

Feminism and Love

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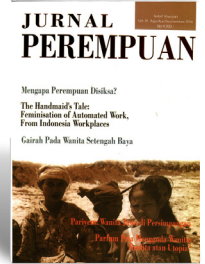
Patriarchal Relationships, Subordination and Glorification of Marriage: The Dilemma of Women across Generations in Living and Interpreting Love
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Telp./Fax (021) 2270 1689
E-mail: yjp@jurnalperempuan.com
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Naufaludin Ismail

Feminism and Love

Love is one of the most talked about topics and we are surrounded by various representations of love in our daily lives. Several works of art and literature as well as music, movies, soap operas and commercials have love as main theme. Love, as it is often narrated in romantic tales, is considered as indefinable, mysterious and beyond rational discourse. The meaning of love is held to be knowable only intuitively, at the level of feeling, and cannot be communicated in precise terms (Jackson 1999). Therefore, love is often seen as a unique personal need and a desire which is placed in the private realm. The idea of this kind of love is widely believed by society thus things that are part of social and cultural construction of love tend to be taken for granted. Meanwhile, social and cultural constructs are influencing and determining the meaning and definition of love. It can be said that there are two dominant readings of love (Grossi 2014). On the one hand love is seen in close relationship with patriarchy and heterosexuality. This is because the narrative of love is mostly associated with procreation, family, marriage and the household, as well as with monogamy and / or polygamy and loyalty. Thus for women, love is easily translated as being a wife or mother. On the other hand love is seen as not to be bound by social imperatives and constraints; on the contrary, it is related to the idea of freedom, equality and ones capability to act. In other words love is seen as a force capable of overcoming existing social barriers. Therefore for women love is considered to be liberating and empowering.

In feminist thought, the issue of love has been studied by early thinkers such as Simone de Beauvoir, Shulamith Firestone and Ti-Grace Atkinson, feminists who criticize the role of love in perpetuating patriarchal relationships. In the 1980s, this was followed by feminists such as Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, Audre Lorde and bell hooks who viewed love in more productive ways. According to Jackson (1999), feminist criticism of love is related to the notion that love is seen as an ideology that legitimizes women's oppression and which keeps them trapped in exploitative heterosexual relationships. In addition,

love is also seen to make women vulnerable, *not only to exploitation, but also to being hurt by men*. Feminists also see romantic love critically. This is because romantic love is central to heterosexuality and contributes to gender inequality and violence against women.

On the other hand there are also a number of feminists who view love as a form of resistance and transformation which can give women the capability to act. Lynne Pearce and Jackie Stacey who study the narrative of romance, argue that love retains its ability to free women from the patriarchal grip because of its "narrative" power. According to them the fusion with the love narrative allows women to facilitate the "rewriting of other spheres of life" (Grossi 2014). Moreover, the idea of queer thinkers who try to move beyond a conventional understanding of love, is also important in the discourse of love. This idea, for example, is related to dismantle the definition of love that is often associated with heterosexual sex or associated with human nature. The same goes with the dismantling of the relationship between love with marriage, family and procreation. Also important to note is that love sometimes correlates with concepts such as work, care, desire, and romance. Although often associated with romantic romance, the meaning of love is actually very broad.

Today's society has a tendency to view love as a profit-generating commodity or as a means to obtain pleasure and even subjugation and domination. Here, it is important to study feminist views on love, to look at it as an important ethical, social and / or political power with an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, JP96 discusses love in homosexual relationships, feminist experiences in romantic relationships, existence of popular culture in introducing patriarchal love values, violence in dating relationships, philosophical meaning of love, and how women experience the meaning of love. This issue encourages the deconstruction of ideological work that subordinates women in love and hopes to sharpen the feminist theoretical framework on the issue of love while finding mechanisms for change. **(Anita Dhewy)**

Abstracts Sheet

Hendri Yulius (Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, University of Sydney, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, New South Wales, Australia)

Rethinking and Queering Relationships in the Age of Same-sex Marriage: Multiplicities, Intensities, and New Potentialities

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 1-9, 1 image, 20 ref.

This essay presents a theoretical discussion, analysis, and formulation to reconfigure new meanings, potentialities and multiplicities of homosexual relationships. After a brief discussion on the rapid popularization of marriage equality as the primary goal of queer movements, an overview of queer critiques of marriage is provided. Special attention will be given to the discussion about homonormativity and the sharp criticism from queer negativity/anti-social queers. For these critiques, the subjects are encouraged to occupy an abject position, which I argue, only further depoliticize queer politics. After a critical overview of this political stance, I offer the accounts of Foucault and Deleuze to explore multiple forms of relationships beyond marital institution, focusing on the ways in which relationships are to be understood in terms of potentialities, intensities, and emergent forms and functions beyond the existing language capacities and formalized forms. This essay should, however, is not meant to be masterly or prescriptive, but rather is a modest effort to spur more critical concerns, discussions, and debates among queer Indonesians.

Keywords: queer, homosexual, marriage equality, Foucault, Deleuze, potentialities, multiplicities, relationship

Meike Lusye Karolus¹ & Laili Nur Anisah² (¹Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia & ²Jejer Wadon, Boyolali, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia)

When Female Feminists Falling in Love: Ideology, Media, and Practices

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 11-17, 20 ref.

