

THE RECONSTRUCTED PORTRAYAL OF FEMINISM THROUGH HEROINE ACTION IN FILM

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Abstract

*Films featuring female main characters who are generally known as protagonists are increasing each year as seen from the number of action and adventure films that are led by women. These days, actresses seem often to play roles with masculine stereotypes that have been familiarly played by men, take for instance *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* in 2014, *Wonder Women* in 2017, *Ocean's 8* in 2018, and *Enola Holmes* in 2020. These films have in themselves a kind of heroine character, which portrays women to be strong, brave, and important figures. This research intends to analyze whether films in this case are used as a space to propagate gender and then reconstruct feminism particularly in terms of spectatorship. To anticipate the task at hand this research used a qualitative method by gathering relevant and reliable information as data (e.g., interview, media articles, scientific journals, and documentaries). The researchers analyzed the issue on these films through the theory of *The Social Subject* by E. Deidre Pribram and also supported by Garda Lerner's Patriarchy theory. Both theories are used as Pribram gives the statement on how spectatorship is formulated as a convergence between textual subjects and social subjects and gives the effect of discourse that is represented by the media to the audience, and Lerner's theory is the supporting statement of the researchers' assumptions on the reason film become the media for ideological propaganda, which is then evidenced by Pribram's theory. Through this study, the researchers believe that films with female main characters who have roles equal to that of men can reconstruct feminism and try to give new perspectives of women to the audience.*

Keywords: *heroine; film; feminis; spectatorship*

A. Introduction

In the 21st century era, the development of the film industry is growing rapidly along with the evolution of modern technology that supports the production and storage of a film. It is certain that film as one of the modern media which is also the source for popular entertainment has always been able to attract the attention of all people around the world, including in Indonesia. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that progressively many directors and producers are competing to show their expertise in creating films as prepossessing as possible in order to captivate the hearts of film audiences both male and female. Even today, film distribution is not only limited to showing films in cinemas when one has to go to the nearest cinema to watch a film, but there are already many movie streaming platforms that can be accessed at any time such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar, WeTV, and so on. Consequently, people are increasingly exposed to films and escalate the frequency of people watching movies regularly. Based on The 2019 THEME Report as a comprehensive analysis and survey for the theatrical and home or mobile entertainment market by Motion Picture Association, the data result for the gender composition who watch movies or tv shows via a mobile device from the

total population of women as much as 51% and men are 49% show that both gender viewers are balanced since female viewers took the 50% and the other 50% are male. From the related data, the focus is the fact that women are equal to men having the same level of dominance as the audience of a film or television show.

At the same time, recent data result by Stoll (2021) in the report called *Distribution of lead actors in movies in the United States from 2011 to 2020, by gender* indicates that there is a narrowing of the gap between female and male actors in leading roles from 2011 to 2020 with an upward trend of women starring in top films and being in the spotlight. According to her report, 47.8% lead characters in 2020 were female which shows a ten percent increase in the last two years. Even though men obviously still take up the majority of lead actors, the figures from 2020 reveals significant development for women in the film industry compared to 2011 which only occupied 25.6% from the total 100% of females as the main character until in 2016 the percentage has grown consistently to date. From the two reports that have been included, namely between the data of females as audience of films and the representation of women in the films as leading characters signify that the point of equality has begun to be found on the dominance of both genders in the film industry. Consequently, the researchers intend to study whether female lead characters particularly in action or adventure genre films which also known as heroines can virtually create a portrayal of feminism, and films in this case are used as a space to propagate feminism particularly in terms of spectatorship. The researchers see that the female lead characters are able to break the stereotype of the society that women can only be the support figures for men or perceived as the second gender. The purpose of this study is then to examine whether film can reconstruct the perspective in the society of how women should be and represent feminism values through the action of the heroines which portrays women to be strong, brave, and important figures. Several examples of films that carry the action or adventure genre that are led by women and will be studied by the researchers in this paper, such as *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* (2014), *Wonder Women* (2017), *Ocean's 8* (2018), and *Enola Holmes* (2020).

In reviewing the researchers' assumptions, there is a discussion journal entitled *Women and Film: A Discussion of Feminist Aesthetics* (1978) which appointed when the issue of trying to define film as a medium has been able to attract feminists was raised in the discussion, B. Ruby Rich who is an American critic and involved in the world of cinema stated that film is not an individual experience. Film is the result of a collection of group activities that rub against culture, entertainment, and everyday life so that films have the potential for synthesis between art, life, politics, gender, and so on. Therefore, the combination of film and feminism is something that is not intentional at first but becomes inevitable. In addition, Judith Mayne as a professor of French and Women's studies also justified by saying that films have a feminist motivation even though not directly or unconsciously. Julia Lesage also added that the accessibility of films can be linked to other films as feminist teachings by "spewing out stereotypes". This method works to describe how a narrative film in particular can capture codes that everyone knows. When an event in the form of a code or stereotype enters the film, these elements are aspects that have been articulated in terms of something that people know consciously in society. Female figures in films are almost always treated this way in codified ways. In other words, women today are very interested in analyzing social structures to take their knowledge and apply it to their respective lives. Accordingly, this proves that film is an ideal tool to access something into the teachings of feminism.

Moreover, in relation to the connection between the viewers and the films or television shows that they watch, in the Film Studies there is an important concept known as spectatorship which the researchers have mentioned before. Spectatorship itself explores how films convey messages to individual spectators through particular shots, editing, music and performance, as well as narrative and genre to engage their interests and emotions. In accordance with Fuller-Seeley (2010), the spectatorship concept begin in the mid-1970s by following new methodological currents in history, literature, communication, and cultural studies resulted in many researchers starting to incorporate film and television studies through a variety of approaches to analyze the social and cultural context of what screens were trying to represent and perceived by the spectators. Moreover, the researchers

at that moment started to explore the meanings that images or narratives could offer to many different kinds of audiences depending on the individualized point of view. Inside the interaction scope of media, society, and viewers, there are considerable questions and related theories from scholars that open up new research spaces that focus on how spectators in various historical and cultural contexts interpret what they have seen from the media. From the development of the study, it was stated by British film theorist Laura Mulvey in Fuller-seeley (2010) that the concept of spectatorship ultimately comes to the question of how wide the extent of female audiences can identify themselves with main characters in films produced from the patriarchal Hollywood system. In fact, the core problem in the film industry since the beginning has always revolved around gender issues in which from filmmaking to the selection of main characters in films have always been dominated by men as if films were only made by men for male audiences. Considering that women also have an equal number in society as film audiences with men, women should be able to see the relevance between themselves and the characters they see in the film.

In agreement with Nelmes (2012), stated that gender which is portrayed in film is able to reflect concerns in our society regarding who we are, as film functions as the re-presentation of images that pose by actors playing characters. Therefore, images that are concentrated and symbolic in film can give powerful meaning to help identify certain characters and gender types for the audience to resonate and empathise at some level about the world they live in. For instance, when attitudes towards women in the film industry are directed to something more positive or told about women's stories from women's viewpoint then it will help raise awareness about how gender should be better represented in the media for female spectators. Among feminists, there is also a belief that the media can be a factor in reinforcing various narrow and limiting stereotypical images of women from how women are represented in them, such as the stereotype that women should always stay at home, that women are inferior to men, that women like violent men, in which all of that originally comes from patriarchal thinking alone. Accordingly, current society needs to realize that women also have a major influence in the market of the film industry and deserve enough varied representation in order to see a woman as a woman, not to be seen as the second gender and be influenced by marginalization in a patriarchal society.

