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Abstract

Gender ideology, which refers to socially constructed gender roles, has long separated the roles of men and women using the terms femininity and masculinity. When this ideology is widely accepted by society, it forms a hegemony that is often perpetuated through popular film culture. Frequently, films reproduce gender inequality and portray women as marginal figures under male dominance. However, this hegemony also generates oppositional forces called organic intellectuals, who resist domination through various forms, including film. This study aims to investigate counter-hegemony in scenes which critically reframed to challenge and redefine gender stereotypes that are represented in Barbie the Movie (2023). This research applies a critical paradigm, a qualitative approach, and Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis to examine scenes and narratives by positioning subjects, objects, and audiences in the film. The findings reveal that Barbie (2023) not only illustrates hegemonic gender stereotypes through opposing actors, but also demonstrates clear resistance through the director's feminist discourse as an organic intellectual. This resistance conveys an emancipatory feminist ideology that challenges patriarchal gender norms, depicting women's autonomy and subjectivity as a form of counter-hegemony to traditional gender stereotypes in popular culture.

Keywords: counter-hegemony, gender stereotypes, feminist discourse, critical discourse analysis, popular culture.

Introduction

Mass media is one of the tools that can be used to influence the wider society regarding the dissemination of existing ideologies. One of the ideologies created is about gender. Gender is the social and cultural construction of male and female roles. For example, the gender role of men as property owners, decision-makers, and heads of households is socially, historically, and culturally constructed and has no relation to biological differences. The separation of male and female roles, which specifically separates them with their respective responsibilities and activities, becomes a norm reinforced by cultural practices (Stewart et al., 2021). Mass media and gender are closely related to each other. Media is an important element in providing an overview of gender identity in society. Everything portrayed by the media and its content can influence behavior and change societal perspectives on gender contexts within media (Gauntlett, 2008). Views constructed by the media form a mass opinion and become an internalized belief (Razali et al., 2023). However, It is rare that the media is seen as a tool of resistance, especially countering ideologies that influence society.

Stuart Hall's theory of cultural studies explained that one of the popular media today is film. Film is considered a complex medium that is also a cultural product in the form of art, entertainment, and industrial products and technological advancements (Guneratne & Dissanayake, 2003). Film serves as both entertainment and a means to convey ideologies, meanings, and perceptions to audiences, with fragmentary social representations that can support, reject, criticize, or remain neutral towards reality. Additionally, films serve as mirrors of life containing textual signs that reflect social structures and individual creations.

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The presence of a film is considered a "source of dangerous pleasure" that surpasses traditional art and forms of recreation in civilized worlds. This is due to the medium's power within films, involving

hypnotic reception conditions that are more dangerous and associated with enticing illusions about real life (Perumal, 2014).

Film is a medium that can provide information to audiences and is known as an integral part of society as it contributes to representing a paradigm (Monk-Turner et al., 2014). Films can depict various aspects, including gender and the marginalization of women stemming from myths of female incapability and experiences of discrimination (Mitchell & McKinnon, 2019).

Films influence the roles of women in society by adhering to patriarchal ideologies and following a structured system where film narratives typically reflect the culture of society at large, with the hope that the films presented will be accepted by the audience. The role of women in popular culture industries is also often marginalized. The Hollywood industry, which spreads popular culture massively in America and globally, predominantly places white men as the majority narrative makers, while women are placed as minorities and tend to be less prominent. From the outset, there has been racial and gender inequality in representations and even the production process of Hollywood films in the United States (Erigha, 2015)

Several considerations regarding the filmmaker or film editor if they are a woman. Things that are taken into consideration are the reasons for the viewpoint and critical nature that women have (Hunter & Shearer, 2023). Women still rarely appear and find it difficult to hold key roles in Hollywood. In existing research, it is said that in 30% of films, no woman had a leading role in the top 250 films in 2017 (Heldman & Haggard, 2020). Since the emergence of Hollywood, women have only held 17% of influential positions, namely directors, writers, producers, editors and cinematographers. Even women have not made progress in the field of film production. The lack of female representation in Hollywood film production is striking. These obstacles arise because of discrimination *gender* which divides the roles of men and women. It is also supported by female applicants for film workers and only a few women meet the requirements because there is still bias *gender* in every selection process carried out which basically still prioritizes men (Heldman & Haggard, 2020). Apart from the production process, discrimination against women is also visible in the content of Hollywood films.

Gender inequality that exists in the film industry is a form of hegemony that creates a culture that represents an ideology to society that the dominant group is a very influential group which then leads subordinate groups and assumes that what has been constructed by the dominant group is common and normal (Hayward & Ilan, 2017). The theory of hegemony further enriches top subjectivity *gender*, because it is closely related to power relations, which basically has implications for social life. In short, it can be said that genderization has been regulated and embedded by the state in the form of patriarchy and masculinity among the powerful (McNally & Schwarzmantel, 2009). Antonio Gramsci believed that the media had an important role in spreading hegemonic ideology (Aladdin et al., 2022), not only in the roles in films but also in film production. This hegemony is the basis for creating gender norms in culture and forming cultural stereotypes (Rubin, 2021).

