

**THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN OPPRESSION IN REID'S  
*THE SEVEN HUSBANDS OF EVELYN HUGO***

**THESIS**

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**2023**

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*THE SEVEN HUSBANDS OF EVELYN HUGO***

**THESIS**

Presented to

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

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**2023**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled “**The Portrayal of Women Oppression in Reid’s *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo***” is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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## **MOTTO**

“When you are given an opportunity to change your life, be ready to do whatever it takes to make it happen. The world does not *give* things, you *take* things”

— **Taylor Jenkins Reid**

“No one can build you the bridge on which you, and only you, must cross the river of life...”

— **Friedrich Nietzsche**

## **DEDICATION**

The thesis is proudly dedicated to the people who have always meant  
everything to the researcher;

My dearest parents, Agus Sulistyو and Romlah, who endlessly pray for me  
and support me in achieving my dream.

My beloved grandparents, Hj. Madrais and Alm. Khodijah who has raised  
me and loved me wholeheartedly.

My entire family who continuously gives me strengths and motivations  
throughout the process.

All people who love the researcher

Thank you very much for everything.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alamiin. Every time we sincerely and mindfully address Allah as "*Ya Allah*," He is responding directly by saying, "*Here I am, Here I am, Here I am*." Thus, there are no more beautiful words than gratitude or the presence of Allah SWT, who has always blessed the researcher with wellness, toughness, and easiness, allowing her to successfully complete this thesis entitled "*The Portrayal of Women Oppression in Reid's The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*", in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.). Never-to-be-forgotten, *Shalawat* and *Salam* be upon our beloved prophet Muhammad SAW, who has guided us from the darkness into the lightness.

My gratitude is also presented to the Dean Faculty of Humanities, Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.; the Head Department of English Literature, Dr. Ribut Wahyudi, M.Ed., Ph.D.; My honorable advisor, Dr. Muzakki Afifuddin, M.Pd, who patiently guided me in finishing this thesis. I sincerely appreciate all of your suggestions, insights, and feedback, so this study becomes better; My academic advisor, Ulil Fitriyah, M.Pd., M.Ed.; All lecturers in the Department of English Literature, especially Ma'am Galuh, Ma'am Istiadah, and Ma'am Mundi. I really appreciate for all the knowledge that have given to me.

There are not enough words to express my appreciation for those who supported the researcher in completing this thesis; my dearest parents, Bapak Agus and Ibu Romlah, who never stop teaching me the theory of love and struggle in this life; my adorable nephew, Al-Ayyubi, who always cheering me up and keeps me smiling all day long when I get tired; my entire family, especially Kokong, Bude



Sri, Mama Iik, Mama Omah, Ka Yanah, Abang Bima, Ka Dede, and everyone else who continues give the researcher support and motivation throughout the process.

For my best friends I meet in Malang, especially Wilma Afrilia, the best listener who genuinely encouraged me, and repeatedly stood by my side; Darin who has always sincerely helped me from the first semester until now. For my best friend in Jakarta, Ollee, you are my gold old friend, never forget, never change. For Rana, Biya, Acii, Anin, Prisca, Ara, and Tio, thank you for creating and sharing plenty of memorable moments and experiences with me. Meeting you all in my life was the greatest gift I have ever received.

Lastly, for Habib Husein Ja'far Al-Hadar, Ustadz Adi Hidayat, and Ustadz Hanan Attaki, who indirectly inspiring me to stay motivated when I was at desperate moment. Thank you for the enlightening speeches from all of your Tausiah videos.

The researcher completely realize that this thesis might be far from perfect. Therefore, suggestions and criticism are always welcome from the readers. Finally, the researcher hopes that this study will serve as an informative resource for guiding and informing future researchers, particularly those who interested in similar topic.

Malang, Mei 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

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## ABSTRACT

**Damayanti, Alfina Putri** (2023) *The Portrayal of Women Oppression in Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo**. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Dr. Muzakki Afifuddin, M.Pd.

Keywords: *Oppression, Liberal feminism, Objectification, Hollywood entertainment industry*

In this modern world, the phenomenon of women oppression has become more prevalent in society. Oppression against women has been embedded for generations and can really happen under any circumstances. However, this phenomenon is not only actualized in real life but is also portrayed in Taylor Jenkins Reid's work entitled *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. The aims of this study are divided into two categories: first, to identify forms of oppression experienced by women characters, Monique Grant and Evelyn Hugo, and second, to describe women characters' struggle against oppression in the novel. The approach used in this study is the sociology of literature since the novel brings up social issues such as inequalities based on class, race, gender, and other aspects, which these issues examined through the perspective of feminist literary criticism. Additionally, to identify forms of oppression, the researcher uses the 'Five Faces of Oppression' theory by Irish Marion Young. The results of this study revealed that Monique and Evelyn experienced oppression due to their gender and racial background. Monique was marginalized in the workplace, whereas Evelyn was subjected to the five faces of oppression mentioned by Young, both in private and public sphere. However, despite the oppression that Monique and Evelyn experienced, they were struggling for their freedom and rights in order to take control of their own lives and careers. Their struggles are intertwined with liberal feminism, a theory that advocates for changing laws, policies, and institutions in order to eliminate gender equality in all aspects of life.

## مستخلص البحث

دامياتي، ألفينا بوتري (٢٠٢٣) تصوير اضطهاد المرأة في الرواية "سبع الأزواج للإيفلين هوغو" لتايلور جنكينز ريد. البحث الجامعي. قسم الأدب الإنكليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرف: الدكتور مزكي عفيف الدين، الماجستير.

الكلمات الرئيسية: القمع، النسوية الليبرالية، التشكيكية، صناعة الترفيه في هوليوود

في هذا العالم الحديث، أصبحت ظاهرة اضطهاد المرأة أكثر انتشارًا في المجتمع. لقد كان الاضطهاد ضد المرأة جزءًا لا يتجزأ من الأجيال ويمكن أن يحدث حقًا تحت أي ظرف من الظروف. ومع ذلك، فإن هذه الظاهرة لا تتحقق فقط في الحياة الواقعية ولكن يتم تصويرها أيضًا في عمل تايلور جنكينز ريد بعنوان أزواج إيفلين هوغو السبعة. تنقسم أهداف هذه الدراسة إلى فئتين: أولاً، تحديد أشكال الاضطهاد التي تعاني منها الشخصيات النسائية، مونيكا غرانت وإيفلين هوغو، وثانيًا، لوصف نضال الشخصيات النسائية ضد الاضطهاد في الرواية. النهج المستخدم في هذه الدراسة هو علم اجتماع الأدب لأن الرواية تطرح قضايا اجتماعية مثل عدم المساواة على أساس الطبقة والعرق والجنس وجوانب أخرى، والتي درستها هذه القضايا من خلال منظور النسوية الليبرالية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، لتحديد أشكال الاضطهاد، يستخدم الباحث نظرية «الوجوه الخمسة للقمع» للأيرلندية ماريون يونغ. كشفت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن مونيكا وإيفلين تعرضتا للقمع بسبب خلفيتهما الجنسية والعرقية. كانت مونيكا مهمشة في مكان العمل، بينما تعرضت إيفلين لوجوه الاضطهاد الخمسة التي ذكرها يونغ، في المجالين الخاص والعام. ومع ذلك، على الرغم من الاضطهاد الذي تعرضت له مونيكا وإيفلين، إلا أنهما كانا يكافحان من أجل حريتهما وحقوقهما من أجل السيطرة على حياتهما ومهنتهما. تتشابه نضالاتهم مع النسوية الليبرالية، وهي نظرية تدعو إلى تغيير القوانين والسياسات والمؤسسات من أجل القضاء على المساواة بين الجنسين في جميع جوانب الحياة.

## ABSTRAK

**Damayanti, Alfina Putri** (2023) Penggambaran Penindasan Perempuan dalam Novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* karya Reid. Skripsi. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing Dr. Muzakki Afifuddin, M.Pd.

Kata kunci: *Penindasan, Feminisme liberal, Objektivikasi, Industri hiburan Hollywood*

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Dalam dunia modern, fenomena penindasan terhadap perempuan semakin marak terjadi di lingkungan masyarakat. Penindasan terhadap Perempuan ini sudah tertanam secara turun-temurun dan bisa terjadi dalam situasi apapun. Tidak hanya itu, fenomena ini tidak hanya diaktualisasikan dalam kehidupan nyata, tetapi juga tergambarkan dalam novel karya Taylor Jenkins Reid yang berjudul *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. Tujuan dari penelitian ini dibagi menjadi dua kategori: pertama, untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk penindasan yang dialami oleh karakter perempuan, Monique Grant dan Evelyn Hugo, dan kedua, untuk mendeskripsikan perjuangan karakter Perempuan dalam melawan penindasan dalam novel. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah sosiologi sastra karena novel ini mengangkat isu-isu sosial seperti ketidaksetaraan berdasarkan kelas sosial, ras, gender, dan aspek lainnya, dimana isu-isu tersebut dapat dikaji melalui perspektif kritik sastra feminis. Selain itu, untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk penindasan, peneliti menggunakan teori “Five Faces of Oppression” dari Irish Marion Young. Hasil dari penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa Monique dan Evelyn mengalami penindasan karena gender dan latar belakang ras mereka. Monique dimarginalisasi di tempat kerja karena latar belakang ras-nya, sedangkan Evelyn mengalami lima jenis penindasan yang disebutkan oleh Young, baik di ranah pribadi maupun publik. Namun demikian, terlepas dari penindasan yang dialami Monique dan Evelyn, mereka berjuang untuk kebebasan dan hak mereka seperti memilih kebebasan untuk mengendalikan kehidupan dan karier mereka sendiri. Perjuangan mereka berkaitan dengan feminisme liberal, sebuah teori yang mengadvokasi perubahan hukum, kebijakan, dan institusi untuk menghilangkan kesetaraan gender di semua aspek kehidupan.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>THESIS COVER</b> .....	
<b>STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP</b> .....	i
<b>APPROVAL SHEET</b> .....	ii
<b>LEGITIMATION SHEET</b> .....	iii
<b>MOTTO</b> .....	iv
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	vi
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	viii
<b>مستخلص البحث</b> .....	ix
<b>ABSTRAK</b> .....	x
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b> .....	xi
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
A. Background of the Study.....	1
B. Problems of the Study .....	6
C. Significance of the Study .....	7
D. Scope and Limitation .....	7
E. Definition of Key Term.....	8
<b>CHAPTER II: REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE</b> .....	9
A. Sociological Approach in Literary Criticism .....	9
B. Feminist Literary Criticism .....	10
C. Liberal Feminism .....	13
D. Oppression .....	16
1. Marginalization .....	18
2. Exploitation .....	19
3. Powerlessness .....	20
4. Cultural Imperialism.....	21
5. Violence.....	22
a) Sexual Violence .....	23
b) Physical Violence .....	23
c) Psychological Violence.....	23

<b>CHAPTER III: RESEARCH OF METHOD</b> .....	25
A. Research Design.....	25
B. Data Source .....	25
C. Data Collection.....	26
D. Data Analysis .....	26
<b>CHAPTER IV: FINDING AND DISCUSSION</b> .....	27
A. The Forms of Oppression Experienced by Women Characters in Reid’s <i>The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo</i> .....	27
1. Marginalization .....	28
2. Exploitation .....	34
3. Powerlessness .....	39
4. Cultural Imperialism.....	42
5. Violence.....	44
a) Sexual Violence .....	45
b) Physical Violence .....	47
c) Psychological Violence.....	51
B. Women Characters Struggle Against Oppression.....	54
1. Monique’s Struggle .....	55
2. Evelyn’s struggles .....	59
<b>CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION</b> .....	62
A. Conclusion .....	62
B. Suggestion.....	64
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	65
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> .....	68
<b>APPENDIXE</b> .....	69

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher will present the introduction of the study. These consist of the background of the study, problems of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms. In this chapter, the researcher also mentions several previous studies.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

The phenomenon of women oppression has become more prevalent in today's society. This phenomenon can be found directly in daily activities or indirectly through social media platforms. For example, in America, plenty of statistic shows that oppression against women is deeply rooted and one of the causes is inequality between men and women (Aliaga, 2021). A global feminist believes that the oppression of women in society cannot be eliminated because it is systematically recreated in massive economic, political, and cultural institute; “no woman is free unless oppression is eliminated everywhere” (Bunch, 1993).

In many cases, women are frequently subjected to oppression by powerful individuals or groups, and this oppression takes many different forms. Iris Young classifies oppression into five forms, including exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence. She stated that violence is the most frequent and visible form of oppression (Young, 1990). In American society, many women, despite of their age, race, or social status experience oppression in the form of violence whether it be at the workplace, school, or even home.

