



# RUBIKON

JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES

VOLUME 2 / NUMBER 2  
SEPTEMBER 2015

**“Gender Wage Disparity in the United States: Socio-Cultural Context v. Legislations”**

Agnes Nora Eko Wahyu Utami

**“An Image of American Muslims through Updike’s Terrorist: A Study of Identification and Representation”**

Diba Prajamitha Aziz

**“Women Issues in Hillary Clinton’s Speeches”**

Elsa Emiria Leba

**“Non-Violence Principles in King’s Speeches and Its Impacts to African American Society”**

Eryn Gemala Putri

**“The Power of Amiri Baraka’s Political Thoughts to the African-American Movement in America”**

Irma Febriyanti

**“Conceptualizing Friendship through American Gay Television Series in 2000s”**

Rudy



# RUBIKON

JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES

Volume 2 • Number 2 • September 2015

## EDITORIAL BOARDS

Michael Vann (Sacramento University of California) • Melanie Budiarta (Universitas Indonesia) •  
Carla Jones (University of Colorado) • David Palmer (Flinders University) • Srimati Das (Kranatax  
University of India)

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Ida Rochani Adi

## BUSINESS MANAGER

Benita Amalina

## EDITORS

Didik Murwantono • Ekawati Marhaenny Dukut • Mister Gidion Maru • Muhammad Fuad • Nuriadi  
• Juliasih K. • Nur Saktiningrum • Muh. Arif Rokhman • Achmad Munjid • Ans. Prawati

## MARKETING AND PUBLICATIONS

Dhionisius Bambang • Kidhot Kasjuaji

RUBIKON, Journal of Transnational American Studies (JTAS) is a journal published by the Association of American Studies Society of Indonesia (ASSINDO) which is supported by UGM, UI, UAD, and UNS. It specializes in American Studies especially transnational studies of the U.S. It is also intended to communicate American Studies issues and challenges. This journal warmly welcomes contributors from American Studies scholars, researchers, and those related to the discipline.

## COPYRIGHTS RESERVED

Editorial Office:

### RUBIKON

Jl. Ipda Tut Harsono No. 26, Umbulharjo, Yogyakarta 55165

Phone: +62 812-2763-219

E-mail: [jurnal.rubikon@gmail.com](mailto:jurnal.rubikon@gmail.com) • Website: [www.assindo.org](http://www.assindo.org)

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	i
<b>“Gender Wage Disparity in the United States: Socio-Cultural Context v. Legislations”</b>	
Agnes Nora Eko Wahyu Utami.....	1
<b>“An Image of American Muslims through Updike’s Terrorist: A Study of Identification and Representation”</b>	
Diba Prajamitha Aziz.....	14
<b>“Women Issues in Hillary Clinton’s Speeches”</b>	
Elsa Emiria Leba.....	24
<b>“Non-Violence Principles in King’s Speeches and Its Impacts to African American Society”</b>	
Eryn Gemala Putri.....	40
<b>“The Power of Amiri Baraka’s Political Thoughts to the African-American Movement in America”</b>	
Irma Febriyanti.....	51
<b>“Conceptualizing Friendship through American Gay Television Series in 2000s”</b>	
Rudy.....	64

## **GENDER WAGE DISPARITY IN THE UNITED STATES: SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT V. LEGISLATIONS**

Agnes Nora Eko Wahyu Utami  
STMIK AKAKOM  
agnesnora@akakom.ac.id

This study aimed at investigating the contributing factors to the persistence of gender pay disparity in American workforce despite decades of the enactment of progressive, federal legislations concerning on women's wage. This study employed sociological approach and utilized qualitative research to achieve its predetermined objectives. Utilizing library research, data were gathered and analyzed using gender theory, particularly the theory of devaluation of women's work. The results of this study indicated that prevalent American cultural values on gender roles and pay secrecy interfere with the federal legislations concerning on women's wage. Meaning to say, the socio-cultural context where the legislations are applied and enforced seems to be, in some ways, contradictory to the legislations. The data of this study showed that in the workplace, cultural values on gender roles affected the decisions in hiring and during the employment, which further resulted in gender discriminatory practices (in general) and gender wage discrimination (in specific). Meanwhile, the prevalence of cultural values of not talking about salary reinforced employer's policy against salary disclosure (PSC rules), which led to the hindrance of wage transparency that is in fact, in contradictory to what the legislations suggested. As a conclusion, gender wage disparity could not be cured solely with the enactment of federal legislations. Evolutionary changes in cultural values of the society are also significant in eliminating the gender wage disparity in American workforce.

**Keywords:** gender wage disparity, socio-cultural context, cultural values, federal legislations, pay secrecy

### **Introduction**

The succession of legislations prohibiting gender-based discriminatory practices at work has been in effect for almost half a century. However, female employees still fall behind men in pay. Studies indicated that women earn 77 cents for every dollar men earn (NWLC, 2012; US Bureau of Census Data, 2013). Several cases on gender-based discriminations brought to the courts affirmed that gender pay disparity is not only a myth, but facts. Among the prominent cases were the case against Price Waterhouse (1990), Lucky Stores (1994), the US Information Agency (2000), Wal-mart (2000), and Goodyear (2007). Surely, there were still a lot more gender discrimination cases occurred in American workforce in the past few decades.

Scholars note that gender wage disparity has not only affected women as individuals, but also affected children and families they live with, as well as the society at large.

Particularly, as the number of working single mothers is growing significantly and the number of women participating in the workforce is also increasing, gender wage disparity matters for serious study and deserves attention for solutions.

Efforts were made to close the gap between women and men's earnings, and one of the most ultimate was through the enactment of progressive legislative initiatives concerning on women's wage. However, women's earnings remain less than those of men's despite decades of the enactment of progressive legislative initiatives. Careful studies and court decisions were taken into account in making changes in the legislations, making them more protective and non-discriminative. Nevertheless, gender wage disparity keeps enduring. Question remains over why such legislations could not achieve the predetermined purposes. Instead of bringing about equity, prevention or protection from

discriminations, such legislations still fail to serve as a shield against gender pay discrimination at work.

As an alternative way to figure out the contributing factors to the persistence of gender wage disparity in American workforce, the writer proposes an investigation on the failure of federal legislations concerning on women's wage to protect women from wage discrimination. Considering the fact that legislations do not operate in a vacuum, it is then worth to consider that there might be any interference when the legislations are in touch with the socio-cultural context where they are implemented, leading to the ineffectiveness of their implementation and causing the persistence of gender wage disparity.

Referring to the line of reasoning mentioned above, there are several questions to answer in this study. They are, among others, (1) What are the prominent federal legislations concerning on women's wage and how did they develop? (2) What are the prevailing cultural values in American society which define the roles and position of women in the society and hinder equality in pay? and (3) Why does gender wage disparity continue to persist despite of the enactment of the federal legislation concerning women's wage in the workforce?

To answer research questions, sociological approach was employed in this study by focusing on utilizing gender perspective as the lens to investigate the phenomenon under investigation. As the study is to find out how preferences and what the society perceives to be male or female could contribute to the persistence of the phenomenon under investigation, gender theory, particularly the theory on the devaluation of women's work was utilized for analysis in this study.

Gender theory on the devaluation of women's work suggests that women's works are devalued due to the cultural ideas that

undervalue women and characteristics associated with women. All social roles and skills associated with women are devalued in relation to characteristics associated with men (England 1992a; Kilbourne et al. 1994) which also means that women are considered as less valuable, the weaker sex, compared to men. Such cultural ideas lead to the underestimation of women's abilities in the workplace (England, 2005, p. 278).

In the workplace, such undervaluation is then leading to the clustering of women in certain occupations or positions which are usually paid or make them paid less than men (England, 1992; England, Budig and Folbre, 2002; England and Folbre, 2005; Hill and Killingsworth, 1989; Kilbourne et al., 1994; Reskin and Roos, 1990; Steinberg, 1990). Additionally, some researchers notified the existence of gender bias in job evaluations. They stressed that skills and job demands in women's work are often invisible and given fewer points in the job evaluations used in wage setting processes (Reskin and Roos, 1990).

As suggested by Steinberg (1990), wages do not only depend on forces in the labor market or economic laws, but social values and institutional norms also supposedly affect wage systems. Occupational skills are thus viewed as socially constructed with the skills in women's work are often ignored and rewarded less than those of men. (England 1992; England, Budig and Folbre, 2002).

Some argue that women receive less than men because they typically choose low penalties jobs which are typically low salary occupations to fulfill their domestic responsibilities (Polachek, 1981, p. 64). However, it is important to consider that preferences do not represent individual choices free from social context. Individuals' choices to act or behave in certain manners are bound up by social norms, roles, and meaning (Edwards, 2005). Meaning to say, women's

choices do not stand apart from the social context; they do represent women's social and cultural contexts, instead.

In this research, qualitative research was employed to achieve the objectives of the study. As this study relied heavily on the secondary data, library research played major role in obtaining relevant data from both printed and digital materials (from online media) for the accomplishment of this study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from books, journals, papers, articles, reports, published court briefs, and statistics published by the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The relevant data were categorized, based on certain criteria referring to the formulated questions in this study. The data was then analyzed using content analysis, which according to Krippendorf (1980) is defined as a process of analyzing messages in any types of communication systematically by examining the presence, meanings and relationships of the concepts, and then making inferences about the messages within the texts and among the messages in different texts or sources.

To find out the contributing factors of the persistence of gender wage disparity, this study focuses on the reasons why the legislations could not bring about the intended results. To figure out the interfering factors which play roles in the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the legislations, socio-cultural context where the legislations are implemented is worth to consider. In part II, there will be the discussion on the socio-cultural context of gender and work-related issues in American society to provide insight on what cultural values and principles are in touch with the legislations concerning to pay. In part III, the writer provides the elaboration of the development of the federal legislations concerning to pay. Influences of the socio-cultural context on the implementation of the

legislations in American workplace are discussed in part IV and V. In the last part, there will be the conclusion of this study.

### **Socio-Cultural Context of Gender and Work-Related Issues in American Society**

Considering that legislations do not operate in a vacuum, there must be interfering factors influencing the implementation process of such legislations on the ground. Dealing with the context where the legislations are implemented, it is important to consider the cultural values the Americans hold as they do affect how people think and behave, especially ones on gender roles and work related issues, which further determine the effectiveness of the legislations.

### **Cultural Values on Gender Roles in American Society**

The discussion of such values is needed to gain insight on the roles and position of women in the society. Since the colonial era, Americans have held an understanding of sexes separate spheres; women should occupy the private sphere while men occupy the public sphere (Collins, 2009; Rhode, 1991). Such notion has legitimized the role of men as the breadwinners and women as the caretakers. As what Kulich, Trojanowski, Ryan, Haslam, and Renneboog (2010) argue, such legitimate roles repeatedly trained women to be caring, empathetic, understanding as good caretakers supposed to be, while men are repeatedly trained to be multitasking, high-risk taking as they are used to be exposed to more various challenges, which are oftentimes dangerous and risky as well, struggling outside the door as the breadwinners. This leads the society to continuously believe that women are more likely to be caring, empathetic, and understanding, while men are typically multitasking and high risk-taking, which then lead to sexual occupational segregation; women and men should belong to different

occupational divisions or positions according to the labeled characteristics attached to them (Kulich, Trojanowski, Ryan, Haslam, and Renneboog, 2010). Such separated fields lead to a belief that women are the weaker sex compared to men, who are assumed to have greater responsibility and tasks, struggling in the arena outside the house.

The sexual division of labor which starts from the smaller unit of the society (family) affects the perception of the importance of women's participation or contribution (England 1992; Kilbourne et al. 1994). Since financially speaking women give less contribution to the family survival, then they are often considered as the weaker sex compared to men (Collins, 2009; Rhode, 1991).

Overall, despite of the economic and social changes, such notion is prevalent in American society to the present time. Studies indicated that women still have to perform one and a half times more housework than men, confirming that women still play the major role in the domestic arena, holding most of the family responsibilities (Noonan, 2001). It suggests that generally men are still crowned the breadwinners, while women are the main caretakers.

In fact, economic and social changes could only broaden the scope of women's activities but fail to change the negative stereotypes attached to women. It is thus to conclude that the cultural values on gender which have been passed from one generation to another affect how the society views and treats women; they define the significance of women and their roles which further could affect their pay.

#### **Cultural Values on Work-Related Issues: Pay Secrecy as Norms and Workplace Policy**

In the United States, it is traditional etiquette not to discuss salary with coworkers. According to conventional wisdom, discussing about finances ("money talk") is considered as

the last conversational taboo in American life (Edwards, 2005; Lyons, 2013). In a study on pay secrecy, Lawler (1967) describes the social norms against salary discussion as a middle class phenomenon and clarifies the reasons why people are secretive about pay.

In short, Americans, especially the middle class, are got told since the early age that discussing or talking about pay is impolite; it is considered not nice, embarrassing and boastful. Since people are supposedly paid for performance in the workplace, sharing pay information is revealing something personal or private, letting others know how well the company or organization thinks you perform, or how much the company values you, which could be something that is inconvenient (Lyons, 2013, p. 379-381).

As argued by some experts, a strong social norm of pay secrecy, which is often referred to as "a code of silence" with respect to the issue of pay, is in large number of workplaces throughout the United States. It is reasonable to question the prevalence or strength of such social norm despite the "powerful intuitive appeal of this position." In accordance to such code of silence assertions, Gelly and Bierman (2003) summarize that majority are in favor of such social norm as it protects privacy. It reflects the idea that such social norm is "social regularities or behaviors that are widely adopted in the society, activities that the society holds and that the people should do". Gelly and Bierman's study strengthens the possibility that strong social norms concerning on pay secrecy really does exist in the society and continue to be brought in the workplace. It is argued that "a narrower and more accurate description of the [money-talk] norm is... that we are taught not to discuss money when to do so highlights inequality and conflicting fortunes" (Lyons, 2013, p. 50).

Pay secrecy, besides being recognized as strong social norms, usually also refers to workplace or employers' policies which prohibit employees from disclosing how much

money they earn with co-workers, which is often recognized as Pay Secrecy and Confidentiality (PSC) rules. In the other words, such rules can be simply understood as “a restriction of the amount of information employees are provided about what others are paid” (Colella et al., 2007, p. 56). These policies are sometimes written down in employees’ handbooks or stated in the contracts. In some cases, these policies are also implicit in the way that employees are urged through managers’ warning of not talking or discussing about salary among employees.

Although seems to be simple, pay secrecy could be very complex in practice. There are some issues to consider in relation to existence or availability of such policies. First, in terms of the availability of information, employers may keep pay information secret by not providing for its release or publication. Next, employers can make any restrictions regarding the types of pay information available for employees. As an example, employers only provide certain aggregate of pay information, such as pay ranges or pay raises but probably do not provide precise information of the individual-level information of the employees. Another possibility is that the employers may have some restriction on the way pay information is disseminated. Even if pay information is technically and publicly available, sometimes employers may convey some discouragement of disclosing pay information to the employees (in informal way). The employers may impose heavy sanctions against employees who engage in salary discussions (Colella et al., 2007, p. 56-57).

Since this study is intended on discussing pay as a general construct and reaching much broader audience, pay secrecy here deals with the lack of information the employees have about the level of other employees or co-

workers pay within the institution or organization.

### **Development of Prominent Federal Legislations Concerning Women’s Wage: From The Equal Pay Act of 1963 to The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009**

To eradicate gender wage disparity, efforts have been made ultimately by the enactment of federal legislations. Since 1960s, there have been several groundbreaking legislations attempting to prohibit such discriminatory practices. Among those groundbreaking legislations are Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Civil Rights Act of 1991, and The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009. Each of the legislations represents the progressive development it has come about through evolutionary process and incremental improvement by addressing the inherent weaknesses of its predecessor(s).

In 1963, EPA was enacted to prohibit classifying jobs and wages on the basis of sex and age (Ford, 2006). It served as an effort to terminate gender based wage differentials by prohibiting unequal pay for women doing equal work on jobs performed under similar working conditions (Equal Pay Act 1963).

Following the EPA was the enactment of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act a year later. This Act broadens the sense of the prohibition of discriminations as it came to include the prohibition of discrimination not only in compensation (as what its predecessor regulated) but also in hiring, firing, classification, promotion, and any other employment decisions (Crampton, Hodge, and Mishra, 1997). Besides prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sex, this act also forbids the discrimination in employment because of employees’ race, color, religion, and national origin (Civil Rights Act 1964).



To strengthen protection from discrimination and provide more effective deterrence, The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was amended in 1991. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 was born as the first act specifically addressing to gender based discrimination. Amending the predecessor, this act allows women to challenge discrimination based on seniority system in a more flexible clock and also allows them to gain punitive and compensatory damages in the cases of intentional discrimination (Seymour, 1992). This Act generally aims at providing more effective deterrent as ways to prevent gender-based discriminations occurrence or reduce them to the least.

The most recent legislation concerning on women's wage was The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay of 2009. This Act relaxes the statute of limitations (more relaxed period of filing lawsuits and recovery of back pay) under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and expands employees' rights to sue in wage discrimination cases (Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act 2009).

In the development process of the legislations, there were regularities to maintain. In all those legislations, the provisions of seniority, merit, and productivity system—the circumstances under which gender-based wage inequality can be legally justifiable—were kept in existence. For one reason, these systems are continuously allowed to operate considering that Americans have capitalism as their economic system. Capitalism is directed toward making greater profits by maximizing productivity for successful organizations and people (Edwards et.al., 1978). Therefore, it sounds justifiable and acceptable if the best service/ the greatest productivity deserves the best payment and vice versa. Nevertheless, in the other hand, the provisions were ironically proven to weaken employees' positions as they provide employers with rooms for maneuvering to avoid wage discrimination charge.

In addition, United States does not comprise of single, homogenous society. In fact, three of those four legislations (EPA of 1963, Title VII of The Civil Rights Act of 1964, and The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009) were enacted under the administration of Democrat presidents, suggesting that progressive legislations were more likely to succeed to be enacted under the administration of those who favor changes for the sake of social welfare (liberal). Major changes in the legislations were less likely to occur under Republican president, meaning that they were more conservative, wanted to limit government's intervention by keeping governmental power and resources close to the society through state and community leaders (Parsley, n.d).

Passing laws was not a simple/easy job to do. It involved hard efforts, battles over, or persuasion with those who were conservative. Legislations are planned to be the ultimate weapon to eliminate gender wage disparity, to reinforce equality, protecting women from discriminatory practices which could result in pay inequality between men and women. Similar to the tough process of negotiation in passing the laws, it is also worth to consider that to whatever rules/laws or principles established or operated in the society, there would be those who are pros and against them.

### **Effects of Cultural values on Gender Roles in the American Workplace**

Cultural context defines gender roles. It provides the reinforcement of male and female roles through a lifelong process of socialization. What the cultural context says about what to be male and female is taught since the early age through different socialization of boys and girls, continues in education through “gender tracking,” and carries on to the workplace through various discriminatory practices (Jacob, 1989). It is believed that the different socialization of boys and girls and “gender tracking” in education maintain sex segregation. The cultural views

on male and female different spheres and roles lead to sexual division of labor (started in the family) which keeps women devalued and sorted into different positions.

In the workplace, cultural values affect how the employees think and behave, including whether they want to comply with the established laws related to the treatment toward women at work. According to Jacob (1989), cultural context which defines gender roles has been taught or learned since childhood in the smallest units of the society (family) and continued to be brought in the socialization in the society at large, including in the workplace.

Messages in childhood and pre-employment could guide and direct individuals' work choices, which further enable women to relatively cluster in certain occupations or positions constantly (Greene, 2006, p. 54). Education is one of among sensible reasons to cause the clustering of women in certain occupations. Society tends to channel boys and girls into certain educational fields according to cultural values on what the society perceives to be suitable for them. Women are most likely to be concentrated in college majors in humanities ( $\pm 74\%$ ), education ( $\pm 78\%$ ) and social sciences ( $\pm 65\%$ ) that lead to relatively low-paying occupations (see table 1). Meanwhile, degrees in mathematics, sciences, or engineering fields, which lead to relatively high paying occupations, are relatively received by men (Andersen, 2006, p.7; Siebens and Ryan, 2012, p. 4). A recent report published in 2013 affirmed that women still continue concentrating in low paying occupational categories. Although women are more likely than men to work in the second-highest paid occupations, they are not as well represented in the higher paying job groups within such occupational category (BLS, 2013).

In the workplace, such cultural values affect how female employees are treated at work and are often embodied in the decisions in hiring and during the employment, including promotions, classification, and compensation (Greene, 2006; NWLC, 2014). A study conducted to 17 women from 17 different states working in male-dominated occupations reveals that oftentimes hiring mechanism could possibly lead women to sexual occupational segregation (Greene, 2006). Hiring mechanism could either hinder women entering certain occupations or prevent them from occupying certain positions.

Even though legislations and affirmative actions had been legitimized women's rights to work in whichever levels and occupations available, including entering those previously male-dominated ones, women were not necessarily welcome (Heilman et al., 2004). Gender stereotyping was believed to be the great socio-cultural barrier of entering male-dominated occupations and hindering women to make progresses through promotions (Guy, 1993).

Such gender stereotyping did not only make women feel uncomfortable but also did affect their career (achievements) and further affect how much they could earn. In the society, images of leaders are closely associated with the characteristics of those of men (masculine), such as the ability to influence others and implement change (Kulich, Trojanowski, Ryan, Haslam, & Renneboog, 2010; Stivers, 1993). As a consequence, such gender stereotyping and socialization result in the concentration of women in relatively low(er) positions within the organizations, which are closely associated with lower pay.

Additionally, constraints were not only faced by female employees in male dominated (traditionally male) occupations but also in mix-gender occupations. In all occupations available, both traditionally male-dominated

and female dominated, or both high paying and low paying, median earnings of women were still lower than that of men (Day and Rosenthal, 2008; BLS, 2005).

Women felt that getting promoted or transferred was more difficult and less likely for them than for men. Women were given less challenging work assignments and less variety in work than men in similar jobs or at the same level jobs, making them less qualified and less visible for promotions (Greene, 2006). Besides, as promotions are frequently based on “whom you knew,” the leading managers tend to recommend candidates who share their own characteristics or are the part of the “boys club”-- an informal, exclusive system of mutual assistance and friendship through which men belonging to a particular group and are informally provided more access to promotions and better work assignments (NWLC, 2014).

The integration of women into male dominated field or vice versa would not necessarily close the gap in pay. Some cases brought to the court, such as *Miranda v. B & B Cash Grocery Store, Inc.* (1992), *Plemer v. Parsons-Gilbane* (1983), *Dukes v. Wal-Mart* (2000), *Mitchell v. Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.* (2003), and *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Rubber & Tire Co.* (2007), affirmed that despite of the enactment of legislations and affirmative actions prevented them from discriminations, women are still haunted by harmful gender stereotypes stem from American culture that influence what they do and earn at work.