Cultural stereotypes that construct women based on their physical appearance are reflected in the Barbie doll. Barbie is a doll produced in 1959 by Mattel Inc., an American company. Barbie is depicted as a beautiful doll with a slim body, long hair, and a stunning appearance, supported by colorful outfits. This strengthens the idea of an ideal woman in line with the beauty hegemony that is indirectly perpetuated by society regarding the image of Barbie. In the end, society has become accustomed to the influence of the beauty depicted by Barbie and reflected in a woman's style and appearance (Widuri et al., 2023). Gramsci characterizes hegemony as a cultural influence, not just political leadership within an alliance system (Firmansyah & Indarti, 2023; Hereyah, 2011; Lutfiatri, 2023). In 1962, Mattel launched the first Barbie Dreamhouse, where Mattel Inc. created Barbie to represent women in a new way, becoming a symbol of independence and empowerment (Mattel Inc.). Barbie ultimately showed the public that an icon carried the image of a traditional woman, could evolve and adapt with the times (Crimmins, 2023).

Initially, Barbie films were animated films aimed at a children's audience, highlighting depictions of the beauty of classic fairy tale lands. Developments made between time periods only involved additions of music, audio, and utilizing media to reach a wider audience. In 2023, Mattel produced a Barbie movie titled Barbie & Ken. This movie was actually planned to be released in 2017, but due to the director's careful consideration in portraying Barbie's character in the film, it was eventually released in 2023 (Collider.com, 2023). There is controversy as to why the film release process was quite lengthy. Mattel Inc., the Barbie production company, was very careful in preserving

Barbie's history, and after a long process, Greta Gerwig was chosen as the director and Margot Robbie as the lead actress in Barbie (2023).

In 2023, the film *Barbie* become a film *blockbuster* which was able to rake in $1.4 billion in *box office* which simply shook the world with the cultural display it broadcast. Barbie was able to master engagement metrics on social media with strong female branding (Forbes, 2023). In an article launched by Forbes, with the title "*The World's Most Powerful Women*" Barbie is included in the 100 strongest women in the world (Forbes et al., 2023). Barbie is a figure with the image of a woman who has power, but this figure is fictional, different from the other 99 women. Forbes said that with Barbie, supporting the seat of power and gaining an important position in the world will change everything.

Barbie (2023) attracted attention worldwide with its controversial storyline. The film is considered a significant moment in celebrating feminism and a critique of some stereotypes directed towards women (Rosenblatt & Tolentino, 2023). With its iconic pink Barbie aura and hyper-stylized visuals, this film is seen as a heavy film that addresses systemic, complex, and contradictory issues between traditional and modern women. Barbie (2023) is a medium that has the opportunity to create a new discourse that can shift the previous paradigm which was only a communicative paradigm into a critical paradigm as a culture of protest (Baer, 2016) regarding the role of media in placing discourse as change in a positive direction and as a tool for increasing awareness public.

Greta Gerwig portrays that women are capable of empowerment and full criticism of existing gender stereotypes. Greta places messages to negotiate power, involving the audience to create different points of view and meaning. If films are considered cultural products that contain ideologies and the dissemination of values to audiences, usually used by rulers to influence their people, this time the director of the Barbie (2023) film opposes traditional gender values and provides a different positive portrayal from patriarchal stigmas or stereotypes through scenes, audiovisual elements, and meanings conveyed in this film. Greta Gerwig implies a critical paradigm as if opposing power and releasing the projection of society's gender hegemonic ideology to restore human values and rights (Ghaffari, 2022). This is based on the expression that all countries currently have an equal position and oppose inequality (Peters, 2022).

The inequality of gender, race and sexuality depicted by media texts in the past is something that must be overcome and liberate individuals and society from ideologies that are internalized and implemented consciously or unconsciously that limit individual freedom (Peters, 2022). Media and the texts in it have an important role in representing social reality (Brooks & Hébert, 2006). People's behavioral patterns are reflected in media content. However, the media has received harsh criticism for its limited stereotypical depiction of gender and forming a quite patriarchal social structure that is only oriented towards men which is then normalized into hegemony (Ghaffari, 2022). Media texts are a link to discourses of power as described by Foucault (in Gauntlett, 2008) who states that through media-based knowledge and discourse, the subject positions offered to marginalized groups can have the opportunity to erase disparities.

