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MISOGYNY & SEXISM TOWARDS WORKING-CLASS WOMAN IN SOPHIE TREADWELL'S *MACHINAL*

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Abstract
This research aims to misogyny behavior towards women such as hatred, prejudice, sexism, and violence which can also be called misogyny. Many people have read, watched, or listen to movies, books, podcasts, etc. about feminism but many of them are sometimes still not aware or did not notice how women can be a victim of misogyny regardless of how small the actions are. These actions or behavior still lingers even in this modern day, the researcher will compile, analyze, and clarify those actions and why it is considered misogyny. This paper wishes to give the purpose of making people understand and aware of those actions or behaviors and also aims at those who do not understand the attitude, behavior, and actions of misogyny, either for those who do it intentionally or unintentionally.

Keywords: feminism, misogyny, sexism, woman

Introduction
Feminism in literature is well known and enjoyed by many people, some ended up controversial in several countries and regions. There have been many literary works that discuss and raise the topic of feminism starting with films, novels, dramas, etc. Inside feminism, there is a term called *Misogyny*. Misogyny itself is an attitude where hatred arises from within a person towards women, for a long time, misogyny has been defined as the hatred towards women by both men and women. Misogyny is frequently linked in the literature to the practices and discourses of male online subcultures, also known as the "manosphere" (Marwick & Caplan, 2018). Over the years, misogyny has developed into an ideology that has covered society like mist and obscured their view of the aurora. The roars of male-dominated society silenced the great philosophers, socialists, and thinkers of the golden age, which limited their perspectives and turned them into supporters of a patriarchal society (Srivastava, Chaudhury, Bhat, & Sahu, 2017)

Back during the Ancient Greek era, Aristotle did not view women as equals, but rather as imperfect, damaged males. According to Jagoo (2022), misogyny is a term that is often used to describe extreme acts of violence against women (Jagoo,

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2022). This hatred then triggers several actions such as violence against women, sexual harassment, sexual objectification, and humiliation of a woman's self-esteem. This behavior can happen to any woman regardless of social class.

The term Misogyny is a very despicable behavior in which someone lowers one's self-esteem. As an example, in terms of working, such as the following quote; At one end of the spectrum, the term is used to describe the inequality of society, which is evidenced by things like the gender pay gap (Aron, 2019). It does not only affect wages or women's income but also makes it difficult for women to find decent jobs. Many people do misogyny accidentally or unconsciously, it can be caused due to social and regional factors. Misogyny can happen in an area where there is a tradition or a habit of recognizing women as someone inferior, therefore, women can be done arbitrarily by men who are considered to be superior. In this paper, in particular, we will take a reference from Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*, where the main character is a working-class woman who has neither a small amount nor a large amount of income. *Machinal* is a play by Sophie Treadwell in 1928, it chronicles the journey of a young woman, oppressed by her society into pursuing a loveless but secure marriage and other traditional feminine roles (UKEssays, 2023). The play is based on a true story that tells the story of a woman who murders her husband, which was inspired by Ruth Synder, who appears to be the first female to be executed using the electric chair.

In Sophie Treadwells's *Machinal*, the main character is a young woman living in a working society; she is a working-class woman, who is still living with her mother. According to Draut (2018), the term "working class" is defined as the labor force who do not have bachelor's degrees (Draut, 2018). The main character lives in an era where women ought to be feminine despite, her being a working woman, even her mother ought to be feminine and able to do house chores perfectly, and sometimes her mother still think of her as a little girl. She worried that her skin will wrinkle and she will be ugly, this shows a social factor that forces women to be beautiful even when they are old. This research will analyze some behaviors of misogyny whether they are verbal or nonverbal.

Method

Machinal was written with a means to express the life of a working-class woman, it depicts a lot of women stereotypes put on by society. The drama will be analyzed with feminism in a way that conveys that women can be easily judged by their appearance and class. in this drama. Feminism, on the other hand, according to Britannica Encyclopedia means "At its core, feminism is the belief in full social, economic, and political equality for women" (Burkett & Brunell, 2023). The main character is a working-class woman overcoming many stages in her daily life. the misogyny in the drama is mostly in a form of verbal accusations by her society. In the worst case, the main character is accused of not being mature and responsible not only by her co-workers but also by her mother. The main character shows her retain ability by doing everything unlike what society thought that she would do. Instead of following what society wants her to do, she shows the responsibility of taking her own decisions in a way of fighting society's prejudice against her.

