

Feminism and Love

Editorial

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Articles

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

When Female Feminists Falling in Love: Ideology, Media, and Practices
Meike Lusye Karolus & Laili Nur Anisah

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

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

Love, Existential Project, and Truth Seeking
Bagus Takwin

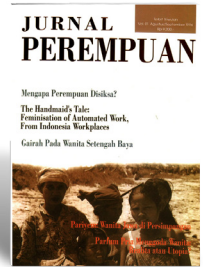
Patriarchal Relationships, Subordination and Glorification of Marriage: The Dilemma of Women across Generations in Living and Interpreting Love
Naufaludin Ismail

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ADDRESS:

Jl. Karang Pola Dalam II No. 9A, Jati Padang
Pasar Minggu, Jakarta Selatan 12540
Telp./Fax (021) 2270 1689
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Contents

Editorial

Feminism and Love iii

Articles

- Rethinking and Queering Relationships in the Age of Same-sex Marriage: Multiplicities, Intensities, and New Potentialities 1-9
Hendri Yulius

- When Female Feminists Falling in Love: Ideology, Media, and Practices 11-17
Meike Lusye Karolus & Laili Nur Anisah

- Romance and Femininity in Indonesian Teenage Dramas: A Transnational Post-Feminist Analysis 19-27
Aulia Rahmawati

- In the Name of Love: Power Relation and Revictimization on Sexual Violence Case in Courtship (Case Study of Court Decision) 29-34
Nike Nadia

- Love, Existential Project, and Truth Seeking 35-42
Bagus Takwin

- Patriarchal Relationships, Subordination and Glorification of Marriage: The Dilemma of Women across Generations in Living and Interpreting Love 43-53
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

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

Meike Lusye Karolus¹ & Laili Nur Anisah²

¹Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada
Komplek Universitas Gajah Mada Gedung PAU, Jalan Teknik Utara, Caturtunggal, Sleman, Yogyakarta
55281, Indonesia

²Jejer Wadon
Ngaruuru, Banyudono, Kabupaten Boyolali, Jawa Tengah, 57373, Indonesia

meikekarolus@gmail.com & laili.nur.anisah@gmail.com

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Abstract

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

Introduction: Female Feminists and Love

Talking about love means talking about something essential in human life, both for men and women. Unfortunately, the concept of love is not always a part of the human instinctive experience alone. Simone de Beauvoir reminds us in *The Second Sex* (1949) that while love can indeed be felt by all, love can have different meanings for men and women. She also quotes Byron who says that men perceive love as something detached from them, while for women love is more existential. For men, falling in love makes them want a desired object to become theirs and proclaim themselves the sovereignty to own and control the object. On the other hand, for women, falling in love is merging or surrendering everything to the object which is loved (de Beauvoir 1956, p. 608). In short, falling in love for men is a temporary conquest while for women it is a devotion. The differences in perceiving love are the root of misunderstandings and violence between men and women in a relationship.

How about female feminists who fall in love? In the prologue of a feminist poetry book by R Valentina Sagala¹, Ayu Utami explains that feminists who fall in love face a problematic situation, "Feminism is a kind of consciousness whereas love releases some consciousness

to let selflessness takes hold" (Sagala 2012, p. 9). Falling in love for a feminist woman is to allow herself to be at the crossroad of her feminist thoughts and her feelings as a lover which often causes tension with patriarchal culture. When a female feminist falls in love with a man (especially if the man is not a feminist), love is no longer just a feeling and an emotion. As a result, feminists often require a political attitude when they fall in love.

The longing for love is also sustained by a fantasy of an ideal love created by the patriarchal media. In a heteronormative context, the media uses romance as a commodity within a framework that positions women as objects (Modelski 1982; McRobbie 1982; Radway 1984, Ang 1985). Media in the form of television series, magazines, songs, films and novels contribute to forming ideal fantasies of love in a patriarchal context. Therefore, when a feminist falls in love, she is then confronted with fantasies, realities, and feminist theories that she reads and practices. Falling in love becomes a test for female feminists to challenge themselves with their double identity: woman and feminist.

This paper examines the problems female feminists face when falling in love and when having a relationship. In this study, female feminists and the experience of

falling in love is limited to the context of heteronormative relations. The key questions examined in this research amongst others are: (1) What is the concept of love for female feminists?; (2) How does the media affect the perception of love for female feminists?; and (3) How do female feminists negotiate in love relationships in their everyday life? This study aims to explain the concepts of love constructed by female feminists, the influence of media in shaping the perception of love, and the process of female feminists' negotiation in a romantic relationship.