Previous studies have shown that mass media, particularly films, function as a powerful medium for disseminating dominant ideologies, including gender ideologies. Gender, as a social and cultural construct, defines distinct roles for men and women that are perpetuated and normalized through repeated representation in media content (Stewart et al., 2021). Media depictions have long shaped collective beliefs about gender identity, with women frequently portrayed as passive, subordinate, or marginal figures within patriarchal narratives (Gauntlett, 2008). This reflects Stuart Hall's cultural studies perspective that popular media, like films, do not merely entertain but actively produce and circulate ideologies that shape audience perceptions (Guneratne & Dissanayake, 2003). Other Research on hegemony in the other media such as television and social media can be seen in Agustin's research (2013, 2024) .Agustin (2013) examined the Hegemony of Gender Ideology in Farah Quinn's Trans TV "Ala Chef" Program and found that there was a modification of female gender stereotypes in culinary shows in cooking programs on television. If previously the gender stereotype displayed was the gender stereotype of women who cook depicted as mothers in the kitchen, then the show with Farah Quinn as the host depicted women no longer cooking in the kitchen, but outside. However, this does not mean that this changes the ideology that resides. The study shows that the hegemony of the existing gender ideology still holds traditional ideology and Farah Quinn as a culinary intellectual, does not become an organic intellectual and also perpetuates women as male objects. Agustin (2024) talks about hegemony in the digital world, where the artificial intelligence (AI)

Instagram account @lentaripagi depicts a female AI influencer Lentari van Lorainne (Riri). The results of the study show that the figure of Riri perpetuates gender stereotypes against the female body by presenting Riri as a young woman with associations of stunning beauty, having an ideal body and a beautiful Indonesian face, loving sports and traveling, and being charming. This perpetuation occurs through posts and comments on Riri's Instagram account by the traditional intellectuals behind the character's creation. However, these studies have failed to identify the ideology underlying this hegemony.

Prior research has mostly focused on how media supports hegemonic gender stereotypes by examining recurring patterns in advertisements, news reports, or mainstream movies. Some studies have investigated counter-hegemonic discourse in various contexts, such as novels, poetry, online journalism, or grassroots community art (Firmansyah & Indarti, 2023; Oumlil, 2013). However, there remains a significant research gap regarding how film directors themselves can act as organic intellectuals to produce counter-hegemonic narratives within a mainstream, commercial film context. While counter-hegemonic efforts are well documented in alternative or activist media, analyses of resistance to gender stereotypes embedded within highly popular, global cultural products — like Barbie (2023) — are still rare.

This research therefore addresses this gap by investigating how the Barbie (2023) film represents counter-hegemony through feminist discourse constructed by the director. It specifically explores how a mainstream film, which historically embodies traditional gender stereotypes, can be critically reframed to challenge and redefine those stereotypes for global audiences. By applying Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis, this study contributes to cultural studies and media discourse by demonstrating how popular culture can become a site for emancipatory feminist resistance.

Based on this background, the researcher wants to analyze how counter hegemony is represented visually by challenging and subverting traditional gender stereotyping paradigms in films by using Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis in the film Barbie (2023). Previously, the discourse that was ideologized was a picture of subordinates who had received defeat, but this research will focus on how the discourse forms a critical ideology to oppose existing domination.

Hegemony, initially a political concept, describes the dominance of one state over another, often through influence or threat. In Marxist theory, it signifies the bourgeoisie's political leadership over the working class without coercion (Lears, 1116). Antonio Gramsci advanced this concept by moving beyond economic determinism, framing hegemony as cultural leadership exercised by the ruling class (Ritzer & Goodman, 2008). Unlike Lenin, who emphasized proletarian political leadership, Gramsci highlighted moral, intellectual, and non-economic dimensions of class relations (Mouffe, 1979). Hegemony thus operates as consent within unequal social structures, in which dominant groups persuade subordinates through cultural influence (Firmansyah & Indarti, 2023) until ideological dominance becomes "common sense" (Hayward & Ilan, 2017). This reconceptualization presents power as a dynamic interplay of alignment, sanctions, and dependency (Bruno et al., 2018; Theodossopoulos, 2014), while also intersecting with feminist state theory, which argues that the state reproduces class and gender inequality through patriarchal structures (McNally & Schwarzmantel, 2009). Understanding hegemony therefore requires examining both historical blocs and the degree of subordinate class consent (Crehan, 2002).

Central to Gramsci's framework is the role of intellectuals as mediators between rulers and civil society. Gramsci highlighted intellectuals who worked on the side of capitalists, achieving cultural leadership and gaining the approval of the masses, who adapted and accepted this cultural leadership. Within the mechanism of hegemony, the role of intellectuals is crucial because they can be described as a leading class with a high level of persuasive power. Gramsci distinguished two types of intellectuals: Traditional Intellectuals and Organic Intellectuals. Traditional intellectuals prioritized academic functions and carried out their roles according to the work system. Organic intellectuals played a more active role as agents of change, acting as liaisons or provocateurs for the proletariat in achieving class consciousness. The class consciousness fostered by organic intellectuals then led the proletariat to resist hegemony and carry out revolution. Therefore, the concept of hegemony helps us not only understand the concept of domination but also explains Gramsci's thinking about revolution as social change (Ritzer, 2012). Cultural and ideological hegemony operates through civil society institutions, such as education, the family, the church, the mass media, popular culture, and so on. Mass media and popular culture are subject to hegemonic production, reproduction, and transformation.

