Representations of Female Masculinity *Bandelnya Judith* Series by Andi Bachtiar Yusuf: Roland Barthes Semiotic Studies

Original Article

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Abstract

Studies on gender representation in contemporary Indonesian film and series increasingly highlight how female characters challenge traditional norms of femininity. However, depictions of women with masculine traits are still relatively limited, creating a gap in understanding how such identities are constructed through visual and verbal signs in local media. This research discusses the representation of female masculinity in the series *Bandelnya Judith* by Andi Bachtiar Yusuf using Barthes' semiotic study. The aim of this research is to describe the form of female masculinity representation through visual and verbal signs found in the series. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with content analysis, while data was collected through non-participatory observation technique (SBLC), note-taking technique, and recording technique. The research results show that Judith's character represents masculinity based on Chafetz's criteria, namely physical appearance, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal character. Through Barthes' semiotic theory, it was found that denotative meaning displays masculine behavior directly, connotation affirms values or views toward visual imagery, while at the myth level there is a shift in social meaning showing social beliefs regarding women's roles. The emerging myths show that masculine traits are not only possessed by men. This research found six out of seven Chafetz's masculinity criteria demonstrated by Judith as the main character. This confirms that Judith represents a woman with masculine character who challenges traditional gender stereotypes and presents a new view that masculine traits are not only possessed by one particular gender.

Keywords: Connotation, Denotation, Masculinity, Myth.

1. Introduction

Gender can be understood as a concept in societal thinking that associates feminine traits with women and men with masculine traits. This view creates the assumption that feminine and masculine traits in general should be possessed according to their respective genders (Rossa & Setyanto, 2024). This stereotype considers that masculinity for men and femininity for women is something absolute and unchangeable. As a result, an individual tends to be required to display behavior consistent with their gender identity (Purwanto et al., 2024). For example, women are often assumed to be warm, sensitive, and cooperative while being required to avoid dominant traits such as aggressive, intimidating, and arrogant (Kinanti et al., 2021). Therefore, women who display masculine traits will be considered deviant in general societal views.

Masculinity is essentially a social view that emerges based on cultural influence and indirectly forms masculine characteristics. Safira (2020) explains that generally masculinity

emphasizes values of strength, power, firmness, independence, self-satisfaction, male solidarity, and ability to earn a living. Conversely, women in traditional society are often associated with gentle feminine traits. As Butler (in Inayah & Fauzi, 2024) explains, gender is not a fixed attribute or essential identity, but a series of actions or behaviors that have repetitive patterns. Halberstam (in Dillawati et al. (2022) affirms that women can display masculine traits or masculinity that were previously associated with men. Based on this repetitive construction, a new perspective can emerge that masculine or feminine traits are not only possessed by one gender; both women and men can have masculine or feminine traits.

The increasingly developing times indirectly also change mindsets and social stereotypes in community life. In recent decades, the boundary between masculine and feminine traits has begun to change (Aldrian & Azeharie, 2022). This aligns with the opinion of Saputra & Albab (2024) who state that masculine characteristics attached to men and women's femininity have begun to mix with each other. In other words, women are no longer fixated on rigid feminine labels, but have begun to show traits outside of femininity itself. Thus, several views above show that gender issues are no longer taboo to discuss in daily life. Some of them are raised in films, dramas, and other media as a means of conveying messages through the narratives and dialogues of the characters portrayed.

One of the sciences that studies the examination of meaning from a sign is semiotics. Barthes (2017) explains that semiotics can be understood as the study of meaning obtained from certain signs and analyzed using three aspects of meaning, namely denotation, connotation, and myth. At the first level, denotation is the actual meaning or literal meaning that appears directly (Halim, 2021; Prasetya, 2019; Sobur, 2009). Denotation becomes the as-is meaning of a sign so it is objective. Additionally, connotation becomes the second level of meaning which is a figurative meaning or not the actual meaning (Barthes, 2017; Kevinia et al., 2024). Furthermore, the aspect of myth is something considered natural in societal views and functions as ideology (Barthes, 2017; Halim, 2021; Sobur, 2009). Myth in simple terms takes the form of societal prejudice toward something. Thus, through semiotic analysis, meaning can be found from signs through visual imagery, dialogue, gestures, clothing, and social interactions among characters in the film series to be studied.

