

**GENDER-BASED PERSPECTIVE ON THE SADISTIC
SCENES IN SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON'S *FIFTY SHADES OF
GREY*: READER RESPONSE THEORY**



**Submitted to the Department of Language Studies Graduate School of
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GRADUATE SCHOOL
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA**

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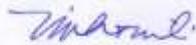
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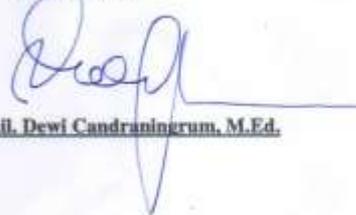
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Has been examined by the board of examiners on January 30th 2019. All feedback, correction, and suggestions recommended by the examiners have been considered and revision has been accordingly made by the students.

The board of examiners certifies that the thesis is eligible for submission.

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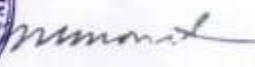
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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby stated wholeheartedly that the Publication Article entitled “*Gender-Based Perspective on The Sadistic Scenes in Sam Taylor-Johnson’s Fifty Shades of Grey: Reader Response Theory*” is an original and authentic work written by myself and it has satisfied the rules and regulations of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta with respect to plagiarism. Everything which is written in this thesis related to others works are written in manuscript and mentioned in the literary review and bibliography.

If it is then proved that I cheat, I will hold fully responsible.

Surakarta, 21 Januari 2019

The Researcher

A 6000 Rupiah postage stamp from Indonesia, featuring a green and yellow design with a central emblem. The stamp is partially obscured by a handwritten signature in black ink.

Kartika Candra Dewi

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GENDER-BASED PERSPECTIVE ON THE SADISTIC SCENES IN SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON'S *FIFTY SHADES OF GREY*: READER RESPONSE THEORY

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tanggapan responden terhadap film *Fifty Shades of Grey* karya E.L. James, yang dianalisis dengan menggunakan teori *Reader Response* dari Richard Beach. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan tujuan untuk mengetahui: 1) bagaimana pandangan responden terhadap film *Fifty Shades of Grey* 2) perbedaan pandangan responden mengenai film *Fifty Shades of Grey* berdasarkan perbedaan jenis kelamin 3) pandangan responden terhadap film *Fifty Shades of Grey* berdasarkan perbedaan hubungan pernikahan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif. Data dari penelitian ini terdiri dari dua macam yaitu data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer berupa pandangan penonton terhadap film *Fifty Shades of Grey*, yang berupa kuesioner dan terdiri dari beberapa pertanyaan mengenai film tersebut. Sedangkan data sekunder diperoleh dari sumber lainnya seperti buku-buku sastra, penelitian penelitian terdahulu, jurnal, artikel, internet, dan lain sebagainya. Teknik pengumpulan data dengan cara analisis dokumen. Hasil dari penelitian ini ditemukan adanya perbedaan pandangan responden dikarenakan perbedaan status perkawinan dan jenis kelamin.

Kata Kunci: *Fifty Shades of Grey*, Readers' Response

Abstract

This research aims to determine the readers' response to the *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E.L James which is analyzed with Reader Response theory by Richard beach. This research was conducted to identify the readers' response to: 1) how are the responses of the audiences towards *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie 2) how is the response of the reviewer based on different gender background 3) how is the response of the viewer based on the different marital status background. This research used qualitative research methods. The data of this research consists of two kinds, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is readers' reviews by using questioner towards *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie. While the secondary data obtained from other sources such as literary books, previous studies, journals, articles, internet, and others related to the study. The technique of collecting data is using document analysis. The result of this research shows that there are different views about *Fifty Shades of Grey* caused by the different backgrounds of the reviewers.

Keywords: *Fifty Shades of Grey*, Readers' Response

1. INTRODUCTION

Fifty Shades of Grey has become one of the most controversial novels by E.L James, which has attracted world attention because this novel shows many deviant sexual scenes and seems very erotic. There are several reasons why the researcher chooses to analyze *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie. First, *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie is an interesting movie because it has become the world attention. Second, the conflict of this story illustrates an unusual sexual disorder that occurs in a relationship. The researcher argues that the existence of stories is possibility that at present, there is a considerable amount of deviant sexual behavior so; this is an interesting thing to know by the public. Third, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is a controversial film and the writer wants to know how the audience responds to this movie.