The data in this paper will be analyzed with a feminist approach, to be specific, misogyny and sexism. To keep it clean and clear, the data given will be organized according to the episodes in the drama so the data given will be detailed therefore the understanding of the plot and story of the drama can be easily followed by the reader. Some forms of sexism will be differentiated, such as Benevolent sexism which is "a subtler form of sexism and is expressed in a seemingly positive way. It is expressed by emphasizing men's role to protect and provide for women by putting them on a pedestal in a chivalrous way". (Mastari, Spruyt, & Siongers, 2019). Hostile sexism, "Hostile sexism refers to the traditional conceptualization of sexism as a reflection of hostility against women" (Barni et al., 2022). Last but not least, ambivalent sexism, which is a complementary ideology that presents a resolution to the gender relationship paradox, or in short, a combination of both sexist acts (Sibley & Barlow, 2018). The example of sexism above showed a means to differentiate the sexism that occurs in the analysis. The data will be conveyed by paragraphs of verbal and non-verbal acts of misogyny in the drama per episode whilst also analyzing the acts, there are 9 episodes in total but only 4 episodes contains the act of misogyny. Analyzing how the main character reacts to those acts will also help to enhance the understanding of the impact of misogyny on working-class women such as the main character.

Findings and Discussion

Episode 1

The result of data on misogyny found in the drama is mostly verbal but there are still some non-verbal acts involved as well. The first behavior of misogyny can be seen in **Episode 1: To Business** in a form of sexism toward the main character, the definition of sexism itself is "prejudice or discrimination based on sex" and "behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex." (Madsen, 2021). the first act of misogyny in the first episode shows how it affects the main character's career and working space. The first episode was delivered to the audience with a scene inside a busy office, and the main character's name was not yet mentioned. The main character was late, her co-workers are talking behind her back about her. Her boss, Mr. Jones, then arrives at the office, straight away he told one of his employees to tell the main character that he wants to see her, he gave a sign that he is into the main character and wanted to marry her. Not long, the main character arrived at the office, she said she was late because of the traffic but none of her co-workers believe her. The woman then knew that the boss wants to see her but instead, she stayed downstairs at her counter to do her job, but then the boss came downstairs and start inappropriately flirting with her and touched her on the shoulder without asking her permission.

From this first episode, it can be seen that the drama was written to show sexism and also prejudice against the main character of the drama. Men are not the only ones who can do misogyny to women, some women tend to do it because of their environment, "A feeling of superiority toward other women, contempt for common feminine behaviors, and male-dominant ingrained beliefs can all contribute to female-toward-female misogyny" (Gillette, 2022). for instance, are the main character's co-workers, her co-workers' prejudice against her shows an act of misogyny not only done by men but also women by not supporting or

believing the reason why she was late and also the other women are jealous of her because the boss is interested in her. misogyny, therefore, can be also done by the woman towards the woman.

Her boss, who wanted to marry the main character, however, did not hate the main character instead he wanted to marry her. This fondness of the boss for the main character caused feelings of envy and prejudice to grow in the other employees because although she is not a well-rounded employee and often comes late to work, her boss still likes her, this behavior whereby creates misogyny in the others employees towards the main character, an article from the guardian stated "When we talk about the social pressure girls feel, what we actually mean is misogyny, and we should be brave enough to call it what it is" (O'Hagan, 2014). The main character was faced with not only pressure from her co-workers but also her boss. This creates an unhealthy environment whereby the main character has no space to develop in her career. The hate of her co-worker towards her and also her boss's objectification towards the main character creates a boundary for the main character to develop in her career:

> Unfortunately, pay is not the only area where women aren't given equal respect. Women are also often passed up for leadership roles, offered lower-ranking positions, and excluded from important work-related conversations that take place outside of normal working hours. (Belcak, 2021)

The statement and example above show how sexism or misogyny can affect the workplace, not only by creating an unsafe environment for the victim but also creates a boundary for the victim to grow.

The impact on the main character is a sense of discomfort and no sense of security because no one can support and protect her at work. The boss' behavior when he touched the main character's shoulder creates a sense of fear for the main character. She then started overthinking because her boss wanted to marry her, she worries about denying the proposal, and she was worried that her boss will fire her. This behavior goes back to the first statement by Aron whereby misogyny can affect women's careers not only by their wage gap but also their whole career. In this matter, the main character is solely seen by the boss in the aspect of beauty and motherly nature instead of seeing the main character's performance for the company. An article stated "Women have been suppressed, have to fight to get their rights, treated as a lower part of the society, moreover they are considered as non-productive and non-intellectual being. Hence their roles were restricted to household chores and birthing alone" (Suman, 2022). This statement shows and relates to how the main character was treated by the boss, instead of seeing the productivity and intellectuality of the main character for the company, the boss objectifies the main character as a material for him to grasp, marry, or sexual object "the viewing of another person as an instrument to be used for sexual goals is known as objectification" (Kellie, Blake, & Brooks, 2019)

Episode 2

Episode 2 is an example that misogyny can even be done by someone close to us. This part also shows the type of sexism that may occur in a parent-child

relationship, namely called benevolent sexism. Benevolent sexism is “a subtler form of sexism and is expressed in a seemingly positive way. It is expressed by emphasizing men's role to protect and provide for women by putting them on a pedestal in a chivalrous way”. (Mastari, Spruyt, & Siongers, 2019). This part of the episode will show how sexism can also be done by parents, which is in form of benevolent sexism.