Film is one of the entertainment media that is very popular among various circles. The increased quality presented in both attractive audio and visuals keeps films in demand and existing in society. Besides functioning as entertainment, films are also utilized as a means of conveying ideas or viewpoints that exist in social life and are packaged to attract interest and curiosity of viewers (Astutik & Setiadi, 2024). In other words, films have the ability to reflect and simultaneously shape public perspectives on various issues, including those related to gender identity and masculinity. Films can represent something through visual signs, symbols, and verbal content contained in scenes within them.

The representation of female figures in films is often depicted with weak characters, such as easily crying, lacking firmness, limited in self-expression, and powerless. However, films that raise modern socio-cultural realities have begun to depict women with masculine characters. Forms of this masculinity include independence, courage, firmness, and strength that have been considered male traits (Setiawan & Prathisara, 2024). Chafetz (1978) proposes seven criteria of masculinity, namely physical appearance, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal character. Thus, female characters in films have also begun to be displayed as strong figures capable of facing challenges like men. Setiawan et al. (2024) conducted similar research on the representation of female characters in a film using Barthes' theory and Beynon's criteria of masculinity. The results of the study showed that the main female character, Alana, had masculine traits, namely a strong physique, courage, the

ability to defend herself, independence, the ability to express emotions spontaneously, and a never-give-up attitude. The fundamental difference with the research to be conducted lies in Chafetz's seven criteria of masculinity theory.

Referring to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), drama genre films became the most widely screened type of film with a percentage of 24.5% in 2017 and continued to increase in 2018 to reach 41.34% (BPS, 2018). Based on this data, it shows that drama genre films have high appeal for society. One drama genre film series that represents female masculinity is *Bandelnya Judith*. This series presents a narrative with a dominant female character. The female character displayed not only functions as a supporting element in the story but also shows masculine sides that challenge societal norms regarding women being required to be feminine.

The representation of female masculinity has become one of the social issues interesting to raise in media studies, especially film. Research by Astutik & Setiadi (2024) obtained findings showing that the main character named Iteung has a masculine side despite being a woman. In this case, film not only functions as entertainment but also as a means to represent the social reality that women can have a masculine side. Gender representation in films often displays women in subordinate positions with weak, whiny feminine characters that are limited in expression. However, the development of Indonesian films has begun to display female characters with masculine traits identical to courage, independence, and firmness. One example is the series *Bandelnya Judith* by Andi Bachtiar Yusuf which displays a main female character with masculine character that challenges social construction about women.

This research aims to reveal how the representation of female masculinity is constructed through visual signs and character utterances using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The focus of this study is directed at three layers of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. Thus, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of gender role shifts in popular media in Indonesia. Similar research was also conducted by Putra (2020) who equally used Fiske's semiotic theory to analyze the representation of female masculinity in two Western action films. The research results show that female characters in both films have domination, physical strength, and occupy strategic roles like men. The fundamental difference between this research and the research to be conducted lies in the film genre being studied. Additionally, the analytical theory to be used is Barthes' semiotics while Putra (2020) uses John Fiske's theory.

2. Methods

2.1. Type and Approach of Research

Research related to the representation of female masculinity in the film series *Bandelnya Judith* uses a qualitative approach. According to Sulistiyo (2023), a qualitative approach is an approach whose research results are not obtained through statistical procedures or other numerical calculations. This aligns with the opinion of Fiantika et al. (2022) who state that qualitative approaches are used to interpret and explain phenomena contextually and complexly. Thus, it can be concluded that qualitative research aims to understand a phenomenon deeply without using statistical procedures. Additionally, this research also uses Barthes' (2017) semiotic theoretical framework to reveal female masculinity depicted in the series.

The type of research used is descriptive qualitative research. Hardani et al. (2020) propose that this type of research is used to describe and understand a phenomenon in detail without involving numerical calculations. This approach is appropriate for the research to be

conducted as it focuses on describing and interpreting the representation of female masculinity in the series *Bandelnya Judith* as a social phenomenon. The method used is content analysis, which is a method to explain content or information in the media being analyzed (Sidiq et al., 2019; Sumarno, 2020). Therefore, this research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis because the data collected is in the form of words, not numbers.