Falling in love is a universal experience that cannot be limited by racial, religious, ethnic, or even ideologies. Female feminists also experience falling in love and being in a relationship. When falling in love, female feminists often face the tension between their consciousness holding on to feminist ideology, and their collective experience influenced by patriarchal culture. Therefore, female feminists often have to compromise and negotiate in their relationships. This paper examines the contemplative experiences of female feminists falling in love in the context of patriarchal culture by focusing on three main areas: feminist ideology, the influence of patriarchal media, and relationships in everyday lives. This research is a descriptive-qualitative paper which uses in-depth interviews with female feminists of different backgrounds in Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Jombang. Findings show that female feminists' concept about love cannot be separated from the existence of their partners, the experience and media reproduction towards the concept of love, and the practice of female feminists relations formed before a formal relationship.

Keywords: love, feminism, media, female feminist, patriarchy

Aulia Rahmawati (Department of Communication Studies, Faculty of Social dan Political Sciences, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia)

Romance and Femininity in Indonesian Teenage Dramas: A Transnational Post-Feminist Analysis

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 19-27, 25 ref.

Even after the rise of Indonesian feminist film directors like Nia Dinata, Mira Lesmana, Mouly Surya, Nan T Achnas and Lola Amaria, Indonesian moviegoers still flock to the cinemas to watch teenage romance dramas, many of which are badly written. This paper examines the way romance and femininity have been shaped in cinematic representation in the movies *London Love Story 2*, *Promise* and *Dear Nathan*. This paper concludes that Indonesian romance teenage dramas are entrenched with masculine power and heavily dominated spectacles in which the feminine heroines are treated as passive objects of desire whose agency and subjectivity are being stripped away. Using feminist literature on post-feminist romance cinema, the heroines in these films have mostly been constructed as independent, smart and seemingly capable to act at first, but nevertheless pursue romantic, traditional, heterosexual relationships saturated with masculine control and dominance. This paper shows that the awareness of post-feminism has become transnational, crossing geographical borders between West and East, and has influenced the production and consumption process of the popular entertainment industry, including in Indonesia.

Keywords: love, romance, teenage dramas, post-feminism

Nike Nadia (Gender Studies Program, School of Strategic and Global Studies, Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia)

In the Name of Love: Power Relation and Revictimization on Sexual Violence Case in Courtship (Case Study of Court Decision)

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 29-34, 1 table, 11 ref.

This paper aims to explain the dimensions of the imbalanced power relations and revictimization that occur in rape cases by the victim's partner. Using the case study of court decisions and radical feminist theory as a tool of analysis, the author argues that the narrative 'in the name of love' used by perpetrators of sexual violence in personal relationships is another manifestation of the inequality of power relations and becomes the site of subjugation of the female body. Therefore, forms of exploitation that use a 'proof of love' narrative in cases of forced sexual intercourse in personal relationships should be identified as part of sexual violence.

Keywords: sexual violence, rape, violence in relationships, seduction, partner by consent

Bagus Takwin (Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia)

Love, Existential Project, and Truth Seeking

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 35-42, 19 ref.

This paper explains what love is by referring to the philosophical thoughts of several philosophers and the results of empirical research that have been done on the phenomena of love. It also discusses the tendency to extend love on one side, as well as narrowing and even negating love on the other. This paper takes the position that love is an existential project. Philosophically, love is seen as the continuing search for truth. As the fruit of will and sincerity of human endeavor, love has real and concrete results. In its concrete form, love is the embodiment of a mutual promise in reality; a step-by-step process presents the concrete manifestation of the statements made in that promise. This philosophical thought is corroborated by empirical studies of love that love differs from sexual passion or lust. Love can last long time, can be eternal and stay intense through a couple's efforts to care for, nurture and develop each other.

Keywords: love, existential project, commitment, influence of love

Naufaludin Ismail (Jurnal Perempuan, Jakarta, Indonesia)

Patriarchal Relationships, Subordination and Glorification of Marriage: The Dilemma of Women across Generations in Living and Interpreting Love

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 23 No. 1, February 2018, pp. 43-53, 1 table, 13 ref.

This paper focuses on the experience of women across generations living and interpreting love as part of their lives. Their experiences in living and interpreting love will be seen from two points of view, namely their romantic relationships and the institution of marriage or their family. Based on the data of six subjects of research with different backgrounds like age, marital status and sexual orientation, this paper shows that there are different perspectives on love and marriage or family institutions compared to mainstream society. The six people in question assume and believe that love or romantic relationships have a close relation with patriarchal cultural values, like men's domination, subordination and ownership if they'd agree with mainstream society's thoughts about love. They also believe that marriage is an institution that produces patriarchal cultural values that will disadvantage women if the marriage is not built on equality and fairness. These six subjects of research agree with the grand narrative of feminism that love shouldn't always be related to ownership, men's domination but instead must be liberating for women to become independent and autonomous.