In general, women rationally choose occupations that could accommodate their needs --as income earners and caretakers of the family as well. Therefore, they tend to decide having lower-penalty occupations to maximize their lifetime earnings even though they are likely to be in lower paying occupations. This implies the fact that women have rationality to prefer something good or

beneficial for them, but as individuals living in the society, their preferences on certain positions or occupations could not be detached from the social context—the cultural values the society suggests on their roles in the society.

### **Pay Secrecy Norm and Pay Secrecy and Confidentiality (PSC) Rules: Their Relation and Effects in American Workplace**

Besides cultural values on gender, there are values on work-related issues which interfere with the attempts to eliminate gender-based pay discrimination in the workplace. Such values are often recognized as a middle class phenomenon which prohibits discussing or talking about salary (Edwards, 2005; Lyons, 2013). In American society, discussing about pay is considered to be impolite, embarrassing, and boastful as it reveals something personal or private that others are not necessarily supposed to know (Lyons, 2013, p. 379).

In the workplace, such values are most likely continuing to be held through employer’s policy of not talking about salary with co-workers (PSC rules). Studies reported that either formal or informal policies/rules against salary disclosure are quite common to operate in American workplaces. More than 60% of American workers are claimed to be either formally or informally encouraged to not talking about their salary with co-workers (IWPR, 2011).

Some argue that the commonness of PSC rules in American workplace reflects the deliberate maintenance of the rules. Some academic researchers presented that there are four main benefits accounted for the maintenance of PSC rules in American workplace: (1) the maintenance of a peaceful workplace through the avoidance of workplace conflict; (2) increased privacy concern for both employers and employees; (3) a more stable wage regime through the avoidance of labor market mobility; and (4) facilitation of firm-specific

investment (O'Neill, 2010, p. 1234; Edwards, 2005, p. 44).

Despite of the advantages PSC rules might bring to the workplace, all cases brought to the court concerning gender wage disparity reveal the harm of having such rules in the workplace to the employees, especially female employees. For all gender wage discrimination cases brought to the court, the plaintiffs' workplaces have either formal or informal rules prohibiting salary disclosure among workers. Among the landmark cases are *Goodwin v. General Motors Corporation*, *NLRB v. Main Street Terrace Center* (2000), *Dukes v. Wal-Mart* (2000), *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.* (2007). Such rules set workers in situation in which they lack of knowledge on differences of their salary to other co-workers'. It is noted that the plaintiffs finally found out that they were discriminated in terms of the payment due to the chance of not deliberately knowing how much others earned through anonymous letter, coincidentally finding misplaced co-worker's W2 form (wage and tax statement), coincidental appearance of a printout salary list on the desk, or listening other male co-workers bragging about their pay. On this basis, therefore, there was hardly any chance for the plaintiffs to gain back-pay or win the case since the employer's confidentiality policy prevented the plaintiffs from learning of pay discrimination earlier. Being unable to notice pay discrepancies earlier means that there is a great possibility that by the time an employee learning that she is discriminated, it has already been time barred to file the charge.

The cases brought to the court are the learning points that wage transparency is, indeed, one of the important weapons to combat gender pay disparity at work. Efforts have been made to the enhancement of wage transparency. Seven states in the US, which include Vermont, Michigan, California, Illinois, Colorado, Maine, and New Jersey have committed to officially prohibiting the policies

preventing workers from disclosing their salary in the workplace as efforts to enhance wage transparency (Fetisova, 2014, p. 5).

Additionally, Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was signed in 2009 by President Barack Obama to enhance wage transparency and relax statutes of limitation (with regard of time and employees' rights). Unfortunately, in spite of the enactment of LLFPA, there are still greater number of states and companies allowing pay secrecy rules to operate in the workplace.

To conclude, despite of the wide acknowledgement of the importance of wage transparency in the workplace, the fact that pay secrecy rules are still widely acceptable in American workplace affirms that the prevalence of pay secrecy norm in American workplace could reinforce the existence of PSC rules and vice versa (Bierman and Gely, 2004; O'Neill, 2010). Therefore, pay secrecy norms can be the barrier to the elimination of pay secrecy rules and to the enhancement of wage transparency, which eventually hinder the achievement of pay equity in the workplace. Either PSC rules or pay secrecy norm prevents the discovery or the reveal of wage inequality in American workplace as it obscures differences in what individuals working on equal work, under similar working condition and the same establishment earn.

### **Conclusion**

Legislations have developed and tried to accommodate the needs of and project the efforts to eliminate wage disparity in the workplace. However, in their implementation, they have to deal with the cultural values prevalent in American society. Cultural values on gender considering women as not equal to men, and women as the weaker sex compared to men, are still prevalent in American society even though not applied to all population. In the workforce, they affect the decisions in hiring and during the employment which reflect the undervaluation of women's

work/ability. Such undervaluation results in pay disparity between male and female workers.

In addition to the values on gender roles, there are cultural values on not talking about money/salary with others (pay secrecy). The prevailing cultural values on not talking about salary are sometimes reinforced by the existence of employer's policy against salary disclosure. In fact, both cultural values and employer's rules on pay secrecy are likely to be in contradictory with legislation's aim at enhancing wage transparency since they prevent workers from being informed about how much the other employees earn, which also means that they have the possibility of not having the knowledge whether they are discriminated or not.

As individuals' behaviors are driven by the values they live, what individuals do in the workplace (especially men) could be possibly not in accordance with the attempts of eliminating gender wage disparity as written in the legislations. Therefore, it affirms that gender based discrimination cannot be solely cured with the enactment of legislations prohibiting gender discrimination practices in the workplace. Further, there need to be changes in the cultural values the society holds. Legislations and cultural values have to really go hand in hand if the efforts of eliminating gender based discrimination, including pay disparity are to succeed.

For the evolutionary changes in cultural values to occur, there need to be educative efforts which are conducted starting from the smallest units of the society (family) to the biggest ones in the society at large. Such efforts need the participations or collaborations of all parties in the society which reach not only women but also men, and involve not only public sectors but also private ones, including the media as well. These efforts could be useful to convey the messages on equality between men and women, internalizing and passing them from

generation to generation, so that further, they could bring about changes on how the society perceive and treat women (changes in cultural values on gender).

In relation to social norm on pay secrecy, society needs to be educated that such norm brings more disadvantages than advantages and ultimately could hinder the efforts to increase wage transparency. As wage parity could be achieved through the increase of wage transparency, which can be achieved through salary information openness, then the society has to realize that both formal and informal policies against salary disclosure need to be banned.

### References

- Andersen, J. (2006). *The gender wage gap: Exploring the explanations (a report)*. Kansas State University.
- Civil Rights Act of 1964. (1964) Pub. L. No. 88-352, sec. 2000, 78 Stat. 241.
- Civil Rights Act of 1991. (1991). Pub. L. No. 102-166, sec. 102, 42 Stat. 1981.
- Colella, A., Paetzold, R.L, Zardkoohi, A., & Wesson, M.J. (2007). *Exposing pay secrecy*. *Academy of Management Review*.32(1).55-71.
- Collins, G. (2009). *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women*. Newyork: Little, Brown and Company.
- Crampton, S. M., Hodge, J.W., & Mishra, J.M. (1997). The equal pay act: the first 30 Years. *Public Personnel Management* 26(3), 335-345.
- Day, J. C. & Rosenthal, J. (2008). Detailed Occupations and Median Earnings: 2008. *US Census Bureau, American Community Survey*.
- Edwards, C.R, Reich, M., & Weisskopf, T.E. (1978). *The capitalist system: a radical analysis of American society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall,Inc.
- Edwards, M. A. (2005). The law and social norms of pay secrecy. *Berkeley Journal of Employment & Labor Law* 26(1), 41-63.

- England, P. (1992). From status attainment to segregation and devaluation. *Contemporary Sociology* 21(1), 643-647.
- England, P. (2005). Gender inequality in labor markets: The role of motherhood and segregation. *Social Politics* 12, 264-288.
- England, P., Budig, M. & Folbre, N. (2002). The wages of virtue: the relative pay of care work. *Social Problems* 49, 455-473.
- England, P. & Folbre, N. (2005). *Gender and economic sociology*. In N.J. Smelser & R. Swedberg (Eds.) *The handbook of economic sociology*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Equal Pay Act of 1963. (1963). Pub. L. No. 88-38, sec. 206(d), 77 Stat. 56, 59.
- Fetisova, O. (2014). Effects of anti-secrecy pay laws on the gender wage gap (Undergraduate thesis). Department of Economics, University of Maryland.
- Ford, L. E. (2006). *Women and politics: the pursuit of equality*, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Gelly, R., & Bierman, L. (2003). Pay Secrecy/Confidentiality rules and The National Labor Relations Act. *Journal of Labor and Employment Law* 6(1), 121-156.
- Greene, J. A. (2006). *Blue collar women at work with men: negotiating the hostile environment*. USA: Praeger Publishers.
- Guy, M. E. (1993). Three steps forward, two steps backward: the status of women's integration into public management. *Public Administration Review* 53 (4), 285 – 92.
- Heilman, M. E. , Wallen, A.S., Fuchs, D. & Tamkins, M. (2004). Penalties for success: reactions to women who succeed at gender-typed tasks. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 89 (3), 416 – 442.
- Hill, M. A., & Killingsworth, M. R. (1989). *Comparable worth: analyses and evidence*. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
- Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR). (2011, June). Pay secrecy and wage discrimination. *Fact Sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications> (11/04/2014).
- Jacobs, J. A. (1989). *Revolving doors: sex segregation and women's careers*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kilbourne, B.S., George, F., Kurt, B., Dorothea, W., & England, P. (1994). Return to skill, compensating differentials, and gender bias: effects of occupational characteristics on wages of white women and men. *American Journal of Sociology* 100 (2), 689-719.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology*. Beverly Hills, Calif: SAGE.
- Kulich, C., Trojanowski, G., Ryan, M., Haslam, S., & Renneboog, L. (2010). Who gets the carrot and who gets the stick? Evidence of gender disparities in executive remuneration. *ECCI Working Paper Series in Finance, Finance Working Paper 272*. Retrieved from <http://www.ecgi.org/wp> (11/08/2014)
- Lawler, E. E. (1967). Secrecy about management compensation: are there hidden costs? *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 2, 182-189.
- Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009. (2009). Pub. L. No. 111-2, 123 Stat. 5.
- Lyons, S. (2013). Why the law should intervene to disrupt pay-secrecy norms: analyzing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act through the lens of social norms. *Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems*, 361-390.
- National Women's Law Center (NWLC). (2012). *The wage gap is stagnant in last decade* (a fact sheet). Retrieved from [www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org) (9/01/2014).
- National Women's Law Center (NWLC). (2014). *Walmart v. Dukes: why the Supreme Court should stand with working women*. Retrieved from

- <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/wal-mart-v-dukes> (25/08/2014).
- Noonan, M. C. (2001). The impact of domestic work on men's and women's wages. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63 (4), 1134 – 1145.
- O'Neill, B. P. (2010). Pay confidentiality: a remaining obstacle to Equal Pay after Ledbetter, *Seton Hall Law Review* 40(3), 1217-1256.
- Parsley, B. M. n.d. In your heart, are you a Democrat or a Republican? Political parties: their philosophies, objectives, and the consequences of each for the United States." *The Southern Division CFRW & SDCFRW* retrieved from <http://www.cfrw.org> (25/05/2014).
- Polachek, S. W. (1981). Occupational self-selection: a human capital approach to sex differences in occupational structure. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 63(1), pp. 60-69.
- Reskin, B. F., and Roos, P. A. (1990). *Job queues, gender queues*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Rhode, D. L. (1991). *Justice and Gender: Sex Discrimination and the Law*. USA: Harvard University Press.
- Seymour, R. T. (1992). How to stem the erosion. *Human Rights: Journal of the Section of Individual Rights & Responsibilities* 19(3), 12.
- Siebens, R., & Ryan, C.L. (2012, February). Fields of bachelor's degree in the United States: 2009. *American Community Survey (ACS) Reports*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/acs> (14/11/2014).
- Steinberg, R. (1990). Social construction of skill: gender, power, and comparable worth. *Work and Occupations* 17, 449-482.
- Stivers, C. (1993). *Gender images and public administration: legitimacy and the administrative state*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). (2005). *Women in the labor force: a data book*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-databook.2005.pdf> (22/08/2014).
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). (2013, October). *Highlights of Women's Earnings in 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov> (22/08/2014).

## AN IMAGE OF AMERICAN MUSLIMS THROUGH UPDIKE'S *TERRORIST*: A STUDY OF IDENTIFICATION AND REPRESENTATION

Diba Prajamitha Aziz  
dibaprajamitha@gmail.com

### Abstract

In the aftermath of September 9/11 tragedy, an image of Muslim dramatically becomes popular topic and object for the researchers. Although analyses for the most part tend to explain the image of Muslim in negative and stereotypical tendency, the wave of action that expresses positive image of Muslim has surfaced in American society. In that case, this thesis using a novel to see that social phenomena attempted to reveal that an image of American Muslims as represented by Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy in Updike's *Terrorist* contributed to endorse an image of Muslim neither as extremist nor as terrorist. To achieve its purpose, firstly this study employs theory of imaginary and symbolic identification from Jacques Lacan. This theory is used to explain the impact of fatherless background, the presence of surrogate father and the influence of another figure on Ahmad. Secondly focusing on an image of American Muslims, theory of representation from Hall is applied. His theory is as a bridge that Muslim can be constructed and represented in the novel. Furthermore, opinions about extremist and moderate Muslim are used to explain those images through characteristics such as thought, action and orientation. The result of the study reveals that the process of identification divides people whom Ahmad had interaction into category of Muslim and non-Muslim group. Muslim group teaches Islamic identity to Ahmad and non-Muslim group plays big role to influence Ahmad to integrate himself into American society. Due to those groups, an identity and image of Ahmad is always related to the other. Focusing on Ahmad's representation as American Muslim, he shows that there are three images such as extremist, transitional and moderate. As a result, through depicting Ahmad as moderate Muslim, Muslim is not terrorist.

**Keywords:** American Muslim, identification, representation, extremist Muslim, moderate Muslim

### INTRODUCTION

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 was a monumental day to Americans because of the unimaginable experience of grief and destruction. According to Khan (2003), "this tragedy made Americans difficult to comprehend the situation, because they think of this event as 'heinous crime'" (p. 56). It is because, Americans cannot understand why people would aim to do horrible things towards innocent civilians in the name of religion. In the aftermath of the incident, Americans were overwhelmed with shock, anger and hatred, at the same time as Muslims in America became the target of backlash through discriminating experiences such as physical attack or verbal harassment.

Following that day, the term terrorism also became popular. This word unfortunately tended to be used to describe terrorism linked to

Muslims and Islam. Therefore, a stereotyping mindset refers to terrorism as related predominantly with Islam and Muslim. According to Blin (2007), "there are three aspects that convince American to believe that way of thinking" (p. 413). The first aspect is media, because the incident, comment and testimony are broadcast live. While Americans can see, feel and experience the attack with their eyes, they construct feelings of extreme dislike towards the hijackers who are Muslim. The second aspect is symbolic. The World Trade Center was the heart of America's financial center and military establishment. It can be said that launching an attack on the Twin Towers is similar with showing aggression to the rest of America. The third aspect is statistic. Due to the a World Trade Center being a vital building on the central point of business, this incident resulted in a large number of victims.



Struggling against stereotyping, many American Muslims declared that Muslim does not mean terrorist. One of the examples of how they showed this was a Muslim trust. The project was simple. A Muslim stood and was blindfolded with a sign and accepts hugs. The message of this action is clear. Muslim does not mean terrorist, because Muslim and terrorist are different things. As uploaded on YouTube on 20 March 2015 by The Strangers. By taking place in New York's subway, there were man and woman standing and blindfolding with a sign, "People call me a terrorist and people think I am a terrorist, hug a Muslim."

One of the literary works which illustrates an attempt at breaking the stereotype of Muslims post 9/11 is the American novel, *Terrorist*, written by John Updike. This article intends to analyze an image of American Muslim represented as Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy. He is a second generation of American mother and Muslim migrant. In the absence of father-figure and growing up with non-Muslim American mother, Ahmad declares himself as Muslim. Although he affiliates with a terrorist group, Ahmad in the end leaves the extremist path behind.

In a nutshell, for the most part many researchers conclude their analysis by establishing Ahmad as the image of a terrorist without considering his fatherless background and his American background. Using those backgrounds, this research deals with the presence of a surrogate father-figure, his influence, and how this figure has an effect on representing an image of Ahmad as a moderate American Muslim. Based on the background given above, the main problem of towards and how those influences have effect on his image. This thesis is about the influence of backgrounds such as family and society towards American Muslims and how those influences have an effect on his image.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This article is under American Studies, which employs an interdisciplinary approach. In particular, in order to explain the portrait of American Muslims, it employs identification theory to elaborate the influence of others in the formation of self. Having appropriated Lacan's theory of the formation of self, an identification is developed through imaginary and symbolic identification.

According to Lacan (1949/2006) before individuals enter in imaginary identification, they will experience the mirroring stage. It is a phase in which individuals cannot master their body and know nothing about self and other. Moreover, the presence of parents who help them to move, eat and so for this seen as the capability of those individuals to do everything as they wish. This is why this phase is called mirroring stage because it means that individuals mirror their parents as the source of learning about self. That phase presupposes that individuals identify the other in the form of image or perception. That is to say, individuals have an image of what they experience in mirroring stage and directly enter into imaginary identification. To put it briefly, imaginary identification is about how individuals begins to perceive an image of a parental figure as their future self.

In developing self, individuals enter into symbolic identification. The sign of this phase is the acquisition of language. Lacan believes that language is a medium in which human beings represent themselves in such as, so forth will distinguish who we are and show how those systems internalized by those individuals (Lacan, 1949/2006, p. 31). As a process, this symbolic identification is a must in order to integrate into one's society. language and also get information about others through language. The knowledge of the self, other and world in other words is constructed by language and because of language human beings can act as "distinct" people (Sarup, 1996, p. 8). In addition, language is a system of society and culture in one's society. Therefore, this symbolic identification can be a culture, ideology and value of society. According

to Tyson (2006), “a response of individual to ideologies such as beliefs, values, and biases, its system of government, laws, educational practices, religious tenets, and so forth will distinguish who we are and show how those systems internalized by those individuals” (p. 31). As a process, this symbolic identification is a must in order to integrate into one's society.

The second theory is representation. Hall (1997) stated that “representation is a process to produce and exchange the meaning of concept in mind through language between members of society” (p. 17). It is a system that links between a concept and language that facilitates humans to refer to the real and imaginary world of object, people and event. The position of language is important because language is a “representational system” to stand for or represent things—ideas, concepts, feelings—to other people (Hall, 1997, p. 1).

To be used in this article, the images of American Muslims are categorized into extremist Muslim, transitional Muslim and moderate Muslim. Each of the images are constructed of characteristics such as thought, action and orientation. Those characteristics differentiate and define among images. According to Baqai (2011), “the extremist is a label of individuals or groups who are religious fanaticism because of justifying everything in the name of religion and tend to employ violence with the purpose of driving their beliefs, ideologies or moral values on others” (pp. 242-243). In a word, the image of extremist Muslims has characteristics, namely narrow thought, destructive action and group orientation.

In order to develop characteristics of transitional image, this study makes use of opinion that an extremist Muslim has the possibility of being a moderate Muslim as long as he internalizes American values and cultures. In other words, transitional image is a transitional stage in which American figures are symbolized as American spirit, value, culture and so forth. Khan (2003) argued, “moderate Muslim is a label of an American who is culturally assimilated with American society, value, norm, law and culture”

(pp. 191-192). In relation to this study, American values that takes part in developing transitional image are freedom, individualism and self-reliance.

The moderate is basically opposite of the extremist Muslim. Writing in a special report published by United States Institute of Peace, Maghraoui (2006) stated, “moderate label is accurate in showing the majority of Muslims who oppose violence, respect the government, value Muslim's tradition and reject the message of extremist such as destruction, hate and isolation” (p. 3). To come to the point, the image of the moderate Muslims meant by this study does not stand for an image of American Muslims in general, but moderate Muslim refers to particular American Muslims with specific characteristics such as critical thought, non-destructive action and individual orientation.

## **DISCUSSION IMAGINARY IDENTIFICATION WITH AMERICAN MUSLIMS**

The focus of this article is Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy. He is a second generation immigrant. Due to his cultural backgrounds, Ahmad undergoes his double identity. To reveal his identity, Ahmad identifies people based on spiritual identity such as Muslim and non-Muslim through two processes namely imaginary and symbolic identification.

Ahmad in the beginning experiences the mirroring stage. This mirroring phase takes place in Ahmad who is completely interested in his absent-father. The analysis shows that the mirroring stage for Ahmad means two expressions. First, as looking at mirror, Ahmad feels that he is similar to his father due to their physical appearance. Ahmad feels that Omar's shadow can be seen from his physical appearances as in the quote, “A warm , dark shadow ... I get my own personal neatness from him, I am sure” (Updike, 2006, p. 36; ch.1). Second, this mirroring phase has a personal effect on Ahmad. He projects himself onto a Muslim like an absent-father whom Ahmad

never meets while he lives with a Christian mother. Ahmad is into imaginary identification, while he is steered by an image and perception about his father. The image and perception of Omar makes Ahmad differentiate people based on two characteristics. First, it is Muslim. Second, physically the person must look like a Middle-Easterner.

This imaginary identification in the end guides Ahmad to substitute the absent father for surrogate father-figures. These figures have similar images such as the immigrant and Muslim. They are Rashid and Charlie. In general, they have function of influencing Ahmad in imbuing his Muslim identity with an anti-American's thought. While Rashid sticks closely to Quranic teachings and encourages Ahmad to practice the teachings consistently, Charlie, while supporting him by recruiting him as a truck driver, leads him in a different direction by providing the 'hooker' so that Ahmad commits a sinful action against an Islamic principle. To come to the point, Rashid is more consistent in promoting Islamic values while Charlie is more contradictory in practicing Islamic teachings.

### **SYMBOLIC IDENTIFICATION WITH NON-MUSLIM AMERICANS**

Ahmad cannot alienate himself from American society. The fact that he lives in America and never goes out of the States reveals that unconsciously Ahmad internalizes American values. Therefore, Ahmad is already American. Even if he denies his American blood, he cannot separate himself from American society and isolate Islamic point of view from American influence.

