

**THE PORTRAYAL OF THE INDEPENDENT WOMAN OF AMY ELLIOT IN
GONE GIRL MOVIE: DE BEAUVOIR'S FEMINISM PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstrak

Gone Girl adalah salah satu film yang disutradarai oleh David Fincher yang dirilis pada tahun 2014. Film ini diangkat dari sebuah novel dengan judul yang sama yang ditulis oleh Gillian Flynn. *Gone Girl* menceritakan tentang kehidupan Amy Elliot sebagai karakter utama yang mengalami kekecewaan terhadap pernikahannya lalu kemudian menghilang dan merencanakan banyak bukti palsu untuk menyalahkan suaminya sendiri sebagai pelakunya. Oleh karena itu, Amy Elliot menjadi karakter yang cukup polemis dalam film ini. Akan tetapi, melalui metode kualitatif naratif, penelitian ini bermaksud untuk menganalisis eksistensi Amy Elliot sebagai Perempuan Mandiri dan Menikah melalui teori Feminisme eksistensialisme oleh Simone de Beauvoir. Secara spesifik, penelitian ini menggunakan konsep Perempuan Mandiri di dalam teori Feminisme Eksistensialisme yang mana terdapat empat karakteristik yaitu bekerja, intelektual, mencapai transformasi sosial masyarakat, dan melampaui batas-batasnya. Dari hasil analisis ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa karakter Amy Elliot di dalam film *Gone Girl* ini menunjukkan eksistensinya sebagai perempuan yang Mandiri dan menikah.

Kata kunci: *Gone Girl*, Amy Elliot, Perempuan Mandiri, Feminisme Eksistensialisme, Simone de Beauvoir.

Abstract

Gone Girl is one of David Fincher's directed movies that was released in 2014. This movie was based on a novel with the same title written by Gillian Flynn. *Gone Girl* told the story of Amy Elliot's life as the main character who felt upset in her marriage and went somewhere, planning a lot of false evidence to blame her husband as the culprit. Thereof, Amy Elliot becomes a quite polemical character through this movie. Nevertheless, by utilizing narrative qualitative method, this study aims to analyze the existence of Amy Elliot as an independent married woman through the theory of Existentialist Feminism by Simone de Beauvoir. This study specifically utilized the concept of Independent Woman in Existentialist Feminism theory which is a roundup of four characteristics; go to work, be intellectual, achieve a socialist transformation of society, and transcend its boundaries. To sum up, based on the result of analysis, it can be concluded that Amy Elliot character point out her existence as the Independent Married Woman through *Gone Girl* movie.

Keywords: *Gone Girl*, Amy Elliot, the Independent Woman, Existentialist Feminism, Simone de Beauvoir.

1. INTRODUCTION

Being a woman in the earlier time was a curse of pain; a trap, because women were treated differently than men. From time to time, women have accepted different treatments between men and themselves. It is still hard for them to get a higher education, a good job, a great career, or other things they want. Nevertheless, as time goes by, women realized that education is just not for men, public space in politics can be possessed by women, and so does a good job, promising career, or other things they want. Women understood that they needed to be independent and free because they were part of a human being who could stand by themselves.

In consequence, since woman realizes those things as stated before are also her things, she is categorized to be along with the concept of the Independent woman. Beauvoir (2011, p.818) said that the Independent Woman knows she is a consciousness and a subject. She has legitimate authority; thus she can be subject, be involved in positive activities in society, and define or erase the role as the object. In other words, she is on the way to transcendence toward her liberation. When it comes to marriage, the Independent woman views marriage as a choice, not a deadline, to prove her existence in society because she understands what she deems right for her.

Furthermore, as woman decided to get into the institution of marriage, she obtained a new life, and so did a new role as a married woman. Nevertheless, she regards those situations as an option that can be discussed. She tries to break the assumption that women have to take care of the house while men go to work to fulfill their life needs. Woman can choose to go to work; to care for the house as long as she wants to do the role; still do the things she did before she got married. Woman can be responsible on the role of the leader, the producer of needs, or the leader of responsibility and options. In other words, woman exists in any terms of her marriage.

Amy Elliot in *Gone Girl* is the perfect model who appropriates the situation described before. It is because Amy Elliot is portrayed as woman capable of providing for her economy, having a good education and good social life, and inspiring women. The character of Amy is by the concept of Independent Woman. In this movie, Amy Elliot is depicted as an elegant and intelligent woman and a prominent figure in her parent's series book, "the Amazing Amy". Therefore, this study intends to point out how Amy Elliot can be portrayed as the Independent Married Woman based on feminism perspective through the concept of the Independent Woman by Simone de Beauvoir.

