

**WOMEN'S STRUGGLE TO GET EQUAL PAY IN
NIGEL COLE'S *MADE IN DAGENHAM* (2010):
A FEMINIST APPROACH**



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AMBARI TRI HASTUTI

A. 320 080 116

**SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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NIM : A 320 080 116

Fakultas/Jurusan : FKIP/ Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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Pembimbing I

Pembimbing II

Drs. Abdillah Nugroho, M. Hum

NIP/NIK 589

Titis Setyabudi, SS. M. Hum

NIP/NIK 948

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Ambari Tri Hastuti

Abdillah Nugroho

Titis Setyabudi

Department of English Education, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

ABSTRACT

*The main problem of this study is how the women's struggle to get equal pay is reflected in Nigel Cole's *Made in Dagenham* movie. The objective of this study is to analyze *Made in Dagenham* directed by Nigel Cole based on the structural elements of the movie and to describe women's struggle to get equal pay in Nigel Cole's *Made in Dagenham* based on feminist approach. In analyzing *Made in Dagenham* movie, the researcher uses qualitative method and feminist approach. The object of the study is *Made in Dagenham* movie directed by Nigel Cole. The data sources consist of primary data and secondary data sources. The primary data sources is *Made in Dagenham* movie itself and the secondary data sources are taken from literary books, article that has relation with the movie and other sources which support the analysis. The technique of the data collection is library research. The technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis. The outcome of the study is shown in the following conclusions. First, from the structural analyzing of *Made in Dagenham* movie shows that Nigel Cole makes the elaboration of the structural analysis in good unity. Second, based on the feminist approach, *Made in Dagenham* movie contains many facts that are revealed by Nigel Cole reflecting women's position, women's role, women's right and women's participation. Nigel Cole wants to express that women workers face gender discrimination on their job. So that the women do the strike as their struggle to get the equal pay.*

Key Words: struggle, women, equal pay and feminism.

A. Introduction

In the social life, the fate of women still concerns, because the women are shackled by discrimination. In the economic aspect, men are the majority. Besides, women earn less than the men. Therefore, many of women struggle to get equal payment to the men. *Made in Dagenham* is the real example of women's struggle to get equal pay. The movie was released in 2010. This movie shows Rita O'Grady leads the Ford sewing machinists strike at the Ford Dagenham plant in 1968, where female workers walk out in protest against sexual discrimination, demanding equal pay. The strike is successful and leads to the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

The writer is interested in analyzing *Made in Dagenham* movie because of some reasons. The first reason is because the story of the movie is based on true story and a great illustration of social history. The second reason is this movie reflects women's struggle to get equal pay to the men. The movie tells about the position and conditions of the underpaid women machinists in the Ford Dagenham.

Based on the previous reasons, the writer observed the *Made in Dagenham* movie by using feminist approach. Therefore, the writer constructs the title, "*Women's Struggle to Get Equal Pay in Nigel Cole's Made in Dagenham (2010): A Feminist Approach*".

B. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In analyzing Nigel Cole's *Made in Dagenham*, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *Made in Dagenham* movie directed by Nigel Cole. It is analyzed by using feminist approach

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

There are two sources of data namely primary and secondary data sources.

a. Primary data source

The primary data source is *Made in Dagenham* movie directed by Nigel Cole. The dialogues, character's description, plot, and all of the statements related to the problem become the data.

b. Secondary data Source

The secondary data are taken from literary books, article that has relation with the movie and other sources which support the analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The data collecting technique used in this study is the library research.

The necessary steps are as follows:

a. Watching the movie several times.

b. Identifying the problem and to find the data.

- c. Collecting some supporting data from other references related to the topic.
- d. Drawing the conclusion of the analysis.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. The writer makes some interpretations of the movie dealing with the major character which researcher wants to analyze using a feminist approach.

C. Research Finding and Discussion

1. Feminist Analysis

a. Women's Position

Nigel Cole's *Made in Dagenham*, seems to show that women's position is still under the men. It can be seen in this movie that the women who are working in the factory which is dominated by the men are labeled with "unskilled" just because they are women.