The analysis of symbolic identification is symbolized by American figures who are non-Muslim. They are Teresa Mulloy, Jorlyeen Grant and Jack Levy. In general, they have an effect on Ahmad, which is replacing the strict standpoint with a relativistic point of view. In addition, they also integrate Islamic principle into American values. Particularly, these figures have an

influence on Ahmad in different ways, such as Teresa who tends to implant freedom, Jorlyeen who speaks for individualism and Jack who stands for self-reliance.

### **REPRESENTATION OF AHMAD ASHMAWY MULLOY**

Based on the result of analysis on identification, the image of Ahmad is attached to the figures whom he follows. Therefore, it is possible for Ahmad to have more than one image. In view of that, this section will discuss how Ahmad experiences three images of the American Muslim. They are extremist, transitional and moderate Muslim. Each of the images has particular characteristics consisting of thought, action and orientation. Those traits differentiate one image to another image. Although Ahmad has three images, these representations are seen as a process for Ahmad to become a moderate Muslim.

In general, Ahmad represents extremist Muslim due to attaching to terrorist group. The novel shows that the part of terrorist group is represented by Rashid. In particular, Ahmad fills in for the posse of extremists, because he fits in three characteristics.

First, his characteristic is narrow thought. This way of thinking is from a literal interpretation of the Quran and taking binary opposition as a point of view. The result of those attitudes constructs a single interpretation of the Quranic verse and radical view as a way of thinking. The narrow thought, for example, is reflected on dialogue between Ahmad and Jorlyeen (Updike, 2006, p. 68; ch. 2). This quotation speaks about Ahmad who says an unbeliever as 'kafir.' Due to this term, this unbeliever is enemy and legal target to be killed. From that dialogue, narrow thought is manifested by separating people into Muslim and non-Muslim. In short, this narrow thought represents extremist as religious fanatic.

Second, the characteristic is destructive action. This action is from narrow thought which divides

the world into western and Muslim category. This categorization puts the western world as the oppressor towards the Muslim world. As the result, destructive action is in retaliation for that sentiment. Ahmad represents this characteristic because he participates in a plot to make an explosion. The novel shows that Ahmad drives a truck that is full of dangerous chemical to perform self-destruction (Updike, 2006, p. 294; ch. 4).

Third, the characteristic is group orientation. Extremist Muslims exist in the name of a group. Following that argument, extremist Muslims live in an organization with a system, member and a place. The novel illustrates the extremist organization through the role of member. Rashid and Charlie is the masterminds. The figures such as “operative, soldiers, units” are the technician of the truck and the bomb specialist (Updike, 2006, p. 246; ch. 4). Ahmad is “the driver”, an executor (Updike, 2006, p. 245; ch. 4). Maurice is a fundraiser who collects donation of money (Updike, 2006, p. 199; ch. 4). This group makes use of a mosque as a place to spread and maintain their existence. Due to this system, Ahmad cannot act based on a personal decision. Ahmad will act in the name of the group to proceed group orientation.

Later on, the image of this section is transitional, because the experience of Ahmad in this phase will move Ahmad from extremist to moderate Muslim. The signal of this phase is Ahmad begins contemplating and hesitating about the influence of Rashid and Charlie. It is because Ahmad has contact with Americans. They are Teresa Mulloy, Jorlyeen Grant and Jack Levy. The result of that interaction turns Ahmad to reevaluate his thought, action and orientation based on his personal consideration and intention.

In general, there are three characteristics, which influence the thought, action and orientation. They are self-freedom, which is from American freedom. This characteristic influences on Ahmad in the way of thinking; Critical thought

which is from individualism. This characteristic focuses on Ahmad who has critical thinking based on individual thought, consideration and judgment. This thought in some ways plays a role as a determinant factor to change from destructive action to non-destructive action; the last is self-help. This characteristic pays attention to the role of Ahmad as the core of consideration, judgment, decision and action. One example of self-help is the moment Ahmad turns destructive plot into non-destructive action (Updike, 2006, p. 306; ch. 5).

Ahmad represents his image as moderate Muslim, because he reflects moderate characteristics. They are critical thought, non-destructive action and individual orientation. The explanation will be discussed separately and briefly.

First, the characteristic is critical thought. This characteristic can be seen from the decision of whether to press the detonator or leave the detonator. In the end, he decided not to push the button, because Jack Levy “wants to die” and the Quran prohibits suicide and destruction (Updike, 2006, p. 306; ch. 5). This decision means that Ahmad does not merely follow what Rashid tells him to do, but Ahmad employs his thought to face the situation in a critical way. In addition to the example of critical thinking, Ahmad dares to ask the meaning of “infidels” (Updike, 2006, p. 76; ch. 3); Ahmad asks about his “delivering” (Updike, 2006, p. 76; ch. 3); and he has disagreement about the incident of “Nine-Eleven” (Updike, 2006, p. 187; ch. 3). These three events seem show that Ahmad internalizes and practices critical thought.

Secondly, the characteristic is non-destructive action. A moderate Muslim is in the position to reject and oppose any form of violence and destruction. The novel shows that Ahmad principally believes in non-destructive action. Ahmad represents non-destructive action, because he believes in jihad means no war. Therefore, Ahmad believes jihad is an inner struggle. As represented by the quote, “Jihad

doesn't have to mean war ... it means striving, along the path of God ... inner struggle" (Updike, 2006, p. 149; ch. 3). This inner struggle means that an individual is always trying to be a better Muslim by doing religious worship and improving the goodness. From analyzing jihad as inner struggle, it can be said that Ahmad speaks for Moderate Muslims who believe in God that supports creation rather than destruction. In other words, Ahmad represents non-destructive action and rejects terrorism.

Third, the characteristic is individual Orientation. This orientation can be seen from Ahmad who does not press the detonator and does not participate in the destructive plot. Those attitudes show that Ahmad has a different orientation with Rashid. While by doing destructive action Rashid aimed at making statement to the Western world, by doing destructive action Ahmad thinks that he will not obey the God by allowing Jack to have suicide by dying with him (Updike, 2006, p. 306; ch. 5). Therefore, his decision not to press the detonator shows that he already makes up his mind based on critical thinking, personal considering and individual feeling. Ahmad is free from group orientation can be seen at quote, "reassuringly he lifts the fingers of his right hand from the steering wheel" (Updike, 2006, p. 307; ch. 5). That simple quote suggests the expression of independence from another people. In other words, individual orientation is represented as Ahmad who does something because of following his personal aim.

## CONCLUSION

The process of identification identifies two groups. They are the Muslim and non-Muslim groups. The Muslim group consists of Rashid and Charlie. They in general instill Anti-American though in Ahmad. The Non-Muslim group consists of Teresa, Jorlyeen and Jack. They fill Ahmad with American values. In other words, American values will broaden their horizon which has the potential of making them more moderate in dealing with others who are Non-Muslim Americans.

Furthermore, the findings on representation show that an American Muslim has the possibilities of being either an extremist or moderate depending on whom they get along with. American Muslim is not basically an extremist. In a nutshell, this novel represents an effort to against a stereotype of Muslim by depicting moderate as an image of American Muslim as represented by Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy. Therefore, being Muslim does not mean you are definitely a terrorist.

Based on the portrayal of American Muslims, *Terrorist* presents two points. First, terrorism is the problem of humanity. In addition, secondly, there is no religion supporting terrorism. The argumentation can be seen from the representation of Muslims as vulnerable figures that the terrorist groups influence to act in the name of Islam. As a result, many Americans only see themselves as victims and ignore the fact that American Muslims also suffer from the act of terrorism.

## REFERENCES

- Baqai, H. (2011). Extremism and Fundamentalism: Linkages to Terrorism Pakistan's Perspective. *International Journal Of Humanities And Social Science* 1.6 (2011): 242-248.
- Blin, A. (2007). The United States Confronting Terrorism. In G. Chaliand and A. Blin. (ed.) and Trans. by E. Schneider, K. Pulver and J. Browner, *The History of Terrorism from Antiquity to Al-Qaeda*. Berkeley: California UP.
- Hall, S. (1997). Introduction. In S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage-The Open University.
- Khan, A. (2003). *Islam, Muslims, and America: Understanding the Basis of Their Conflict*. New York: Algora Publishing.
- Khan, M. A. M. (2003). Constructing the American Muslim Community. In Y. Y. Haddad, J. I. Smith and J. L. Esposito (ed.) *Religion and Immigration: Christian, Jewish and Muslim Experiences in the Unites States*. Walnut Creek: Altamira-Rowman & Littlefield.

- Lacan, J. (2006). The Mirror Stage as Formative of the-I Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience. In *Jacques Lacan ECRITS the First Complete Edition in English*. (Trans. by B. Fink, H. Fink and R. Grigg), pp. 75-81. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Maghraoui, A. M. (2006). American Foreign Policy and Islamic Renewal. *United States Institute of Peace Special Report 164* (2006): 1-12.
- Sarup, M. (1996). *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World*. In T. Raj and P. Brooker. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP.
- Youtube.com. (2015). The Strangers. "Blind Trust Social Experiment New York." *The Strangers*. Retrieved on 20 Mar. 2015 from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3\\_eGgPTtos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3_eGgPTtos)
- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (2nd ed). New York: Routledge-Taylor & Francis.
- Updike, J. (2007). *Terrorist*. Alfred A. Knopf. Penguin Books.

## **WOMEN ISSUES IN HILLARY CLINTON'S SPEECHES**

Elsa Emiria Leba

### **Abstract**

Women's rights to contribute freely in many life spheres are now granted by law. Yet, Hillary Clinton as a U.S. prominent politician still discusses about women's issues in her speeches. This article discusses about Hillary's views, types, and solutions of women's issues that are found in her political speeches from the year 2007 until 2013.

This research is conducted under American Studies applying an interdisciplinary approach, which uses anthropology, sociology, and historical-biographical disciplines, as well as reconciliation of tenses approach that bridges past, present, and future. The data are selected based on purposeful sampling with maximum variation sampling is used as the approach to show various perspectives about women's issues in Hillary's speeches.

The research finds that Hillary considers it important to overcome women's issues in all life spheres; education, economy, health, politics, and social that emerge due to the patriarchal system. It also finds that Hillary regards all issues in those spheres as interconnected thus they have to be dealt simultaneously. Hillary expects all society members, men and women, to be involved in overcoming those issues since women's empowerment supports human advancement as well.

**Keywords:** Hillary Clinton, women issues, women empowerment.

## Introduction

The condition of women has been transforming from time to time. Still, the common stereotypes that women are more subordinate than men lead the society and even women themselves to forget the fact that they are all the same human being that are born with the same rights to live, have their basic needs fulfilled, and make their own life decisions. It is kind of ironic, seeing that women actually encompass the largest group in the world, which means they also hold a vital position in society.

The United States of America itself, as a country that believes in egalitarian value, is inescapable from this problematic condition for women. Basically, the law in the U.S. has been accommodated to protect women from inequality. Women are now allowed to get access to education, employment, and politics and to receive equal treatment before the law. Even so, as the U.S. is a part of Western Civilization which relies on the patriarchal system, women are still seen as a minority group in the social order and viewed as dependent, weak, and submissive by nature (Johnson 86). Hence, women's subordination is difficult to overcome.

"Women's rights are human rights" was the phenomenal phrase said by Hillary Clinton or Hillary, one of the prominent American women's rights activists in her speech at United Nations 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in 1995 to promote equal rights for all. Hillary agrees that those phrases became 'a manifesto for women all over the world' (Gerth and van Natta, 2007; Abrams, 2009). Generally speaking, most of Hillary's speeches contain an inspiring 'can do' attitude that is

stated by Shambaugh (2010) as one of her biggest assets as a public figure. She also has the tendency to deliver her speeches with a strong optimist feminism feeling. Lewis argued that Hillary frequently, "[emphasizes] what women *can* do rather than what they are *kept from* doing, or their victimization...What seems to be clear is that Clinton chooses to celebrate women's successes rather than their struggles". In addition, Muir and Benitez also agreed that, "Hillary succeeds in appreciating other women who have made a difference in politics and in society" (as cited in Burrell, 2001). In general, Hillary's speeches focus on both the empowerment and victimization of women.

A lot of researches have discussed about Hillary and/or women issues but not many studies talk about Hillary's viewpoints of women's issues in general, other kinds of women's issues she encounters besides in politics and the solutions for women's issues from her speeches. Take for examples Scharrer (2002) in "*An Improbable Leap*": *A Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Hillary Clinton's Transition from First Lady to Senate Candidate*, Wachyuni (1998) in *The Role of American Career Women in the Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century: A Study on Hillary Rodham Clinton*, Carlin and Winfrey (2009) in *Have You Come a Long Way, Baby? Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Sexism in 2008 Campaign Coverage*, and Leslie (2013) in *Hillary Clinton is the only Man in the Obama Administration: Dual Character Concepts, Generics, and Gender*. All of them only focus on women's roles and issues in politics.

America as a democratic country has provided laws that support equality for all



but women's subjugation still emerges. This condition suggests that the law has not overcome women's issues. This phenomenon turns into the major trigger to do a research about this situation. This research intends to analyze women's issues according to Hillary in her speeches. Therefore, the problem of the article is formulated in one big question: "What are Hillary Clinton's views about women issues that are found in her speeches from 2007-2013?"

### **Methodology**

To acquire a comprehensible picture of women issues's in Hillary's speech, two American Studies approaches are used here; interdisciplinary and reconciliation of tenses. American Studies tries answering a question that is too complex to be dealt with only a single discipline by integrating other disciplines like anthropology, sociology, literature, politics, social, and economic structure, to construct a more comprehensive understanding (Smith, 1980). Meanwhile, reconciliation of tenses approach shows that time is not identical but a continuous and dynamic motion that relate is interrelated, which are past, present, and future (McDowell, 1948). This makes this research focus not only on the historical study that deals with the past but also acts as the bridge for the future (McDowell, 1948).

The theories used in this research are socialist feminism and patriarchy. Most of socialist feminists believe that women's oppression happens due to "class-based capitalism and its alignment with the patriarchal family in capitalistic societies" (Lindsey, 2010). Meanwhile, patriarchy can be defined as an ideology or a social

system that promotes male privilege based on the principles of male dominance, male identification, and male centeredness. As a result, it has the characteristics to; (1) be obsessed with control and (2) support the oppression of women to maintain male privilege (Johnson, 1997).

This research is a library research that tries to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). The data are Hillary's speeches from 2007-2013 found in *The American Presidency Project* from

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php> and the U.S. and Department of State from <http://www.state.gov/>. The research covers speeches written from the year 2007-2013, which are considered as Hillary's golden years in politics as she became a major public figure when she announced her plans to run for the presidency as a democrat in 2007-2008 and when Barack Obama became the president of the U.S. he appointed her as Secretary of State, a role which she served from 2009-2013.

The data is selected based on maximum variation sampling is used as the approach here. Creswell stated (2009) that this approach determines, "in advance some criteria that differentiate the sites or participants, and then selecting sites or participants that are quite different on the criteria". This approach was selected because it is ideal to show various perspectives on the research problem. Since the data are taken from the Internet, they have no page numbers which makes it difficult to quote some statements in the speeches. The data, as a result, are decided to be combined into the form of a book. The details and arrangements of the

speeches in the book, such as the title, place, and dates, and the abbreviation of those speeches when they are addressed later in the analysis of this research can be seen in the following tables:

**Table 1.1**  
**Speeches as Presidential Nominee for Analysis**

Presidential Nominee for Democrat Party (PN)			
Speech Title	Place	Date	Abbreviation
Remarks in the "Equal Pay HillCast"	(Unknown)	March 6, 2007	PN No. 1
Speech and Q&A on Innovation	Silicon Valley, California	May 31, 2007	PN No. 2
Mary Louise Smith Lecture	The Catt Center for Women and Politics at Iowa State University in Ames	October 24, 2007	PN No. 3
Remarks on Student Activism	Wellesley College	November 1, 2007	PN No. 4
Remarks at the Global Summit on AIDS and the Church	Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California	November 29, 2007	PN No. 5
Remarks on Foreign Policy	George Washington University in Washington, DC	February 25, 2008	PN No. 6
Remarks in Grafton	Grafton, West Virginia	May 11, 2008	PN No. 7
Remarks Following the Kentucky and Oregon Primaries	Kentucky	May 20, 2008	PN No. 8
Remarks on Counting Every Vote at a "Solutions for America" event	Boca Raton, Florida	May 21, 2008	PN No. 9
Remarks Conceding the Democratic Presidential Nomination	National Building Museum, Washington D.C.	June 7, 2008	PN No. 10

**Table 1.2**  
**Speeches as Secretary of State for Analysis**

Secretary of State (SS)			
Speech Title	Place	Date	Abbreviation
Remarks with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Kenya's Minister for Agriculture William Ruto	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute	August 5, 2009	SS No. 1
Opening Remarks at Combating Violence against Girls Event	New York City	September 25, 2009	SS No. 2
Remarks on the 15th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development	Washington DC	January 8, 2010	SS No. 3
Remarks at the UN Commission on the Status of Women	UN Headquarters New York City	March 12, 2010	SS No. 4
Gala Dinner Celebrating the U.S.-Islamic World Forum in the event hosted by the Brookings Institution and the State of Qatar	Washington DC	April 12, 2011	SS No. 5
Remarks at UNESCO Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education	Paris, France	May 26, 2011	SS No. 6
Remarks at Women Enhancing Democracy Event	Presidential Palace Vilnius, Lithuania	June 30, 2011	SS No. 7
Remarks at the APEC Women and the Economy Summit	Westin Saint Francis San Francisco, CA	September 16, 2011	SS No. 8
Keynote Address at the International Crisis Group's "In Pursuit of Peace" Award Dinner	Pier Sixty at Chelsea Pier New York, NY	December 16, 2011	SS No. 9
International Efforts To Empower Women and Girls Through Sports with ESPN	Treaty Room Washington, DC	June 21, 2012	SS No. 10

The speeches gathered are then analyzed based on qualitative analysis steps. The

steps are; (1) categorizing strategies in context (such as coding and thematic analysis); (2) contextualizing strategies in which Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is utilized; and (3) using memos and displays for reflection on theory, method, or purposes, and facilitating the relationships in data (Maxwell as cited in Bickman and Rog, 1997).

## Findings

Hillary declares that women's rights are human rights-the rights that are the real core of human beings, and that means women have the right to work, pursue an education, start a business, and be active in the nation's affairs (PN No. 5, 2007). Even so, Hillary believes that women's empowerment in the world is not only about morality and justice but also about a political, economic, and social imperative (SS No. 4, 2010). It is impossible to develop the world by abandoning the rights of more than half of the population of the world, which are girls and women.

The data reveals women's issues can be classified into five categories; economy, education, health, political, and social to make it easier to detect the views, examples of issues, and solutions about them. Nonetheless, Hillary's speeches point out women issues in those five categories are in fact interrelated, and therefore, they have to be dealt at once. She states, "Because we think changing the conditions of women and girls must go hand-in-hand; their economic, political, and social empowerment must be addressed simultaneously" (SS No. 7, 2011). Empowering women only in one sphere at one time actually does not

overcome women's issues effectively and efficiently.

### **Economy**

Hillary clarifies that, "there are still too many millions of girls and women who are uneducated, unhealthy, unfed, as well as treated inhumanly" (SS No. 4, 2010). Meanwhile, to enhance the progress of all humankind, the progress of women should be improved as well. In doing so, Hillary states clearly that it is really important for women to be involved actively in economy for the reason, "When we liberate the economic potential of women, we elevate the economic performance of communities, nations, and the world" (SS No. 8, 2011). Women's participation in economy improves economic efficiency and competitiveness.

In the U.S. itself, Hillary highlights that the main problem is women still earn less money than men for doing the same jobs. She describes that:

Women who work full time year round earn just 77 cents for every dollar that a man makes [for 60 minutes of the hour]. And for women of color it's even less. Sixty-seven cents for African American women for every dollar a man makes. And just 56 cents for Latinas. (PN No. 1, 2007)

Rising wages nowadays are actually desirable considering that energy costs are getting higher so the cost of daily needs is swelling up. The lack of equal income women actually impacts the family's income as well.

While in the international context, Hillary mentions that the common problems that

some women face are that they are one of the biggest unemployed groups in worldwide average (SS No. 5, 2011). According to Allais, unemployment is "not only a waste of human resources, a source of public social security deficits or a depressive element for global demand; it is also a threat of disruption to our modern democratic ethos" (as cited in Branco, 2009). Hillary believes that, "women who are free to involve in economy become one of the key drivers of economic growth and social progress create a more stable, peaceful, and secure country" (SS No. 4, 2010).

Hillary offers several solutions to overcome women's issues in the economy. For the U.S., Hillary proposed a new bill called the Paycheck Fairness Act that purpose was to overcome the payment gap between men and women (PN No. 1, 2007). The bill, will toughen the penalty for violating the Equal Pay Act, ensure the government to enforce equal pay laws in the federal contracts, prohibit the employers from retaliating against employees who share salary details, and require the Department of Labor to continue disseminating information about women workers (PN No. 1, 2007). From that, it can be seen that Hillary believes all people deserve equal access to employment, thus they also deserve equal rewards for doing the same job. She wants to ensure people's right to pursue happiness. All of this reflects her belief as a Democrat who favors government's involvement to guarantee people's welfare.

While for international women's issues, Hillary mentions several solutions. Although women's condition generally have improved better than before, Hillary

thinks that the awareness of women's vital contribution to the world's economy is still low. As a result, Hillary supports the adoption of a declaration for APEC nations that affirms the APEC members' commitment "to improving women's access to capital and markets, to building women's capacities and skills, and to supporting the rise of women leaders in both the public and private sectors" (SS No. 8, 2011). The declaration can be realized in various programs that support women to participate in the economy.

The U. S. government itself, as explained by Hillary, has two programs for expanding global economy; Pathways to Prosperity and the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP) (SS No. 8, 2011). Those programs try to involve the entrepreneurs, women in particular, in the economic process by examining and reforming the regulatory systems that rule out their participation and by assisting and facilitating women in entrepreneurship.

Besides presenting programs that are believed to overcome issues in economy, Hillary also expects that increasing the awareness of women's important role in the economy can create a paradigm shift in the society about women. The paradigm shift can be achieved by changing the attitude of the lawmakers, business investors, and consumers toward women (SS No. 8, 2011). However, changing their attitudes is not easy since the formal and informal barriers that prohibit women's participation in economy in the world, whether as employees or entrepreneurs, still exists (SS No. 8, 2011). Both barriers rule out women's participation in economy.

The formal barriers here can be categorized as structural impediment such as the laws, policies, and the government and social institutions system. Whereas, the informal barriers can be categorized as the social impediments, such as patriarchal culture, that regards women as incapable to have jobs, earn money, and be independent, or that women are in danger when they participate in economy due to the belief that women are the moral guardians of the family whose purity and goodness have to be protected (Collins, 2009).

