

THE RESISTANCE OF WOMEN TOWARD OPPRESSION IN CHRISTINA DALCHER'S *VOX*

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the writer analyzes women resistance toward oppression as seen in the novel *Vox* by Christina Dalcher. This novel depicts women oppression where women have been silenced due to government regulations that make women feel the unpleasant treatment. The novel also depicts how the women react to the oppression. For that reason, the purpose of the study is to describe the resistance of women towards the oppression they experienced. This study applies feminism theory. Hook states feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression [1]. Lerner states the term oppression is a forceful subordination used to describe the subject-matter of individuals and groups as class oppression or racial oppression. As a result, it can be concluded that the women oppression is a mental burden or injustice by men to women, and that women lack of freedom, and under pressure [2]. Hollander and Einwohner state people who are oppressed and dominated will likely perform the act of resistance for they think and feel that the particular condition is not fair to them. The intention of doing resistance and shall the resistance be visible and recognized marks the discussion span of resistance. Some do it to get recognition, while other conceal it intentionally [3]. Nowadays there are still many women who experience inequality and restrictions on their rights. Therefore, the writer consider women oppression and women resistance be important to study.

METHOD

The source of data in this study is a novel entitled *Vox* by Christina Dalcher [4]. To do the research, the writer applied the interpretation and close reading technique to completed and understand of the data. Interpretation is the exploration of those meanings and responding to a work of literature, people draw on their own understanding, background, and observation [5]. In

analyzing this novel, the writer reads carefully and repeatedly while making notes about women oppression and women resistance.

Data related to women oppression and the women resistance in the novel are found out through words, phrases, and sentences. To answer the research by way of examining special words, phrases, taking note allusion, and sentences related to the research problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The forms of women oppressions found in the novel are lack of freedom and injustice in job for women. The oppression happens because an unpleasant treatment and women oppression against the background of policies made by pure movement and the government. Women oppression in form of lack of freedom for women, it can be seen from Jean's case. She has been restricted from getting her rights and also lost her rights to write and send a letter to congressman.

I learned how difficult it is to write a letter to my congressman without a pen, or to mail a letter without a stamp.

I learned how easy it is for the man at the office supply store to say, "I'm sorry, ma'am. I can't sell you that," or for the postal worker to shake his head when anyone without a Y chromosome asks for stamps. I learned how quickly a cell phone account can be canceled, and how efficient young enlisted men can be at installing cameras. (P.26)

The women oppression that can be seen from the data above is from the experience of Jean who cannot buy a pen and a stamp. This of course, makes it impossible for her to write and send a letter. The failure in getting stationery and stamp could indirectly cause limitation of communication of women. This is one way to restrict women not only verbally but also in written form. The freedom to speak or communicate is determined by their male counterparts.

The next data is injustice in job for women. After the existence of a new regulation that forbids women to work outside their homes, many working women like Jean must quit their job and do domestic chores only. Such injustice shows how women are under pressure.

Morgan hasn't finished. He picks up a pen and jabs the air with it. "You need to get it in your head, Jean. You women aren't dependable. The system doesn't work the way it was. Take the fifties. Everything was fine. Everyone had a nice house and a car in the garage and food on the table. And things still ran smoothly! We didn't need women in the workforce. You'll see, once you get over all this anger. You'll see it's going to be better. Better for your kids." (156)

The data above shows Morgan, one of Jean's male colleagues, explaining how women are considered as unreliable. According to him it is women's lack of competence that makes them not acceptable "in the workforce." With women staying at home and taking care of their family men can still provide clothing and food. With the new system being put into use at the work place shows the injustice of men to women.

The forms of women resistance found in the novel are underground resistance group, accepting job offer, and demonstration. The resistance used to fight injustice and the oppression.

Underground resistance group is a movement was carried out by people who disagreed with the policies that had been made by the government. The members of this group also created a tool that serves to get the freedom of speech. It is a fake bracelet used by Sharon Ray. The fake bracelet deceives and trickles the government and pure movement and has the same shape as the original bracelet.

