavior

Enola's perspective on her mother's discipline began to form at an early age and has had a significant influence on her worldview and life. She is a confident individual who doesn't conform to societal expectations for women. Her intelligence and ability to analyze situations in a rational way have contributed to her success in life. Enola's proficiency in martial arts is a result of her mother Eudoria's early training. Unlike other girls of her time, Enola was taught science, martial arts, and was an avid reader of the *Frendel Hall* books from her mother.

4. Makeup

Enola Holmes' makeup is unique and distinctly different from traditional women's makeup. Her ability to transform herself into a man with the aid of makeup is a testament to her skills and resourcefulness. Whether disguised as a gardener, a newspaper seller, or while escaping from *Ferndell Hall*, her makeup is consistent and plays a significant role in enriching Holmes' character. In the movie, Enola's cross-dressing is a successful representation of feminism in Europe during the 1880s, challenging the societal norms of femininity. The makeup is a significant part of Enola's transformation and plays a crucial role in her ability to pass as a man. Throughout the film, Enola's character development is influenced by her disguises and makeup, which affect her thought process and recognition of societal norms.

5. Environment

Enola was born and raised in the small town of *Ferndell Hall* in England, where she received an unconventional education from her mother. Enola's mother was a feminist who

instilled feminist values in her daughter from a young age. In the year , Enola's mother made her read a wide variety of books, including Shakespeare, Locke, and Mary Wollstonecraft's essays. Enola's mother also had a book on feminism by John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. Enola was taught several lessons every day, starting with history, physics, and fitness in the morning, followed by physical combat after lunch. The environment of London during that period reflects the state of feminism. London was the center of civilization, music, literature, luxury goods, and the center of civilized society. While in London, Enola used her intellect to hone her survival skills in search of her mother, Eudoria. Enola's investigation led her to the territories and seats of inheritance of Basilweather Hall, where she exposed the fraud against the Viscount and the deception regarding the implementation of reform laws that were not approved by the government in the year regarding voting rights.

6. Expression

The act of expressing, demonstrating, or expressing goals, ideas, sentiments, and other things is known as expressiveness. Expressions on a person's face that convey their emotions are another type of expression. In one incident, the hitman assigned to track down and murder Tewkesbury could find Enola Holmes and turn her into a murder suspect. Enola is evidently still attempting to fight and get away from the assassin based on her coded expressions. She gives out a small smile, shows no fear, and begins to prepare her hands for battle with the villain. This shows that, despite being a woman, Enola does not fear anything. At the age of sixteen, this young woman was able to face a killer to save herself. Although Enola was wearing a red dress that was supposed to show the elegance of a woman, the dress did not prevent Enola from performing the martial arts moves that she had learned since childhood.

Enola Holmes, a movie directed by Harry Bradbeer, sheds light on the restrictions that women faced in Europe during the 1880s. It highlights the contrast between the existing values and norms and the message the director wants to convey. Gender discrimination acts like an obstacle to personal freedom, and in this case, it is limited to gender difference. The character of Enola Holmes portrays the sexism that existed during that time. Mycroft Holmes, her older brother, believes that women should abide by the norms of the time and have good manners. He also believes that ladies ought to have polished, refined looks. The scene where Enola picks up Sherlock Holmes and Mycroft at Ferndell Hall Station makes this clear. Mycroft gives Enola a startled look before being repulsed by how messy she seems. He says to himself, "Oh, my God. Take a look at you. You're really disorganized." Where are your gloves and hat?" reveals his attitude. Mycroft's remarks demonstrate that he still holds women to 18th-century European ideals of beauty. According to this data, Enola is subjected to discrimination because of her appearance. She recalls telling Mycroft that she used to wear a hat, but it itched her head, and she didn't feel comfortable wearing it. Enola has not worn gloves since childhood, as her mother, Eudoria, gave her the freedom of spirit.

Enola is expected to conform to a certain ethical standard as a woman in order to be deemed suitable for marriage. Mycroft enrolls her in Mr. Harrison's personality school to prepare her for this role. In the 18th century, women had limited roles and were mainly expected to take care of their homes and families. Their only purpose was to find a husband and lead a respectable life. Once married, women had no freedom and were subject to their husbands' authority (Güven, 2022).

