

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

The 2023 Barbie live action movie is without a doubt a movie that aims to support feminism. After extensively analyzing the movie through the lens of Derrida's deconstruction theory, the researcher would like to admit that there is a truth to the notion that the movie supports feminism, or at the very least, a genuine effort to try to do so. It is the dominant side of the binary, the researcher might add. Unequivocally, there are depictions of women empowerment found in the movie; the researcher and this research does not intend to deny that. There are two ways that the movie tries to support feminism with:

1. Promoting women empowerment. The researcher considers this as the better way of the two, if not the only correct way. This aligns with the goal of the First Wave feminists, as they had always been aiming to combat patriarchy by showing that women could do things that men could, hence the term 'women empowerment.'
2. Depicting that men are foolish, weak, and fragile in nature, especially compared to women. After analysis, the researcher would say that this is not a good way for the movie to show its support for feminism. This also does not align with the First Wave feminism. Feminism's goal has always been to combat patriarchy and promote equal gender rights.

If pre-feminism gender disparity were to be imagined as two points of height, men are higher in this hypothetical height point and therefore stronger than women. Showing women empowerment would cause women's value to rise to meet the men's as equal. In other words, the two genders are equally strong and of value. On the other hand, if the men were to be depicted as weak, men's value would drop to meet the women's. This would also result in equality. However, both genders would be in a position where they are equally weak. This is the downfall of the 2023 Barbie live action movie; by making men look weak, it inadvertently agrees that women are equally weak. However, the movie mixes making men weak and women strong, which has thus created a hierarchy where women are higher and stronger than men. This means that the movie also inadvertently agrees that matriarchy is good and normal, while patriarchy is bad. However, what is matriarchy, if it is not patriarchy but run by women? Therefore, what is matriarchy, if it is not as bad as patriarchy? This massive oversight has led to the eventual subversion of the movie's binary hierarchy.

As previously stated, Hamilton's research revealed distinct behaviors of modern-day feminism that negatively impact the society. Those behaviors are shaming motherhood, and generalization and resentment for men. All of the aforementioned behaviors are present and prominent in the 2023 Barbie live action movie. Therefore, it is not hard to figure out why the movie, despite its clear deprecations and mockeries of men, is still widely regarded as a movie that supports feminism. The researcher particularly finds it discomforting and disappointing that the movie is not an alternate depiction of reality where

feminism is misinterpreted, but rather a depiction of the actual reality and the normalization and justification that feminism is about men being weaker than women, and thus women being stronger than men. This has led people such as Hamilton believe that feminism brings harm to the society.

This normalization should not continue to influence people's thoughts. Conversely, more people should be made aware of what feminism really aims to do, and that the acts represented in the 2023 Barbie live action movie spell the downfall of feminism by justifying the acts of modern-day feminism, and therefore making non-feminists think that feminism harms society. As such, the researcher would like to propose a term called "Toxic Feminism" to describe a matriarchal mindset of resentment and harmful generalization of men, as well as shaming women who assume motherhood, that promotes and celebrates a gender hierarchy where women are strong, while men are weak and of no value. These "Toxic Feminists" should be made aware of their damaging acts, true feminists should not be afraid of being shunned by society, and non-feminists should hold less or no resentment to the concept of feminism, as the negative interpretation commonly seen in the modern day likely originates from a twisted yet unfortunately popular perspective of feminism.

5.2 Suggestions

This research has its limitations, and would therefore greatly benefit from further research within the same field or data. For example, extensive analyses of the depictions of masculinity, while strongly related, are outside of this research's

limitations. The full impact that the 2023 Barbie live action movie has had on society also falls outside of this research's scope. Emotional and philosophical attributes present in the movie also warrant their own analyses. As such, the researcher earnestly hopes that this research would be able to assist further research endeavors in order to further the concept of Toxic Feminism.

