

AN ANALYSIS OF FEMINISM ON BRITISH CULTURE IN POLITICS BASED ON FILM “THE IRON LADY” BY PHYLLIDA LLOYD

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Abstract

Gender is one of the things that is quite complex in society. Various activities and certain positions sometimes require a view of a particular gender, where this becomes a distance for progress in an aspect of social life. This paper analyzes the feminism aspect on a British culture in a politics field which is represented by one of the longest-serving famous Prime Ministers of Great Britain named Margaret Thatcher at the film “The Iron Lady” directed by Phyllida Lloyd which was released in 2011. By her dedication, leadership, and uncompromising politics as a leader in the British politics field, she is also known as “The Iron Lady” from a Soviet journalist. This research is used a qualitative descriptive by using the words of the dialogue and analyzed by the theories. Some of the theories that are used in this paper are about feminism and women’s role in politics which will be used to analyze the data. Furthermore, the analysis results that a feminism aspect in British culture, especially at the politics aspect, occurs and Margaret Thatcher tries to break out an ordinary feminism society side by side by being a Prime Minister and represents the new value of feminism in a modern era. The findings of this paper hope that give an idea about a new feminism value and also women’s role in politics.

Keywords: feminism; British culture; woman’s role in politics; literature; film

Abstrak

Gender merupakan salah satu hal yang cukup kompleks dalam masyarakat. Berbagai aktivitas dan posisi tertentu terkadang memerlukan pandangan terhadap gender tertentu, dimana hal ini menjadi jarak kemajuan dalam suatu aspek kehidupan bermasyarakat. Tulisan ini menganalisis aspek feminisme pada budaya Inggris dalam bidang politik yang diwakili oleh salah satu Perdana Menteri Inggris Raya yang paling lama menjabat bernama Margaret Thatcher pada film “The Iron Lady” yang disutradarai oleh Phyllida Lloyd yang rilis pada tahun 2011. Dengan dedikasi, kepemimpinan, dan politik tanpa kompromi sebagai pemimpin di bidang politik Inggris, ia juga dikenal sebagai “The Iron Lady” dari seorang jurnalis Soviet. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan menggunakan kata-kata dialog dan dianalisis berdasarkan teori. Beberapa teori yang digunakan dalam tulisan ini adalah tentang feminisme dan peran perempuan dalam politik yang akan digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Lebih lanjut, hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa aspek feminisme dalam budaya Inggris, khususnya aspek politik, sedang terjadi dan Margaret Thatcher mencoba mendobrak sisi masyarakat feminisme biasa dengan menjadi Perdana Menteri dan mewakili nilai baru feminisme di era modern. Temuan tulisan ini diharapkan dapat memberikan gambaran tentang nilai feminisme baru dan juga peran perempuan dalam politik.

Kata Kunci: feminisme; budaya Inggris; peran perempuan dalam politik; literatur; film

INTRODUCTION

Humans are being live in a harmony life. With a live as a one group as a citizens of the world, humans are living with a dynamic every time. Everything at this time are equal, even sometimes it is have a different. There are several differences in our society’s or maybe in the global society’s like the status social, race, and also the gender itself. It is a long story in our societies about the differences of those kind of things. During the time, there are several movement

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in our societies to make every thing in our cultural aspects are equal. Peoples want to lived with fairly, peacefull, and also the equality of the human itself.

The important thing right now about equality in our societies is about the issue of the gender. Starting from the past, middle age, post – modern, and the era of modern right now, the issue about gender is still an important topics to discussed by the experts, professionals, activies, academic, and so on. Man and woman are still have a gap today.

The gap is beacuse people have their interpretation about the man and woman itself. People think that man is more superior than a woman. To make it more equal between the gender itself, there is a movement called “*feminism*” in people’s societies. This movement is always exist in every century. The movement itself is to make man and women are equal in every subjects of our life’s such as equal in chances, rights, education, health, and also in political side.