2.2. Data Sources

Data collection in this research uses the observation method with the basic tapping technique. Mahsun (2006) explains that the tapping technique means collecting data by observing language use. Additionally, the tapping technique is complemented with advanced techniques such as non-participatory observation, note-taking technique, and recording technique. Non-Participatory Observation (SBLC) is a data collection technique by observing language without actively participating in the interaction (Mahsun, 2006). The SBLC technique is used because researchers only observe the visuals and utterances of characters in the series *Bandelnya Judith*. The SBLC technique requires an advanced technique in the form of note-taking technique to obtain more accurate and systematic data. Mahsun (2006) explains that the note-taking technique is done after SBLC with the help of writing tools to record data relevant to the research. This recording includes utterances, visual scenes, and other elements that contain the masculinity values of female characters in the series.

The use of the note-taking technique has the possibility that data is not recorded in detail, for example visual data of scenes in the series *Bandelnya Judith*, so the use of recording technique is necessary. According to Sudaryanto (2015), the recording technique is recording verbal/oral language as well as nonverbal behavior and conduct that can be seen. After that, researchers document it in the form of screenshots from scenes that represent masculinity in the film series *Bandelnya Judith*. Documentation is data collection in the form of documents such as writings, images, and so on (Sugiyono, 2022). With screenshots from scenes of the film series studied, the data obtained can be proven accurate. The primary data in this research is screenshots in the form of images/visual imagery related to scenes of appearance and character behavior and fragments of dialogue utterances from scenes of the series *Bandelnya Judith* that represent female masculinity.

2.3. Data Analysis Technique

An important stage in research to ensure that the data obtained can answer the problem formulation and is in accordance with research objectives. Data analysis technique is one effort to classify, categorize, and interpret data that has been collected (Fiantika et al., 2022). In this research, researchers use interactive data analysis technique. According to Miles et al. (2014), data analysis in qualitative research is conducted continuously until the data is saturated. Data analysis is focused on the representation of masculinity in the main character. Roland Barthes' semiotic approach is used to explore the meaning contained in these signs.

The first step in interactive data analysis is sorting data. Data condensation is interpreted as summarizing, selecting important data, and in accordance with the research objectives to be conducted (Miles et al., 2014). This is done after the data collection process by researchers previously. At this data condensation stage, researchers will eliminate and summarize data from observations, notes, and recordings in the form of utterances or screenshots that have been collected. Only data relevant to the research focus and in accordance with instrument indicators will be selected. This relevant data is in the form of utterances or visual imagery that represent female masculinity reviewed from denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings. Additionally, the data must fall into one of the seven

masculinity criteria, whether physical appearance, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, or personal character.

The next stage in interactive model data analysis is data display. Data that has been condensed is then arranged systematically in the form of descriptions, charts, tables, and so on to facilitate researchers in understanding and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). At this stage, the form of representation of women in the series *Bandelnya Judith* based on Barthes' (2017) semiotic theory and Chafetz's (1978) masculinity criteria will also be explained in more detail. Data that has been collected and analyzed is then drawn research conclusions. Qualitative research conclusions are new findings that become answers to the problem formulation in the research conducted (Miles et al., 2014). This process includes interpretation of denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings from character visualization, actions, and fragments of the main character's utterances that show the representation of female masculinity.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Research Results

Based on the research that has been conducted, a number of data on female masculinity representation was found in the film series *Bandelnya Judith* by Andi Bachtiar Yusuf. The data found was analyzed using Barthes' semiotic perspective consisting of denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings. Additionally, it is supported by Chafetz's masculinity criteria. The following are the data found in this research.

3.1.1. Physical Appearance

Figure 1. Judith rolling up her shirt sleeves

Figure 1 shows Judith raising and rolling up the sleeves of the OSIS uniform she is wearing. An annoyed expression is visible on her face because Biyan is sitting in the seat she had previously marked using a pencil case for Rendy. This action implicitly shows Judith who does not hesitate to show that she is trying to assert to Biyan to immediately move from the seat that is actually intended for Rendy. In the circulating myth, this scene is inversely proportional to the social view that exists in society regarding women who are usually associated with neatness, but Judith's action of rolling up her shirt contradicts that association.

The scene of Judith rolling up her shirt sleeves in figure 1 is often associated with work readiness, toughness, and practical attitude which are traits that are culturally attached to men. Through this gesture, Judith positions herself as an individual who has control over her body and appearance. Judith does not only display a gentle feminine attitude and obedient to

women's appearance norms in general, but instead highlights confidence and firmness that shows strong character. Nurafifah & Harini (2023) say that physical appearance in the form of clothing style can show someone's masculinity. This appearance style falls into Chafetz's (1978) masculinity criteria, namely physical appearance. Based on the scene displayed in figure 1, that appearance style can apparently be shown by women.