These barriers come from the old economic concepts that have not adapted to the new economic realities or concepts of justice (SS No. 8, 2011). Those old concepts, as Hillary believes, were created in order to maintain men's higher role in supporting the family (SS No. 8, 2011). As a formal institution, government is the one who should secure the right to work through overcoming those barriers as it is where the policy instrument is decided.

All of these views and solutions presented by Hillary to overcome women's issues in economy, in both U.S. and international context actually reflect the ideology of Democrats. By urging all people that economy participation is for everyone, including women, plus by including the governments' participation to ensure equal economic opportunity; they all are comparable with Democrats' idea that government has to accommodate its underprivileged citizens' economy and other life aspects to ensure equality well-shared.

Overall, for women's issues in economy, according to Hillary there is a direct

correlation between the gender gap and economic productivity, the lower the former then the higher the latter (SS No. 8, 2011). In this 21<sup>st</sup> century where information is no longer limited by any borders, Hillary believes that the economy participants' age, gender, or other characteristics is not important anymore (SS No. 8, 2011). Everyone is contributing as the participants and valued member of global economy today (SS No. 8, 2011). Women can help lifting up a country's economy activities for sure.

### **Education**

Hillary supports the idea that all human beings must be able to get easy access to education. She explains that the power to learn, discover, grow, and reach one's God-given potential is the heart of human dignity (PN No. 5, 2007). When women are given the rights and opportunities in education,

...the benefits are not just economic. More education leads to more choices, opportunities, and useful information in how to live one's life. Birth rates, HIV infection, incidents of domestic violence, female-cutting all decline when education rises. Fully one half of the drop in child mortality achieved between 1970 and 1990 can be attributed to increased education for women and girls. (SS No. 6, 2011)

Gaining education gives benefit in many spheres. Educating girls and women, is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart one (SS No. 6, 2011).

For the U.S. region, Hillary notices the skill shortage in STEM (Science,

Technology, Engineering, and Math). Even if women can enter college nowadays, the common problem that exists is the lack of women's participation in STEM subjects. There are only a few women who major in those fields. Women actually can contribute as much as men can in those fields. By joining more women, newer perspectives and talents that can enrich a nation's research and discoveries can be obtained.

For international women's issues in education, Hillary remarks that women still represent around two-thirds of the nearly 800 million illiterate adults (SS No. 6, 2011). Besides women, Hillary explains that 72 million children, mostly girls, are still unable to enter schools, and hundreds of millions only finish primary school (PN No. 5, 2007). Education for girls and women even for one extra year, in fact, shows a significantly higher wage for women and girls, that is also increasing their, the families, communities, and country's living standard.

Hillary has several solutions in defeating women's issues in the education sphere. In the U.S., the pressure that comes from women's inability to compete and create new innovations in those fields like men makes them even more unwilling to major those subjects. Hence, Hillary tries gaining public awareness by telling about the falling innovation infrastructure and skill shortage in STEM, and convincing other women to be interested to take those fields as their major (PN No. 2, 2007).

Meanwhile, for international women's issues in education, particularly related to literacy, there are several commitments that the U.S. government has to ward off

the issue, as stated by Hillary. The U.S., for the instance, has partnered with the NGO Room to Read to support girls in South Asia who are at risk of dropping out of school (SS No. 6, 2011). The partnership has invested in school necessities, mentoring programs, tutoring and community organizing (SS No. 6, 2011).

The barriers in U.S. and international education, as it can be seen, are related to the society's view that women still cannot compete, either in education in general, STEM subjects, or even sports, just like men can. This reveals that apparently the belief that women's competency are in fact as good as men's is not spreading widely enough in the society. Thus the gender barriers in education that prohibit women from achieving their potential still exist.

Getting proper education can help women end their issues not only in education sphere but also in economy, health, politics, and social spheres. As the result, education can provide a solid foundation for active citizenship and social stability, increase social equity, prevent social exclusion, and strengthen the democratic social structures (Singh, 2005; Dufour and Curtis, 2011). Hence, the society, not only women themselves, must work together to overcome women's issues in the education sphere.

### **Health**

Women and health are one of Hillary's main concerns in her speeches. Women's improved health can create families, communities, and even the nation's stability, sustainability, and development (SS No. 3, 2010). Hillary believes that in

eliminating women's issues in the health sphere, the active agent that is expected to fight for women's proper healthcare is merely not women themselves, but also men; it is based on the belief that men's health is also connected to women's (SS No. 3, 2010).

For the U.S. women's health issues, Hillary does not focus merely on women themselves. She tends to see the issues faced in the health sphere as problems for all men, women, and children. To make the health system better in the U.S., Hillary sees that it is appropriate for family leave system to be boosted up. Improving family leave can protect the rights of people, mostly women, and allow them permission from their workplace to look after their sick family member.

Interestingly, Hillary thinks U.S. and international women's issues to some extent are related with each other. For example, Hillary sees that the spread of HIV/AIDS infection in both the U.S. and worldwide are related. Hillary expresses her concern that in the U.S. the infection rates of HIV/AIDS are increasing in poor, communities of color, and women. Similarly, the HIV/AIDS infection has also been increasing in younger women in developing countries (SS No. 3, 2010).

There are also four other common health issues that have to be faced by women in the worldwide setting. They are; difficulties in getting health care access, lack of family planning, and the unavailability of reproductive health and maternal healthcare (SS No. 3, 2010). In Hillary's speeches, women's health care access are often abandoned by the society due to gender and sometimes class

barriers. In many developing countries many societies invest more on men because they are seen as more productive.

There are several solutions suggested by Hillary for U.S. and international women's issues in health sphere. For health issues in the U.S. in regards to medical leave issues, Hillary believes that it is important to expand the conditions in the Family and Medical Leave Act (PN No. 1, 2007; PN No. 7, 2008). Apparently, this act has not covered several conditions that are really vital for American families yet. For example, this act is not effective enough in preventing people from losing their job when they frequently ask permission not to go to work in order to care for their newborn, sick, handicapped, or aging family member.

For HIV/AIDS infection, since Hillary considers health of women in the U.S. and worldwide as interrelated, due to facing the same challenges in handling HIV/AIDS infection, Hillary had an agenda when she acts as the Presidential candidate that consisted of four steps to deal with this disease. First, she wanted to deal with HIV/AIDS infection in Africa first then later in the U.S. It can be seen that Hillary wanted to prioritize the African region, where HIV/AIDS infection spreads widely.

Hillary also considered that it was necessary for the government to invest in HIV/AIDS treatments, improve health systems in Africa, and double the number of people receiving anti-retroviral treatment, using the \$50 billion fund that would be allocated if she was chosen as the U.S. President (PN No. 5, 2007). Then, Hillary also thought that targeting mother-to-child transmission issues was also

essential. It was believed that although the spread of the virus from mother to child could be stopped, the resources and system behind producing and delivering the drugs was still lacking (PN No. 5, 2007). Thus, voluntary testing with counseling for HIV/AIDS patients was recommended (PN No. 5, 2007).

The next step was that the government would invest in education to prevent the infection by teaching young men and women to be more responsible in protecting themselves. The third step in Hillary's agenda was that the government would also continue investing in researches that could develop an effective vaccine and a cure (PN No. 5, 2007). For the final step, Hillary would restart the battle against HIV/AIDS in America (PN No. 5, 2007). Hillary's agenda invited all parties, either the government, society, scientists, and academicians, to participate against this disease. In addition, Hillary also emphasized the importance for the government to embrace the social communities, like churches when dealing with HIV/AIDS.

Meanwhile, to overcome the gender and class issues for international women in receiving health care access, Hillary sees that it is important to change people's common paradigm to reshape the society's misconception about women. Social factors, such as the cultures in understanding the importance of health for all people often play an important role. Cultures, especially the society that adopts patriarchal culture, often create the differences in comprehending how healthcare should be delivered and who should receive it.

For the practical solutions in getting health care access, family planning, reproductive health, and maternal healthcare, when acting as Secretary of State Hillary often offered one answer; The Global Health Initiative. She stated at the time that U.S. government “is integrating women’s issues as a key elements of our foreign policy agenda and in, especially, our Global Health Initiative” (SS No. 3, 2010). This initiative is a part of Millennium Development Goal 5 for mothers’ health, which also contains another program to handle HIV/AIDS infection.

Since women and children are often treated as the weakest members of society, the government’s role in maintaining their health is vital. Hillary’s solutions for U.S. and international women’s issues in the health sphere shows her Democrat ideology; that the government wished to be involved actively in overcoming those issues. It is supported by Goldsteen, Goldsteen and Graham (2011) that the governments “have the resources [such as fund, partners, media, etc.] and legal authority to implement public health policies and focus on public health missions that private actors generally lack.”

Eliminating women’s issues in the health sphere does not only help women, but all members of society. Hillary believes that; “investing in the health of women, adolescents, and girls is not only the right thing to do; it is also the smart thing to do” (SS No. 3, 2010). Goldsteen, Goldsteen, and Graham (2011) suggested the same idea; it is the government, public, and private’s obligation to maintain and improve the health of the people using the necessary means and method within a

jurisdiction. So, it is important for all members of society to care about the inadequate healthcare women get and to try finding ways to fix it.

### **Politics**

Politics is about the process, substance, and impact of decision making (Munrou, 2002). Politics, basically, can be performed by anyone. It is important for women to be involved in politics so their voice will always be heard and the development of laws that guarantee their freedom can be monitored (PN No. 3, 2007). Therefore, a nation where every child and adult can achieve his or her God-given potential and dream can be built.

Women’s participation in politics is still considered low; meanwhile democracy without women is not exactly a democracy. Take for example women in the U.S. If women were silenced in the past by others, nowadays women are silenced by themselves. Hillary notes that more than 35 million U.S. women still did not vote in 2004 (PN No. 3, 2007). It is important that they use their political rights to vote for people who represent U.S. ideology. When women do not vote, they give up their beliefs, freedom, and right to disagree with people who do not share their beliefs.

Until today, in certain cases international women’s voices are also “underrepresented or absent altogether” (SS No. 7, 2011). When women want to participate in politics, they have to endure the isolation, intimidation, and violence. In some parts of the world, women are even denied access to power structures (SS No. 9, 2011). They also often get exclusion from decision-making progress which makes



them unable to contribute fully in politics. It is important, in fact, to involve them because it is also their future that is being discussed and decided.

Besides isolation, violence is usually used as a political tactic to gain certain political objectives. The objectives can be in the form of preventing women's participation in politics and maintaining men's authority. Hillary exemplifies that there are many cases where "sexual violence is used by governments [often ruled by men] to intimidate and punish protesters seeking democratic reforms . . ." (SS No. 7, 2011).

Regarding the issues in politics, Hillary offers several solutions. For issues in the U.S., Hillary tries to gain U.S. citizens' awareness by constantly reminding people that voting is important (PN No. 3, 2007; PN No. 4, 2007; PN No. 10, 2008). Hillary mentions her belief that "politics is the art of making what appears to be impossible possible" (PN No. 4, 2007). Even if actually human are born free and equal, in reality they still have to be protected. The protection can be gained through politics.

For increasing international women's participation in the political process, an active effort is needed to protect women when they participate in politics (SS No. 7, 2011). Either when she acts as a Presidential nominee or Secretary of State, she keeps on saying that human rights including women's have to be in the U.S. foreign policy (PN No. 4, 2007; PN No. 6, 2008; SS No. 3, 2010). Hillary explains that women, their issues, and their improvement have been involved in the U.S. agenda. U.S. foreign policies have adopted the principle of Millennium Development Goal Number 3 that

promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women as well.

The U.S. government itself, Hillary continues, also consults women about the design and implementation of U.S. policies, diplomacy, and defense that will give benefits to women (SS No. 4, 2010). In addition, the government will support women leaders' work and evaluate the progress. U.S. government considers women's suppression as a threat to the security of the world because it causes nations' instability (SS No. 4, 2010). Hillary hopes the U.S. will be the leading country that stands up for women because it is in line with U.S. beliefs and values.

She considers that any gender-based violence against girls and women due to political tactics is intolerable. It gives bad impacts to women, particularly to their life. The U.S. government has tried to protect human rights through diplomacy, development, and defense (SS No. 2, 2009). Any excuses that allow the act of violence, including in relation to cultures and religions, will not be accepted. Hillary urges governments of the countries where the violation cases happen to bring the people who are accountable to justice through transparent investigation (SS No. 7, 2011). This way of thinking shows her Democrat belief that the U.S. government should only use its military force when it is necessary.

From Hillary's views, types of women's issues, and solutions, it can be seen that women's ability to participate in politics actively is still hindered by male domination. Politics in fact hold vital keys for them to achieve equality for all. Many policies and decisions related to many

spheres, such as economy, education, or health that supports all human rights can be acquired or reinforced through politics. Hence, Hillary believes that to achieve an ideal democracy, one of the ways is that women can use their rights to vote and to run for public office actively so that the government is more effective in response to people (SS No. 4, 2010). Women should not let their rights to participate in politics be wasted.

### **E. Public life**

A society usually comprises of individuals whose lives are governed by religious, political, economic, and organizational rules that share certain structures, cultural norms, values, and beliefs (Goldsteen, Goldsteen, and Graham, 2011; Johnson, 1997). The term social used here focuses on the way the individuals live, and their relationship with other individuals and environment. In Hillary's speeches, she discusses about women's relationship with other society members based on social factors, such as gender and class, within a patriarchal society.

Overall, Hillary's views, types of women's issues, and solutions in the life spheres mentioned before reveal that the main cause of women's suppression in the society is because of the patriarchal culture. She discusses how patriarchal culture supports women's subordination. In 2010 she states that, "in too many places, women are treated not as full and equal human beings with their own rights and aspirations, but as lesser creatures undeserving of the treatment and respect accorded to their husbands, their fathers, and their sons" (SS No. 4, 2010). It is easier to allow women to blend into

patriarchal society than to challenge it. When women begin to, they are frequently ignored, rejected, or even worse, oppressed.

Unfortunately, gender discrimination is also supported by the government in some countries. As explained before, patriarchal culture leads men to have high control in every life aspect, including in legal institutions. Government is a state institution that basically has to protect every single citizen but since the majority of politicians and officials are men, the law often prioritizes maintaining male privilege.

Another issue for women in a patriarchal culture emerges as well. There is a misconception of women spreading in the society. This misconception causes the members of the patriarchy society, which are children, men and women themselves, to subconsciously have the perspective that women are second-class society member in which their status is lower than men's. Hillary explains that she herself experiences that kind of misconception; women are seen only as a homemaker, rarely as an educated and career woman (PN No. 4, 2007; PN No. 3, 2007).

Misconception, ominously, creates the perception that women oppression as something normal and natural (PN No. 5, 2007). The normalization of women oppression, unfortunately, also leads the society to have a tendency to blame women themselves for being easily oppressed. Hillary provides a case sample:

. . . Mukhtar Mai, a young woman who I've come to know, who was gang-raped in 2002. . . . She was forced to walk home naked in front her village, and she was expected

to kill herself. I mean, that's what you do. You get humiliated, you get shamed, you get attacked. It's your fault, you go kill yourself. (SS No. 2, 2009)

The society's view that women should be responsible for the oppression shows how male dominance operate in a patriarchal culture; that men are always highly valued and easily free from the blame.

There is one main solution offered to overcome the women issues in social sphere by Hillary. Basically, Hillary sees that it is important to change the misconception of women by reshaping a new paradigm (SS No. 5, 2011; SS No. 8, 2011). Hillary always tries to change the misconception, either when she acts as Presidential nominee or Secretary of State by constantly informing, reminding, and arousing public's awareness that women are also human being and one of important keys for families, communities, nation, and even humankind's advancement (PN No. 6, 2008; SS No. 2, 2009; SS No. 3, 2010; SS No. 4, 2010).

Besides rising public's awareness, the new paradigm can also be gained through challenging the patriarchal culture. Patriarchal culture has been existed for so long thus women themselves believe that their oppression as normal,

And I've met girls who have heard their whole lives that they were less than-less talented, less worthy of respect – until they eventually came to believe it was true...The principle of women's equality is a simple,...but the work of turning that principle into practice is rarely simple. It takes years and even generations of patient, persistent work, not only to change a

country's laws, but to change its people's minds, to weave throughout culture and tradition in public discourse and private views the unassailable fact of women's worth and women's rights. (SS No. 4, 2010)

Challenging patriarchal culture is not easy. It can be overcome by supporting any actions that promote equality of women in all life aspects. Although the difficulties are persistent, Hillary explains the determination is very vital.

Taken as a whole, women issues in social sphere contain the problems about the relationship between women and men to the social factors like gender and class in a patriarchal society. Those problems are not easy to deal with. Nonetheless, unlike other spheres, this sphere mostly gets in touch with people's mind since the main solution lies in the paradigm shift about women. The society needs to be reminded on a regular basis that women are just like men as a human being. Once the paradigm shift achieved, a great improvement of women condition in many sphere will progress simultaneously.

From all five spheres of women issues discussed in Hillary's speeches above, it is found that in overall women have contributed more in the economy, education, health, political, and social sphere than they did in the past. Nonetheless, their talents, opportunities, and achievements are still hardly acknowledged. All speeches show Hillary's thoughts that everyone has to work hand-in-hand to help overcoming women issues in all spheres as women's advancement also means human's advancement as well.

This situation also shows Hillary's viewpoint about women issues are actually not the core problem in the society. She believes that women issues are only a part of bigger issues in improving the life of humankind that need to be abolished. She suggests this idea in several occasions, whether when she acts as a Presidential nominee for Democrat party or Secretary States. She always explains that women's progress is human progress, and human progress is women's progress once and for all (PN No. 6, 2008; SS No. 4, 2010).

From the views, types of issues, and solution for women issues that Hillary is performing several roles when addressing women issues. The speeches found that Hillary has acted as a civil right activist, a Democrat who believes in progressivism, and a socialist feminist. As a civil right activist, she attempts to protect any human being's basic rights, including women's from being violated in all life aspects. It is based on the liberalism that emphasizes in upholding the rights of all individuals to have freedom and autonomy (Lindsey, 2010; Tong, 2009; McAuley, 2003).

Hillary is also found in her speeches to show herself as a Democrat Party proponent. Democrat Party relies its political ideology in liberalism. Today's liberalism believes that government action is needed to preserve individual liberty, promote justice, and reduce inequality (Ginsberg, et al, 2011). Democrats, in general, support the government to be more involved in domestic affairs, such as intervening the economy, supporting for federal social services, and helping the poor, minorities, and women, as well as in international affairs such as supporting for

aid to poor nations and opposing to the use of American troops to influence the domestic affairs of developing nations (Ginsberg, et al, 2011).

All of the examples of government involvement in public's life above are similar with Hillary's ideas in dealing with women issues. All of her speeches show that she prefers people's right to pursuit happiness that are violated have to be taken care of by the government under the law. She also often discusses women and other minorities' oppression in society to raise public awareness. Most importantly, she also presents many proposals and U.S. programs that help the life of unfortunate people, especially women, in both U.S. and large numbers of developing countries to lift their condition up.

Hillary as a Democrat, who enters the politics world, is aspiring to change the systems that underprivileged people from the inside of the government system. As her political orientation focuses more on progress for the nation and its people toward better condition, she is deemed as a person who believes in progressivism. Progressivism is a belief that changes in social, politics, and economy is vital to improve the lives of people (Eisenstark and Friedenthal, 2010).

As a feminist, Hillary proposes the idea that women subjugation is violating human rights. Changing women's condition "must go hand-in-hand; their economic, political, and social empowerment must be addressed simultaneously" (SS No. 7 129). She argues equality can be achieved by persistent works, law accommodation, and paradigm shift although it will takes some time (SS No. 4 109). As a result, women can gain more power to be autonomous. Hillary regards the structural, cultural, and

social impediments that are based on patriarchal and capitalistic system are considered as the challenge to women's progress (PN No. 3, 2007; SS No. 8, 2011; SS No. 9, 2011).

All of these statements that reflect Hillary's views about women issues make her can be classified as a socialist feminist. Her idea reflects this branch of feminism since she believes that patriarchal and capitalistic systems are the causes of women oppression (Chafe 131; Lindsey 15). Changing a society system by changing how society members think, feel, and behave in social relationship is important. Hillary, moreover, thinks that people have to work hand-in-hand to overcome those impediments. Women cannot deal with the issues they have by themselves, and this idea is supported by socialist feminism (Johnson, 1997).

From the view, types of issues and solution that Hillary offers to overcome women issues in her speeches, it can be seen that Hillary wants to promote women empowerment under government's helps so women can have the equal rights to participate in many life spheres with men. They also reflect her roles either as a civil right activist, a Democrat who believes in progressivism and a socialist feminist; they all show that Hillary is influenced by social liberalism. Social liberalism emphasizes in upholding values of individual liberty and social justice that can be achieved when women get equal opportunities to all life spheres by changing the social system under government observation (Ginsberg, et al, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

When women live in a patriarchal society they experience oppression as patriarchal values men more than them. The oppression occurs in many life aspects; economy, education, health, politics, and social sphere. Hillary sees that it is essential to overcome the oppression by dealing with women issues. However, women issues and their solutions are actually interconnected with each other. Improving one sphere can help other sphere to improve, but to achieve women empowerment effectively and efficiently; the issues in all spheres have to be dealt at once. Simultaneous participation from all members of the society, including men, is needed because the issues will not disappear if women fight them alone. It is also found that overcoming women issues actually grants more benefits than people know commonly, in which human advancement.

## **References**

- Abrams, Dennis. (2009). *Woman of Achievement: Hillary Rodham Clinton*. Infobase Publishing: New York.
- Bickman, Leonard and Rog, Debra, eds. (1997). *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Branco, Manuel Couret. (2009). *Economics versus Human Rights*. Routledge.
- Burrell, Barbara. (2001). *The Public Opinion, the First Ladyship, and Hillary Rodham Clinton*. Routledge: New York.