Research on this *Fifty Shades of Grey* can be grouped into five. The research is done by Permata Sari, (2016); Yuvinda (2017), both researchers are using psychoanalytic approach in order to analyzed Fifty Shades Trilogy. The researcher based on the linguistics theory is conducted by the varied researcher. Effendi, (2017); Rohmah, (2015); Permatasari, (2015); Friska, (2016); Fahrati, (2016). The other study is used feminism theory. It discussed by Jarijie, (2016); Laak, (2017). There are some researchers which interesting in structural analysis, they are; Dewi, (2015); Bilyarta,(2014); Sunarto, (2015); Lestari, (2018). The researcher based on the psychological approach is Fanani,(2013). Pollit, (2013) the researcher focuses on the way Ana explores her sexual desires and the way she does in dealing with Grey's deviant behavior. Quale from Minnesota State University in her thesis the author was concerned about the evolution of the novel especially in *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel and she tested the novel for the evolution of the current romance genre. Brockerhoff, (2015) argue that this book is more appropriate to be called Fifty Shades of Red because it describes a red flag from a love relationship that should not occur. Amanda, (2013), the research shows Amanda's disinterest toward the *Fifty Shades of Grey* book. Waspada, (2016) here, the resesarcher using case study theory. Ridhanty, (2017) focus on the representation of patriarchy in Christian Grey as the main character.

Previous studies indicated that they focused on the psychoanalytic theory, linguistics theory, feminism theory, and structural elements of the movie. The researcher find the gap between previous research with current research. The previous researches are only focus on the text of the novel while, reader is the main component in the literary work, but until now there are no researches that discuss the readers' response. Departing from the readers' response, the researcher focused the readers' response in this movie. From the explanation above, current research is different with the previous research. The current research focused on the response of the reader after they watch *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie. And also, the use of theory is reader response theory. The previous research has never conducted about reader response theory. To give novelty to the research on the *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie, this study will analyze the response of the reviewer.

Reader response is one of the theories of literature which is focused on the reader experiences about literary work. According to Tompkins (1930: 9) reader response theory is a term which associated with a work of critics which use reader to give their response in order to investigate the literary work. In Davis (2001: 51) the readers usually express their response based on what they read and explore the meaning of the text they read. (Beach, 1993) says that the response of the readers are usually based on the emotion what they feels about, when facing the text in order to understanding the literary work.

Beach differentiates reader response into five perspectives. They are textual perspective that focused on the reader's knowledge to interpret meaning of literary work. The interpretation is primarily directed by the text or work. Experiential reader response is focused on the reader experience when they create meaning of literary work. Psychological reader response is related with the text to our lives. It speaks with personally and makes the reader to better understand about phenomenon in everyday life. Social reader response focuses on the influence of the social context of the reader. And the last, cultural reader response towards to reader' attitudes and value shape their response draw on a range of different disciplinary perspective: poststructuralist, feminist, anthropological, historical, and Marxist.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of this research is qualitative research. There are two types of data sources which are needed to conduct this research namely; primary data sources and secondary data sources. The primary data source is contains of readers review of *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie. The researcher give some open questioner for the viewers, the questioner are consist of eight questions about *Fifty Shades of Grey* movie. The secondary data obtained from other sources such as literary books, previous studies, journals, articles, internet, and others related to the study. The technique of data collection in this study is using library research. It was done by collecting and selecting both of primary and secondary data source which is compatible with the problem statement and objectives of the study. The technique used in analyzing the data is qualitative analysis that consists of three phases namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 11).

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Findings

In this part contains of analysis data by respondents which has different background. Reviews perception about the Story, Female Character, Acting, The Scene, and the Norm. Gender and marital status background have not led to any differences to the perspective on the story of this movie.