Rita: We're on the lowest rate in the whole factory despite the fact we've got considerable skill. And there's only one possible reason for that. It's because we're women. Yeah. And in the workplace, women get paid less no matter what skill they got. (MID script, 00:43:16)

Besides the women who work in the Ford factory, there is Lisa Hopkins, the smart and beautiful wife of Ford's managing director who gets gender discrimination by her husband at home.

Lisa: I'm Lisa Burnett, I'm 31 years old. I have a first-class honors degree from one of the finest universities in the

world. And my husband treats me like I'm a fool. (MID script, 01:20:09)

With the struggle of the women workers and helped by Barbara Castle, the women workers finally get what they want and they are back to work.

Barbara: I am delighted to announce that following our talks this afternoon, the 187 Ford machinists will be going back to work on the first of July. They will receive an immediate pay rise of 7 pence an hour. Which will put them at 92 percent of the male rate. However... However, this is not all. As a result of our discussion, I can confirm that the government is in full support of the creation of an Equal Pay Act. And by the autumn of this year, I guarantee appropriate legislation to ensure that that act becomes law. Thank you. (MID script, 01:45:18)

b. Women's Role

In *Made in Dagenham*, Rita O'Grady has role as mother and a wife. Besides, she is also working at Ford as the sewer of seats for car. But, Rita and the other women worker face the gender discrimination and they get nethermost and unworthy workplace. Besides, there is a woman named Connie. She has role as woman worker and wife. Moreover, her role is as the sister for her husband, George who gets trauma when he became battler at war. So that Connie has to take care of him and also work to fulfill the needs of her and her husband.

Connie: George is ill, Rita. You know that. I'm not his wife anymore. I'm more like his sister or his... But I'm his. (MID script, 01:03:20)

There is also Lisa, a wife of Peter Hopkins. She is very smart and moreover she is a first-class honors degree from one of the finest universities in the world but she is always treated like a fool by her husband. She is just having role as a wife and a mother at home in fact she has first-class honors degree.

Lisa: I'm Lisa Burnett, I'm 31 years old. I have a first-class honors degree from one of the finest universities in the world. And my husband treats me like I'm a fool. (MID script, 01:20:09)

Furthermore, they agree to do the strike in order to their management give them fairness and equal payment to the men.

Rita: This strike is about one thing.....Fairness!!Equal pay or nothing!!(MID script, 00:43:30)

c. Women's Right

In *Made in Dageham*, Rita and the other women workers do not get the equal rights to the men. As women workers, they lose their right to get the worthy workplace whereas they have sent the complaint to fix their workplace. When raining, the women have to use pail to hold water from the leaky roof and some of them cover themselves with umbrella.

Brenda: Here it comes. Oh, no. Look at that. We might as well not have a roof. How many times have we asked to fix this? It's not difficult, is it? (MID script, 00:13:58)



Figure 1. A woman place a pail to hold water.



Figure 2. Connie is using umbrella to cover herself from water droplets.

Besides, the women workers lose their right because their payment is not the same as a men. In fact, they have a skill to do their work but their bosses rate them as unskilled workers and they proper get lowest pay. So that the women workers demand their rights to get the equal pay.

Rita: We're on the lowest rate in the whole factory despite the fact we've got considerable skill. And there's only one possible reason for that. It's because we're women. Yeah. And in the workplace, women get paid less no matter what skill they got. Which is why, from now on, we gotta demand a level playing field and rates of pay which reflect the job, not whether you've got a dick or not. (MID script, 00:43:16)

d. Women's Participation

In *Made in Dagenham* movie, the participation of the women workers is not appreciated by their bosses. They get the lowest pay and they get the unworthy workplace. Their complaints is always ignored by their bosses.

Albert: Now, the deadline we set the management to respond to our complaint about how they've regraded you unskilled has now passed. (MID script, 00:04:43)

The women workers think that they should be equal to men so that they demand the same participation as the men workers. They have some struggles in order that their participation as women workers are listened and appreciated by their bosses such as doing the strike, demonstrating, and asking for help to Barbara as Employment Secretary in the Labour Government. But their struggle is not easy, they get pressure not just from their bosses but also the men workers.