- Carlin, Diana B. and Winfrey, Kelly L. (2009). Have You Come a Long Way, Baby? Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Sexism in 2008 Campaign Coverage. *Communication Studies*. Vol. 60, No. 4, p. 326–343.
- Chafe, William H. (1977). *Women and Equality: Changing Patterns in America Culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Collins, Gail. (2009). *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present*. Back Bay Books.
- Creswell, John W. (2009). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Dufour, Barry and Curtis, Will, eds. (2011). *Studying Education: An Introduction to the Key Disciplines on Education Studies*. McGraw-Hill Open University Press.
- Eisenstark, Reyna and Friedenthal Lora. (2010). *Key Concepts in American History: Progressivism*. Ed. Jennifer L. Weber. Chelsea House Publishers.
- Gerth, Jeff, and van Natta, Jr., Don. (2007). *Her Way: The Hopes*. Little, Brown, and Company: New York.
- Ginsberg, Benjamin, et al. (2011). *We The People: An Introduction to American Politics* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.). W. W. Norton & Company.
- Goldsteen, Raymond L., Goldsteen, Karen, and Graham, David G. (2011). *Introduction to Public Health*. Springer Publishing Company, LLC.
- Johnson, Allan G. (1997). *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy*. Temple University Press.
- Leslie, Sarah-Jane. (2013). “Hillary Clinton is the only Man in the Obama Administration”: Dual Character Concepts, Generics, and Gender (in press). *Analytic Philosophy*.
- Lindsey, Linda L. (2010). Theoretical Perspective and Feminist Frameworks. *The Sociology of Gender in Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Pearson Publishing.
- McDowell, Tremaine. (1948). *American Studies*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press.
- McAuley, James W. (2003). *An Introduction to Politics, State and Society*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Munroe, Trevor. (2002). *An Introduction to Politics: Lectures for First-Year Students* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Canoe Press.
- Scharrer, Erica. (2002). An “Improbable Leap”: A Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Hillary Clinton’s Transition from First Lady to Senate Candidate. *USA Journalism Studies*. Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 393–406.
- Shambaugh, Rebecca. (2010). *Leadership Secrets of Hillary Clinton*. McGraw-Hill eBooks.
- Singh, Madhu, ed. (2005). *Meeting Basic Learning Needs in the Informal Sector: Integrating Education and Training for Decent Work, Empowerment and Citizenship*. Springer.
- Smith, Henry Nash. (1980). Can American Studies Develop a Method? *Studies in American Culture*. Joseph J. Kwiat and Mary C.

- Turpie, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Tong, Rosemarie. (2009). *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*. Westview Press.
- Wachyuni, Sri. (1998). *The Role of American Career Women in the Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century: A Study on Hillary Rodham Clinton*. (Unpublished Dissertation). Universitas Gadjah Mada. Yogyakarta.





## NON-VIOLENCE PRINCIPLES IN KING'S SPEECHES AND ITS IMPACTS TO AFRICAN AMERICAN SOCIETY

Eryn Gemala Putri  
gemala.p@gmail.com

### Abstract

This paper is aimed to analyze the non-violence principles in Martin Luther King's speeches and the impacts to African American society and reveal the consistency of King in practicing non-violence principles. This study is a qualitative research, which is conducted under a library research. To describe and analyze non-violence principles in King's speeches, the writer applied American Studies perspective of interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, it applies a number of related approaches in an integrated way: literature, social, and culture. The result of this research reveals that Martin Luther King is consistent in applying non-violence principles. Applying non-violence principles gives impacts to African American society. Desegregation in public facility and the legalization of voting right for African American society are the impacts of non-violence principles that initiated by King.

**Keyword:** non-violence principles, impacts of non-violence principles, public desegregation, speech.

### Introduction

Speech is one of the media that people can use to convey their ideas toward certain important occasion. Many influential people in the world such as: Martin Luther King Jr, Mahatma Gandhi, and Ir. Soekarno use speech as the media to lead movement. Martin Luther King is one of the prominent figures in African American history. King actively participated in civil right movement by giving speeches and leading several demonstrations and marches as his effort to eliminate segregation that occurred (Puckrein, p. 5). His contribution and his concept in gaining racial equality for African Americans make him a distinctive figure.

Besides King's speeches give inspiration and enlightenment to his readers, his speeches also reflected the social condition of African Americans who struggled hard to face racial

segregation in United States around 1960's. At that time, African Americans were not treated equally by the Whites. They had their own public facility and it was forbidden to them to use public facility that owned by the Whites (Johnson 1999: 891). Several ways are applied by the African Americans to fight against racial segregation. Leading a movement is one of the ways that African Americans use in fighting against racial segregation. Besides leading movement, African Americans also held a demonstration or march as their way to fight against racial segregation.

Martin Luther King was born on January 15th 1929. King attended segregated public schools in Georgia and graduated from high school at the age of fifteen. He received the B.A. degree in 1948 from Morehouse College; a distinguished Negro institution of Atlanta from which both his father and grandfather graduated.

In 1954, Martin Luther King became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. He was a strong worker for civil right movement. Because of his hard work, he accepted the leadership of the first great Negro leader demonstration of contemporary times in the United States. In 1957, he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to provide new leadership for the new burgeoning civil right movement. Between 1957-1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appeared wherever there was injustice, protest, and action. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the entire world (Bruns: 11-14).

In King's speeches, the struggle of African Americans in gaining racial equality can be seen. Not only become the reflection of the situation that happened in United States during segregation era, King's speeches also contain the non-violence principles that become the guideline for King and his followers to face the violence, riots, and discrimination that happened in United States. Feeling curiosity with this literature phenomenon, a research is done to analyze this phenomenon. What non-violence principles that King initiated and the impacts of non-violence principles become elements to be investigated in this research. Whether King is consistent in practicing his own non-violence principles is also analyzed here.

Five speeches from Martin Luther King are used as the data because they represent the struggling that African Americans face at that time. The way of King in delivering and persuading his audience is one of the reasons this research is done. Hopefully this research gives new information about non-violence principles that

were practiced by African Americans during the segregation era.

This paper, thus, is focused on speeches that have similar issue which were delivered by Martin Luther King. There are five speeches from Martin Luther King, which are: Rediscovering Lost Values, Speech at Green March on Detroit, A Letter from Birmingham Jail, Our God is Marching On, and Loving Your Enemies. From those speeches, the struggle for gaining the equality for African Americans is revealed. Each speech pictures the difficulties that King faced for gaining the equality of his race and shows his way in practicing non-violence principles. The analysis is limited whether King is consistent in practicing non-violence principles and the impacts of non-violence principles for African Americans struggle in gaining racial equality.

### **Methodology**

This research is qualitative study by using descriptive-explanatory way of discussion. According to Creswell in his book *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The main and supporting data are gathered from various journals, books, articles from library and internet that focus on speeches that were delivered by Martin Luther King. This thesis analyzes five speeches that have similar theme which is non-violence. This thesis uses library research, a research that based on any literature on library or internet as well and collect information from textbooks. The focus of this study is to see the consistency of King in applying non-violence principles and to reveal the impacts of non-violence principles in African Americans life. The method of

collecting data is by downloading all the speech texts through internet. Five speeches are selected based on the similarity of their themes. Five speeches are chosen for they contain the same theme which is non-violence principles that King proposed. The selection of the data was based on criterion sampling based on Patton (1990) stated that:

The logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance ... to understand cases that are likely to be information-rich because they may reveal major system weaknesses that become targets of opportunity for program or system improvement (176-177).

Because this is an interdisciplinary research, every book and journal that relate with this research also collected through internet and library. These information are used to give a better understanding. After collecting the data, the speeches are analyzed one by one so the consistency of King in applying non-violence principles can be revealed. After the speeches that contain non-violence principles collected, the analysis starts from categorizing the data gathered, choosing the data needed, analyzing the case from data, presenting the result, and drawing the conclusion. Additional information are also added in analyzing speeches to give detail analysis of the non-violence.

## **Discussion**

### **A Way of Life for Courageous People**

This principle is one of the non-violence principles proposed by King in his book entitled *Strive To Freedom*. Martin Luther King states that applying the non-violence principles needs courage. The courage that King means is the bravery and faith in applying the principles. This means that non-violence principles can only be

practiced by brave people. The courageous of African Americans can be seen through King's speeches. In his speeches King pictures the bravery of African Americans to practice the non-violence principles.

By not using violence, it does not mean that African Americans are coward. Applying non-violence principles needs courage and faith. Through speeches that were delivered by Martin Luther King, it can be seen that African Americans take the risks in applying non-violence principles. At that time, many of them had to be jailed, kidnapped, even killed. The others still stood to fight their rights. From a speech that was delivered by Martin Luther King entitled *A Letter From Birmingham Jail*, it can be seen that African Americans are people who have deep faith and courage in reaching their dream, to be equal with Whites. *A Letter From Birmingham Jail* was written by King when he was jailed in Birmingham for leading a demonstration in Birmingham. After being released from jail, he had a chance to speak what he wrote in jail (Trotter: 125).

In this speech King spoke, "So we had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community" (Speech 4: 43-45). This quotes show that King is brave enough to have a direct action as his response to Whites. Here he also assures African Americans to present their bodies which means to take risk as a way to do non-violence principles. In applying non-violence, African Americans have sacrificed what they have. It can be seen from many physical and mental abuses that they received along their survival. Here King reminds African Americans not to stop their struggle and still have spirit and courage to have direct actions.

Another speech that explains about this principal is Our God Is Marching On. This speech was delivered in Alabama on March 25th. King begins the speech by saying:

“A seventy-year-old Negro woman who lived in this community during the bus boycott—and one day, she was asked while walking if she didn’t want to ride. And when she answered, No, the person said, Well, aren’t you tired? And with her ungrammatical profundity, she said, My feet is tired, but my soul is rested.” (Speech 5: 4-7)

It is an illustration that shows the courage that owned by a seventy years old woman who still commits herself in practicing non-violence. The spirit of this old woman is highlighted by King in order to give the real example how non-violence principle is practiced. This picture also shows to the Whites that African Americans are people with endless spirit. The courage that they have is the weapon for them to attract Whites’ sympathy.

King in this speech highlights the courageous that owned by African Americans that King witnesses through along he led demonstrations and marches. They have walked through desolate valleys and across the trying hills. Their effort is clearly seen and they do not easily give up in spite of many obstacles that they have to face in practicing non-violence principles.

By giving the picture of courageous African Americans in Alabama, King tries to do two things. First it will show to the Whites that African Americans will never stop their fight. They are not coward people who easily give up when they are hurt physically and mentally. Second, it will inspire other African Americans in other places to also have bravery and faith in applying non-violence principles.

### **Winning for Friendship and Understanding**

Winning friendship and understanding with the Whites is one of the principles that have to be created. King tries to persuade African Americans not to take revenge to the Whites who hurt them. Instead of defeating Whites, King urges African Americans to create friendship with the Whites. Winning friendship and understanding will be the beneficial thing for both sides: the Whites and African Americans. It will make the situation between Whites and Blacks better.

In applying this non-violence principle, the understanding between two sides have to be promoted. Though, the oppressed have experienced a lot of pain from the oppressors, still the understanding and friendship have to be pursued. The importance of this principle can be seen from speeches that were delivered by Martin Luther King when he led march, demonstration, and boycott.

The idea of winning friendship and understanding can be seen from King’s speech entitled Loving Your Enemies. In this speech King explains the understanding will never be accomplished if there is still hatred and anger in their hearts. King said that, “The person who hates you most has some good in him; even the nation that hates you most has some good in it; even the race that hates you most has some good in it.” (Speech 2: 97-98). These lines refer to the Whites who hate African Americans. Though the Whites have so much hatred to them, King said that there is still good in them. It is not easy for African Americans in the beginning to see the good side of the Whites. However, after the civil right movement occur, several Whites begin to consider that actually African Americans are actually same to them and it

makes African Americans easier to build understanding with Whites.

Another speech that also discusses the importance of winning friendship is A Letter from Birmingham Jail. Besides this speech talks about the injustice that received by King when he was jailed by the Whites, King said that not all Whites treat Blacks bad. King is still thankful that some Whites respect African Americans by joining demonstration, march, boycott that are initiated by Blacks. King in this speech spoke: "I am thankful, however, that some of our white brothers have grasped the meaning of this social revolution and committed themselves to it. They are still all too small in quantity, but they are big in quality. Some, like Ralph McGill, Lillian Smith, Harry Golden, and James Dabbs, have written about our struggle in eloquent, prophetic, and understanding terms. Others have marched with us down nameless streets of the South. They sat in with us at lunch counters and rode in with us on the freedom rides." (Speech 4: 210-214).

What King said is the proof that winning friendship and understanding will earn something positive. When African Americans apply non-violence principles, some Whites turn their attitude and support them to eliminate any forms of segregation and discrimination. They also participate actively in march or demonstrations that held by African Americans.

It is hard for King personally to understand the injustice that have been done by the White religious leaders. The thing that King can not easily accept is the fact that these White religious leaders oppose him. As religious people, they should be wiser in treating Blacks and not to discriminate them. However, deep in his heart King believes and hopes that the understanding will be earned and more Whites

will treat African American as their brothers and sisters not as their enemies.

### **Choosing Love Instead of Hate**

This is another principle that is proposed and expressed by King in his speeches. The love that King defines in this principle is not merely a melancholy thing. Love is seen as a power to forgive and treat the enemies in a good way. Actually, this principle is adapted from one of Christian teachings. Jesus asked his followers to love their enemies and not to defeat them. In Luke 6:27 - But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you ([www.bible gateway.com/](http://www.bible.gateway.com/)). This teaching is adapted by King in order to make it easier for African Americans in struggling for their equality. By knowing the reasons and the good results projected in applying this principle, African Americans are expected to apply the non-violence principles in their movement. A speech that explains about the importance of loving enemies in order to gain peace is Great March on Detroit. King states that love is not limited with the definition of affectionate feeling. King said, "I'm talking about something much deeper. I'm talking about a sort of understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill for all men." (Speech 3: 119-120). It has been explained previously that love is a redemptive power. King states again in order to explain that love should not only be interpreted as affectionate feeling. It will be difficult for people who have been abused to have affectionate feeling to people who abuse them. However, when people see love as a power that can redeem and transform people into a better person, it will be easier for the oppressed to love their oppressors.

In this speech King also states that loving enemies is one of the commands from Jesus Christ. King spoke, "But Jesus told us this a

long time ago. And I can still hear that voice crying through the vista of time, saying, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." (Speech 3: 124-126). In spite of much pains that experienced by African Americans, King again reminds them through this speech that African Americans should not curse or hurt their enemies. Jesus asks his followers to bless their enemies by forgiving and loving them. Though it is hard command to do especially for African Americans who receive physical and mental abuse from Whites, King still urges them to love their enemies.

### **Defeating Injustice not the People**

This is the fourth principle that King proposes. This principle holds the belief that the thing that must be defeated in the African American Movement is the injustice itself. It refers to any systems that legalize the injustice to happen. It includes the system of segregation that occurred in the United States. King underlines this concept in order to make African Americans not to defeat the Whites as the oppressors but to defeat any systems that legalize the injustice. In Great March on Detroit, King tries to make African Americans aware of the injustice that they have to face. King says that they cannot wait any longer to be treated unequally. They should do a direct action to stop the injustice. However, King reminds them not to defeat the people but it is the system that must be defeated. In this speech King explains that segregation belongs to injustice system that becomes the social problems in United States. King said, "Segregation is wrong because it is a system of adultery perpetuated by an illicit intercourse between injustice and immorality." (Speech 2: 32-34). This sentence underlines the idea why segregation must be eliminated. In King's opinion segregation involves injustice and immorality in it. In this system, colored people

are treated unequally. They cannot use the public facility together with the Whites.

In King's speech entitled *Our God Is Marching On*, he also explains about this principle that non-violence defeats the injustice. King in this speech mainly discusses about the unequal treatment that African Americans receive in segregation. However King again reminds his audience to never defeat Whites. He said, "And so I plead with you this afternoon as we go ahead: remain committed to non-violence. Our aim must is never to defeat or humiliate the white man". (Speech 5: 214-215). King never hesitates to repeat the principle for not defeating oppressors in applying non-violence. It is very important command for it can change Whites' perception toward Blacks who are regarded as uncivilized people.

### **Suffering Can Educate and Transform People**

This principle urges African Americans to see the positive side of the suffering. The suffering phase in people's life can transform and educate them. Along with the suffering, people gain power and strength that can transform them into courageous people. The power that they gain along the civil right movement functions as a defensive mechanism to make them survive in the movement. It has been explained, in civil right movement African Americans suffer from physical and mental abuse. To defense and survive, the suffering that they receive creates power as their weapon to fight against racism. Applying non-violence principle means that people must be ready for any consequences. One of the consequences that is possible to happen is being suffered.

In *Our God Is Marching On*, King portrays how the suffering that African Americans face

becomes the power for them to fight against the racial injustice that occurred in United States. King spoke, "The confrontation of good and evil compressed in the tiny community of Selma generated the massive power to turn the whole nation to a new course." (Speech 5: 44-46). King explains to his audience that the suffering that African Americans face in Selma somehow gives a positive energy to their struggle. The physical and mental abuse that Blacks receive in Selma turns into power to change the situation in Selma better. A new course that King mentions in this discussed speech refers to the new way of thinking toward the racial injustice issue. The suffering that happens in Selma moves the African Americans to change the perception of the Whites who consider segregation as a legal system.

From what King said in his speech, it can be seen how African Americans have to face the hard time during the segregation era. At that time, Blacks had to see directly when they saw their family members killed. They also received physical abuse even when they were considered as innocent. Because of all injustice that occur to them, King says that the time for fighting against segregation has come. King urges Blacks to use their strength to not be plunged in this injustice system.

### **Universe is on Side of Justice**

This is the last principle that King proposed. This principal holds the belief that actually the universe is on the side of justice. It means that justice will eventually win. In spite of many injustice cases happened in the universe, at the end justice will win over the injustice. This principal is important for giving a better understanding for African Americans in understanding that justice is important thing. They face injustice treatments and it makes them believe that injustice can not be changed.

However, King through this principal tries to change the perception. King makes them realize that justice will eventually win over the injustice.

King delivers this principle through direct action and speeches. The speech that discusses about this principle is The Great March On Detroit. King portrays the ideal situation that should exist in the United States through his speech. King said, "Yes, I have a dream this afternoon that one day in this land the words of Amos will become real and justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." (Speech 3: 203-204). King delivers his dream so that African Americans would realize that justice is not an impossible thing. Justice will happen if they strive to make it exists. The word 'amos' refers to love and King hopes between the Whites and Blacks can love each other. There will not be any injustice cases and justice will exist in every place in the United States. By saying these sentences, King expects that the Whites begin to realize that injustice is totally wrong and it must be stopped.

The Impacts of Non-Violence Movement for African Americans in Gaining Racial Equality Applying non-violence principles gives a new hope for African Americans in gaining racial equality. Before civil right movement, they did not use certain concept or method in fighting against racial injustice. They only used physical strength and violence to respond Whites injustice attitude. Martin Luther King is one of the Black leaders who gives contribution for African American society in gaining racial equality. He initiates a new way in dealing with racial injustice that does not involve violence. Desegregation in public places is one of the positive impacts that was successfully reached by Blacks in civil right movement. African Americans in segregation era received injustice

treatment from Whites since they were segregated almost in all aspects of life. They could not get proper job, attend the public facility, and also they had to send their children to school that is separated from Whites school (Ladenburg: 16-18). In responding to this, Martin Luther King initiates a new tactic to end the racial injustice that occurred in United States. The principles are seen as the effective weapon to fight against racism. Demonstration, march, sit in, and also boycott were ways that they apply to protest Whites injustice treatment. In spite of obstacles that Blacks face, they persevere to apply non-violence principles in responding Whites injustice treatment.

Several demonstrations were held in the United States during the civil right movement. One of the successful demonstrations that was initiated by King is Memphis Sanitation Worker Strike. This demonstration happened in 1968 as Black workers respond for injustice that they received in their job. 1,300 Black sanitation workers in Memphis protested their terrible working conditions, discrimination, and low pay (Honey: 1-4). This movement can be seen as Black's temptation to gain equality in all aspects. Eventhough Blacks have worked hard still their wage is under the standard. King supports the workers in Memphis to fight against the segregation that occurred to them.

The sit in is another form that African Americans used in gaining equality in public places. The instruction that Blacks do in sit in is only sitting quietly and waiting to be served. Though it seems simple instruction, it is not easy to do since Blacks often received physical abuse during sit in (Friedman: 38). Blacks persevere in applying non-violence through sit in. They do not fight back to Whites who threaten them to stop their struggle. They prove that Blacks stereotype that is created by Whites

toward Blacks is totally wrong. They are civilized people with endless courage who never give up in realizing their dream; to be equal with Whites. Sit in finally resulted a remarkable policy that legalizes desegregation in public places.

### **Conclusion**

From the analysis of speeches that were delivered by Martin Luther King, it can be concluded that Martin Luther King is a consistent leader. King does not only formulate the principles of non-violence but he is persistent in practicing those principles. King actively participates in direct actions that aim to eliminate discrimination and segregation that occurred in United States of America. Being a consistent leader is not an easy job to do. King must face several incidents that endanger him. However, King keeps in faith that practicing non-violence principles would change the life of African Americans so they can be treated equally by Whites.

Martin Luther King initiates his own non-violence principles that make him different with other leaders. King gives a real example through demonstrations, marches, and boycott that he led. He does not give up though he was jailed in Birmingham. He applies his principles by not taking revenge to Whites who jailed him. Instead of using violence, King prefers to compose and deliver speech as his reaction to Whites. It can be concluded that actually his action is the reflection of the principles that he initiates.

The impacts of non-violence principles that are initiated by King give significant change in African American life. Though it takes long time for African Americans to be treated equally, still the non-violence principles play an important



role in gaining racial equality. The realization of non-violence principles through sit in, demonstration, and march can change the Whites' policy toward Blacks. Several policies that were used to discriminate and segregate African American's life almost in all aspects slowly change. Beginning with the desegregation in public facility, Whites slowly change their attitude toward African Americans.