The most recent study has become a horrifying reminder that oppression in the form violence against women constitutes one of the most widespread crimes in massive global. The new study by UN Women shows that, on average, more than five women were killed every hour at home by someone in their own family members in 2021, proving that the home cannot be a safe haven for them. Moreover, in the United States, sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence are widespread. What makes violence a face of oppression is the social context that surrounds them, which makes the specific acts of violence seems possible and even acceptable. Some people find this face of oppression is unsurprising because it happened frequently, and much worse when those who perpetrate act of violence often receive light or no punishment.

Apart from that, surveys reported by Catalyst (2023) find that approximately 51% of women from minority racial and ethnic groups are frequently oppressed in the form of marginalization at their current workplace. The worst thing is that the connections between the various forms of oppression that from women marginalized racial and ethnic groups encounter at work are frequently ignored and left unaddressed. In addition, the oppression against women in the workplace keep continue which women globally earn on average about 20 per cent less than men (Masselot & Ceballos, 2022). Whereas, the wage disparity for women of color such as Black and Latina women is even worse. This can be seen in *Institute for Women's Policy Research* which estimates that Black women must work extra days to earn 64 cents for every dollar a white men earn (Prewitt & Elakbawy, 2022).



As stated in the previous explanation, oppression remains experienced by women in the United States. Global feminists claim that all groups of women are certainly oppressed in various ways, and rooted in various factors such as race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, and other intersectional identities. The oppression of women happened because of male domination of the public and private spheres, as it has been deeply embedded in a patriarchal system. As a consequence, oppressed women had to live in different ways, such as experiencing violence, being powerless, being exploited, being marginalized, and other injustice treatment.

The oppression of women somehow does not stop with the cases mentioned above. Millet in *Sexual Politics* (1970) believed that the whole culture encourages male authority in all aspects of life and outside of the home, consequently, limits the female in any way. In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Woolf asserts that men keep treating women as inferior beings; men define what it means to be a woman and control the political, economic, and social structures. Finally, after reading numerous references regarding the oppression against women, the researcher can conclude that oppression is still relevant in society and happened in various forms. Additionally, those people who believe have more power, control, wealth, or other advantages have the ability to perpetuate various forms of oppression.

The phenomenon of women oppression above is not only actualized in real life but also portrayed in Taylor Jenkins Reid's famous work entitled *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. This novel tells the mesmerizing story of Evelyn Hugo, a fictional legendary Hollywood movie star who is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life to a Journalist, Monique Grant. The novel

explores themes of love, ambition, identity, and the price of fame. It touches upon Evelyn's complex relationships, her struggles with societal expectations, and the lengths she went to protect her career and personal life. As Monique delves deeper into Evelyn's past, she discovers the secrets, scandals, and sacrifices that Evelyn had to endure to achieve success in the entertainment industry. She also struggled as a woman with the things she takes and the amount it costs to confront every truth.

Taylor Jenkins Reid brings up social-life issues such as male domination, gender inequality, cultural stereotype, racial background, discrimination, objectification and exploitation of women, violence, and others. The story primarily takes place in Hollywood during the 1950s to 1980s, a time marked by significant cultural and societal shift. Reid portrayed the women character in the novel named, Evelyn Hugo and Monique Grant, facing several forms of oppression that are caused not only by men but also by women and the ruling group as well. However, through Evelyn and Monique, Reid persuades readers that women should unite together to fight for equality, end injustice, take risks, make sacrifices, struggle for rights, and to refuse to be governed by those who have power in life.

Based on the explanation above, this study is significant since the novel portrays the oppression of women in the workplace, in the home, in the entertainment industry, and in the society as a whole. Additionally, this study attempts to raise awareness of the fact that women oppression still exists and happens in various forms and in various aspects of life. Throughout the novel, it is revealed that Evelyn and Monique are subjected to several difficulties as women both in personal or professional lives. However, despite the difficulties, they

continue to take action to struggle against the oppression by doing some changes. As a result, the researcher concludes that the theme of women oppression is interesting to study since the topic is still prevalent in social life.

The researcher has found two previous studies which uses the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid as the main data. The first study is in the form of a doctoral dissertation conducted by Sitti Suharni (Suharni, 2021) and the second study is in the form of a journal article conducted by Fitria Ramadhana Rosmiati (Rosmiati, 2022). Both of the studies only focus on the main character, Evelyn Hugo. The two researchers discuss different topics and use different theories. In Suharni (2021), the study was conducted to see how gender is present as performativity and becomes subversive by using the theory of Judith Butler. Whereas Rosmiati (2022) focuses her study on the forms of gender discrimination and how patriarchy can affect gender discrimination, uses radical feminism theory by Alison Jaggar and uses patriarchy from Sylvia Walby.

In addition to providing support for the argument and expanding on existing knowledge, the researcher discovered several previous studies that were related to this research, including the use of feminist literary theory and Irish Marion Young theory to analyze the problems of their study. All of these studies are in the form of journal articles and undergraduate thesis. This research is written by Fauziah, Ratih, and Natawiria (2019), Dominilla, Kuncara, and Valiantien (2020), Istiadah, Furaida, and Nabillah (2021), Nada (2021), Ardiasyah (2022), Septiana (2022), Kristami, Surya, and Lubis (2022), Pratiwi, Supiastutik, and Wardani (2022), Alfando and Wahyuni (2022), Wahyono (2022).

The researchers of the previous studies above discussed the oppression experienced by women characters in literary works in the form of novel. In analyzing the novels, the researchers using five faces of oppression by Iris Young. The results of their study are several forms of oppression, including cultural imperialism, powerlessness, exploitation, violence, and marginalization. They have also discussed the cause of the oppression of women and how women struggle against oppression. Several findings from the previous studies state that oppression against women is carried out by those in positions of power in society. Furthermore, there has been no previous study that examined more closely about the oppression faced by two women characters in the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*.

Therefore, this study aims to complete the gaps left by previous studies that did not adequately examine the women oppression in Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. Besides, this study explore two women characters, Evelyn Hugo and Monique Grant, who were oppressed. The researcher will analyze and classify the form of women oppression by using the five faces of oppressions theory by Iris Young; exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence (both physical, psychological, and sexual); in addition, the researcher also using the perspective of liberal feminism to answer how women character struggle against oppression.

## **B. Problems of the Study**

Based on the explanation of the background of study, the researcher intends to narrow the focus of this study by dividing the problems into two questions:

1. What are the forms of women oppression portrayed in Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*?
2. How do the women characters struggle against the oppression in Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*?

### **C. Significance of the Study**

This study is designed to focus on providing a significant theoretical and practical contribution. Theoretically, the purpose of this research is to strengthen and enrich sociological approach, feminist theories, and five faces oppression theory by Iris Young, particularly when the topic is about the oppression of women portrayed in the novel. the purpose of this study is to encourage the reader, particularly oppressed women, to believe more crucially regarding feminist criticism theory, to be aware of several forms of oppression, and to empower them to struggle against the oppression by doing several changes. Finally, the researcher hopes that this study will serve as an informative resource for guiding and informing future researchers, particularly those who interested in similar topic.

### **D. Scope and Limitation**

This study focused on the oppression experienced by women characters named Evelyn Hugo and Monique Grant in the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. The researcher classified several forms of oppression based on Iris Marion Young theory such as exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence (sexual, physical, and psychological). Furthermore, this study is limited in discussing how women characters Evelyn Hugo and Monique

Grant struggle against the oppression that they experienced. In addition, this study uses feminist literary criticism to find out how they struggle against oppression.

### **E. Definition of Key Term**

The researchers define words that are frequently used in this study in order to help readers avoid ambiguity and gain a better understanding.

**Oppression** : Oppression is defined as the phenomenon that creates injustice over a particular group or individual in society and primarily restricts their freedom and ability to experience their human potential (Young, 1990).

**Structural injustices** : Structural injustice occurs when individuals and institutions act to pursue their personal goals and interests while unfairly harming certain groups, limiting their ability to develop and use their skills, and resulting in inequality (Young, 2008)

**Objectification** : Objectification occurs when a human being, through social means, is made less than human, turned into a sexually object or commodity, bought and sold, cause their humanity is harmed (Dworkin, 2000).

**Feminist literary criticism** : Feminist literary criticism proposes equal rights and opportunities for all women (and, as a matter of fact, all people) through all aspects of life, including socially, politically, professionally, personally, economically, and psychologically (Bressler, 2011)

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the approach and the theory that will be applied to this study. These literature reviews are related to the main topic of the research and intended to answer the problems of this study. The researcher will provide an explanation of the approach in literary criticism, feminist literary criticism, and five forms of oppression theory by Irish Young.

#### A. Sociological Approach in Literary Criticism

The sociological approach to literary criticism aims to analyze and interpret literature in the context of society as a whole. It views literature as a creation to uncover the social, cultural, and historical factors that influence literary productions and audiences. The relation between literature and society itself is usually discussed by starting with the phrase derived from De Bonald in Wellek and Warren (1956) that “*literature is an expression of society*,” (p.90). The previous statement means that literature is simply a representation of current social situations that the writer expresses as a member of society. In this case, the writers are not only influenced by society; but they influence society as well. It is important to situate the author's works within the larger social context that arises in which they live and write.

Sociological approach in literary criticism emphasizes the significance of the social context in which a work of literature is created. As Kennedy and Gioia (2013) added their own statement that sociological approach examining how the author in a particular context affected what they created, which means this would

be beneficial to take a look at the author's background, the historical, and the social conditions that influenced the creation of the text. Furthermore, sociological approach examines the social content of literary works, such as the cultural, economic, and political values that a given text implicitly or explicitly expresses. By understanding the societal factors surrounding the work, critics can gain insights into the motivations, ideologies, and values embedded within the literature.

The sociological approach in literary criticism investigates how literature reflects different social structures and institutions such as family, education, religion, government, and economic systems. It investigates how these structures shape the characters, relationships, and themes, as well as how they may reflect or challenge prevailing social norms and structures of power. Moreover, in the social content of the work, sociological criticism examines how literature represents social groups and identities, including race, gender, class, sexuality, and ethnicity. It explores whether they are given agency or voice, and this approach also seeks to uncover and challenge stereotypes and inequalities within literary works. Overall, this approach considering the interplay between literature and social context.

## **B. Feminist Literary Criticism**

Feminist literary criticism is a branch of literary theory that focuses on analyzing and interpreting the representation of women and the exploration of gender roles within literary works. This theory emerged as a result of the 1960s and 1970s' 'women's movement,' known as the second wave of feminism. Feminist criticism has always been concerned with books and literature (as well as other cultural production). For many feminists, literature and life are interconnected, and



it is the critic's responsibility to fight against stereotypes in literature, to increase oppressed people's consciousness, and to offer some movement in the power relationship between the oppressors and oppressed people (Dobie, 2012).

Since feminist criticism movement first began, literary texts reflect the social fact that women have lived in a patriarchal system. According to Showalter, the first stage of feminist criticism involved '*representations*', by concentrating on how women are portrayed as well as where they are inaccurately depicted or not depicted at all literature (Dobie, 2012). Based on the previous statement, Gillespie (2010) continues with her idea that the primary practice of feminist criticism has been to investigate how texts represent or reject women, reinforcing or challenging them. Additionally, Bressler (2011) stated that feminist literary criticism proposes equal opportunities for all women (and, as a matter of fact, all people) through all aspects of life.

The goal of feminist criticism is to promote equality by ensuring the fair portrayal of women in the text, to promote women's experiences and values in the world, and, finally, to eliminate gender differences in society. Feminist believed that the situations in which men and women write literary works have an impact on their writing style and the subjects they write about. In our society, feminism has been both a theoretical concept and a public practice. Many feminist activists have devoted their lives to promoting the rights and interests of women, breaking down barriers, proposing laws, and declaring attention to the ways in which women are still subjected to oppression, exclusion, exploitation, marginalization, and indifference (Gillespie, 2010).

Feminist literary criticism, from sociological perspective, has developed as a particular application of conflict theory, especially about gender inequality. Since gender is a social and cultural concept, feminists believe that these cultural definitions have traditionally put women at a disadvantage in terms of power, status, and respect. They investigate how power is distributed along gender differences and how this affects the interactions and relationships between male and female characters. Therefore, feminist criticism is defined as an effort to develop equal representation between men and women by opposing and changing the social and cultural structures in society.

In fact, there are many different kinds of feminism, perspectives, frameworks, and viewpoints that global feminists have actually used to create their justifications for oppressing women and solutions for eliminating it. The foundation of modern feminism is found in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) by Mary Wollstonecraft, which portrayed women as an oppressed class regardless of social hierarchy (Dobie, 2012). Additionally, *The Second Sex* (1949) by Simone de Beauvoir served as the inspiration for second-wave feminism, focusing on human rights, particularly social and economic justice, and exploring the ideological aspect of gender difference (Castle, 2013).

Overall, feminist theory emphasizes that society is filled with gender inequality, with women oppressed in every aspect of life (Lorber, 2010). Finally, there are many feminist theory, and according to Bell Hooks (2000), "*feminism is a movement to end gender inequality, sexual exploitation, and oppression*" (p.34). The next sub-chapter is a detailed explanation of Liberal feminism.

