

**WOMEN'S RESISTANCE AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN
THE KEEPING ROOM MOVIE (2014)**

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Abstrak

Artikel ini mencoba untuk menganalisis kekerasan seksual terhadap perempuan dan perlawanan perempuan terhadap kekerasan seksual dalam sebuah film berjudul *The Keeping Room* karya Daniel Barber menggunakan teori segitiga kekerasan milik Johan Galtung untuk mengungkapkan akar kekerasan seksual terhadap perempuan, serta teori resistensi milik James Scott untuk menjelaskan resistensi perempuan terhadap kekerasan seksual berkaitan dengan maraknya kasus-kasus kekerasan seksual terhadap perempuan dalam situasi darurat kekerasan seksual saat ini. Teori segitiga kekerasan milik Johan Galtung melihat fenomena kekerasan seksual terhadap perempuan sebagai bentuk dari kekerasan langsung, kekerasan struktural, dan kekerasan kultural. Sementara teori resistensi milik James Scott melihat resistensi perempuan terhadap kekerasan seksual dalam dua bentuk yaitu resistensi publik dan resistensi samar. Penulis menggunakan metode deskriptif-kualitatif serta analisa tekstual untuk menjelaskan kekerasan seksual dan resistensi perempuan yang tergambar dalam adegan serta dialog antar karakter dalam film. Hasil analisa menunjukkan bahwa akar kekerasan seksual terhadap perempuan adalah struktur patriarki dalam bentuk kekerasan langsung, kekerasan struktural, dan kekerasan kultural yang menyebabkan relasi antara laki-laki dan perempuan menjadi tidak setara serta mensubordinasi posisi perempuan di masyarakat. Sementara bentuk resistensi perempuan terhadap kekerasan seksual terbagi menjadi dua, yaitu resistensi bersenjata sebagai resistensi publik dan kamufase sebagai resistensi samar.

Kata Kunci: Kekerasan Seksual, Resistensi, Patriarki

Abstract

This article attempts to analyze sexual violence against women and women's resistance against sexual violence in a movie entitled *The Keeping Room* by Daniel Barber using Johan Galtung's theory of violence triangle to reveal the roots of sexual violence against women, and James Scott's theory of resistance to explain women's resistance against sexual violence which related to the rise of sexual violence cases against women in the emergency situation of sexual violence at this time. Johan Galtung's theory of violence triangle sees the phenomenon of sexual violence against women as a form of direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Meanwhile, James Scott's resistance theory sees women's resistance to sexual violence in two forms, namely public resistance and vague resistance. The author uses descriptive-qualitative methods and textual analysis to explain sexual violence and women's resistance depicted in the scenes and dialogues between characters in the movie. The results of analysis show that the root of sexual violence against women is patriarchal structure in the form of direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence that causes the relations between men and women become unequal and subordinates women's position in society. Meanwhile, women's resistance against sexual violence is divided into two, namely armed resistance as public resistance and camouflage as disguised resistance.

Keywords: Sexual Violence, Resistance, Patriarchy

INTRODUCTION

All women are oppressed as women, and that oppression is not the destiny of history. This is the key meaning of Simone de Beauvoir's famous

statement, "One is not born a woman, but becomes one". One forms of oppression which frequently experienced by women is sexual violence. In recent years, studies and research on sexual violence have become increasingly popular, with many focused on

changing attitudes about sexual violence and increasing empathy for sexual violence survivors (Dickson & Willis, 2016). Basically, sexual violence has no gender, it means that anyone could become the victims or offenders of sexual violence. However, male sexual offenders are more likely to victimize women than female offenders because of unequal relation between them which caused by patriarchal system of society, men commit about three-quarters of violent crimes including sexual violence against women (Bachman, 1994).