## References

- Adjei, P. (2012). *Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Bosmajian, H. (1967). *Rhetoric of Martin Luther King's Letter from Birmingham Jail*. Midwest Quarterly.
- Bringing History Home. (2005). Mississippi Jim Crow Law. Retrieved from [http://www.bringinghistoryhome.org/assets/bringinghistoryhome/3rd-grade/unit-2/activity-5/3\\_Mississippi\\_JimCrow.pdf](http://www.bringinghistoryhome.org/assets/bringinghistoryhome/3rd-grade/unit-2/activity-5/3_Mississippi_JimCrow.pdf)
- Bruns, R. (2006). *Martin Luther King, Jr: A Biography*. London: Greenword Press.
- Blair, W and J. C. Greber. *Factual Prose*. Chicago. Scott, Foresman and Company.
- Bond, J. (1999). *Non-Violence: An Interpretation of Freedom Ways*. Meet the Press.
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. USA: Sage Publication Inc.
- Davis, R. (2014). *Creating Jim Crow: In Depth Essay*. Retrieved from <http://www.voyager.dvc.edu/~mpowell/afam/creating2.pdf>.
- Du Bois, E. (1996). *African American Political Thought, 1890-1930*. Garland Publisher.
- Franklin, J. H. (1991). *Race and History: Selected Essays 1938-1988*. Lsu Press.
- Friedman, M. (2008). *Free at Last*. Bureau of International Program: <http://www.america.gov>
- Irwin, B and Gordon, F. (1984). *Why Non-Violence? Introduction to Non-Violence Theory and Strategy*. New Society Publishers.
- Garrow, D. (1987). Martin Luther King Jr and the Spirit of Leadership. *The Journal of American History*, vol. 74, September.
- Goldfield, D. R. (1987). *Promised Land: the South Since 1945*. Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc.
- Guillen, C. (1993). The Challenge of Comparative Literature. President and Fellow of Harvard College.
- Harris, T. (2010). African American Protest Poetry. Retrieved from <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1917beyond/essays/aaprotestpoetry.htm>
- Heath, J. F. (1976). *Decade of Disillusionment: The Kennedy-Johnson Years*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Honey, M. (2003). *Labor and Civil Right Movement at the Crossroads*. Seattle: University of Washington.
- Johnson, P. A. (1999). *History of The American People*. New York: Harper Collins Publisher.
- Koliussi, L. (2004). *Language and Literacy in The City's Neighborhoods*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Association Publishers.
- King, M. L. (1954). *Rediscovering Lost Values*. February. Retrieved from <https://swap.stanford.edu/20141218223358/http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol2/540228RediscoveringLostValues.pdf>
- King, M. L. (2015). *Our God Is Marching On*. March 1965. Retrieved from <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/our-god-marching>.

- King, M. L. (2015). Loving Your Enemies. June 1957. Retrieved from [http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc\\_loving\\_your\\_enemies/](http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_loving_your_enemies/)
- King, M. L. (2015). Great March On Detroit. June 1963. Retrieved from [http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc\\_speech\\_at\\_the\\_great\\_march\\_on\\_detroit.1.html](http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_speech_at_the_great_march_on_detroit.1.html).
- King, M. L. The Letter From Birmingham Jail. August 1963. Retrieved from <http://www.uscrossier.org/pullias/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/king.pdf>.
- King, M. L. (2010). *Strive Forward to Freedom*. Beacon Press.
- Ladenburg, T. (2007). Discrimination in Public Accommodation. Retrieved from [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/teachers/pdfs/unit11\\_4.pdf](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/teachers/pdfs/unit11_4.pdf)
- Laurenson, D and Swingewood, A. (1972). *The Sociology of Literature*. London: Granada Publishing Limited.
- LaFayette, B. (2004). The Role of Religion in Civil Right Movement. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/pdf>.
- Levy, P. B. (2003). *The Civil Right Movement in Cambridge, Maryland*. University Press of Florida.
- Levy, M. (1965). *The Black Experience in America: From Civil Rights to Present*. New York: Britanicca Educational Publishing.
- Lewis, J. (1965). March From Selma to Montgomery, "Bloody Sunday." Retrieved from <http://www.archives/exhibits/eyewitness/html>.
- Lomax, L. When Non-Violence Meets Black Power. Los Angeles: Holloway House. 1968.
- Lyman, R. 2011. Stanford in Turmoil. Stanford Historical Society. Retrieve from <http://historicalsociety.stanford.edu/pdfST/ST35no1.pdf>
- Martin, J. K. *et al.* (1989). *America and Its People*. USA: Harper Collins Publishers. 1989
- Mc Dowell, T. (1948). *American Studies*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press.
- Morris, A. D. (1984). *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing For Change*. New York: Free Press.
- Norton, M. B. *et al.* (1986). *American Society During the Postwar Boom 1945-1960s*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Nimer, A. (September 2004). Nonviolence in the Islamic Context. Retrieved from <http://forusa.org/fellowship/2004/september-october/nonviolence-islamic-context/12208>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods (2nd edition)*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Parks, Rosa. *Rosa Parks: My Story*. New York: Dial Books. 1991.
- Parillo, V. (2008). *Stranger To These Shores: Race and Ethnic Relations in The United States*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Pilgrim, D. (2000). What Was Jim Crow? Ferris State University. 2000. Retrieved from <http://www.bringinghistoryhome.org/assets/bringinghistoryhome/3rd-grade/unit-2/activity-5/Crow.htm>
- Roses, L. E. and Randolph, R. E. (1997). *Harlems Glory: Black Women Writing 1900-1950*.
- Sitkof, H. (1981). *The Struggle for Black Equality*. New York: Harper Collins Ltd.
- Sunnemark, F. (2004). *Ring Out Freedom*. Indiana University Press.
- Summy, R. *Understanding Non-Violence in Theory and Practice*. Peace, Literature, and Art, Vol. 2, 2002. The Martin Luther King

- Jr, Papers Project. Retrieved from <http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol2Intro.pdf>.
- The American Postal Worker. (2005). Memphis 1968: Sanitation Workers Strike. Retrieved from <http://www.apwuiowa.com/memphis%20strike%201968.pdf>.
- Trotter, J. W. (2001). *The African American Experience*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Smith, H. N. (2007). *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Williams, D. (2005). *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People who Broke the Back of Jim Crow*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books.
- Zattz, M. and Coramae, M. (2006). *Images of Color, Images of Crime*. Oxford University Press.

## **THE POWER OF AMIRI BARAKA'S POLITICAL THOUGHTS TO THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN MOVEMENT IN AMERICA**

Irma Febriyanti  
Irma.febriyanti86@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

Imamu Amiri Baraka is an artist, activist, and also an African-American leader who was born in Newark, New Jersey. Throughout his prolific career in American literature, he was able to generate some important political issues in defending the Black Power which was a perpetuating challenge for African-American intellectuals in the 1960s-1970s.

This research is written under American Studies discipline, which takes politics to gain an African-American politics' point of view, sociology to explore the theory of race and social conflict in the United States, and cultural studies to understand the struggle of African-Americans towards white Americans.

The findings of this research show Baraka's adeptness in his dual role as artist and politician through his political thoughts which has a never-ending development of his political consciousness. Baraka's intellectual and political thought formation has moved through very distinct stages and they are: Black Cultural Nationalism, Black Solidarity and Black Marxism. His final political stage has a broader consciousness that reveals capitalism in the Western world and this revelation of capitalism declared its theme of death and despair, moral and social corruption with its concomitant decrying Western values and ethics, the struggle against self-hatred, and a growing ethnic awareness.

**Keywords:** Amiri Baraka, black power, political thought, African-American politics, and conflict

### **Introduction**

Over the course of political history in the United States, African-Americans have appeared in a long and rich spectrum. African-Americans started their journey in the New World with a struggle for a long time to survive and thrive in a democracy originally conceived by and for Americans from Europe (Scott & Shade, 2005). Ever since their ancestors were forced to be enslaved to the New World for nearly 400 years ago, they have persistently striven to overcome racial adversity. Even the significance and reach of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 signed by Lyndon Johnson 50 years ago live to inspire the nation up to this moment in 2015 and the striving events of African-Americans in gaining their equality are easily can be seen in many aspects of American life (Roy, 2014). Therefore, victories over slavery and the

persistence of discrimination and repression towards them are still an important issue.

After the horrible and perpetuating life of slavery in America, African-Americans had to experience Jim Crow Law in the United States of America. This law is a term used to refer to the widespread practice of racial segregation instituted in the Southern states after the end of reconstruction. Robert C. Smith defined segregation as the practice of the enforced separation of the members of a subordinate group, ethnic group, or minority group from the superordinate group. In the United States this practice mainly involved the separation of whites from blacks. It was seen virtually in all aspects of life, while in the Northern states it was enforced mainly in housing, schools, and employment. Segregation was also enforced by the federal government in the bureaucracy, the military, and in various aspects of public

policy. This segregation forced plenty of African-American leaders to stand up and precipitate the Civil Rights movement where political thought was needed in order to change African-Americans' positions in the society (Smith, 2003).

The politics of Black radicals which Amiri Baraka took part in contributing his political thoughts in the local black freedom movement in America which can be called as Black Marxism (Theoharis & Woodard, 2005) was a result of Black Power Movement promoted by Malcolm X on the local, national, and international levels (Joseph, 2000). From the previous statements can be said that Malcolm X's racial capitalism ideas after the Civil Rights movement, developed to be Baraka's political behavior: black radical. Hence, it was clear that Baraka was famous of his radical political behaviors and thoughts.

Amiri Baraka was chosen here for his abundant contributions on black intellectual activism. Baraka's experiences and involvements in intellectual activism reflected an African-American cultural tradition. This tradition was viewed as their way to survive as a family, or in this case: a community. A community of African-Americans takes part as the keeper of African-American legacy (McCoy, 2011). The community that he built and provided for the black youth and blacks in general could not be counted as a few. His contributions also rested in his spontaneous involvement in local black power politics, making of Newark a model of Black Nationalist influence within African-American political culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to now. Through the Modern Black Convention Movement, Baraka established Newark's Black Power experiment to be not only as a black political convention, but also as a national prototype for the black liberation movement. This convention created black leadership which later formed the politics of

cultural nationalism (Woodard, 1999). Baraka was a prominent political leader who made literature and his music as an agent of political socialization.

Amiri Baraka was the leading figure in the movement, articulating and advocating a variant of cultural nationalism in his poetry, criticism, and commentary. Baraka was well known for his strident social criticism, often writing in an incendiary style that made it difficult for some audiences and critics to respond with objectivity to his works. Most of his career and method in poetry, drama, fiction, and essays was confrontational, calculated to shock and awaken audiences to the political concerns of black Americans. For decades, Baraka was one of the most prominent voices in the world of American literature (Baraka, 2014).

### **Methodology**

Dealing with a library research in this research, the researcher uses will use a qualitative research methodologically with a social constructivism as its perspective. As the title of this study is about the power of Amiri Baraka's political thoughts, the issue of politics will provide evidence to validate a particular view of the world, which is clearly vital to the discipline of political science. The methods, after all, are intrinsically linked to research findings. With the analysis of documents and archives, I will connect the chain of events in Amiri Baraka's life. As Creswell (2009) mentioned the definition of qualitative research is as:

a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand. Their interpretations cannot be separated from their own backgrounds, history, contexts, and prior understandings. After a research

report is issued, the readers make an interpretation as well as the participants, offering yet other interpretations of the study. With the readers, the participants, and the researchers all making interpretations, it is apparent how multiple views of the problem can emerge. (p. 236)

With interpretative character, the case study begins with a detailed description of the incident such as the Black Power Movement, a chronology of the first two decades of events following the incident, and details about Baraka's political thoughts in dealing with the black struggle, the organizations he had made, and the conventions he had built for his community/society. Then, finally, the researcher uses will make an interpretation of those incidents and Baraka's efforts in merging elements of the Black Arts Movement and sections of Black Power Movement to fashion of politics of black cultural nationalism in the Modern Black Convention Center (Woodard, 1999).

This research consists of several materials which are a collection of original primary data and secondary data collected by the researcher. The primary data is undertaken after the researcher has gained some insight into the issue by reviewing secondary research or by analyzing previously collected primary data. The primary data covers Amiri Baraka's autobiography, books, and some theses related to Black Art Movement/Black Power Movement/Black Power Politics or Amiri Baraka's issues. The secondary data concerns on articles, website articles, journals, Amir Baraka's poetry collections and electronic books downloaded from the internet and also some theses' citations taken from graduate students of Universitas Gadjah Mada.

## Findings

Amiri Baraka political stance was built and created through many events and conflicts, each of them contributed and influenced African-American community in American history. Baraka's political thoughts which had encouraged him to stand up for African-Americans rights was influenced by certain social, cultural, and political background.

A social background examines and elaborates the position of Amiri Baraka as an individual who took place as an issue where he reflected his place and thoughts in the society. It was the unjust inequality that developed the most common type of internal conflicts in the making of Baraka's political thoughts. The domination of economic, cultural, or racial group was often manifested and authorized by white Americans and this produced the potential for conflict of such magnitude that it literary tears a society apart (Bartos & Wehr, 2002).

The result of economic domination by white Americans forced black Americans without many choices to live equally in America. As an African-American, Baraka could not avoid his situation of economic domination; being a black middle class but described by American society as 'underdeveloped middle class'. It has practically no economic power, and in any case it is in no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hopes to replace their condition and situation with bare hands.

The neglect of African-American history brought its society into the United States of America without its own consciousness and this became a social background for this research. The social background that is related to Baraka's consciousness can also be seen through W.E. B. Du Bois' *Souls of Black Folk* which represent the voices of African-American thinkers about how they were excluded from philosophical discourse for

several reasons. Du Bois raised a powerful consciousness which the wider white community had ignored.

Without a powerful consciousness, the American history occasionally overlooks the experiences of powerless minorities and later reinterprets their contributions to American society (Harrison, 2011). Therefore, Du Bois tried to figure this out through his work which is marked with the ascendancy of analytic philosophy, logical positivism, language philosophy, and the view that philosophy's proper role is servant of science. This movement of shifting paradigm left the social and political activism behind in the new focus on scientific investigations.

The investigation gave an insight that “black folk” have a fundamentally different experience of the world in every way—emotionally, socially, politically, etc.—in virtue of being black. In a 1960s *San Francisco Chronicle* interview, Baraka explained about his experience in studying in Howard University majoring in English with a minor in philosophy, “The Howard thing let me understand the Negro sickness... They teach you how to pretend to be white. This experience began a long-running condemnation of and disassociation from the black middle class or, as Baraka termed them in his interview with Henry C. Lacey’ as “false Negroes” (Lacey, 1981).

Using a conflict theory, the term “false negroes” was caused by Baraka’s consciousness contributed to understanding social conflict (its sources, the causes of escalation and de-escalation of violence, the negotiations process). The actual case of social conflict can be eliminated by having a political revolution because according to Karl Marx, political revolution has an ability to restrict the economic and social relations within the class struggle. One of African-

American class struggles in America can be seen through Baraka’s refusal towards blacks’ mainstream identity. This refusal was supported by his middle class community, which started to create their own society, which Baraka considered was detrimental to overall black culture.

For Baraka, the middle class later came to symbolize the failure of black arts, since, with more resources, middle-class blacks were in the best position within the community to explore literature, drama, and art beyond the mainstream concepts of white America. He tried to start and promote Blacks’ identity without white interference to tell and define the definition of popular art should be. The black artists were expected to lift up black’s dignity in the class struggle, from being underdeveloped middle class to be real American citizens.

As Franz Fanon described black middle class in America as “underdeveloped middle class,” Baraka developed his consciousness by using art as a tool to change false identity given by white Americans. He said in 1962, “In most cases the Negroes who found themselves in a position to pursue some art [...] have been members of the Negro middle class, a group that has always gone out of its way to cultivate any mediocrity, as long as that mediocrity was guaranteed to prove to America [...] that they were not really who they were, i.e., Negroes” (as cited in Martin, 1995). Therefore, artistically he claimed that as long as the black middle class’s aim was to be viewed by white America as not black, they would never be able to fully explore or cultivate a unique art form.

According to Bartos & Wehr (2002) in *Using Conflict Theory*, a deepening sense of injustice as it was experienced by Baraka, was shaping a monumental grievance among blacks and sympathetic whites, a grievance

soon to be transformed into overt conflict action in what is commonly known as the civil rights movement.

The Civil Rights Movement had a great value to black cultural nationalism for this movement had done many continuing efforts to renounce and claim their own culture to be a valuable part of American society. Without the fully admittance of black culture in American society, African-Americans were unable to have the same rights as white American citizens. Therefore, to see Baraka's cultural background, the researcher uses his point of view as a black man in the Civil Rights Movement to be related later on to his political thoughts. For a black man like Amiri Baraka, the Civil Rights Movement was a struggle against structural racism and for democracy for all, the African-American people continue to play a strategic role in the fight for progress. This culture of struggle is indelibly etched on the basic progressive and democratic political consciousness and basic character of the African-Americans (Tyner, 2014).

Similarly, many other black revolutionaries of that era, Baraka attempted to follow the path outlined by Malcolm X. Malcolm X's black ethos and his emphasis on the revolutionary black consciousness rouse the new nationalism in several of the most challenging lessons of Malcolm X: the modernization of black nationalism, the priority of black cultural revolution, the centrality of the African Revolution, and the necessity of developing a black ideology of self-determination, one reflecting the African American ethos (Woodard, 1999).

The popular themes such as self-determination, self-respect, and self-defense articulated by Malcolm X was an assertion of black pride and a reaction against the entire system of racism; blacks denounced white

culture, institutions, behavior, and liberal racists (Woodard, 1999). A reaction against racism reveals how blacks' goal of equality has been incompatible with the goal of continued dominance by whites. African-Americans were challenging this racism with law as well as word by the first decade of the twentieth century. The 'word' was formed into black writing where Baraka mentioned in his journal entitled *Afro-American Literature and Class Struggle*; it (the writing) was actually accompanied, reflected and exhorted rebellion.

The definition of cultural nationalism is a movement of moral regeneration which seeks to re-unite the different aspects of the nation—traditional and modern, agriculture and industry, science and religion—by returning to the creative life-principle of the nation. Furthermore, Hutchinson defines cultural nationalist as one who sees the essence of a nation as its distinct civilization, generated by its unique history and culture (Hutchinson, 1994).

This black cultural nationalism examined how Baraka's cultural politics contributed to the Black Power experiments in the 1960s and influenced the course of black nationality formation in the 1970s. Before Baraka's political thought emerged on this cultural nationalism, the politics of cultural nationalism was confined to a small circle of students, artists, and intellectuals. In terms of black nationality formation, it remained a head full of radical ideas but separated from the body of the black community (Baraka, 1976).

The new generation of militant Black Power was the first phase of Amiri Baraka's political development where it was a formative period during which he emerged as a revolutionary artist and a radical intellectual and in Newark, Baraka rose as the head of the Modern Black



Convention Movement. Baraka's ability to translate his radical belief into sustain mass political action had shown America how his power of political thoughts was different from the previous black nationalist intellectuals who experienced important personal transformations, but they had extreme difficulties translating their radical beliefs into sustained mass political action (Hudson, 1973).

Even so, those personal transformations of writers were significant in Baraka's political thought because they had set the stage for the larger battles to come in the next black nationality formation. Baraka's moving narratives of individual transformation in *Home* along with Malcolm X in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and Eldridge Cleaver in *Soul on Ice* constructed a radical black identity, purpose, and direction for many black activists. Those narrative, poetic, and dramatic accounts of self-transformation inspired millions in the black national community to imagine black nationhood in White America (Anderson, 1983). This was where Baraka had a role both as an artist and a cultural theorist, in association with Askia Muhammad Toure and Larry Neal, sparked the explosive Black Arts Movement, which galvanized thousands of African American artists and writers; this upsurge prepared the path for the politics of the Modern Black Convention Movement.

The ability to have a free communication was gained through black political convention which created a common culture by "averaging" the beliefs, values, and expectations that the individual members bring into the group (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). It is showed how free communication as a tool which produces so called communal values and in this case is; black culture. Moreover, free communication can also promote conflict solidarity and this solidarity was poured into

Baraka's political Thought in the Modern Black Convention Movement.

Between 1967 and 1972 the politics of black cultural nationalism crystallized in the Modern Black Convention Movement, and Imamu Amiri Baraka sought to establish Newark's Black Power experiment and its black political conventions as a national prototype for the black liberation movement. As a cultural nationalist, Baraka used the black conventions to represent the core of the nation becoming to the "liberation" or freedom of African-Americans.

Those conventions/assemblies were the gathering at which the nation took definitive shape. Thus, the black political assemblies were the centerpiece of Baraka's politics of cultural nationalism, that is, the heart of the strategy of nationality formation. Under Baraka's leadership, elements of the Black Arts Movement and sections of the Black Power Movement merged to fashion the politics of black cultural nationalism in the Modern Black Convention Movement. Baraka's black political convention signaled a new stage in black nationality formation, and that new identity and consciousness developed in the context of group conflict: black against white.

Conflict group between white and black Americans led Baraka to increase group solidarity. By forming a group solidarity to deal with the perpetuating conflict, Baraka interacted with his community fairly and regularly and using a conflict theory, this interaction is seen as a crucial ingredient of "groupness," not only because it establishes relationships between individuals but also because it tends to create features that are essential for a group's existence, such as group solidarity, identity, and culture (Homans, 1950).

The formative political influences of Amiri Baraka was not only came from Malcolm X who had started a black national consciousness and contributed to the early development of the black freedom movement, but also from various revolutionary leaders from many other countries such as Fidel Castro (Cuba) and Mao Zedong (China) to Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Sekou Toure (Guinea). Different from Malcolm X, Amiri Baraka's path to black consciousness represents the other important route to Black Nationalism, the road traveled by students and revolutionary intellectuals who had been inspired him through all his youth from various countries.

Baraka was intensely affected by the political success of the Cuban revolution. In celebration of the revolution's victory over the Batista forces, Jones edited *Fidel Castro, January 1, 1959*, a small pamphlet of collected poetry by Kerouac, Ron Loewinsohn, Joel Oppenheimer, Gilbert Sorrentino, and Jones, among others. Less political than it might seem, the origins of the pamphlet lay in the Errol Flynn-like images through which Jones imagined Castro: "The Cuban thing seemed a case of classic Hollywood proportions" (Watts, 2001). In addition, Baraka's visit to Cuba and his encounters with some revolutionary leaders, such as Fidel Castro in Cuba, Mohammed Babu in Tanzania, Robert F. Williams and Malcolm X in Black Revolt took shape in the early 1960s and challenged his identity both as a writer and as a man (Woodard, 1999).

The emergence of black politics in Newark, New Jersey, was accompanied by "group trauma," the kind of "collective suffering" that stimulated the development of a collective nationality consciousness (Bayor, 1978). On issues ranging from public education to welfare, Baraka's intellectual role was to remake black political landscape. Different

from the previous cultural nationalists before him who were the top-down middle class leadership of traditional black intellectual groups, Baraka fundamentally altered the composition of black leadership in his community to include a new cohort of neighborhood-based working class and female black community activists.

This strategy was a new and distinctive style of expressive politics crystallized in Newark, New Jersey; it was a dynamic movement combining the politics of black nationality formation with the modernization of cultural nationalism (Woodard, 1999). Placing the foundation for a black and Puerto Rican alliance was essential for the rise of the Black Power experiment in Newark; together African Americans and Puerto Ricans constituted some 65 percent of the city's population. Galvanized by an alliance of people of color against white racism, the campaign pulled various oppressed cultures of black, Latino, and progressive white voters under the banner of the Black and Puerto Rican Political Convention's "Community Choice" slate (Young, 2006).

