

AGAINST GENDER INEQUALITY IN ANDY FICKMAN'S *SHE'S THE MAN* MOVIE (2006): A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abstrak

She's the Man adalah film olahraga komedi romansa Amerika tahun 2006 yang disutradarai oleh Andy Fickman, terinspirasi dari drama William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*. Film *She's The Man* bercerita tentang seorang wanita bernama Viola Hasting yang mendapatkan perlakuan tidak adil dengan mengikuti pertandingan sepak bola karena menganggap wanita tidak sekuat pria. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi indikator ketidaksetaraan gender, mendeskripsikan bagaimana ketidaksetaraan gender digambarkan dalam film ini, dan mengungkap alasan ketidaksetaraan gender yang diangkat dalam film ini. Untuk mendukung pembahasan tesis ini, penulis mengumpulkan data dengan menggunakan teori perspektif feminis dari Rosemarie Tong, dan metode observasi. Sumber data primer diperoleh dari jurnal, website, dan naskah film *She's The Man*. Penelitian ini diakhiri dengan mengidentifikasi indikator ketidaksetaraan gender dalam film, mendeskripsikan ketidaksetaraan gender dalam film, dan memahami alasan sutradara membahas ketidaksetaraan gender dalam film.

Kata kunci: Ketidaksetaraan gender, Andy Fickman, Feminisme, *She's The Man*

Abstract

She's the Man is a 2006 American romantic comedy sports movie directed by Andy Fickman, inspired by William Shakespeare's play *Twelfth Night*. *She's The Man* movie tells the story of a woman named Viola Hasting who gets unfair treatment by participating in a soccer match because she thinks women are not as strong as men. The purpose of this study is to identify indicators of gender inequality, describe how gender inequality is depicted in this movie, and reveal the reasons for gender inequality being raised in this movie. To support the discussion of this thesis, the authors collect data using the theory of a feminist perspective from Rosemarie Tong, and the observation method. Primary data sources were obtained from journals, websites, and the film script of *She's The Man*. This study concludes by identifying indicators of gender inequality in the movie, describing gender inequality in the movie, and understanding the director's reasons for discussing gender inequality in the movie.

Keywords: Gender inequality, Andy Fickman, Feminism, *She's The Man*

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender refers to the assortment of traits that distinguish between femininity and masculinity. This could encompass gender identity and sex-based social structures (i.e., gender roles) depending on the situation. In most societies, gender is classified into two categories (boys/men and girls/women), and people are assumed to belong to one or the other. Those who do not fit into either of these categories may be referred to as non-binary. Some societies, such as the hijras of South Asia, have unique genders in addition to "man" and "woman"; they are sometimes referred

to as third genders (and fourth genders, and so on). The majority of scholars agree that gender is an important component of social structure.

According to Hannam (2007), “Feminism is a set of ideas that recognize explicitly in an explicit way that women are subordinate to men and seek to address imbalances of power between the sexes”. Furthermore, Tandon (2008:2) said that “Feminism includes women acting, speaking and writing on women’s issues and rights, identifying social injustice in the status quo and bringing their unique perspective to bear on issues”. It means feminism told about women’s movement in every sector where the unfair condition put women as the victim like social, politic, economy, and education.

She's the Man is a 2006 American romantic comedy sports movie directed by Andy Fickman. Inspired by William Shakespeare's play *Twelfth Night*. *She's The Man* movie tells about a woman named Viola Hasting. Even though she is a woman, it turns out that Viola Hasting is so good at playing soccer. She is a member of a women's soccer team. And one of Viola's biggest dreams is to become a professional soccer player. However, everything fell apart when the coach of the soccer team suddenly disbanded the women's soccer team. The coach reasoned that the women's soccer team had absolutely no fans in terms of spectators, so it couldn't be profitable. However, Viola did not despair. He will continue to fight to be able to compete. Viola plans to impersonate her brother at her sister's school at Illyria High School. He will try to beat his school team Cornwall High School, disguised as his brother. Viola trained hard at Illyria School for two weeks. After the match started, in mid-half Viola confessed that she was a woman posing as her brother. Then, the match continued, and at the end of the game, Viola managed to put the ball in the net with a penalty kick. Finally, the Illyria team won the match.

She's The Man movie shows that men always excel at almost everything and women have to work twice as hard to reach their level. This movie conveys the message of feminism which says that women should be able to work with men with equal treatment. Men have an easier life and they get what they want easily. Many scenes challenge traditional views of gender roles in society. The traditional view is based entirely on gender and not ability. Viola soon learns how to act like both a boy and a girl to achieve what she wants.

This movie reveals how women are treated lower than men, the world of sports is just one example. One of the problems that is often faced by every human being, especially women, is how to defend their rights and not let their male-dominated society define what it means to be a woman.

