



## **THE RISE OF WOMEN IN THE POEMS *A WOMAN'S PLACE* BY FROHMAN (2018), *REMEMBER, WOMAN* BY LEYVA (2015), AND *A WOMAN'S PLACE* BY CHIDI (2005)**

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### **Abstract**

This research is an analysis of three poems by Denice Frohman entitled *A Woman's Place* (2018), by Reese Leyva entitled *Remember, Woman* (2015), and by Sylvia Chidi entitled *A Woman's Place* (2005). This analysis explores the struggles of women in conveying their rights and positions, obtaining gender equality and breaking the patriarchal culture. The analysis of the three poems also reveals the extent to which the author implies the woman's effort to gain equality. The study of these poems is analyzed with feminist theory and supported with the theories of gender inequality and gender oppression. The results of this study indicate that women already have awareness about their situation and determined to change it. This research will include; 1) injustices and oppression towards women, 2) women's awareness, 3) women efforts to achieve equality.

**Key words:** struggles, inequality, oppression, awareness, equality

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The debate between the position of men and women is still a common topic today. In modern times like today, there are still many social conflicts related to the issue of gender inequality. Not infrequently this problem leads to pressure from one party, who is superior, especially men towards women. This problem is not unnoticed; in fact this gender-related issue is a problem that has been known to the world for a long time. Walby defines "patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby 1990:20). From the statement above, seeing from a social perspective, it can be seen that there are differences between rights and obligations, positions between men and women. This division of social roles leads to gender imbalances to the point of suppression. The imbalance and

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emphasis felt by women will certainly trigger resistance from women. Because of the inequality of position that harms women a lot, triggers the emergence of awareness in them to change the situation. In addition, the many pressures received by women from men to the social environment forced them to fight back and try to rise from adversity. The rise of woman can be said as a form of resistance or struggle carried out by women to fight social injustice and the oppression they receive.

The National Commission on Violence against Women (women's commission) noted that for 17 years, namely during 2004-2021, there were 544,452 cases of domestic violence or the personal sphere around the world. WHO also conducts research to see the level of violence against women around the world. WHO analyzed data from a survey of 161 countries between 2000 and 2018 to produce this latest estimate. The WHO study lists partner violence as the most widely reported form of abuse. About 641 million women claim to have experienced it. Beyond that, 6% of women worldwide say they have been assaulted by someone other than their husband or partner. Based on the issue of social inequality experienced by women, the analysis of this research looks at the impact of this patriarchal culture. (Patriarchy is “a social system in which men act as the main central authority figure in social organization and where fathers hold authority over women, children, and property”). Imbalance will lead to oppression, oppression will lead to rebellion. This gender problem that occurs raises resistance by women. These forms of resistance are the main focus of this research.

The aim of this study is to reveal the injustices and exploitation imposed on women in the poems, *A Woman's Place* (2018), *Remember, Woman* (2015), and *A Woman's Place* (2005). This research will also reveal how the women fight back the injustices and oppression they receive. This study use feminist theory as it base and supported it with the theories of gender inequality and gender oppression to look at issues of the rise of women from the three poems. This research looks at how the feminist movement tries to break down patriarchal culture. The goal of feminists is to equalize the position of men and women, for even today, in this modern world, women are still often underestimated by men. Linda Gordan (2002:6), defined feminism as “an analysis of women's subordination for the purpose of figuring out how to change it”. For Gordan feminism also means sharing the drive to increase women's power and autonomy in their families, communities and societies. On another occasion Gordon also defines feminism as a “critique of male supremacy, formed and offered openly to change it”. Through poems entitled *A Woman's Place* by Denice Frohman (2018), *Remember, Woman* by Reese Leyva (2015) and *A Woman's Place* by Sylvia Chidi (2005), they convey the issue of the rise of women from patriarchal oppression. At first glance, the three poems above seem to only describe the lives and habits of women, but actually they contain a very deep meaning about women's voices and struggles to get their rights in society. These three poems are not only captivating in terms of language but also the way the author conveys the meaning contained in them also impresses the people who read them. In the three poems above, the author focuses their thoughts on the