### C. Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism emerged during the "first wave" of feminist activity in the 1950s, sparked during the "second wave," from the 1960s through the 1980s, and began to restructure during the "third wave," approximately from the 1990s to the present. The first wave in mid-nineteenth century of liberal feminism focused on women's rights, pioneered by Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, encouraged women to create independent decisions based on their economic and political freedom from men, as well as to be well-educated same as men receive. Wollstonecraft viewed a woman who is powerful both in mind and body, a person who is free from being oppressed by her passion, her husband, or her children (Wollstonecraft, 2014).

Throughout the page of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft insisted that women are not merely a man's tool for enjoyment or fulfillment; rather, they are, in the words of Immanuel Kant, an end in themselves, a rational being who deserve an equal chance to develop into 'autonomous agents' and worth to have the capacity for self-determination (Wollstonecraft, 2014). By this statement, it emphasizes the idea that women, regardless of their gender, should have the ability to think, reason, and act independently, have the freedom and opportunity to develop their intellectual and moral capacities, make choices, and pursue their own goals and interests. Liberal feminists argued that giving women the very same privileges and opportunities as men would be sufficient to remove inequality between men and women in society.

The second wave of liberal feminism concentrated on gender equality and equal opportunity for women. As written by Botts and Tong in *Feminist Thought* (2018) there are several rights and opportunities for women that simply aimed to make women equals of men, including; equal employment opportunities provided to all women and men by enforcing anti-racial discrimination laws and equal pay in the workplace; women have the same right as men to be educated to their full potential and eliminating all discrimination by sex, at all levels of education; the right of women living in poverty to access job training, housing, and family; the right of women to control their own reproductive lives.

From the statement above, liberals advocate for changes in laws, policies, and institutions to eliminate inequality and promote women's rights. They believe that the best way to achieve gender justice is to change existing institutions and political systems. For example, in the context of the workplace, "change institution" typically refers to the act of create a work environment that is free from discrimination, where men and women have equal opportunities for career advancement and are treated fairly. Moreover, change institution in the workplace also refers to the act of leaving one company for some reasons such as career growth, better compensation, more suitable environment, or new opportunities.

The third wave liberal feminism encourages women to define their own identities, make choices according to their own desires, and challenge traditional gender roles and expectations. Liberal feminists acknowledge that women's oppressions intersect with other aspects of their identity, such as gender, race, sexuality, disability, and socioeconomic status. It emphasizes the importance of

addressing these intersections and working towards justice and equality for all group of women, recognizing that women's experiences are diverse and complex.

Liberal feminists also believe that every women have the right and opportunities to be as active in society as men, and thus be equally represented in the workplace, in the politic, and in the media. This could imply that women would like to be equally represented in higher-level positions in the workplace, in political roles, such as having more female world leaders, and in the media, to be equally represented in film and television, by having more female leading actors and more female directors, and producers. Liberal feminists have contributed to the passage of the law that protects more women. They cannot be discriminated against on the basis of their gender in the workplace and they have more rights. Furthermore, liberal feminism extends its principles into the private sphere in order to protect more women from oppression.

Overall, the main goals of liberal feminism are to challenge the existing gender inequalities and to promote equality of rights, access to opportunities, and the removal of social and economic limitations on women's choices and desire. Liberal feminists place a strong emphasis on the value of women's autonomy and freedom to make their own decisions and pursue their own goals. They advocate for changes in laws, policies, and institutions to eliminate oppression and promote women's rights. This refers to modifying or reforming the systems, rules, or structures within an organization, government, or society, so that individuals can eliminate inequality in specific context.

## **D. Oppression**

Oppression is defined as the institutionalized practices, norms, and structures that happens to social groups through the intersection of various social identities and systems of power. Oppression in this sense is not merely a result of individual actions or attitudes but is deeply ingrained in societal structures which is perpetuated by systems of power. It represents the development of social structure and unequal power relation that systematically disadvantage certain social groups while privileging others. The power relation allows them to influence social, economic, and political structures in ways that reinforce oppressive systems, where individuals or groups are positioned differently based on factors such as wealth, power, or status and influence access to resources, opportunities, and social change.

In the 1960s and 1970s, American society was riddled with serious structural injustices. At that time, oppression is a major topic of political discussion, especially among social movements like socialists, radical feminists, Black, and lesbian activists. Oppression might simply refer to treating a group of people inhumanely. Iris Marion Young, in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990), added that oppression refers to a phenomenon that naturally creates injustice in society and primarily restricts the freedom and ability of certain groups of people to experience their human potential, both mentally and physically. Considering what has been stated, some critical race theorists mention it is horrifying to believe that the unjust treatment is influenced by a variety of factors in addition to gender, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, religion, and others factors (Tyson, 2023).

There are various factors that contribute to the perpetuation of oppressive systems. According to Marxist and socialist feminists, those who hold power, wealth, and status in society, such as the capitalist class, uses their ideology to perpetuate the oppression of women (Dobie, 2012). Additionally, Kate Millett agrees with Gayle Rubin which mention the historical roots of women oppression are firmly buried in the sex/gender system of patriarchy (Rubin, 1975). Whereas a French feminist psychoanalyst claimed that the oppression of women is not limited to the economic, political, and social; instead, women are also psychologically oppressed at the unconscious level (Dobie, 2012). Furthermore, the African-American feminist critic, for example, finds herself pressured by two forces of oppression: racism and sexism.

Finally, the previous explanation asserts that the various elements of oppression (such as racial background, sexual identity, social class, and abilities status) intersect and fuse in the lives of the oppressed. All group oppressed people, which includes women, Blacks, Latinas, biracial women, queer women, old women, women from working-class backgrounds, and women with physical and psychological disabilities, in the broadest sense, experience limitations to use their abilities, skills, and express their needs, thoughts, and feelings. They experienced different forms of social injustice in different ways which is finally Young (1990) divides those situations of injustice into five categories: marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

## 1. **Marginalization**

Marginalization is generally defined as the practice of excluding or restricting a group of people from getting involved in social life, possibly affecting all of them to severe material deprivation or do not have access to basic resources (Young, 1990). In the United States, a large percentage of people experienced racial oppression or commonly known as marginalization. Erskine, Brassel, and Robotham, in Catalys (2023), report that the numbers of marginalization even higher for women of color; Blacks, Latinas, Indians, Asians, African-American, Latin-American, who are frequently discriminated based on skin tone, hair texture, or other physical features. Disgracefully, the others groups also marginalized such as the elderly and young people who are laid off or unable to find jobs, people who are mentally or physically disabled, many single mothers and their children, queer women, and others.

Marginalization is indeed a form of oppression that can have severe negative impacts on individuals and groups. It refers to the practice of pushing particular people or groups to the outside of society, denying them full participation and limiting their access to opportunities, resources, and social interactions. Moreover, in the context of the workplace, particularly groups of women, frequently lack access to leadership positions or opportunities for career advancement. They often excluded from significant decision-making processes, and receive lower pay than their male partners. People who are marginalized continue to be teased as if they do not exist in any society. These oppression of marginalization would continue lead to feelings of isolation, lack of representation, and a sense of being undervalued or underutilized.



## **2. Exploitation**

Exploitation refers to the act of the capitalist class taking advantage for personal gain or benefit from workers, resulting in unequal or unfair transfers of wealth, status, power, and other resources (Young, 1990). As a group, indeed, women undergo specific forms of gender exploitation where their energies and power are expended, often unnoticed and unacknowledged, which can hinder their ability to engage in important and creative work. This exploitation can occur in multiple spheres, including the workplace, domestic, and broader societal contexts. Historically, women have been assigned traditional gender roles which depend on men for financial support and expected to prioritize domestic duties and mothering. This condition became the main cause of the disadvantages of women in workplace as well as the reason why female sexuality exploited in society (Barret, 2014).

Women are exploited based on their sexuality and race. Sexual exploitation of women refers to the act of manipulating into engaging in sexual activities against their will or without their consent. This occurs when someone uses a woman's body sexually for financial benefit or to attract the male gaze/pleasure, or other advantages in the workplace. In this situation, workers must choose between being exploited and having no work at all. On the other hand, women are exploited based on their race. In racial exploitation, the members of an oppressed (racial group) should serve and benefits those in a privileged group. For example, those with a privileged status, such as business executives, government, and other professionals, might have servants if they visit a good hotel or restaurant. These servants are typically people of color such as Blacks, Latinos, Indians, etc.

### 3. Powerlessness

Powerlessness is the condition of having little or no authority or independency in most aspects of people's lives in society, particularly in decision-making processes because of the powerless status (Young, 1990). In this case, the division between the 'middle class' and the 'working class' or 'professionals' and 'nonprofessionals' can contribute to power imbalances and reinforce social inequalities. Those in the middle class may possess more influence, decision-making, and access to resources, whereas the working class are placed in a position in which they have to follow orders, almost never have authority, and rarely get the chance to develop and use their skills. This treatment clearly shows that the lives of the powerless are frequently oppressed and overruled by the powerful class and significantly impacted on daily lives and actions.

Being powerless can result in a number of fundamental injustices. When individuals or groups are disempowered and lack the ability to assert their rights, participate in decision-making processes, or shape their own destinies, it rise to various forms of injustice such as unable to realize the potential, having no control over how things are decided, and being treated with disrespect because of lower or powerless status. Paula Gunn Allen in *Feminist Thought* (2018) summed up modern and radical feminist perspectives as having two statements; that women are basically powerless and that conflict is fundamental to human life. Examples of powerlessness against women frequently happened in the workplace in which they may face underrepresentation in decision-making positions, their voices and views are unconsidered, and their needs and interests are not adequately addressed.

#### **4. Cultural Imperialism**

Cultural imperialism is the act of the dominant groups of one culture ‘taking over’ the culture of the ‘*Other*’ groups in society (Young, 1990). On the other hand, cultural imperialism refers to the condition in which the dominant culture of one society is imposed on another group, attempting to make it as the norm and universal. It involves the spread and promotion of the dominant culture's values, norms, beliefs, language, traditions, and practices, resulting in the suppression, erasure, or devaluation of local cultures and traditions. Cultural imperialism has been one of the most widespread forms, such as the distinction between men and women, heterosexuals and homosexuals, and professionals and workers. Those who are culturally dominated experience oppression; they are negatively stereotyped, socially separated, and marked as distinct and invisible.

Cultural imperialism, when it comes to women, would manifest in various ways and have negative implications for their rights and empowerment. In this case, a common example of cultural imperialism is the portrayal of women in media often perpetuates unrealistic beauty standards, objectification, and stereotypes. Moreover, the spread of American popular culture, such as adopting American beauty standard or ‘more white and more blonde’ appearance. These can have damaging effects on women's self-esteem, body image, and overall well-being, as they may feel pressured to conform to these ideals, and also can result in the loss of cultural traditions and values in many countries. Overall, cultural imperialism is a complex concept that describes how the dominant group who has power and influence shape societies and cultures.

## 5. Violence

Violence is a pervasive issue that manifests in various ways within societies. It refers to harmful actions or behaviors committed by dominant groups against other groups with the intention of dehumanizing, destroying, and stigmatizing the victim, causing physical and psychological harm and injury (Young, 1990). Violence exists as a social practice that a group of people knows happens and will continue to happen again. This form of oppression is the most visible, acceptable, and tolerable in societies. Those who commit acts of directed violence are frequently punished lightly or not at all. Summarizing Iris Young's statement related to violence chapter in her book reveals that violence in society is deeply rooted in the issue of gender inequality, racial background, and sexuality of women.

Violence against women continues to be a worldwide issue that knows no boundaries, class, economic status, race, and sexuality, as proven by the fact that violence is now the most common cause of injury and trauma to women (Botts and Tong, 2018). The most frequent acts of violence against women were rape, domestic violence, physical attacks, and, shockingly, killing. In fact, the issues of violence against women occur across various settings, including homes, workplaces, public spaces, and even online platforms. In general, some subgroups of women such as women of color, biracial women, or queer women are subjected to higher and wider rates of physical violence, sexual violence, and verbal violence. The perpetrators of violence exert power and control over the victim, leading to harm, suffering, and denying fundamental human rights.

**a) Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence happens when a person is forced to participate in sexual activities they do not want to involve. Sexual violence directly impacts women of ages, racial groups, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc. The most common forms of sexual violence against women are sexual assault or rape, unwanted physical touches, being exposed, filmed, or photographed in a sexually explicit manner without consent, prostitution, and so on. According to The World Health Organization (WHO) in *Violence Info* (2022), sexual violence against women might cause significant long and short-term physical, sexual, mental (depression, trauma, self-harm, suicide), and reproductive health issues.