Keywords: love, romantic, marriage, oppression, subordination

Rethinking and Queering Relationships in the Age of Same-sex Marriage: Multiplicities, Intensities, and New Potentialities

Hendri Yulius

Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, University of Sydney
School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry
A14 Quadrangle Building, University of Sydney, New South Wales 2006, Australia

hendri.yulius@gmail.com

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Abstract

This essay presents a theoretical discussion, analysis, and formulation to reconfigure new meanings, potentialities and multiplicities of homosexual relationships. After a brief discussion on the rapid popularization of marriage equality as the primary goal of queer movements, an overview of queer critiques of marriage is provided. Special attention will be given to the discussion about homonormativity and the sharp criticism from queer negativity/anti-social queers. For these critiques, the subjects are encouraged to occupy an abject position, which I argue, only further depoliticize queer politics. After a critical overview of this political stance, I offer the accounts of Foucault and Deleuze to explore multiple forms of relationships beyond marital institution, focusing on the ways in which relationships are to be understood in terms of potentialities, intensities, and emergent forms and functions beyond the existing language capacities and formalized forms. This essay should, however, is not meant to be masterly or prescriptive, but rather is a modest effort to spur more critical concerns, discussions, and debates among queer Indonesians.

Keywords: queer, homosexual, marriage equality, Foucault, Deleuze, potentialities, multiplicities, relationship

Introduction: Queer Criticism on the Institution of Marriage

After two months of worry and anxiety, on November 15, 2017 Australians with a non-normative sexual orientation and gender identity (now popularly referred to as LGBT) can finally breathe a sigh of relief. Through a national survey, marriage equality for homosexual couples received the support of the majority with 61,6% while the rest opposed giving equal rights to homosexuals to obtain a legal status of their relationship through marriage ('SSM: Australia returns resounding Yes vote but debate over details has long way to go' 2017). Although I personally cheered when the results were announced, there was an uneasy feeling as well as concern that silently crept into my consciousness. It is not my intention to downplay the importance of the recognition of same-sex marriage, which will certainly have many implications regarding other civil rights. However, when we gain something, we often lose something else. As homosexual relationships begin to be recognized and institutionalized, it is not exaggerated to acknowledge that homosexual relationships have entered into the framework of state control and regulation. The queer culture¹, known for being versatile, critical towards norms and institutions as well as subversive, is now slowly taken away from its roots.

In its early days, similar to the second wave of feminist movements, the queer movement regarded the institution of marriage as a bourgeois institution that would only plunge the stake of the rules and norms in the most private realm of sexuality. However, this political position shifted in the late 1970s and 1980s as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis among gays, which then led to the emergence of a new awareness to protect homosexual couples through the legal recognition of same-sex relationships that led to the issue of marital equality (Paternotte 2015; Weeks 2016). Although queer theorists are still critical of the institution of marriage, the LGBT mainstream movement that desires legal recognition and protection, as well as the granting of rights based on identity does unfortunately not embrace this view. Claims for these different sexual and gender identities form the foundation for LGBT's mainstream movement to gain equal rights with heterosexual groups. Although it seems fair in a liberal framework, for queer thinkers there is a certain price to pay when non-normative sexual/gender groups want their identity and rights recognized by the state, especially through marriage institutions, or what is often called 'assimilationist politics' (Thomas 2017).

In addition to being regarded as a form of control and regulation, the queer critics consider marriage as

a selective legitimacy that only recognizes a certain standard and form of relationship at the expense and demeaning of other forms (Warner 2000). The legitimate and ideal relationship is a legally recognized monogamous relationship. Ultimately, the recognition of this legal monogamous relationship is a mere imitation of the normative institution that so far only belonged to heterosexuality, without seriously resisting and questioning the power of the institution of marriage. Another equally sharp criticism points out that the inclusion of gays, lesbians and transgender - especially in the American context - are based on the logic of neoliberal capitalism. Recognition is achieved on the basis of economic productivity: gays and lesbians are consumers and target markets, as well as a productive workforce for neo-liberal economic milestones, and ultimately eliminate other differences, such as race. This means that LGBT rights are often only enjoyed by a certain race and social class (Eng 2010; Puar 2007; 2017). In the end, assimilationist politics encourage the non-normative gender/sexual groups to enter a dominant ideology—no longer to challenge the ideology of heteronormativity, but instead to replicate it by institutionalizing marriage, gaining recognition based on potential consumption and labor as well as respectability. For example, since homosexuality has been regarded as something wrong or dirty by society, assimilation politics is trying to change this paradigm by highlighting homosexual that are in line with the dominant norm of society—gays who are smart, handsome, productive, not arbitrary in their sexual relationships (in other words monogamy), and free from sexually transmitted diseases. Homosexuality is now a normative subject, which no longer challenges dominant values. Ultimately, the recognition achieved is conditional and selective. Individuals who cannot fulfill this exemplary homosexual 'ideal' are marginalized, as they only make a 'bad name' of the gay community. This is what Lisa Duggan (2002) has called 'homonormativity' to signify the mainstream queer politics in a dominant normative ideology.

On one hand, it seems very difficult to put forward this criticism of homonormativity amid the globalization of marriage equality as a major milestone of LGBT rights, without being labeled a defector or homophobic. But on the other hand, there is a concern that marriage becomes the ideal value that eventually undermines other forms of relationships. In Indonesia alone, I often hear how gays are who are considered 'naughty' sexually branded negatively by their own fellow gay friends. Monogamy has become the main standard. Since same-sex marriages have become more globalized through

the increasing number of countries that have legalized them, I have heard questions like "When will you marry?" or "You do not want to get married?" too often from same-sex couples. Simply put, the discourse on same-sex marriage turned the subject of homosexuality a concrete subject of marriage—something that used to be only relevant to heterosexuals. Here, the concept of interpellation by Louis Althusser (1971) becomes significant, as in the individual is subject to being 'hailed', so the implication of the subject ultimately replicates the existing ideology. Homosexuals are now also 'called' by the discourse of marriage. When homosexual identities and relationships are embedded in same-sex marriage, then do not be confused when both—previously never mentioned in the same breath—now become intimate bedmates. But the question is, is marriage always wrong? Is institutionalizing a relationship always bad?

