

OFFRED RESISTANCE AGAINST OPPRESSION IN MARGARETT ATWOOD'S *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*

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Abstract

Oppression is the inequitable use of authority, law, or physical force to prevent others from being free or equal. Feminists fight against the oppression of women. Women have been unjustly held back from achieving full equality for much of human history in many societies around the world. This study aims to analyze the resistance against oppression of Offred as the main character in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*. In order to analyze the text, this study uses Kate Millet's theory on sexual politics. The analysis finds out that there are two ways Offred becomes a radical person. Firstly because Gilead Society restricts freedom of the Handmaid, and secondly Gilead Society uses the Handmaid body as a device of the country to produce a baby. And those reasons make Offred show her own resistance in the end.

Keywords: Feminism, Oppression, Resistance, Radicalism

Abstrak

Penindasan adalah penggunaan otoritas, hukum, atau kekuatan fisik yang tidak adil untuk mencegah orang lain menjadi bebas atau setara. Kaum feminis berperang melawan penindasan wanita. Wanita telah secara tidak adil terhalang untuk mencapai kesetaraan penuh untuk banyak sejarah manusia di banyak masyarakat di seluruh dunia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perlawanan terhadap penindasan Offred sebagai karakter utama dalam novel Margaret Atwood. *Handmaid's Tale*. Dalam rangka untuk menganalisis teks, penelitian ini menggunakan teori Kate Millet tentang politik seksual. Analisis menemukan bahwa ada dua cara Offred menjadi orang yang radikal. Pertama karena Masyarakat Gilead membatasi kebebasan Handmaid, dan kedua Gilead Society menggunakan Tubuh puteri sebagai perangkat negara untuk menghasilkan bayi. Dan alasan itu membuat Offred menunjukkan perlawanannya sendiri pada akhirnya.

Kata Kunci: Feminisme, Penindasan, Perlawanan, Radikalisme

INTRODUCTION

Oppression is the inequitable use of authority, law, or physical force to prevent others from being free or equal. Oppression is a type of injustice. The verb oppress can mean to keep someone down in a social sense, such as an authoritarian government might do in an oppressive society. It can also mean to mentally burden someone, such as with the psychological weight of an oppressive idea. Feminists fight against the oppression of women. Women have been unjustly held back from achieving full equality for much of human history in many societies around the world. Feminist theorists of the 1960s and 1970s looked for new ways to analyze this oppression, often concluding that there were both clear forces in society that oppressed women.

Women did not have the same legal and political rights as men, and were under control of

fathers and husbands in almost all societies. In some societies in which women had few options for supporting their life if not supported by a husband, there was even a practice of ritual widow suicide or murder. (Asia continued this practice into the 20th century with some cases occurring in the present as well.)

In Greece, often held up as a model of democracy, women did not have basic rights, and could own no property nor could they participate directly in the political system. In both Rome and Greece, women's very movement in public was limited. There are cultures today where women rarely leave their own homes. According to Friedrich Engels,

[...]Engels called the working woman "a slave of a slave," and his analysis in particular was that oppression of women rose with the rise of a class

society, about 6,000 years ago. Engels' discussion of the development of women's oppression is primarily in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," (Engels, 1884). Like the "patriarchal" feminist constructions of history criticized by Newton, *The Handmaid's Tale* offers a "tragic" view of gender relations, in which the oppression of women by men is seen as "unchanging, universal, and monolithically imposed."