This paper uses the methodology of in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with 6 female feminists in the cities of Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Jombang. The informants were randomly selected based on the following criteria: female feminists who openly admitted that they are feminist, single (not in a relationship), currently in a relationship, married and divorced. The names of the informants are kept confidential as per their request. These informants were selected to represent a variety of female feminists' perceptions of love and experiences in relationships. Therefore, this study is not intended to generalize the experiences of female feminists.

Feminism, Love and Patriarchy

Love is an abstract concept that does not always have a single meaning. According to the *Great Dictionary* of the Indonesian Language of the Language Center (KBBI), love as an adjective means affectionate; caring; infatuated (between men and women); admiring; amatory; sentimental, while as a noun, romance is a matter of love between men and women. Furthermore, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, love means an intense feeling of deep affection which can refer to a deep romantic or sexual attachment to someone. The famous psychoanalysis Eric Fromm describes in his book *The Art of Loving* (1956) that love is divided into five forms, including motherly love, brotherly love, erotic love, self love, and God's love (love of God). Another definition that Fromm offers about love is as an activity, not a passive influence, "standing in" rather than "falling for"; the character of love is active in giving, not receiving (2006, p. 67). Fromm (2006, p. 68) underlines that giving in this context does not mean surrendering or sacrificing anything but it has to be seen as an expression of the potential of the individual by giving to others.

Ideally, feminism is to realize equality not only in the public sector but also in the private realm, specifically in

the personal relations between men and women. The root of inequality between men and women in a relationship is shaped by a patriarchal culture. In her book *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinities, and Love*, bell hooks (2004, p. 70) defines patriarchy as a socio-political system that affirms that men characteristically dominate, are superior to everything, particularly those they consider to be weak (especially women). They are endowed with the right to dominate and overwhelm the weak and maintain such dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence. As a result, love in patriarchal culture is related to ownership that positions both men and women in dominance and subjugation (hooks 2000, p. 234). In heteronormative and sexist relationships, love relationships become reciprocal transactions between couples while placing women in positions to compete with other women to receive love from men.

In the patriarchal system, men and women have been trained since childhood to fill certain roles that assert their position on the basis of gender. For example, boys are taught to be served, to be aggressive, courageous, strong, thinking and not to give space to emotions and feelings. At the same time, girls are taught to serve, to be weak, to not think, to be passive, and that it is all right for them to express their feelings and emotions. One of the most crucial processes is the act of being motherly for girls while boys from the onset have been encouraged to work in the public sphere (Chodorow 1978). The most important patriarchal sin is for men to believe that they are born to dominate and control while women are shaped to believe that they are born to be dominated and controlled by men (hooks 2004, p. 87). Therefore when this is seen in the context of relationships, men believe that they are the ones to make decisions and control relationships while women need affirmation from men. hooks also criticizes how men and women are trapped with sexist thoughts in a relationship, for example women look down on men who express their feelings and emotions because in a patriarchal mindset, men should not do that. On the other hand, men will stay away from women who are capable or have masculine power (*phallic women*) which is considered to threaten the "maleness" of men.

The work of the feminist movement to transform the meaning of love and relations is to redefine love and relationships. In her book *All About Love: New Visions* (2000), bell hooks states that when we love, we openly and honestly express our caring, affection, responsibility, mutual respect, commitment and trust (hooks 2000, p. 14). This is in line with the concept of equal partners who place

the position of men and women equally in accordance with their respective potential. hooks suggests that relationships need to be committed to ethical love (2000, p. 88). By having relationships based on love ethics, we can make choices based on honesty, openness, integrity and beliefs which are expressed through decisions in the public and private sphere. Living with love ethics teaches couples to appreciate loyalty and commitment in preserving bonds beyond material interests.

Love in Media and Patriarchy

In the capitalist system, love is not just an idea. In the culture industry, love is a commodity that can be exchanged for the purpose of consumption. In Indonesia, one of the popular media is film, of which the number of Indonesian movie viewers reaches up to 7 million. According to a survey conducted by Film Indonesia (filmindonesia.or.id 2017) there are 10 popular movies from 2002-2017 of which six out of ten are romantic movies, such as *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta?*, (2002: 2,700,000 viewers) and the sequel *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta? 2* (2016; 3,665,509); *Eiffel I'm Love* (2003; 2.632.300); *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2008: 3,581,947), *Habibie & Ainun* (2012: 4,583,641) and *My Stupid Boss* (2016, 3,052,657). Suwanto found in his research (2017) that the majority of film audiences in Indonesia are between 18-22 years old. Therefore, it is not surprising that the romance theme is best-selling given the interest of the audience at that age.