Traditional intellectuals reinforce dominant ideologies, whereas organic intellectuals cultivate critical awareness and expose structural inequalities (Mosco, 2009). Intellectuals encompass not only cultural producers but also administrators, politicians, and organizers, classified vertically (e.g., industrial managers) and horizontally (traditional versus organic).

When ruling groups can no longer maintain consensus, counter-hegemony arises as an ethical-political alternative (Pramudyanto, 2013). Driven by organic intellectuals, counter-hegemony seeks to democratize society by contesting capitalist dominance. In cultural practice, films may serve as counter-hegemonic sites, portraying struggles that resist the capitalist ideology underpinning the film industry itself (Andriandini, 2016).

Method

The approach employed in this research utilizes a qualitative methodology with text or discourse analysis. The primary data in this study consists of an in-depth textual and visual examination of the film Barbie (2023). The research strategy adopts is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method, which allows the researcher to investigate how power, ideology, and resistance are embedded in language and visual signs. This study specifically employs the CDA model developed by Sara Mills, which is particularly relevant in feminist discourse studies. Sara Mills' CDA focuses on the subject-object position within texts, the narrative voice, and the position of the audience or reader. By analyzing who is positioned as subject and who as object, and how these positions shift, the analysis reveals hidden ideologies, stereotypes, and possible sites of resistance. This perspective is crucial for uncovering how films reproduce or resist dominant gender narratives.

The critical paradigm in this research is rooted in Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony and counter-hegemony, which frames how dominant ideologies are maintained through cultural means and how organic intellectuals can resist them. Thus, this research uses Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony alongside Sara Mills' CDA tools to examine both narrative and cinematic elements of the film. Scenes are categorized based on depictions of gender stereotypes, hegemony, resistance, and counter-hegemony.

The film dissection involves five selected scenes that meet these analytical criteria. Each scene is examined in detail to identify how discourse strategies such as positioning, language, and visual representation contribute to perpetuating or challenging hegemonic gender ideologies. By integrating CDA, feminist media theory, and cultural studies, this research reveals how Barbie (2023) acts not merely as entertainment but as a site of ideological negotiation that redefines traditional gender stereotypes. The selection of scenes categorized as hegemony, resistance, counter-hegemony, and gender stereotypes was done purposively because these four elements are key in analyzing how the film Barbie (2023) represents the process of reproduction and resistance to gender ideology. The characteristics are:

1. Scenes containing elements of hegemony were chosen to demonstrate how traditional gender stereotypes are constructed, embedded, and disseminated through narrative and visuals. These scenes are important as evidence of how patriarchal ideological constructions persist in the film, despite being packaged in a modern way.
2. Scenes containing resistance were chosen to demonstrate the efforts to reject traditional gender domination, both symbolically and textually. This demonstrates that the film does not merely passively reproduce hegemony but also opens up space for critical reading.
3. Scenes depicting counter-hegemony were chosen because they serve as the focal point of the research.

Through these scenes, researchers can examine how the director, as an organic intellectual (Gramsci), inserts emancipatory feminist ideology, with the aim of challenging gender stereotypes deeply rooted in society and popular culture. 4. Scenes containing gender stereotypes are important for demonstrating how feminine and masculine representations are constructed, maintained, or undermined. This element serves as a foundation for understanding the power relations between the men and women depicted, as well as examining the extent to which these representations support or challenge patriarchal ideology.

Based on those characteristics, there are 5 figures found:



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

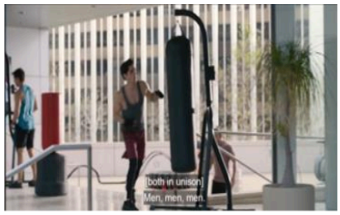


Figure 4



Figure 5

After the scene is selected according to several established criteria, the researcher then interprets the selected scene based on the visual images and dialogue displayed. The data analysis technique is film dissection analysis. where the surgical analysis of this film considers the narrative elements that will be described. where these elements contain aspects: (1) Characters, (2) Conflict, (3) Goal, (4) Place and (5) Time. The second element is the cinematic element. Cinematic elements are all aspects that contribute to a film to convey a style in packaging a film which contains the components: (1) Mise-en scene, (2) Cinematography, (3) Editing and (4) Sound (Pratista, 2008). However, there is an additional component, namely the type of shooting that shows how the subject is depicted. These types of shooting include: (1) Longshot/Wide Shot, (2) The medium shot and (3) The Close-up.

Subsequently, the film is dissected using Sara Mills' critical discourse to elucidate how representation within the text manifests through stylistic language (Mills, 1995). Sara Mills is recognized for her feminist perspective, examining how women are portrayed within texts. By examining the subject-object positions within each scene, the analysis elucidates how events are

perceived, who is positioned as the subject, and subsequently, who becomes the object of narration. Furthermore, the position of actors in the film unveils how dominant beliefs exert control over and shape a text with particular ideologies (Mills, 2005). The classification of the author's and reader's positions is essential, as readers will position themselves in interpreting the text. Thus, readers will align themselves with a perspective that resonates with their identification (Mills, 2005). The analytical framework applied to the Barbie (2023) aims to analyze both the depiction of counter-hegemony and the portrayal of genderizing the film's scenes.