Likewise, according to Pribram (2004), that the concept of spectatorship cannot be separated from the theory of the human subject and the search for what motives make them sit in front of a film or television screen and explore configurations to see themselves, the text, and the world it represents within a certain system of meaning. Pribram (2004) further explained, the emergent spectator of cultural studies at that point contributes two noteworthy varieties to the idea of spectatorship. To begin with, the text is produced simultaneously in the minute of interaction with the audience member, bringing the spectator or viewer to the edge of the mediated occasion which it gets to be inconceivable to talk of the implications of the text separately from its seeing subject and the two getting to be constant. Second, the viewing subject is composed of the interaction between the impacts of the discourse conjured by the text or representation and the impacts of social and the material discourses beyond. Here, spectatorship is formulated as the convergence of textual subjects and social subjects and there is an exchange of implications produced by media discourse where textual and social power intersect. In fact, cultural studies become the territory where social power, relationships, and frameworks of meaning are arranged and set up, and consequently can be declined and/or reestablished otherwise. In consequence, the Pribram's theory of spectatorship particularly The Social Subject will become the theoretical basis in analyzing the statement that with the existence of films that place women as the main characters in particular as heroines or a kind of leader in the action and adventure genre films, which normally play by male actors, will be able to resist the marginalization of patriarchal thinking that women are a weak second gender, and reestablish the view that women are also entitled to be equal in the film industry either in terms of filmmaking or in terms of getting a lead role.

To review as well as support the researchers' statement regarding women who are considered as the second gender in society, the researchers also include the patriarchal theory by Gerda Lerner

which at the end of the discussion will help understand the relationship between feminism values towards film. Since 1940s, Gerda Hedwig Lerner has been a feminist yet throughout decades in her life, her guidance towards political point of view and intellectual has changed. Gerda published a two-volumes book which entitled Volume I: *The Creation of Patriarchy* (1986) & Volume II: *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness* (1993). Gerda clearly noted the varieties of patriarchy that emerged in different socio-economic environments. In her two-volume book, she thoroughly introduces the scaffolding for the claim she has made for some time in her lectures that depriving women of their education and knowledge of their own history is at the root of women's subordination. Gerda Lerner also often conveys the history of women to the public which is the key to women's freedom. This is a clearly non-materialist claim because it minimizes the importance of women's economic subordination and consequent dependence on men. Gerda wanted to elaborate a holistic history that serves to advance understanding of all forms of injustice against women.

Based on the English Cambridge Dictionary (accessed on July 27th 2021, 15:41 pm), patriarchal means ruled or controlled by men. According to *Patriarchal Society According to Feminism* (ThoughtCo.), patriarchal (adj.) describes a general structure in which men have power over women and society (n.) means the entirety of relations of a community. A patriarchal society consists of a male-dominated power structure throughout organized society and in individual relationships. Normally, power is related to a privilege of something that is connected to a significant people, government side, and highest position. Patriarchy is a system in which men have more power than women and men have some level of privilege to which women are not entitled. Women's activist scholars have extended the definition of patriarchal society to depict a systemic inclination against ladies. As second-wave women's activists inspected society amid the 1960s, they did watch families headed by ladies and female pioneers. They were truly concerned with whether this was exceptional or not. More critical, be that as it may, was the way society saw ladies in control as a special case to a collectively held see of women's 'part' in society. Instead of saying that men abused ladies, most women's activists saw that abuse of ladies came from the basic predisposition of a patriarchal society. Therefore, if the film industry continues to develop films that can be relevant to female spectators, then this patriarchal thinking will gradually be removed from the view of the general society.

Gender disproportion and stereotyping in cinema have gotten basic consideration over a few decades. Recently, consideration has been drawn to sex disparity inside the film industry. According to UNESCO's 2018 Worldwide Report "Re-Shaping Social Policies", ladies are emphatically under-represented within the workforce, women have less access to assets and confront significant gender pay gaps. Data cited within the report appears that, in Europe, as it were 1 in 5 movies is coordinated by a lady and as it were 16% of the subsidizing goes to movies directed by ladies. Besides that, another pan-European study cited within the report uncovers a noteworthy under-representation of ladies in key imaginative positions, counting coordinating, indeed in spite of the fact that a nearly rise to number of ladies and men graduate from film schools (European Women's Audiovisual Network, 2016). As communicated by Nigerian essayist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie within the Worldwide Report, she said that society should give a place for women where they can take and choose their own choices without being oppressed,

"We must create a world where a woman is as likely as a man to be a decision maker. We must create a world where watching films written by women and directed by women and produced by women is completely ordinary and mainstream."

B. METHODOLOGY

The research will be conducted through qualitative research with literature study methods to gather information relevant to the topic or problem being researched. The informations can be obtained from scientific books, scientific journals, research essays, media articles, documentaries, and also the four films that are used as the materials namely *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* in

2014, *Wonder Women* in 2017, *Ocean's 8* in 2018, and *Enola Holmes* in 2020. Subsequently, the next step is to analyze and draw interpretations of the data obtained as to get the conclusion regarding the literature studies that have been carried out and get the research results whether the researchers' assumption that film can reconstruct feminism and try to give new perspectives of women to the audience is valid or not. In collecting the data for this study, the researchers used two types of data which is primary data that is related to the motives behind the directors or writers in making the four films through various reliable sources that have been mentioned. Then the second is secondary data, which is several samples in the form of film reviews from the spectators that will help provide perspective in seeing whether the filmmakers' claims can be accepted by the spectators. The researchers take the secondary data from media articles and various online databases that display film reviews from both fans and critics. In this research, the researchers have agreed to choose *The Social Subject Theory* by E. Deidre Pribram to be applied as well as to analyze the acquired data and strengthen the arguments and statements given. Gerda Lerner's Patriarchy theory is also used by the researchers as the supporting statement of the researchers' assumptions on the reason film became the media for feminism propaganda.

C. Results and Discussion

In this paper, the researchers as part of the film audience intend to review an assumption that film can be a medium for feminism propaganda through its female lead character particularly from the four films, namely Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* (2014), Princess Diana of Themyscira from *Wonder Women* (2017), Debbie Ocean from *Ocean's 8* (2018), and lastly Enola Holmes from *Enola Holmes* (2020). The reason the researchers use the four films that have been mentioned as research material is because the four films have different types of stories from one another, and they particularly show the uniqueness of their respective female lead characters who have roles as women with qualities that provide representation space for women in real society to see themselves as more than just being a woman as well as trying to challenge the stigma that women may not be given ample opportunity to be seen as or become the roles played by the characters in the film. For instance, the character Katniss Everdeen from the film series *The Hunger Games* was originally depicted as a common teenage girl in District 12 before she was volunteered to take the place of her younger sister in Panem's annual Hunger Games as an act of self-sacrifice. Until seen in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* because of her courage, unyielding attitude, and pretensions for justice and humanity that brought Katniss to the point where she became a symbol of the people's rebellion against the Capitol in which the symbol of the rebellion was marked by the Mockingjay bird. Likewise, with Princess Diana of Themyscira or known as *Wonder Women*, her motivation was driven largely by ideology that is to fight for equality in a male-dominated society and to protect the world from all kinds of injustice in order to be able to present the possibility of a world without war, hatred, and violence. Of the four films studied, *Wonder Woman* according to its film genre as part of the American superhero films is the only one of the female lead characters who truly has super powers and can even be considered as one of the most powerful Superheroes.