The main point feminists have stressed about gender inequality is that it is not an individual matter, but is deeply follow in the structure of societies. Gender inequality is built into the organization of marriage and families, work and the economy, politics, religions, the arts and other cultural productions, and the very language we speak. Making women and men equal, therefore, necessitates social and not individual solutions. The feminist perspectives of the last 35 years into three broad categories that reflect their theories and political strategies with regard to the gendered social order. These are gender reform feminisms, gender resistant feminisms, and gender revolution feminisms. Gender revolution feminisms claim that all the statuses that structure our lives are socially constructed. Thus, it is possible to have multiple variations and mixes of whatever humans can found in behavior, emotional and sexual relationships, and identities. Identity politics becomes a lot more complex, but the possibilities for political coalitions also multiply. Gender reform feminisms stopped the theoretical base for second-wave feminism. Their politics are practical and perhaps the best way to redress gender inequality at the present time. The fight for equal legal status and political representation for women and men, and for autonomy for women in making procreative, sexual, and marital choices still has not been won in most countries of the world

Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* also writes that woman's position is a political state. She mentions that "men do not need to practice patriarchy with violence, because it is efficient without it (Millet 43) – most women do not realized when they are oppressed because they think it is normal, so it does not take a big effort for men to dominate woman. It can be happen because men are "taught to be dominant. Women and men have a relationship of dominant.

In this sense the dominant subject-position offered by *The Handmaid's Tale* is a victim-position. The novel focuses on the journey of the handmaid Offred. Handmaids are forbidden to use their birth names and must echo the male, or master, whom they serve. *The Handmaid's Tale* explores themes of women in subjugation in a patriarchal society and the various means by which these women attempt to gain individualism and independence. Gilead is ruled

by a fundamentalist regime that treats women as property of the state. The few remaining fertile women are forced into sexual slavery.

Atwood's novel offers a satirical view of various social, political, and religious trends of the 1980s United States. Further, Atwood questions what would happen if these trends, and especially "casually held attitudes about women" were taken to their logical end. Atwood has explained that *The Handmaid's Tale* is a response to those who claim the oppressive, totalitarian, and religious governments that have taken hold in other countries throughout the years "can't happen here" but in this work, she has tried to show how such a takeover might play out.

METHOD

According to the background of the study, the problems are formulated as (1) How has Offred become a radical person to against oppression in Gilead's society? (2) What kind of Offred radicalism way to against the oppression in Gilead's society?

The source of the data mainly from Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. The supporting data are obtained from some journals, websites and other matters that are relevant to this study.

The researcher did close reading to find out the resistance of against oppression in Offred character that will be discussed, then the researcher needs to underline the specific quotation as the evidence and put the evidence in the table to make it easy to analyze them. Later on, the researcher will collect the data that suitable to be analyzed. After collecting the data, researcher will find any related sources to strengthen the arguments. Lastly, the thesis will be written based on the data that has been compiled.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In accordance with statement of the problems, several theories are arranged to support the analysis. The theories presented here are; the concept of Radical feminism by Kate Millet and the supported theory of feminism and supporting data from some journals.

Jamie Dopp Journal

The first previous study that is an article written by Jamie Dopp entitled *Subject- Position as Victim -Position in the Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood*. This journal focusses on the against women's oppression, in fact reproduces the essentializing tendencies of a patriarchy that, as a feminist gesture. Like the "patriarchal" feminist constructions of history criticized by Newton, *The Handmaid's Tale* offers a "tragic" view of gender relations, in which the oppression of women by men is seen as "unchanging, universal, and monolithically imposed." The result is that the text offers the reader not a position of active resistance to patriarchy, but a position of abjection that shares in the fatalistic passivity of the protagonist. In

this sense the dominant subject-position offered by *The Handmaid's Tale* is a victim-position. The answer offered by the text is that the Gileadean revolution was motivated almost entirely by a desire to (re)oppress women. This is made explicit by the Commander. The takeover was necessary, the Commander explains, because there was nothing left for men "to do with women" (221). Sex he says, with patriarchal understatement, it was part of the issue. It was too easy for anybody to buy it. As a result, "There was nothing [for men] to work for, nothing to fight for... Men were turning off on sex.... They were turning off on marriage" (221-22). The entire regime seems organized to subjugate women: women are silenced; forbidden to see themselves in mirrors or to read or write; "salvaged"; treated as property; "natural resources" and children; controlled with ropes and cattle prods. The oppression is so absolute and so otherwise unmotivated that it could be the result only of an instinctual need by men to oppress women. (Dopp, 2000)

Judith Lorber Journal

The second previous study that an article written by Judith Lorber entitled *The Variety of Feminisms and their Contribution to Gender Equality*. This journal focuses in recent feminist ideas and perspective, the continuities and discontinuities. This journal will discuss the development of feminist theories of gender inequality source and the various feminist political solutions and remedies based on these theories. Combining ideas from various feminist writers, and not usually talking about any specific writers. A list of readings can be found at the end.

