



## **THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON WOMEN IN THE DRAMA "BEHIND CLOSED DOORS" BY JANET SHAW (2005)**

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### **Abstract**

This research is an analysis of the drama "behind closed doors" by Janet Shaw (2005). In this study, the author aims to reveal the issue of the impact of domestic violence on women faced by Harriet and Pearl's characters as wives who experience domestic violence by their husbands. In this analysis, there are two impacts of domestic violence. The first is abnormal behavior such as having an imaginary friend / a fantasy man as a way to survive in the household. Having an imaginary friend they can express all the desires they cannot get from a husband. The next abnormal behavior found is normalizing violence by blaming herself and feeling worthy of being given violence by her husband because she is already in a case of depression. The second is the impact of physical injuries and bruises due to domestic violence received by women. This analysis uses the concept of "abnormal behaviors" which is a branch of psychology proposed by Sigmund Freud and supported by several other experts. The use of concepts based on the context of the drama and interpretation of the text. In this analysis, the elements of drama that help reveal the impact of domestic violence are stage direction and dialogue.

**Key words:** violence, impact, and women

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

There are a lot of people's dreams in this world. One of them is getting married. Marriage is the union of two people (whether of the same sex or of opposite sexes) who commit to romantically loving and caring for each other and to sharing the burdens and benefits of domestic life (Girgis, Sherif, Robert P. George, and Ryan T,2011). Getting married to some people will find happiness because they have a partner to help, support, and share a lot of activities in their life. So that's why many people want to get married. However it's not all expectations to have happiness in married happens.

Many problems come after married life for example violence, cheating, and

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others to women. Violence in married is usually known as domestic violence. Swiss Med Weekly defines domestic violence as the threat or exercise of physical, psychological, and/or emotional violence; i.e., any type of force against another person with the intent of inflicting harm or exercising power and control over them (2010,140). Almost every victim of domestic violence is a woman. Moreover in the 1960s woman's oppression is a common issue that exist in society especially in American family. , therefore, the author realizes that this is an important issue to analyze so that the author knows what are the forms and impacts of domestic violence to women in this research.

There are many factors why domestic violence happens. It could be coming from an economic background, education background, and environment. For instance, first on the economic side, if a family has a problem with a finance there is no more income to fulfill their daily need which causes quarrels or any kind of domestic violence. Second, on education background, there is a case of a couple of married and does not know the things that should not be happening such as interdicting to hit their couple, punishing their couple based on their desire, and having minim respect for each other.

These problems are coming from a lack of education or knowledge in running a household. Or the other case the couple married only graduated from high school and it is difficult for them to control their ego and emotion to respect their commitment as a couple of married. Third of all, from the environmental side usually this couple has a habit to go to a club to drink alcohol and wasting their time with their friends outside to party in a nightclub so then by drinking alcohol perhaps domestic violence happens if this couple fight or quarrel.

This research exists to complete the previous research. Almost all previous research exposes only any kind of domestic violence, types of domestic violence, and the impact of domestic violence on children. So this research is different from others because this focuses on the impact to woman in the drama play "behind closed doors" by Janet Shaw. The previous almost use novel drama behind closed doors as the media.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

Expose the impact of domestic violence and women's oppression in this research using a qualitative method. Jackson, R. L., Drummond, D. K., & Camara, S.(2007) define a qualitative method as primarily concerned with understanding human beings' experiences in a humanistic, interpretive approach.

The qualitative method in this research engages drama as the written text. The drama text was chosen to analyze elements of drama such as stage direction and dialog. The elements of drama in the text will contribute to exposing the issue impact of domestic violence, women's oppression, and the impact on women.

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Research Finding**

This chapter discusses the impact of domestic violence on women in the drama behind closed doors by Janet Shaw (2005). The impact of domestic violence on women refers to the character Pearl and Harriet in the drama "behind closed

doors”. In the drama, the setting takes place in 1969 when physical and mental abuse was something normal that happened to many women. This issue will expose types of domestic violence in this drama and the impact of domestic violence on women. This analysis is using elements of drama: stage direction and dialog to reveal the issue of the impact of domestic violence on women.

## 2. Discussion

### 2.1. forms of domestic violence

The first sub-topic to be discussed is the forms of domestic violence that occur to the characters Harriet and Pearl in the drama "behind closed doors". In this drama, two forms of domestic violence were found. They were mental violence and physical violence. So both violence experienced by women had some impact on the characters of Harriet and Pearl. The second subtopic is there were several impacts of domestic violence on women. They were mental and physical illnesses.

#### 2.1.1. Mental abuse/ verbal abuse

The most common form of aggression, according to Lynn Cameron (1998), is verbal abuse.its ramifications regarding profound surprise outrage, low confidence, shame, and dread might be pretty much as harming as an actual assault.According to this understanding, verbal abuse is a form of domestic violence in which the perpetrator treats or behaves in a disrespectful manner toward the victim.Making someone afraid, acting extremely powerfully, disrespecting them, and socially isolating them are all examples of verbal abuse.Verbal abuse can be found in both real-life situations and works of literature.There was a lot of verbal abuse during the drama that took place behind closed doors.