Figure 2. Judith's body posture is taller than her friends

In figure 2, Judith and her three friends can be seen standing in front of a building while waiting for a vehicle that will take them to the camping location. Denotatively, this scene only shows a group of teenagers with tall and sturdy body postures having a casual conversation. However, at the connotation level, the physical appearance of the characters, especially Judith, reflects confidence, independence, and firmness. A tall body posture gives the impression of being strong, active, and dominant, indicating that Judith is not a passive figure or dependent on others. Meanwhile, at the myth level, height is associated as a symbol of physical and mental superiority that describes an ideal figure, especially for women who want to show their strength and independence. This myth reinforces societal views that a tall body symbolizes attractiveness, authority, and leadership.

According to figure 2, the Chafetz's masculinity criteria in this scene appears through the way Judith presents herself with an upright posture and confident expression. A tall body posture and firm standing manner become a representation of masculine values such as strength, firmness, and independence. Judith does not display a soft gentle feminine image, but instead shows a tough and brave character in interacting with her friends. This confirms that masculinity is not only attached to men but can also be present in women who have high self-confidence and the ability to take an active role in groups. This scene shows a shift in the meaning of masculinity that is no longer limited to gender, but to strong and independent traits that can be possessed by anyone.

3.1.2. Sexual

Figure 3. Judith teasing Galih

In figure 3, Judith teases Galih by saying that if one truly likes someone, it should be expressed directly without shame. Galih appears awkward and blushing hearing Judith's words, while the girl responds with laughter and says she was just joking. At the connotative level, Judith's action describes courage and spontaneity in interacting with the opposite gender, showing an open and confident attitude. Judith appears as a figure not bound by shy female stereotypes, but actively controls communication situations. At the myth level, this scene represents a change in views toward modern women who are no longer limited by traditional norms in expressing interest. Judith's courage challenges the old myth that women must be passive in romantic relationships, while simultaneously affirming the new image of women who are equal to men in terms of initiative and self-confidence.

When related to Chafetz's masculinity theory, Judith's behavior reflects masculine criteria in the sexual aspect, namely being brave enough to take initiative first in heterosexual relations. Based on figure 3 Judith shows symbolic domination through her courage to openly tease Galih, which in patriarchal cultural contexts is usually a male role. This attitude illustrates that Judith has self-confidence, social control, and freedom to express feelings without fear of violating norms of propriety. Thus, Judith displays a form of female masculinity that is active, assertive, and empowered in managing social and emotional relations with the opposite gender.

3.1.3. Emotional

Figure 4. Judith acting calm while Putri panics

Figure 4 shows a contrasting difference between Putri's attitude appearing panicked thinking about test results, while Judith remains calm because what's important is that it's finished. Judith's calmness can be interpreted as a symbol of emotional maturity, self-control often associated with masculine character. She shows a brave and tough attitude in facing difficult situations, while Putri is depicted as more emotional and panicked, reflecting feminine stereotypes. At the myth level, women are associated with being weak and sensitive. However, Judith's behavior of remaining calm while Putri panics shows that women can also have the ability to control emotions.

Judith's calm attitude in figure 4 can be said to be one form of masculinity. The scene fragment above displays emotional dynamics between two contrasting characters: the anxious Putri and the calm Judith. Through this expression difference, Judith appears emotionally mature. She does not behave reactively or emotionally, but calms others. Judith's behavior above falls into the masculinity criteria, namely emotional. Chafetz (1979) says emotional ability is a form of masculinity that can be possessed by an individual, whether male or female. This is strengthened by the opinion of Saputra & Albab (2024) that remaining calm is one part of masculinity criteria. Thus, Judith's behavior displays women who are not always sensitive like Putri.

Figure 5. Judith acting calm facing Ela

In figure 5, denotatively, the scene shows Judith and Ela talking in the school environment about Judith's feelings who is trying to divert herself from distress due to love problems. Judith tries to calm herself by seeking busyness, while Ela responds casually and judges that teenage years are indeed the time for love matters. In that conversation, Judith appears to restrain herself from showing angry emotions toward Ela's comments. Connotatively, this scene shows emotional control and Judith's effort to remain rational amid situations that could provoke debate. This attitude becomes a form of resistance to women's stereotypes who are often portrayed as emotional and easily provoked. At the myth level, the scene represents modern views about women who are able to control emotions as a sign of maturity.