position of women in society. The injustices and oppression they received forced them to rise up and fight back in order to achieve equality. According to Charvet (1982:10) that because the courage of woman who are very radical, women get other freedom, such as the right to acquired academic knowledge and work outside at home. From the quotation it can be said, woman struggles is what lead them to the gender equality. To further analyze the elements of feminism contained in the poems *A Woman's Place* (2018), *Remember, Woman* (2015), and *A Woman's Place* (2005) an analysis was conducted using the poetic elements such as speaker who is the narrator of the poem, repetition, symbol, metaphor, setting and the tone of the poems. By using these poetic elements, this research is able to reveal the implied meaning contained in the three poems.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

The data analyzed based on feminist theory which includes gender inequality and gender oppression. The research conducted is qualitative research. As stated by Bogan, "Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials, so that they can be easily understood, and the findings can be shared with others." Based on this statement, data analysis is carried out by collecting and organizing existing data, then arranging them in such a way to draw a conclusion. The analysis of this research is done by interpreting the text or quotation from the three poems.

The analysis of the three poems is based on content analysis. The data used are quotes from the poems *A Woman's Place* by Frohman (2018), *Remember, Woman* by Leyva (2015), And *A Woman's Place* By Chidi (2005). The quotation or the line that is narrated by the three speakers of the poems is used to find meaning contained in it. Based on the quotes in the poem, the elements taken as the basis for the analysis are speakers, repetition and tone that show the settings in the three poems. Base on the data used, this analysis can be said to be a descriptive study. As stated by Gay (1992: 217), descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. This analysis takes notes or quotes that relate to the research topic. The data collected is tested for truth through various sources and different opinions or views, and then a conclusion is drawn.

Poetry elements such as speaker, symbol, metaphor, tone, setting are used to assist in collecting data. By connecting these elements with the quotation, this research able to reveal the meaning contained in the research data. The speaker describes most of the meanings of the three poems, the tone describes the speaker's feelings, repetition confirms meaning, metaphor and symbol show the ideas of the poems and the setting show the atmosphere created by the three poems. These elements are very important to know and understand this research data well.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Research Finding

From the three poems, it can be expressed the struggle of women to get their rights in society. All the poems feature the voice of women who wants to show their existence. The three speakers in the poem convey the greatness and privilege of a woman. From the way the speaker delivered the three poems that voiced the privilege of women, it shows that in this situation there are still many people who underestimate women. Even many women themselves are not proud and confident. There are still many women who do not believe that they can do great things, that they are nothing special. This is what the three speakers in the poem above are trying to penetrate. These poems give encouragement and confidence that women can choose their own path in life and have their own place in society. Women can stand on equal footing with men.

### 2. Discussion

To look at issues regarding the rise of women, this research first discusses the factors behind the causes of the rise of women. The main cause that forces women to rise up is the injustice and oppression they receive from both men and their social environment. This condition can be seen in the following quote:

“Many say  
A woman’s place belongs in the kitchen”  
(*A Woman’s Place* by Chidi, First stanza line 1-2)

The quote above shows that the social environment considers and even stipulates that the position of women is lower than men. Plus, most women think the same. The culture of thinking like this has been very attached to many people, including women themselves. The use of the “many say” diction shows that society expect women to be good at housework. The social environment does not expect women to be able to work in other fields such as earning a living for their needs the same as men. On the contrary, it is actually taboo when women work outside the home. The use of the "kitchen" diction shows that women are considered only to take care of the house and have no place in other fields, especially careers like men. The injustices received by women are supported in the next quote:

“When she’s only good in bed  
Fattened up from being well fed”  
(*A Woman’s Place* by Chidi, Second stanza line 2-4)

Women are considered only good at taking care of the house and are not given the opportunity to try to work outside the home. Men to the social environment assume that the place of women is in the domestic sphere. The use of the “good in bed” diction shows that women are not only despised but also subtly abused as human beings. Because in the quote there is also a diction “only” which shows that domestic work is the only skill possessed by women.