Results and Discussion

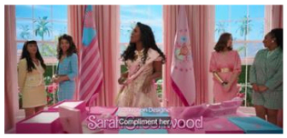
The findings reveal how the film simultaneously reproduces and resists patriarchal gender norms, positioning the director as an organic intellectual presenting emancipatory feminist discourse release of Barbie (2023) featured distinctive packaging, marking it as the first Barbie movie/motion pictures. Directed by Greta Gerwig, the film stirred controversy surrounding feminist themes, which reverberated throughout the global film industry. Below are the 5 scene-categories analysis:

Scene 1 Category : Gender Stereotype

Visual	Narrative Elements	Cinematic Elements	Subject – Object Position	Audience Position	Monologue
Figure 1: Playing with doll 	**Characters:** Several young girls play with dolls **Conflict:** Reinforces societal norm that girls must play with dolls, reflecting traditional gender stereotypes. **Purpose:** Shows how early gender socialization limits roles. **Setting:** Barren desert/wasteland. **Time:** Late afternoon/evening.	**Mise-en-Scène:** Young girls and dolls in a barren desert, sunset background. **Cinematography:** Somber composition, dim lighting, gloomy feel. **Editing:** Simple visual effects, contemplative pacing. **Sound:** Desert winds, bird sounds conveys solitude.	**Subject:** Young girls as the narrator and active agents. **Object:** Dolls symbolize babies, highlighting role of women as mothers.	The audience is positioned through the girl's perspective and the female voice-over, prompting viewers to reflect on the cultural stereotype that girls must be nurturers from childhood, limiting their choices and identity formation.	*"Since the beginning of time, since the first little girl ever existed, there have been dolls… The girls who played with them could only ever play at being mothers, which can be fun, at least for a while…"* (Barbie, 2023)

This monologue illustrates that the stereotype of women is someone who has the role of a mother, carrying a baby, putting the baby to sleep, and similar activities. However, it is also explained that the enjoyment derived from these routines is only temporary, and in reality, young girls also have the opportunity to explore other games with different roles. Overall, this monologue highlights the limitations of women's roles that have become stereotypes, thus inhibiting women's mobility from an early age.

Scene 2 Category: Counter Hegemony

Visual	Narrative Elements	Cinematic Elements	Subject – Object Position	Audience Position	Monologue
Figure 5: Barbie President of Barbie Land 	**Characters:** Several Barbies, with one Barbie as the president who is about to be interviewed.Barbie and the other Barbies. **Conflict:** The president in Barbie Land is also a woman, demonstrating that women can lead effectively, democratically, and with compassion. **Purpose:** To showcase women's power and empowerment; Barbie Land as an ideal space where women can be anything. **Setting:** Barbie Land. **Time:** Morning, indicated by bright lighting.	**Mise-en-Scène:** The scene shows the return of women to Barbie Land, with wide spaces and dominant orange tones symbolizing both warmth and tension. **Cinematography:** Bright, sharp lighting symbolizes the assertiveness and confidence of a female leader indoors. **Editing:** Visuals emphasize unity, cheerfulness, and positive energy. **Sound:** Upbeat music reinforces the happiness and empowerment of Barbie and her community.	**Subject:** The Barbie President is positioned as the empowered subject and leader. **Object:** The object is the role of the presidency, symbolizing authority usually reserved for men, now held by a woman.	The audience is positioned to view this scene as a depiction of a utopian feminist society, where women hold the highest leadership positions, challenging patriarchal norms that restrict women's access to power and decision-making. This positions the viewer to rethink conventional leadership stereotypes.	"*Everybody, turn to the Barbie next to you. Tell her how much you love her. Compliment her. Reporter Barbie, you can ask me any question you want. Well, how come you're so amazing!*" *(Barbie President, Barbie, 2023).*

The position of the reader/viewer in this scene is from the point of view of a woman expressing freedom of expression. The leader of Barbie Land is a female Barbie. The highlight of this scene is the statement made by the president instructing all Barbies to express love towards each other. This is also depicted through the audio, which shows the happy laughter of each Barbie in the Barbie President's room. Barbie President portrays how a leader has a policy that every individual must respect each other, sending a message that support among women is essential in shaping a peaceful Barbie Land society. It is evident how the president responds well to the media by demonstrating that everyone has the right to ask questions to Barbie President. In the meeting forum, the president opens space for other Barbies to voice their opinions.