Women themselves are the ones who demonstrate their skills the most to establish who they are and the roles they will play in society. They must, above all, resist the patriarchal idea that women are less valuable than males. Therefore, everyone has the same possibilities and civil rights, and they must be permitted to exercise their freedom of choice without upsetting the public or the law, according to Anderson in Mandell (1995: 5).

Three things make this movie attractive to watch, thus the researcher decided to use it as an example of literary work analysis. The film's narrative can serve as motivation for women to stand up for their rights in society, which is the primary justification. In the *She's The Man* movie, a woman rejects the patriarchal society (soccer) to fit in with them (men). He had many disagreements as a guy, all of which were resolved amicably. He wants to demonstrate both his skills and his identity. He struggles to take control of his decisions and decide what to do without affecting the other person. Researchers also think of RA Kartini's fight for gender equality in society as they consider this issue. Women in Indonesia had no rights in terms of employment, education, hobbies, or other pursuits and were required to stay at home as long as imperialism persisted there. Well, as Viola struggled for her rights, women are now living on an equal footing with men thanks to Kartini's struggle. The second justification is that this movie is captivating and genuine; it closely resembles daily life. Finally, a big problem with *She's The Man* is gender inequality. The problem of gender discrimination that exists in society is brought up by Viola Hastings in this movie. The main character serves as a symbol of gender discrimination in the tale of this movie. For this reason, researchers adopt a feminist viewpoint. Viola's battle is a reflection of women's independence. So that it would alter the notion of women that they are weak and unable to do the same roles as men. And even when performing human labor, women may make a significant contribution to the planet, claims Viola. He also intended to shake women out of their denial that they are the inferior sex, that they can benefit from the same chances as men, and that they are free to express their skills and opinions. Based on these reasons, attracted researchers to analyze movies within the framework of a feminist perspective to be included in their research paper entitled *Against Gender Inequality in Andy Fickman's She's The Man movie (2006): Feminist Perspective*.

2. METHOD

This type of research is literary studies research. The gathering of data or content from academic sources (such as books, journal articles, and theses) that is pertinent to a subject or research

question is known as literary studies. The material object is *She's The Man* movie directed by Andy Fickman, and the formal object is gender inequality. The type of data uses dialogue text taken from the movie. Data sources will be classified into two categories, primary data sources, and secondary data sources. The primary data source will be taken from the movie itself *She's The Man* movie. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are taken from other data related to research, underlying theory, and other materials of concern for analysis, namely journals related to the movie, and the researcher used copy-paste or note-taking methods.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Indicators of gender inequality in *She's The Man* movie

The researcher found indicators of the causes of gender inequality *She's The Man* movie, they are 1) Limitation of women's rights participation; 2) Underestimating women's abilities; 3) Questioning of women's abilities. Gender inequality in this movie is found in several dialogues. Therefore, the research describes gender inequality as follows:

1) Limitation of women's rights to participation

Limitation of women's rights to participate means closing opportunities for women to be involved in society, both in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields. Women are entitled to human rights, including the right to live free from violence and discrimination, to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and the right to vote. Researchers found several derailed women's rights in this movie.

The following is a dialogue that contains one of the limitations of women's rights contained in this movie. This dialogue takes place on the pitch when Viola and the teams are going to practice soccer.

Viola's friend : "**The school cut our team. Not enough girls signed up.**"

Viola : "Wait, what?"

Viola's friend : "Not enough girls signed up."

Viola : "**So they just cut us?**"

Viola's friend (2) : "They can't do that." [00:03:46- 00:03:53]

The dialogue above shows that there is a limitation on the women team's that is implemented by the school. When the women team's walked to the pitch, Viola's friend

suddenly approached and gave bad news. Viola's friend received information that the school had stopped playing the women's soccer team, due to the lack of interest from the community, especially women to join the women's soccer team. The school simply dismissed the women's soccer team's without the women's team's approval, this shows gender inequality based on the limitation of women's rights.

Another example of this conversation showing the limitation of women's rights is when the women team's met the Cornwall Coach as the soccer coach at Cornwall High School. Viola reconfirmed the news to Coach.

Viola : "Now college scouts won't even get to see us play."

Cornwall Coach : "I know. If there's anything I can do, just say the word."

Viola : "Matter of fact, there is. We wanna try out for the boys team."

Cornwall Coach : "(**laugh**). **Anything besides that.**" [00:04:08 – 00:04:20]

After Viola and the team met with the Cornwall Coach, the Cornwall Coach was aware of this information and agreed to it. The Viola asked that they try against the men's team to show what they are capable of, but Cornwall Coach only responded with laughter and was unable to comply with her request. This is a form of limitation of women's rights and opportunities to participate in soccer matches conducted by the Cornwall Coach.