3.1.1. The Story

Respondents agree that *Fifty Shades of Grey* is an interesting movie. By raising a theme which is out of the box and anti-mainstream, this movie successfully amazes the audiences and makes them curious with its further scenes. Moreover, its unpredictable scenes make the audience even more curious to this movie. The respondents believe that this movie are so interesting, it can be proven by this data:

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Interesting	Interesting
	Unmarried	Interesting	Interesting

3.1.2. Female Character

Respondents are also argue that female character of this movie is a person who does not have stance in this movie. the respondents believes that Ana should not be stuck by Christian Grey and make her become connoisseur of BDSM. According to Jarjawi (2006, p.371) women have unstable decisions and tend to have a weak desire in the various problems that they face. This is appropriate with the views of the respondents who consider that Ana tend to be unstable and do not have stance in this movie.

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	She does not have a principal	Labile
	Unmarried	She does not have principal	She is easily influenced and flirted

3.1.3. The Acting

The acting which has been done by both main actor and actress successfully attracts the audiences. They believe that the Jamie Dornan’ and Dakota Johnson’s acting talent can really present the roles that they are playing. Acting is an art which is used to create a feeling and express in an artistic way. To create a “world” artistically, an actor needs to train his whole body and vocal to be able to feel the role he plays. It can be seen in the following quotation:

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Good	Good
	Unmarried	The acting suits the character	Good acting

3.1.4. The Scene

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Uncommon sexual activities	Dangerous sexual activity
	Unmarried	Uncommon sexual activity	Uncommon sexual activity

From the table above, the respondents argue that the sexual activity reflected in the movie *Fifty Shades of Grey* is an uncommon sexual activity in which this involves the acts of violence and hurting the partner. In this case, the sexual activity done with violence is a form of uncommon sexual activity or even a sexual disorder.

3.1.5. The Norm

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	With affection / love	With affection / love
	Unmarried	On the basis of love	On the basis of love

Based on the data on the table, the respondents think that sexual activity is supposed to be done on the basis of love and with affection. It is also supposed to satisfy each other's needs but without hurting each other, psychologically and physically. A sexual activity is supposed to be done to satisfy each other in which they have to understand each other's preferences.

3.2. Reviews Perception about the Story and the Male Character.

According to the responses of the audiences towards the film *Fifty Shades of Grey*, there has been a relationship between gender backgrounds. The gender background has led to different views, there are; males tend to pay more attention towards the sexual side while females judge that human-beings need not only sex but also a true love. In terms of judging the character of Grey, male respondents considered

that Grey is a man who has a sexual disorder while female respondents tend to view his financial abilities.

3.2.1. The Story

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Showing sexual behavior which includes violence in it	Human-beings need a whole love, not only a sex.
	Unmarr	Unnatural sexual activity	Based on love not because of the frequent of having sex

According to the data, it could be concluded that male respondents of this research assume that its story educates the audiences by displaying sexual fantasies which include an idea of violence or in this movies, it is Bondage Discipline Sadism and Masochism (henceforth BDSM). By watching this movie, they realise that there are various ways of having sex, hence, they tend to be entertained and a way more curious to the further scenes. Meanwhile female respondents believe that its unrealistic that this movie only focuses on the physical, material and sexual attraction. However, they believe that the actor should care to the way of thinking, life experience, and the way of understanding the partner without proofing it with the sex activity. They do really think that the story is not compatible to the real life in which human-beings need a real love, not merely the sex.

3.2.2. Male Character

	Gender	
	Male	Female

Marital Status	Married	Sex disorders because of his experience	A young successful businessman
	Unmarried	Someone who is up normal/ different Childhood Trauma	Settled, hardworking, charismatic

From the table above, we can understand that male respondents' tend to view Grey in a positive way. They believe that his sex disorder is quite normal, especially after what he has experienced. Meanwhile, female respondents agree that Christian Grey is a successful young businessman. He is not only rich but also a handsome man who can attract women. In addition, he is smart enough to run his business. Eventually, he is a perfect man for most of women.