**b) Physical Violence**

Physical violence refers to acts in which one person attempts to gain greater control and power over another by using a part of their own body, potentially resulting in physical harm or injury (Crowell & Burgess, 1996). This physical violence includes pushing, grabbing, shoving, kicking, smacking, hitting, beating, choking, and threatening by using the victor's own body or objects such as a knife or gun. All of these actions are regarded as "severe" physical violence. As a result, those who are the victim of physical violence often suffer fatal injuries both inside and outside of the body; bruises, broken bones, and even death.

**c) Psychological Violence**

Psychological violence or emotional abuse happens when someone threatens, reduces, and devalues the victims in an attempt to gain power over them,

which can result in psychological trauma. Crowell & Burgess (1996) state, Psychological violence against women can take many different forms, including; verbal abuse such as insulting, criticizing, undervaluing and discrediting; isolation and restriction the women from social life, professional status, and family interactions; repeatedly threatening to abandon, divorce, or begin an affair. Finally, this kind of violence can have an impact on both physical and mental health, such as anxiousness, sadness, powerlessness, and other negative emotions.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

In this chapter, the researcher will explain the research methods and techniques used to gather and analyze the data in this study. The researcher divided this chapter into four sections: research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis. Therefore, the readers will understand how the study was conducted.

#### **A. Research Design**

This study belongs to the category of literary criticism since it is mainly focused on the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of the contextualization of a literary work (Klarer, 2014). The primary objective of this study is to identify the portrayal of oppression experienced by women characters Monique and Evelyn in *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. This study applies related theories, such as the oppression theory by Irish Young, which is able to provide a wider perspective on oppression. Furthermore, liberal feminism theory emerges to depth understanding of women struggles against oppression on the most profound level. The study is designed to gather several data on women oppression; then, those data serve as references for the researcher to analyze how women characters struggle.

#### **B. Data Source**

In conducting this study, the main source of the data is the novel entitled *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. The researcher used an English printed version of the novel, which consists of 400 pages long and the novel divided into 69 chapters. In order to avoid differences in the data information,

the researcher only uses first-edition publications from Atria Books, which was published on June 13, 2017. All of the data in this study comes from words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues that are relevant to the theory and the topic in the novel.

### **C. Data Collection**

The researcher goes through several stages when analyzing the forms of women oppression and women struggle in the novel. First, the researcher reads the printed version of Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* in order fully understand the whole story. Second, the researcher re-reads the novel several times by using a close-reading method to gain a deeper understanding of its contents and to make sure that there is no missing data. During close reading, the researcher takes some notes and writes down the data evidence from statements, conversations, interactions, and quotations of women characters; Monique and Evelyn, that are relevant to the five forms of oppression and their struggle against oppression.

### **D. Data Analysis**

After collecting the data, the researcher classified the data found in the novel based on five faces of oppression by Young's theory; exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. Moreover, the researcher also analyze and interpret the data by using Young's theory and the theory of liberal feminism to know how women characters struggle against oppression in the novel. These theories are related and contribute to the development of knowledge regarding the connection between women oppression and women struggle which is intended to understand the strength, power, and movement that women can practice. The final step is drawing conclusions regarding the problems of the study.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the forms of oppression experienced by Monique Grant and Evelyn Hugo in the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid and how they struggle against oppression. The researcher used the five faces of oppression theory by Iris Marion Young and liberal feminism perspective to answer the problems of this study. After reading the novel repeatedly, the researcher found that Monique is subjected to marginalization in the workplace due to her gender and racial. Whereas Evelyn Hugo is subjected to five faces of oppression of Iris Young, carried out by those in positions of power.

#### **A. The Forms of Oppression Experienced by Women Characters in Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo***

Taylor Jenkins Reid's novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* extensively examines women's lives and the difficulties they experienced from the early 1950s to the present day. The main themes of the novel are how society treats and judges women regardless of their gender, race, and sexuality; even more so, the novel addresses sensitive issues such as domestic violence and sexual assault. This study examines two women characters, Evelyn Hugo, a Cuban-American, and Monique Grant, an African-American woman. As women of color in the novel, they are often portrayed as objects, they must follow social norms, and they are frequently marginalized, exploited, objectified, and even subjected to violence.

In the novel, the oppression that Monique and Evelyn experienced carry out by those in positions of power in the workplace, the house, the entertainment industry, and society as a whole. Consequently, they had to confront difficult decisions in order to sustain themselves in a society that was denying and unwelcoming to them, especially Evelyn. As a woman, Cuban-American woman, as well as a bisexual woman, she had difficulty finding acceptance in her life. However, Evelyn and Monique struggle to maintain authority and make their own decisions both in their career and personal life. Through the portrayal of Evelyn and Monique, the novel demonstrates the complexity and diversity of women as well as their right to be seen and heard on their own terms.

### **1. Marginalization**

In *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, the characters Monique Grant and Evelyn Hugo confront marginalization in the workplace due to their gender and racial background. Monique Grant, as African-American journalist working for a fictional magazine called Vivant, experiences racism and sexism in her professional life. Despite her talent and potential, she is underestimated and undervalued by her boss, Frankie, assuming that Monique is not capable of handling a high-profile assignment. On the other hand, Evelyn Hugo, as Cuban-American actress being marginalized in Hollywood entertainment industry. She experiences limited opportunities, subjected to racial stereotypes, and excluded from any production. Additionally, the society at that time period where the novel is set highly valued whiteness and has historically marginalized women of color.

Monique where relatively in a low-profile position and struggles to advance her career. When the assignment to interview Evelyn Hugo is presented to Monique, her boss, Frankie doubts Monique's ability to handle such a significant opportunity. She questions Monique's qualifications and suggests that she is not experienced or skilled enough to conduct the interview. Kimberlé Crenshaw in *Feminist Thoughts* (2018) defines marginalization as a form of oppression which excludes groups or individuals from useful participation in social life, including in the productive work. In this case, Frankie expelled Monique from useful participation, diminished her abilities to exercise her jobs, and limited her opportunities to advance her career in the workplace. As seen in datum 1.

**Datum 1**

*“Look, it’s not that we don’t love you, we do,” Frankie says. “We think you’re destined for big things at Vivant, but I was hoping to put one of our more experienced, top hitters on this. And so I want to be up front with you when I say that we did not submit you as an idea to Evelyn’s team. We sent five big names, and they came back with this.”(Reid, 2017, p.5)*

The datum 1 above interpreted as a form of marginalization since Monique feels that her abilities and skills are not fully appreciated or recognized by her boss at the workplace. Frankie, who holds a position of authority and decision-making, has some power to control over Monique and the stories she creates. Frankie also frequently casts doubt on Monique's journalistic skills and explicitly admits that Monique was not submitted as an idea to Evelyn's team, instead, she is sending “*five big names*” or top hitters for Monique's position. Even though in the first phrase Frankie said that Monique is “*destined for big things at Vivant,*” which interpret that she has potential, still, she was excluded from participation in the workplace and did not receive the equal level of recognition or opportunities as top Hitter.

Throughout the novel, the researcher also discovers that Frankie repeatedly underestimates Monique's abilities by assuming she is an inexperienced worker, someone with less clout, weak, and easy to control. Frankie holds the beliefs that Evelyn chose Monique for exclusive interview is because of her perceived weakness. Monique was undoubtedly intimidated by this treatment. She was not treated with the same respect as those top Hitter. Overall, Frankie's treatment of Monique highlights the difficulties faced by women who receive less respect and less representation in the workplace.

In addition, Monique Grant was marginalized not only by her boss but also by another journalist, named Julia Santos. Santos expresses frustration and anger because Evelyn had not chosen her for the exclusive interview, but rather Monique. Furthermore, Santos emphasizes her power in the entertainment industry by spreading hatred in her article, strengthening the idea that Monique is an inexperienced journalist. As seen in datum 2.

**Datum 2**

*Here is the only part that has me heated: Evelyn could have chosen anyone for this. (Ahem, me?) But instead she chose some newbie at Vivant? She could have had anyone. (Ahem, me?) Why this Monique Grant chick (and not me)? (Reid, 2017, p.11)*

The datum 2 provided above can be interpreted as a form of marginalization since Julia Santos questioned why Monique Grant, who is described as a "*newbie at Vivant*," was chosen to write Evelyn Hugo's biography. Julia Santos uses the term "*chick*" refers to Monique Grant, which is viewed as insulting or demeaning, possibly due to Monique's lower position and lack of experience. As a consequence of her marginalization, Monique faced difficulties at work that affected her

confidence and motivation, as she felt undervalued and underused despite her abilities and contributions; it also limited her opportunities for professional growth.

In further analysis, faces oppression in the form of marginalization also experienced by another female character, Evelyn Hugo. Many feminist theorists argue that women of color may experience marginalization due to stereotypes and discrimination, which can affect to their social interactions. In the novel, Evelyn began to experience various forms of social marginalization when she was 13 years old. Grew up in Hell's Kitchen neighborhood around the 1950s, and at that time period, the neighborhood was shaped by issues of poverty, cultural diversity, and thriving street life. As shown in datum 3 below.

**Datum 3**

*Grown men were watching me walk down the street, and some of the girls in my building didn't want to hang out with me anymore. It was a lonely business. Motherless, with an abusive father, no friends, and a sexuality in my body that my mind wasn't ready for (Reid, 2017, p.43)*

The datum 3 above clearly evidence that Evelyn is marginalized and isolated due to various factors. The fact that Evelyn was watched by grown men as she walked the street was potentially gender harassment or discrimination, causing her to feel uncomfortable due to unwanted male attention. The fact that some of the girls in her building no longer want to hang out with Evelyn anymore indicates that she is being rejected and excluded from society, leading to feelings of loneliness. Additionally, the fact that Evelyn is motherless, lives with an abusive father, and struggles with her sexuality that her mind was not ready for raises the possibility that Evelyn is marginalized due to her complex family background, her history of abuse, and her sexuality, causing her to be marginalized from others in society.

Evelyn Hugo nevertheless continued dealing with marginalization in the entertainment industry, even after rising to fame as a Hollywood artist. Hollywood during the 1950s and 1960s is a place of extreme racial and gender marginalization. At that time period, white men (producers, directors, and actors) held the majority of positions of influence and power in the industry, while women especially women of color were frequently marginalized and were never offered the same opportunities as men (Hunt and Ramon, 2022). In the novel, the other marginalization experienced by Evelyn was carried out by powerful men, Ari Sullivan, a Sunset Studio film producer. As portrayed in datum 4 below.

**Datum 4**

*ARI DROPPED ME FROM ANY productions within Sunset and started offering to loan me out to Columbia. After being forced to do two forgettable romantic comedies—both of them so bad that it was a foregone conclusion they would fail spectacularly—the other studios didn't want much of me, either. (Reid, 2017, p.154)*

The datum 4 above portrayed Evelyn as female actress who marginalized in the form of exclusion. Ari Sullivan, a decision-maker and an influential figure in the entertainment industry within Sunset excluded Evelyn from all Sunset productions, which interpreted that Evelyn was no longer given opportunities to work within that production. In addition, Ari Sullivan offered to "loan out" Evelyn to Columbia, indicating that she was no longer a priority for Sunset Studios anymore, instead she was being transferred to work for another studio, reducing Evelyn's agency to advance her career. Furthermore, the term that states Evelyn was "forced to do two forgettable romantic comedies", which were predicted to be forgettable and unsuccessful, implying that Evelyn is powerless unless accepting to do low-quality jobs with a small probability of success.

Moreover, the statement "*foregone conclusion they would fail spectacularly*" indicates that Evelyn received projects that were believed to fail, possibly due to poor quality or lack of audience interest. Furthermore, there is a piece of evidence in the final statement, which mentions that "*the other studios did not want much*" of Evelyn shortly after two unsuccessful romantic comedies, implying that her future career and value were completely diminished. In this condition, Evelyn did not receive the chance to express her abilities or opportunities due to Ari limited her for career advancement and, at the same time, excluded Evelyn to contribute in Sunset Studio production. Ari Sullivan and the industry by these action highlight the oppressive system and power imbalances that exist within the Hollywood entertainment industry.

The novel highlights how gender and racial discrimination intersect, causing the marginalization that Monique and Evelyn experience in their respective workplaces. They navigate a world where women are often relegated to subordinate roles, their voices are silenced or ignored, and they are subject to objectification and stereotypes in social and professional spheres. In addition, Monique Grant and Evelyn Hugo, experienced of exclusion and limitation from getting involved both in the social life and in the workplace, naturally due to their gender as women and their racial background as African-American and Cuban-American. Furthermore, marginalization against Monique and Evelyn maintained by those in positions of power. To sum up, marginalization can be both a cause and a result of other forms of oppression, as those who are excluded from society are steadily more subjected to violence and exploitation (Crenshaw, 1990).

