

## Conference Paper

# The Appearance of Gender in the Main Characters in *The Hunger Games* (Gender Analysis)

Choerul Anam<sup>1</sup> and Febri Taufiqurrahman<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Masters of Science in Diponegoro University Semarang<sup>2</sup>Universitas Negeri Malang

## Abstract

This study considers the representations of gender in the 2012 film *The Hunger Games*, focusing on the central characters. The method used is qualitative research. The purpose of this study is to define the gender elements in the film using Judith P. Butler's gender theory. This study demonstrates how Katniss usurps masculine traits seen in several scenes, while Peeta either voluntarily or involuntarily adopts more typically female traits.

**Keywords:** Gender Emergence, Gender Theory, Film *The Hunger Games* 2012.

Corresponding Author:

Choerul Anam

choerulanam04@gmail.com

Published: 29 July 2020

Publishing services provided by  
Knowledge E

© Choerul Anam and Febri Taufiqurrahman. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the WCGS Conference Committee.

## 1. Background Problems

Films are the result of the process of filmmakers who bring together various elements, such as ideas, value systems, outlook on life, beauty, norms, human behavior, and technological sophistication (Trianton, 2013). According to Sari, films based on the elements of their development occur on a combination of art, literature, photography, drama, and so on. From this element of development it can be seen that the film has a very strong relationship with literature in terms of story content. Therefore, basically analyzing stories in films can also utilize literary approaches, both intrinsically and extrinsically (Sari, 2013).

Film and literature are two works of art that have many similarities, for example elements of storytelling and language. So with the basic characteristics of the two works of art, namely the fictional, aesthetic and narrative characteristics. As a narrative work, film and literature have elements of character, plot, setting, theme, and message. The same narrative elements of film and literature, one of its strengths lies in fictitious characteristics. If the fictional power of literature lies in verbal language, then the power of film lies in the language of images.

 OPEN ACCESS

Film *The Hunger Games* tells about a game The Hunger Games, which was followed by a pair of young people aged between 12-18 years and selected from 12 districts in Panem. The competition has been held for 74 years in a row. The purpose of this competition is to strengthen relations between the districts, while at the same time refreshing the memories of those killed due to rebellions in the districts and reminding the entire population how powerful the Panem government led by President Snow.

The main characters in the film *The Hunger Games* are Katniss and Peeta. These two characters are central in the film's story. Meanwhile, according to the writer, the problem is the role of the two figures who are not in accordance with their respective gender. In other words, gender is attached to and influences the appearance of each person so that later what will appear is different from the original gender. Katniss can front like a guy and Peeta can also look as a girl in the broadest sense is the nature and behavior of the two characters.

The author personally, interested in analyzing the film *The Hunger Games*, this film by Suzzane Collins seems to want to show that the role and nature or behavior of a person can change according to current needs, so the writer will use analysis using Gender theory.

## 1.1. Problem Formulation

From the background above, the writer can formulate a problem, namely how the form of gender in the film *The Hunger Games*?

## 1.2. Scope of Research

Scope of research requires a limitation in research, so the authors limit research by focusing on the formulation of the problem. The object of the research is the film *The Hunger Games*, which includes a representation of gender. The film contains elements that are different from gender which is a social elaboration and biological characteristics of the main character.

The method used is qualitative. The purpose of the qualitative method is so that the writer can get to know the in-depth history of the research environment by using this type of descriptive research, in the sense that the researcher tries to find evidence experienced in formal or analytic reasoning.

## 2. Gender Theory

In this study also used gender theory. The word gender comes from English which means gender. According to Tong (2006: 55), gender is defined as a visible difference between men and women in terms of values and behavior. Meanwhile, according to Butler (1990: 87), gender is a cultural concept that refers to the characteristics that distinguish between men and women both biologically, behaviorally, mentally, and socially culturally. Gender is a rule or norm of behavior related to gender in a community system, because gender is often identified with gender or sex.

According to Abdullah (1997: 7-9), gender (separator) is a trait inherent in men and women that is formed, socialized, strengthened, even constructed socially or culturally, through religious teachings and the State system. Meanwhile, according to Waryono (2005), gender is a social difference between men and women whose emphasis is on behavior, their respective role functions are determined by the habits of the society in which he is located or the concepts used to identify male and female differences are seen from social and cultural aspects.

It can be concluded that gender is a condition or construction that separates men and women both intentionally or unintentionally, or in other words that gender is something that can be exchanged, meaning that as long as men use or do what is usually used or done by women, and vice versa, without causing problems, such things are reasonable to be left alone and there is no need to look for the problem. That kind of is a generic form of equality from humans that human women or men are also able to use and do that they are not used to do.

Generally what happens in the community is that there is injustice (bias) between men and women, and it has been constructed since the prospective baby was born in this world, at the beginning of this paper, it has been explained about the concept of naming children, male or female, it needs to be emphasized again that men and women are we, we, religion and the construction of (social) society which divides human beings into two titles where it is beneficial to one side, and one party is disadvantaged. Like a wife who becomes housekeeper, and husband as family leader. Here it becomes like there is power under power, impressed by the position of the husband as superior, and intri to be inferior who is subject to superior (Sigihastuti, 2010).