This political thought of Baraka about modern black cultural nationalism drew a parallel between struggles against racial and class oppression in the US and movements abroad against colonialism and imperialism (Geary, 2008). The politics of cultural nationalism proposed a strategy of black liberation involving struggles for regional autonomy in urban centers and in this case, according to Baraka, they were the oppressed people of color in the United States: Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans. The development of racial politics took place in formation with the rise of a second type of black ghetto in the United States (Woodard, 1999).

The most remarkable of Baraka's commitment to black cultural nationalism was that creative

experimentation with organizations, agendas, and institutions was a way forward. He believed that African-American had a great storehouse of creative energy that urban youth had tremendous untapped potential that was essential to the regeneration of black America. It was the legacy of Malcolm X's black self-determination that Baraka used to intervene or mediate college students, artists, and intellectuals on the side of the grassroots, a great deal was possible (Allen, 1970).

Baraka's political thought on cultural nationalism was related to Black Art and black activism which played a vivid complexity in the concrete activism he was involved in. Being held from 1960s to 1970s, black cultural nationalism was a long struggle which characterized its long dynamics. He was conscious of the hardships that African-Americans encountered during their search for identity, purpose and direction that shaped cultural nationalism. Black arts was one of the most important political experiments of Baraka which started from small circles of students and artists. However, the great lesson of struggle that Baraka had been done to his community was that he was committed to black cultural nationalism through creative and artistic experiments with organizations, agendas and institutions. It was the Modern Black Convention Movement that gave such a great storehouse of creative energy and that urban youth had tremendous untapped potential that was essential to the regeneration of black America.

From the earlier discussion the researcher has mentioned about how free interaction or free communication among blacks in the Modern Black Convention Movement (MBCM) promotes the creation of any culture (Homans, 1950) and promotes acceptance of common goals: so-called communal values (Bartos & Wehr, 2002). However, seeing this through a conflict theory, free communication can also

promote conflict solidarity. Some features that are essentials for a group's existence such as a group solidarity, identity, and culture, an interaction among the group of members are seen as a crucial ingredient. Not only it tends to create such features, but it also establishes relationships between individuals.

The struggle to achieve a black nationality formation developed a conflict culture within Baraka's community in Newark as the local political arena to the national political stage which marks the most important phase of the politics of cultural nationalism as well as the birth of a national political community (Woodard, 1999). MBCM was the genesis of that political community which supported four national organizations: the Congress of African People (CAP), the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC), the Black Women's United Front (BWUF), and the National Black Assembly (NBA).

By bringing up the issue of black solidarity, Baraka blew up his own pride as an African-American. His black pride tells us everything we need to know about his political thought. Just like Juliet Hooker in her *Race and the Politics of Solidarity*, Baraka viewed black solidarity not only as a political tactic, but also as the way his race works through the body, in a visual register, thus has the effect of spatially determining the boundaries of those whom he saw as his political and intellectual equals and those whose unmerited pain and suffering need not concern him,

Thus, in this case, racial seeing in black solidarity has tremendous consequences for gaining his political solidarity, as solidarity is crucially dependent on vision and imagination. Baraka's ability to create many creative and important black conventions together along with his arts has made him to be a great

political leader and established a political transformation for African-Americans in the United States. It is not accidental that solidarity is routinely described in terms of the capacity to envision a shared collective identity, which Baraka described it later as a collective suffering or collective injustice. (Hooker, 2009)

As the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept, the Black Arts Movement led by Baraka envisioned an arts that spoke directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America. The Black Arts Movement had given a belief where there would be an imminent demise of West and the simultaneous rise of the black world, which might have generated a vicarious sense of empowerment for they invoked a teleology of black emancipation (Watts, 2001). However Watts explained that kind of doctrine was a confusing analysis because it was an unlikely historical change that would ultimately bring the west to its knees and the African diaspora to ascendance. This was where Baraka entered his new consciousness towards some new groups who adopted a Marxism-Leninism.

Being committed to the improvement of his nation, as an artist, Baraka viewed that the values of Western capitalism did not fit the people of America. Instead, he believed that by approaching the ills of the nation through a Marxist worldview, individuals could come to a deeper resolution. His poetry during this period marked a seemingly never-ending development of consciousness, whereby Baraka did not operate as an individual but as a voice for the masses (Al-Otaibi, 2010). This was where Baraka's consciousness went wider into the Western world's history of imperialism which recited the long and perpetuable history of enslaved blacks in America.

Thus, Baraka's consciousness grew up wider from an ideology of race superiority and its inequality to a world of capitalism in a form of America, as Taylor Patrick elaborated race as an ideology in his examination of Fanon's theories, "race is emphasized over class, with the result that capitalist relations of production and the related social inequities remain untouched in the neocolonial regime", leading Nationalism to play into the hands of the oppressor rather than causing any real freedom of consciousness.

### **Conclusion**

In the United States of America, African-Americans have been living a perpetuating journey to gain an identity as a legal citizen. It took more than a hundred year to be treated equally, especially in American Politics. This research analyzes one of the black leaders in the United States named Imamu Amiri Baraka. Baraka was a prolific artist as he published many literature works with many political themes. He was well-known as a race leader for defending the African-American race in the United States, but the way he used his political thoughts and ideas were quite different from the previous black leaders before him.

Choosing politics as his main weapon in facing the reality around him was brilliant since politics gave African-Americans more power in the American society to survive in the middle of race-conflict and class struggle in the United States. To analyze Baraka's political thoughts, this research is started with the theory of power which leads the readers to the central challenges facing American society: ideological conflict, crime and violence, racism and sexism, community problems, poverty and powerlessness, globalization, and international relations.

The changing political thoughts of Baraka from time to time was reflected and represented through his changed name from Leroi Jones to Imamu Amiri Baraka. As an activist and artist at the same time, Baraka's quest to recover his consciousness motivated him to attempt and define black politics and black aesthetic. He accomplished this life-changing identity by embracing pseudo-African traditions, an immersion in black community and culture, and a violent denial of the white and middle-class black bourgeoisie. When he changed his name from LeRoi Jones to Imamu Amiri Baraka, he assumed his role as a spiritual leader of a community, which was signified by the title "Imamu", and embraced a new identity. These alterations of his public self-signified his deep desire for change and the creation of a new conscious self and nation.

Baraka's ever-changing political thoughts which had encouraged him to stand up for African-Americans rights was influenced by certain social, cultural, and political background. The social background influencing Baraka's political thoughts were started from his own experience as a part of black middle-class. Being born as an African-American in white dominations, Baraka grew up to be critical about his own society. There was a social conflict which led him to be conscious that without having a class struggle, African-American would remain an underdeveloped class. In other words, Baraka's social background could be traced back to the neglect of African-American history ever since it was started with a slavery bondage.

Not only social background which was important in the quest of Baraka's political thoughts, but also cultural and political background of Baraka as a race leader in the Black Power Movement. Baraka's cultural background in this research was begun with

the Civil Rights Movement where the previous black leaders such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. articulated popular themes as self-determination, self-respect, and self-defense. It was a black pride's reaction against the entire system of racism; blacks denounced white culture or to put it differently it was a reaction against racism. While the social and cultural background related to the demand for Black Power to close a long chapter of legal segregation in American life, the political background of Amiri Baraka demanded a larger battle to come in the next black nationality formation. This black nationality formation was inspired and cause by racial oppression, nationality conflict, and ethnic competition in the United States, thus Baraka used politics in his own way as a tool to form his own aspirations as an artist and black intellectual.

The power of Baraka's political thoughts shows the functions of social conflict in the process of social change regarding and stressing on his ability of expressing and supporting African-American politics in his works as an ultimate tool. His political thoughts find the connection between power and social conflict in a society by providing a critical review of theorizing about the two domains, between white Americans and black Americans. Baraka's struggle for black liberation and equal opportunities in the U.S. after the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s showed his contributions in changing the social system. The researcher proposes some theories in studying this research with American Studies approach and those theories are Social-Conflict theory and African-American Politics.

By revealing Amiri Baraka's attempt to redefine political and artistic expression to better reflect a black perspective, this research has explored the origins of Baraka's intellectual activism or in this term is named

as Baraka's political thoughts. Baraka intellectual and political thought formation had moved through very distinct stages. As we could see from this research that throughout his prolific career, Baraka showed us the most important political experiments of political thoughts was the Modern Black Convention Movement where he planted a valid and new black culture to African-Americans, especially in Newark: the black nationality formation through Black Culturalism, the community control through Black Solidarity and a wider perspective of blacks in Black Marxism.

In Black Cultural Nationalism, the native intellectual remembered his authentic identity and kicks against attempts to assimilate him. He was able to recognize himself as part of the black community and a new black aesthetic tradition and, from this foundation, he moved to build a consciousness based on realism and action. This phase of political thought was his own cultural alienation, the native intellectual's attempts at cultural reaffirmation stop at romanticizations of bygone days corrected by philosophical traditions and aesthetic conventions borrowed from the world of the colonizer.

Black Cultural Nationalism did bring a huge impact for Black America, however, to prolong its value and existence in the United States, Baraka later promoted Black Solidarity to nurture a new generation of Black Power organizations under the Modern Black Convention Movement (MBCM) and led the convention to be a center for the development of national black leadership in a number of ways.

Finally, the last political thought of Baraka is: Black Marxism. As the third political thought, Black Marxism showed Baraka's expansive efforts of his shift to Marxism and the economics at the heart of the racial struggle. He believed that he was able to approach the ills of the nation through a Marxist worldview

and inspired other minorities in America and around the world to come to a deeper resolution in dealing with capitalism.

Baraka has played an important role in the leadership of each of those three movements and their distinct ideologies, first as a cultural nationalist breaking conventions out of disillusioned rebellion, then as a black leader collecting and calling for black solidarity. He has worked tirelessly for the development of the world around him first on the basis of race and then on economics through his belief in Marxism.

The findings in this research show the twofold development of the poet and nation. This last chapter indicates that Baraka's ability to live up to the expected role of an artist using art and poetry as a weapon for social change is dependent upon and shaped by the ideological shifts and political fragmentation characterizing race in America.

Amiri Baraka had a broader consciousness that the reason behind this class oppression towards African-Americans were related to America being a huge part of capitalism in the Western world and it declared its theme of death and despair, moral and social corruption with its concomitant decrying of Western values and ethics, the struggle against self-hatred, and a growing ethnic awareness.

Having analyzed Baraka's political thoughts, this research is able to find that Baraka's political thought is a never-ending development of his political consciousness. This statement is taken from the study's major hypothesis that Baraka's different stances and poetic expressions attest to an ever-developing, ever-changing consciousness centered on his identification as a black man in a Western world of capitalism.

## **References**

- Allen, R. L. (1970). *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*. New York: Anchor.
- Al-Otaibi, M. A. (2010). *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka: The Development of a Black Poet's Consciousness*. Riyadh: King Saud University.
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Baraka, A. (1984). *The Autobiography of Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka*. New York: Freundlich Books.
- Bartos, O. J., & Wehr, P. (2002). *Using Conflict Theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bayor, R. H. (1978). *Neighbors in Conflict: The Irish, Germans, Jews, and Italians of New York City 1929-194*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Denzin, N. K. (2003). Reading and Writing Performance. *Qualitative Research Vol. 3 (2)*, 243-268.
- Geary, D. (2008). Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a US. Third World Left. *Journal of American Studies, Vol. 42, No. 2*, 384-385.
- Harrison, B. C. (2011). *Power and Society: An Introduction to the Social Sciences, Twelfth Edition*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Holliday, A. (2002). *Doing and Writing Qualitative Research*. Great Britain: The Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Homans, G. C. (1950). *The Human Group*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Hooker, J. (2009). *Race and the Politics of Solidarity*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Hudson, T. (1973). *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka*. Duke University Press.
- Hutchinson, J. (1987). *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*. London: Aleen and Urwin.
- Joseph, P. E. (2000). Waiting Till the Midnight Hour: Reconceptualizing the Heroic Period of the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965. *Souls*, 6-17.
- Jr., W. W. (1999). *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcom X and the Organization of Afro-America Unity*. Boston: South End Press.
- Martin, R. (1995, May 11). *Historical Overviews of the Black Arts Movement*. Retrieved from Modern American Poetry: <http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/blackarts/historical.htm>
- McCoy, R. (2011, 11 18). *African-American Elders, Cultural Traditions, and the Family Reunion*. Retrieved from American Society on Aging (ASA), Generations: <http://www.asaging.org/blog/african-american-elders-cultural-traditions-and-family-reunion>
- Neal, L. (1968). The Black Art Movement. *National Humanities Center Resource Toolbox: The Making of African American Identity Vol. III, 1917-1968*, 1-2.
- Roy, A. (2014, July 31). *50 Years After The Civil Rights Act, Integration Remains Elusive*. Retrieved from Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/theapotheary/2014/07/31/50-years-later-integration-remains-elusive/>

- Scott, W. R., & Shade, W. G. (2005). *Essays on African-American History, Culture and Society*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State.
- Smith, R. C. (2003). *Encyclopedia of African-American Politics*. New York: Facts on File, Inc.
- Theoharis, J., & Woodard, K. (2005). *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America*. New York: New York University Press.
- Tyner, J. (2014, February 19). *African-American struggles are key in the fight for progress*. Retrieved from People Before Profit network: <http://peoplesworld.org/african-american-struggles-are-key-in-the-fight-for-progress/>
- Watts, J. G. (2001). *Amiri Baraka, The Politics and Art of a Black Intellectual*. New York: New York: University Press.
- Woodard, K. (1999). *A Nation within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones) and Black Power Politics*. North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Young, C. A. (2006). *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left*. NC: Duke University Press.





## CONCEPTUALIZING FRIENDSHIP THROUGH AMERICAN GAY TELEVISION SERIES IN 2000S

Rudy  
Prima Indonesia University, Indonesia  
rudolphlim@yahoo.com

### Abstract

Gay culture has been one of the most phenomenal issues in the world, particularly in the United States. As this culture has become pro and contra over American regarding their point of view, ethically or unethically, thus, it has been spread all over the world through media, particularly television, which makes it unique and essential to observe through the television series, gay characters appear with certain features attached to them. This study concentrates on the depiction of gay shown through American gay television series in 2000s. As gay culture is strongly connected to the collectivity, the friendship among minority groups like gay people has become fascinating to identify. By focusing on how and why the friendship is portrayed through the gay television series, this study incorporates semiotic approach to identify the friendship among gay shown by the American gay television series in 2000s. The observation of the gay television series have revealed that friendship among gay people plays a significant role in gay culture. The research findings show that the depiction of friendship through the gay TV series symbolizes similar values and vision shared among gay people in order to reach solidarity. Additionally, strong friendship as a binding value is always the feature shown by oppressed minority groups in a society.

**Keywords:** Gay, Television Series, 2000s, Friendship, America Culture

### Introduction

The world has recently witnessed various incidents and changes in people's lives. These are seen through mass media which have a great contribution in reporting the changes in many different aspects of humans' lives, particularly the social life. One of the phenomenal social issues is the movement by gay people in fighting for their civil rights. American gay movement, for instance, has become a fundamental incident for the current social changes in the United States. As a part of society, gay people in The United States have been striving for the equality. The demonstrations conducted by them have brought impacts to the world. Apart from the pros and cons about gay culture in the world, America as a liberal country seems to be an open place for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

and Transgender) to gain more opportunities to come out. Thus, gay phenomena in the United States have become argumentative issues among American people.

For this reason, the issue on gay people is interesting to be observed. As a minority group in sexual orientation, there are certainly some values shared among gay people. In other words, minority groups in a society believe that there must be certain values that they can be counted on can count on since they have similarities. This condition can also be seen in gay community. One of the most fascinating parts in gay relationship is the friendship. This can tell that friendship plays an important role in gay culture. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought many changes in American society, including the gay community. Consequently, this has

influenced American television, particularly television series.

### **Methodology**

Thus, the study uses gay television series as the primary data to identify friendship in gay culture. They are for example, the Emmy Award-winning sitcom *Will & Grace* produced broadcast by NBC from 1998 until 2006; *Queer as Folk* (2000) broadcast by Showtime Network; *Some of My Best Friends* (2001) by CBS and *Six Feet Under* (2001) broadcast by HBO; and *Dante's Cove* (2005), *DL Chronicles* and *The Lair* (2007) by American gay television channel, Here TV.

From the observation through some of the American gay television series, it frequently portrays gay friendship scenes. Therefore, the objectives of the study is to figure out how gay friendship is commonly shown in American gay television series in 2000s and to identify the reason it is depicted. The analysis of the study is conducted by applying semiotic approach to show the symbol of friendship portrayed in American gay television series through the concept of 'sign-signified-signifier.' The techniques are used repeatedly to decipher the signs in order to explain the meaning and messages behind the sign observed through the TV series.

### **Findings**

#### **Perceiving Friendship in Gay Culture**

One of the most important depictions which has frequently appeared on American gay-themed television series since 2000s is friendship. It shows the importance of having friends. In other words, from the data acquired, it can signify that friendship is necessarily essential in

gay culture. From the gay-themed television series observed, friendship among gay friends has become one of the central issues in American gay culture. To pave a way to understand a broader concept of gay friendship, it is firstly started from the mainstream perception of friendship. America is a country with multi culture and ethnics. Consequently, the concept of friendship seems to be essential in this liberally multicultural country.

Everyone is born as a social individual. As the most important part in the society, people need to interact with others for different kinds of purposes. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000) defined friendships as "a relationship between friends" and "the feeling or relationship that friends have; the state of being friends". From the definition above, it can tell that there is a kind of feeling, which determines whether it is called friendship or not (p. 516). In addition to that, Thomas II said (2008), "friendships are like ideas. They come, they go, rising and falling, side by side. You get a new idea, you spend time and energy thinking about it, you adapt to it. Then it may start to wane or even die altogether" (p. 91). Making friends involves more than one individual. Since it is built by including more than a person, it demands some processes to make it work. Once it does not work properly, the friendship will end. In order to prolong the friendship, there must be some particular requirements to fulfill.

The social interaction which creates the so-called small kind of organization, friendship has certain types of forms and values in it. Regarding to this, Healy (2011) described, "at a basic level, friendship demands that some are excluded from the relationship and it cannot include everyone. Friendship, by its very nature, indicates those who may be outside of

family bonds (although family members can also be friends) but not strangers” (p. 232). Thus, the kind of friendship that people generally perceived is the kind relationship among people outside of family members such as neighbors or people at schools, work places, markets etc. This social contact shapes a kind of good relationship among the people called “friendship” which is based on certain virtues. And the values contained in friendship can determine whether or not the friendship can continue.

It is important to note that the concept of friendship is not easily defined. Some may simply misunderstand the term friendship. For this reason, Healy (2011) tried to explain, “I can be friendly without being friends: civic friendliness is a very different concept to civic friendship. Before dismissing the concept entirely, it is necessary to consider the alternative form of friendship, that of virtue” (p. 232).

It can be understood here that not all kind of friendliness is called friendship. But in friendship, there should be friendliness. In relation to this, friendship described in mainstream culture is usually perceived as the relation among friends. However, friendship does not seem that simple. In this part of the study, various perceptions of friendship and its characteristics are discussed.

Forming friendship with some people we know one another and share thoughts and life experience can satisfy people because it makes people recognized, without it people barely express their satisfaction (Korab-Karpowicz, 2010, p. 309). In order to reach the satisfaction, people believe that there are some basic values necessarily needed in friendship. Regarding to this, Kaye (2005) revealed, “trust is widely

regarded as a virtue among friends, and being trustworthy sometimes requires keeping secrets. But keeping secrets sometimes requires telling lies. We may ask if true friendship justifies lying” (p. 475). Thus, when somebody begins to trust a person, that can be said to be the time, he or she starts building friendship with the person. Hence, trust can be the key to select friends and build good friendship (Martin and Biello, 2008, p. 155). Tracing back to the history of the United States, friendship has been very important since the coming of Europeans to The land of America. The same thought is also expressed by Healy (2011):

Trust undoubtedly transcends the personal relationship, and as such looks on the surface as the most likely candidate to transpose neatly from the personal virtue to the public. Just as we need to be able to trust our friends, so we need to be able to trust beyond particular individuals. When ill, I need to be able to trust that the doctor is truly trying to make me better, without continually asking to see her qualifications and chasing up references. (p. 475)

Friendship based on trust has become one of the most fundamental characteristics in friendship. As the point described above, the satisfaction acquired from having friends can be related to happiness. Therefore, it can tell that one can express his satisfaction for getting good friendship and at the same time, the satisfaction can bring happiness. This idea is supported by Demir, et al., (2013) arguing, “the findings suggest that one reason why the quality of friendships is related to happiness is because friendship experiences promote individuals’ feelings of uniqueness” (p. 1201). The notion of friendship explained by Demir, et al. concentrates the happy feeling that someone has when having close friends because friendship is

unique. It is unique because of its complexity too. Thus, friendship is not a simple thing to describe. Friendship does not seem to be something fixed. It can change, degrade or fade faded due to many factors. For this reason, Quinn (2008) has argued:

To come up with a coherent, thoughtful discussion of friendship proved to be more difficult than I imagined. For me, contemplating the constellation of people in my life whom I could describe as friends was as difficult to explain as the infinity of space or the subquark level of existence. People are simultaneously simple and complex and what makes them attractive or interesting to me is as nearly inexplicable. Friends simply are. They exist as anomalies in the course of all of my human reactions. To think about why some people are differentiated as friends as opposed to simply interchangeable humanoids is to try and grasp at a knowledge of myself as much as it is to understand why those friends like me in return. (p. 105)

Since friendship is based on trust which can give the sense of satisfaction and happiness, there are some processes explained by Adam and Ueno (2007), "Friendship process is another component of friendship patterns and includes behavioral processes (what people do with their friends), affective processes (what people feel about their friends), and cognitive process (what people think about their friends)" (p. 199). In other words, friendship is strengthened by these three processes. When people enjoy doing something with other, they share the similar interests.

From the sharing, the feeling of affection appears caring, protecting, and finally, affection

that may lead people to see how their friends respond toward their affection and kindness. In this stage, it is normally examined and evaluated. Therefore, when their friends do not treat them the same way as their expectations, it can simply end the friendship. For this reason, it can be said that friendship is a reciprocal relationship or mutualism (Hostetler and Choler, 1997, p. 204; Adam and Ueno, 2007, pp. 199-200; Healy, 2011, p. 232). From the points above, it can be inferred that being kind to each other is a fundamental key to reach good friendship with mutualism as one of the characteristics. For instance, Cureton (2012) explained:

Similarly in the case of friendship, what is most essential about the value of friendship is the set of reasons we have to be a good friend (i.e. to be loyal to the other person, visit her in the hospital, do these things out of our concern for her, etc.), although we may also have some reasons to bring about more and better instances of friendship in the future. (p. 704)

From the features such as satisfaction, trust, happiness, and uniqueness, friendship can promote solidarity. In other words, the strength of solidarity needs friendship. A nation without solidarity of its people means nothing.