If *Wonder Woman* uses the super powers she got as the daughter of the ruler of all the Greek gods named Zeus, in contrast to Debbie Ocean with her female assembly in *Ocean's 8* which shows the power of her own mind in carrying out her motivation to steal a jewelry made out of \$150 million worth of antique diamonds at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual Gala. The unique thing is besides Debbie Ocean's role in the film as a heist leader, but Debbie also breaks the understanding and elevated thievery into an ideology that her mission is not for crime and to get rich. Her mission is simply to show that she does it because she is capable and good at planning theft tactics, wanting to be detached from anyone's command, and stating that somewhere there is an 8-year-old girl dreaming of becoming a smart criminal and she wants to make it happen. On the one hand, there is also Enola Holmes who also uses the power of her mind as the youngest sibling of the Holmes family who is

famous for their genius brain. Since childhood, Enola Holmes was taught everything from physical activities to brain sharpening games by her mother so that she can grow into a woman who thinks critically and independently, and eventually she truly grows into a woman who is very intelligent, observant, insightful and defying the social norms for women of the time. For that determination, she dared to state that her future was her alone and decided for herself that she wants to be a detective in her own right, implementing her ciphers knowledge, and fulfill her intentions to be a “finder of lost souls”.

As the researchers have elaborated about the description of all the female lead characters in each of the four films, it can be concluded that the four main female characters present the characters that match with the assumptions of the researchers as film audience in defining the heroine figure. According to Hume (1997), dictionaries of the nineteenth century define “heroine” or “heroes” simply as “a female hero” who has the qualities of a hero that is illustrious, brave, courageous, noble, valiant, magnanimous, fearless, and a great warrior (Walker 254; Noah Webster 152; Webster and Wheeler 158; Worcester 679). They also define a heroine as the chief female character in a work of fiction. In addition, there is also an understanding of heroine according to Jane Austen in her work entitled *Northanger Abbey* which was quoted from an International Journal of Arts and Sciences by Ka Man Meg Chan (2010),

“In one of her novels, Northanger Abbey, Austen reflects the unequal gender position by depicting two literary types, namely ‘the good women’ means a woman who fulfill social expectations on their gender roles and ‘the heroines’ means a figure who seem stronger as they often suffer but survive after all”.

From the statements regarding the meaning of heroine itself, when referring to the definition of heroines from the nineteenth century dictionaries then the scope will be more limited because it is more depicted that the heroine is a kind of female warrior in a fiction story. Meanwhile, when referring to the meaning of heroine based on Jane Austen, it can be interpreted that any female lead character in a film whose role does not comply with the social expectations on their gender roles so that they look stronger and survive with their own strength are considered a heroine. Therefore, the researchers’ interpretation of heroine is in line with the meaning of heroine based on Jane Austen in which the researchers assume heroine as the female lead character which portrays women to be strong, brave, powerful, superior, know their own desires and motivations, have the ability to do what they want to do, and important figures whose roles even challenge the masculine stereotypes as represented by the chosen female lead characters from the four films studied.

However, in order to find out whether the four films studied were indeed films created by the directors and writers intentionally to show the feminism movement in films with the aim of rejecting the stigma of women as the second gender in patriarchal society or not, the researchers first sought to find out the motives of the directors and writers in making the film through interviews from various media articles, scientific journals, and documentaries as primary data. Accordingly, after knowing the motives of making the film from the directors and writers, their claims will be proven through audience reviews that the researchers take from media articles and various online databases that display film reviews from both fans and critics as secondary data. In that way, the researchers will be able to interpret whether the assumption that films are used as a propaganda medium to trigger the feminism movement and provide space for women in real life society to be able to see themselves more than their role in social expectations that is become the lady of the house, taking care of the family, being focused on children and their happiness, only have to pay attention to appearance, do not allow to show emotions, be small and try not to be noticed for their intelligence and strength, should defer to men, and be passive by not showing ambition to a desire.

1. *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1 (2014)*

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1 is the third film of a film series entitled *The Hunger Games* as a young adult science fiction dystopian story based on a trilogy of novels by an American female author named Suzanne Collins. The first film of *The Hunger Games* was released in 2012 directed by Gary Ross, while the second film which is *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* to the fourth or final film called *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2* were directed by Francis Lawrence. In an interview with Edward Douglas (2014), Francis Lawrence as a director in this film series admitted that he felt lucky to have been given the trust and opportunity to be invited as the person responsible for adapting the rest of Suzanne Collins' story in the form of a film where the first film was already directed by Gary Ross. Although he also admits that with the original story in the novel which has already achieved success and the first film released also earning huge profits, expectations for the sequel to *The Hunger Games* have become higher and that was a tough but exciting challenge for him.

"I wouldn't say it was an easy thing to take on. I mean, I think that I'm quite lucky that I was invited in, because quite honestly, "The Hunger Games" series has all the elements of the things that I truly love in movies, especially for my own things. I think something that I discovered recently—it was pointed out to me by somebody that I really respect at the studio, actually—and that's that a lot of my movies focus on sort of these kinds of solitary, very lonely characters. If you look at "Constantine," obviously "I Am Legend," but even "Kings," you're looking at this guy who's very alone. There's a guy who's sort of pulled into this world, and he's kind of by himself in this kind of crazy world. It's the same as with Katniss, you know? She's surrounded by all these people, but she's a very isolated character. And then, within that context, I'm getting to do a lot of really fun world-building and dealing with different kinds of themes and ideas and things like that. So, it's a fun world."

Moreover, Francis Lawrence in an interview with Britt Hayes (2014), gave his views on Katniss Everdeen which he thought is a relatable character because at first Katniss was just an ordinary girl but because her beloved younger sister was sent to play in the Games so she could not help but sacrifice for her sister even though she was clueless. Then suddenly, she became the symbol of a revolution which she clearly does not want the responsibility for so all she did was fight to survive. This side of Katniss Everdeen that made Francis mainly respect the character.

"One of the things I like about that sequence is, I think, and again, about Katniss, what makes her so believable and relatable is that she's walking in and she doesn't know what she's going to do. She feels like a fool. "I'm going to walk in to see these people, they're having a miserable time. They're injured, they're dying. What am I going to do from here, just me?" And it's the first time she realizes what she means to all these people. Before she sees that reaction, she has no idea that just her presence would make a difference."

However, since Francis Lawrence is principally a person who is trusted to direct Suzanne Collins' novel into a film, to find out more about the motive behind the story making of *The Hunger Games* itself with its female lead character and whether it has anything to do with the efforts of the feminist movement then it is necessary to find out directly from the author which is Suzanne Collins herself. Towards David Levithan (2018), when interviewed Collins told that the origin moment when the idea for *The Hunger Games* story first created was when one night, she was flipping through television channels and then live footage from the ongoing Iraq War appeared. Throughout the trilogy story, Collins also mentions that she applies the just-war theory in the setting that she explains as follows, *"Just-war theory has evolved over thousands of years in an attempt to define what circumstances give you the moral right to wage war and what is acceptable behavior within that war and its aftermath. The why and the how. It helps differentiate between what's considered a necessary and an unnecessary war. In The Hunger Games Trilogy, the districts rebel against their own government because of its corruption. The citizens of the districts have no basic human rights, are treated as slave labor, and are*

subjected to the *Hunger Games* annually. I believe the majority of today's audience would define that as grounds for revolution."