Beauvoir indicates this concept not through any abstract understanding as to what it means to be a free woman, but through characteristics of woman who embodies the contours of her everyday situations. If woman wants to become free, she must grasp and understand her situation as that which constitutes her particular existence. Therefore, to be along with the concept of the Independent Woman, woman also needs to be along with its characteristics, as follow:

a. Go to Work

The concept of Independent Woman is in contradiction with her femininity, because they uphold “the true woman” is required to make herself as an object, the Other. The truth is the environment would limit woman to define her destiny and her freedom would also be limited depend on the amount of money she had. Therefore, woman should assert herself as independent subject through work in order to demand recognition in her own right to begin the process of becoming free. By getting to work, woman can reclaim her status as subject and actively determine the direction of her destiny (Tong, 2018, p.277).

b. Be Intellectual

Beck (2018, p.18) said that woman have to cultivate and discipline her mind toward the production of creative work to transcend the negative aspects of her immanent situation. Toisuta and Handojo (2017, p.48) appended that the intelligence makes woman competent, able to help others, and totally depend on her entire existence than depend on other person. Palumbo (2017, p.31) claimed that woman need to see that being smart is a part of being capable and being strong and independent is a good thing that will lead to her success as the Independent Woman.

c. Achieve a Socialist Transformation of Society

Indriyani (2014, p.29) claimed that women should have the same opportunity to be independent like men because the women’s role not only in the household but also in the society. According to Beck (2018, p.22), the Independent woman believes that the independence gained through such participation in society will always be contingent upon her adherence to socio-political and cultural values that structure her situation. In other words, woman tries to achieve socialist transformation of society in order to have social responsibilities that will able to overcome the conflicts of Object-Subject within herself.

d. Transcend its Boundaries

According to Beck (2018, p.18), woman is required to carve out her own position, to mark her existence in the world with a signature that is recognizably her own. It is not enough for a woman to claim independence without doing nothing or just standing in the world made by men. It is purposed to become a self in society, to free herself from her body, to refuse to make her appearance the “be all and end all” (Tong & Botts, 2018, p.279). Hence, woman is able to know what she wants, to decide what she needs, to define what her existence is meant to be, and to achieve what is equality for her.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is considered as a narrative qualitative research. This research puts attention on focusing one or two individuals in the literary works, and then gathered the data through the collection of their stories, chronologically retold individuals' experiences, and attempted to describe the meaning of those experiences related to theories and general literature. The object of this study is *Gone Girl* movie. *Gone Girl* is a 2014 movie directed by David Fincher which is adapted from the 2012 novel entitled *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. *Gone Girl* movie narrates the marriage life of a couple, Nick Dunne acted by Ben Affleck and Amy Elliot acted by Rosamund Pike. This movie intends to point out that Amy Elliot who is brilliant, independent, gorgeous, and well-known woman still got disappointed by her husband.

In collecting the data, this study did some procedures obtained from the data source. The first is watching *Gone Girl* movie intensively in order to get the whole story and to understand the intention of the movie. The next is focusing on Amy Elliot's life to find out other characters connected with her depiction and to take notes which scenes related to the problem; then focusing on the chosen scenes and attempted to understand the conversation and situation in-between connected to the theories used in the study. After that, the author collected all data and highlighted the important words, phrases, and sentences. The last step is arranging the data that has been selected to several parts.

After collecting and arranging the data, the next step is identifying the selected data that include with the concept of the Independent Woman then embodying the description and explanation. The next is describing how the narrative outcome compared with the concept of the Independent Woman and the general literature on the issue or the problem in *Gone Girl* movie. Then, the last is conclusion to brief sharply the data in order to the data is relevant with the theories and the focuses of the study.

3. FINDINGS

This study found four characteristics of the Independent Woman that is portrayed by Amy Elliot in *Gone Girl* movie. There are go to work, be intellectual, achieve a socialist transformation of society, and transcend its boundaries. It contains of five data to analyze Amy Elliot as the Independent Married Woman.

a. Go to Work

Amy Elliot is a daughter of Rand Elliot and Marybeth Elliot, who are well-known as the writer of children's book series entitled *Amazing Amy*. She became the inspiration of her parents to write the book series then she got the trust fund from it. Therefore, because of the trust fund, she is depicted as a wealthy woman. Not only from her parents had trust fund, but she also works as a writer for magazines and a journalist. It intends to point out that Amy Elliot is not dependent on her parent's wealthy, yet she puts her best competency and ability toward her career as a writer and journalist.