Based on figure 5 above its relation to Chafetz's masculinity theory, this scene depicts masculine criteria in the emotional aspect. Judith shows the ability to control feelings and not release her emotions impulsively. This attitude indicates emotional maturity and self-stability, which in social construction is more often attached to men. Thus, Judith shows a representation of women who have masculine character through calmness and control over feelings. She rejects feminine identity considered weak and easily carried away by emotions, and presents an image of women who are strong, independent, and rational.

3.1.4. Intellectual

Figure 6. Judith interpreting the poem "Aku" by Sapardi Djoko Damono

Figure 6 present denotatively, the scene shows Judith who has finished reading a poem titled "Aku" by Sapardi Djoko Damono and is asked by Pak Yon to interpret the poem's meaning in front of her friends. She answers calmly that simple love does not expect reciprocation, then receives praise from her teacher. Connotatively, Judith's action in interpreting the poem indicates the ability to think logically, critically, and reflectively. She not only reads textually but is able to capture the deep meaning of the poem's content, something generally associated with intellectual intelligence and thinking maturity. At the myth level, society often views women as creatures who prioritize feelings over logic. However, this scene

refutes that view because Judith actually shows rational intelligence identical to masculine character, especially in the context of deep thinking and analyzing ability.

The masculinity criteria by Chafetz apparent in figure 6, this scene is the ability to think rationally and analytically. Judith shows a mature intellectual side, brave in expressing her opinion argumentatively, and shows emotional control in conveying poem interpretation. This character reflects a form of intellectual masculinity, namely women's courage to think critically and assert their logical views in public spaces usually more dominated by men. Thus, Judith represents a woman figure who is not only emotionally sensitive but also intellectually strong.

Figure 7. Judith pretending to call the police

In figure 7, at the denotation level, the scene displays Judith pretending to know the police and calling someone to calm the situation when Rendy and Galih are almost beaten by residents. Connotatively, this action shows Judith's cleverness and ability to think quickly in solving problems. She uses logic and strategy to calm the atmosphere without violence. At the myth level, this scene refutes the assumption that women are incapable of thinking rationally or making important decisions in critical situations. Conversely, Judith shows intellectual intelligence and leadership ability to control chaotic situations.

According Figure 7, the masculinity criteria in this scene is seen through Judith's action who intellectually is able to find solutions to problems faced by Galih and Rendy. She shows calmness, rationality, and the ability to make strategic decisions under pressure. Traits generally attached to men in social construction. By pretending to contact the police, Judith shows a form of Chafetz's masculinity that is smart and tactical, namely courage to face conflict by relying on reason and strategy, not physical strength.

3.1.5. Interpersonal

Figure 8. Judith collecting trash without help from her friends

Based on the scene fragment depicted in figure 8, it is seen that Judith chooses to collect trash alone without asking for help from her friends. Interpreted denotatively, this scene

shows Judith's action working alone, different from other girls' groups who actually ask for Rio's help. Meanwhile, at the connotation level, Judith's behavior reflects independence and initiative, namely the desire to complete tasks without depending on others, especially men. This connotative meaning increasingly leads to cultural myths that have attached that independent attitude and not depending on others is a masculine characteristic. Although Judith is a woman, her action is categorized as a form of masculinity. This is in accordance with Chafetz's (1978) masculinity criteria which includes interpersonal aspects, one of which is being independent. In this case, Judith's friends actually prefer to depend on men's help.

Figure 9. Judith breaking up a fight between Biyan and Galih

In figure 9, at the denotation level, this scene displays Judith trying to break up a quarrel between her two friends with a firm expression and tone of voice showing her dislike of the conflict. She takes a position in the middle, giving direction for both to immediately complete their work. Connotatively, Judith's action reflects a figure who has initiative and control in social situations. She appears rational and oriented toward problem-solving, not emotion, thus showing effective and authoritative leadership. While at the myth level, this scene affirms social construction that leadership ability, problem-solving, and mediating conflict are often associated with masculinity. However, through Judith's character, that myth is redefined that masculine traits such as firmness and rationality can also be possessed by women.

Based on Chafetz's masculinity criteria, scene in Figure 9 reflects the interpersonal category (leadership spirit). Judith shows the ability to lead groups by mediating and directing her friends to refocus on common goals. Her courage to make decisions amid tension shows responsibility and positive dominance generally associated with masculine roles. In this context, Judith breaks the stereotype that women tend to be passive, by displaying authoritative, rational character capable of effectively controlling situations.