Sexual violence is frequently describe as any action whether in the verbal or non-verbal form done by a person to control or manipulate another person for engaging in unwanted sexual activity. There are two important aspects of sexual violence which are aspects of coercion and aspects of consent. It was important for sexual violence cases in particular condition such as the victim is not or has not been able to give consent consciously (for example sexual violence against children or individuals with intelligence disabilities). The precise scope of sexual violence against women are frequently debated, but even conservative figures show that millions of women are victims of sexual violence. The fear of abuse, especially rape, affects a large number of women. While women are less often victims than men of violent crimes, women are more afraid of crime and that fear seems largely to be based on their fear of rape.

It's not easy to be a woman in the middle of civil war. After all the men were sent into the war to be soldiers and did not necessarily return home safely, women had to remain alone at home. In all fearful uncertainties, women are forced to take over and replace all male role. They should be prepared for any eventuality. In order to defend their lives, women must learn to fight. Set in the American Civil War of 1875, *The Keeping Room* (2014) movie gives us another perspective of three women who saw and experienced the war. Directed by Daniel Barber and Julia Hart as scriptwriter, *The Keeping Room* tells the story about three young women who live and survive together against sexual violence during the war that has claimed the men of their family members. Augusta and Louise are white siblings. They both lived with Mad, a black woman who actually worked as a slave to their family at that time, where slavery had not yet been abolished. However, after the civil war broke out, they have no time and place for racial discrimination and realizing that they were just fellow women who have to support and protect each other in order to survive against sexual violence in the midst of war.

In the end of story, *The Keeping Room* (2014) succeeds in wrapping the experiences of women who have to survive together against sexual violence in the midst of war. It reminds us of the fact that women are still considered as weak and vulnerable group in the cultural system of patriarchy. Implicitly, *The Keeping Room* (2014) depicted that women who are considered as weak and vulnerable group than men could actually survive against sexual violence, even though by disguising their women identities become men and then leave their homeland to stay alive.

There are several previous studies which are related to movie analysis using sexual violence as object of the study. These previous studies are used to support and broaden the understanding of movie analysis using multiple theories related to sexual violence. The first previous study is a thesis written by Adhera R. Vidasari (2015) entitled *The Portrayal of Male Dominance through Domestic Violence in Lovelace Film* (2013). In this study, the author using feminism theory by Simone de Beauvoir and Kate Millet's theory of Sexual Politics as the supporting theory to analyze the domestic violence in the forms of physical violence, psychological or emotional abuse, sexual violence, and threat of physical or sexual violence perpetrated by Chuck Traynor and Linda's resistance in dealing with domestic violence and the enslavement of the sex industry. The analysis of this study showed that male dominance can happen because of traditional gender stereotypes and sex industry as a patriarchal product describe how woman is treated as a sexual objectification which portrays her as a weak and submissive creature.

Then, the second previous study is a thesis written by Dhinda Wulaningtyas (2018) entitled *Violence Against The Main Female Character in Memoirs of Geisha Film* by Rob Marshall. In this study, the author using the theory of violence introduced by Iris Marion Young to know the kind of violence and its effect against women, also how they solve the problem. The result of this study shows four types of violence experienced by the main female character, namely physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence and the last psychological violence. It also shows four ways used to solve the violence, namely contending or fighting, yielding, running away, and inaction. Last, the effects of violence are negative effects namely depression and anxiety, also positive effects namely becoming a powerful and strong character. The similarity of these previous studies is conducted in order to analyzing the topic about oppression against women in the movie. While the differences of these previous studies is located in the feminist theory which is used to analyzing the topic about oppression against

women. In this present study, the author uses Johan Galtung's theory of violence triangle to analyzing the roots of sexual violence against women, also James Scott's theory of resistance to analyzing women's resistance against sexual violence.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Sexual Violence

Conceptually, sexuality is aspects of human life related to biological, physiological, social and cultural factors related to sex and sexual activity that affect society (DeBeavoir, 1949). It means that gender and sexuality is always attached to every individual life. Each gender is either female or male based on cultural and language conventions, namely feminine and masculine (Butler, 1990). The determination of gender identity as feminine or masculine is the social and cultural construction based on each gender at birth time. In WHO's *World Report on Violence and Health* (2002), sexual violence is described as any sexual acts and attempts to achieve a sexual act or unwanted sexual advances, or acts for the use of coercion against individual or groups, by any individual or groups in any environment, including irrespective of the relationship to the victims. Sexual violence can be triggered by several factors that commonly divided into three factors, namely individual factors, environment factors, and relationship factors (Wilkins, 2014). The forms of sexual violence perpetrated by men against women are the expression of masculinity between their relationships or interactions with women. Sexual violence is a prevalent crime that has a serious consequences and long-term impact on victim's journey of life.