When it comes to the relationship, woman is always defined as something inessential, whereas man is the essential. In other word, when woman got married, she engages in the situation of the married woman that is the *given* and the *receiver* and is dominated by her husband. Yet, by getting to work, woman can reclaim her status as subject and actively determine the direction of her destiny. In *Gone Girl* movie, Amy Elliot is portrayed as a woman who has all of assets as though house, car, credit card, and any other important assets registered with her name even she is a wife. Below is the conversation that supported the statement:

Datum 1

Dialogue performance at: (00:23:20-00:23:30)

Gilpin : **House is rented in her name. Car's in her name. Credit cards, utilities, phone bill, all in her name. Even his bar' in her name.**

Boney : I don't know that that's so surprising.

This datum is a scene when Detective Rhonda Boney and Officer James Gilpin came to Nick and Amy's house to check the inspection progress of Amy's missing case. In this scene, Officer Gilpin was shocked by information that he got and told Detective Boney. It tells that all of important and valuable assets, even Nick's bar, registered by

her name instead of registered by Nick's name. Amy Elliot is also a person who decides to open *the Bar* for Nick when they moved to Missouri. She also told Nick to bump up her life insurance to fake their financial problem to corroborate the pretty game of pretending kidnapped.

Therefore, it proves that she is not the *given* and the *receiver* for Nick Dunne and is not dominated by her husband on the matter of the leader, the primary producer of needs, and the primary leader of responsibility and option in marriage life. It is said before that woman can reclaim her status as subject and actively determine the direction of her destiny depending on the amount of money she had. Hence, by being economically independent, Amy Elliot reclaims her status as subject to determine and to decide most of the important responsibilities and options in their marriage life.

b. Be Intellectual

Amy Elliot is depicted as a New York woman who is well-educated and brilliantly smart. She graduated from Harvard and Yale University for a master's degree in psychology. When Amy Elliot choose her study at Harvard University, Amy Elliot points out that having higher education is not for supporting the parts as wives and mothers, yet it is for her own self to be a person who is not only have ability of writing, reading, and counting. Then, she continued her study to Yale University for a master's degree in psychology. It intends to show that Amy Elliot is a woman who puts more attention to her education and realizes that education is an important thing. When she continued her school for a master's degree, it shows that Amy Elliot has pleasure, strong will, and obvious purpose in education.

Furthermore, the other way to build the image of being intellectual is woman need to realize that she must become intellectual with the activity of thinking, searching, and defining her own identity. The Independent Woman believes that woman can do many activities to get and absorb knowledge from anything and anywhere. It can be seen from Amy Elliot's character. She is always keeps busy with the activity of reading a book.

Datum 2

Dialogue performance at: (00:16:12 - 00:16:26)

Boney	So, what does Amy do most days? A woman with all those degrees, what does she do?
Nick	I don't know. She keeps busy.
Boney	Doing what?

Nick

She's a voracious reader. So, she's always got a book in her hand.

From the datum above, it emphasized that Amy Elliot always spend her time with books. It means that she does intellectual activity of thinking, searching, and defining her own identity through reading a book. This is more supported by Nick's words "**She keeps busy**" that point out reading a book is an activity not to spend her spare time but it is a main daily activity to spend her time. The words of "**a voracious reader**" points out that Amy Elliot reads any kinds of books with various things, genres, themes, or any else. It also points out that she can read many books all it once in purpose to not only entertain herself but also to train her to be better people and she keeps busy doing this activity.

c. **Achieve a Socialist Transformation of Society**

Amy Elliot is a role model and becomes popular in American; well-known as Amazing Amy. It is because of her family background, her parents, who write the children series book that inspired from her life. She got her education well, and also got her career successfully as a writer and a journalist. She has a well-picture as an intellectual and elegant woman when she is communicating with people. In addition, she is confirmed and recognized by community or society. Therefore, she is depicted as a woman who achieves a socialist transformation of society.

Afterwards, Amy Elliot is also pictured as a woman who is likely to participate in economic activity or civil society to retain her authority. There are some of activities that Amy is likely to participate as though a crowded party of hipster media types; a night launching of her parents' last book series; an interview with some reporters and bloggers; a brief conference with some FBI guys, doctors, Detective Rhonda Boney and Officer James Gilpin after she came home; a signing meeting for her fans after she came home; an interview with Ellen Abbott to announce that Nick and Amy will have a baby. Some of these activities are Amy's efforts to retain her authority and her image as *Amazing Amy* and American sweetheart. Hence, it is depicted on the movie that she is loved by and be appreciated by many people around her.

Datum 3

Dialogue performance at: (00:12:50 -00:13:02)

Amy's Dad : **It would mean so much if you would talk to a few reporters, bloggers, give them a little Amy color. People wanna hear from you.**

Amy : We can't stay long.

Amy's Dad : Fantastic. Fifteen minutes, tops.