The movement of “*feminism*” itself is popular among the societies in Western countries, especially such as in the United States of America and also in Unted Kingdom itslf. It is become the one of the important movement for the peoples society. The movement in the western countries are making the country itself more colorful about the diversity, equality, and also bring the development for many aspects such as economic, social status, and also the political itself. During the Revolution of Industry in the Great Britain, the role of women are increasing in many aspects such as a labour. After that, the era is move to the World War I and World War II. Woman’s role is not only as a labour but also as a several important jobs such as medic in the frontline, a secretary, a teacher, and so on.

Year by year, the word “*feminism*” is becoming an ideology for woman to symbolize it about the movement of equality of a gender. Not only equality in the gender itself, but also equality in very aspects life such as in the education, workforce, education, and the opportunity itself. At the 20th Century, women’s role are more goes into the several important side of job.

Margaret Walters from the book “*Feminism. A Very Short Introduction.*” said that “During the 20th century, English women achieved legal and civil equality, in theory if not always in practice.” There are so many literatures like books, novel, songs, poetries, or even films that represent the feminism and its movement. Those literatures are come from many nations around the world torepresent a woman in every aspects of life, especially in Britain.

The highest job that women can reach in the British is becoming a prime minister. One of the woman that can be a prime minister and also the longest prime minister in British history and also in the 20th century named, Margaret Hilda Thatcher or it is simply known by people just Margaret Thatcher. Margaret Thatcher is the only woman become a prime minister for British Government for at least 11 years. She is also the Leader of the Conservative Party from 1975 to 1990.

She had a called name “The Iron Lady” from the Soviet journalist because of her leadership style and known by her uncompromise with her politics and also her collegaue in the parliament. Until this day, her legacy is one of her style when she is as a prime minister. Her legacy is called “*Thatcherism*”. Because of her leadership and an uncompromise on her term of office as a prime minister, there is a film that it tells a story about her when she is as a prime minister. The name of the film is “The Iron Lady,” directed by Phyllida Lloyd. It is based on the true story about the Margaret Thatcher itself.

Not only when she is became the prime minister, the story of the film also tell about the life of the Margaret Thatcher itself. It is started when she is young, she becomes a prime minister and until she is in the old age. According to the film, we can see and analyze the role of the women in the politics and also feminism is narated by film itself.

According to the background that have been explained before, we can see several statement of problems from this paper. The problems are :

1. How feminism value is by the main charcter in the film?
2. How women’s role in the political side?

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This research is going to know several things from the film “The Iron Lady” and also the objectives from this paper are :

1. To find out some feminism view and its value of aspects in film.
2. To find out the role of women in political side.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminism

Feminism is about the movement for the women to get and reach their goals in the several aspects. The several aspects is such as the equality in gender, freedom, workforce, opportunity and also for the educational itself. The movement itself is to represent the existents of the woman in the people’s society itself. Feminism also have its own definition itself. The definition itself is to give an information about what is feminism stand for, the concept of the feminism, and the vision of feminism and for the women itself.

Feminism is about the movement in every aspects for woman to gain the same perception and view with a man. According to Jane Freedman, “*feminisms concern themselves with women’s inferior position in society and with discrimination encountered by woman because of their sex*” (Freedman, 2001).

We can see from the theory that the word “*feminism*” is refers to the woman that want to have a same right and without no discrimination with a man. Not only the same right and without any discriminations for every aspects from man, Freedman also said that woman have the inferior position than man. It is what a women want by using the feminism itself, to get a same position with a man.

Between 1975 and 1985, there was a UN meeting to discuss about the woman’s issues. According to Walter’s that giving the information about that meeting, the meeting is make a statement that there is must a diversity in feminism. “*Constitutes the political expression of the concerns and interests of women from different regions, classes, nationalities, and ethnic background . . . There is and must be a diversity of feminisms , responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women ,and defined by them for themselves*” (Walters, 2005). In this first statement, we can see that women are different with other women. Even in the inside of the feminism theory or in the each women itself, it should have a diversity among the woman and also the feminism itself. All of the women are not same each other. Each women is different, especially different in needs.