The point made by feminists about gender inequality is that it is not an individual matter, but that it is profoundly followed in societal structure. Gender inequality is built into the organization of family organization, work and the economy, politics, religions, the arts and other cultural productions, and the language we are talking about. Making women and men equal, requires social solutions rather than individual ones. The feminist perspectives of the last 35 years into three broad categories that reflect their theories and political strategies with regard to the gendered social order. These are gender reform feminisms, gender resistant feminisms, and gender revolution feminisms. Gender revolution feminisms claim that all the statuses that structure our lives are socially constructed. Thus, it is possible to have multiple variations and mixes of whatever humans can found in behavior, emotional and sexual relationships, and identities. Identity politics becomes a lot more complex, but the possibilities for political coalitions also multiply. Gender reform feminisms stopped the theoretical base for second-wave feminism. Their

politics are practical and perhaps the best way to redress gender inequality at the present time. The fight for equal legal status and political representation for women and men, and for autonomy for women in making procreative, sexual, and marital choices still has not been won in most countries of the world. Gender discrimination in the workplace and lower pay for women's work is pervasive in capitalist and socialist economies. The global economy, with its exploitation of poor women and men as cheap labor, and economic restructuring in industrializing and post-industrial economies, with its reduction in social-service benefits to mothers and children, has worsened the material conditions of life for many people throughout the world. Thus, economic problems are another arena for feminist gender politics.

While the politics of gender reform feminisms spills over into a politics for every disadvantaged person, the battles of gender resistant feminisms are for women alone. Fighting to protect women's bodies against unwanted pregnancies and sterilizations, abortions of female fetuses, genital mutilation, rape, beatings, and murder has been never-ending struggle. And the sexual integrity of women and girls needs protection from forced prostitution, exploitative sex work in pornographic productions and nightclubs.

Feminism Concept

Feminism is a range of political movements, ideologies, and social movements that share a common goal to define, establish and achieve political, economic and social equality of sexes. This includes seeking to establish educational and professional opportunities for women that are equal to such opportunities for men.

Feminist movements have campaigned and continue to campaign for women's rights, including the right to vote, to hold public office, to work, to earn fair wages or equal pay, to own property, to receive education, and many others. Feminists have also worked to promote bodily autonomy and integrity, and to protect women and girls from rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Changes in dress and acceptable physical activity have often been part of feminist movements

Kate Millet's Concepts

Radical feminism is a philosophy emphasizing the patriarchal roots of inequality between men and women, or, more specifically, social dominance of women by men. Radical feminism views patriarchy as dividing rights, privileges and power primarily by sex, and as a result oppressing women and privileging men. Radical feminism opposes existing political and social organization in general because it is inherently tied to

patriarchy. Radical feminists tend to be more militant in their approach (radical as "getting to the root") than other feminists are. A radical feminist aims to dismantle patriarchy, rather than making adjustments to the system through legal changes. Radical feminists also resisted reducing oppression to an economic or class issue, as socialist or Marxist feminism sometimes did or does. Radical feminism opposes patriarchy, not men. (Robin Morgan defended "man-hating" as the right of the oppressed class to hate the class which is oppressing them.) Radical feminism was rooted in the wider radical movement, where women participated in anti-war and New Left political movements of the 1960s, finding themselves excluded from equal power by the men within the movement, even with underlying theories of empowerment. Many of these women split off into specifically feminist groups, while still retaining much of their political radical ideals and methods. Then radical feminism became the term used for the more radical edge of feminism. Radical feminism is credited with the use of consciousness raising groups to raise awareness of women's oppression. New York Radical Women (NYRW) was a feminist group in existence from 1967-1969.