The movie *Enola Holmes* portrays liberal feminism, which seeks to fight against patriarchal culture and gender discrimination. As Tong (2010: 2) argues, "Gender justice can start with ourselves." Eudoria's influence on Enola's upbringing instilled in her the values of independence and intelligence, and the belief that women deserve equal opportunities. This is evident in Enola's actions when she helps the Viscount uncover the truth about Basil Weather, leading to the approval of the Electoral Reform Act through the Viscount's franchise.

This idea serves as the foundation for the portrayal of women as logical in *Enola Holmes* (2020). This is true because the term "rationality" describes the lowest form of human reasoning, which is the capacity to present arguments in favor of and counter arguments against beliefs or courses of action. Another way to understand rationality is to associate it with more

substantive and normative actions, specifically those that pertain to cultural and societal norms, as well as political and religious values (Heikes, 2012: 18).

CONCLUSION

The film "Enola Holmes" (2020) successfully portrays women's empowerment through the main character, Enola Holmes. Enola is depicted as a smart, brave, and independent woman who challenges the societal norms that limit women during that time. The movie also showcases the character of Enola's mother, Eudoria Holmes, who is a feminist and women's rights activist, and inspires Enola to fight for women's empowerment.

Using John Fiske's semiotic model of the film, it can be emphasized that the movie as a communication medium offers the idea of representing women who are still considered taboo even today. The representation of the lives of female characters in "Enola Holmes" (2020) also illustrates how masculine rationality is detrimental to women. The film depicts the rationality of women primarily when they face discrimination or humiliation from the patriarchal society. The behavior that shows women's resistance to oppression is consistent with the ideology of liberal feminism, which emphasizes the values of freedom and fair speech. In this case, the rules of patriarchal society become a catalyst for the emergence of intelligent women who dare to defend their rights.

Women's rationality is still viewed as taboo and not important, as the 2020 film Enola Holmes makes clear. Not really important. This is due to the long-standing normalization of male logic, which is demonstrated by the necessity for women to launch a defensive movement before claiming their own rights as members of society and individuals. The female lead has the audacity to oppose the many injustices brought about by the dominance of men over women in society's institutions.

The patriarchal society 've discrimination and humiliation of women is the primary means by which this film demonstrates the rationality of women. Liberal feminism's ideology, which is connected to the emphasis on the principles of freedom and opinion, is demonstrated by the behavior that demonstrates women's resistance to oppression. In this instance, the laws of patriarchal society lead to the rise of astute women who are not afraid to stand up for what has right.

The capitalist system, which subjects women of the proletariat to discrimination and oppression at the hands of the dominant bourgeoisie, is frequently linked to patriarchal culture. Professor Val Burris of the University of Oregon's sociology department clarified that patriarchy keeps the capitalist system alive by assigning women the responsibility of producing children, which generates resources for the capitalist class. In this instance, capitalism serves as a means of achieving both commodity production at the lowest feasible cost and sustainable economic expansion (Wijaya and Loviona, 2021).

A politically progressive system that encourages gender equality is known as a matriarchy, in opposition to the patriarchal one. Matriarchy literally translates to "mother power." Matriarchal civilizations are defined by a strong emphasis on maternal qualities, including reproduction (prosperity), nurturing, courage, compassion, and caring (empathy). Women are the source of authority, the givers of life, the healers, and the embodiments of justice in matriarchal communities (Joffe and Neil, 2013: 272).

The 2020 film Enola Holmes addresses women's rationality, a topic that is still controversial and not very important. This is due to the long-standing normalization of male logic, which is demonstrated by the requirement that women launch a defense movement before demanding their individual rights as part of individuals and society. Female characters dare to fight against various injustices due to the dominance of men who run the system of society

The researcher concludes that this film effectively provides a spirit of empowerment for women, which can make the audience feel optimistic and motivated to understand the gender equality movement. Gender equality is one of the most violated human rights globally, and empowering women is crucial to eliminate discrimination and the root causes of gender-based violence.

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