Scene 3 Category : Gender Stereotype

Visual	Narrative Elements	Cinematic Elements	Subject – Object Position	Audience Position

Figure 5: Ken and Barbie Journey to Real World 	**Characters:** Ken (male) and Barbie (female) embark on a camping trip using a pink van. **Conflict:** Ken, a male character, takes on tasks typically associated with women, such as drying clothes and preparing food, while Barbie relaxes. **Purpose:** To show a shift and subtle critique of traditional gender roles. **Setting:** Journey to the Real World, featuring a tulip garden, forest edge, and campsite. **Time:** Morning and daytime indicated by clear blue sky.	**Mise-en-Scène:** The background is a colorful flower garden and forest. Ken hangs clothes beside a pink van, Barbie eats food calmly, symbolizing role reversal. **Cinematography:** Static composition highlights characters actions, with bright lighting creating a cheerful tone. Dominant pink hues and flowers emphasize the iconic Barbie world. **Editing:** Simple cuts focus on activities of both characters. **Sound:** Upbeat music underscores the joyful vibe of their adventure.	**Subject:** Ken, as a male figure, becomes the subject doing domestic tasks. **Object:** Domestic chores and the act of nurturing traditionally female coded tasks become the object redefined through Ken's actions.	The audience is positioned to question rigid gender divisions, seeing a male character performing stereotypically female tasks. This scene encourages viewers to reflect on how gender roles are fluid and can be subverted even in playful settings. It subtly mocks the idea that domestic work should belong solely to women, showing instead that such roles can be interchangeable.

The position of the reader/viewer is placed from a female perspective. The audio throughout the journey consists of songs sung by women. The scene portrays how Barbie enjoys the journey. However, the highlighted perspective from this scene is the activities of Barbie and Ken. Barbie is seen leisurely enjoying her meal while Ken is hanging clothes. This is a reversal of roles compared to the traditional understanding in the real world. Typically, women would do household chores while men would sit at the table to eat the meals prepared by women. This reversal may seem impossible, but for the director of Barbie (2023), there is a deeper meaning to understand from this scene. It portrays that the positions of men and women are equal without assigning specific gender roles for tasks.

Scene 4 Category: Hegemony

Visual	Narrative Elements	Cinematic Elements	Subject – Object Position	Audience Position	Monologue
Figure 5: You're the Man 	**Characters:** Two men in a sports facility doing physical activities. **Conflict:** This scene contrasts Barbie Land's female-centered world with the Real World's male-dominated spaces, highlighting patriarchy. **Purpose:** To illustrate how the Real World remains under patriarchal control. **Setting:** Company sports facility in the Real World. **Time:** Daytime indicated by natural light through large windows.	**Mise-en-Scène:** Modern indoor space with men exercising, wearing casual or business attire. The large windows and open layout emphasize an environment designed for men's activities. **Cinematography:** Fast-paced shots reflect masculinity and dominance. **Editing:** Focused on showcasing the men's physical presence and confidence. **Sound:** Male voices chanting "Men, men, men!" reinforce the dominance of masculine energy.	**Subject:** Ken, as a male figure, becomes the subject doing domestic tasks. **Object:** Domestic chores and the act of nurturing traditionally female-coded tasks become the object redefined through Ken's actions.	The audience is positioned to question rigid gender divisions, seeing a male character performing stereotypically female tasks. This scene encourages viewers to reflect on how gender roles are fluid and can be subverted even in playful settings. It subtly mocks the idea that domestic work should belong solely to women, showing instead that such roles can be interchangeable.	"*You're the Man, No You're The man Men, men, men!*" *(Male voice in the real world). Barbie, 2023).*

The position of the eader/viewer is from the perspective of Ken or the male perspective. Through the imagery and dialogue presented, the scene portrays an environment where all activities in the real world are dominated by men. All facilities are provided for men, and almost all scenes are dominated by male faces. This makes Ken increasingly skeptical about what truly exists in the real world. Ken is amazed by the real world, imagining if his entire life were dominated by individuals like himself. With a sense of curiosity, Ken becomes more eager to delve into and uncover the mysteries of the real world, which he finds intriguing and captivating.

Scene 5 Category: Resistence

Visual	Narrative Elements	Cinematic Elements	Subject – Object Position	Audience Position	Monologue
Figure 5: Gloria Monologue 	**Characters:** Gloria (Sasha's mother) delivers a heartfelt monologue to motivate and awaken Barbie and the other Barbies. **Conflict:** The conflict heightens as Barbie Land succumbs to patriarchy, and Gloria's words expose the burdens women face under hegemonic systems. **Purpose:** To depict the struggle and feminist resistance led by Gloria, Barbie, and their allies to reclaim Barbie Land's autonomy. **Setting:** Barbie Land. **Time:** Morning, implied by the activities and lighting.	**Mise-en-Scène:** The scene shows the return of women to Barbie Land, with wide spaces and dominant orange tones symbolizing both warmth and tension. **Cinematography:** The camera dynamically follows Gloria's passionate delivery, focusing on her as the main subject, with bright lighting highlighting her expression. **Editing:** Complex editing interweaves dramatic moments with rebellion imagery. **Sound:** The soundtrack features subtle, somber tones that intensify the weight of Gloria's message.	**Subject:** Gloria is positioned as the subject and organic intellectual challenging patriarchal norms. **Object:** Barbie and the other Barbies are positioned as the object receiving enlightenment and motivation for collective resistance.	The audience is positioned to identify with Gloria's monologue, prompting reflection on the contradictions and double standards imposed on women. This scene invites viewers to recognize how societal structures burden women with unrealistic expectations, highlighting the power of collective awareness and feminist solidarity.	*"You're supposed to stay pretty for men but not so pretty that you tempt them too much… and nobody gives you a medal or says thank you… everything is your fault."* (Gloria, Barbie, 2023)