Problems can arise when something is portrayed through the media. Love that is represented in the media (whether film, novel, television, print media, or music) is generally constructed in line with the dominant cultural discourse (patriarchy). In *Loving with a Vengeance* (1982), Tania Modleski describes cultural practices that offer images of women in a passive or dependent position in relation to men. In the romance of *Harlequin*, *Gothic* novels, and soap operas, Modleski finds feminine forms that confound the relationship between men and women with a fantasy of an ideal relationship between men and women. The fantasy depicts women as masochistic figures who accept men's harsh treatment and regard it as romantic. The male roughness is not considered as a manifestation of anger but of love (Modleski 2008, p.3). This situation also occurs when sexual desire is satisfied with a gender biased view. According to Mulvey (1989), a film narrative is strongly influenced by masculine power and by placing the *male gaze* as the viewer and the woman as the object to be seen. Thus, in order to satisfy a man's desire, sadism (context of punishment) and worship (fetishism) of the female body emerges.

Romance is also presented to attract women to the media. Angela McRobbie (1982) found that romance was used to attract the attention of the readers of teen magazines *Jackie*. By shaping the femininity of its readers, one of Jackie's magazine attempts is to use romantic connotations in titles like the words *you, me, love, and happiness* or link titles of an article with romantic song titles such as "*Meet Me On The Corner*" or "*Come Fly With Me*" (McRobbie 1991, pp. 94-95). Janice Radway on the other hand finds in *Reading The Romance* (1984) that while romantic fiction is highly patriarchal, the reading process is "resistance" and seen as "therapy" for women to escape from conflicts and problems they face in daily life. This situation is appalling because in both reality and fantasy, women are subjected to a discourse of love as promised by patriarchy.

Adding to the spreading of patriarchal ideas about love is that the media industry is dominated by men who serve their own interests; including propagating the masculine outlook on relationships they believe in. Therefore, feminist critics of the media seek to examine and dismantle the representations presented in the media which are not limited to sex and gender, but also ethics when portraying race, ethnicity, and culture (Buikema 2007; hooks, 2007).

In her book *Technologies of Gender* (1987), Teresa de Lauretis highlights gender based on sexual differences. There are attempts to standardize women and men. In fact, women and men have social identities (race, ethnicity, religion, class, etc.) that make their experience different. When displayed in the media, only one female (*woman*) and male (*man*) seems to exist when in the reality there are many types of women and men. Relationships between men and women are usually presented with men being active subjects and women are passive objects. This is being reproduced, whereas in reality there are many different types of relationships in everyday life.

Female Feminists and The Concept of Love

The concept of love is often a reference for people in defining the feelings and relationships they lived. In this paper, there are six female feminists who share their stories of love and relationships. They are three single female feminists, Yasmin (21, Yogyakarta), Mariska (26, Yogyakarta) and Dinda (31, Yogyakarta); one female feminist in a relationship, Danny (27, Yogyakarta); one married feminist, Intan (36, Surabaya); and one divorced female feminist, Sari (34, Jombang).

The concept of love according to the informants is greatly influenced by their experiences. For example, Intan and Dinda who are advocates for victims of domestic violence assumed that the concept of love did not exist. However, after entering a relationship their understanding of love changed. Dinda envied couples with more egalitarian criteria in accepting her feminist thinking. "Love fills the empty space, is an impulse for both sides to advance and develop through appreciation and respect," (Dinda 2017, interviewed 12 December). As for Intan, the concept of love transforms into a commitment to receive and advance together as a couple. "Before I got married, I did not believe that there was love [but] there was only mutually beneficial biological needs, [but] now [I see] love as a commitment to mutually respect one another, to be open and trust and love one another," (Intan 2017, interview 13 December).

Fear of loneliness in old age and a persistent partner convinced Intan to get married, and to negotiate the concept of feminism she had believed in so far. Among the two single female feminists, the concept of love leans more strongly toward feminist thought, after a failed relationship for Mariska and the other who has never been in a relationship, Yasmin. As Mariska reveals, "Love is something that fills one's life. There is chemistry. There is equity and mutual respect," (Mariska 2017, interview 12 December). Similarly, according to Yasmin, "Love is a choice". We can choose to fall in love or not. Love does not suddenly appear," (Yasmin 2017, interview 11 December).