Katherine Murray Millett was an American feminist writer, educator, artist, and activist. She attended Oxford University and was the first American woman to be awarded a degree with first-class honors. She has been described as "a seminal influence on second-wave feminism", and is best known for her book *Sexual Politics* (1970), which was based on her doctoral dissertation at Columbia University. Journalist Liza Featherstone attributes previously unimagined "legal abortion, greater professional equality between the sexes, and a sexual freedom" being made possible partially due to Millett's efforts. The feminist, human rights, peace, civil rights were some of Millett's principal causes. Her books were motivated by her activism, such as woman's rights and mental health reform, and several were autobiographical memoirs that explored her sexuality, mental health, and relationships.

Came to be known as radical feminists, they introduced the practice of consciousness raising where women came together to share their experiences as 'women'. Realizing that personal experiences are not unique to individual women, they proclaimed that 'personal is political' with the notion of universal sisterhood. They believed that men's control over women's sexual and reproductive lives is the most fundamental form of oppression meaning that women are oppressed because they are 'women.'

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. "the dominant ideology of patriarchy" (Marx 1845). Generations of society before us have had strong patriarchal themes. People who speak against feminism are scared of change.

Feminism is a movement towards equal society for male, female and transgender people, without discrimination. People should not feel discriminated against for being who they are. They should be able to live in peace, without fear of not conforming to the "social norm."

Oppression

Oppression is the systemic and institutional abuse of power by one group at the expense of others and the use of force to maintain this dynamic (Thompson 1997). An oppressive system is built around the ideology of superiority of some groups and inferiority of others. All actions systems, cultures, ideologies and technologies which refuse to take full and proper consideration of everyone and everything affected by them are aspects of oppression. Oppression enables those in charge to have access to control resources and choices while making those labeled as inferior vulnerable to poverty, violence, and early death. It is a set of processes, actions, and ideas that hinder the oppressed from exercising their full freedom of choice and have access to resources.

Oppression manifests itself as systemic, structural, historically naturalized and institutionalized violence that is normal. It boxes the oppressed into categories of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and other divisions that supposedly discriminated the "normal" from the "abnormal". Oppression actively provides unearned privileges and protections to some members of our community allowing them to ignore the presence of classism, racism, ableism, fat hatred, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or any of the many systemic oppressive themes that live in our culture.

ANALYSIS

This chapter explains broad analysis as the answer of two research questions as stated in the previous chapter. These chapters will analyze Offred against oppression in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.

1. Handmaid as the object of oppression

In Gilead society, most of women's activity and ownerships are restricted, especially the handmaid. Even though they are allowed to go out for a walk and shopping, they cannot move without the

supervision of the government. Their freedom is very limited.

Gilead Society restrict freedom of the Handmaid

The first way Gilead society limits the handmaid's movement is the handmaids are not allowed to read. They are not allowed to watch or read the news. Education and economy are very closely related, the Gilead women, in this case is the handmaids, are meant to be low educated. According to Millet,

If knowledge is power, power is also knowledge, and large factor in their subordinate position is the fairly systematic ignorance patriarchy imposes upon women (Millet 42).

The Gilead society understand that literacy means power, which is very important for women's emancipation. Reading is one of the main skills to learn new things and get knowledge, and knowledge is power and the Gilead society does not want the women to be powerful, therefore they monopolize knowledge only for men. There no longer any magazines or books allowed. The Handmaid's rooms are empty, only bed, so most of the time they are idle and this leads them to be depressed and mentally unhealthy. The Gilead society expects them to forget how to read, therefore they will never learn, they cannot communicate each other or corresponding, cannot put their ideas into writings and keeps them making a community, do movements and keeps them being weak. Offred is logging for reading, and it is evidenced when commander asks her to play scrabble with him. She enjoys her ability to read and to derive words from letters.