3.1.6. Personal Character

Figure 10. Judith arriving earliest

Figure 10 above shows Judith entering class earliest compared to other students. The classroom condition is still quiet and the seats in that class are still empty. The girl begins to observe and look for strategic seating positions until she settles on seat number two from the

back. She also doesn't forget to mark three chairs for her best friends, Rendy, Ela, and Putri using a pencil case and notebook so they won't be occupied by other students. In other words, this scene implies Judith's competitive attitude to get a strategic seat before it's chosen by other students. At the myth level, this scene differs from traditional views that women tend to be passive and need encouragement from other parties to act.

What Judith did in figure 10 is a manifestation of competitiveness. This trait is often identified with men, but in this scene, it is displayed by a female character, thus showing a shift in the meaning of masculinity that can be possessed by women. Chafetz (1978) mentions that competitive attitude is included in the masculinity aspect of personal character. As Nurafifah and Harini (2023) add that being competitive is one form of masculinity. Judith shows that discipline and competitive spirit do not belong to one particular gender, but are universal values that can be possessed by anyone.

Figure 11. Judith volunteering to be the first to read a poem in front of the class

In figure 11, denotatively, this scene shows Judith spontaneously raising her hand when Pak Yon asks one of the students to read a poem in front of the class. Judith's action draws surprised reactions from the teacher and her friends because she becomes the first student brave enough to come forward. Viewed connotatively, Judith's action shows a confident, competitive attitude, and brave in taking initiative to appear in public space. This attitude is often associated with masculine character. This action also illustrates Judith's desire to highlight her own abilities without fear of others' judgment. At the myth level, this scene affirms that courage to appear and compete in public space is not a male monopoly. Through Judith, the myth about women being passive and reluctant to stand out is challenged, and a new representation emerges that women are also capable of appearing as active, competitive, and confident figures.

The masculinity criteria apparent in this scene in figure 11 are courage, competitiveness, and self-confidence. Judith shows the ability to take an active role without waiting for others' direction, indicating leadership spirit and strong achievement motivation. Her quick decision-making attitude and courage to appear before the public reflect a dominant personality not easily intimidated, two characteristics in the construction of masculinity based on Chafetz's criteria. However, the form of masculinity possessed by Judith is not aggressive in nature, but productive and constructive. She dares to stand out not to defeat others, but to show her capacity as an individual who believes in her own abilities.

3.2. Discussion

Based on research results, it was found that Judith displays various forms of masculinity that reflect gender meaning shifts in Indonesian popular culture. At the denotation level, Judith is depicted through concrete actions such as rolling up shirt sleeves, standing upright, and daring to speak firmly to the opposite sex. These actions show dominant character socially often attached to men. At the connotation level, these scenes contain symbolic meanings about

courage, independence, and self-control that challenge passive women's stereotypes. Judith shows that emotional and intellectual strength is not only a male characteristic but can also be part of modern women's identity. Meanwhile, at the myth level, Judith's representation affirms a change in social views that women do not always have to be gentle and dependent on men. Through Judith's character, this film challenges patriarchal myths and presents a new construction that women can play active roles, lead, and express strength without losing their feminine side.

This finding aligns with Halberstam (2019) theory which states that masculinity is not only male property but can be displayed by women through actions, attitudes, and ways of thinking. Additionally, the use of Chafetz's seven masculinity criteria strengthens the results that Judith has masculine sides from various aspects, both physical, emotional, and interpersonal. Thus, *Bandelnya Judith* not only becomes entertainment viewing but also a means of reflection on gender identity changes in modern society. Masculinity in terms of physical appearance is reflected through the visual imagery of scenes in the film series studied. This aspect of masculinity includes men's clothing style and physical characteristics (Chafetz, 1978). Therefore, physical appearance is something that is visible to the eye, can be interpreted, and can be judged by others, as shown in figure 1 and 2.

In terms of sexuality, masculinity refers to the way an individual builds relationship and interacts with the opposite sex. According to Chafetz (1978), sexuality is not only about heterosexual orientation, but also the ability to protect, take initiative, show interest, and express feelings directly to the opposite sex. This aspect of masculinity encourages a person to act and dominate in a relationship. Judith is depicted as dominating the relationship, as shown in Figure 3. In addition, humans also have emotions that serve to indicate their current psychological state. However, the way individuals express their emotions is often influenced by society's views on gender. Chafetz (1978) also mentions individuals who do not show excessive emotions and remain calm even when facing problems. Masculinity views emotions not only as a response, but also as an aspect that is regulated and requires self-control. In this series, Judith has good self-control, as seen in figures 4 and 5.