## 2. Exploitation

The novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* represents the main character Evelyn Hugo, who is not only marginalized but also exploited in the entertainment industry. During 1950s and 1960s Hollywood, women actresses faced numerous difficulties and limitations regarding representation, opportunities, and treatment, both in front and behind the camera. Additionally, the industry was largely dominated by men, typically white men including producers, directors, and actors, while women were frequently forced to get involved in exploitative relationships with them, for a chance to advance their careers. In the portrayal of the novel, Evelyn blossoms into a legendary Hollywood actress under the supervision of Sunset Studio, but in any case of her popularity and glory, she experienced exploitation, such as being controlled, manipulated, objectified, and taken advantage of by the men around her.

In the picture of Hollywood, women are not at the heart of it, not even the half. The exploitation and mistreatment that Evelyn experiences happened when she was just beginning her career as a female Hollywood actress, where she is being put into inappropriate situations, having her background purposefully changed, and being under pressure to meet particular requirements for beauty standards to conform societal expectations, as well as having much fewer speaking roles than men in movies. Additionally, Evelyn has been exploited because of her race as a Cuban-American actress in Hollywood and primarily because of white producers Harry Cameron and Ari Sullivan taking advantage of Evelyn's fame in the Hollywood entertainment industry.



The researcher has discovered around ten statements and quotations in the novel that represent the exploitation of Evelyn. The researcher analyze the most visible form of exploitation against Evelyn where the white producer, Harry Cameron purposefully controls and manipulates Evelyn's personal life, in order to create her to be a more marketable or desirable actress in the entertainment industry. These treatment include changing Evelyn's physical appearance and personal life, manipulating her historical life, and managing Evelyn's sensational relationships with numerous actresses and actors. The Producers Harry Cameron, and Ari Sullivan exercise Evelyn's life under control, for the benefit of Sunset Studio, which might be resulting in unequal distributions. As represented in datum 5 below.

#### **Datum 5**

*Harry Cameron: "I read your answers to the interview questions." He looked at me directly. "Ari is very happy with the changes you've made. He thinks you have a lot of potential. The studio thinks it would be a good idea if you went on a few dates, if you were seen around town with some guys like Pete Greer and Brick Thomas. Maybe even Don Adler." (Reid, 2017, p.52)*

The datum 5 above is one of the most visible portrayals of exploitation against Evelyn, particularly when her personal life is essentially controlled and being subjected as a marketing tool to benefit the studio. The phrases "*the studio thinks*" and "*it would be a good idea*" indicate that Evelyn does not have complete power or freedom in making decisions unless to meets Ari and Harry's demands. Additionally, the point of "*being seen around town*" with some guy actresses raises the possibility that Evelyn's relationships are being exploited as part of a spotlight or marketing campaign to shape a particular public perception or representation. Moreover, in the novel, Harry indirectly demands Evelyn to get rid of her first husband, Ernie Diaz, so she can freely hang out with many famous males.

The portrayal of the novel explicitly shows that Evelyn put an unrealistic representation in the entertainment industry for the profit and benefit of Sunset Studio. Her whole life; attitudes, beliefs, physical appearance, and life background were fully managed and controlled, possibly with the intention of creating a good reputation perceived by the public. Nevertheless, after Evelyn gives all of her potential to Sunset, she still suffers from a shortage of speaking roles in the film. In 2018, Dr. Martha M. Lauzen's research find that only 35% of women characters speak in films, their stories and voices are not entirely being told and heard in films. The researcher discovered that Evelyn has no influence or control when Sunset Studios forces her to perform a weak, short-lined role in seven different movies.

For a brief period, as Evelyn expanded in notoriety, still, she was experienced two incident of sexual exploitation by France director and producer, Max Girard. Girard approached Evelyn about acting in the film called *Boute-en-Train* and *Three A.M.*, which both of them were intended to represent a graphic portrayal of women's desire, with sensual scenes that were more vulgar than the original concept of the film. In this situation, Evelyn was positioned into inappropriate representations, allowing her to be sexually exploited, dehumanized, and served as an object or commodity of males and, on contrary, this condition would be very profitable for the producer. As portrayed in datum 6 below.

#### **Datum 6**

*When Max came to my dressing room on the second-to-last day of filming, he said, "Ma belle, aujourd'hui tu seras seins nus." I had picked up enough French by then to know he was saying he wanted to shoot my scene coming out of the lake. When you're an American movie star with huge boobs in a French movie, you quickly learn that when French men are saying seins nus, they are talking about you being topless. (Reid, 2017, p.163)*

The datum 6 above is interpreted as sexual exploitation since Evelyn's body, mainly when her breasts "*seins nus*", is being exploited and objectified for the purpose of entertainment or sensationalism of the audience and the filmmakers, rather than for artistic or narrative purposes in the film industry. Radical-cultural feminists believe that men have taken advantage of women's sexuality for their own entertainment (Botts and Tong, 2018). In this situation, Evelyn did not have much choice but to bring her name back to popularity after being marginalized or excluded by the producers of Sunset Studio.

The researcher discovered another forms of sexual exploitation. This incident is more severe since Evelyn was objectified by Max Girard, in *Three A.M.*, movie. Girard, as a producer of that film, created and portrayed Evelyn as a woman who wanted to be pleased by her husband. Women, since the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the media, has played a significant role in shaping societal perceptions and attitudes towards women, that women have increasingly been sexualized and objectified throughout history, particularly their physical appearance have always been portrayed unrealistically, and seen as objects, so their humanity is diminished.

In case of the sexual exploitation of Evelyn in the Hollywood film industry, there is specific injustice and unfairness transferred from Evelyn to a producer, Max Girard, and Evelyn's opposite actor, Don Adler. As seen in datum 7 below.

### **Datum 7**

*They blamed the sexpot they'd created, whom they could now call a tramp. They weren't going to give me an Oscar for that. They were going to watch it alone in a dark theater and then chastise me in public. I made people money. No one turns away money. They were all too happy to get me in their movies and then talk about me behind my back. (Reid, 2017, p.277)*

Due to Evelyn's role in those movies, she became an international sensation, but not because of her acting abilities or talents, but because of the representation of her sexual attractiveness. The audience labeled her a "*sexpot*," blaming her for this image and calling her a "*tramp*." During her rise and fame, Evelyn was repeatedly treated as a commodity rather than a fully human. Meanwhile, the fact that the producers, Max Girard and Evelyn's opposite actor, Don Adler, won an Oscar because of that movie, and Evelyn was not even nominated. Additionally, those men making money off of Evelyn's exploitation and not willing to give her credit or reward for her performance.

The way men and producers talk about Evelyn behind her back interprets that she is not given the same opportunities or treated with the same level of professionalism as male actors. From the interpretation above, it is clear that men in the industry were not interested in recognizing Evelyn's talent and hard work but instead only interested in exploiting her sexually; decreasing her physical or sexual attractiveness; and having her bodies are taken advantage of for their personal or financial benefit, or to attract audience, mainly attract male gaze/pleasure, or others.

Finally, *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* clearly portrays situations of exploitation against Evelyn that were carried out by men who held power in the entertainment industry. These men use their influence to control over Evelyn's career and exploit her primarily for their own benefit. On the other hand, Evelyn felt as if she was trapped and powerless to escape from exploitative relationships with them in order to advance her career. Finally, Evelyn was exploited because of her gender and racial background as Cuban-American female actress in Hollywood.

### 3. Powerlessness

Evelyn Hugo in the entertainment industry experienced disparities in power and representation, which can contribute to feelings of powerlessness. At the moment when Evelyn is being marginalized and exploited as a female actress in the entertainment industry, she is rendered powerless to participate in decision-making that affects the conditions of her life and actions. In some situations, Evelyn occasionally finds herself in a position where she has to follow orders from those who are designated as professionals or decision-makers, rarely given the opportunity to exercise her own authority, and has less experience to develop her skills and abilities. Those because of the power structure in Hollywood, where men held massive power and influence in the entertainment industry.

#### **Datum 8**

Harry laughed. "Look, this is Ari's plan. Like it or not. He wants you in a few more pictures before he's gonna give you *Little Women*. But he is gonna give you *Little Women*." "All right," What choice did I have, really? My contract with *Sunset* was for another three years. If I caused too much trouble, they had the option to drop me at any time. They could loan me out, force me to take projects, put me on leave without pay, you name it. They could do anything they wanted. *Sunset* owned me. (Reid, 2017, p.66)

From the datum 8 above, Evelyn feels a sense of powerless since Harry and Ari make decisions for Evelyn's career without her being involved in the decision-making process, representing a lack of control over her own professional development. Harry Cameron and Ari Sullivan held power or 'professional' positions, in the entertainment industry whereas Evelyn held powerless or 'non-professional' positions. In this situation, Ari wants Evelyn to be in a few more pictures with other famous male actors before he gives her the role in *Little Women*. Evelyn believes her options are limited, but to follow the terms & conditions of the

agreement with Sunset Studio, even if she does not want to. She forcefully had to make compromises and sacrifices to advance her career, or Sunset Studio would exert their power to drop or loan her out whenever Sunset desired, force her to accept unwanted projects, or place her on unpaid leave.

In addition, there is a power structure between Don Adler and Evelyn Hugo. Don Adler, Evelyn's second husband as well as a famous actor, has significant power and control over Evelyn's life. Adler has more financial resources than Evelyn, has more influence over social circles in the entertainment industry, and is able to use his fame to manipulate Evelyn's feelings. Don repeatedly taking advantage of Evelyn weaknesses and insecurities in order to keep control of her, including limits or isolates her from social and opportunities. Whenever Evelyn refused Don's demand, she might have been subjected to threats, intimidates or even physically violence her, leaving her in a constant situation of fear and powerless.

In Evelyn's case, her position as a woman in the entertainment industry and her relationship with Don Adler may have made it more challenging for her to speak up for herself, or to remove the power structures that were affecting her life in society at large. The media has sensationalized Evelyn's relationship with Don, portraying it as a glamorous romance, while removing the truth about his abuse and control over Evelyn. Furthermore, despite her fame and success, Evelyn felt restrained by social norms and people's perceptions of her as a submissive wife, which left her feeling powerless to speak out or ask for help. Don uses his authority and influence in Hollywood to diminish Evelyn's agency to control her professional life and public image. As portrayed in datum 9 below.

**Datum 9**

*“Don wants you out of the studio. Ari’s planning to loan you out to MGM and Columbia. Don wants Ari to blackball you from getting an Oscar nod, and Ari’s agreeing to it. I think he’s gonna loan you out and purposefully put you in flops”. Because Don’s the goose that laid the golden egg. The studios are all hurting. People aren’t going to the movies as much; they are waiting for the next episode of Gunsmoke. Sunset’s been in decline from the minute we were forced to sell off our theaters. We’re staying afloat because of stars like Don”. (Reid, 2017, p.139)*

The lives of the weak or the powerless are frequently oppressed and overruled by the powerful class. The representation of Don in the datum 9 above is known as the "*goose that laid the golden egg*," indicating that his position is a valuable and profitable to the Sunset Studios. Hence, he became the most influential figure in the entertainment industry. Don uses his power to persuade Ari, a decision-maker, to remove Evelyn from studio and cease her from being nominated for an Oscar. Consequently, Ari consented to deal with all of Don's demands and purposefully put Evelyn in "*flops*" to sabotage her career.

Evelyn seems to be a relatively powerless figure caught in the conflict of more powerful stakeholders in the industry. She feels dissatisfied with Don's actions, which had a profound negative impact on her life and left her feeling weak, powerless, and disadvantaged. The point about Sunset Studios' reliance on stars like Don highlights the pressures that Evelyn faces to maintain their success and influence, and the competitive nature of the entertainment industry between men and women as well as between the powerful and powerless. Overall, datum 9 above represents images of an industry where only influential people hold the ability to succeed, while others described as vulnerable and powerless figure who is subjected to the desire and decisions of those who control success.

#### 4. Cultural Imperialism

In *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, Evelyn, as a Cuban-American actress faces the effects of cultural imperialism. In this form of oppression, Evelyn is labeling as ‘*other*,’ or different than the dominant culture, which mostly represent through her physical characteristics. Rahayu (2010) claims that in a variety of cultures and societies, women are treated as colonized people and are relegated to the position of ‘*other*’. The novel examine the ways in which Hollywood and American culture are portrayed as superior and massively used to oppress and remove other minority cultures, such as Black or Latina culture.

The Hollywood entertainment industry has become widely dominant around the world, influencing the development of American culture, beliefs, and values. As part of Evelyn's rise to fame, the white Producer Harry Cameron in the entertainment industry designed and presented her as two opposing images, from Cuban-American to fully becoming American. Evelyn is purposely forced to conform to a particular set of cultural norms, including adopting white American beauty standards, such as changing her Latinas name and becoming a white desirable American actress in order to succeed in Hollywood. The erasure of her Cuban identity represents a form of cultural imperialism that oppresses Evelyn. More portrayal can be seen in datum 10 below.