When I started to write this article, I suddenly remembered the famous phrase of author Oscar Wilde, "the love that dare not speak its name" (a love that does not have the courage to mention its own name). The phrase expressed in the trial of Wilde actually comes from Lord Alfred Douglas who is 'considered' to have had a special relationship with Wilde, and is used by the author to refer to homosexual relationships. On the charge of 'indecent' (referring to homosexuality at the time was a criminal offense), Wilde made a public scandal, was detained and sentenced to forced labor. The reason why this phrase feels so important to me right now is not just the historical background, but also the significance of the language.

In that expression, love is considered to have a name or language, which, in a historical context, has no courage to 'call its own name'. Through this assumption, the feeling of love is always assumed to have its name, which be called and expressed. In modern times, we recognize various types of relations that have certain names, such as friendship and marriage. In ancient Greece, there were at least four categories of love: agape, eros, philia, and storge. When love has to be known and named in language, we indirectly face a boundary. But what happens when feelings, connections and closeness can't always be expressed in the existing linguistic system? What if not all types of relationships must have names? How can we reconsider relationships that do not necessarily fall into institutionalization?

This theoretical essay is not intended as a single or monolithic answer. On the contrary: it aims to open up other possibilities of relationships using the queer perspective. The foundation of the queer critique is built

on the basis of anti-normativity. In other words, it always questions and examines the existing dominant norms. But, talking about relationships, how can this concept of anti-normativity be used when building relationships? What kind of logic is inside anti-normativity that can give birth to other forms of relationships outside of dominant relationships? I need to say that I am not solely anti-marriage. For many homosexuals, marriage can be important. There is nothing wrong with that. However, there is nothing wrong with having an alternative perspective, that having an institutionalized relationship is not regarded as the ideal. I'm writing this essay with this consideration in mind, to offer an alternative on relationships, as well as highlighting the queer point of view.

The essay is divided into five sections. After the introduction, the following section will briefly but firmly discuss the limitations of identity politics and the degree to which queer criticism (queer negativity) can unravel this limitation and encourage us to think further. In the third section I will discuss the underlying logic of romantic relationships or love, and the criticism that accompanies it. The fourth section will introduce what I call 'miscellaneous relations' by highlighting the conceptual thinking of Foucault and Deleuze, and see what new possibilities can be generated from here. This essay is then closed with a brief reflection.

The Blessings and the Curse of Political Identity

Before going further into the issues of marriage and relationships, I would like to begin this discussion with the development of queer theory to understand why the issue of marriage is important for debate. Through a critical study on the discourse of sexuality, Foucault has made a significant contribution to the queer theory. Sexuality is no longer regarded as something naturally given, but rather an arena of power that operates to discipline the body and sexuality through various apparatus, discourses and institutions (Foucault 1979). From here, the 'docile subject' emerges as a term to name how a subject emerges and is shaped through this disciplinary practice. For example, the medical and psychiatric discourse and practice began to classify different categories of sexuality and sort them into normative categories: normal and abnormal. Foucault's sharp analysis has been used too often in sexuality studies in Indonesia to dismantle discriminatory practices on subjects like gender and non-normative sexuality. But then, the next question arises: if the category or sexual identity is the result of a classification performed by an apparatus with power, can

identity politics also be separated from power politics? But when we use and politicize our sexual identity, isn't it possible that we also go in and preserve 'identity boxes'? In practice, although various gender and sexual identities declare themselves to be 'challengers and opposition', the ideology of hetero-normativity remains irresponsible. Because the diversity of identities like homosexuals and bisexuals remains defined according to their relation to heterosexuals. Heterosexuality is even stronger and lasting, while the other identity is only a derivative. Not to mention, 'new boxes' increasingly 'imprison' subjects in other categories.

Identity politics are often only mobilized on a single issue and assume that all subjects experience and need the same. The 'LGBT rights' discourse sees sexuality and gender as the only source of 'suffering' without further questioning: who does actually have access to these LGBT rights? Obviously, not all LGBT. In the American context, non-normative gender/sexual groups of minority racial groups, for example, are still discriminated against, so that those enjoying these LGBT rights are the white dominant races of the upper class. Then comes the approach of intersectionality to see how different identities – from race and ethnicity to social class – cross-links. But the question is: how much will these identities want to put into this intersection? Although intersectionality is very useful to see the diversity of a subject, the subject is still stuck in the identity boxes, for intersectionality still retains the identity that must be made 'real', 'concrete' and 'visible' (Puar 2007).