The positioning of the audience/reader is from a female perspective. Through Gloria, the film's narrator depicts how the environment shapes female stereotypes. She indirectly portrays the struggles

that Barbie faces when she enters the Real World. Everything associated with femininity is deemed wrong, and whatever women do will always be judged negatively. Gender discrimination against women is highlighted in this dialogue. The emotional expression from the female perspective reflects how women are treated in the real world. This is in line with Stuart Hall's cultural studies perspective that popular media functions not only to entertain but also to circulate dominant ideologies that shape audience perceptions.

The roles of men and women in Barbie The Movie (2023) are compartmentalized according to what is constructed by the social environment. The separation between women and men creates a belief and approval by society, as it is deemed commonplace and correct. Women become marginalized figures while men are portrayed as dominant. In Barbie (2023), the gender ideology portrayed stems from the appearance of young girls playing with dolls, continuing to do so until Barbie arrives and changes everything. This forms a hegemony. Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony arises when there is a group that dominates and brings forth certain ideologies. Popular media plays a significant role in perpetuating gender stereotype hegemony. Gender stereotype hegemony is introduced by Ken, portraying a role based on gender. Masculinity is highlighted in the Real World. Similarly, in the film, the Real World depicted in Barbie shows boundaries between what should be done by men and women. Patriarchal values are realized by the director into Ken's role when he enters Barbie Land and transforms it into Ken Land. This analysis is supported by Stewart et al. (2021), who explain how gender roles are socially constructed and normalized through everyday cultural practices.

In the words of Antonio Gramsci, after hegemony, oppositi11will emerge. In this research, efforts to counter hegemony are clearly evident from the beginning to the end of the film. In Barbie, the director is a woman known for her staunch feminism. Greta Gerwig conveys messages into the text by injecting elements that detach from ideologies commonly depicted by popular media. With a background in English and Philosophy, Gerwig can be considered an organic intellectual. Gerwig resists cultural hegemony conveyed through film, also adding a feminist touch at the beginning of the film, portraying Barbie's life as a woman capable of breaking free from patriarchal constraints that dictate women must conform to traditional societal stereotypes. Gender roles are largely eliminated upon entering Barbie Land, where women have the right to express themselves according to their dreams. Barbie indirectly breaks gender stereotypes bound by conventional ideologies represented through popular media. This reflects Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis, which focuses on how the position of the subject, object, and reader can shift and resist dominant power structures.

The analysis of scenes in Barbie Movie (2023), when viewed through the lens of subject-object positioning, illustrates how discourse within the text is conveyed to the audience. Given that the analysis encompasses both film and textual elements, the determination of subject-object positions within scenes extends beyond mere character allocation in the film. By applying Mills' CDA, the findings show how the narrative voice consistently situates women as subjects with agency. Barbie (2023) depicts the workings of organic intellectual class bias within the film. The subject position as narrator is dominated by Barbie, while other characters serve as story supporters. Similarly, in terms of the audience's position, as Gerwig is the story's owner, she positions the viewer as one who resists the previously existing domination. The audience's position is largely placed from a female perspective rather than a male one, granting Gerwig ample opportunities to counter the existing dominance. This reinforces Gauntlett's (2008) view that media content influences how society internalizes gender roles. One form of language conveyed in the film is when Gloria speaks to Barbie and other women from a female perspective, critically explaining how women have been expected to behave in everyday life. This scene serves as a climax, showcasing anger and resistance subtly embedded by the director into the dialogue. This is evidenced by the director's positioning of the reader or viewer from a female standpoint, influencing them to concur with the interpretation of Barbie (2023) as a feminist film, serving as a form of resistance against hegemony, or what is termed as counter-hegemony. This interplay between hegemony and counter-hegemony aligns with Hall's and Gramsci's theories, showing how popular culture can become a site of ideological struggle.

Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony emphasizes that domination is sustained not merely through coercion but through consent embedded in everyday cultural practices. This dynamic is vividly illustrated in *Barbie* (2023), when patriarchal values from the real world such as masculinity, male authority, and women's domestic roles are absorbed into Barbie Land following Ken's intervention. Gramsci terms this acceptance *common sense*, in which dominant ideologies are naturalized and

rendered unquestionable. The film demonstrates how gender stereotypes and patriarchy operate not only as explicit rules but also as implicit social norms that restrict women through symbolic consent.