##### **Datum 10**

*Harry introduced me to studio stylist Gwendolyn Peters. Gwen bleached my hair and cut it into a shoulder-length bob. She shaped my eyebrows. She plucked my widow's peak. I met with a nutritionist, who made me lose six pounds exactly, mostly by taking up smoking and replacing some meals with cabbage soup. I met with an elocutionist, who got rid of the New York in my English, who banished Spanish entirely. (Reid, 2017, p.50)*



The datum 10 provided above portrays how Evelyn is subjected to Hollywood's beauty standards and cultural norms. The beauty standard in the Hollywood entertainment industry has historically been dominated by white; therefore, it had to be imposed on Evelyn. The sentence, "*Harry introduces me to studio stylist Gwendolyn Peters*" this might refer to Evelyn's transformation, which includes bleaching her hair, changing her hairstyle, shaping her eyebrows, and plucking her widow's peak. Evelyn's physical transformations portray a form of cultural imperialism since she has to conform to a specific look to be successful.

In addition, Harry wants Evelyn to have a session with a nutritionist who forces her to lose six pounds by quitting smoking and replacing her meals. This condition is a reflection of Hollywood's obsession with women actresses being thin, and the expectation for them to keep maintaining a particular body type. This action is another way in which Hollywood puts values and practices on minority cultures by promoting an unrealistic standard of beauty. Further interpretation is when Evelyn meets an elocutionist who removes New York from her English and banishes Spanish entirely. This is a representation of how Hollywood takes away Evelyn's cultural linguistic identities and forces her to adopt a standardized American accent.

In general, *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* portrays oppression in the form of cultural imperialism through Hollywood dominance and the imposition of beauty standards, body shapes, and languages on Evelyn. Evelyn's experiences as a Cuban-American actress clearly illustrate how minority cultures are expected to adopt dominant norms and beliefs in order to succeed, even if it means completely erasing their distinctive cultural identities in social life.

## 5. Violence

Oppression against women on multiple levels can frequently contribute to violence in society. Cudd (2006) states that violence has always played a significant role in the development and perpetuation of oppression. Violence are almost usually carried out by men against women, thus, women may have been the original victims of oppressive violence, and they continue to experience violence as a result of the ongoing oppression. This is because oppression creates power imbalances between those in positions of power, often men, to exert control and dominance over women. Furthermore, summarizing Irish Young's statement related to violence chapter in her book reveals that violence in society is deeply rooted in the issue of gender inequality, racial background, and sexuality of women (1990).

The social and cultural setting of the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, which portrays five faces of oppression, also plays a significant role in highlighting the forms of violence issues that Evelyn Hugo experienced both in private and public lives. Furthermore, during that time, the social norms supported the ideas or reinforced the stereotype of women that women are weak and less valuable than men, and that violence against women is tolerable or even acceptable.

Evelyn, in this novel, experienced the most powerful violence of women, including sexual assault, domestic violence such as physical violence, and psychological violence. Additionally, those who held positions of power in Evelyn's life, such as her husbands, father, men in the entertainment industry as well as people in society, were portrayed as practicing several forms of violence against her on frequent occasions.

**a) Sexual Violence**

Evelyn Hugo experienced two forms of sexual violence. The action was kissed by the cashier and forced to have sex by her husband which these sexual activity happened without her consent. In the portrayal of the novel, the cultural and social environment in which Evelyn lives have an effect on how the roles between men and women and structures of power make it possible and even justify for violent behavior. By the time Evelyn was thirteen, she was experiencing sexual violence, which is done by the cashier at *five-and-dime*, Billy. In this case, Billy, an older guy than Evelyn in a position of power, gains advantages over her. As seen in datum 11 below.

**Datum 11**

*The cashier at the five-and-dime on the corner was this boy named Billy. He was the sixteen-year-old brother of the girl who sat next to me in school. One October day, I went down to the five-and-dime to buy a piece of candy, and he kissed me. I didn't want him to kiss me. I pushed him away. But he held on to my arm. "Oh, come on," he said. The store was empty. His arms were strong. He grasped me tighter. And in that moment, I knew he was going to get what he wanted from me whether I let him or not. (Reid, 2017, p.43)*

The datum 11 above clearly highlights the issue of sexual violence and the power structure that exists in such situations. Sexual violence, according to Dartnall & Jewkes (2013), is defined as any sexual activity that is mostly directed against women's sexuality, using coercion, harassment, or advances, and they all occur in circumstances where consent is not given or not given freely. Billy, a sixteen-year-old boy, kissed Evelyn without her consent when the store was empty, and when Evelyn resisted by immediately pushing him away, Billy used his physical strength to hold onto her by grasping her tighter and using other forms of coercion.

Evelyn mentioned that the store was empty, and there was no one around. This situation adding the sense of vulnerability that Evelyn feels. Evelyn expresses the way she felt powerlessness, she felt physically overpowered, and she felt like she had no control over what was happening, despite the fact that Billy was going to use her to get what he wanted, whether or not she allowed it to happen. In addition, the novel portrays the way that Billy sexually violent Evelyn repeatedly for the next three months. Moreover, Billy's actions are a significant illustration of how someone in a position of power can gain an advantage over another person who is in a position of powerlessness, even if it will lead to the violent action.

Further analysis revealed that Evelyn Hugo had also experienced sexual violence from her third husband, Mick Riva, who was a famous singer in Hollywood. Deosthali, Rege, and Arora (2022) define sexual violence as using physical force by the husband to have sex even if the wife refused. In the portrayal of the novel, Mick asserts his power and control over Evelyn by attempting to force and manipulate her into having sexual activity with him without Evelyn's consent. Mick's behavior was coercive and disrespectful as he ignored Evelyn's boundaries and wishes, as seen in datum 12 below.

**Datum 12**

*You catch his eye. He smiles. He grabs you. You push him off and say, "I don't like to have sex in the morning." "What does that mean?" he says. You shrug. "I'm sorry." He says, "C'mon, baby," and lies on top of you. He shakes his head. He gets out of bed. He says, "You know, you're nothing like I imagined" (Reid, 2017, p.184)*

The datum 12 above clearly portrays a sexual violence in which Mick forces Evelyn to have sex in the morning. Evelyn asserts her boundaries by pushing him away and saying that she does not want to have sex in the morning, but Mick

responds by using manipulative and dismissive expressions like "*C'mon, baby*" while lying on top of her. This treatment indicating that he is trying to coerce and pressure Evelyn into having sex. Furthermore, in the last sentence, Mick is blaming Evelyn for not conforming to his desire and expectations. This position highlights harmful gender stereotypes that men deserve sex from their partners and women are obligated to fulfill their sexual desires. Finally, this behavior is not acceptable and might leave women feeling powerless, violated, and traumatized.

**b) Physical Violence**

The physical violence that Evelyn Hugo experiences in *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* is happened repeatedly and carried out by father and husband in her life. The 1950s and 1960s, the period in which the novel is set, are depicted as having social beliefs toward domestic violence, with women frequently being trapped in abusive relationships, which were often ignored or even normalized. Furthermore, violence against Evelyn in this novel exposes the power relationships in home and Hollywood, where powerful men can get away with abusive behavior. Throughout the novel, Evelyn first experiences physical violence from her abusive and alcoholic father, and in the midst of her fame and wealth, she subjected to physical violence repeatedly at the hands of her second husband, Don Adler.

Evelyn lives in a patriarchal society where it is common for women to be expected to put their responsibilities as wives and mothers over their professional and personal goals. Don, the most significant influential star in Hollywood, married Evelyn and quickly started physically violent Evelyn to maintain his control over

her both in her private and public life. This physical violence escalated over time as Evelyn could not agree with every one of Don's demands, despite the fact that his demands were rooted in his own insecurities over Evelyn. The first incident of physical violence happened when Don demanded Evelyn quit acting and have children instead, when Evelyn refused, Don responded with violence. As seen in datum 13 below.

**Datum 13**

*He came right up into my face. "We are not equals, love. And I'm sorry if I've been so kind that you've forgotten that." "I think this should be the last movie you do," he said. "I think it's time for us to have children."*

*His career wasn't turning out the way he wanted. And if he wasn't going to be the most famous person in his family, he surely wasn't going to allow that person to be me. I looked right at him and said, "Absolutely. Positively. Not." And he smacked me across the face. Sharp, fast, strong. (Reid, 2017, p.77)*

From the datum 13 above, a powerful example of domestic violence was portrayed in the form of physical violence in which Don controlled Evelyn's life by reducing her autonomy and quickly turned to physical violence against her. The passage also reflects male dominance in period which the novel is set, where women historically excluded from opportunities for professional success. From the datum illustrate above, it becomes clear that Don feels his own career was not going in the way he wants and that he is threatened by the idea of Evelyn having greater fame or success than he does. Therefore, Don was attempting to maintain his power and control over Evelyn by demanding Evelyn to quit acting and have children instead.

However, Evelyn confidently refused her husband's demand by saying, "*Absolutely. Positively. Not,*" which left no room for negotiation or compromise. As a consequence of Evelyn's decision, Don responded to her with physical violence, smacking her across the face. Evelyn then expresses the physical pain she

felt and makes a connection to her past, recalling how her father had hit her in a similar manner. In addition, Don's statement, "*We are not equals, love. And I'm sorry if I've been so kind that you've forgotten that*", is particularly telling, as it reveals the power structure of their relationship. Don sees himself as superior to Evelyn and believes that he has the right to control her actions and decisions.

Following a single incident, Don's physical violence against Evelyn gradually escalates over time, becoming more frequent and severe. According to *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence* (2022), those who commit acts of violence frequently seem wonderful and perfect at first but eventually, grow more aggressive and controlling as the relationship progresses. In this situation, Evelyn becomes trapped in the cycle of abuse, feeling unable to leave the marriage because Don has power and influence in their relationship. During their relationship, Don may be more concerned about his career advancement and his public image rather than about the well-being of Evelyn. As seen in datum 14.

#### **Datum 14**

*A MAN HITS YOU ONCE and apologizes, and you think it will never happen again. But then you tell him you're not sure you ever want a family, and he hits you once more. The third time, it's a disagreement about whether to go out to Romanoff's or stay in. Which, you realize when he pushes you into the wall behind you, is actually about the image of your marriage to the public. The fourth time, it's after you both lose at the Oscars. You tell him it's OK. He tells you that you don't understand. You remind him that you lost, too. He says, "Yeah, but your parents are trash from Long Island. No one expects anything from you." You know you shouldn't, but you say, "I'm from Hell's Kitchen, you asshole." He opens the parked car's door and pushes you out. (Reid, 2017, p.81)*

The datum 14 above describes how acts of violence progressively escalate from physical to psychological violence. The second physical violence happens when Evelyn was unsure about wanting a family; Don hits her once more and

apologizes for it would not happen again. In this case, Don manipulated Evelyn with affection and kindness after a violent situation to maintain a cycle of violence and forgiveness. Meanwhile, Evelyn, who is in a vulnerable position, believes her husband will never do it again and repeatedly forgives him. Don's behavior, on the other hand, only worsens and continues to the third violence against Evelyn.

In the third situation, the physical violence happened during the disagreement between Evelyn and Don about whether to go out or stay in, where that matter is not about going to the restaurant together but it is about the image of their marriage in public. The underlying issue is revealed when Don pushes Evelyn into a wall after refusing Don's demand. This violence is a strategy used to control and threaten Evelyn into giving in to Don's desires. In the fourth situation, physical violence occurs after both Don and Evelyn lose at the Oscars. When Evelyn tries to comfort Don, he dismisses her and makes insulting comments instead about her life background. As Evelyn defended, Don opened the car door and pushed her out.

Don's comments about Evelyn's upbringing indicate that he is using her socioeconomic status and background to exert control over Evelyn. Furthermore, the physical violence continued to the fifth, where Evelyn was pushed down the stairs by Don. Evelyn found it was difficult to deal with violence that escalated from physical to psychological violence. She was unable to escape the violent situation because Don has more power and influence in Hollywood. Therefore, Don's violent treatment of Evelyn leaves her feeling trapped, isolated, and powerless in the abusive relationship, which was often ignored or even normalized in society.



### c) **Psychological Violence**

As violence escalates in *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, where both the male characters also begin to use psychological means to control and exert power over Evelyn Hugo, making her feel powerless and worthless. Although psychological violence frequently goes unnoticed because there are no visible physical injuries, it continues to cause severe emotional and psychological harm that can last for a long time after the violence has stopped. Crowell & Burgess (1996) state, Psychological violence against women can take many different forms, including; verbal abuse such as insulting, criticizing, undervaluing, and discrediting; emotional abuse such as manipulating, controlling, or isolating; intimidating, and repeatedly threatening.

Evelyn Hugo, a famous female actress in the Hollywood entertainment industry, is frequently pressured to conform to society's beauty standards in order to maintain a perfect image and constantly adapt to changing trends and expectations in society. However, when Evelyn does conform to these expectations, she is still not satisfied with the way people view her; she is constantly judged and criticized for the way she looks and the way she interacts with others. Evelyn first experienced psychological violence from people on the internet who shared negative comments about her. As portrayed in datum 15 below.