Ultimately, queer criticism ultimately sees how identity politics, in order to achieve legal recognition, not only has the potential to be trapped in homo-normativity, but also in biopolitics. In summary, biopolitics operate not by repression, but through discipline and self-responsibility in line with the neo-liberalist regimes (Deutscher 2017; Foucault 1979; Ruti 2017; Puar 2007). Simply, just refer to this regime as management of life, which is related to how an individual's life is made in accordance with productivity à la neoliberalism. With the discourse that puts body fitness in the center, people compete to 'maintain their health' by signing up and routinely working out at the gym. When an individual from a minority group fails to achieve 'success', the individual is blamed for 'less effort', regardless of how the social structure precludes the individual from having access. One term we often hear is 'people are poor because they are lazy'. This is a biopolitical regime that is in line with neoliberalism. The problems and limitations caused by social structures are then turned into 'individual' mistakes (individualizing).

Another similar example is how the 'success' stories of people with disabilities become a source of inspiration for non-disabled people, who then celebrate how these people can get through challenges despite the 'limitations'. With this kind of narrative, the structure of *ableism* is actually perpetuated. Considering the above, mainstream identity politics (in this case, LGBT) have the potential to enter and replicate the existing system. Through the institutional recognition of marriage, homosexuality becomes the subject of new regulations – it is domesticated, regulated in a monogamous framework, becoming a productive subject – with the same logic that is applied to heterosexual families. Like the ad below, same-sex marriage is framed as a source of 'happiness', an indication of modernity (as opposed to tradition), and of course, a new attraction for corporations to appear gay-friendly in order to gain a share in the homosexual market that is considered to have economic power. In order to eliminate negative stereotypes attributed to gay sexuality that are considered 'free' and 'non-normative', for example, homosexuals begin to adopt monogamous institutions.

to oppose this biopolitical regime through the rejection of 'reproductive futurism'. Borrowing his theoretical framework, the figure of the 'Son' (with a capital letter) becomes a sign of the future, so everything we do is always 'for the next generation'. Thus, the future is always associated with reproduction, even when it comes to normative monogamous families. Jack Halberstam (2011), another thinker, opposes the standard of success promoted by neoliberal capitalism through the celebration of 'failure'. Feelings and emotions are also at the center of the attention of these queer critics, because feelings can't be separated from social construction. One of the most frequently discussed is Sara Ahmed (2010). Feelings of happiness are often achieved by following the standards of the norm. If not, we will be considered weird, until we feel uncomfortable. And it doesn't stop there: personal happiness is sometimes achieved by making other people happy. For example, when it comes to marriage demands in Indonesia, a person often can only make their parents happy through marriage. Therefore, the discourse on happiness often leads us to a norm or 'what is considered good' in order to achieve that happiness without questioning the norms and standards. Product advertisements in the media portray happiness through material ownership.

Of course, there are many more points of criticism by negativity queers.² However, one of the most important foundations is the queer political position to 'occupy' everything that is considered negative. For example, since homosexuality is considered 'destructive' to the norm, 'close to death' (because of the shadow of the AIDS crisis), and 'not reproductive', then queer politics must have the courage to take this position; a dark, pessimistic and negative position as a form of resistance, so in the end, it isn't aimed at changing the existing social structure. Mari Ruti (2017) wrote a comprehensive critique of this political position, specifically from the perspective of psychoanalyst Lacan.

Regardless of the sharp criticism of this negativity, I will try to continue Ruti's criticism. First, the politics of negativity tend to depoliticize queer politics – then in which direction is the queer struggle headed when the queer subject is expected to put him- or herself in this abject position? Isn't it possible to change the unfair social structure? Secondly, when the negativity of queers is made the norm, what then is the difference with dominant hegemony norms? Is there no other political option that is not hegemonic, but emphasizes the diversity of political positions or changes to existing social structures? Thirdly, many marginalized groups have



Image 1. Advertising of Coca Cola Co.
 (Source: <http://www.newnownext.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/cockaaaaaa.png>)
 When 'happiness' is defined through representation of a homosexual family

In this turmoil, emerging critics can fall into the category of 'queer negativity/anti-social queers' to counter the dominant narrative on self-respect, discipline, success and happiness according neoliberal regimes. The thinker Lee Edelman (2004) spawned a new queer ethic

limited access because they are not recognized. Legal recognition of identity is sometimes important for the subject. So, do they have to be quiet, enjoy 'oppression' and refuse to make a social change? Fourth, while the fight of LGBT was sometimes stretched to its limits, it can be seen as a process, that there is a step-by-step progression in which homosexuality begins to perceive as not threatening anymore, and there is increasing support from the public. Fifth, this queer negativity theory will be very difficult to implement in Indonesia, considering the sociocultural differences with the United States. LGBT in Indonesia are very concerned with the acceptance of the family and their surrounding environment.

Given the limitations of queer negativity as well as the challenge of assimilation identity politics that tend to adopt dominant norms by 'using' marriage and homosexual relationships, I want to try to offer a political position to bridge the gap between queer negativity and assimilationist politics. That there are homosexual couples who find their happiness through marriage, and that there are also homosexual couples that are reluctant to marry. There is always a difference between homosexual individuals and couples. Most importantly, do not let one norm – for example, marriage – be one the ideal norm. Unmarried couples or non-monogamous relationships are considered inferior. In the midst of the popularity and support for same-sex marriage, as an indicator of 'progress', it is time to rethink the case of 'relations' and provide alternative 'relations' without the need to label marriage as a demon. For me personally, diversity or multiplicities are political positions that give agency to individuals to create alternatives outside the dominant norm, without the need to label people who choose to marry as demons. In addition, multiplicities also provide a variety of standards and bases that do not have to always comply with the dominant norm. Without any further ado, let's start thinking about 'miscellaneous relations'.