2. Johan Galtung's Violence Triangle

One of the concept frequently used to study about violence is Johan Galtung's Violence Triangle (1969) namely direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence, to identify forms of violence. Direct violence can take many forms. In its classic form, it involves use physical force, such as murder or torture, rape and sexual violence. In addition to direct violence, Galtung emphasized another form of violence, namely structural violence, which not done by individuals but hidden within structure smaller or wider. Furthermore, Galtung defines cultural violence as prevailing attitudes and beliefs which have been

taught since childhood in daily lives of society about power and violence. Conceptually, Galtung's violence triangle is related and influenced each other. Cultural violence and structural violence lead to direct violence. Direct violence also amplifies or exacerbates structural violence and cultural violence. Direct violence in the form of physical or verbal appears as behaviour that does not change, because its roots are structure and culture (Galtung, 1969).

3. James Scott's Theory of Resistance

James Scott defines resistance as all actions carried out by the people or inferior group intended for reduce or deny claims made by superior group against them (Scott, 1985). Scott divide the resistance into two types namely Public Resistance and Disguised Resistance. Public resistance is an organized, systematic, principled, observable, and concrete form of resistance due to direct communication between conflicted parties. Public resistance leads to movement carried out systematically with coordination between leaders and members. While Disguised resistance is a resistance carried out by someone through less systematic procedures. Disguised resistance tends to become the movement of slow rejection by taking into consideration of resistance forms, achievements and determination of individual attitudes in organizing desires and ability to resist. These two types are distinguished on the articulation of resistance, form, characteristics, social and cultural area. Public resistance is characterized by organic, systematic or cooperative, unselfish principle, revolutionary consequences, and includes ideas or intentions that negate the background around family life. Meanwhile, disguised resistance is characterized by irregular, disorganized, individual tendency, and does not contain the impact of changes.

METHODS

According to the background of study, the research problem are (1) What are the roots of sexual violence against women in *The Keeping Room* movie? and (2) How do women carried out the resistance against sexual violence in *The Keeping Room* movie? The research method of the study is a descriptive qualitative because the data are served in words and picture instead on number and the data are analyzed with meaning instead of statistic. The analytical approach to analyze the data is objective approach because the analysis focuses on the main character in the several movie scene that portrayed women's resistance against sexual violence.

Moreover, these methods are used to analyze the discourse of sexual violence and women's resistance as response against sexual violence that depicted in *The Keeping Room* movie. The data of this research are taken from several conversations, dialogues, narrations, and scene throughout 90 minutes and 13 seconds duration. The data collection method that is used in this research is observation method. The first step of observation is done by watching *The Keeping Room* movie, listening carefully to every dialogue or conversation, reading the movie script repeatedly to understanding every scene and story, then taking notes of all the important points. While the second step is selecting the data which is related to the research problems before arrange it become a descriptive analysis. Furthermore, the researcher analyze the data using Johan Galtung's theory of violence triangle to reveal the main causes of sexual violence against women and James Scott's theory of resistance to describe how women's resistance against sexual violence. In this study, the analysis is done by selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data become a descriptive analysis. Then the latter is writing the conclusion.

