

Chapter I: Introduction

Background

In 2010, 6,982,000 American women became the victim of domestic violence by their partners (The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence (NISVS), 2010).

Domestic violence which included in this data are rape, physical violence, and stalking.

This survey is shocking because United States of America was included in the most democratic country in the world (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015). United States of America has 8.24 point in civil liberties and categorized as full democratic country.

The data from the survey that held by The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence in 2010 is the evidence of a perspective about women in the American society. Olivia (2015) argued that in the American society's point of view, women are depending on her family. This perspective emerged because American society believed that it is not women's responsibility to look after herself. If women were married or had a partner, woman should put her life in the hand of her husband or man who in partnership with her. This man domination perspective made women became vulnerable to domestic violence in the household life.

Domestic violence could be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse was physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person (Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV), 2016). Domestic violence was against human rights, because of the abusive behavior that included. Domestic violence also against equality in sexes. Women who became

the victims of domestic violence still in the highest rate compared to men. Statistically, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men have been victims of severe domestic violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (NISVS, 2010).

Torturing and forcing women into several improper acts to control over what they should do is indicate a disproportionality in the household and in contrast with the idea of feminist movement. Hooks (2000), believed that women and men are created equal. They have the same liberty and opportunity. Both women and men have rights to decide their way of life without bothering each other. Women and men are similar in social life and psychological structure, exempted from their biological condition.

According to liberal feminist (Tong, 2009, p. 11-16), to gain freedom in women's life, there are two aspects that must be achieved: equal education and equal liberty. Mary Wollstonecraft (Wollstonecraft, 1792, p. 18) argued that equal education brought a power for women to equal in family. With education, women can support the family financially and gain a full human's experience like what men usually do.

In 1869, John Stuart Mill joined Wollstonecraft in approving rationality as the power for women to get happiness in their life. Mill (Mill, 1869, p. 57) claimed the common way to maximize aggregate utility, e.g. happiness and pleasure, is to permit individuals to pursue their desires, provided the individuals to not hinder or obstruct each other in the process. So, to improve women's condition in society, individual desire must have achieved with rationality that gained from education.

Since colonial era, higher education in the United States was designed for men. But, in 18th century, women's positions and opportunities in the educational domain have moved toward equality. Since 1982, more bachelor's degrees have been earned in

the United States by women than by men (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Women now also earn the majority of master's degrees and doctoral degrees in the U.S.

Despite these educational gains, women continue to lag behind men in employment, income, business ownership, research, and politics (Chamie, 2014). This pattern of inequality suggests that societal expectations and cultural norms regarding the appropriate roles for men and women as well as inherent biological differences between the sexes are limiting the benefits of women's educational advantage. Women are more educated than men but still paid less because in the United States, like every society in the world, remains a patriarchy: they are ruled by men.

Cohen (2012), believed that there is a systemic characteristic that combines dynamics at the level of the family, the economy, the culture, and the political arena which made patriarchy still alive and control how American society thought about women's position in the system. The most basic indicator of unequal position in the system is the apparently quaint custom of wives assuming their husbands' names. This has not generated much feminist controversy lately. But, this patrilineality would be a major signal that American families are male-dominated.

In the problem of inequality in liberty, liberal feminist spotlighted on women's capacity to keep up their correspondence through their own particular activities and decisions. Liberal feminist contended that society holds the false conviction that women are, by nature, less mentally and physically capable than men; hence it has a tendency to victimize women in education, social life, and the marketplace (Tong, 2009, p. 11-16).

Liberal feminist believed that women subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the public world.

Men are controlling the majority of the family in the United States and made women became easier to be a victim of domestic violence (Cohen, 2012). The domination of men in the household and in the system made women's liberty and education are limited. This problem of unequal liberty and unequal education which exist in modern era and made women suffered from domestic violence could be analyzed through literary works. Literary work is reliable reference for what actually existed in the society because the real-life issue could become a literary issue and literature is an illustrated reality (Walzer, 2008). The example of unequal liberty and unequal education in modern society is appeared in *Safe Haven*, novel which were written by Nicholas Sparks in 2010.

Safe Haven became famous because of its storyline and the likable characters. The main character in *Safe Haven* is a woman named Erin Tierney (Sparks, 2010). Erin Tierney has no specific education degree. Erin was only a housewife, she had no skill and no financial independent. The only family that she had was her husband, Kevin Tierney, who controlled her life.

The story of Erin Tierney's life in *Safe Haven* is related to the issue of unequal liberty and unequal education which made women vulnerable toward domestic violence in modern American society. Therefore, this research provided an analysis to those issues.

Research Question

Based on the background of study, this research is undertaken to answer these following questions: How is the issue of inequality in education and domestic violence portrayed in the life of Erin Tierney in *Safe Haven*?

Purpose of Research

This research has two purposes. The first purpose is to uncover Erin Tierney's liberty and education, also explain how Kevin Tierney and Erin's father harassed Erin Tierney's life based on liberal feminism theory. The second purpose is to enhance the reader's appraisal and perceptivity of unequal liberty and education when they read *Safe Haven*.

Significance of Study

This research gave an admission to the reader, because of three aspects:

First, the fact that *Safe Haven* was taking place in the modern era or 21st century, *Safe Haven*'s setting represented modern life, e.g. telephone and cellphone was available at that time and there was a bus station and self-service shop (Sparks, 2010). Second, the story in *Safe Haven* was about a wife who became a victim of domestic violence and escaped from her husband. Third, *Safe Haven* told the reader that patriarchy in the family made woman could not gain a better education and restricted woman to control their liberty. Those three aspects made people know how the perspective about women described in modern society and could understand this perspective through the data that represented in literary works.

Since the study of feminism in literature is supported by feminist literary criticism theory (Brizee, Tompkins, & Chernouski, 2010), this novel became eligible for finding woman liberty and education in the United States of America.

Scope of Study

This research would study about a main woman character in *Safe Haven*, Erin Tierney or also known as Katie, with liberal feminist theory and feminist literary criticism to gain depth comprehension of *Safe Haven* through feminism study. Liberal feminism theory provided a knowledge in equality of liberty and education between women and men. To apply liberal feminism theory and perspective, researcher used feminist literary criticism, because feminist literary criticism had a procedure to analyze literary works with liberal feminism theory.

The analysis of this research will explore the life of Erin, especially her liberty and education in the liberal feminism perspective. This research only focus on the plot when Erin controlled by her father and her husband. And the plot when Erin lived in her father house. husband house and after she escaped from her husband.