Other thing from that UN meeting according in Walter’s books is about the African women that give a reminder that not all woman share the same identical interest. “*Women also members of classes and countries that dominate others . . . Contrary to the best intentions of ‘sisterhood’, not all women share identical interests.*” (Walters, 2005).

In this second statement, we can see that it is same just like the first statement that has been illustrated. In this second statement, an African women give a statement that not every women share their interests. They also said that women are the member of every countries and also every aspects of social classes among the people’s society.

There is a concept of what is the definition itself. Women activities transforming, making and shaping on object given to it , can adequately comprehend traditional activities [Brooks , 1997]. It means that women’s activities are transforming from time to time. Transforming from traditional activities into the modern activities that same men do in the people society. We know that in the past, women’s activities just do their job in the house such as housekeeping, make a food for family, take care the children, and so on, but it has been transformed into modern activities such as work as a labour, teacher, nurse, and any kind of jobs that in the past, women cannot do that kind of job.

The influence of the feminism itself is started on the second – wave feminism. According to Tim Edward’s, *the influence of second – wave feminism was to problematise the feminine,*

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mothering and the family as repressive institutions and to assert the right to education and work as equal opportunity and equal outcome for women and to demand freedom from harrasment, abuse, and exploitation (Edwards, 2004).

We can see that women want to have an equality in every aspects of life such as equality in education, work, and also opprtuinity. The second – wave feminism brings something to the women itself. From that second – wave feminism, women assert the right education and can work as an equal opportunity just same as man. The wave itself bring an outcome for women to demand freedom from several things such as harrasment, abuse, and also the exploitation of the women itself.

It is also hard for the society to deny the feminism itself. According to Paul Patton's, *on the face of it it would be hard to deny that these are all worthwhile as actions extending the principles of freedom, equality, and justice to include women*". (Patton, 1993).

The actions of the feminism itself is hard to deny by the society among people. It is the actions extending the principles of freedom, equality, and justice to include women. The meaning itself is that women should be more active or include in the freedom, equality, and also for justice itself. It is also usefull to extend the meaning of freedom, equality, and justice in the people's society, especially in the equality of gender to include women.

Another definition is from the Simone De Beauvoir, a French feminism author books. According from De Beauvoir's in her books *The Second Sex* (1949), De Beauvoir said that: "*When she is productive, active, she regains her transcendence; in her projects she concretely affirms her status as subjects; in connection with the aims she pursues, with the money and the rights she takes possession of she makes trial of and senses her responsibility*" (De Beauvoir, 1949).

The meaning of De Beauvoir theory is about when women are active and also productive, she can pursues her dreams. Women in the past are not productive in the job or in the workforce. They just productive in the house such as in the housekeeping, prepare the food for enitre of the family member, and also caring the children. Women should be productive and also active. If they have the rights, they can be productive and also acvtive to pursue what they want with the her senses of responsibility.

Woman's Role in Politics

Woman also involved in the politics itself. It is based on what feminism is. Because feminism is about the change of women in every aspects of life such as in the wokforce, education, opportunity, and also in the political itself.

During the 1970' and 1980's, the primacy of class was changed. According to Moya Lloyd, she said that: *The primacy of class in politics was challenged during the 1970's and 1980's, in particular, by the rise of the 'new social movements' (including feminism, gay, and lesbian liberatianism, the anti – nuclear movement, and environmentalism)*" (Lloyd, 2005).

The meaning of Lloyd's theory is there is a change and movement in every aspects, especially in the politics itself. During the time, every aspects of life especially class in the people's society is changing. And by time to time also can bring a new movement for the human's life. During the 1970's until 1980's, people know a new rise social movements called "New Social Movements".

The "New Social Movements" is about the rising movements of the several societies such as gay, lesbian, feminism, anti – nuclear movement and also environmentalism. This new social movements bring an effect for the every class in the people's society, esepcially in the politics.