A monologue: Ford's Dagenham. The plant is mainly idle. With thousands laid off, strike bound, and production barely ticking over, millions of vital pounds being lost in export orders. And until there's an answer to the rift between management and Ford's machinists, the factory gates will remain closed indefinitely to the entire work force. (MID script, 00:53:50)

The American Ford boss is very angry when he knows that the Ford factory in England is closed so that he asks an executive to stop the participation of women workers. He does not want the women workers to get

what they want because if they get what they want, the other women workers across the world will do the same thing.

American Boss: If this woman gets what she wants we'll end up having to do it right across the world. Do you understand that?

Robert Tooley: Yes, sir. I do.

American Boss: Good. So deal with it!!!(MID script, 00:57:31)

All of those efforts to stop the women workers does not work. The women workers keep on going with their struggle until at the end, they finally get what they want, equal pay. Moreover, because of their participation, government decided the Equal Pay Act becomes law and similar legislation quickly followed in most industrial countries across the world.

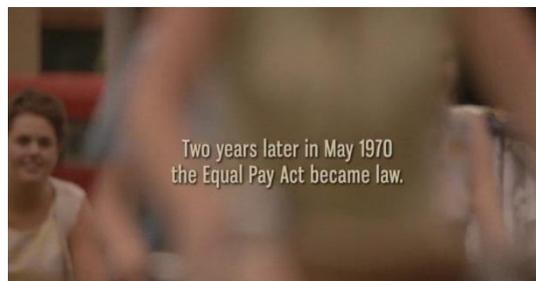


Figure 3. The scene that shows the Equal Pay Act become law.



Figure 4. The scene that shows the law is applied across the world.

2. Discussion

Based on the previous structural analysis, the next step to complete this study is relating the whole element to one another and return into entity. The correlation among the structural element of the movie enables the audience to understand the message of the story. It is clear that in this movie, Nigel Cole would like to deliver the message through this movie. *First*, each expertise in work must be worthy appreciated and rewarded without look the gender. *Second*, this movie gives the inspiration and motivation to do the best and never give up before the struggle is reached

The analysis of the women's condition in position, role, right, and participation above shows that every classification of those gives an important part in building the women's struggle. In this movie, Nigel Cole is going to show the time when women do not get the same level with the men, how women face the gender discrimination, and how the struggle of the women workers to get the equal pay is.

D. Conclusion

1. Conclusion

The writer presents two conclusions that relate to the results of the analysis. It is drawn as follows:

First, from the structural analyzing of *Made in Dagenham* movie shows that Nigel Cole makes the elaboration of the structural analysis in good unity.

The unity of the characters, plot, point of view, and style are related to build the theme of the movie that is “injustice towards workers women will always result resistance.”

Second, based on the feminist approach, *Made in Dagenham* movie contains many facts that are revealed by Nigel Cole reflecting women’s position, women’s role, women’s right and women’s participation. Nigel Cole wants to express that women workers face gender discrimination on their job. So that the women do the strike as their struggle to get the equal pay.

2. Suggestion

Made in Dagenham movie is an interesting literary work. This movie is directed by Nigel Cole and launched in 2010. The researcher suggests to the other researcher to conduct research in this movie because *Made in Dagenham* movie is a good movie. There are many approaches that can be used to analysis *Made in Dagenham* movie besides using feminist approach. The writer suggests to other writers to make deeper researches about *Made in Dagenham* movie with feminist approach but with different issues and with other approaches such as Women Movement in Nigel Cole’s *Made in Dagenham* Movie (2010): A Sociological Approach or Rita’s Struggle for Fairness in *Made in Dagenham* Movie (2010) Directed by Nigel Cole: an Individual Psychological Approach. The researcher also expects this research can give influence in English education especially to enrich the knowledge in literature side.

3. Pedagogical Implication

The pedagogical implication of this study is that do not ever give up easily before what we want is reached even though there are many obstacles because every problem there will be solution. So that it needs struggle and great spirit to reach what we want. This study can be taken as teaching material for students, especially the values related to struggle and effort to get same right.

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