Mariska no longer wants to try to establish a relationship if there is no common understanding of what a relationship should be as she does not want to be trapped by the love she is feeling. Her next partner must share the same principle of equality. Yasmin, on the other hand, interprets love as an option, which does not happen all over sudden. According to her, one can choose to fall in love or not. Yasmin tends to be realistic when it comes being in a relationship which can be based on the benefits and disadvantages which she receives from her partner.

In Danny's experience, the concept of love changes after going through several relationships. She says, "Love is a sacrifice. You have to support each other so that both can grow and be free. This sacrifice is preceded by negotiations," (Danny 2017, interview 11 December). This change can be greatly influenced by a couple. Danny has experiences with both patriarchal men and feminist men. She did not object to being treated like a queen by her first partner, a patriarchal man, but she felt constrained by the many requirements and expectations he had of how

she had to be as a woman in a relationship. For example, she was expected to give in and do domestic chores. The concept of love changed when Danny got to know her feminist lover where love is no longer a restraint but a positive impetus for both to grow and to try new things. For Danny, love makes people willing to sacrifice and succumb if it stems from prior discussions and negotiations.

For Sari, a divorced female feminist, love became something indefinable and blurred, after a bitter experience of being in a relationship for 3 years and had to end with a divorce. Sari's bitter experience does not make her reluctant to have a relationship again, but she is more careful in choosing a partner. Sari does not deter relationships after her failures, because she needs a partner to fill the void and emptiness, exactly as de Beauvoir says that the idea of marriage offers happiness and balance in a repetitive natural life (de Beauvoir 2016, p. 239).

I have never known what true love is. What I feel is just an outlet of desire, comfort, mutual attraction and a sense of belonging. So far, that is the definition of love I have. Another thing that outlines the relation between love and the household in my opinion is that although as free, independent and strong as I am, I need a partner who is more mature than me, in terms of knowledge and life experience to can guide me and my son. I am still an ordinary woman who needs to be loved, sheltered and protected. Of course it will not be blind obedience but there will be discussions and talks first. (Sari 2017, interview 13 December)

Feminist thought influences Sari when it comes to sharing roles with a partner while in a relationship, but it does not make her cautious when choosing a partner. Marriage for men is the expansion of assets, they consider the profit and loss of their relationship, while marriage for women is the integration of their identity into society (de Beauvoir 2016, p. 224). Based on Sari's experience when she is about to divorce, she still considers her family's good name in the village as well as the status as a divorcee which she will bear. A divorcee's status is viewed poorly within patriarchal society because being divorced is identical with the failure of woman to care of her husband and family, the concept of motherhood is attached to the patriarchal culture.

Related to equality in public spaces, the concept of love of female feminists is still contradictory. When it comes to equality in the public sphere, women dare to negotiate and share roles with their spouses. Gender mainstreaming seems to have succeeded in shaping the conception of independence both economically

and as regards personal autonomy for female feminists. They dare to negotiate and compromise to take care of domestic affairs or a career; moreover they choose to have an equal partner. However, friction occurs in the personal area when there is a female feminist who still feels she is not yet fulfilled without the presence of man by her side. Although some of the women choose a partner, secretly they still crave to be chosen by a partner. Men are still central to women's existence compared to being on their own.

Female Feminists and Romantic Fantasy in the Media

Media is an external factor that helped shape the concept of love for female feminists. Each of the informants admitted that they love to watch romantic movies (Western and Asian) or listen to romantic songs. Mariska's view of the concept of love was born out of a combination of feminist theories she read and her passion for watching movies and reading romantic novels. As a result, Mariska's view tends to be contradictory, being a feminist and a romantic movie lover. In Mariska's view, one of the concepts that was influenced by the media is the idea of soulmate.

In romantic movies, we are presented with the image that the cool guy secretly likes us for what we are. If we are patient enough to chase after him, then he will melt. In the real world it does not happen. However, I still believe in the concept of a soulmate that is portrayed in movies, that God creates a couple. This raised my optimism to a sad reality. (Mariska 2017, interview 12 December)

Almost in line with Mariska, Dinda and Sari also feel the same way. Dinda loves listening to romantic songs. According to her, every romantic song represents her feelings toward men she liked. As for Sari, feminist thoughts about love and relationships cannot compete with the concept of love offered by the media like her favorite Indian films. In Sari's experience, the desire to be loved and make sacrifices as a couple makes sense and this knowledge was sealed when she chose her husband.

