

ABSTRACT

HENRICA ANGELIA INDRIAWATI SUMARNO. **Resistance against Black Women Oppression Seen through the Main Character in April Sinclair's *Coffee Will Make You Black***. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2011.

Oppression against black women in America existed since the period of slavery. Black women were seen as slaves who could be exploited anytime. They were forced to work in plantation and in their master's house, and they were also forced to fulfill their masters' sexual desire. After slavery the oppression continues to trap black women in a more systematic way. Black women were treated based on the controlling images existed in American society. These images keep black women in a subordinated place. This thesis tries to see black woman's resistance against the oppression through Stevie as the main character in *Coffee Will Make You Black*.

There are three problems which are discussed in this thesis. The first point is how Stevie is characterized, the second is what forms of oppression that Stevie experiences, and the last point is how Stevie resists against the oppression.

Feminist approach is used in this study. It has a goal to see women's experience in the past and the struggle for their future so that it will increase our appreciation toward women's value in the world. This thesis is a library research. The writer finds the data from the books and other supported references from the articles.

From the analysis it can be concluded that Stevie is characterized as an African-American woman who is critical, sympathetic, and also brave especially when she faces the problems of controlling images against black women. In the story Stevie experienced sexual harassment and unfair treatment as the cause of the images. Aunt Jemima image shows her as a white nurse's servant when Stevie once helped a white nurse cleaning her office. Welfare Mother image causes Stevie to get charity from a white teacher who treated her like a poor black woman. Jezebel image that shows black woman as sexually permissive made Stevie sexually harassed and raped. The standard of white woman's beauty had forced Stevie to use bleaching cream and straighten her hair. Stevie resists the oppression through her thought and action. When she reaches her consciousness of being oppressed she assures herself to have self-respect. This self-respect is built when she can define herself as a respected black woman. Stevie changed her appearance into natural African-American look and speaks up her voice about freedom through her poem entitled "What Good".

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Tekanan terhadap wanita kulit hitam di Amerika terjadi sejak masa perbudakan. Pada masa ini wanita kulit hitam dianggap sebagai budak yang bisa dieksploitasi dengan mudah. Mereka dipaksa bekerja di perkebunan dan rumah para majikan. Mereka juga dipaksa untuk memenuhi kebutuhan seksual para majikan. Setelah masa perbudakan berakhir, tekanan yang dialami oleh wanita kulit hitam berlanjut. Tekanan ini lebih sistematis dari sebelumnya. Tekanan ini berupa perlakuan masyarakat terhadap wanita kulit hitam. Perlakuan yang didapat berdasarkan pada citra negatif wanita kulit hitam di dalam pola pikir masyarakat. Citra ini menempatkan wanita kulit hitam pada posisi terendah di dalam strata masyarakat Amerika. Melalui tokoh utama di dalam novel *Coffee Will Make You Black*, skripsi ini melihat perlawanan wanita kulit hitam terhadap tekanan yang mereka alami.

Skripsi ini mempunyai tiga rumusan masalah. Yang pertama adalah bagaimana Stevie dideskripsikan, kemudian apa saja bentuk-bentuk tekanan yang dialami oleh Stevie, dan bagaimana Stevie melawan tekanan yang dia alami.

Skripsi ini menggunakan pendekatan feminis yang bertujuan untuk melihat pengalaman para perempuan dan perjuangan mereka untuk membangun masa depan. Pendekatan ini dapat meningkatkan apresiasi kita terhadap peran kaum perempuan. Skripsi ini menggunakan studi pustaka. Penulis mengumpulkan data yang berasal dari buku, referensi tertulis, dan artikel.

Dari hasil analisis penulis menyimpulkan bahwa Stevie dideskripsikan sebagai wanita Afrika Amerika yang kritis, simpatik, dan berani menghadapi tekanan sebagai wanita kulit hitam. Di dalam cerita Stevie mengalami pelecehan seksual dan ketidakadilan sebagai akibat dari citra negatif wanita kulit hitam. Citra "Aunt Jemima" memandang Stevie sebagai pelayan wanita kulit putih di sekolahnya. Citra "Welfare Image" membuat Stevie diperlakukan sebagai orang miskin. Citra "Jezebel" yang memandang wanita kulit hitam sebagai wanita murahan membuat Stevie dilecehkan secara seksual dan diperkosa. Standar kecantikan yang mengidolakan wanita kulit putih memaksa Stevie untuk memakai krim pemutih dan meluruskan rambutnya. Perlawanan Stevie terhadap tekanan ini dapat dilihat melalui pemikiran dan tindakannya. Ia membuat dirinya menghargai diri sendiri setelah ia sadar bahwa ia ditindas. Ia menghargai diri sendiri dengan berpenampilan seperti wanita kulit hitam dan menyuarakan kebebasan dirinya melalui puisi berjudul "What Good".