Yet for Gramsci, hegemony is always precarious, as it can be challenged by counter-hegemony. As stated before, organic intellectuals played a more active role as agents of change, acting as liaisons or provocateurs for the proletariat in achieving class consciousness. The class consciousness fostered by organic intellectuals then led the proletariat to resist hegemony and carry out revolution. In this sense, Greta Gerwig as director may be understood as an *organic intellectual* who stages resistance through feminist narration. By envisioning Barbie Land as an alternative space where women reclaim agency, the film illustrates how cultural representation itself can contest dominant ideologies. Counter-hegemonic forces emerge not only through the characters' collective resistance against patriarchy but also through the film's discursive strategies such as positioning the audience from a female perspective, employing humor to deconstruct masculinity, and foregrounding female solidarity. Thus, *Barbie* (2023) exemplifies Gramsci's insight that popular media constitutes a crucial arena of ideological struggle, where gendered domination is destabilized and new forms of consciousness open pathways for women's emancipation. Gerwig can be seen as an agent of change who carries out resistance by planting feminist narration that counter gender stereotypes.

In Antonio Gramsci's formulation, every form of hegemony inevitably generates its opposition. This study finds that *Barbie* (2023) consistently stages counter-hegemonic strategies from the opening to the closing scenes. While film as a medium often reproduces dominant ideologies, Gerwig's *Barbie* subverts this tendency by presenting narratives and imagery that contest established power relations. Here, popular media becomes a critical site of ideological struggle, in which counter-hegemonic discourses are articulated.

The director's role is crucial in shaping such resistance. As a female filmmaker with a strong feminist orientation, Greta Gerwig positions the narrative through a female gaze, thereby unsettling the male-centered ideologies typically embedded in mainstream cinema. Drawing on her academic background in English and Philosophy, Gerwig exemplifies the role of an *organic intellectual* who resists cultural hegemony by embedding feminist elements into the film. From the outset, Barbie is depicted as a figure capable of breaking free from patriarchal constraints, challenging traditional stereotypes of femininity. Within Barbie Land, gender roles are dismantled: women exercise agency, authority, and self-expression beyond conventional limitations.

Gerwig's cinematic vision offers an idealized counter-reality, where patriarchal norms are reversed and a matriarchal system highlights women's centrality in social and political structures. This narrative choice explicitly challenges the hegemonic gender order of the real world. As Gramsci argued, counter-hegemony emerges when subordinate groups weaken dominant values through alternative representations. In *Barbie*, this resistance is manifested through characterization, narrative structure, and symbolic reversals that destabilize entrenched gender hierarchies. By employing feminist discourse and critical stylistics, the film demonstrates how popular culture can dismantle patriarchal ideology and produce counter-hegemonic imaginaries.

Theoretical Implication

Based on the findings of this study, the theoretical implications are follows:

1. Reinforcement of Gramsci's concept of hegemony in popular media.
   The findings show that gender hegemony is not only present in social structures but also internalized and reproduced through mainstream films. This extends the understanding that popular media is not merely entertainment but a contested arena where hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces interact.
2. Expansion of the notion of organic intellectuals.
   The analysis demonstrates how a mainstream film director (Greta Gerwig) can act as an organic intellectual by embedding feminist discourse and resistance into a global cultural product. Theoretically, this broadens the concept of organic intellectuals beyond activists or academics to include popular filmmakers.
3. Contribution to Stuart Hall's Cultural Studies.

The study highlights that film is not only a medium that reproduces dominant ideologies but also a potential site of resistance. This challenges the conventional assumption that popular media primarily supports dominant power structures, showing instead that it can subvert them.

4. Development of Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).
   By applying CDA to subject–object positioning in a blockbuster film, the study demonstrates that Mills' feminist CDA can be effectively extended from textual/journalistic discourse to visual and cinematic texts. This strengthens the theoretical application of CDA in analyzing popular culture.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that Barbie (2023) reflects how hegemony is constructed through the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, particularly depicted by male characters in the Real World who represent traditional gender roles. The film shows how popular media can contribute to maintaining societal beliefs that separate the roles of men and women, often relegating women to marginal positions. The unequal and disproportionate positioning of women and men is clearly visible when men's positions are minimized within Barbie Land, but conversely, women's positions are marginalized when Ken imposes patriarchal norms and transforms Barbie Land into Ken Land. Through the subject-object perspective in this critical discourse analysis, the director highlights how the film's narrative resists dominant ideologies by positioning Barbie and other female characters as both the subjects and the objects of resistance. Greta Gerwig, as an organic intellectual, conveys a discourse of resistance and counter-hegemony that challenges the deeply rooted gender stereotypes still evident in everyday life.

From this study, it is recommended that future researchers explore how counter-hegemony develops in other popular films using more diverse cultural and intersectional perspectives, such as analyzing how race, class, and sexuality intersect with gender representations in mass media. In addition, future research could deepen the analysis by involving audience reception studies to understand how viewers interpret and negotiate these gender discourses in their own contexts.

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