



## **Feminism in Patriarchal Society Reflected in the Main Characters in Sabrina & Corina**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study deals with feminism in patriarchal society based on the main character in anthology of short story named Sabrina & Corina by Kali Fajardo-Anstine. This research used qualitative descriptive as the method. The data of this study were dialogue and narratives that appeared in the story. The data was analyzed using Hannam's (2007) theory. It was found that there are three definition of feminism found in the data, they are: 1) Recognition of imbalance power" found 11 data; 2) women's condition is a social construct found 8

data; 3) emphasizes women's autonomy found 5 data. From the data found, it can be seen that recognition of imbalance power is the definition of feminism that is most often found in these short stories. It shows that there is indeed a big difference in power and authority between men and women. The main characters in these stories also try to help, protect, and support other woman as their way to fight the patriarchy that already ingrained in society.

### **Keywords:**

*feminism, patriarchy, short story*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature is the expression of the human person in the form of experiences, thoughts, feelings, ideas, enthusiasm, beliefs in a form of concrete images that evoke fascination with language tools (Sumardjo and Saini 1991). Literature is considered to be able to represent one's thoughts and communicate them to the general public. Not infrequently literature contains complaints, praise, or just thoughts that pass by every day. According to the researcher's justification, literature is the way people express their thoughts or imaginations via personal experience.

Gender discrimination and gender equality is one of the current issues that often being brought these days. The concept of gender discrimination is frequently found in literary works. There is a misconception about women that they have great power to assert

their rights as women and the ability to demonstrate that they are capable of anything while also breaking the rules, but the reality is quite different. That occurs because males think they are extremely strong and women are weak. In light of the gender discrimination concerns that continue to exist in every part of our lives on the basis of culture, politics, economics, and religion, the remark may be problematic.

The problems may range from what women and men are expected to do to societal judgments in daily life. Gender stereotype values are classified into two types: masculinity and femininity (Brannon, 2004:159). It has a deleterious impact on both men and women, particularly women. The disparity in expectations for the two genders causes attitudes to diverge in everyday life.

As a result, a patriarchy arouses that mostly benefitted man in society. In a patriarchal culture, the patriarchy system serves to reinforce gender stereotypes. Patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men rule, oppress, and exploit women (Walby, 1990). She distinguishes between two sorts of patriarchy: private patriarchy and public patriarchy. From literary works like anthology of short story and movies, the main character can be used to depict the issues with feminism in a patriarchal culture.

Despite the patriarchal system's promotion of male privileges and masculinity traits that represent men's power and dominance, it is not always true that women lack traits such as power, independence, dominance. A movement or situation where women can do the same or more than men can be called as Feminism.

Because it stresses the equality of women and everyone who identifies as a woman, feminism is one of today's delicate concerns. Hannam (2007) expressed the word feminism can be define as 1) Recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes, with woman in a subordinate role to men. 2) A belief that woman condition is social constructed and therefore can be changed. 3) An emphasis on female autonomy.

Therefore, Sabrina & Corina is one of a literature works that suitable for this topic. It is a heartbreaking story collection by Kali Fajardo-Anstine that consist of 11 different stories with different character background and ages published in 2019. It will show stories about siblings, mothers and daughters, and the profound realities of their homelands, concentrated on Latina of indigenous origin that sheds new light on the patriarchal society of the American West. This analysis show how the main character's

feminism is reflected. For Example, one of the titles in this Anthology named “Sisters” talk about how not every woman needs to have a partner or be married.

Making a study issue is crucial when analyzing literary works since it allows the researcher to more easily analyze the data. In light of the context, the researcher determines the following study questions:

1. What kind of feminism issues do the female characters in the anthology of short story exhibit?
2. How do the female characters in the anthology of short story fight the patriarchy in their societies?

## METHOD

The descriptive qualitative approach being employed in this study. based on Sugiyono (2010), who claims that descriptive qualitative research is. It indicates that the data was gathered using words rather than numbers. The data source of this study is “Sabrina & Corina” anthology of short story. It was published in 2019 based on the problem of social life which a Feminsim by Kali Fajardo-Anstine. There are several steps of data collection for this research. First, underlining the dialogues and narratives from the books after reading it several times, then listing the underlined dialogues and narratives, last is classifying the listed dialogues and narratives into the types of Feminism by Hannam.

## RESULTS

### Feminism Issue Displayed by Character

According to Hannam (2007), feminism can be defined as 1) Recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes, with woman in a subordinate role to men. 2) A belief that woman condition is social constructed and therefore can be changed. 3) An emphasis on female autonomy.