ANALYSIS

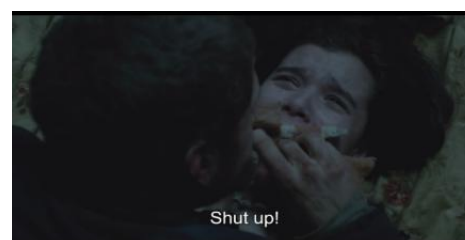
In this part, the analysis is conducted using theory of violence triangle proposed by Johan Galtung to analyze the roots of sexual violence against women in *The Keeping Room* movie. In addition, theory of resistance proposed by James Scott also used to describe women's resistance against sexual violence. Feminist discourse on patriarchy generally view patriarchy as a system of social structure where men dominate, oppress, and exploit women (Walby, 1990:28). Galtung claims patriarchy as the roots of direct, structural and cultural violence which creates a dichotomy between public and private roles, productive and reproductive, which make up unequal power relations between men and women. The beginnings of patriarchy can be traced back to the first encounter with the division of labor, which occurred in the ancient Near East was a 2500-year period from nearly 3100 BC to 600 BC rather than a single event (Lerner, 1986). Violence triangle related with a temporal dimension: direct violence is an event, structural violence is a process, and cultural violence is invariation (Galtung, 1990:294).

Sexual Violence Against Women

1. Direct Violence

Direct violence is a disturbance that should be avoided related to basic human needs, the need for a decent life, something that lowers the level of satisfaction of real needs below the existing potential (Galtung, 1969). The phenomenon of direct violence is a male phenomenon, where almost all violence is committed by men and makes women become the victims. Violence that occurs towards women is direct and personal, which can be experienced by women in public spaces or private spaces.

In *The Keeping Room* movie, the phenomenon of sexual violence committed by men characters against women characters are depicted through scenes and dialogues between characters, so that sexual violence can be categorized as direct violence because the perpetrators of sexual violence and the victims of sexual violence can be identified directly. Sexual violence as direct violence in *The Keeping Room* movie is divided into 3 sections. First, sexual (physical) violence in the form of rape committed by a men character named Henry against a women character named Louise at home or private space. Second, the threat of sexual (verbal) violence in the form of temptations committed by a men character named Moses against a women character named Augusta outside the home or public space. Third, the past experience of sexual (physical) violence in the form of rape by an unnamed men against a women character named Mad at home or private space. The three forms of sexual violence that are categorized as direct violence are caused by a patriarchal structure that makes relations between men and women become unequal so that men tends to become the perpetrators of sexual violence and women tends to become victims of sexual violence.



Picture 1. Sexual Violence

The conflict related to sexual violence against women in the *Keeping Room* movie began when Augusta went on horseback trying to find a medicine for Louise in the bar. Then, Augusta meets Moses and Henry who were drunk in the bar. Henry immediately approaching Augusta by tease (verbal

violence) her to accompany him and Moses, but Augusta ignore it and directly back home after getting a medicine for Louise. Then, Moses and Henry could tracking the way towards women's farmhouse. Augusta hears a dog barking externally after successfully treating Louise. After her rifle is grabbed and shot, she went back to the home and instructs Louise and Mad to stay in. Augusta draws Moses out after repeated attacks in the house, and prompts Henry to explore in the house alternatively. Then, Moses pursues Augusta and felt discouraged immediately to shoot her, one would suppose that he felt anything than sexual tendencies. They shoot each other after a little verbal play, but both are left with only wounds. Augusta knocks Moses down and returns inside. After went inside, Henry slams the door shut and smacks Mad across the face, knocking her out as well. Then, Louise who is defenseless attempts to flee, but Henry catches her and forcefully rapes her.



Picture 2. Sexual Violence

2. Structural Violence

Violence also occurs in the structural framework, namely violence that does not harm or kill directly, but through social structures that lead to poverty, economic inequality, or social and political injustice. Basically, structural violence is violence that is not committed by individuals but is hidden in smaller and wider structures (Galtung, 1969:170). Sexual violence against women in *The Keeping Room* movie can also be categorized as structural violence because of the political-economy structure that supports the patriarchal structure as the main cause of sexual violence against women. In economic level, the sexual violence experienced by women characters named Augusta, Louise, and Mad occurs because their living space is limited in the domestic sphere such as doing household or housework activities, so they cannot carry out activities in the public sphere. The patriarchal mode of production is one of two patriarchal structures that take place at the economic level. Thus, the family has become a small state with a set of rules that are detrimental to women's interests. The family continuously becomes

a tool of patriarchal power and becomes a discursive apparatus where father becomes the leader who represents the community interests and the patriarchal state. Moreover, the labor division is an important aspect of patriarchal relations in the family. This unfair division for women is part of a discursive formation that continues and ultimately strengthens the men's position in society.