The second way the Gilead society limits the handmaid's movement is by not allowing them to have money. In the beginning of the Gilead's reign, they freeze all of the women's bank account and cut them off from their jobs. Besides education, money means power and without money and education women are powerless. After they lose their money and jobs, they begin to lose their power. Offred and Moira are talking about their bank account and how they were fired from their jobs. After Gilead rules, the handmaids are only allowed to bring tokens, for shopping for the household, not for their own purposes. Doing the shopping can be counted as a daily job, but they are not paid for this.

They have nothing to be traded except their bodies, "Something could be exchanged, we thought, some deal made some tradeoff, we still had our bodies. That was our fantasy". (Atwood 2)

Kate Millet states :

Since education and economy are so closely related in the advanced nations, it is significant that the general level and style of higher education for women, particularly in their many Renaissance humanism than to the skills of mid-twentieth-century scientific and technological society. Traditionally patriarchy permitted occasional minimal literacy to women while higher education was closed to them. While modern patriarchy have, fairly recently, opened all educational levels to women, the kind and quality of education is not the same for each sex. (Millet 41)

The only capital they have is their body, and as mentioned in the first part of analysis, the handmaid's body has become a tool that belongs to Gilead, which means they now have nothing but their own mind. The combination of prohibiting the handmaids to get proper education and money is very powerful to keep them weak and obedient.

Gilead creates a 'discourse' saying that reading is a sinful activity for women. With any objectives, this restriction makes men become more powerful than women because men the only party that literate, have access to reading materials and other socio-cultural items and activities. The power of Gilead is produced through discourses (mostly from religious belief) and because they are powerful, they can produce reality. In Foucault's term it is called the "regime of truth", or "the types of discourses it accepts and makes function as true" (Foucault, quoted in Storey 129). By saying that reading as well as getting higher education is a sinful activity, the Gilead men achieve a continual power over women. What Foucault calls 'regimes of truth' do not have to be 'true' they have only to be thought of as 'true' and acting on as if 'true'. If ideas are believed, they establish and legitimate particular regimes of truth. The discourse created by Gilead is based on oppression and it works to put women under men's power in every aspect of their lives.

Handmaid's Body as a device of Gilead Society

Body or biological difference is the basic aspects that underlies oppression because oppression believes that this difference is the reason why women naturally have to be dominated by men. Body is the most important asset that a handmaid had. They have to be healthy because they are required to do the 'national duty' which is giving birth to white race babies. Therefore, they may not do anything unhealthy such as smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol. They are treated as national property because of their functions and importance. Handmaids are also become a prize or reward for men and their household, and after they

finish giving birth to the family, they will move to another family. They are so valuable that it is mentioned.

The posture of the body is important, here and now: minor discomforts are instructive (Atwood 79).

The handmaid should wear red clothes that covered their body from being seen. Red, the handmaid's clothes, may be associated with the blood as the medium to maintain life—and connect this to their duty to give birth for families. As mentioned in the book:

Everything except my wings around my face is red: the color of blood, which defines us. The skirt is ankle-length, full, gathered to a flat yoke that extends over the breasts, the sleeves are full. The white wings are too prescribed issue; they are to keep us from seeing, but also from being seen. (Atwood 4)

Their body's curves are not to be exposed because they are a national property that cannot be 'enjoyed' both physically and virtually by men that have no importance. Furthermore, the handmaid's are under strict supervision and their freedom is very limited.