Another aspect of masculinity is intellectualism, which is closely related to a person's analytical and critical abilities regarding academic and everyday knowledge or information. In masculinity, intellectualism is an aspect related to a person's ability to think, understand information, be objective, and make rational decisions (Chafetz, 1978). Intellectuality is one of the factors that determine how individuals respond to situations, assess and respond to problems with careful consideration. Figures 6 and 7 show Judith as a figure who has good academic intellectual abilities, being able to interpret a poem and also pretending to call the police to save Galih and Rendy from the residents' misunderstanding.

Furthermore, the interpersonal aspect basically refers to a person's ability to relate, interact, and build relationships with others. Chafetz (1978) explains that interpersonal skills include self-promotion or a dominant, assertive attitude and leadership qualities. Judith demonstrates interpersonal masculinity in Figure 8, where she acts independently in carrying out the task of collecting trash, and in Figure 9, where she mediates a fight between Biyan and Galih. Meanwhile, personal character aspects are traits inherent to individuals that influence their attitudes and behavior in making decisions and responding to situations encountered in daily life. This aspect is one of the elements that shape masculinity because it is related to the way individuals show independence, dominance, competitiveness, ambition, reliability, and adventurousness. This aspect of masculinity is shown in data 10 and 11, which describe Judith's competitive character.

The representation of female masculinity in *Bandelnya Judith* shows how visual and verbal signs work at three layers of Barthes' semiotic meaning including denotation, connotation, and myth in forming new gender constructions that break societal stereotypes. Barthes (2017) affirms that every sign never stops at literal meaning but continues to move to more complex meaning networks through connotation and ideology. This is clearly seen in several scenes in the series. All these findings confirm that *Bandelnya Judith* reconstructs myths about masculinity and femininity in Indonesian popular culture. As stated by Rossa & Setyanto (2024), media has the ability to dismantle gender identity boundaries through symbolic representation. Based on this, it aligns with the behavior and actions displayed by Judith in the scene data that has been found.

4. Conclusion

Based on research results and Barthes' semiotic analysis, it can be concluded that the series *Bandelnya Judith* by Andi Bachtiar Yusuf displays female masculinity representation through the main character, Judith. Judith's character shows seven forms of masculinity according to Chafetz which include physical appearance, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal character. Denotative meaning displays masculine behavior in reality, connotative meaning affirms values/views toward displayed visual imagery, while mythical meaning shows social belief views regarding women's roles. This series breaks traditional stereotypes that masculine traits only belong to men and presents a new image of modern women in social and narrative space. This research shows that film media has an important role in forming new understanding about gender equality through representation of female characters who have masculine sides within themselves.

This research found a number of data showing female masculinity representation through Judith's character in *Bandelnya Judith*. This data appears in various Judith's actions, such as rolling up shirt sleeves and her upright body posture, which reflect masculinity from the physical appearance aspect. In the sexual aspect, Judith appears brave in taking initiative when teasing Galih. From the emotional side, Judith several times shows self-stability, for example remaining calm when Putri panics or when trying to control her emotions in conversation with Ela. In the intellectual aspect, Judith stands out through her ability to interpret poetry logically and her intelligence in finding solutions by pretending to call the police. Interpersonal masculinity is seen when she chooses to work independently when collecting trash and when breaking up conflict between Biyan and Galih. Additionally, Judith's personal character is also exposed through her discipline arriving earliest to class to choose strategic seating and her courage appearing first when asked to read poetry. Viewed overall, the obtained data shows that Judith consistently displays six out of seven Chafetz's masculinity aspects through actions, choices, and social interactions.

Referring to the findings and discussion above, this study provides an understanding of how women are represented as having masculine traits in a film series. This provides a new perspective through Barthes' semiotic analysis and the application of Chafetz's theory of masculinity, which shows that masculinity is not only possessed by men, but can also appear as a form of expression, choice of action, and behavior by women. Through Barthes' semiotic approach, this study confirms that Judith's representation does not merely display masculine behavior denotatively, but also forms connotative meanings and myths that break traditional views about women's roles and characteristics.

5. References

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