What's Wrong With our Understanding of Relationships?

Although Foucault's name has often been heard, his thoughts on ethics, as well as relationships are still rare or have never even been discussed in Indonesia. In the interview 'Friendship as A Way of Life' (1997), Foucault, then fifty, raised an important question about homosexual relationships, whether relationships, through homosexuality, can be formed, discovered, duplicated, and formulated? This question is not without reason, but it leads us not to get caught up in the 'essential'

question, like "who am I?", "What makes me like this?", or "what lies behind my sexual desires?" Considering how complicated sexuality is, this kind of question is losing its relevance. But, on the contrary, what should be looked at more deeply, according to Foucault, is how individuals use their sexuality to create the diversity of relationships that can provide or enhance self-transformation.

In mainstream romantic relations, we know that interpersonal relationships are always interpreted in terms of monogamy on the basis of romantic and sexual attraction, which then encourages the couple to bind themselves into an exclusive monogamous relationship, commonly known as 'dating'. Dating is then considered a preparatory stage for reaching a higher level, namely 'marriage'. When the process of dating is successful, the couple enters the institution of marriage, which is then legitimized by the state, religion, and other apparatus. There is nothing wrong with people who choose to get married. But here, I want to look critically at the assumption in a monogamous relationship, as we understand it now, where stepping in front of the altar of grace is the culmination. To dismantle this assumption, and continuing Foucault's argument, I will discuss five criticisms connected to relationships, namely 'object of desires'; 'language'; 'time'; 'legitimacy'; and 'identity equality'.

First, in today's understanding of mainstream society, romantic relationships occur when there is a sexual/romantic attraction between pair of individuals, which then forms the basis of a relationship. Sexual desire becomes important, not only when the relationship enters the institution of marriage, but the reproduction logic also legitimizes it. In fact, in today's homosexual marriages, the reproductive logic is also an integral part, made possible through the aid of reproductive technology. In addition to reproductive logic, the logic of intimacy in romantic relationships must be proven through sexual intercourse. How many manuals, sex columns, wedding counselors are waiting to re-warm the bed that is rarely soaked in the sweat of intimacy? Thus, it is no wonder sexual desire is the basis of this relation; the object of our desire must be something that not only can satisfy what we have been hoping for, but also sexually stimulating. The question is, is there another basis for relationships?

Foucault puts the word 'friendship' as the key in homosexual relationships that can be freed from the grip of the institution. According to him, the idea of sexual liberation in the 1960s was to break free of obstacles. But defining narrow homosexual relationships—for

example, two men bind themselves in monogamous relationships becomes the ideal—is actually contrary to the original idea of sexual liberation. Therefore, Foucault encourages us to see how friendship is the key to making relationships and relationships diverse. A man can live with two or three other men on the basis of mutual care, such as close friendship ties, or an older man living with a younger man in the form of mentorship. There are many basic relationships that can be used as a foundation, in addition to the desire of sexual attraction and the logic of reproduction/family.

From here, the second point becomes important: 'language' and names. The language system has its limitations. We know something from a language. But what if there is no or no name for a relationship? Does that mean it is impossible? We recognize various terms today: monogamy and polyamory, or friendship, courtship, and marriage. However, in general, these terms are still based on the absence of sexual desire. Friendship means no sex. If there is sex, it means dating or marriage. In connection with the first point, sexual desire is always used as a basis for differentiating relationships. Is it impossible for two friends to live together, to have sex with each other, without naming or legitimizing their relationship through any label?

The third point is connected to temporality, or time. Besides understanding the different phases—approach/first meeting, dating, and marriage—the bond of marriage is expected to last forever. This kind of relationship is always associated with the future and sustainability, assuming that the feelings and lives of both partners will never change. Individuals eventually become disillusioned when the couple is not what they used to be, or when the feelings between them change over time. Then, in our popular culture, true love is defined as a love that will fade away over time. Like or dislike, directly or indirectly, this understanding may be anti-change: feelings should not shift; individuals seem to have a fixed subjectivity. When they change, we consider it treachery, failure, and the threshold of destruction. We create a relationship of 'cruel optimism' (cruel optimism), to borrow the term from Lauren Berlant (2011); like it or not, this kind of idealization is a form of cruel fantasy – as if there was an ideal that must be accomplished by an individual or spouse. This ideal value is automatically considered more 'moral' and better than other forms of relationships. Humans change, sociopolitical conditions also change, as well as feelings. Nothing is permanently fixed. However, the illusion that everything will always remain and there is an 'ideal' that must be achieved

only makes a relationship 'exhausting'. Relationships are trapped in linear logic with certain ideals as indicators; which is perhaps now called relationship goals. Since when should relationships be treated like a sports match with a clear and concrete finish line? We force relations to always fulfill this ideal, without realizing that we ourselves are actually changing, just like our partners.