Another theory about woman's role in politics is based from Rita Felski's theory. According from her books, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics : Feminist Literature and Social Change* (1989), Felski's said that: "*As a political ideology, moreover, feminism cannot be understood as disintersted knowledge, but is located in relation to changing value systems, shifting balances of power, and the struggles of oppositional groups*" (Felski, 1989).

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It means that feminism relation is to changing values systems and balancing the power itself, and also the relation itself is important for several aspects in the political side and aspect. Feminism also include in another theories and ideologies. In the political ideology, feminism and women are have a relation with the politics. When feminism and women have a rights and also an equality in the gender in the politics, women can be the balances of the power. For example balances of the power in the parliament.

The definition of feminism itself also have a vision itself. A vision for every women and also the equality of the gender itself. Hooks said that “*The vision of ‘women’s liberation’ which captured and still holds the public imagination was the one representing women as wanting what men had. And this was the vision that was easier to realize changes in our nation’s economy, economic depression, the loss of jobs, etc, made the climate ripe for our nation’s citizen’s to accept the nation of gender equality in the workforce*” (Hooks, 2000).

The meaning of the theory is that men and women must equal in the workforce. They have a vision to become a liberal women. Their vision also can make change for the country itself such in the economy, jobs, and so on. The vision itself is to make the society accept the meaning of the gender equality in every aspects in the society especially in the workforce or in the labour force.

There are some previous studies that used as reference for this thesis. Those previous studies can be related to the research that the researcher conduct. Astuti (2001) argues that a woman’s leadership should be reflected as like the character of Margaret Thatcher did on the film.

Other argumentation stated by Emmet (1997) giving the result on the research has been conducted which is liberal feminism and feminism in politics occurs in this modern day. The role of a women in a politics aspect is important to take a policy for public, just like as men do in the politics field.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is using qualitative descriptive because it is not presented any number and also it is describe the feminism itself based on the data. The result also is using a words and analyzed by the theories. This research is using a British bibliographical film named “*The Iron Lady*” directed by Phillida Lloyd in 2011.

For the data collection, this research is used an observation of the film to collect the datas. The step is observe with watching the film and then make a note for each dialogues from the scene that represent the feminism and women’s role in politics.

The data analysis in this research conducted with 3 steps to get the data. First is observe the film. Second is make a note for each dialogues, and third is analysis the dialogues using the theory itself.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Feminism

In this chapter, the research will explain about the theory of feminsim in order to analyzing the data.

Dialogue 1. Ladies in the dinner table (00:18:25).

Lady : “ Ladies, shall we?”

Man : “Miss Roberts, do join the ladies.”

From the dialog above, we can see that when a lady talk to the all ladies in the dinner table that they have their own time. In here, between woman and man are have their own time. According

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to the theory by Freedman, woman want to have a rights of equality. Thatcher wants to stay in the dining table, but a man suggest that she must join to the ladies outside the dining table. Even there is a discrimination by the man, Thatcher want to stay and still to keep the woman's ideas same like man does.

Dialogue 2. When Margareth listening his father (00:08:56).

Mother : "Margareth! Cups!"

From the scene above, we can see that when Margareth listening her father's giving his speech, Margareth's mom remembering her to get back to the work. According to the theory from Jane Freedman by her books "*Feminism*", woman want to have an equality in every aspects. The dialogue is represented that Margareth want to have an equality in the aspect of opportunity. She wants to stand in front of the people, just like her father do.

Dialogue 3. Margareth invited to join the girls (00:09:09 – 00:09:15).

Girl 1 : "Margaret, do you want to come to the pictures?"

Girl 2 : "She can't come, she's got to study"

Girl 3 : "Miss Hoity Toits"

From the dialogue above, it is the scene when Margareth is standing in front of the shop and there are several girls walking away. They invite Margareth to joined up, but one of the girl said that Margareth wants to study. According to the Edward's theory, woman need to have equality in several aspects, especially in the education. In here, Margareth wants to be a different than other girls. She wants to get a right in education want to change the idea when women are didn't get enough educational background.