In this episode, the main character talked to her mother about the boss’ proposal in their house. The mother did not take the main character’s words seriously and what’s worse was that she mocked the main character for being immature of being a woman. Her mother did not try to support her or give her any advice the mother said that she should marry the boss and then she will be wealthy and have enough money to give to her mother. “Telling girls to be "ladylike" or to "act like a lady." Telling girls to remain "ladylike" pretty much controls their actions and shames them into conforming to some antiquated archetype” (Leygerman, 2017). From this part of the episode, it can be seen that the mother puts on a stereotype of a woman should marry a man to be able to be wealthy and stable. By putting on pressure on the feminine qualities of the main character, the mother expects her to marry her boss.

Her mother who she expected to give advice and support did not please her, she got more stress from deciding because, on the other hand, she still has to financially support her mother’s life. Her mother, however, did not appreciate the main character’s effort instead, her mother discriminates against her daughter. This creates pressure on the main character whereby she feels like there is no safe place and support, even from her closest ones.

> It is especially hard to emancipate yourself from an oppressive situation when your oppressors are your parents and have control over you and also have society’s backing and support. The abuse suffered at the hands of one’s parents is often overlooked and viewed as love rather than what it is, CONTROL (Atinuke, 2021)

Although it may seem like a logical way to find the solution, still, it is inappropriate for a mother to obtrude her daughter to marry someone for the money and let the daughter feel miserable for the rest of her life. As a mother, instead of guiding and becoming a safe place for her child, she tries to control her daughter's life. The reason for the mother doing this is pretty clear her daughter is ought to marry someone for wealth or gold. The cost of a daughter’s marriage and the prospect of dowry, which includes large amounts of gold, are the largest factors parents consider before deciding to have a sex-selective abortion (Arora,2019) The mother in this drama is one of the examples. Every mother should know and understand how a daughter feels about their parent’s decision, parents can’t just jump to conclusions and hope their children do what they want because what is best for them may not be the best for their daughter.

Parents should be a safe place for children to share what they are feeling and what they are going through. Instead of giving a straight conclusion and actions, parents may advise on their past experiences or choices of solutions for the children, therefore, the children will be able to choose which one suits them. In the drama, the mother’s prejudice and discrimination made the main character feel

unsafe and lost, she has nowhere to go, and no one to tell of what she is going through. This made her lose and take wrong decisions on her own. Although the background of the main character's mother was not mentioned in the drama, the prevalent cause of the mother acting this way is because of their economical struggle and her traditional stigma of marriage.

Episode 3

In episode 3, it shows that the main character was married to her boss, and from this episode the boss is called "the husband" and the scene is in a hotel room when they are on a honeymoon. In this episode, the prejudice against the main character can also be seen when the husband is trying to persuade her to go into the bathroom with him to take a shower together, also when the husband tries to touch the main character without consent and persuade her to open her clothes in front of him when she is changing. The main character however felt uncomfortable and unsafe because she married a man she doesn't love and knows very well. The main character was under the pressure of being a wife to a man she doesn't love. The husband has the thought or prejudice that a wife should be able to satisfy her husband's desires, especially sexual satisfaction no matter the consequences. According to Deswal (2022), denying women the right to say 'no' reeks of paternalism wherein the voice and choice of certain categories of persons are insignificant (Deswal, 2022). Her husband loves the main character but what is wrong with the way he delivers it, the husband is almost like forcing his wife to love him back "Women tend to be abused by those who say 'I love you', so it's very crazy-making" (O'Hagan, 2014).

Towards the end of episode 3, the main character finished changing her clothes and went out of the bathroom just before her husband barged in. The main character was described to show fear in her eyes, showing that she is scared of what her husband might do. When her husband started to get close to her, she then screams for her mother. According to Laura Thompson's research: Through the male sex drive discourse, men are understood to be more interested in heterosexuals than women – often voraciously so – and thus an insistent, even aggressive, style of the male sexual agency is considered normal, and desirable. ''Naturally'' more resistant to sex, women are considered to need some persuasion and indeed may even enjoy being overpowered by men (Thompson, 2018).