In the next line, it can also be seen that women are treated like people who cannot be individually independent. On the second line there is a diction that says that women are just waiting to be fed and even become obese. If interpreted, the meaning of the diction is, women are not allowed to try to earn a living for their own needs, so they must always wait for gifts from men or their husbands. This shows that there is inequality in social rights between men and women, where men have the opportunity to work and have career paths while women just wait at home. Women experience a lot of injustice. It doesn't stop there, the continuing effect of this position gap will make women easy to exploit. Women are not only socially excluded but also experience a lot of pressure from their social environment. For example, married women will be forced to submit to men and all decisions in their lives have been regulated by men. Women must not have a career in work, must not oppose the decisions of men, and must always serve men.

The injustice they receive, as well as the increasing emphasis in the social environment is what trigger the emergence of awareness in women to change the situation. Because only with women's courage and strong will to change the situation women can rise up and get their rights and equality in society. Evidence of awareness from within women to rise can be seen in the following quote:

“You were born with the fire of Queens & conquerors,  
warrioreess blood you bleed.”  
(*Remember, Woman* by Leyva, Second stanza line 3-4)

This quote explains that women are both queens and conquerors. The quote implies that women are creatures who are graceful and full of tenderness but still have the courage to fight back if they are treated unfairly and under pressure beyond limits. The tone of spirit that is full of struggle is very thick in this quote. This quote also explains that women will not hesitate to fight anyone who tries to bring them down. Diction fire is a metaphor for the word blazing spirit. The “warrioreess you bleed” diction shows that they are ready to fight and are ready for all possibilities that will happen. This quote also shows that women will never stop fighting like a soldier who will fight to the last drop of blood. In this stanza, women are expressed as queens and conquerors. Queen is closely related to wisdom, leadership, and grace. But a queen is also aware of her position to protect her dignity. A woman is a queen who is able to conquer or in other words break the bad stigma against women. Inspirational tone is also supported in the next quotation:

“all the women i know are perennials—  
marigolds, daffodils  
soft things that refuse to die”

(*A Woman's Place* by Frohman, sixth stanza line 1-3)

There is a use of symbols here. Women like "marigold" and "lily". Both symbols can be interpreted as positive energy, honesty and truth. Marigold flowers are symbolized as a symbol of beauty, while daffodils are symbolized as a new spirit. Both plants are beautiful plants that seem easily damaged. But the speaker said that they are hardy plants. This shows the struggle of women to continue to survive in all conditions, including when they are humiliated or even persecuted. The elegance and tenderness of women tend to make people think of them as weak creatures. But at the end of the quote the speaker emphatically says that women are "soft things that refuse to die". The quote shows that women will never give up to get their rights and always fight for their lives and dreams. That even though they have a weaker physique than men, but perhaps they have greater courage than their physical weakness. This is proven and supported in the following quote:

“i don't come from anything tamed or willing  
i come from soil flossed with barbed wire”

(*A Woman's Place* by Frohman, seventh stanza line 1-2)

From this quote, it can be said that there is a special pride in women which was conveyed by the speaker. There is a use of metaphor here; soil and barbed wire are compared to women's lives so far. In other words the woman had walked through the dirt and barbed wire which had injured many of her bodies. If interpreted, barbed wire is the injustice and oppression they have received so far. However, women managed to survive it all and keep moving forward. The speaker boldly said that women are not creatures that can be tamed or subdued. Women are not born to be oppressed or ordered at will. Speaker says women come from ground and barbed wire. This shows the resistance of women. That they had lived a difficult life and that now they could fight back and rebel bravely. Speakers show that women have been through a lot. They are ostracized, treated unfairly, oppressed. And now women are rising up to fight it all. The trials that women have had so far have made them.