“Sandra : Because there are two types of abusers. The first one. like my dad, just lashes out when he can't get his own way he doesn't think of it as domestic violence; he is the man of the house and what he says should go... but it doesn't, because my mother answers him back. If things aren't done the way he wants them doing, he hits her. It's the only kind of discipline The understands. I think he must love her, but he makes her life so miserable. The second type is the control freak, that sounds like your dad. They dictate everything their partner says or does and if they don't conform, they abuse. (Pause). I bet you can't guess what my mother has she has a fantasy man.” (p.32)

#### 2.1.1.1 Physical abuse

Physical violence against women is the second form of violence in the drama "behind closed doors." A form of violence against the human body is known as physical violence .A person may suffer physical harm, physical disability, pain, and trauma as a result of this violence. The two female characters in this drama are victims of domestic violence. Husbands frequently engaged in

this violence whenever possible. In the drama play "Behind Closed Doors," there were several quotations showed the women who were subjected to physical violence.

““Harriet : I'm sorry Vernon, he obviously didn't know as much about wine as you do. I will him when I see him that you were upset. Vernon : You will do no such thing. Do you always talk to complete strangers about our personal life? Write a list and send Mrs Wilkinson. How many times do I have to tell you Harriet? *(He takes hold of her arm and squeezes very hard)*. I said, how many times do I have to tell you? Harriet : Too many, Vernon... you're hurting me

Based on the data above, it could be seen that an act of domestic violence happened to women, especially to Harriet's character as a wife. In the quotation above, women's oppression was carried out by holding Harriet's arm and squeezing it hard. This violence was caused by someone else's fault which was not the wife's fault meanwhile the husband's character in this drama kept blamed and vented his anger on Harriet's character. So that the behavior of the husband's character is a form of physical violence.

“Eddie : Where's the bread? Pearl : In the bread bin. Eddie : What did you say? Pearl : I said the bread is in the bread bin. Eddie : Are you answering me back? Pearl : Looks like it. Eddie : You sit on your fat arse all day, whilst I'm out sweating my bollocks off, and when I come home you haven't even cooked me a bloody tea. You put fish and bloody chips on the table, cold bloody fish and chips, and you haven't even bothered to butter some bloody bread. You useless bitch. Pearl : Eddie I'm sorry, Eddie. Eddie: *(Mimicking)* "I'm sorry Eddie" you will be sorry when I've finished with you. *(He picks up the food from the plate and rubs it into her face, then hits her across the face)*”.(p.28))

Based on the data above, it can be seen that stage direction contributed to the portrayal of women's experiences of physical domestic violence. It is evident from the stage direction that the husband's character in this drama punched his wife in the face. The sole reason for this violence is that his wife failed to feed her husband when he returned home. In the meantime, there was already bread on the table. He needs to be treated as a king. He was reluctant to consume the bread on his own. So that he would use violence against his wife when he couldn't get what he wanted. As a result, the quote above includes physical violence as a form of violence against women.

### 2.1.2. The impact of domestic violence to women

The second sub-topic to be discussed is the impact of domestic violence experienced by women in the drama “behind closed doors”. There were three kind of abnormal behaviors were founded in this drama. The first the abnormal behavior that occurs to women in this drama was having an imaginary friend. The second impact was depression experienced by women in the drama "behind closed doors". The last impact was the physical injury suffered as a result of physical violence against women.

#### 2.1.2.1. The abnormal behavior

Abnormal psychology is a branch of psychology that aims to understand abnormal behaviors. Abnormal psychology is sometimes also called psychopathology, which in English is Abnormal Psychology. According to Kartini Kartono (2009), abnormal psychology is a branch of psychology that investigates all forms of mental disorders and mental abnormalities. According to King (2003), one of his criteria to determine people abnormal behavior is being Under Personal Stress is a personal stressor brought on by emotional disturbances like depression, anxiety, and fear, anxiety and depression, on the other hand, can be a response that is already in line with the circumstances

#### 2.1.2.2 . Having an imaginary friend

Based on the explanation above about abnormal behavior related to women's character in the drama "behind closed door" abnormal behavior occurred due to being in a condition that made women in the drama "behind closed doors" felt anxiety and depression. As a result of the existence of domestic violence to women had the impact of abnormal behavior. The form of abnormal behavior is women in this drama have imaginary friends or a fantasy man.

“Sandra : Because there are two types of abusers. The first one, like my dad, just lashes out when he can't get his own way... he doesn't think of it as domestic violence; he is the man of the house and what he says should go... but it doesn't, because my mother answers him back. If things aren't done the way he wants them doing, he hits her. It's the only kind of discipline he understands. I think he must love her, but he makes her life so miserable. The second type is the control freak, that sounds like your dad. They dictate everything their partner says or does and if they don't conform, they abuse. (Pause). I bet you can't guess what my mother has ... she has a fantasy man. Tarquin : A what?

Sandra : You know, like children have imaginary friends, well she has this fantasy man. He comes in to her mind and

she pretends that he's real, that he is the man my dad will never be. Tarquin : An escape.