In creating Katniss Everdeen as the main character, Collins stated that Katniss just came to her mind by carrying a bow and arrow and so she let Katniss take over the story as a first-person point of view, even though previously she intended to make the story in the form of a third person. Interestingly, although the story is made from the perspective of a woman and its genre targets a kid audience, Katniss Everdeen's character is liked by both boys and girls from children to adults. In a question and answer session when asked why *The Hunger Games* film series can be liked by both men and women, Collins answered that in making a story she tried to make the story interesting for both genders. In a question and answer session when asked why *The Hunger Games* film series can be liked by both men and women, Collins answered that in making the story she tried to make the story interesting for both genders yet she also stated that perhaps having a female hero in a fighter story which customarily highlights a male became an unexpected choice, and the horrid nature of the story is bigger so the audience would not care who was the lead in a great dystopian story. Eventually through *The Hunger Games*, Collins wants teenagers to dare to find out the truth about the world they live in and think in a larger perspective. Therefore, it can be stated that Collins in making *The Hunger Games* film series especially *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* did not have any intention of specifically making Katniss Everdeen a heroine as a form of feminist propaganda which then made her character a representation for women in the media because she chose Katniss as the female lead character came purely from her instincts and ideas. On the other hand, although Suzanne Collins did not intentionally make Katniss Everdeen a feminist character in the film, critics and audiences assume that the character has a strong sense of feminism with her role stronger than her opposite gender characters in the film namely Peeta Mellark and Gale Hawthorne. Particularly, the storyline in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* which also shows Katniss Everdeen becoming a symbol of rebellion and the driving force of the people's movement to destroy the power of the Capitol led by President Snow. Moreover, the rebellion movement was also fully supported by President Alma Coin who is also a strong female character as president of District 13 and the leader of the Second Rebellion against the Capitol. Some reviews from critics and audiences regarding the side of feminism shown in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* by both the story and the character of Katniss Everdeen are as follows:

Interestingly, the villains of *Mockingjay* employ traditionally "feminine" means to accomplish their ends. Governments rise and fall by the delicate wiliness of their messaging, and by their advisers, who are conniving and canny. Anyone who studied *Romeo and Juliet* in high school can expound on the gendered significance of poison as President Snow's murder weapon of choice: Unlike a showy, penetrating blade (or an arrow), toxins are stealthy, rarely revealing themselves until it is too late. Katniss' appeal, meanwhile, lies in her straightforward, no-frills pragmatism and, of course, her physical prowess. So maybe, in addition to riveting entertainment, *The Hunger Games* represents a revolt against outdated ideas about how women should be. And it does so without sucking all the air out of the room. (Slate Magazine. Katy Waldman. November 25, 2014)

Suzanne Collins has pulled off a remarkable coup, producing a female character that has equal appeal to both boys and girls and it is interesting how the book manages to balance an intricate and detailed love triangle with sequences of fairly gruesome violence. It's not often you find both these things between the covers of the same YA [young adult] book. It helps that Katniss Everdeen is extremely well-drawn; one of the reasons I liked the books so much. She is tough without being a tomboy and attractive without being a sophomore although she has elements of both. Her relationship with Peeta (is it love or expediency?) is particularly well-handled. Even she is unsure where her feelings truly lie. (The Guardian. Anthony Horowitz. April 27, 2012)

This movie has a great view on the equality of the genders. Katniss is the leader of the revolution, which in most movies, is led by men. Both genders are treated with respect and power and nobody is discriminated against solely because of their gender. The women are not only in the household,

and the men are not only on the battlefield. Great representation all around. Would recommend it. (Rotten Tomatoes. Lilly R. September 14, 2015)

Although a fair number of critics and audiences have commented favorably on *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* based on its feminist story and characters, but many audiences also commented on this film badly, particularly in terms of Katniss Everdeen as the main character and the story itself which is considered boring as in the following review:

Like watching paint dry. Boring to a mind-numbing degree. How many times can we see Katniss be horrified and/or emotionally distraught? Maybe the filmmakers thought they were adding depth to their characters. Well, they were wrong. Instead we, the audience, sit through one scene after another in which really nothing happens at all. This whole thing could have easily been compressed down to 40 minutes and then we could have had the rest of the book as the rest of the film. This felt very much like they were stretching it out so they could make two movies - which is the new thing to do in Hollywood with these franchises. Not good storytelling. (IMDb. Meme Factory. December 21, 2014)

This kind of review can be considered to be a sign that not all audiences enjoy the character development of a main character in a film, let alone since the main character is a heroine who is considered easily emotionally distraught.

2. *Wonder Woman* (2017)

Wonder Woman is a 2017 American superhero film produced by DC Films in collaboration with RatPac Entertainment and Tencent Pictures, and distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures. The film is based on the DC Comics character of the same name made by a solo female director named Patty Jenkins. Through *Wonder Woman* film, Patty Jenkins not only displays a feminist character but also in real life shows the fight of a woman to get equal rights behind the male-dominated world of Hollywood cinema. By directing *Wonder Woman*, Patty Jenkins was able to become a female filmmaker with the highest paid or equivalent to men and the first woman who managed to direct a superhero blockbuster film, because in the Hollywood film industry there is still a salary gap between women and men in which women only earn 80 cents to every dollar men get and have a dismal record of hiring female directors particularly in blockbuster films (Setoodeh, 2017). Besides, *Wonder Woman* is not just any superhero yet she is a feminist icon, a character beloved for her intelligence, generosity, and power. However, when critics considered *Wonder Woman* a feminist manifesto, Jenkins stated that she did not think in directing this film in that term because she wanted to fully present the heroine as the lead character as a 'hero' who need to be appreciated for the glory of her heart and her strength, and also because she considers herself to be the last wave of feminist.

"I think the legacy of 'Wonder Woman' is a different kind of hero, one that hits the same marks but also really is about love and empowerment in a slightly different way. I think that is why I love that people wear her outfit. People who are struggling in some sort of way or do not identify with the world they live in can often find themselves in Wonder Woman. And that is the success of feminism. I have always wanted to be last-wave feminism, where you are so feminist, you are not thinking about it at all. Where you are like, 'Of course this superhero is the greatest superhero of all time. Oh, she is a woman? I was not even thinking about that!'"

In addition, in an article interview entitled *The Woman Behind 'Wonder Woman'* with interviewer Cara Buckley (2017), Jenkins clearly stated her opinion on *Wonder Woman* and its relationship to the female gender.

Interviewer : “Do you think gender hurts you in terms of trying to make feature films?

Patty Jenkins : “I do not know. Ironically, tent poles were what I was asked to do, though they were not ones I was into. I think [being a woman] might have had something to do with why people were not interested in my screenplays. It was, “Ah, we do not want that point of view, we want our point of view.” If you want more diversity in the industry, you need diverse people writing scripts and developing them.”

Interviewer : “Do you think “Wonder Woman” needed a woman to direct it?”

Patty Jenkins : “I do not think any movie has to have any specific kind of person. I was not directing a woman, I was just directing a hero, and that freed me up to go broader with her personality than someone might be able to do if they were afraid to make her vulnerable and loving and warm, and not always right, which is absolutely imperative to a leading character. That has been one of the hardest things about leading characters: Other people might not have felt safe, or worried [that] if there is any vulnerability, what is that saying? But main characters have to have flaws, and have a journey and be rich. I felt the same way about “Monster.” A woman did not have to direct it, and I was not directing a woman’s story. I was directing a person.”