The fourth point is connected to legitimacy. One aspect of Butler's (2011) theory of performativity is citationality—where something becomes the norm or looks natural through repetition and continuously citing something until it slowly becomes a standard. Undoubtedly, the ideal of marriage and monogamous relationships occurs not only through the process of repeating the 'ideal' representation of values (for instance, through popular culture with all its romanticism), but also through the legitimacy given by the actors. Sayings like, "Hereby, I marry..." authorize a law, order, norm, and also the actors and institutions to legitimize a relationship as valid or not. Repeated citation by actors of a norm makes it stronger and more natural. Homosexual marriages are almost no different from heterosexuals. It's just that one partner is replaced with the same gender within the monogamous framework. The implication of this construction is that the limits of 'official' or 'unofficial'/'good' or 'naughty' relationships become stronger. If a gay marriage is glorified to become normative, then what is considered official and true is a monogamous relationship, legitimized by the state through law, or even the church. Beyond that, there can only be bad relationships, like a couple that wasn't married in Indonesia could become a victim of judgment by the community. The good and bad of a relationship are legitimized by a power that is outside of the individual.

Again, there is nothing wrong with homosexuals getting married. Through this criticism, I just want always remind myself of the dangers of marriage glorification, because the 'official' and 'unofficial' dichotomies have certain moral values, so that people who are considered to have relationships outside the 'official' category are considered to be of a lower class. Although the legitimacy of a relationship is often drawn from the 'outside' – institutions, norms, and even moral values – in the process, these things are often veiled. What appears and is advertised in the public sphere is a romantic wedding party or a happy family picture (like the example above). The invisible is far more complex: the authority that legitimizes that relationship, the morality that becomes the foundation, the couple's struggle to meet material needs for survival (for love alone is not enough for life),

as well as other assumptions about good and correct 'relationships'.

The fifth point is connected to identity. As I write this passage, I am reminded of a question that has always bothered me, "Is it impossible that I as a male homosexual live with a single woman and we happen to want to take care of each other?" In mainstream discussions, a homosexual marriage is based on the first point, sexual and romantic attraction. Love is love becomes the main slogan that can't be questioned – what does love mean? Is romantic love the only one that can be the basis of a relationship? Going back to Foucault's interview, he said that sex should not have to be stuck on identity, but on the possibilities of pleasure, especially how to open our bodies with possibilities that can give, even intensify, pleasure. This makes identity no longer important. Sex should not be viewed as an identity, but as an open possibility for the transformation of pleasure.

To borrow this argument, what if the relationship doesn't need to be based on identity equality, and also the first point, sexual desire? What if there are other possible relationships outside the frame of sexual identity and the language system? When we 'open' opportunities and move beyond the construction of identity, then there are other potentials that can be opened, discovered and created. The next section will highlight the criticism of the relation I derived from Foucault with the etiology of Deleuze to see the foundation of 'mutual relations'.

Miscellaneous Relationships: Potential, Intensity, and New Functions

After the above criticism shows the assumptions, as well as the limitations of mainstream relations and the institution of marriage, we now come back with a slight revision to Foucault's question: "How, in particular, what kind of thinking, has the potential to bring forth various relationships that emphasize diversity?" Above, Foucault has given one key argument about how to open our bodies to the possibilities of pleasure. Variety is understood as a potential to be discovered and perceived by opening up the possibility. Here, then, I want to bring in the understanding of Deleuze (1992) about ethology, which was significantly influenced by Spinoza. To build relationships in various ways, then there are at least three things that must be seen, namely potentiality, intensity, and new capacity. To begin this discussion, I will explain a little about the basic foundations of ethology, based on Deleuze.

The body, for Deleuze, must be understood beyond the functions and forms it was constructed for. Influenced by Spinoza, the body consists of infinite particles, infinite possibilities, so that it has the capacity to influence or be influenced (to affect and being affected). For example, when I was in a cold room to defend my thesis, I suddenly felt nervous and my body began to sweat. Another example, when we are at a protest joined by hundreds of bodies conveying anger, we will feel agitated as well, encouraged to join in the shouting and protesting. I also yawn when the person sitting next to me yawns. Here, the capacity of the body must be understood not only as something that is inherently embedded, but it can also be stimulated, shaped, or transmitted by other bodies. The potential and capacity of the body arise through its relation to something else. Therefore, according to Deleuze, when "we understand the body as the capacity to influence and be influenced, things will change" (1992, p. 626). We no longer define the body based on its mere form and function, but from the capacity it possesses. This capacity is related to motion, speed, and intensity. For example, when we are on the dance floor listening to high-pitched music, our bodies move quickly to the rhythm. Meanwhile, sitting in a cafe with our lover, listening to soft ballads, our body becomes relaxed and awaits the warmth of touch. However, if an annoying boss replaces the lover, we move further away from the feeling of relaxation and instead feel tense, nervous or anxious inside. This implicates that we no longer really understand how body and mind will response or bring forth a certain capacity, because this capacity is born from an encounter, arrangement and combination with other things (*encounter, arrangement, and combination*).

When Foucault raised the question of how homosexual relations can be duplicated in other forms, this thought of Deleuze (and Spinoza) finds an anchor. Foucault has seen various potentials in homosexual relationships (in this case, male homosexuals): mentorship, friendship, and of course, many more who do not even have a name. If Deleuze then says that new capacity can be born from the combination and its composition with other things, then this is the potentiality that must be understood from miscellaneous relationships. Miscellaneous relationships should no longer be trapped in standard forms – dating or marriage on the basis of sexual desire and logic of reproduction, but rather on "what potential can be realized from those relations". For example, a young man may live with an older man, and their relation is a mentorship that makes them both feel comfortable with each other or an elderly gay couple may live with a single

woman and they take care of each other. Therefore, sexual desire and/or romantic attraction, as well as sexual identity, are not always and not the only basis of relationships, but a possibility and potential that can be realized from these connections.