The quotation above shows that men's desire to express their sexual needs, be it aggressively, is still considered normal. This point showed signs of misogyny because men most likely think that women will obey whatever they say. This episode shows what kind of impact the main character experienced that was caused by misogyny, which is fear. The main character was forced to be a woman who needs to satisfy the man she married, doesn't matter whether she loves the man or not, so therefore it is a prejudice against the main character because her husband thought or judged that she would be able to do so. Popular feminism has given women the impression that sexual consent can be successfully negotiated, while popular misogyny allows the spread of traditional sexual scripts that do not require consent (Kettrey, Davis, & Liberman, 2021). In Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*, it appears that the main character's husband is following popular

misogyny, which made him think that sexual activities do not require consent, especially because they were already married.

Episode 4

The fourth episode of the drama was delivered inside a hospital room, the main character just gave birth to her baby. The drama, however, made the audience assume that the main character got pregnant when they went on the honeymoon, the characters involved in this episode are a doctor (male), a nurse (female), the husband, and the main character. The episode starts with the nurse asking how is the main character feeling but she answered only with a nod for yes and shaking her head sideways for no. The main character is under deep stress and is depressed trying to deny that she just gave birth to a little girl. The main character was stressed out because she just gave birth to a baby she does not want, also with the fact that she had the baby with a man she does not love. The main's character's state after giving birth is considered *baby blues*. The baby blues, also known as maternity blues or postpartum blues may be defined as a mild, transient, and physiological mental impairment occurring within the two first weeks following delivery (Moyo & Djoda, 2020).

Then, when her husband came, she asked him to leave right away. The nurse then said to the doctor that the main character was behaving badly because she does not want to breastfeed her baby. The doctor then came into the room and tried to persuade her to feed her baby. The doctor tried to talk to her at first but she did not give any response, causing the doctor to be a little upset. The doctor then asked the nurse whether the woman's breastmilk has come out or not and when he found out the breastmilk has not come out, he ordered the nurse to bring the baby and shove it right on the main character's breast. The patient should have a right to accept or reject the treatment recommendation formulated (Cohen, 2019). In this episode, the main character is forced to do what the doctor wants without her consent at all. Ethics is an inherent and inseparable part of clinical medicine [1] as the physician has an ethical obligation (i) to benefit the patient, (ii) to avoid or minimize harm, and (iii) to respect the values and preferences of the patient (Varkey, 2020). The doctor in this play has violated the medical ethics that was mentioned before.

The main character was then left alone when the doctor and the nurse went out to bring the baby. The main character can be seen talking to herself, speaking almost nonsense, showing that she already lost her mind from going through so much so far. From this episode, we can see that the doctor is a hard-headed person, she did not care about what the main character was feeling but instead, hatred grew inside him, he was forcing the main character to feed her baby. The doctor also implied that they should change the main character's diet to solid even though the main character cannot swallow a single thing except water. This scene is showing the violence against the main character, the doctor who is supposed to treat the patient and understand the patient's condition doesn't do what he should, instead, he forces the main character to do what he wants or in this case, what the society would want the woman to do. The main character is immediately labeled as a bad mother, either by the nurse or by the doctor. Those despicable things were done by the medical workers because they live in an environment or society

where women have certain standards in living their lives whereby women are treated as a lower part of the society.

Over centuries, women have been suppressed, their rights were neglected as human beings, they were treated as a lower part of society, and their roles were restricted to household chores and birthing (Chaudhury et al., 2017). The quote is relatable and also fits perfectly with what is given to the audience during episode 4 where the main character is seen as a woman who must be able to be a good mother even though she was not ready to be a mother yet and she was not able to be one yet, so violence and prejudice will come for her. The compulsion comes from an environment dominated by men which can also influence or indoctrinate women such as, for example, the nurse and in the previous episode, the main character's female co-workers.

Conclusion

The rest of the episode which is episodes 5 until 8 does not contain a specific event or dialogue that contains misogyny, but instead, it shows the effect of misogyny, which will be explained in this part. After the main character gave birth and her child grew up a bit older, the main character has spare time and was able to go out with one of her co-workers. They went to a bar and met with two guys. The main character fell in love with one of the guys, she followed him into his apartment and spend the night there. Only for this one night, the main character can feel happiness in her life. This guy is the one who motivated the main character to be free of her agony, which then the next few weeks she killed her husband while they were in bed which led the main character then imprisoned for murder, but finally, she got the feeling of freedom, but in a cage. Those acts of prejudice and discrimination done by society is the cause of this, the main character was mentally injured. The standards for women put on by society are too depressing for an ordinary woman such as Helen. The acts may just seem mostly verbal but they can cause such an impact on one's mental well-being, for instance, the main character feels much more sense of freedom inside bars rather than in the rest of the world where people are free to do what they want and say what they think is right. To conclude, misogyny acts can make a person feel caged and punished. From all of the misogynist behavior done to the main character, she had become a victim of sexism and prejudice against women in her society.

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