Through various interviews, Jenkins has repeatedly stated that the films she directs are not only made to be seen from the side of its femininity, but more than that Jenkins wants the audience to get used to seeing the lead character of a film is a woman or heroine and perceive the character does not based on gender but entirely as a human being. Jenkins also stated that her intention through the character of Wonder Woman was to present a hero who believes in love, who is filled with love, who believes in change, and who believes in the good of mankind. She wanted to discuss how people cannot defeat the evils that have befallen them by eliminating a single villain, because if people want to live in a world of peace in the future then they must put the past behind and become responsible heroes that prioritize love and peace rather than battle. As a filmmaker, Jenkins believes that there is no word such as cringe in her dictionary that makes so many artists frightened to be genuine, honest, and emotional, because art is supposed to make the world a more beautiful place. Furthermore, in an interview with Gina McIntyre quoted from an interview article entitled ‘Wonder Woman’ Director Patty Jenkins: ‘We Need a New Kind of Hero’, Jenkins agrees that the film feels like a turning point in terms of the representation of women on screen and behind the camera as she narrates,

“I have an eight-year-old son. Watching his attitude shift from being a kid who is stuck in all the classic “I-cannot-wear-that-shirt, it-is-too-girly” to needing every incarnation of the Wonder Woman doll and saying, “I have to have her to fight in the battle, I have got to have Wonder Woman” ... it is hard not to get emotional. He is going to grow up thinking that, of course, some of the women you know are going to be princesses. And some of them are going to be princesses who fight side by side with you in battle.”

From these interviews, it can be stated that Patty Jenkins' main motive in working on *Wonder Woman* is to give a message to people in the world that just like women, heroes also have the right to show their emotions where these emotions are not a form of vulnerability but are a form of strength at a time when the world is currently full of hate and violence. Along with its feminist character, *Wonder Woman* becomes a film that can be used as a medium for female representation which convinces that women can be both princesses or heroines who fight either alone or with men, which then provides a space to break the patriarchal view that women are powerless. In that way, to see if the director's intentions have reached the spectator, it is necessary to review the film through some reviews from the audience as follows:

This is an incredible movie, my favorite one ever. It has an amazing, very talented cast that brings light and laughter to a very strong and heart-warming story. This is a must see for everyone but as a young woman I found it so motivational and heartwarming, it brought tears of laughter and sadness to my eyes. Gal and Patty did a phenomenal job and this is not a movie to miss. (Rotten Tomatoes. Lily H. January 3, 2021)

By far the best female-led superhero movie and for good reason. Wonder Woman is visually stunning with an incredibly likeable lead character and Gal Gadot's portrayal is perfect, her and Chris Pine have amazing chemistry, Themyscira is gorgeous, the action sequences are incredible especially the No Man's Land and Themyscira fight and on a production level, it does a great job of bringing us back to WW1 with the dark colors (but not like Snyder's movies), dirty streets and injured people. It is also an amazing example of female empowerment. WW is a character (even as a male) that I can look up to because everything she does to ensure the people around her are safe. What holds it back is the villains. When you have a WW1 movie, you're going to have boring villains and Ares is just not intimidating and there is no foreshadowing and the movie's message starts to become incredibly unclear towards the end but this is a great DCEU movie. (Rotten Tomatoes. Mohammed A. April 7, 2021)

However, there are also some audiences who criticized some aspects regarding the feminism values of Wonder Woman in this film directed by Patty Jenkins, such as the following audience reviews:

Wonder Woman was not even the hero of the movie. She faced no real challenge, killed hundreds of men who probably were just doing their jobs but spared an evil woman who literally laughed as sprayed gas in a room full of people. She repeatedly put her friends' lives in danger but illogically none of them died and killed Ares in an anime fashion with a big bang. She said she wanted to fight for the weak but a hero inspires the weak to strong not what she did. This movie was just made to support deluded feminists just like Captain Marvel and Batwoman. (Rotten Tomatoes. Lu T. March 24, 2021)

I love what Wonder Woman represents: independence, strength, intelligence, discipline, giving back to one's community, helping others, finding the extraordinary in the ordinary, truth, honesty, compassion, and nurturing. I dislike what Wonder Woman is in this movie -- another beautiful woman beholden to a man who does nothing more than demand her love while demeaning and diminishing who she truly is. Love can conquer all. I just wish Hollywood would make a movie where the woman loves a man who actually deserves it. Two of the better female superhero movies I have seen starred Charlize Theron: "Monster" and "Atomic Blonde". US American filmmakers can learn a lot from Chinese martial arts movies starring women: "Crouching Tiger" and "House of Flying Daggers" are two examples of how women can be leaders who love -- not women who are enslaved to love. On a side note, Lynda Carter looks amazing, and she should have had a real role in this movie as one of the Amazon elders. (Rotten Tomatoes. Coqui C. December 26, 2020)

From the interviews and reviews above, it can be concluded that Patty Jenkins as the director in making the *Wonder Woman* film through the character of Princess Diana has the main motive to give a message that in a world filled with hatred and violence as well as in a world dominated by men, people need to be aware in becoming heroes for themselves by spreading love and peace. For the reason that, no matter how strong heroines or heroes protect humans from evil yet if the evil comes from humans themselves, no one can save them but themselves. Thus, it can be interpreted similarly to Suzanne Collins in *The Hunger Games*, Patty Jenkins also does not specifically use the *Wonder Woman* film as a manifesto of feminism values to the spectator, but as an effort to show that this world needs

a new kind of hero who does not just eradicating villains but about self-discovery and the awakening of humanity. Nevertheless, the difference with *The Hunger Games* is that Patty Jenkins admits that Wonder Woman's role as a heroine can also be a representation for women in the media. Moreover, this story also comes from the perspective of a woman from Jenkins as a female director and her own story in the real world behind Hollywood cameras also shows that women deserve the same opportunity and appreciation as a filmmaker. Jenkins' two messages in her intention or motive for working on *Wonder Woman* were eventually successfully conveyed to the spectator, even though there are still male and female audiences who do not support Wonder Woman as the female lead character show the feminist side, particularly with her message of peace and love which is considered cringy by many spectators, or some even feel that her character does not fully represent the real feminist even after being studied then it does make sense.

3. *Ocean's 8* (2018)

In 2018, the world of Hollywood cinema was shocked by the presence of a high-class film that carried the feminism movement in its story. *Ocean's Eight* or *Ocean's 8* (2018) is an American film with heist comedy genre directed by Gary Ross and written by Ross and Olivia Milch. *Ocean's 8* is both a continuation of and a spin-off from Steven Soderbergh's *Ocean's* trilogy. This film features astonishing women cast, one of them is Sandra Bullock who plays the female lead character. *Ocean's 8* follows a group of women led by Debbie Ocean, Dannie Ocean's sister who plan a sophisticated heist at the annual Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. After the release of *Ocean's Thirteen* (2007), Steven Soderbergh as the director had no intentions of making a fourth film yet he desired to have the series "go out on top". It was specifically stated that *Ocean's 8* is not going to follow the storyline of the last film as a sequel and not as a rebooting version of *Ocean's* franchise yet this film branches off from the previous *Ocean's* trilogy to create a whole new story from a female perspective. The director of *Ocean's 8*, Gary Ross, who was also the director of *The Hunger Games* (2012) and *Pleasantville* (1998), claimed himself that he wanted to create a film that brings up the theft theme with women characters in it through an interview with *Slash Film* (2018). In the interview conversation below, Gary Ross talks about the origin of *Ocean's 8* and how the impressive cast helped sell the studio on the concept:

Interviewer : *"I was wondering if you could just talk a little about the origin of this film. Was it as simple as someone saying, 'Let's do Ocean's 11 with a female cast', or?"*