In the match between the Cornwall team and the Illyria team who have entered the second round. Before the second half of the match started, Viola invited all the players and coaches to gather on the pitch. And want to explain something.

Viola : "Everybody, I have something to tell you. I am not Sebastian. I am Viola (take off the wig). **The girl's team at Cornwall got cut. The guys wouldn't let me go out for their team.** So I've been pretending to be my brother while he was in London for the past two weeks. So I could make the team and beat Cornwall." [01:27:34]

Viola admits that she is a woman posing as Sebastian (her brother). She told the truth in front of everyone, that the women's soccer team in Cornwall was disbanded. however, Viola was not discouraged. She proves his worth by posing as her brother who attends Illyria High School. meanwhile, her brother went to London for two weeks. So, Viola takes advantage of the situation by impersonating her brother, then joins the Illyria team and defeats the Cornwall team.

Furthermore, another example of the limitation of women's rights carried out by the Cornwall Coach was that after everyone knew the truth that Viola was a woman posing as her brother, Cornwall Coach, and Coach Illyria argued on the pitch.

Cornwall Coach : "No! No playing! You have to forfeit. There's no girls in this league. Look in the manual."

Illyria Coach : "What manual? Listen, pal. You're in Illyria. We don't discriminate based on gender." [01:29:40 – 01:29:57]

The debate started when Cornwall Coach wanted the match to be over because there were women players. Cornwall Coach gave a manual to Illyria Coach, that there should be no women players in the manual. However, Coach Illyria tears up the manual, saying that in Illyria there is no discrimination based on gender. This shows that the Cornwall Coach is one of the perpetrators of discrimination because it limits the right of women to participate in soccer.

2) Underestimating women's abilities

Underestimating women's abilities is insulting or making fun of women's abilities and assuming that women's abilities are weak, and not as good as men's. An example of the limitation of women's abilities in this movie is done by Cornwall Coach and Justin as Viola's boyfriend. Justin and the male soccer teams approach them on the pitch as Viola and Coach Cornwall discuss the awful news affecting the women's team.

Justin : "What's going on, coach?"

Cornwall Coach : "The girls here want to try out for the team."

Justin : "(Laugh) You're not serious."

Cornwall Coach : "All right, all right! You're all excellent players. But girls aren't as fast as boys, or as strong, or as athletic. Girls can't beat boys, it's as simple as that." [00:04:48 – 00:05:10]

After Justin heard that the women team's wanted to try against the men team's, Justin only responded with laughter and thought that it was a joke. Cornwall Coach admits that the women's soccer team is an excellent player, but the Cornwall Coach thinks the women team's is still not as good, fast, and strong as the men's team's.

Underestimating of women's abilities also occurred in the final seconds of the Cornwall team's versus Illyria team's match. Through a penalty kick, Viola kicks the ball toward Justin as a goalkeeper.

Justin : “It's not gonna happen. You're a loser! This is my house! You're pathetic!”
[01:31:55]

Justin shows that he underestimates Viola's abilities through his bad words. Justin was sure that Viola would not be able to kick the ball into the net. But, Viola ignored Justin's screams.

3) Questioning of women's abilities

Questioning of women's abilities is a man's distrust of women's abilities because men think women will not be able to do something with their abilities. In this conversation, there is a form of questioning about women's soccer team abilities by the Cornwall Coach towards women team's which occurs on the pitch.

Viola : “Coach, come on! You know that we're good enough.”

Cornwall Coach : “Girls, we have two weeks before school starts. Then we open against Illyria. A rivalry game. We have to win.”

Viola : “And we can help you win.” [00:04:20 – 00:04:40]

Viola assessed that the ability of the women's team is good enough. However, Cornwall's Coach doubted the women soccer team's could win a game after two weeks of practice. Cornwall Coach pointed out that he had doubts about women's abilities. Whereas, the women soccer team's wants to show their best ability by helping to win the match.

Another example of the following conversation that shows questioning of women's abilities is when Cornwall Coach and Illyria Coach argue during half of the game and made the players gather near them.

Cornwall Coach : “You really think you can beat us with a girl on your team?”(leave the pitch)

Justin : “This should be fun. (laugh).”

Cornwall Team : “(laugh).”

Illyria Coach : “OK, team.. Let's go kick! Kill!” [01:30:03 – 01:30:20]

At the end of the debate between the Illyria Coach and Cornwall Coach, Cornwall Coach said that he did not believe the Illyria team could win with women players. Justin also demeans the Illyria team with his jokes. However, Coach Illyria ignores Cornwall Coach and Justin's words. then cheering on the Illyria team to defeat them.

Next, an example of gender inequality based on doubt about women's abilities is in a scene where it was in the second half and at the end of the match.