In contrast to Mariska, Dinda, and Sari, Yasmin and Danny seemed more resistant to the idea of love being portrayed in the media. Danny blatantly dislikes romantic novels such as *Harlequin* or watching romantic movies. While Yasmin likes to watch romantic movies though, she tends to be resistant and critical to portrayals that appear in the media.

There are many scenes in Korean movies where a girl is forced to do something without consent. It happens also in Disney stories, such as Snow White who desires a Prince.

In real life there is nothing like it. (Yasmin 2017, interview 11 December).

The explanations of the informants give reason to hope that female feminists start to be critical of what is portrayed in the media. By looking at the position of women, they already have the sensitivity to distinguish between love and violence by men to pacify women. The media indeed mixes ideals and patriarchal ideas of love but through the experiences and knowledge of feminism, female feminists understand the messages displayed in the media. Friction occurs when the primitive desire within them to find the ideal partner goes hand in hand with the ideas of love that the media displays. It is a pity that patriarchal idea of love still occurs and it exists in the personal area of women. By still watching romantic movies, they are actually escaping from a reality that is not ideal.

Contrary to this, some female feminists simply reject the ideas of love promoted by the media. For them, the patriarchal idea of love weakens them as women. The reality is sometimes contrary to what happens in a movie and creates skepticism toward the concept of the patriarchal idea of love. As a result, they refuse to watch or they keep watching but resistant to the ideas that are presented by the media. In the case of Yasmin and Danny, the media did not have a strong effect in shaping their perception of love.

Female Feminists in a Relationship

Being in a relationship can be a battlefield of being a feminist within a patriarchal culture. Sometimes feminist ideology influences female feminists in the process of being confronted in a relationship. However, frequently female feminists find that their thoughts change toward patriarchal thinking. The practice of relationships makes female feminists such as Mariska and Yasmin more cautious about certain criteria they desire wish for in a relationship. They know and choose not to succumb to the patriarchal men's bids that treat them subordinately.

Mariska and Yasmin's decision to stay single rather than being in a relationship that is below their standards is a reflection of the experience of relationships they had. Being in a relationship with patriarchal men also changed Danny's qualification of a partner. Danny did not hurry to choose a man. She even admits that she was the one who expressed her feelings to her current partner because she felt confident with her choice, aside from the fact that her partner is an introvert. Feminist thought prompted Danny to break the taboo of expressing her feelings

which is considered something that only for men are supposed to do. On the other hand, having a partner who is also a feminist means that they have to compromise.

I have to let go of my desire to be spoiled by my partner while he must give up his ego and the privileges he has, in order to be equal. An equal relationship is also not easy when we have lived our whole life in a patriarchal framework. (Danny 2017, interview 11 December)

The changing concept of love is also evident in the experience of Intan, a married female feminist. Intan interprets love as a mutual commitment that has an impact on your daily life as a couple. For example, there are certain things where Intan cannot express her opinion in a straightforward way when it comes to certain problems. Intan chooses negotiate and discuss smoothly and calmly even if she is angry. According to her, this way she negotiates between herself as a feminist who is married. Before being married she had a tendency to express her beliefs without considering the feelings of her partner. However, after getting married, Intan learned to express her opinion by not hurting the feelings of her partner. She calls this a feminist strategy to stay committed.

Sari had a different experience, claiming that the concept of love has not changed for her before getting married, during marriage and after being divorced. For Sari, to love means to make sacrifices for the people she loves. The experience of her has made Sari more careful and had her rethink about her happiness. She no longer wants to make people happy by making sacrifices. It is exactly the same as de Beauvoir discloses, happiness for women is always based on the happiness of the loved ones, such as husbands or children. Women are making sure all the needs of their loved ones are met. For women, to take care of the house and nothing else is considered as self-realization (de Beauvoir 2016, p. 256).