Gary Ross : *"Well, that actually was me, that person who came up with the idea. I mean, I wasn't really a director for hire on this. It's just something that I originated and created, brought to the studio, and worked for five years to get made, so... it really was a personal movie in that respect, even though it's derived from another franchise. Steven Soderbergh's a good friend of mine and we've collaborated informally over the years on many things. He was a producer on *Pleasantville*. I helped him on *Che* at times. He shot a day of second unit for me on *The Hunger Games*. I had helped him on the previous *Ocean's* movies. So we've had this kind of an ongoing conversation for like 20 years."*

*"After *The Hunger Games*, the thing that sort of stayed with me after I left the franchise, that resonated me the most, was **how girls were taken with and moved by the fact that there was a protagonist in a movie that they could relate to that they had not seen in a movie like that before, and that..., that was so resonant to them and that it made a difference to them.** So I think that sort of stayed with me and then I was a friend one night and I was just kicking ideas around, and this idea sort of jumped in my head, and then when I thought about it, I thought, well, it is weird but there is just never been a female ensemble like this. There is not. Not where there is sort of these kickass women going to do something like this. It just has not existed. So, it should not be groundbreaking, but it is. And, because of that, it is like all the more reason to*

do it, I feel. You know? I kind of felt like, well, god, what is it? It is just a heist movie. It is not, you know—it should not be that earth shattering. And yet I looked through film history and I could not find the antecedent to this. So that kind of really made me want to do it.”

“Then I went to Soderbergh and I said, what do you think of this idea? And I pitched it to him. And Sandy (Sandra Bullock), I think, was doing a lot of Gravity press, and she and (Ocean’s 11 star) George Clooney were talking about the nature of their brother-sister relationship and of course I believe everything that I read, so I said, what about that, Steven? What if she plays his sister? And they are like, that is interesting. So we brought it to producer (Jerry Weintraub), who was alive at the time and he was interested in it, and then we – you know, Soderbergh and I obviously have trust and friendship – and then we brought it to Sandy and Sandy said, well, if the script is good and you get these people I am interested. So, I took that as a yes even though it was not. Then we went to the studio, and that began a long process of trying to get the movie made that really took a lot of time and effort to get done, in collaboration with Steven”.

*“Then I reached out to Olivia Milch, because... **this is about eight women and I am not arrogant enough, and hopefully not stupid enough, to think that I can write that by myself**, and this was somebody with whom I would have a collaboration on a couple other things before. And I love Olivia, and I had not really written with anybody since Big, with Anne Spielberg. Ever since Big...I would written everything by myself, and suddenly I was just in this really cool world where I had a collaborator again. I had conversations going on, you know? I had somebody next to me at the keyboard and we really wrote side by side. And that was just a blast, I think especially at my age — I am free from kind of the lonely drudgery of needing to pull the rock uphill myself. So that was just fun, the spontaneity of that, and in a room with her, and stuff like that. So that was a long process, and still I do not think we ever got this movie officially greenlit until two months before we were shooting. I mean, they wanted to see the whole cast come together before they officially greenlit. So, I really only had two months to prepare for it. I mean, it was incredibly tight. But, anyway, that was the process of sort of breathing this into being”.*

From the interview conversation above with Slash Film (2018), Gary Ross directly said that he wanted to make a collaboration of *Ocean’s 8* with Olivia Milch as a movie that is different from the rest of the heist genre in film production. It started from Ross’s idea to make a diverse visualization of women through crime action scenes. There are a total eight women who are not merely watched and sat quietly while the robbery plan is in progress yet each of them had a major role to play in the success of the robbery. Debbie Ocean who plans to rob The Toussaint, a \$150 million jewelry necklace at the annual New York Met Gala with the team as follows, Amita as the jewelry maker, Tammy as the blacksmith, Constance as the street thief, Nine ball as the computer genius, Rose Well as the fashion designer, and the final touch of *Ocean’s 8* is Daphne Kluger as the one who wore the Toussaint at the Met Gala and eventually became one of the team with Debbie Ocean at the end. Occasionally, people already knew that a thief or someone who did heist in a story would be men, it made this stigma when a man had to do all the stuff as the one who did every bad or dangerous movement in a film or storyline. The brain of a heist, the man who stole the money, the hacker of the security system, and et cetera would be a man who would fit into the role. Meanwhile, the team production of *Ocean’s 8* thinks otherwise, specifically the co-writer and co-producer, Olivia Milch, stated in the interview with Pacific Standard (2018) that not only men can do what he wants and can be what he wants but women can also do that too, as shown in below:

“It was a healing experience to see a group of women in the trailer—and feel like you could just celebrate them being together. You did not have to feel nervous or worried that something awful was going to happen. It is important for men and women to see powerful, badass, excellent women

doing their jobs well and it is incredibly satisfying to see eight women on screen who are central to, rather than appendages of the story."

Olivia Milch also mentioned that all the female characters in *Ocean's 8* were made for spectators to feel the empowerment of women through a film that *"We wanted audiences to connect to different characters, to identify themselves on screen, as well as to reflect what New York City actually looks like and feels like"*.

The protagonists in *Ocean's 8* display an ideal type of woman on a heist plan with each diverse background life (for instance as a high-strung event planner, a self-absorbed celebrity host, and the "crazy" ex-girlfriend) with aplomb. By exaggerating so-called "feminine" qualities as though status-seeking, superficial, and narcissistic with a little bit of humor, *Ocean's 8* characters use sexist stereotypes in order to crack them open the bunker and get the jewels. Ultimately, the essence of the joke in *Ocean's 8* is the male characters who underestimate the women rather than the women themselves, who work together toward a shared goal which is jewelry; all without petty digressions. However, there was still a man who appears in *Ocean's 8* film as the supporting roles because they only starred as accessories for the female characters who control the story, as Olivia Milch concludes in an interview with Pacific Standard (2018),

"The balance of the universe is restored because (Becker) gets what he deserves. And that's a particularly satisfying experience in the moment we are in". The spectators might flinch when Cate Blanchett's character calls a group of people "a bunch of pussies" yet as Olivia Milch asserts, *"Women and also pussies which are deep and strong and perseverant and the givers of all life and the ground zero of all existence and really kind of miraculous, powerful things. We need to shift our language to accurately reflect what we all know to actually be true, which is that women are powerful."* Olivia Milch also stated that she and Gary Ross acknowledged themselves as feminist in an interview with Pacific Standard (2018), *"We are both feminists. We always were excited by spending time with these powerful women characters. For us, that was a given."*

These interviews above showed the spectators that women do not have to use their power physically to succeed in their theft plan but use logic, intelligence, and sense. All the women characters in *Ocean's 8* did not use knives or semi-automatic pistols to demonstrate power or to advance their master plan. *"I think that the greatest weapon in this film is intellect"*, Olivia Milch explained on Newsbeat, BBC Radio 1. The women merely use small but dangerous types of things that are creatively made by them to threaten men from doing unexpected treatment such as a razor-sharp, prison-style toothbrush, and et cetera which proved that no weapons are being used in *Ocean's 8*. In order to prove that *Ocean's 8* could change the spectator's viewpoint on women through feminist in a film, these reviews on media platform would give some of statements:

This movie will go down as a success and it will be used to show how women can make a movie great, and how they don't need men in the spotlight for every movie. However, at the end of the day the movie was bland. I thought the casting for the film was fantastic, they showcased their stars well and they put them in roles that they fit well. They used their celebrity status and showed them just enough to make people happy and to add up to eight people. The lead actresses were strong. I loved Helena Bonham Carter as the crazy lady which she frequently plays and Cate Blanchett as the rebellious mom. I could have done without Hathaway and Kaling, but there had to be eight, so what are you going to do? Even in the original Oceans they added random actors to just exist and glance over. The largest driving force in this film is the fact that it is an "all-female cast" something they really enforced. Which is the new thing, and I'm all for using any cast you want to make a great film. However, in a remake scenario it just comes off as posh and sassy. Like getting in an argument and yelling "women can do it just as good, or even better than the men." Kind of childish. But the reasons

this film was made aside, because it made them had to showcase the women in a perfect storm. From a story and directing point of view they had very little room to add conflict.

