

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introduction of the present study. It consists of background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

People may express their feelings and thoughts through varieties of media; one of them is song lyrics. According to Forest (2011, p. 53), song lyrics are abstract, almost unintelligible, and in such cases it emphasizes the expression. Therefore, song lyric as one of literary works can be considered as a medium of expression.

Generally, when lyric writers write a song lyric, they are greatly influenced by their life experience and events. For example, a song writer who is brought up in an environment that values patriarchal ideologies may portray women inferiority in his or her song lyrics. The portrayal of women in song lyrics has been a particular interest, especially for the feminists. Many have tried to draw the representation of women in literature that is to a high extent still prone to mistaken description and or incorrect representation. This is also true for the

representation of female character in song lyric. For instance, in a paper critiquing Pink's *Stupid Girl*, Leonardi and Dickinson (2007) discuss how each gender is being portrayed in the song when they say, "Females are constructed and portrayed through various negative strategies to be passive, shallow, unengaged, and disempowered creatures". They found that the song supports patriarchy by making the woman seem inferior to the man and having the man seem to be a more powerful figure in the song.

Song lyric, as a piece of literary text, also contains the message in both explicit and implicit way. It is almost impossible for any types of literary text for not having a particular meaning. The connection between song lyric and its message, then, emerges in view of the fact that a songwriter whether in a conscious condition or not, always influences their songs with their intended meaning. Gendered message as the deeper meaning focusing on gender relation in song lyric can be identified by emphasizing correspondence of lyrics and images as the elements in the texts (Silverman 2001, cited in Click and Kramer 2007).

Katy Perry is an American pop singer-songwriter whose most of her songs concerning on gender relation. Most of her lyrics elaborate realistic aspects since it reflects view, feeling, and voice of women. Katy Perry is also well-known as a singer-songwriter who often explores themes of sexuality in her songs as a tool to make female character in her songs powerful. However, there is an implicit meaning that can be analyzed through that kind of portrayal. Considering that, this present study tries to uncover how women are typically portrayed in song lyrics

written and sung by woman and what gendered messages can be derived from the song lyrics as viewed from a post feminist perspective.

For this reason, this present study chooses ten song lyrics from *One of the Boys*(2008) album by Katy Perry to be analyzed. The song lyrics are *Fingerprints, Hot n Cold, I Kissed a Girl, If You Can Afford Me, I'm Still Breathing, Lost, Mannequin, One of the Boys, Self Inflicted, and Thinking of You*.The writer decided to choose the selected song lyrics above since those song lyrics provide representative examples of women stereotypes who are associated as “*sentimental, superstitious, gentle, emotional, weak, dependent and sensitive*” (Williams & Best, 1982). Katy Perry co-wrote every song on the album as well as writing three of the songs herself.

Framed by gender studies and post feminist perspectives as its theoretical foundation, this present study utilizes text analysis in analyzing the popular song lyrics. Textual analysis helps reveal the way lyric tells different stories about women’s expectations and experiences while at the same time enabling the researcher to read gendered messages in each song.

1.2 Research Questions

This present study raises two questions, which are:

1. How are women typically portrayed in Katy Perry’s selected song lyrics?
2. What gendered messages can be derived from the song lyrics as viewed from post feminism perspectives?

1.3 Aims of the Study

In line with the research questions above, this study is intended to:

1. To draw the portrayal of women in Katy Perry's selected song lyrics.
2. To reveal gendered messages derived from the song lyrics as viewed from post feminism perspectives.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This present study provides an analysis of the portrayal of women in the song lyrics written and sung by woman in the view of post feminism perspectives. The collected data are analyzed by using the stereotypical idea of women proposed by Williams & Best (1982) and post feminism theory. It is expected that the analysis can help the writer to interpret the portrayal of women in song lyrics and describe gendered messages in the song lyrics.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Gender notion in popular culture has become a subject for several studies. One example is Leonardi and Dickinson's (2007) *Feminism for Stupid Girls: A Feminist Rhetorical Critique of a Popular Song by Pink*. It is a paper that studied woman's portrayal in a popular song by using a feminism theory. Nevertheless, this present study conducts a similar study with Leonardi and Dickinson's paper highlighting women's portrayal in media, in this case song lyrics, by using post feminist perspective. It is expected that the present study may provide new insights for understanding gender issues in media through a deep analysis of women's

portrayal in Indonesia University of Education, generally in Indonesia. Thus, the different findings and conclusions will enrich the knowledge about women's portrayal in media.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

The present study uses a qualitative descriptive method since the data used in this study is a text – ten song lyrics written by Katy Perry-. According to Maxwell (1996), qualitative research design focuses on specific situations or people and emphasizes on words rather than numbers. This study is attempted to find out how women are typically portrayed in those selected song lyrics and what gendered messages can be derived from the song lyrics. The design is considered appropriate to be applied in this present study because it is proposed to describe the women's portrayal and gendered messages found in Katy Perry's selected song lyrics. The data will be analyzed by describing, elaborating, and interpreting the findings. Thus, the analysis will be emphasized by means of description.

1.6.2 Site and Subject of the Study

The subjects of this present study are ten song lyrics written and sung by Katy Perry. They are *Fingerprints*, *Hot n Cold*, *I Kissed a Girl*, *If You Can Afford Me*, *I'm Still Breathing*, *Lost*, *Mannequin*, *One of the Boys*, *Self Inflicted*, and *Thinking of You*. The song lyrics are taken from the same Katy Perry's album, *One of the Boys* (2008). The present study will be conducted by analyzing the ten Katy Perry's song lyrics to know how women are typically portrayed in those

selected song lyrics. It will also investigate the gendered messages in the song lyrics in relation to post feminism perspective.

1.6.3 Data Collection

The data will be collected from ten Katy Perry's song lyrics in the form of textual evidences. In addition, the data of the study is also gained from other source in written forms (books, academic journals, and articles) about the subject being investigated. Then, by leaning on the information obtained from analyzing the song lyrics and literary research, the study will try to meet the research objectives.

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis was presented through the following procedures:

1. Reading and re-reading the ten song lyrics being investigated;
2. Highlighting and collecting the textual evidences that can be acquired from lyrics that represent the issue of this study
3. Categorizing the textual evidences into some portrayals;
4. Framing those textual evidences with related theoretical frameworks;
5. Analyzing and interpreting the result of data collection;
6. Presenting the conclusion of the result and also providing suggestions for further study.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

In this study, there are some terms that need to be clarified in order to avoid misunderstanding of the concepts underlying the title of the study. Those terms are:

1. Portrayal: In the present study, it means the depiction of certain characters in literary works; it usually represents the stereotypes of certain roles and functions in society (http://www.genders_definition_portrayal.org.html).
2. Gender: It concerns on something unnatural that people perform and they choose to conform or resist (Butler, 1990).
3. Popular culture: It is associated as local culture, something that is produced and consumed by people (Hall cited in Hollows, 2000).
4. Post feminism: A reaction against second-wave Feminism when all women have arrived at equal justice that leads to the issues of women's own will and self determination (Faludi cited in Gamble, 2001).

1.8 Organization of the Paper

The paper will be organized as follows:

CHAPTER I

This chapter contains background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II

The chapter covers some related theories which stand as the foundation of the study.

CHAPTER III

This section provides the research methodology, discussing the steps and procedures of the study, and the data resources in conducting the study.

CHAPTER IV

In this part the result of the research will be presented. This chapter contains the research findings and discussion.

CHAPTER V

This last chapter contains the interpretation toward the result of the research in a form of conclusion and suggestion in accordance with the research.