#### **Datum 15**

*And don't even get me started on that body. No ass, no hips—just huge boobs on a slim frame.*

*MrsJeanineGrambs says: I do not care about Evelyn Hugo AT ALL. Her marriages, affairs, and most of her movies just go to prove one thing: Slut. Three A.M. was a disgrace to women. Focus your attention on people that deserve it.*

*YuppiePigs3 says: Too skinny! Not for me. (Reid, 2017, p.12)*

The datum 15 above portrayed forms of psychological violence that Evelyn experienced in the entertainment industry. In this case, Evelyn is subjected to comments and harsh criticism that devalue her, leading to negative impacts on her self-esteem. The first and the third comment about Evelyn having "*no ass, no hips,*" just "*huge boobs on a slim frame,*" and "*too skinny*" focuses on Evelyn's body and reinforces the idea that woman's worth is only based on her appearance. However, it is interpreted that Evelyn is not attractive or desirable enough because she does not conform to society's beauty standards.

Furthermore, the comments made by MrsJeanineGrambs, which label Evelyn as a "*slut,*" based on her vulgar scene, discredit her career and personal life. That word is used to shame Evelyn for the choices and decisions that she has made. Moreover, MrsJeanineGrambs' comment indicates that because Evelyn had multiple marriages and affairs, she is naturally inappropriate and unworthy of attention or respect. That situation reinforces the idea that women must consistently demonstrate their talent and worth, while men are frequently given the benefit of the doubt and celebrated for their accomplishments.

Following further analysis, the researcher examined that Evelyn had been threatened, which is a form of psychological violence, by her sixth husband, who is a successful French director, Max Girard. This threat of violence happened when Girard found out that Evelyn was actually falling in love with women during their marriage. Girard then used his position and influence to exert control over Evelyn's actions and stop her from leaving their marriage. The fact that he is using the threat

of exposing Evelyn's sexual orientation to public as a tool to control her behavior and maintain power over her. As portrayed in datum 16 below.

**Datum 16**

*He shook his head in disbelief. "Wow," he said. "Incredible. I married a dyke." "You can't leave me. I could make one phone call and destroy you. I could tell anyone, anyone at all, about this, and your life would never be the same" (Reid, 2017, p.317)*

The statement "*You can't leave me*" from datum 16 above indicates that Girard believes Evelyn is trapped in the relationship because of the threat he holds over her. Furthermore, the statement "*I could make one phone call and destroy you*" is a direct threat of violence against Evelyn. The fact that Max has the power to expose Evelyn's sexual identity to society obviously could destroy Evelyn's reputation or career if she really leaves him. This threat is meant to intimidate Evelyn and create a sense of fear and powerlessness, particularly preventing her from leaving this abusive relationship. Overall, the use of threats and psychological violence is a form of control and violence that can have long-lasting impacts on the victim's mental and emotional health.

Throughout the novel, *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, Evelyn's relationships with her husbands and the people around her are explored in depth through the different forms of violence that she experiences in her private or public life. This includes sexual violence, physical violence, and psychological violence. Moreover, the novel examines societal norms that support these types of violence, particularly in the context of Hollywood's patriarchal culture, where men are more dominant. Sadly, those who perpetuated this type of oppression are generally tolerable or even acceptable in society (Young, 1990).

## **B. Women Characters Struggle Against Oppression**

The novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* portrays not only the various forms of oppression that women characters experience but also portrays their struggles to deal with that oppression. In the previous sub-chapter, the researcher has discovered and examined the oppression faced by Evelyn Hugo and Monique Grant, which are frequently connected to larger social issues, such as marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, and cultural stereotypes and violence. Meanwhile, in this sub-chapter, the researcher will examine how Evelyn and Monique struggle against oppression which the struggle reflect to the principle of liberal feminism.

The struggles between Evelyn and Monique have a connection to the liberal feminism, which advocate for changes in laws, policies, and institutions to eliminate inequality and promote women's rights. Feminist literary criticism itself generally share the main ideas which is to get equal opportunities for all women (indeed, all people) through all aspects of life (Bressler, 2011). In the novel, Evelyn and Monique face oppression in the workplace and fight for equality. They struggle against the difficulties that have limited their success, such as being marginalized based on their gender and race, and objectified in the entertainment industry.

Furthermore, in order to achieve these equal rights and opportunities, the women characters in this novel demonstrate the importance of uniting together to support one another in the face of oppression. They demonstrate the significance of female solidarity and empowerment, which will be discussed further below.

## 1. Monique's Struggle

In *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, Monique's struggles after being marginalized by her boss, Frankie, can be explained into the principles of liberal feminism. According to liberal feminism, the best way to achieve gender equality is to change existing institutions. This includes reforming the structures, policies, and practice within organization. In this case, Monique's struggles revolve around her aspirations and career growth, which indirectly points to the need for changes in the practice of her workplace. Her struggles as portrayed in the novel aim to create a work environment that is free from discrimination, where she can have equal opportunities for career advancement and have the right to negotiate for equal pay. Monique's action refers to a shift in institutional structure that previously confined her to a subordinate role and limited her opportunities.

The first forms of Monique's struggle against her boss is changing workplace institutions by developing equal opportunities for career advancement. In the beginning of the novel, Monique, as an African-American journalist at Vivant, a fictional magazine publishing company, is being marginalized. In the middle of her career, Monique has the opportunity to write the historical life of Evelyn Hugo. Unfortunately, her boss, Frankie, always put Monique into a subordinate position. Frankie limited Monique from achieving her full potential, particularly while choosing stories for her works. Moreover, despite Monique's talent and potential, she is underestimated and undervalued by Frankie, assuming that Monique is not capable of handling a high-profile assignment at Vivant.

In response to unequal treatment, Monique expresses her desire for career advancement and demand the opportunities she deserves by having significant changes at work. Monique trying to create more suitable work environment, which is free from discrimination. Monique challenges the cultural institution that women are usually in lower or subordinate positions. She create an environment where women can be valued for their talents and contribution. As seen in datum 17.

**Datum 17**

*“I want this opportunity. I want to write this story. I’m sick of being the lowest one on the totem pole. And I need a win, goddammit. I’m thirty-five years old. I’ve been a writer for more than a decade. I want a book deal one day. I want to pick my stories. I want to eventually be the name people scramble to get when someone like Evelyn Hugo calls. And I’m being underused here at Vivant. If I’m going to get where I want to go, something has to let up. Someone has to get out of my way. And it needs to happen quickly, because this goddamn career is all I have anymore. If I want things to change, I have to change how I do things. And probably drastically. (Reid, 2017, p.6)*

The previous statement in datum 17 is an illustration of Monique Grant's struggles against marginalization in the workplace which reflect on the principle of liberal feminism. The main points of Monique's statement are her desire to take control over her career decisions including having a book deal and the ability to choose her own stories as well as to be respected and recognized as valuable individual at work. Because throughout her career, Monique is tired of being marginalized and treated as the *"lowest one on the totem pole"* at Vivant. Therefore, when a great opportunity came her way, she recognizes that she must take drastic action in order to achieve her dream career, which all the time has been limited by Frankie's control. By advocating for her own career advancement, Monique is implicitly advocating for institutional changes that can benefit all individuals who face marginalization and limitations in their careers.

Monique's struggles in the workplace align with broader goals of promoting gender equality, which are central to creating a more equitable and supportive work environment. She provide ideas that can liberate women from subordinate positions that limit their freedom and create a circumstance in which women can practice themselves as valuable individuals who can experience happiness for achieving her dreams (Botts and Tong, 2018). Monique decided to work together in harmony to achieve the same goal in the workplace rather than working independently. She believed it would be inspiring to have African-American woman running higher-level positions in the workplace.

The second forms of Monique's struggle against her boss is changing workplace institutions by negotiate to get equal pay in the workplace. By advocating equal pay, Monique draws attention to the issue of gender-based wage disparities and promotes awareness of the fact that valuable women can have better employment opportunities and higher earning potential. In this case, Monique provides an equitable workplace environment, where individuals are compensated based on their abilities, rather than their gender. Additionally, Monique's desire for her life and professional career is empowered by Evelyn Hugo. Bell Hooks in *Feminist Thought* (2018) write that women can be united in similar interests and beliefs, united with an appreciation for diversity, and united in struggles to end oppression. The datum illustrated below.

**Datum 18**

*"I think about it for a moment further. The writer at large seems reasonable. Writer at large sounds great. "OK," I say. And then I push just a little bit further. Because Evelyn said, at the very beginning of all this, that I have to insist on being paid top dollar. And she's right. "And I want a raise commensurate with the title." (Reid, 2017, p.148)*

In the previous datum, Monique demonstrates her movement to negotiate for equal pay in the workplace. The act of negotiating for equal pay is a form of institutional change in the workplace which involves challenging existing norms that perpetuate gender-based pay disparities. According to Furaida and Ishlahiyah (2019), women liberation refers to in the workplace with equal pay. Monique is requesting a raise commensurate with her new title since she aware that her skills, experiences, and contributions at Vivant were worthy of praise. Moreover, her act highlighting the importance of valuing women's work and recognizing their worth in the workplace

Monique's equal pay negotiation can be interpreted as a symbolic act that represents the larger struggle for gender equality in the workplace. Her actions can inspire and empower other women in similar situations to assert their worth and demand equal treatment. Overall, Monique's desire on negotiating for equal pay exemplifies her agency and determination to challenging workplace institutions and advocating for gender equality. By advocating this, she is not only seeks to enhance her own financial situation, but also attempts to eliminate the gender pay gap and promote equal opportunities for women in the workplace.

The previous explanation is the portrayal of how Monique's struggling against her boss in the workplace. Her struggle is to change workplace institution including create more equitable environment that is free from discrimination. The first struggle is by promote equal opportunities for career advancement and the second is negotiate for equal payment in the workplace. Her struggles and advocacy for change success obtaining what she wants for her professional career.



## 2. Evelyn's struggles

In *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, Evelyn Hugo's struggle after being marginalized and exploited by men in the entertainment industry can be explained into the principles of liberal feminism. Liberal feminism advocates for women's rights to make their own choices and aims to change institutions that support oppressive environments. In the context of Evelyn's struggle against marginalization and exploitation, she is leaving her previous agency (Sunset Studio) that support oppressive environments and start joining another agency in France. By joining another agency, she actively seeks a more empowering and equal environment in which she can exercise career growth, new opportunities, and her artistic value.

Throughout the novel, Evelyn's struggle reflects the broader difficulties experienced by women in male-dominated industries who are oppressed by systems of power. Evelyn is a Cuban-American actress in the Hollywood entertainment industry, who previously worked at Sunset Studio agency. She is often subjected to the exploitation and marginalization that comes from white producer and director in the industries. She feels like Sunset Studio limited her creative freedom, self-expression, and career advancement. Despite her talent and hard work, the industry was not ready to accept a woman as a leading actress.

As portrayed in the novel, Evelyn is constantly confronting entertainment industry expectations. She often force by the producers to change her appearance, behavior, and beliefs in order to fit in. For some situation, she also faces sexual and economic exploitation, which she must navigate in order to protect her career. Even

after all of her contributions, the industry where she works, Sunset Studio, remains devalued her. Therefore, instead of continuing to live in oppressive situation in male-dominated industry, Evelyn decided to take the new opportunity to express herself freely or without the limitations in France, Paris. Her courage emphasizes the importance of challenging and reshaping institutions in order to create an environment in which women can thrive and be treated equally. More illustration in datum 19 below.

**Datum 19**

*"I closed my eyes and breathed in deeply, considering both how beneath me this opportunity was and how lucky I was to be given it. It's a hard business, reconciling what the truth used to be with what the truth is now. Luckily, I didn't have to do it for very long.*

*TWO WEEKS LATER, I was back on a film set. And this time, I was free of all the buttoned-up, innocent-girl stuff that Sunset had pinned on me. This time, I was able to do whatever I wanted" (Reid, 2017, p.163)*

The datum 19 above reflects on Evelyn's struggle after being oppressed by men in the Hollywood entertainment industry. Evelyn's decision to leave and change the structural institution within reflects her agency in seeking empowerment and equality. She recognizes the limitations and oppressive nature of her previous agency, Sunset Studio, which imposed a specific image and narrative on her as the "*buttoned-up, innocent girl.*" By leaving Sunset Studio for new opportunities in Paris, France, she could take control of her own career without any agency which proves her freedom from the oppressive system that had previously held her back.

Evelyn's struggle contributes to reshaping the industry's structures in another agency. By making this move, Evelyn exercises her right to choose the agency that better aligns with her goals and values. She is finally could create

her own path to success and free from the limitations. She emphasizes her ability to do whatever she wants, express her true self without being ruled by the expectations of others, indicating her newfound control over her career choices. Evelyn's struggle to maintain her position ultimately paid off in the end. Evelyn finally became an international sensation, winning an Oscar, and becoming one of the most the highest-paid actresses in Hollywood. Her struggle serves as a powerful example of what can be achieved when women are struggling to create more equitable professional environment, particularly in the entertainment industry.