These are supposed to be strong women, and the smartest people they could find. But movies without conflict are nice to see but in the end lack depth, drive, and are boring. Other areas this movie fell down a few rungs was in the fact that it was an “original” sequel. With such a strong standing already, the Oceans movies already created a blueprint of success, so going away from that probably isn’t your best idea. In the end, the director Gary Ross put his best shot out there with all of the strings attached to every aspect, and Bullock and her supporting ladies can count this as a win for women. It is not going to be a movie that people are going to be excited to watch again. (IMDB. Ryan Bartlett-870-746486. June 9, 2018)

Nonetheless, there are still some of the spectators who could not get what was the key point of feminism that going through in the whole story, as shown below some of the audience critics towards *Ocean’s 8*:

Alright, here's the tea folks: This movie sucked. No, not only because of the blatantly obvious feminist overtones (and I'm saying this as a woman myself), but because of the incredibly weak and poorly written plot. A lot of the film fell flat due to the lack of originality and ingenuity which was a trademark of the original 3 films. I don't have an issue with female leads, if it's done WELL, but this film was clearly attempting to make a political statement like "women can do it too!"—Yes, they can, but then why resort to copying a beloved original? Why not invest in screenwriters who write solid original content rather than attempting to revive old franchises and inserting really annoying agendas to boot? Not my cup of tea, Hollywood. One more thing: Adding a boatload of famous celebrities doesn't make a film better, it just becomes an expensive train-wreck. Overall, a mildly entertaining watch but terribly poor execution. (Rotten Tomatoes. Laura A. Nov 27, 2020)

The reviews above explained about how *Ocean’s 8* is out of context from the other three films of Ocean’s trilogy (*Ocean’s Eleven*, *Ocean’s Twelve*, and *Ocean’s Thirteen*), how they did not like the outcome of women’s energy illustration in a film who is written also by a woman, and how the film addressed women as a villain but not as a bad person.

4. *Enola Holmes* (2020)

The newest film on Netflix is enough to attract the attention of audiences from all ages, Enola Holmes is a 2020 mystery film based on the first book in the young adult fiction genre series of The Enola Holmes Mysteries by Nancy Springer. The film is directed by Harry Bradbeer and written by Jack Thorne. The story of Enola Holmes revolves around the teenage sister of the already-famous-detective in the entire world, Sherlock Holmes, who travels to London to find her missing mother yet she ends up experiencing a thrilling adventure and pairing up with a runaway lord as they attempt to solve a mystery that threatens the entire country. Enola Holmes was played by Millie Bobby Brown while she also served as a producer on the film. This film illustrates the background of the early 19th century when the women’s movement was in its nascent stage in the United Kingdom which could made the setting and the story perfect for “a feminist perspective”. Originally, Enola Holmes is a 16-year old girl who has two big brothers, Mycroft Holmes and Sherlock Holmes. Both of Enola’s brothers have distinctive characteristics as men, Mycroft Holmes has a cunning nature like a fox, he always has a way to get things with his good intentions. Mycroft also strongly forced Enola Holmes to attend a girls’ school since her mother disappeared so that she could behave like a normal teenager at her age. Meanwhile, Sherlock Holmes is a wise man who always supported Enola to be what she wanted to and reached out for what she wanted to have yet he also wanted what is best for his one and only

little sister. The characteristics of *Enola Holmes* seemed peculiar for a woman at that time, she had a big curiosity for all of the stuff that was happening in the country. *Enola Holmes* was not obnoxious yet she merely had a curiosity greater than anyone which makes her a master at taking risks and being brave. *Enola Holmes* is willing to do something that in the eyes of others, it will not be possible yet she is confident that she can get through it. When Eudoria disappears on Enola's 16th birthday, she must set out to find her mother while fighting her brother's disapproval for doing things that cannot be guaranteed and dangerous. This was the time when the women's suffrage movement started to take shape with the bill appearing in the British Parliament even when there was a lot of resistance against it.

Harry Bradbeer, the director of *Enola Holmes* and *Fleabag* (2016), opened up to the public about the parallel's storyline between Enola Holmes and Fleabag, his previous masterpiece in film production at a Zoom Interview with Press Trust of India (2020) on the website of Republic World.com, he explained how the film has a strong feminist character and storyline. Harry figured out that he was gonna make the 'Little Fleabags' film while he was halfway through filming *Enola Holmes*. The parallel's plot between two female characters of Fleabag and Enola Holmes which Harry drew stated that the younger feminist audiences will feel represented in the film and is similar to Fleabag (2016) as shown below from his interview:

Harry Bradbeer : *"About halfway through the making of Enola Holmes, I thought, "I am making this film for little Fleabags". Many women that came to me after watching Fleabag, said, "I feel acknowledged, I feel confirmed in who I am". It brings tears to my eyes. There are girls out there who are going to feel self-accepting through this film because she is someone who just wants to live her own life. She is not a particularly selfish person or reckless but well thought. I think it is very much in that world (feminist stories). I am very proud of it."*

Harry Bradbeer also felt the allowance to have a viewpoint on feminism in the early era which was caused by making *Enola Holmes*. The director of *Enola Holmes* enjoyed the opportunity to depict and notice the early feminist movement and how it took over the world. Harry Bradbeer believes that the film has given him a new perspective on feminist art as he said on the interview with Press Trust of India (PTI) below,

"This gave us an opportunity to look at feminism in its early days because female suffrage was beginning from the 1840s to the 1880s. So, I love the opportunity to look at the early feminist movement and see how it developed. I felt like that way I brought another dimension to my interest in feminist art".

One of the challenges in creating Enola Holmes into a modern story that matches with the time period at women's first movement is to make the whole movie alive and not preachy to women as follows with Harry Bradbeer interview's on Press Trust of India (PTI) below:

"It is important to not make it too serious. But underlying this whole film is a very serious message, which is that the future is up to us. It is up to a woman if she's going to uphold on her own, to stand on her own two feet".

Enola Holmes is a woman who may be frivolous at her age but she is also vulnerable to environmental influences and adult talk because according to Bradbeer, it is very important for others as viewers to trust her character in judging things from the perspective of a 16-year-old woman. How Enola Holmes will choose her own path to achieve her goal and whether she will stray in another direction or stay on her goal. *"She is not a superhero, but she's someone with flesh and blood. I think finding the heart in adventure films, finding the politics in them is exciting"*, Harry Bradbeer said in an interview with Press Trust of India (PTI). According to Harry Bradbeer, the character of Enola

Holmes often breaks the fourth wall where the wall is the boundary between the fictional or fantasy world in a film with the real world which contains the audience who enjoys the film, as if the character of *Enola Holmes* greets the audience directly when watching the film ; it will remind the audience of the movie *Fleabag* (2016). According to Bradbeer, this kind of technique could give a new spin to a story where a girl not only goes on an adventure to reach a goal but it's as if she tugs on the back of the audience's neck and says, "Come with me". One of the unique aspects of *Fleabag* (2016) is how the director brings up the theme of a woman's journey alone in a film. The word that is suitable to describe the character of "Enola Holmes" is "Alone", the protagonist who tells the audiences that even women can independently use their intelligence, curiosity, and courage as shields and weapons to survive in this world. Harry Bradbeer declared it through an interview with Press Trust of India (PTI) as follows,

"I think all my work is about lonely people looking for friends. There's something very reassuring to women living in this world. To see someone who has to cope on their own and somehow get through it is very reassuring. I found that very important in me. I heard an actress the other day talk about the way cinema makes people feel less alone. The power of cinema comes when you see yourself on the screen. You see what they're going through, you're going through, and if they can manage it, you can".