3.2.3. Reviews Perception about Sexual Violence.

Based on the respondents, doing a sexual activity which includes a harassment will only gain a wrong sexual satisfaction. They view that a sexual activity which includes pain is a form of sexual disorder which could not be tolerated. There are many things which should be considered in doing sex activity which includes harassment because this might cause a trauma. Moreover, this might give a bad effect psychologically. Other than that, this is a sexual disorder which might cause any dangers to the partner.

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Can be done	Can be done

	Unmarried	Disagree	Disagree
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In this study, some different perspectives between married and unmarried respondents have been found. The married respondents tend to be more receptive to the sexual disorders performed by characters in the *Fifty Shades of Grey*. They assume that the sexual activities done by the two characters in the movie is acceptable since every person has different sexual desires.

Meanwhile, the unmarried respondents tend to be rigid and judge that sexual activity which includes violence is something that should not be done because it could affect the mental and psychological aspects of the partner.

3.2. Discussion

The findings imply that there is different point of views between two genders, male and female. Other than that, their marital status also shows how they have different perspectives toward *Fifty Shades of Grey*. The male tends to see the sexual side compared to other sides. As what Kartono (2006) explains that one of the male's characteristics is that they are more open to sexual desire, i.e. having sexual erotic fantasy which is more aggressive, experiencing orgasm as well as knowing how to use their sex organs. These are different to female's characteristics, such as having doubt within themselves, unstable emotion, inner conflict, a feeling to sacrifice everything for a person they love. This is proven by the data collected from male respondents that shows how they tend to judge their own interests towards *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Their interest comes from the sex scenes showed in the movie, i.e. various sex fantasies which are performed by the main actor whose sex disorder. Moreover, he plays his role successfully so that they are attracted to keep watching the movie. In

the meantime, the female respondents view that human-beings should not only need sex but also the real love.

Male respondents stated that Christian Grey is a man whose sexual disorder. They view that this is a normal case because he has a trauma from his childhood sexual life. This happened when his mother's friend did a sexual harassment to him in his childhood for a long period of time. This matches to what Magdalena (2010, p.33) states that the teenagers who tend to do inappropriate sexual activities are triggered by their past life in which they might be a victim of any sexual harassments. In this case, they are triggered to do inappropriate sexual activities which eventually to have a sexual addiction.

In this case, female respondents tend to view that Grey is a rich young businessman. This implies that they tend to be materialistic in which according to Belk (1985), materialism is a part of characteristics in every individual, and hence, this is normal that women have this characteristic. In addition, according to Richins and Dawson (1992), materialism is an achievement of the life perfection which is based on the sense of material belonging.

The acting which has been done by both main actor and actress successfully attracts the audiences. They believe that the Jamie Dornan' and Dakota Johnson's acting talent can really present the roles that they are playing. Acting is an art which is used to create a feeling and express in an artistic way. To create a "world" artistically, an actor needs to train his whole body and vocal to be able to feel the role he plays. According to Saptaria (2006, p.5), in the art of acting, the appreciation towards the role which the actor plays is an absolute. An actor should be able to appreciate and born a role that has been created for him inside the art of acting bubble.

The respondents view that the sexual scenes pictured in the movie are a form of the sexual disorder which is called paraphilia. This is a strong desire to achieve a sexual satisfaction by building an interest and stimulating the sex organs between the adults without any force. However,

this might cause harassment to the partner which simultaneously could risk themselves.

According to American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, paraphilia is a sadomasochism in which a way to get a sexual satisfaction by hurting the partner (sadistic), or by having a sexual pain (masochist). This is supported by the respondents' perspectives that the whole sexual activity which has been done by Grey and Ana is a form of sadomasochism since they use pain as a media to achieve the sexual satisfaction.

Rubin (1970) stated that a sexual activity should be done based on love. Love is a feeling which is much deeper and stronger, i.e. a desire to stay with a person who we really like. Someone who likes someone else will be happy by only being together with her/ him.

Love is a desire to accept a physical and psychological contact from the beloved one. This could be explained by the intimacy and togetherness as well as a share between the partner's desire and feeling.