Through Evelyn's and Monique's experiences, the novel explores themes of empowerment and equality within of their specific fields, particularly on the workplace. While their experiences differ, Evelyn and Monique are a reflection of liberal feminism, which seeks to address gender-based inequalities within existing institutions. By support changes in institution, Evelyn and Monique promoting equal opportunity of women's representation and participation in the workplace.

Finally, the novel highlights the importance of speaking out against oppression and the struggle for change. For Monique who marginalized by her boss but change the institution by promoting equal opportunities for career advancement and negotiate for equal pay. For Evelyn, it means using her power to stand up for greater representation and diversity in the entertainment industry. Overall, Monique and Evelyn's journey becomes an inspiring symbol of empowerment, in which women must have the courage to make decisions for professional success including creating equitable professional environment or leaving the oppressive situations.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After analyzing and interpreting two women character in the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, the researcher comes up to the concluding chapter of the study. In this chapter, the researcher provides a brief summary of the findings and discussions regarding the problem of the study that was conducted in the previous chapter. In addition, the researcher also provides some suggestions to all of the readers, particularly to future researchers who will be analyzing the same literary work and have a similar interest in related topics.

#### A. Conclusion

Based on findings and discussions in the previous chapter, the researcher discovered that women characters Monique Grant marginalized in the workplace, while Evelyn Hugo experienced five forms of oppression including marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (sexual, physical, and psychological). In the novel, oppression that Monique and Evelyn experienced carried out by those in positions of power in the workplace, in the domestic, in the entertainment industry, and in the society as a whole. Moreover, they were subjected to this oppression naturally due to their gender as women and their racial background as African-American and Cuban-American.

In the novel, both Monique and Evelyn are directly marginalized in the workplace. Those who held positions of power and authority in industries, eliminating Monique and Evelyn from participating in productive ways and limiting

their abilities to pursue career advancement opportunities. In the forms of exploitation, Evelyn as Cuban-American actress being controlled, objectified, and taken advantage of by white producers in Hollywood entertainment industry.

Evelyn is rendered powerlessness as she is rarely given the opportunity to participate in decision-making, having less chance to exercise her own authority, to develop her skills and abilities. In the form of cultural imperialism, Evelyn are expected to adopt American cultural norms and beliefs in order to succeed in Hollywood, which means completely erasing her cultural identity. In the form of violence, Evelyn experienced sexual violence (being touched without her consent and being raped), physical violence (smacked, hit, pushed into the wall, out of the car, and down the stairs), and psychological violence (humiliated, criticized, manipulated, intimidated, and threatened), in her life on frequent occasions.

Despite the oppression that Monique and Evelyn experienced, the novel portrayed examples of women who are struggling to get equal opportunity by changing the structural institution. Their struggles have a strong connection to liberal feminism, which concentrated on gender equality and equal opportunity for women. For Monique, she struggle to create a work environment that is free from discrimination, where she can have equal opportunities for career advancement and have the chance to negotiate for equal pay. For Evelyn, it means using her power and influence to stand up for greater representation and diversity in the entertainment industry. Finally, Evelyn and Monique achieve a level of triumph and personal fulfillment by the end of the novel.

## **B. Suggestion**

In studying the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, the researcher focused mainly on the various forms of oppression that Monique Grant and Evelyn Hugo experienced and how they struggled against those oppressions. However, during analyzing this novel, the researcher discovered many interesting topic relating Evelyn Hugo, who deals with larger social issues. Therefore, to enrich the development of the sociological approach or feminism theory, the researcher suggests for future researchers who will analyze the novel *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* continue this study by examining the intersection of race and sexuality in popular culture, how Evelyn's identity is shaped by her experiences, or examining the power relation in the entertainment industry.

Furthermore, the researcher suggest for future researcher to examine this novel more deeply by using different approach and theory, such as psychoanalysis, postmodernism, structuralism, or other literary theory to uncover new insights. Finally, the researcher is completely aware that the interpretations and explanations in this study might not be perfect. Therefore, for the purpose of conducting better research, all criticisms and suggestions are always welcome. Lastly, the researcher hopes that this study will serve as an informative resource for guiding and informing future researchers, particularly those who interested in similar topic.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE



Alfina Putri Damayanti was born in Jakarta on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001. She graduated from SMK Dinamika Pembangunan 2 Jakarta in 2019. During her study in Senior High School, she was a member of the English Club. Her interest in English grew while she was at Vocational High School as she participated in various English competitions and attended English courses at LIA for two years. She started her higher education in 2019 at the Department of English Literature UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and finished in 2023. During her semester break, she improved and practiced her computer and business skills, joined some online courses, as well as participated in Professional Certification, particularly in the field of Tourism and Hospitality.

## APPENDIXE

## A. Five Faces of Oppression Experienced by Evelyn and Monique

No	Five Faces of Oppression	Datum from The Novel <i>“The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo”</i>
1.	Marginalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Look, it’s not that we don’t love you, we do,” Frankie says. “We think you’re destined for big things at Vivant, but I was hoping to put one of our more experienced, top hitters on this. And so I want to be up front with you when I say that we did not submit you as an idea to Evelyn’s team. We sent five big names, and they came back with this.”(Reid, 2017, p.5)</i></li> <li>• <i>Here is the only part that has me heated: Evelyn could have chosen anyone for this. (Ahem, me?) But instead she chose some newbie at Vivant? She could have had anyone. (Ahem, me?) Why this Monique Grant chick (and not me)? (Reid, 2017, p.11)</i></li> <li>• <i>Grown men were watching me walk down the street, and some of the girls in my building didn’t want to hang out with me anymore. It was a lonely business. Motherless, with an abusive father, no friends, and a sexuality in my body that my mind wasn’t ready for (Reid, 2017, p.43)</i></li> <li>• <i>ARI DROPPED ME FROM ANY productions within Sunset and started offering to loan me out to Columbia. After being forced to do two forgettable romantic comedies—both of them so bad that it was a foregone conclusion they would fail spectacularly—the other studios didn’t want much of me, either. (Reid, 2017, p.154)</i></li> </ul>
2.	Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Harry Cameron: “I read your answers to the interview questions.” He looked at me directly. “Ari is very happy with the changes you’ve made. He thinks you have a lot of potential. The studio thinks it would be a good idea if you went on a few dates, if you were seen around town with some guys like Pete Greer and Brick Thomas. Maybe even Don Adler.” (Reid, 2017, p.52)</i></li> <li>• <i>When Max came to my dressing room on the second-to-last day of filming, he said, “Ma belle, aujourd’hui tu seras seins nus.” I had picked up enough French by then to know he was saying he wanted to shoot my scene coming out of the lake. When you’re an American movie star with huge boobs in a French movie, you quickly learn that when French men are saying seins nus, they are talking about you being topless. (Reid, 2017, p.163)</i></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>They blamed the sexpot they'd created, whom they could now call a tramp. They weren't going to give me an Oscar for that. They were going to watch it alone in a dark theater and then chastise me in public. I made people money. No one turns away money. They were all too happy to get me in their movies and then talk about me behind my back. (Reid, 2017, p.277</i></li> </ul>
3.	Powerlessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Harry laughed. "Look, this is Ari's plan. Like it or not. He wants you in a few more pictures before he's gonna give you Little Women. But he is gonna give you Little Women." "All right," What choice did I have, really? My contract with Sunset was for another three years. If I caused too much trouble, they had the option to drop me at any time. They could loan me out, force me to take projects, put me on leave without pay, you name it. They could do anything they wanted. Sunset owned me. (Reid, 2017, p.66)</i></li> <li>• <i>"Don wants you out of the studio. Ari's planning to loan you out to MGM and Columbia. Don wants Ari to blackball you from getting an Oscar nod, and Ari's agreeing to it. I think he's gonna loan you out and purposefully put you in flops". "He can. And he will, Because Don's the goose that laid the golden egg. The studios are all hurting. People aren't going to the movies as much; they are waiting for the next episode of Gunsmoke. Sunset's been in decline from the minute we were forced to sell off our theaters. We're staying afloat because of stars like Don". (Reid, 2017, p.139)</i></li> </ul>
4.	Cultural Imperialism	<p><i>Harry introduced me to studio stylist Gwendolyn Peters. Gwen bleached my hair and cut it into a shoulder-length bob. She shaped my eyebrows. She plucked my widow's peak. I met with a nutritionist, who made me lose six pounds exactly, mostly by taking up smoking and replacing some meals with cabbage soup. I met with an elocutionist, who got rid of the New York in my English, who banished Spanish entirely. (Reid, 2017, p.50)</i></p>
5.	Violence	<p><b>a) Sexual Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The cashier at the five-and-dime on the corner was this boy named Billy. He was the sixteen-year-old brother of the girl who sat next to me in school. One October day, I went down to the five-and-dime to buy a piece of candy, and he kissed me. I didn't want him to kiss me. I pushed him away. But he held on to my arm. "Oh, come on," he said. The store was empty. His arms were strong. He grasped me tighter. And in that moment, I knew he was going to get what he wanted from me whether I let him or not. (Reid, 2017, p.43)</i></li> <li>• <i>You catch his eye. He smiles. He grabs you. You push him off and say, "I don't like to have sex in the morning." "What does that mean?" he says. You shrug. "I'm sorry." He says, "C'mon, baby," and lies on top of you. He shakes his head.</i></li> </ul>

		<p><i>He gets out of bed. He says, "You know, you're nothing like I imagined" (Reid, 2017, p.184)</i></p> <p><b>b) Physical Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>He came right up into my face. "We are not equals, love. And I'm sorry if I've been so kind that you've forgotten that.". "I think this should be the last movie you do," he said. "I think it's time for us to have children." His career wasn't turning out the way he wanted. And if he wasn't going to be the most famous person in his family, he surely wasn't going to allow that person to be me. I looked right at him and said, "Absolutely. Positively. Not" And he smacked me across the face. Sharp, fast, strong. (Reid, 2017, p.77)</i></li> <li>• <i>A MAN HITS YOU ONCE and apologizes, and you think it will never happen again. But then you tell him you're not sure you ever want a family, and he hits you once more. The third time, it's a disagreement about whether to go out to Romanoff's or stay in. Which, you realize when he pushes you into the wall behind you, is actually about the image of your marriage to the public. The fourth time, it's after you both lose at the Oscars. You tell him it's OK. He tells you that you don't understand. You remind him that you lost, too. He says, "Yeah, but your parents are trash from Long Island. No one expects anything from you." You know you shouldn't, but you say, "I'm from Hell's Kitchen, you asshole." He opens the parked car's door and pushes you out. (Reid, 2017, p.81)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>c) Psychological Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>And don't even get me started on that body. No ass, no hips—just huge boobs on a slim frame. MrsJeanineGrambs says: I do not care about Evelyn Hugo AT ALL. Her marriages, affairs, and most of her movies just go to prove one thing: Slut. Three A.M. was a disgrace to women. Focus your attention on people that deserve it. YuppiePigs3 says: Too skinny! Not for me. (Reid, 2017, p.12)</i></li> <li>• <i>He shook his head in disbelief. "Wow," he said. "Incredible. I married a dyke." "You can't leave me. I could make one phone call and destroy you. I could tell anyone, anyone at all, about this, and your life would never be the same" (Reid, 2017, p.317)</i></li> </ul>
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## B. Evelyn and Monique Struggle Against Oppression

No	Struggle	Datum from The Novel <i>“The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo”</i>
1.	Monique’s Struggle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“I want this opportunity. I want to write this story. I’m sick of being the lowest one on the totem pole. And I need a win, goddammit. I’m thirty-five years old. I’ve been a writer for more than a decade. I want a book deal one day. I want to pick my stories. I want to eventually be the name people scramble to get when someone like Evelyn Hugo calls. And I’m being underused here at Vivant. If I’m going to get where I want to go, something has to let up. Someone has to get out of my way. And it needs to happen quickly, because this goddamn career is all I have anymore. If I want things to change, I have to change how I do things. And probably drastically. (Reid, 2017, p.6)</i></li> <li>• <i>“I think about it for a moment further. The writer at large seems reasonable. Writer at large sounds great. “OK,” I say. And then I push just a little bit further. Because Evelyn said, at the very beginning of all this, that I have to insist on being paid top dollar. And she’s right. “And I want a raise commensurate with the title.” (Reid, 2017, p.148)</i></li> </ul>
2.	Evelyn’s struggles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“I closed my eyes and breathed in deeply, considering both how beneath me this opportunity was and how lucky I was to be given it. It’s a hard business, reconciling what the truth used to be with what the truth is now. Luckily, I didn’t have to do it for very long. TWO WEEKS LATER, I was back on a film set. And this time, I was free of all the buttoned-up, innocent-girl stuff that Sunset had pinned on me. This time, I was able to do whatever I wanted” (Reid, p.163)</i></li> </ul>