To prove the statement of the director of *Enola Holmes* which stated that the film uses a technique that could take the audiences to go on a journey with Enola, these are the reviews and critics from some spectators in media platform, as follows:

This is the movie I wish I had at 15. This is not about Sherlock Holmes. It is not about solving a mystery or surprising the audience. It is about a teenage girl finding out who she is. It was charming, funny, wonderfully acted, aesthetically pleasing, and sweet. If you are a grown man criticizing it, back off. This was not made for you. Or me. This was made for 15 years old girls. And the 15-year-old girl in me LOVED it. (IMDB. Jesamazinghawley. September 25, 2020)

This is a fictional story about Enola Holmes – not Sherlock Holmes. The name "Sherlock" is more of a setting/narrative device than a relevant character. We should expand our perception of how an intelligent person behaves, speaks, and looks. Being unfeeling, being a sociopath, and being hooked on cocaine, should not be (and certainly is not the case in the real world) identifiers for a genius person. Normally, I do not like films that hit you over the head with the feminist messages – because it normally is not done well. This time it is part of the character, it is a developed concept, and it is a developed narrative. Relax. No reason to get heated. Just enjoy it. A solid Netflix released. Would personally love for a sequel. (IMDB. Summertrianglestars. September 23, 2020)

However, there are still some spectators that are not satisfied with the storyline, characteristics, and characters, especially with the presence of Enola Holmes in the film as Sherlock Holmes' sister as shown below:

This could have been a really fun adventure with a great young actor in the lead. Unfortunately, we have ended up with a boring, predictable story with a young lead who cannot quite carry the film yet. The film looks good but the script is awful, the acting is not great and it just does not work. Shame as it could have been good fun. (IMDB. Seagull30. September 24, 2020)

So much disappointment in this movie, it is disrespectful to Holmes books as it is clearly made for feminists' sake. Sherlock's character is vastly different than the books he is played as a compassionate loving person as in the books he is self-centered and selfish to a degree. (IMDB. Feras-974-883674. September 24, 2020)

Of the four films that have been reviewed in terms of the directors' or writers' claims in working on the story in their films, the researchers can clearly state that only two of the four films namely *Ocean's 8* and *Enola Holmes* that were specifically made by the directors with the intention of feminism propaganda. Therefore, provide a medium for female spectatorship to be able to see representations of themselves who are strong, brave, and challenge the patriarchal views in the society through their female lead characters. Nonetheless, in fact *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* and *Wonder Woman* are not made notably for their feminism values but with their own characters that have important roles and really show a strong and fearless female personality, the spectators do not only catch the key message that the directors want to convey but also feel the side of feminism as an ideology that has a goal to build and achieve gender equality in all aspects from politics, economics, the personal sphere, to the social sphere. Even though the directors of the four films are mostly men and Patty Jenkins is the only female director who directed the film *Wonder Woman*, the male directors are also considered feminists. Principally, feminists are people who support equal rights for women and agree that women should be given equal opportunities as men whether that person is a man or a woman.

Then, when viewed from the perspective of the reviews given by the spectators to the four films and which the researchers used as a sample whether the audience got the same message from the claims stated by the directors, the researchers interpreted that on the whole of the four films studied with their own strong female lead characters or also called heroines, it turns out that many of the female audience admit that these films have given them representation in the popular media to see themselves out of the patriarchal view in the society that depicts women as only having to stay in the household, are made aware that women also have the choice to determine their own will and are not bound by existing rules, and eventually revolt against outdated ideas regarding the social expectations of how women should be. Meanwhile for male audiences, they admit that the four films have relatively changed their point of view towards women. Women in films can also be great main characters who do not need men as spotlights to make the film a good film, and also make them have more respect for women who show their strength and intelligence. Based on Garda Lerner's theory of patriarchal society, our world is still dominated by the command and control of men who have more power over women and society where men also have some level of privilege that women are usually not entitled to, and clearly this patriarchal idea also still exists in Indonesia. According to the Minister of PPPA RI, in Indonesia itself there are still conditions when women are disadvantaged due to the patriarchal social construction that places women in a lower position than men even though women are the strength of the nation, and efforts to eradicating various views that are still detrimental to women must continue to be echoed until an equal division of roles between men and women can be implemented (Darmawanti, 2021).

Therefore, relating to the spectators, the researchers use Deidre Pribram's theory of The Social Subject in spectatorship which explains when textual and social power intersect then spectatorship is defined as the convergence of textual subjects and social subjects, and there is an exchange of meanings produced by media discourse as well. Cultural studies, in fact, become the terrain where social power, relationships, and meaning frameworks are constructed and established which therefore can be refused and/or reinstated otherwise. In this way, if the theory is applied to this issue then when the spectator as a social subject converges with the heroines as a textual subject, an exchange of meaning is mediated by the film which eventually the spectator will be able to resist the marginalization of patriarchal thinking that women are a powerless gender that should be bound by traditional social expectations and reestablish the view that women are strong, brave, and important that deserves to be appreciated and respected. Although, there are also many both male and even female audiences who reject the existence of feminism values in the films or feel that films that highlight women as main characters are poor films or are not worth watching. Nevertheless, from the many remaining film reviews that provide positive feedback on the influence of textual subjects on their understanding, it is worth to be stated that films with heroines that challenge masculine stereotypes can fundamentally become a medium for feminism propaganda and reconstruct equality

from the patriarchal view of women as a second gender. In the context of spectatorship, the purpose of film as a medium to reconstruct society's view of women will certainly be more successful if the audience can become active spectators who are able to produce meaning from the stories and the female characters themselves in the film. An active spectator has to think about what to feel and respond to the film and individually take their own meaning from it by reflecting on their personal experiences.

D. Conclusion

Of the four films selected by the researchers to examine The Reconstructed Portrayal of Feminism Through Heroine Action in Film in sequence starting from *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* in 2014, *Wonder Women* in 2017, *Ocean's 8* in 2018, and *Enola Holmes* in 2020, it can be concluded that not all audiences actively understand and capture the women's value of the four main female characters in these films. Not all of these four films create and provide a clear picture of women's empowerment through the storyline and actions of the female main character to the audiences, there are only two films that can be proven that the two directors in these two films have the intention, purpose, and motive to raise the theme of women's suffrage in the story, such as *Ocean's 8* and *Enola Holmes*. Even though the previous films speak out loud about the motives of women empowerment, the other two films which are *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part I* and *Wonder Women* have strong female main protagonist characters which in the end plentiful audiences could see the films from the angle of feminism. This can be proven through reviews from the audiences in each film. It shows that film can ultimately be a medium to reconstruct the society's view of women who are required to follow social expectations or in particular the patriarchal perspectives put forward by Gerda Lerner.

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