It was on the night launching of the last book series of *Amazing Amy, the Complete Amazing Amy*. Amy's Dad asked Amy to meet some reporters and bloggers who are waited for her. Then, Amy agreed to talk to the reporters and bloggers. It shows that Amy Elliot is the main and important person in the book launching so as some reporters and bloggers were waiting for her. Even though, the event is the launching of Amy's parents' book yet her dad asked Amy for giving them “**a little Amy color**” because people need to hear words from her. This intends to indicate that Amy Elliot is related to the person who has knowledge and ability especially language skills to talk in front of people and also the community or society recognized and confirmed Amy Elliot as a woman who achieves a socialist transformation.

Therefore, Amy Elliot achieved a socialist transformation of a society seeing that see fulfilled the two purposes. For this reason, Amy required to be the goals models to many people considering that she loved by many people, encourage people, and many people grew up with her. Additionally, Amy is required to engage in economic activity or civil society in the effort to establish her own world and to retain her authority. It can be seen from some activities, such as interviews, signing meeting, medias, along with party or important events, that Amy attended.

d. Transcend its Boundaries

Amy Elliot is depicted as a woman who has the right to choose and decide what she wants to do in her life because she raised from feminist parents and educational family background. Most of the important things are her appearance, education, job, marriage, and also the other things. Amy Elliot is also depicted as a woman who independent, elegant, authorized, strong, and intellectual. She always gets dressed by prioritizing her comforts and her needs. It means that she has the rights to choose what she wants to wear. It was once depicted in the movie; Amy was wearing black dress where she should wear white dress like her mother because she was the main character on the night launching the last book series of *Amazing Amy*.

Datum 4

Dialogue performance at: (00:13:13- 00:13:17)

Amy's mom : I thought you were gonna wear white to match the wedding theme.

Amy : **I thought that would be creepy.**

The datum above tells that Marybeth expected Amy to wear white dress to be the center of the night launching of “*The Complete Amazing Amy*”. Besides, Amy wore the black dress because she did not want to be the center and to be different with her real life. The words of “**I thought that would be creepy**” intend to tell that Amy Elliot has the reason why she was not wearing the white dress on that night. It is because the event is not for the real Amy Elliot but the fictional character, *Amazing Amy*, who was getting married. She thought that it would be creepy if she was wearing the white dress acted like she is the real person who was getting married. Therefore, this datum intends to emphasize that she has the right to decide what she deems good for her.

Furthermore, when she got married with Nick Dunne, Amy can actively decide the matter things and important decision in her marriage. Amy has decided to borrow the trust fund to her parents because she thought that it was technically their money. She is also the person who decides to use the trust fund and to buy Nick a bar to solve their financial problem. She suggested bumping up her life insurance to \$1.2 million and Nick agreed about it. These things prove that Amy Elliot is a person who possesses an important role in her marriage especially in terms of making decision since it should be the husband who bears the role of the leader of her wife and the primary leader of responsibility and option in the marriage life.

Afterwards, Amy decided to not having a baby in the near future, yet Nick was still planning to have kids. Even though Amy savvied that Nick wanted to have kids and he went to a fertility clinic, yet Amy still made up her mind to not have kids. Then, when they moved to Missouri, Amy told that it was the time to have kids in their marriage. Amy thought that by having a baby, it would be a new start for Nick and her and having a baby gives a real purpose and an inspiration for her.

Datum 5

Dialogue performance at : (00:46:07-00:46:15)

Amy : **It would be a new start for us. And for me, I would have a real purpose here.**

Nick : A child is not a hobby.

Amy : **Not a hobby. An inspiration.**

Consequently, from the datum above, it depicts that Amy Elliot has the right to choose whether she wants to have a baby or does not want to. She resists that women regarded as a failure and an unfortunately wife if they are not able to give the birth to their family. She realized that when woman got into the institution of marriage, she has an option to choose whether she wants to get pregnant or not needs considering for her future. She believes that having a baby is an option to decide whether she wants to have it or does not want to. It can be concluded that Amy Elliot is related to a woman who releases the boundaries from an obligation to have a baby in purpose of maintaining generation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes the results of the analysis about the characteristics of the Independent Married Woman reflected on Amy Elliot's character in *Gone Girl* movie. There are four characteristics of the Independent Woman according to Simone de Beauvoir as follow go to work, be intellectual, achieve a socialist transformation of society, and transcend its boundaries. This study presents that Amy Elliot portrays the four characteristics of the Independent Woman before she got married with Nick Dunne and also after she got married. Otherwise, this study presents the characteristic of transcends its boundaries in the theory of Independent Woman is the most dominant characteristic in Amy Elliot's character. Therefore, this study points out Amy Elliot's existence as the Independent Married Woman through *Gone Girl* movie.

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