Sandra : Yes, that's the only thing that keeps her sane... when I have qualified, the first thing I want to do is try to get mum out of that hell-hole.” (p.22)

The information presented above suggests that Sandra is aware of her mother's abnormal behavior. Sandra's mother was a victim of domestic violence as a child. A way to get over the depression that Harriet and Pearl's characters experience as a result of domestic violence is to have "a fantasy man" or "an imagery friend." The hope and desire of women who are treated unfairly to have a decent life and a husband who behaves well and treats them well, such as respecting their rights as wives and humans, can also be expressed in the quote above.

The child also realized, as can be seen from the quote above, that his mother could survive the pressures of domestic violence by having an imaginary friend. Having fictitious friends fulfills all of Pearl and Harriet's wishes as wives who did not want to become depressed as a result of the violence they experienced. In point of fact, they are not proceeding as anticipated, so that they can overcome the daily domestic violence they face by having a fantasy man.

“Thomas : OK, I'll just do a few and you stop me when you find the one you like... (Thomas now speaks in a variety of accents until Pearl calls out the one she likes the most). Pearl you are the light of my life, my one true love. You're my world, my planet, my universe Being able to breathe the same air as you is likened only to kissing stars and chasing rainbows. You are my passion and the reason for my sanity. Without you my life would be meaningless. My waking moment's useless. And my sleeping hours would be bereft if you were not there beside me. I want to hold your hand and gaze into those bottomless pools of liquid sea that are your eyes. I want to kiss your ruby red lips and drink in the vision that is your body. You are the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo. You are likened only to the goddesses of love

Pearl : That one, I'll have that one today... and Thomas, (she moves as Pearl if to kiss him), go and do the washing up, cock! And when you're done, I'll have a chorus of something.” (p.17-18)

It is possible to deduce from the information presented above that Thomas is an imagined friend of Pearl. The desire to have a husband who is

loving, romantic, and kind manifests itself as Thomas's fantasy man for Pearl. According to Thomas's interpretation of the poem, Pearl desired praise as an expression of a husband's affection for his wife. On the other hand, women in this drama experience domestic violence, and Pearl was treated rudely. Pearl can reveal things that are hidden in a fantasy character's heart and mind. As a result, Thomas creates an imaginary friend for the women in this drama in order to help them cope with the effects of domestic violence.

#### 2.1.2.3. Depression

According to Beyond Blue (2019) depression is while we all feel sad, moody, or low from time to time, some people experience these feelings intensely, for long periods (weeks, months, or even years) and sometimes without any apparent reason. Based on the conditions above, it can be stated that depression is a difficult condition for a person to pass through his daily life. This condition is closely related to mental conditions and can affect mental health. These following below are some of common symptoms of depression.

#### 2.1.3. Physical Injury

Domestic violence against women, particularly women in the drama "Behind Closed Doors," can result in physical harm. The victim may experience pain and bruises as a result of these wounds. Women suffered physically as a result of the husband's character's acts of domestic violence toward his wife in this drama. Hit, kicked, and slapped women with the force of an adult male full of strength and emotion, committing violence that left bruises. So as to cause women to suffer pain. The following is evidence that the women in the drama "Behind Closed Doors" sustained physical injuries.

### **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

The author found two impacts, namely the impact on mental and physical health. For the impact that affects mental, the writer finds that women in the drama "behind closed doors" have abnormal behaviors. First, women have an imaginary friend / a fantasy man as a form of how she releases the stress due to domestic violence. The second is depression. Women experience deep sadness and disappointment as a result of the life that she experiences intimately with physical or mental violence. Furthermore, the impact that affects the physical is the wounds and bruises experienced by the victim. Violence perpetrated against women by being hit, kicked, slapped, and treated harshly results in bruising and pain that makes the victim suffer.

The impact of domestic violence on women is the focus of this study. However, the author also finds several forms of violence committed against women in the drama "behind closed doors" to assist in determining the impact. The author identifies both physical and mental forms of violence against women. A form of violence known as "physical violence" is one in which an individual is physically harmed or suffers pain or injury as a result of the violence. In the meantime, the author comes to the conclusion that mental violence is violence that

is committed by attacking a person's mental health rather than by touching any body parts. It makes a person feel uneasy, restless, and in pain. Disrespect, rude speech, dictating to someone by organizing all actions according to personal wishes, and not allowing room for opinion are all examples of physical violence. So that these women are affected in some way by all of the pressure women face.

In the drama "behind closed doors," the effects of domestic violence on women cause them to suffer and survive by accepting the violence and blaming themselves. The characters in Pearl and Harriet can't fight because they don't have enough money to provide for their children. As a result, economic constraints prevent them from acting. As a result, women in the drama "behind closed doors" still experience domestic violence. This violence has a very dangerous effect. Having a life full of pressure can have a negative impact on one's mental state. In addition, if women continue to be subjected to physical violence, it may be dangerous for their lives. To ensure their safety, women must therefore be aware of the various forms of violence and their effects.

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