In Gilead society, women are seen as body with social roles and they can be replaced by other bodies with similar function when no longer useful for Gilead. To be able to give birth, the handmaids have to have sex with the men as the head of the family they live with. They cannot choose the man. In the family in our society, women can choose their sex partner, but it does not happen in Gilead. Coitus, as mentioned earlier, is "a model of sexual politics" (Millet 23). They cannot choose which man that will be father of their babies. They are forced to be passive. Men are free to exploit them sexually. The sexual encounter, or the ceremony, consists of three people; the male as the head as of the household, the handmaid and the wife. In Offred's case they are the Commander, Offred in the middle of them and Serena Joy, the wife. In this sexual encounter, Offred only takes part as an instrument, not as an active human with feelings or sexual desire. The ceremony does not permit the Commander to involve feelings. This practice is almost similar like prostitution but it is legal and organized by the government of Gilead society. This is ironic because they are introctrianing to be 'pure' but when they are sent to the family they used as sexual object of men.

Giving birth is women's special ability. Gilead society it is special because they can be used by the republic to maintain the white race. This special ability does not belong to a personal feeling or happiness for delivering a human to life, but only to support a system. The handmaid lose their connection to their bodies and also the connection to their special ability as a woman. Pregnancy is seen as a success that

gives them a chance to be saved. This means that pregnancy is a way to be 'useful' so the handmaids can stay in the Gilead and live, not deported to the Colony with the unwomans (infertile woman). The handmaids have lost emotional connections to their babies. Babies are a product of the republic of Gilead and also the golden ticket for the handmaids. Moreover, their bodies and their children are properties of the men's households. As mentioned by Millet, 'patriarchy granted the father nearly total ownership over wives and children, including the powers of physical abuse' (Millet 33). The children of the handmaids belong to the men's family, after giving birth they have to move to another family and do the same duty.

The strict rules for the handmaids are also the example that Gilead society have taken controls the handmaids body. They cannot run away in any way. The Aunts are ready to direct and the eyes are the spies. They cannot commit suicide. The handmaids rooms are free from anything that can be used to commit suicide. The handmaids are so valuable for the Gilead society, even if they are depressed and want to run away from the reality or want to die, the Gilead will not allow them. Gilead society treats women only as a "body with soul", instead of "body with soul and mind" because of the oppression.

2. The effect of Oppression for the Handmaids

Oppression in Gilead makes the Handmaid make their own resistance. Resistance can take form in managing mind and consciousness, just like what Offred did. She tries hard to manage her mind and not to fall into unnecessary thought, and she keeps inspiring herself with strong women or those who keeps struggling to resist.

Resistance

She looks up to Moira whenever she needs a spirit because Moira's rebellious character and constant resistance to Gilead's power make Offred believes that there are still many things can be done, there is always a possibility to get out and back to freedom. On the other hand, Moira finally finds a better place for her. In Jezebel where she becomes a prostitute, she finds women who hate men. Since Moira is a lesbian, she finds out that being Jezebel is better than being a handmaid—at least her sexual needs can be fulfilled. That is something that cannot be obtained from being a handmaid. The facilities like hand body, drugs, and drink are offered in Jezebel. This is Moira's way to refuse to be a handmaid. Ofwarren or Janine, tries to obey the rules because she does not want to deal with the punishment. She tries her best to have babies, even though she does not succeed, her attitude and

mental breakdown are the evidence that no handmaid that portrayed in this novel obey the Gilead's rule full-heartedly. Janine obeys the rule because she is afraid of the force, not because she thinks that the rule makes sense and applicable for women.

Ofglen 1, who hanged herself, shows her resistance by doing suicide. Besides her involvement the Underground, it also can be inferred that Ofglen wants Gilead society knows that the rule has ruined the very basic mind of women, to show that women are not merely body because they also have mental condition that has to be considered. Suicide is her way to show that power over her own body. Probably Ofglen thinks it is better to hang her rather than being a sexual object and killed because of not being able to have babies.