Picture 3. Civil War Situation

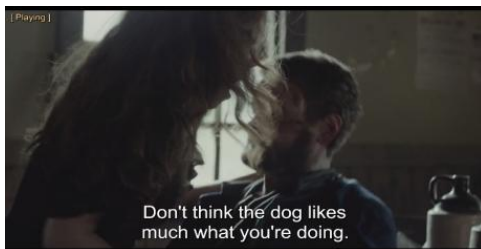
While in political level, the civil war situation that was occurred at that time causes them to always stay at home when their father and brother died on the battlefield, so they became the targets of sexual violence committed by men soldiers in the midst of a civil war situation. Women are kept away from access to resources and state power as part of the patriarchal system. This is only part of the fact that women are excluded from direct presence in the state more significantly is the result of a lack of power in gendered political power. Militaries and armed groups continue to be predominantly masculine communities. Masculine cultures that value loyalty, protection, and brotherhood can foster an environment in which sexual violence is tolerated and perpetrators of violence are protected (Reed, 2015). In report release (2019) entitled *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*, The United Nations shows how women are still in the shadow of structured and massive violence. In addition to reporting on the relationship between women as victims of violence and political conflicts or wars, the UN release also emphasizes the importance of the women's side to rise up and make changes in dealing with sexual violence.



Picture 4. Civil War Situation

3. Cultural Violence

While cultural violence referring to cultural aspects such as religion and ideology, language and art, empirical knowledge and formal knowledge which can be used to justify or legitimize direct violence and structural violence (Galtung, 1990:291). Basically, cultural violence is prevailing attitude and belief that has been taught since childhood and surrounds in everyday life about power and the need for violence. Patriarchy is a major part of cultural violence. This cultural violence leads to direct violence and structural violence is seen as the right thing to do. One way that cultural violence works is by changing moral habits from wrong to right. In addition to direct and structural violence, sexual violence in *The Keeping Room* movie can also be categorized as cultural violence because of cultural aspects that legitimize sexual violence committed by Henry and Moses against Augusta, Louise, and Mad. The cultural aspect is patriarchal culture which is the main cause of sexual violence against women, as well as legitimizing men in committing sexual violence against women. Cultural norms and customs have always been used to justify numerous bad behaviors throughout history.



Picture 5. Cultural Aspects

In patriarchal culture, women has become the object of violence especially sexual violence. Men dominate the cultural structures, then placed women as a marginalized and vulnerable group. In a male-dominated family, patriarchy literally means father's rule because patriarchy is an ideological and social construct that views men as the primary determinant of women's lives and treats them as his personal property (Walby, 2002:22). As explained earlier, patriarchal culture causes relations between men and women became unequal, so men are considered as superior group while women as an inferior group. These unequal relations causes sexual violence against women to be considered as normal thing or something cannot be avoided. So, it can be concluded that patriarchal culture as a form of cultural violence is the roots of direct violence and

structural violence in the form of sexual violence against women. Furthermore, patriarchy as a system of social structure in society has been going on for a long time and has been continuously transformed in which men have a dominant position, then using that position to exploited women which manifests in social practices, economics, politics, and culture, both in the private and public spheres (Walby, 1990).