"So, you're Sonia?" She bends down and takes my daughter's left hand, running a thumb where Sonia's wrist counter should be. "I'm Ms. Sharon, and I think we're gonna be good friends, you and me. You like horses?"

Sonia nods.

"Use your words, girl. You got 'em, right?"

"I told her—," I start.

"You're probably wondering why I'm talking so much." Sharon unsnaps the silver band on her left wrist and slides it off. "Fake. Del made it for me last year, once he figured out how to get the real one off. Made three more for our girls." (147)

The quotation above depicts efforts and techniques of resistance to the government's decision to reject word restrictions on women by using a fake bracelet that replaces the original one. This fake bracelet is used to fight decisions against women who are oppressed. The fake bracelet has the same as the real one. Women are supposed to use bracelets to control how many words they used. The fake bracelet can help a woman who wants to speak freely without having to think and worried about how many words they use. As in the data, the fake bracelet also uses by her three daughters. Because this resistance is executed in secret, Sharon does not want what she used is known by other people. Jean's way of resistance to this injustice is by taking the offer to get her normal life back, even though she has to work for the president. She worked to find a cure for the president's brother.

"So," Reverend Carl says. His hands are down now, and he's no longer looking at me, but at the steel cuff Thomas has been holding for the past twenty minutes. "It's your choice. You can set up a new lab, recommence your research, and move forward. Or—"

"Or?" I say. My eyes find Patrick's.

"Or everything can go back to normal. I'm sure your family would like that." He doesn't look at me while he's talking, but at Patrick, as if he's studying my husband's reaction. (P.53)

The data shows the advantage that Jean would get if she agrees with Reverend Carl's offer to find a cure for the president's brother. Working again as a scientist, have a benefit to Jean. She will get a new lab for her research as a Scientist, being able to restart her study and get her normal life as a free woman, such as getting freedom of speech and no need to be afraid of the government and pure movement control, also returning to work outside the home like usual. This offered could also be used to fight the government by taking advantage and getting her life back.

The next data is Demonstration. Demonstrations is show by several women who spearheaded the anti-Myers campaign and wanted to demand freedom and justice from the president and government.

"After the election, we started believing. Some of us became vocal for the first time. Women, for the most part, spearheaded the anti-Myers campaign —women like me, who hadn't ever tried on a pair of marching boots, piled into buses and Metro cars and froze in the Washington winter. They spent a Saturday

painting signs at their house two doors down from ours; five of the graduate students from my department said they had our backs. And they did, for a while.” (P.164)

The data above describes the existence of a struggle or resistance to the injustice felt by women. This resistance started after the existence of regulations made by the government. The rules make women being oppressed and do not have freedom like men. The women carried out the demonstration by painting and give a sign in front of their doors. It can be seen from the data that women demonstrated by getting on buses and Metro cars while voicing their opinions.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The study reveals that all cases of women oppression are done by several characters. The dominant data of women oppression is lack of freedom for women. Lack of freedom for women happens because the government's regulation about women are only allowed to speak 100 words a day, not allowed to work outside, and women are only allowed to do household. Women lose their rights such as the rights to make expression, to speak, women do not have same rights as men, and it is obvious that women are oppressed by men and their society. All women and girls feel this oppression. The girls are only taught about cooking, sewing, and without being taught about general subjects.

The resistance carried out by women consisted of three categories, but the more dominant is demonstration. Demonstrations was held to reject and voice disapproval about the regulations made by the government and women wanted their rights and freedoms to be returned to normal. The demonstration was carried out by several women who carried out their actions in the streets to voice their dislike of the regulations by the government. Although in the end, the resistance through this demonstration was not successful and the government managed to disperse the people who were demonstrating.

For other research and researcher, the writer suggest to explore more about feminism, women oppression and women resistance of this novel for giving more knowledge, experience and understanding for the readers.

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