Connections can have multiple bases, from shared interests to the desire to care for each other and the comfortable feeling of sharing. All these don't need to be trapped in the logic of reproduction or the institutionalizing of relationships – but should be a self-transformation. This is the ethic, which was later developed by Foucault in the third book of the *History of Sexuality* – an ethic that refers to transforming and transforming oneself. Connections and relationships outside marriage or monogamous romantic relationships can also be one way to get here.

Potential and capacity arise from connections and relationships. But these connections and relationships should not be understood as timeless forms and functions, until we force these relations to fulfill our desires and be 'forever' oriented. Here, a relationship must be released from the cruel optimism that Lauren Berlant mentioned. In Deleuzian understanding, time should be not be seen as something that flows linearly and predictably, but through motion and intensity. In relation to this linear time and back to the cruel optimism of Berlant, we are always (made) to feel less – less healthy, less beautiful, and others – which implicitly puts something 'ideal' on the other end. Therefore, according to Puar (2007, pp. xx), we are only compelled to imitate something that already exists, rather than innovate, or 'disturb' something that has been established and find something new. Here, without any labels of 'forever', besides potentiality, what we feel is intensity. How a relationship provides an intense, certain potentiality that is open to other possibilities. For this intensity (1992, pp. 628) is also influenced by order, complexity, and structure. Just like when time feels so long when we are waiting for some who is late, or on the opposite, when time flies so fast when we are with someone we love. Understanding time in a nonlinear way allows the relationship to be open to other possibilities when its intensity is 'reduced' – for example, a polyamorous relationship that can warm up the intensity again with a new arrangement.

The last point in this essay is about the new function of the miscellaneous relationships. When potentiality and intensity arise from relationships, new functions that have never been thought of can come along. Lately, I often hear from female friends who are still single in

their mid- or late 40s that they are 'afraid' of the future, when they grow old. They already feel that marriage is impossible. But they are also afraid to spend the rest of their lives alone, for instance when they become sick. Here, I see relationships that can be a 'form of caring'. When relationships are released from sexual desire as a basis and refer to the potentiality, intensity, and diversity of relationships, it is not impossible that through these miscellaneous relationships, individuals form their own kinship bonds to care for each other. Relationships can be anything: they can be a collective mode with new functions and practicalities that have so far been unthinkable. They don't always have to be exclusive only to two people who have romantic and erotic interests, but they can always be open to diversity and are not always trapped in and beyond the identity and the presence or absence of sexual desire. They transform, guard and cares for us all in the midst of uncertain times.

Conclusion: Reflection

This paper is not a dictum, but a brief discussion on queer negativity, also towards homonormativity, which was born out of personal anxiety when marriage became glorified as an ideal value for homosexuals. Queer negativity offers a pessimistic, dark and too depolitic criticism and political position for pushing queers to occupy the dark position and enjoying it – the failure, unhappiness and anti-future attitude. Meanwhile, homonormativity also offers political assimilation that tends to bend to institutionalization and dominant values. With these two positions as well as through the issues of marriage and relationships, I do not necessarily push everyone towards anti-marriage. If there are individuals who find happiness through marriage, then of course that isn't a problem at all. But there are some who look for other alternatives. Therefore, a multiplicity by offering other options is one of my political attitudes to keep in mind that the institution of marriage isn't the only way to build a relationship. Diversity can break down the dominance and hegemony of an ideal value by showing other alternatives.

One afternoon, while drinking together, I casually asked an academic and senior historian, "What is the purpose of the current queer movement when marriage equality has been reached?" The answer was automatic, "To reduce the importance of marriage (to undermine marriage)." I don't know if he was a little drunk, joking or serious. But what he said showed me his anxiety about marriage becoming an ideal value. Acceptance

and equality are important. But what if the acceptance, through the institutionalization of relationships, actually makes other forms of value inferior?

Miscellaneous relationships then become one of the attempts to start a discussion and debate in the midst of the popularity of same-sex marriage. To finish this paper, I conclude that miscellaneous relationships are an attempt to (go beyond) the identity politics of relationships; they expose capacity, potentiality, and intensity as an open possibility; and by itself, show that capacity and potentiality are not the inherent, but the most beautiful part of the relationship itself.

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Endnotes

- 1 I am using the term queer here to refer to non-heteronormative sexuality/gender. However, as an academic study, queer theory or queer studies move beyond identity claims to critically interrogate constructions behind sexual identity/gender, to show their limitations and also to examine how a particular ideology moves behind the construction.
- 2 I will not show them one by one here because of space limits. If there is interest to read it in detail, there are some titles in the list of references.

Expression of Gratitude to Reviewers

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YAYASAN
YJP
JURNAL
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Jl. Karang Pola Dalam II No. 9A
Jati Padang, Pasar Minggu,
Jakarta Selatan 12540
INDONESIA
Phone/Fax: +62 21 22701689



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