The mainstream perception of friendship seems to be essential to understand the significance of friendship among gay people. The depiction of friendship on gay-themed television series is the relationship among gay friends. Almost of all the television series observed in the study portrays the importance of having and keeping friends. *Queer as Folk* (2000), for example, pictures some of gay friends (Brian, Michael, Emmett and Ted) who really are dedicated to their friendship. Many episodes depict the

importance of gay friendship in the series. One of them is in the second season when one of the friends, Ted has a problem about the friendship.

Ted : So, what's up?  
Emmett : You, Teddy. You have a problem. That's why I brought Michael and Brian. We're friends. We care about you. We're here to help you.

The meaning of friendship in gay culture has played a more significant role because gay men are marginalized in the society. Many gay men feel the necessity of having friends who share similar sexual orientations, and know precisely how hard their life is. By friendship, the life they live will seem more pleasant, meaningful and powerful which can lead to strong solidarity. Gay people realize that mainstream culture in a society have excluded gay culture and for that reason, there is something they share among them such as sexual orientation and life experience in the heterosexual-dominated society in order to reinforce the gay culture.

### **Empowering Solidarity through Friendship**

According to Korab-Karpowicz (2010) expressed the idea relating to solidarity, "Let us find a common ground. Let us ask if there is anything that we all share. This is life itself. Global Solidarity depends on the recognition of life as the common platform on which all human beings, despite their cultural differences" (p. 309). This context seems to be applied in gay culture. It is obvious that they are united because of their sexual orientation. Therefore, they are solidified in order to gain motivation and support among them. Gottlieb (2008) expressed, "For gay men, however,

friendship has *never* been thought of as secondary. Rather, those relationships have always been safe havens, places where we can be understood, feel valued, and experience acceptance and love" (p. 4). This can show that gay people gather with their gay friends because they can understand one another and share the same painful life experience, and obtain life spirit to continue living together with their gay friends.

In addition, Roden (2008) inferred, "In places where gay male community is necessary for combating social or personal oppression, that community must be valued and strengthened for its ability to help the individual and group to grow in healthy ways" (p. 16). Friendship in gay men seems to play a very important role because besides being friends for sharing ideas, life experience, and gaining support, it also functions as a second family for many gay men since they have been abandoned by their blood family members for their sexual orientation. In addition, Robinson (2008) in his research has figured out, "More recently, the definition of gay family has expanded to include person who are neither kith nor kin" (p. 136). This can be inferred that gay people have another version of friendship, which they call family. So, their good gay friends who spend more time talking, sharing, playing, and doing routines with them can be said as family members, particularly the gay men who have been neglected or hated by their own blood family. For this reason, having good friends is essential to gay men (Preston, 1995, pp. 7-8; Robinson, 2008, pp. 117-178).

From the observation through gay TV series, it shows that when gay people gather with their friends, they feel the importance of sharing things that their straight friends do not seem to understand, especially about being gay. Regarding to that, Marcus (2005) described:

In addition to talking about all the things that heterosexual people talk about, many gay and lesbian people talk about being gay and about the latest news on gays and lesbian rights issues – although how much gay people discuss these issues depends upon their stage in life. If you're in the process of getting coupled or you're working on having children, you're likely to discuss gay issues, legal issues in particular, far more than the average single gay person. (p. 161)

The idea above can show that the talks, ideas, and moments shared among gay friends have made them feel the need of having the so-called “new family” besides their blood family. This importance of friendship is also shown on *Will and Grace*, in the episode “Moveable Feast” of the fourth season:

- Paul: It's a huge difference between my obligation to my family and your obligation to your friends.  
Will: My friends are my family.  
Paul: Your situation is completely different and you know it. You made that choice...  
Will: My being gay is no more choice.

Therefore, the example above can show that it is common to see gay characters on American gay-themed television series having a best gay friend or some close friends. This is clearly shown in the gay-themed series discussed in the study such as Will and Jack, Larry and Joe on *Will and Grace* (1998); Brian, Michael, Ted and Emmett on *Queer as Folk* (2000); Warren and Vern on *Some of My Best Friends* (2001); and Toby and his lesbian best friend, Van on *Dante's Cove* (2005).

There is an episode entitled “Nobody Sleeps” in the third season in *Six Feet Under* (2001) also

portrays a gay man, where Bob dies in his partner's arm surrounded by his friends. His partner explains that Bob's family cannot accept his homosexuality:

- Bob's partner : We buried our friends. We thought we'd been spared and we'd grow old together. Such hubris.  
Nate : I'm so sorry.  
Bob's partner : It was cardiomyopathy. Enlarged heart. His heart was too big. We used to joke about it. It was caused by severely leaking heart valve. We used to joke about that, too. Bleeding heart.  
Nate : Have any of his family been contacted?  
Bob's partner : I called his sister in Phoenix, but she's not coming. His family was never very accepting of things. Bob and I were together for 22 years. So, I'm his family.

The depiction shows that the primary (blood) family of the poor dead gay man does not seem to care about his death. The sentence “So, I'm his family.” can show that the poor dead gay man is not accepted by his blood family. On the day he dies, he is only accompanied by his partner and his gay friends. This can indicate that in gay culture, friends are important because they can replace the position of blood family members. This can also reveal that friendship in gay culture can have some functions in gay men's life. This is also described by Roden (2008):

‘Gay male friendship’ per se has two primary values—one public and one private. In community, wherever two or more are gathered, there is strength: for a voice to speak out against oppression, to

support (in a healthy rather than damaging way) self-definition, and thus to serve a marginalized population. Individually, gay male friendship can play a similar function: the communication of self with the other who shares some common category of identity supports the growth and development of the persons involved. The difficulty here is what is shared. (p. 12)

Regarding the idea above, friendship has a role as a family as well as a source of spirit for gaining supports as power to survive in a hetero-normative society. Those gay men who share the same thoughts and come out to live as gay men tend to have stronger friendship than those who choose to hide his gay side (Roden, 2008, p. 14). It can reveal that gay people who befriend with other gay friends who have honestly live their lives as gay men can share the same vision and mission in terms of getting motivations as well as solutions in handling discrimination problems they face in the society. By this way, the friendship will lead to solidarity as described previously. Friends involved in the so-called friendship that empower the solidarity must realize that the purpose of their friends is indeed different than the other kinds of mediocre friend relationships. In addition, Derpmann (2009) revealed, “When we speak of solidarity, members of a group are, or they at least feel obliged to promote the well-being of other members, even incurring significant sacrifices for themselves. Further, they might be sanctioned, if they forego obligations of solidarity” (p. 305). Therefore, friends who are united based on particular conditions to create solidarity are supposed to grow the sense of belonging. This can make the people involved in friendship feel the importance of preserving and reinforcing their friendship for the sake of solidarity. In addition

to this Cureton (2012) explained about solidarity in this way:

Solidarity, in general, is a matter of a group of people being united or at one with regard to something (sympathies, interests, values, etc.), having genuine concern for each other’s welfare, respecting others as group members, trusting one another not to intentionally undermine or free ride on the group, taking pride in the group as a whole, being ashamed of its failures and suffering loss or betrayal if members of the group do not live up to the requirements that the group places on itself, and perhaps having certain other affections for one’s compatriots. (p. 696)

Gay-themed television series present a funny, smart and talkative gay character to befriend with the main gay character. Jack, on *Will and Grace*, for example, is depicted as Will’s best gay friend who has been with him almost every day. Emmett in the second season of *Queer as Folk*, for instance, seems to be disappointed when he knows that Ted hides something from him: “Teddy, since when do we keep secrets? And since when do we share things with Brian that we do not share with me?” This can tell that the friendship based on care, understanding, support and motivation in gay culture is also illustrated in the friendship between Warren and Vern on *Some of My Best Friends*,

Vern: What? No no no, you have to go.  
Warren: Forget it. I’m not facing Terry and the gorgeous Paulo, it’s too humiliating. You go with Meryl.  
Vern: Wrong. If you’re not going, I’m not going. I’m not gonna face those people by myself.  
Warren: Just go with Meryl...  
Meryl: By the way Warren, I want you to meet Mason. He’s best for your team and he’s totally gorgeous.



Looking back at the gay rights movement took that place in 1970s; the friendship has played an important role in actualizing the solidarity. Groups of friends at the gay bars shared the same mission to claim their rights and later it was followed by more and more groups of friends. That can signify that friendship in gay culture has a fundamental role in shaping solidarity.

The way television series picture gay characters with their gay friends can reflect that gay men respect and appreciate friendship because constructing friendship is not an easy thing to do in gay community. For many gay people, friendship is indescribably deep as mentioned by Martin and Biello (2008):

I like your description of our friendship as 'deep'. I wonder if it feels this way because of all the other aspects of relationship that we share and perhaps the friendship part underlies everything else—like a foundation or a root. Or maybe the deepness of our friendship was instant and became the reason we were able to build so much upon it. (p. 153)

This can indicate that gay friendship means a lot to gay people because by gathering or being around with friends who share the same sexual orientation, life experience as well as hard times may be one of the best things in their life – the life they hardly get when they are with their straight friends or family members. This is similar to the point expressed by Quinn (2008):

Many gay people experience a sense of isolation and alienation by way of being ostracized and excluded from others beginning as far back as childhood, but there is a huge gay community out there with everything from Web sites to potluck

suppers to encourage a shared common identity and to provide opportunities for human interaction and intimacy. (p. 107)

The condition explained by Quinn can reveal that gay men need friends to shape solidarity to show their existence in the society. Therefore, the presence of gay friends creating friendship is essential to gay men in expressing their sense of liveliness and to gain sense of belong as a social and cultural individual (Aoki, 2008, p. 125). By having the strong friendship, a gay man can live his life happily. If it is related to the previous explanation, having good friendship seems to make gay men feel confident as well as unique, as Demir *et al* (2013) pointed out, “Thus, individuals who accept their special characteristics, fostered by their interactions with significant others, and feel unique are more likely to feel happy in their lives” (p. 1205). From this point of view, it can tell that gay men will be happier if they have gay friends and build good gay friendship.

The friendship that gay men create does not only involve gay men but it also includes their lesbian friends. In fact, both gay men and lesbian women are bonded. They belong to gay culture. This sort of condition is often depicted in American gay-themed television series since 2000s. It is obviously pictured in *Queer as Folk* (2000) and *Dante's Cove* (2005). The presence of lesbian characters such as Lindsay and Melanie is to befriend with the gay characters. Their friendship portrayed on the series is strong. It seems that those gay and lesbian friends are not only ordinary friends, but it turns out to be the so-called 'gay family'. The lesbian couple Lindsay and Melanie has used the sperm of their best gay friends, Brian and Michael for the artificial insemination. This can indicate that they believe that their gay friends have a set of talents to be inherited to their babies. It is

‘trust’ that plays an important role in their friendship.

Melanie who is pictured as a lesbian lawyer on the third season of *Queer as Folk* puts more efforts to help her gay friend Ted Schmidt when he has a problem with his pornography website:

The prosecuting attorney: If you call an unsavoury homosexual pornographic website a legitimate business...

Mel: Your honour, Mr. Schmidt was extremely diligent in keeping his business strictly up to code. He had no idea that his employee, Edward Steward Malone was a minor.

The relationship between gay men and lesbian women has been based on the similar life experience that both of them have. Another illustration showing a gay man and a lesbian woman who trusts each other can be seen on *Will and Grace* in the seventh season when Ro can trust Jack by revealing her true sexual preference:

Jack: Are you nervous about your wedding? Kind of, cause I’m a lesbian. (Jack is a bit surprised.)

Ro: What am I gonna do? I can’t get married. The thought of my fiancé’s touch sickens me. I’m a lesbian. I’m a lesbian! Oh, my God. It feels so good to say it out loud.

Jack: It seems to me, perhaps you should not marry him.

Ro: But I have to. My parents have been dreaming about my wedding forever. It’ll kill them to know that their only girl loves only girls.

Jack: Whoa. What are you talking about? Your parents have done everything right. They raised all

their kids gay. Why would they not accept you?

Ro: It’s different with Vince. He’s a guy. We’re Italian and all Italian guys are gay...

Ro: Look, you’re the only person who knows so please don’t tell anyone.

Jack: Well, I won’t. But you have to, Ro. And this is the perfect opportunity.

In the conversation above when Ro tells Jack that the lesbian character Ro feels a relief when she opens up her homosexuality to the gay character, Jack. In *Dante’s Cove*, the lesbian character Van is depicted to be the gay character’s best friend Toby. The main gay character Toby can share his love problems with the lesbian character Van such as exemplified below where both talked about separation:

Van: Toby, I was just thinking about you.

Toby: How’s everything in the Dante?

Van: Thing’s fine. I miss you so much. How’s everything with you and Kevin?

Toby: Not so good.

Van: What’s wrong?

Toby: We broke up.

Van: No! What happened?

Toby: We got a huge argument. He doesn’t want to come live with me in Dante’s Cove. ...

Toby: His parents don’t approve...They think that I’m corrupting him.

The way they take care each of others reflects that friendship that the homosexual people share can be deeper especially those who are not wanted by their own blood family members. The closeness between gay men and lesbian women picture on the gay-themed television series can indicate that their relationship is actually similar to any ordinary friendship perceived in mainstream culture. However, then, their sexual orientation experience in the

society has made them be more selective in choosing friends based on convenience, freedom, self-identity and satisfaction. Again in the second season of the series *Dante's Cove* shows that the gay character and the lesbian character need each other to form a family:

- Kevin: Nice. You still got Vanin here.  
Toby: Why wouldn't I?  
Kevin: Well, the fight.  
Toby: She's still my family. You don't throw away your family no matter what.  
Kevin: Maybe not where you came from.  
Toby: Right. I know it was different for you, but the good thing is we get to pick our own families.

Thus, lesbian characters in the series are depicted to get along well with the gay characters. At least, they appear to complete the gay character's life.

In relation to the friendship, gay and lesbian people are also frequently portrayed to be together at some public places. It seems that many gay men gather with their friends in public places such as bars, fitness centers, cafés, etc. can prove that they can still socialize with one another in the hetero-normative mainstream culture. Most gay people prefer the places dominated or owned by gay people such as gay bars, gay cafés, etc. or gay-friendly places to gather. This is explained by Edwards (1994),

The gay community has creatively and positively developed a vast array of meeting places, venues and groups which offer the chance to meet people of the same sexual preference. This usually only extends to the level of café, clubs and bars and the odd bookshop that one generally has to find out about first. (p. 110)

Tracing back to the gay liberation period, gay bar has been an important venue for the history of gay rights movement in the United States. There are many activities that gay men can do when they gather with their friends including the rebellious kind of activity such as gay protest or demonstration. The solidarity created by friendship has changed the gay culture in the United States. By putting a lot of efforts in protesting and fighting to win their civil rights such as getting marriage and adoption, gay people can eventually show that gay power is through the friendship which grows to form a strong solidarity. In addition, there have been many gay places found in big cities. The gay bar phenomena has been increasing since 1970s. This has seemed to give opportunities to gay people to enjoy their urban lifestyles as pointed out by Harry (1974):

The differentiation of gay bars which occurs with increases in city size probably provides a more satisfying life for gays in the larger cities. The variety of available gay life-styles permits a closer fit between the sexual, social, and cultural tastes of the individual gay and the opportunities for expression of those tastes. Not only does the large city offer opportunities for finding friends with similar tastes, the size of the sexual market makes sexual contacts more readily available. (pp. 245-246)

The gay bar or club phenomena have been used by many gay friends to socialize with the other gay friends for many different purposes such as getting friends, love or sex partners, and many more. Such a condition can be seen from the gay club "Babylon" depicted on the television series *Queer as Folk*. The gay club can symbolize the freedom that gay people have always wanted. It seems that, the gay characters depicted in that gay club feel the great

excitement and pleasure to express themselves by dancing, cuddling, kissing and having sex.

Besides, by gathering at some public places especially for gay men such as gay bars, gay gym, etc. can show the importance of shaping their identity. Further, Marcus (2005) mentioned,

When you step into a gay or lesbian bar or play on an all gay softball team, you're not an outsider. You can be yourself, which include being physically affectionate in public in ways that heterosexual people take for granted (and get upset about when they see gay people doing the same things.) There's no fear of being judged or discriminated against for being gay. At its best, the experience offers the sense of being with 'family', in the most positive sense of the world. (p. 165)

Being with their own gay friends make them feel that they can grow older in a better way with the affection of friends. By this way, their life seems to be more meaningful. In addition, Robinson (2008) has emphasized, "Friends are without doubt the central feature of the affective life of the gay men" (p. 137). Thus, many gay men are willing to move or find a place where they can get more gay friends. By this way, they can improve their creativity in dealing with many social and cultural activities. This seems to lead a way to gay people to show their identity.

## **Conclusion**

From all the points discussed above, it can be concluded that in American mainstream culture, the concept of friendship is actually broad because it can be perceived through different perspectives. It is normally seen as a unique and mutual relationship that involves more than one person generating the sense of satisfaction and

happiness reinforced by trust in order to grow the solidarity. From the signs acquired through observing American gay-themed television series, friendship in gay culture has frequently appeared. Additionally, the friendship portrayed in gay television series can be a means of showing confidence and identity in gay community.

Friendship is important to gay people because it can also function as a "family" for them since many of gay men are rejected or abandoned by their blood family members. By this way, they can live their gay life confidently, freely and happily. The presence of lesbian characters in gay-themed television series can indicate that both lesbian women and gay men share the similar life experience regarding to their sexual orientation. Thus, many of them can get along well by gathering at some public places such as gay bars or clubs to display their existence in the hetero-normative society. Besides, from the good friendship, it helps create solidarity among homosexual people to fight for their rights. And it seems that the depiction of gay friendship has often been significant in the representation of gay on American television series.

## References

- Aoki, E. (2008). The Absence: Living Everyday Life without Gay Male Friends. In *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.
- Cureton, A. (2012). "Solidarity and Social Moral Rules." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 15: 691-706.
- Demir, M., Ö. F. Şimşek and A. D. Procsal. (2013). I Am so Happy 'Cause My Best Friend Makes Me Feel Unique: Friendship, Personal Sense of Uniqueness and Happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies* 14:1201-1224.
- Derpmann, S. (2009). Solidarity and Cosmopolitanism. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 12: 303-315.
- Gottlieb, A. R. (2008). Introduction. In A. R. Gooetlieb (ed.), *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.
- Harry, J. (1974). Urbanization and the Gay Life. *The Journal of Sex Research* 10 (3): 238-247.
- Healy, M. (2011). Civic Friendship. *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 30:229-240.
- Hostetler, A. J. and B. J. Cohler. (1997). Partnership, Singlehood, and the Lesbian and Gay Life Course: A Research Agenda. *Journal of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Identity* 2 (3/4): 199-230.
- Kaye, S. M. (2005). True Friendship and the Logic of Lying. *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 39: 475-485.
- Korab-Karpowicz, W. J. (2010). Inclusive Values and the Righteousness of Life: The Foundation of Global Solidarity. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 13 (3): 305-313.
- Marcus, E. (2005). *Is it a Choice? Answer to the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Gay and Lesbian People*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Martin, D and M. Biello. (2008). *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.
- Preston, J. (1995). Introduction. In J. Preston and M. Lowenthal (Eds.), *Friends and Lovers*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd.
- Quinn, J. (2008). On Friendship and Being Alone. In A. R. Gooetlieb (ed.) *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.
- Robinson, P. (2008). *The Changing World of Gay Men*. The UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Roden, F. S. (2008). Toward a Definition of Gay Male Friendship. In A. R. Gooetlieb (ed.) *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.
- Thomas II, M. E. (2008). The country Club. In A. R. Gooetlieb (ed.) *On the Meaning of Friendship between Gay Men*. New York: Routledge.



## GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The editor of Rubikon Journal welcomes article submissions in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Articles have not been published or accepted for publication, or are being considered for publication elsewhere. In addition to the manuscript, a written statement should be attached which clarifies that the article is original and does not contain any elements of plagiarism.
2. Types of article suitable for publication include the following; research report (laboratory, field, archives), conceptual ideas, studies, theory applications.
3. Another suitable type of article is book review. Please note the following requirements for submitting book reviews:
  - a. book being reviewed should be newly published (within the last one year for books in Indonesian and two years for books in other foreign languages),
  - b. book reviews should be between 3-5 pages in length, and
  - c. a copy/scan of the book cover should be attached.
4. Articles are written in Indonesian or English (preferable) using academic language along with standard academic writing structure and composition. Manuscripts are typed 1,5 spaced in a quarto paper size (A4), between 15-20 pages in length including references, pictures, and tables.
5. Article should be in essay form which includes:
  - a. title (15-20 words),
  - b. author's name (without academic degree) with an e-mail address and institution's name,
  - c. abstract in English (150-200 words for each) which includes research problem, methods and result,
  - d. keyword in English (5-7 words),
  - e. author's personal information and e-mail address,
  - f. introduction (without subsection, 2-3 pages) which includes background, objectives, methods, and literature reviews/theoretical construct (if needed) of research. The introduction section ends with an emphasis on items to be discussed,
  - g. discussion,
  - h. conclusion, and
  - i. references.
6. Reference list format is based APA (American Psychological Association) style. Reference list should appear at the end of the article and includes only literatures actually cited in the manuscripts. References are ordered alphabetically and chronologically. When writing a reference list, please use the following conventions;
  - Azhar & Matsumura, K. (2010). A Study of 'Kenry' in Japanese and 'Hak' in Indonesian. *Jurnal Humaniora*, 22, p.22-30.
  - Nur, T. (2008). *Verba dalam Bahasa Arab dan Bahasa Indonesia: Studi Gramatika Konstasif*. (Unpublished Dissertation). Universitas Gadjah Mada. Yogyakarta
  - Reid, A. (2011). *Menuju Sejarah Sumatra: Antara Indonesia dan Dunia*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.
  - Zachareck, S. (2008). *Natural Women*. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/27/books/review/Zachareck>
7. The editor appreciates if authors excerpt information from subsequent published articles in *Jurnal Rubikon*.
8. Articles should be submitted in soft files using Microsoft Word application to [jurnal.rubikon@gmail.com](mailto:jurnal.rubikon@gmail.com)
9. Authors will be sent notification of receipt of manuscripts and editorial decisions (whether the articles are accepted or not) by e-mail. Manuscripts that are not published will not be returned to the authors.
10. A successful author is obliged to contribute publication fee with minimum amount of Rp. 100.000,00 (one hundred thousand rupiahs) and in return is entitled to 2 (two) copies of the print issue in which the article appears.