Dialogue 4. Margareth's father gives her advice (00:09:17 – 00:09:19).

Father : "Never run the crowd, Margaret. Go your own way."

From the dialogue above, we can see that Margareth father's giving an advice to her. Her father wants Margareth to have their own way in her life. Her father also want Margareth to be different than other woman. According to Edward's theory, woman need to have a right opportunity for their life. Woman need to be their own way freely without any interruption by several peoples or even by the gender itself.

Dialogue 5. Margareth accepted in Oxford (00:09:26 – 00:09:48).

Father : "Open it then"

Margareth : " I've got a place at Oxford"

Father : "Don't let me down Margareth"

Margareth : "Mother"

Mother : "My hands are still dump"

From the dialogue above, the scene is represented when Margareth got a letter and she is accepted in the Oxford. Her father was very surprised about it, but not from her mother. From the Edward's theory, we can see that woman are need to have an opportunity in every aspects. In here, the aspect is education. Women need to be supported by their closest people, especially family to reach their dream.

Dialogue 6. Margareth discuss current issues (00:17:52 – 00:18:19)

Margareth : "A man might call it fiscal responsibility, a woman might call it good housekeeping."

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Man : “I’m not sure . . . A home economics lesson is quite what . . . the Dartford Constituents need. They see industry being nationalized . . . the unions on the up, the pound on the slide whoever can sort that lot out, he’s my man.”

Margareth : “Or woman?”

From the dialogue above, it is the scene when Margareth is have a dinner with several people to talking about several issues. In here, Margareth giving her oppinion about the issue, but that man respond it with an idea that he still believe in the men’s works. After that, Margareth responds it with an aswer “Or woman?”. According to the Edward’s theory, women need an equality in several aspects such as in work and opportunity. In here, we can see that Margareth wants the opportunity to take that job to be a member of parliament.

Dialogue 7. A dialogue between Margaret and a lady (00:20:04 – 00:20:18).

Lady : “I hope you appreciate what an inspiration you have been for women like myself.”

Margareth : “ It used to be about trying to do something. Now its about trying to be someone.”

From the dialogue above between Margareth and a lady, the lady is giving an appreciation to the Margareth. The lady believes that Margareth can inspire another womens just like her. According to the Freedman’s theory, women need to be equality just like man do. If the man can inspire peoples, woman also can do that jus like a man can do.

Dialogue 8. Margareth responds Denise marriage propose (00:26:24)

Denise : “Margareth, will you marry me?”

“Well”

Margareth : “Yes, yes!”

Denise : “What?”

Margareth : “I love you so much, but, I will never be one of those women Denis - who stays silent and pretty on the arm of her husband or remote and alone in the kitchen doing the washing up for that matter.”

From the dialogue above between Denise and Margareth, Denise wants to propose her. But, Margareth responds it with a statement that she didn’t want to be just like an ordinary women. She wants to be a different one. According to the Edward’s theory, women need to have an equality in several aspects of life, especially in the opportunity and the fredom itself. Margareth needs to be an independent women and be a freedom person.

Dialogue 9. Airey asks Margareth to be a Prime Minister (00:43:06 – 00:43:40)

Margareth : “There will be no female prime minister here, not in my lifetime. No. And I told Airey, I don’t expect to win the leadrership, but I am going to run. Just to shake up the party.”

Airey : “Respectfully, Margareth, I disagree. If you want to change this party, lead it. If you want to change the country, lead it. What we’re talking about here today is surface. What’s crucial is that you hold your course, and stay true to who you are. Never be anything other than yourself.”

From the dialogue above, the scene is telling about that Airey asking Margareth to be the prime minister. But Margareth didn’t sure about that because there is no female prime minister in British history, and Airey responds it with several suggest. According to the Edward’s theory, women need to have an opportunity in every aspects. In here, the aspect is in the opportunity and

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work. Airey giving an opportunity to become the prime minister and also to lead the country. He encourage her to be the first British prime minister in the history.