Justin : “***It's not fair! It's not fair! That was a lucky shot!***” [01:32:38]

Viola finally managed to put the ball in the goal with a penalty kick. The final score of the match was won by the Illyrian team. The loss to the Cornwall team made Justin upset and angry. He still questioned Viola's ability, so he thought Viola's kick was just a lucky shot.

3.1.2 The Reason of Gender Inequality Specifically Addressed in *She's The Man* movie

In this section, find out the director's reasons for showing the gender inequality in this movie. *She's The Man*, released in 2006, is a modern comedy adaptation of William Shakespeare's play *Twelfth Night*. This movie is about a girl who disguises herself as her twin brother to join the boys' soccer team at her school. Researchers find Andy Fickman's reasons from WWU WordPress site, that Fickman attacks societal implications of gender roles from both sides of the spectrum. He utilizes a strong women lead to break the expectation that all women are “proper”, and uncover the implications of society's views on women in the world of sports. Directly parallel to this, he employs a supporting role of a male character who does not fit into society's expectations of what “male” should look and act like. Together, this lethal combination tears down the sustained ideology defining men and women within society. In 2002, the issue of gender equality in sports in the United States continued to be highlighted in the context of Title IX, the federal statute that prohibits gender restrictions in education accepted by the federal government. Although this law dates back to 1972, expansion of the degree to which educational institutions comply with Title IX has continued, particularly in providing opportunities for women athletes. Meaning, that in the year the movie was released, *She's The Man* was still relevant to the issue of gender equality in sports in 2002.

3.2 Discussion

Gender inequality is a societal phenomenon in which men and women are treated differently. Such treatment could result from variances in genetics, psychology, or societal cultural norms. Some of these distinctions appear to be empirical, while others appear to be social constructs. Through the findings above, three elements of findings simultaneously answer the three problems of the statement. First, indicators of gender inequality in *She's The Man* movie are described through dialogue that shows the treatment of gender inequality. Second, gender inequality is also described through characterizations, settings, and events. Characterizations are divided into three characters,

namely perpetrators, victims, and neutrals. Settings are divided into two, namely places that show gender inequality and places that show gender equality. Events refer to several scenes that reflect gender inequality in *She's The Man* movie. Third, the reason of director addresses gender inequality in his movie entitled *She's The Man*.

The researcher held the research using liberal feminism theory from Rosemarie Tong to find the results of the analysis of the data above. According to (Tong, 2009), a woman has the right, if she so chooses and believes it is best for her, to not marry, work, or alter herself for the better. This is according to the liberal feminism viewpoint. According to a liberal feminist viewpoint, this is clear in the *She's The Man* movie. Liberal feminism places a strong emphasis on women's autonomy, whether such autonomy is related to personal, professional, or marital decisions. In the context of *She's The Man* movie, the passage highlights a scene where gender inequality is evident. Viola, a woman, initially joins the women's soccer team but encounters discrimination from the coach and the men's team who belittles her abilities compared to men. To challenge this perception and prove her skills, to play for the men's soccer team, Viola poses as her twin brother. This storyline underscores the struggle against gender stereotypes and the effort to show that women are equally capable or even better than men.

The results of this study support a previous study from Winar (2015), about how the main character reflects feminism. Winar's research is equally against gender inequality in this film. There is also previous research that neither supports nor opposes, namely research from Arista (2011). Arista's research uses a psychological approach and analyzes the transformation of the main character's character from the perspective of self-development and fulfillment of psychological needs. This study adds information from Arista that has been published previously.

4. CLOSING

First, based on the results of data analysis in the previous chapter about *She's The Man* movie (2006) by Andy Fickman, researchers found three indicators, namely limiting of women's rights to participation, underestimating of women's abilities, and questioning of women's abilities. Limiting of women's rights to participation means closing the opportunity for women to be involved in society, both in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields. Underestimating of women's abilities is insulting or making fun of women's abilities and assuming that women's abilities are weak, not as good as men's. And questioning of women's abilities is a man's distrust

of women's abilities because men think women will not be able to do something with their abilities. This is a picture of gender inequality depicted in this movie.

Second, the depiction of gender inequality in *She's The Man* movie is also described in this film, such as characters, events, and settings. Characters are divided into perpetrators of discrimination, victims of discrimination, and neutral. Five places describe gender inequality and equality that occur in this movie. Events of gender inequality occur when the team practices soccer, and soccer matches between schools.

Third, Director Andy Fickman in *She's The Man* movie, explains that Andy Fickman attacks societal implications of gender roles from both sides of the spectrum. He utilizes a strong female lead to break the expectation that all women are “proper”, and uncover the implications of society’s views on women in the world of sports. Directly parallel to this, he employs a supporting role of a male character who does not fit into society’s expectations of what “male” should look and act like. Together, this lethal combination tears down the sustained ideology defining men and women within society.

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