Table 1. Feminism by Hannam in Sabrina & Corina

NO	Feminism by Hannam	Frequency
	Recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes	11
	A belief that woman condition is social constructed and therefore can be changed	8
	An emphasis on female autonomy	5
	Total	24

1. Recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes, with woman in a subordinate role to men

The disparity in political representation, uneven access to resources, limited economic possibilities, restricted educational attainment, and the prevalence of gender-based violence are just a few examples of how this power imbalance between the sexes presents itself. Due to their intersections with other aspects of social identity, including as ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and ability, it is crucial to recognize that not all women will experience these power dynamics in the same manner or to the same extent.

In “Sugar Babies”, Sierra is reunited with the mother who left her when she was a baby. Sierra's mother asked her to go up the hill with her in the afternoon. His mother then said

*“Ever feel like the **land is swallowing you whole**, Sierra? That all of this beauty is wrapped around you so tight it’s like being in a **rattlesnake’s mouth**?” (p. 19)*

From this situation, it can be seen that Sierra's mother feels that her environment always puts a lot of pressure on her that her mother is no longer able to and chooses to leave the environment where she lives. Her mother felt, although the place where she lived was beautiful, it never felt like a comfortable home for her.

The word “land” that Sierra’s mother said symbolize the societies that asking and push their own will to other people. It describes that people around Sierra’s mother trying to control her just like land that trying to swallow her.

There is also another word “rattlesnake mouth”. It is also symbolizing the people around Sierra’s mother that trying to control her mind and body, even her beauty that she feels like she does not belong to herself. This is often felt by women who are in a family. Women do not have the power to argue and even choose their own way of life. Loss of power due to gender can make a person unhappy, to the point that they leave their own family because of trauma.

2. A belief that woman condition is social constructed and therefore can be changed.

This idea holds that gender roles and expectations aren't set in stone or innate; rather, they're the result of socialization processes, conventions, and institutions. Family, education, the media, religion, and the larger cultural and socioeconomic background are a few of these. They have an impact on how women are viewed, the possibilities open to them, and the standards set for them.

one example that can be seen is from the story "Sugar Babies". Sierra gets a school assignment to look after a bag of sugar with her classmates. They both have to carry out their duties as parents and taking care a bag of sugar.

*"I'm not sure if anyone is **prepared for raising a child**. It doesn't seem to be something we can practice before it actually happens." (p. 23)*

Sierra spoke to her suddenly appearing mother that no one can be perfectly prepared to raise a child. There is no exercise that can make someone ready to have children.

Social perception has always assumed that a woman must become a mother in order to be a real woman. all women must be good at taking care of children. Even though not only women, men must also take part in taking care of children and being good fathers. But rarely is their social coercion that forces the importance of fatherhood onto men. This is an example that the position of women is actually the result of a hereditary system in society, so it must be changed.

### 3. An emphasis on female autonomy.

The concept behind female autonomy is that women ought to have the freedom to make decisions about their own lives, bodies, and destinies without interference from others or oppression. It incorporates a variety of ideas, such as decision-making autonomy, physiological autonomy, and personal autonomy. It acknowledges women as autonomous beings who can make decisions in line with their own needs, wants, and beliefs. It states that women ought to have autonomy over their bodies, sexuality, and reproductive decisions.

In "Sisters", Tina set a date for Doty so she can go have some romance like what Tina always want for her sister. Doty's date trying to kiss her but Doty shaking her head showing rejection.

*At the end of the night, despite Doty shaking her head no, he moved in for a kiss. Doty leaned so far back that it became a game of limbo. (p. 49)*

Sentence "Doty shaking her head no" showing non-verbal rejection to the men. Doty did not give consent to the men to kiss her. But that didn't stop her date and keep push his head closer to Doty's lips.

There are also sentence "it became a game of limbo". This sentence refers to a game called "Limbo" which was released in 2010 and really famous for their visual and

story. This game is a black and white game, and can only be moved forward and backward.

That sentence describes Doty's condition, which had to keep turning her head back because her partner at that time kept asking for kisses and didn't listen or see Doty's refusal. This show that all women get harassed when they try to reject such a thing from men. Feminism is there to show that women have a valid and obligatory capacity to be respected for opinions about their own bodies.

### **The way characters fight the patriarchy**

Fighting patriarchy entails critiquing and correcting the ideologies, mindsets, and actions that uphold discrimination and gender inequality. It's crucial to actively participate in opposing and eliminating the structures, beliefs, and behaviors that support gender inequality. Because it targets the underlying injustices and inequities that result from gender-based discrimination, combating the patriarchy is crucial.