Rebellion

Offred's have a confusing situation, she needs the baby to survive in the Gilead. In another hand, Offred experiences the despair of loss and the dread of being left empty with nothing once more. To her, this baby is not merely a new life for the household, but a new life for her. However restrained the Wives are, Offred realizes the women from the lower status are even much more exploited and controlled. Someday Serena Joy (wife of commander) tells Offred that she can help her get pregnant, that she will help her use someone else, probably Nick. Nick is a Guardian serving Commander Fred and Serena Joy, who later becomes Offred's lover. Offred agrees because Serena Joy promises if Offred getting pregnant, she will meet her daughter. As Offred notices, she is not happy with the situation. This is shown when Serena suggests that Offred should try to get pregnant with someone else since the Commander might not be able to do it.

" 'Maybe he can't', she says [...] 'No,' I say. 'Maybe he can't' [...] 'Maybe you should try it another way' [...] 'what other way'? [...] 'Another man', she says. 'You know I can't' I say, careful not to let my irritation show. 'It is against the law. You know the penalty' " (215).

Serena Joy recognizes that she does not believe in the official notion that men cannot be sterile. Rather, it seems she actually suspects that her husband in fact is, sterile. Then she suggests that Offred should commit a crime punishable by death.

After her confrontation with Serena, Offred waits in her room. She thinking to escape from this.

"I am tired of this melodrama, I am tired of keeping silent. There's no one you can protect, your life value to no one. I want it finished." (Atwood 305)

She has plan to escape because Nick tell to her about Mayday, the day when Serena can leave Gilead. Hears

the van coming for her, and she regrets not doing something while she had the chance. As the van pulls into the driveway, she sees the Eyes painted on its sides. The van pulls in, and Nick opens the door of Offred's room.

"It's all right. It's Mayday. Go with them." (Atwood 305)

Offred knows that he might be an Eye, because the Eyes probably know all about Mayday, but this is her last chance.

"I've been wasting my time. I should have taken things into my own hands while I had a chance. I should have stolen a knife from the kitchen, found way to the sewing scissors." (Atwood 305)

She walks down the stairs to meet the men waiting for her. Offred can't thinking clearly, she's kill the Commander with the knife on her hands. Serena demands to know Offred's crime, and Offred realizes Serena was not the one to call these men. The men say they cannot tell her. As Serena curses her, Offred follows the Eyes to the van waiting outside and go with them without Nick.

CONCLUSION

Truth and action, are used to oppress women both in Gilead and in the society before. From the finding above, the writer can analyze that the handmaid oppressed by Gilead society. The analysis find out that two are two ways Gilead oppressed the handmaids firstly Gilead Society restrict freedom of the Handmaid and secondly after their lose their power, Gilead use the Handmaid's Body as a device for their Society. Every Handmaid character shows their own resistance.

The first way is by restrict freedom of the Handmaid. Women are not allowed to go outside, work, have own money. The example of basic capital own power. Besides not allowed to have more knowledge and skill. This thing make women have no choice and power anymore and good condition for men to dominate the society and gain a sustainable power over women.

Secondly, after women is weak because lose their power of everything, Gilead society uses their bodies as a "device" to maintain nation's interests. Handmaid bodies are exploited by sexuality. Obligation to give a birth to babies and very limited freedom to use their body to do activities outside being a loyal subject of men. As the result, in the end Handmaid as the women are isolated from their body and sexuality.

Without education and capital, and limited area of roles to be explored, the handmaids have

become the object of oppression. The Handmaid become the object because they are oppressed through in many things , such as ideology , socialization , religion ,biological , economy , and education . They show resistance even the smallest act can be defined as resistance.The Gilead society uses the negative aspects of the society before to justify the situation for women, especially for Handmaids. They try to justify that women have lost their freedom and their right to decide over their own body by claiming that the conditions for women were worse before, with the sexual violence. This leads to the conclusion that Gilead society before is one where the values result in oppression of women. In Gilead, it is a state system of keeping women controlled as Handmaids . In Gilead , women's freedom must be restricted .The Handmaid's Tale is in fact a rather tragic story where no woman is successful.

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