Some gender classifications according to Sugihastuti (2010) are as follows:

1. Gender attributes are biological accessories that distinguish between male babies and newborn babies, men have genitals called penises, while women have genitals called vagina (clitoris).

2. Gender identity is a specificity inherent in children based on sex, for example: generally a boy tends to use roles that make a hard job such as a driver, such as using trucks, and women wear clothes that are pink, motivated flowers and using doll toys.
3. Gender burden is the role and cultural values attached to gender, for example; men are conceptualized as someone who will take care of economic problems, women are more pressed on a prospective housewife.
4. Gender roles are social roles that are determined by gender differences, men tend to be superior, women tend to be inferior.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. The emergence of Gender in The Hunger Games

Film *The Hunger Games* has a gender element in the two main characters in the film: Katniss and Peeta. Katniss and Peeta are residents of district 12, which is the last of all districts in the capital Capitol. District residents must continue to attend games organized by President Snow, the President of the Capitol.

Katniss is a woman with a knack for archery, when she lived in the 12th district she became a very feminine woman she also had a lover named Gale. They are both happy lovers. Katniss is a woman of good character and of good character.

Peeta is a man of good character and likes to help the neighboring sesame of the district. 12. Peeta is a figure of men who has a good ideology of life in the community. It is evident how much he was loved in the 12th district. Peeta is also a figure of a man with a soft heart. Her life in the 12 Peeta district often helped her parents work.

Here the author will elaborate on the emergence of the gender of the main character Katniss who has many masculine traits in the movie *The Hunger Games*. Katniss shows several scenes in the film that show that she has that masculine trait and intentionally allows her to grow up in Katniss, as follows:

1. Katniss often wears pants throughout her day, though she sometimes wears skirts in her pajamas. It proves that Katniss also has a masculine trait because the pants are usually identical and the men's jeans and vice versa with the skirt.
2. Katniss is a very masculine woman who is good at using arrows and is good at shooting games.

3. Katniss at the Capitol showed a lot about her masculine side as she wore her day-to-day pants.
4. Katniss turns masculine when she has to practice fighting in the Capitol. We actually know that fighting is identical to men.
5. Katniss also shows the masculine side when there is a scene where she is not observed in archery during the skill test, so she shows the power by arming an apple towards the banquet of guests present at the event.
6. The masculine side also appeared when Katniss dared to dress in a fiery fire.
7. Katniss dares to even threaten Peeta when Peeta suddenly says she likes Katniss. Katniss has no fear of anyone, it proves the masculine side of Katniss is very dominant.
8. Katniss dares to fight Cato who is a strong man.

Katniss has a lot to show off the masculine nature and character in The Hunger Games because Katniss dominates the game. Katniss's masculine character is an accidental one due to the need to win a game. Meanwhile, Katniss's masculine trait is when she is good at archery that she has learned since living in the 12th district.

Peeta also has feminine qualities in her. In contrast to Katniss with many masculine traits, Peeta has only a few feminine qualities. The following authors describe:

1. The Feminine side that appeared on Peeta was when Katniss told her about her life. Peeta carefully listens to all of Katniss's stories. The portrayal is proof that Peeta also has a soft and delicate side to her feminine nature.
2. Peeta shows her feminine side as she lives in the 12th district with her daily helping to make a cake in her mother's kitchen that should be a woman's job.
3. Peeta treats Katniss who is sick because of the poisonous bee sting with the love and gentle touch of a man a woman should.
4. Peeta shows his feminine side when he is attacked by his opponent, causing him to become helpless and eventually catches Katniss. Peeta demonstrates his dominance over Katniss.

Peeta does not show much feminism in herself as it seems Peeta strives to maintain her ideology and image as a man who protects women. Peeta has more to show for his masculine nature which is what he has to play in his life.

The above explanation is an impression that a Katniss also has a masculine nature and Peeta has a phenomenal nature. It can be said that in fact, each person has different masculine and feminine traits of varying degrees of usefulness, so each person will be different in presenting the masculine and feminine side of his life experience.

## 4. Conclusion

Film *The Hunger Games* contains and represents the gender elements in the story. The main characters Katniss and Peeta give a gendered portrayal of the storyline. Katniss shows more of her masculine nature in several scenes, while Peeta shows less of her feminine character in the story. This behavior was borne out by the compulsion of Katniss and Peeta to participate in game The Hunggar Games involving 12 districts.

## References

- [1] Abdullah, I. (1997). *Sangkan Peran Gender*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar dan Pusat Penelitian Kependudukan.
- [2] Butler, J. P. (1990). *Gender Trouble (Feminism and the Subversion of Identity)*. New York: United States of America.
- [3] Sari, D. N. (2013). *Definisi dan Pengertian Film*. Semarang: Undip Press.
- [4] Sugihastuti, I. H. S. (2010). *Gender dan Inverioritas Perempuan: Praktek Kritik Sastra Feminis*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- [5] Tong, R. P. (2006). *Feminist Thought (diterjemahkan oleh Aquarini Priyatna Prabasmoro)*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- [6] Trianto, T. (2013). *Sejarah dan Pengertian Film sebagai Kekayaan Karya Sastra*. Jakarta: Kencana 1 Prenada Media Group.
- [7] Waryono, A. G. (2005). *Tafsir Sosial Mendialogkan Teks dengan Konteks*. Yogyakarta: eL-SAQ.