According to Elaine Hatfield, love is based on a feeling and attitude which include respect, appreciation, attachment, and trust. This could be grown by the feelings from two lovers who care and respect one another.

Based on the previous description, with the existence of love, this might build a respect and appreciation. Furthermore, a sexual activity which is based on love will not raise any harassment to achieve the sexual satisfaction. Basically, a sexual activity should consider the enjoyment and satisfaction for both sides which finally this could raise a comfort for both.

Based on the respondents, doing a sexual activity which includes a harassment will only gain a wrong sexual satisfaction. They view that a sexual activity which includes pain is a form of sexual disorder which could not be tolerated. There are many things which should be considered in doing sex activity which includes harassment because this might cause a trauma. Moreover, this might give a bad effect psychologically. Other than that, this is a sexual disorder which might cause any dangers to the partner.

Nurhayati (2000) said that violence is basically a symptom, or any form of verbal and non-verbal behavior carried out by a person or group of people towards others. Hence, it could be having a negative effect on the physical, emotional, or psychological condition of the victim or target person. Sexual activities should be done with a balance of rights between men and women so that sexual activities could be enjoyed by both parties fairly and evenly.

In this study, some different perspectives between married and unmarried respondents have been found. The married respondents tend to be more receptive to the sexual disorders performed by characters in the *Fifty Shades of Grey*. They assume that the sexual activities done by the two characters in the movie is acceptable since every person has different sexual desires.

Meanwhile, the unmarried respondents tend to be rigid and judge that sexual activity which includes violence is something that should not be done because it could affect the mental and psychological aspects of the partner.

According to the responses of the audiences towards the film *Fifty Shades of Grey*, there has been a relationship between marital status and gender backgrounds. The gender background has led to different views, there are; males tend to pay more attention towards the sexual side while females judge that human-beings need not only sex but also a true love. In terms of judging the character of Grey, male respondents considered that Grey is a man who has a sexual disorder while female respondents tend to view his financial abilities.

Regarding to marital status background, this has led to different views that married respondents tend to be receptive towards sexual abnormalities performed by the characters in the movie. Meanwhile, the unmarried respondents tend to be rigid and judge that sexual activity with violence is something that should not be done.

However, the gender and marital status backgrounds have not led to any differences to the perspectives on the acting played by Jamie Dornan

and Dakota Johnson. Respondents consider that the acting played by the two characters in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* is very captivating and able to make the audience being lulled. Respondents also argue that sexual abnormalities happened to Grey is a sexual disorder called sadomasochism. In addition, the sexual activities should be done based on love and affection, not merely based on lust.

Finally, the audiences with different gender backgrounds (male and female) tend to give various perspectives in conveying their responses so that differences could be found. Meanwhile, the audiences with different marital status backgrounds (married and unmarried) tend to judge that sexual activities with violence could be done depending on how people are able to find satisfaction.

4. CONCLUSION

According to the responses of the audiences towards the film *Fifty Shades of Grey*, there has been a relationship between marital status and gender backgrounds. The gender background has led to different views, there are; males tend to pay more attention towards the sexual side while females judge that human-beings need not only sex but also a true love. In terms of judging the character of Grey, male respondents considered that Grey is a man who has a sexual disorder while female respondents tend to view his financial abilities.

Regarding to marital status background, this has led to different views that married respondents tend to be receptive towards sexual abnormalities performed by the characters in the movie. Meanwhile, the unmarried respondents tend to be rigid and judge that sexual activity with violence is something that should not be done.

However, the gender and marital status backgrounds have not led to any differences to the perspectives on the acting played by Jamie Dornan and Dakota Johnson. Respondents consider that the acting played by the two characters in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* is very captivating and able to make the audience being lulled. Respondents agree that female character of this movie is a person who does not have stance in this movie and they believes that Ana

should not be stuck by Christian Grey and make her become connoisseur of BDSM. Respondents also argue that sexual abnormalities happened to Grey is a sexual disorder called sadomasochism. In addition, the sexual activities should be done based on love and affection, not merely based on lust.

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