But not all women can do it. Being in an environment where the concept of patriarchy has been imprinted for a long time can make it difficult for the feminist movement to take hold. In this short story anthology Sabrina & Corina, women protecting other women is one of the best steps against patriarchy because no one understands women other than other women.

In the story "Sister," Tina forcing Doty to go to the bar with her to go on a date. Tina keep saying that we need to be better than other woman since every woman is their competitor. Doty then ignores her sister's notion that all the beautiful women at the party are a competition.

*"Competition," she always said, but Doty never cared for the men there, and she didn't view the women as competition. She simply enjoyed them, their beautiful clothes and hair, their bright happy faces. (p. 58)*

Doty doesn't think that other women are a competition. Patriarchy in society forces women to find the best man as a partner. So that women also feel that they are rivals to each other. Doty didn't want to be part of the system because she also never thought of having a partner, let alone marriage, as a way out of her problem.

There's also word "enjoyed" meaning that Doty don't find threatening when there are other women. She likes seeing women comfortable and feel safe in public space. It shows

that Doty trying to support and encourage other women in a place where patriarchy ingrained and want women to please men as far as make women compete each other.

Take a look at “Sabrina & Corina” story, Corina listened to her grandmother tell her about Sabrina's death because of her partner.

*The stories always ended the same, only different girls died, and I didn't want to hear them anymore. (p. 44)*

Corina's grandmother always told old stories about women who died because of men's mistakes. And this time, Sabrina is the example of her grandmother's story. Corina felt there was no need to do this. He didn't want Sabrina to set a bad example and her grandmother's story of her tragedy to keep echoing.

The sentence “and I didn't want to hear them anymore.” mean that Corina will stop become the bystander. She will start protecting Sabrina from gossips and sad story that their family often tell to the younger generation. In the family that only care about other people when they become the victim, Corina don't want to be like that.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, after analyzing the types of Feminism in Sabrina & Corina: a short story anthology, it shows that there are 24 selected data that dealt with Hannam's definition of feminism. From 24 data that appear in short stories, it has been classified into three definitions of feminism. 1) Recognition of imbalance power" found 11 data; 2) women's condition is a social construct found 8 data; 3) emphasizes women's autonomy found 5 data.

This study analyzes how the main characters in several short stories by Kali in the anthology of short stories entitled Sabrina & Corina show their feminism. This study also analyzes how the main character fights for feminism amidst the ingrained patriarchy in her environment. The main characters in this anthology of short story are: Sierra from “Sugar Babies”, Sabrina & Corina from “Sabrina & Corina”, Doty & Tina from “Sisters”, Liz from “Chessman Park”, and the last one is Neva from “Any Further West”.

Each character faces different problems but is rooted in the same thing, namely the patriarchy in their environment. Sabrina died because of being abused by her partner, Liz, who was injured because of a man who was passing by in the park where she was, and also Doty, who was blind because of a man who was trying to approach her. There is also Sierra who was abandoned by her mother, and also Neva who has to accompany her mother who

has an untreated mental illness. And the last one are Liz from “Cheesman Park” as someone who try to retrieve a friend’s jacket stolen by a man in the park.

In the middle of ingrained patriarchy in their environment, when their families and even themselves become victims of patriarchy, they still try to fight and protect themselves and their families. Feminism exists for women to help and protect each other. As we can see from their behavior, every character in the story is protecting each other from people that using violent either verbal or non-verbal. Corina from “Sabrina & Corina” trying to save Sabrina’s image after her death, Doty from “Sisters” who never see woman as competition. In the story “Any Further West”, there are Neva who trying to console her mother from heartbreak, and also

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Varieties of the definition of feminism according to Hannam (2007) which are represented by the main characters in the short story anthology entitled Sabrina & Corina are recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes, with a woman in a subordinate role to men, A belief that a woman's condition is socially constructed and therefore can be changed, and an emphasis on female autonomy. Of the 24 selected sentences, it was found that recognition of an imbalance of power between the sexes was the most dominant in the characters in Sabrina & Corina.

The way the characters fight against patriarchy is by mutually protecting and supporting fellow women from an environment that is detrimental to women. This can be seen from Corina who wants to protect Sabrina's image after she dies so that she doesn't set a bad example. There is also Doty who never sees other women as competition, Doty is always happy to see other women look beautiful. This method arises because the women in these short stories consistently experience verbal and non-verbal violence from their environment. So there is no other way but to protect fellow women.



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