The awareness that women have about the social injustices they experience triggers the thought of changing the situation. In addition, in the three poems, the speaker tries to make women aware of the advantages they have. The awareness that they are special, valuable, and have the same rights and obligations as men make women demand to be treated and appreciated as an independent individual. The resistance carried out by women in the three poems to achieve equality and justice is not by taking up arms or having direct confrontation with men, but rather to their efforts in opening their minds and worldviews about the incompatibility of the social system which has been burdensome to women. This can be seen in the following quote:

“tell them i grew a new tongue  
tell them i built me a throne  
tell them when we discovered life on another planet  
it was a woman  
& she built a bridge, not a border”  
(*A Woman's Place* by Frohman Stanza 16-17)

From the quote it is clear that the speaker shows the greatness of a woman. There are repetitions of the “tell them” diction which shows that the speakers are trying to convince women of the power they have. The speaker uses tongue diction and throne to show that women can speak for themselves and can be queens for themselves. Women just like men can do amazing things. If men can get higher education, women can too. If men can produce something great, women can do it too. The diction "Tell them" shows that the speaker wants to show that women all over the world must be respected and recognized as being creatures that are free to make their own choices. Furthermore, the diction "bridge not a border" shows that women do not struggle to create tension between themselves and men or with society. They are just trying to get the rights and enjoy their life to create a better and more harmonious world. There are no boundaries between men and women. Without a caste system, the position of women is always below that of men. In the last stanza, the speaker said that one day the women's struggle would be successful and they would celebrate it proudly. Furthermore, to emphasize the rise of women, it can be seen in the following quote:

“Gone are the days  
When she's only good in bed  
Fattened up from being well fed”  
(*A Woman's Place* by Chidi Second stanza line 1-3)

This quote states that women will not depend on other people for their survival, especially men. The use of the diction "Fattened up from being well fed" shows that women have lived all this time depending on and only accepting everything in their lives. If interpreted, women can be expressed as always being passive towards their social environment. For that, in this stanza the speaker emphasizes that it's all over. Through the diction "Gone are the days" delivered by the speaker, it feels very strong with the nuances of independence. The tone of joy is also very strong. In this quote, the speaker emphasizes that the days of oppressed and exploited women have ended. Now is the time for women to rise up and be free to live a life that is she wants, achieve gender rights and equality in society, and announce a revolution in the new beginning of women.

## **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **1. Conclusion**

In Denice Frohman's poems *A Woman's Place* (2018), Reese Leyva's Poems *Remember, Women* (2015), and Sylvia Chidi's Poems *A Woman's Place* (2005) it can be concluded that there is a struggle carried out by women conveyed by three speakers to voice the greatness and women's privileges and to obtain women's rights in social life. The speaker emphasized the self-worth of a woman and showed the world that women are not objects but free individuals. Women here can be seen as just as special as men. The speaker wants the reader to understand that women and men are the same, even though women and men have many differences. Basically the above poems aim to motivate women around the world to be brave, smart, and proud to be a woman and stand on their own feet.

The results found from this study indicate that women already have an awareness of gender inequality and the injustices they receive. Women awareness of the situation triggers the resistance from women to rise up and change the situation. The form of efforts from women that has been found through this research is not against physically but rather on the development of the mindset of women themselves. A mindset that is aware of themselves and the abilities and privileges they have. The final result of this study shows that women have risen from their passive nature of the adversity and injustice that they have received so far. Women in the three poems *A Woman's Place*, *Remember, Woman*, and *A Woman's Place* have had the courage to change things and rise up to become sovereign individuals.

### **2. Suggestion**

Based on the conclusions and findings obtained from this study, the author would like to contribute to provide some suggestions for other researchers in future studies. It is recommended to fully understand the struggles of woman. Next to researchers who use poetry as an object of research in order to understand well the elements of poetry to be used as a tool in dissecting and analysing a poem. Finally, the author hopes that this research can provide assistance as an inspiration for future research. Not to forget, the writer also really hopes for the readers to provide corrections to this research.



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