The division of roles which are written in the law, creates subordinate positions for men and women in their marriage. Subordination is one of the triggers of domestic violence that is used as a means of maintaining a position of power within the family; power is used as a means of controlling spouses, children and even parents (Davies 2008, p. 17). Legal thinking as described above greatly influenced Danny in choosing a partner. Danny believes love cannot come suddenly, there needs to be a process to choose a men who will be considered as a partner. The same thing is also conveyed by Mariska. Women should have a feeling or some sort cynicism regarding the motives of men. For example, is their

motive pure interest in a woman or is their motive to utilize their superiority over a woman for their own benefit. The cynicism of de Beauvoir is permissible and necessary as it reduces the impact of failures once in a marriage, and also because as men tend to do the same when in a marriage (de Beauvoir 2016, p. 530).

In Indonesia, the position of women in the perspective of the marital law is not equivalent to the position of men. Law Number 1 from 1974 on marriage legalizes the unequal role in marital relations. In Article 31 Paragraph (1) of the law is written, "The rights and position of the Wife are in balance with the rights and position of the Husband in in the household and in their joint life in the community". The article is imperfect when article (3) gives a different role for men and women, "The Husband is the head of the family and his wife, the housewife." The word "head" in this article conveys the connotation of ultimate power, so it is not wrong to assume that in society it means for the man to always be served, while the other (the wife) has a role to serve (Mulia in Irianto 2006, p. 163).

The concept of a wife in the law is based on religious understanding. In Islam for example there is a verse "*Ar-rijalu qowwamuna 'alan nisa*", which is commonly interpreted that the wife's position is lower than the position of the congregation and the man's position as equal as a priest. Article 2 Paragraph (1) of the Marriage Act requires the legitimacy of marriage through a religious ceremony as a condition of being legitimate in the eyes of the law, "Marriage is lawful if done according to the law of each religion and belief". For Muslim, the articles of the Marriage Law are lowered more severely in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) which is binding to all Muslims. In Article 80 KHI for example, the obligation of the husband as supervisor of his wife and household is mentioned and that the husband is obliged to protect the wife and provide all the needs of the household. The wife's obligations in the KHI contained in Article 83 are mentioned as follows, "(1) The primary obligation for a wife is to be devoted to the husband within the boundaries justified by Islam. (2) The wife organizes and regulates the household daily to her best abilities".

The explicit division of male and female roles mentioned in legislation has a domino effect in the public sector. In employment, for example, the wage policy of a company for male and female workers is different. Since the status of women in marriage is to be housewives, women's salary is regarded as an "extra-income" that cannot be compared to the salary given to male workforce". A wife's health and childbirth subsidies

are linked to her husband's salary, while the female worker does not receive any subsidy directly because she is considered covered through her husband. When a female worker's husband is not employed in the formal sector, she is not covered in her own workplace. Law No. 1 of the 1970 Islamic Marriage and Compilation Act is heavily loaded with patriarchal values and subordinates the position of women in marriage.

Conclusion

The concept of love for female feminists has different definitions, but none of them can be separated from the existence of a male figure who is believed to bring happiness in a relationship. The liberating feminist mind becomes a power of negotiation and partner criteria for female feminists. Female feminist awareness of the existence of love gives them a bargaining position when falling in love, weighing and measuring profit and loss, although there are also female feminists who surrender to the definition of love as outlined out by the media. The concept of love for female feminists is made up of individual experiences and media influences such as romantic movies, songs, and novels. The media does not always have a negative side effect on the concept of love, for some of the informants in this study the media also provides an optimistic boost for the existence of noble love. This optimism makes female feminists believe that for themselves and for their way of thinking there will always be partners that match their own set of criteria.

For female feminists, relationships are like a practice room where feminist ideology must be tested with the patriarchal realities that surround it. Feminist thought often conflicts with reality, and female feminists must be willing to negotiate and sacrifice in order to align the concept of love that exist on an ideological level with the concept of love understood by society. These conflicts are sometimes won by feminist thought, and sometimes female feminists surrender to the demands of the concept of patriarchal love. Being in a relationship for female feminists results in new concepts that can change the way they think about love.

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Endnote

- 1 The poetry book is titled *Like Morning: Feminist Credo and Poems R.Valentina Sagala* (Institute of Women, Bandung, 2012). The prologue written by Ayu Utami in this book is titled "When the Feminist Falling in Love". The title of this paper is inspired by the prologue.

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Jurnal Perempuan (JP) is a quarterly interdisciplinary publication in the English language that aims to circulate **original ideas in gender studies**. JP invites critical reflection on the theory and practice of feminism in the social, political, and economic context of Indonesian society. We are committed to exploring gender in its multiple forms and interrelationships.

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