Picture 6. Women's Role

Women's Resistance Against Sexual Violence

1. Public Resistance

The form of resistance committed by three women characters named Augusta, Louise, and Mad facing the threat of sexual violence by two men soldiers named Moses and Henry is public resistance in the form of armed resistance. Basically, public resistance is an organized, systematic, principled, observable, and concrete form of resistance due to direct communication between conflicted parties (Scott, 1985). So the form of resistance committed by women characters could be categorized as public resistance because there are direct communication between men characters as the perpetrators of sexual violence and women characters as the victims of sexual violence. They chose to commit public resistance because they had no other choice but to fight directly and openly against the male soldiers who wanted to rape them. Public resistance leads to movement committed systematically with coordination between leaders and members (Scott, 1985).



Picture 7. Public Resistance

In *The Keeping Room* movie, the leaders of women's resistance against sexual violence is Augusta, while the members are Louise and Mad. In addition, their experiences and traumas resulting from sexual violence in the past also influenced their decision to fight directly. Those experience is clearly illustrated in a scene where a women character named Mad tells about her experience when she become the victims of sexual violence in the past which is carried out by people around her, so that she experienced deep trauma that she still remembers as an adult. Mad recounts her past experiences of sexual violence that he experienced in detail and emotionally to the point of tears, so it can be concluded that sexual violence has a very deep and traumatic impact on the victims of sexual violence. In conclusion, their decisions in conducting public resistance against sexual violence are based on the collective desire and awareness that every human being has the right to feel safe and free from any threats of sexual violence.



Picture 8. Public Resistance

2. Disguised Resistance.

While, the form of resistance that Louise, Augusta, and Mad committed to save themselves from the threat of sexual violence in the midst of a civil war situation is disguised resistance by hide their identities as women and disguising (camouflage) themselves as male soldiers. Disguised resistance is a resistance committed by people through less systematic procedures (Scott, 1985). It tends to become the movement of slow rejection by taking into consideration of resistance forms, achievements and determination of individual attitudes in organizing desires and ability to resist. After successfully killing Moses and Henry, they immediately look for a way to save themselves from another male soldiers. Through long negotiations, they finally agreed to disguise themselves as male soldiers and leave the house. In the midst of a patriarchal society and a civil war situation, their reason of commit disguised resistance is very reasonable because they do not have much time and

energy to fight directly and openly against the threat of sexual violence, so the realistic and reasonable option is commit disguised resistance by hiding their identities as women to avoid any threats of sexual violence.



Picture 9. Disguised Resistance

Basically, disguised resistance is characterized by irregular, disorganized, individual tendency, and oes not contain the impact of changes (Scott, 1985). It tends to be non-existent manifestly in the appearance of action because tends to be individual and considered to be influential on the order that already exists within a person. In addition, women are also outnumbered in quantity compared with men on the battlefield. So their decision to commit disguised resistance was based on long-term considerations, namely if they did public resistance like they did before against two male soldiers who wanted to rape them, they would most likely lose and die. However, if they commit disguised resistance by disguising themselves as men, at least they still have a chance to live longer even if they must disguise their identities as women. So that long-term considerations are the basis of their decision to commit disguised resistance.



Picture 10. Disguised Resistance

CONCLUSION

There are two conclusion from the analysis of sexual violence against women and women's resistance against sexual violence in *The Keeping Room* movie. First, based on Johan Galtung's

violence triangle, the roots of sexual violence against women is patriarchy as system of social structure which causes the relations between men and women become unequal and subordinate women in society. In the context of direct violence, the perpetrators and the victims of sexual violence could be identified, namely two men characters named Henry and Moses as the perpetrators of sexual violence, while three women characters named Augusta, Louise, and Mad as the victims of sexual violence. Then in the context of structural violence, sexual violence against women is affected by political-economy factors, namely housework and civil war situation. Moreover, in the context of cultural violence, sexual violence against women is affected by cultural aspects such as traditional norms and dogmas. Second, based on James Scott's theory of resistance, women's resistance against sexual violence in *The Keeping Room* movie is divided into two types, namely public resistance and disguised resistance. In public resistance, the resistance carried out by women against sexual violence is open fight and direct actions in the form of armed resistance. While in disguised resistance, the resistance carried out by women against sexual violence is hiding their women's identity and disguised themselves as male soldiers in the form of camouflage.

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