Dialogue 10. Margareth arguing with the leader opposite member (00:23:42 – 00:34:13).

Parliament Members : “Me thinks the Right honourable lady doth screeed too much. If she wants us to take her seriously, she must learn to calm down!”

Margareth : “If the right honourable gentleman could perhaps attend more closely to what I am saying rather than HOW I am saying it, he may receive a valuable education in spite of himself!”

From the dialogue above, it is the scene when Margareth giving an argue with the leader of the opposite member. The opposite member seems that underestimated Thatcher, but Thatcher respond it with a calm. According to the theory from Freedman, Margareth stand up and respond that statement from the leader of the opposite that woman didn't want any discrimination, especially in the gender itself.

Dialogue 11. Several men giving opinion to Margareth (01:00:13 – 01:00:32).

Margareth : “Really. How much is a pack of Lurpack?”

Francis : “Lurpack?”

Margareth : “Butter, Francis, Forty two pence, Anchor butter is forty pence, Flora mrgarine still the cheapest, is thirty eight pence. I can assure you I am not out of touch.”

Francis : “Grocer's Daughter.”

From the dialogue above, it is in the scene when several men are giving and opinion to the Margareth. The situation is a little bit messed up in the London. Francis thhink that Margareth is out of the touch in the public, but then, Margareth responds it by asking several things. When Margareth explain it, Francis seems that discriminated Margareth by whispering “ Grocer's Daughter” with a man beside him. According to Freemnan's theory, women didn't want have any discrimination in gender, even by her background itself.

Dialogue 12. U.S Secretary talk with Margareth (01:11:49 – 01:12:10).

U.S Secretary : “But Margareth, with adll due respect, when one has been war . . . “

Margareth : “With all due respect sir. I have done battle every single day of my life and many men have underestimated me before. This lot seem bound to do the same but they will rue the day.”

From the dialogue above, the scene is during the Falkland's crisis between British and Argentine. America as the closest allies with British, asking about the British resolution to solve the conflict itself. Margareth thinks that war is a best thing to get back the Falklands Island. But, the U.S Secretary seem underestimate those plan and think that it is not a best solution. Margareth respond it that she already war with many men that already underestimated her all the day and it seems that the war is same between the discrimination and war. According to Freedman's theory, Margareth didn't want any discrimination even by her works as a Prime Minister. So, when she wants to take an act to respond the problem, she wants that she can get the support with her partners, even from the different of gender itself.

Women's Role in Politics

Regarding to the theory that has been stated before, the woman's role in a politic also occurs in the film and can be analyze furthermore.

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Dialogue 13. Margareth wants to be a member of parliament (00:15:58)

Man : “Ah, Miss Roberts.”

“Hoping to be chosen as our candidate for parliament.”

From the dialogue above, we can see that the man tell to the Margareth that she is hoping to be the one of the member of the parliament. According to the Felski’s theory, women need to have a right and equality in the aspect of politics. Women can be the member of the politics and they can be the balances of the power in the politics itself.

Dialogue 14. Margareth gave her ideas (00:17:30 – 00:17:50).

Man : “With all due respect, Miss Roberts, what may have served in Grantham – “

Margareth : “Can serve very well for the people of Dartford too.”

Man: “Really”

Margaret : “I know much more than those two have never lived on a limited income. Just like the man or woman on the street, when I am short one week . . . I have to make economies the next.”

From the dialogue above between Margareth and the man, there is a conversation between two of them talking about the recent issue. Margareth gave her ideas and she needs to make an act to make the economies better. According to the Felski’s theory, women can be a balances of the power and also in the social itself. Woman can change the social aspects with using the politics itself.

Dialogue 15. Margaret wants to be a Prime Minister (00:38:41 – 00:38:55).

Denis : “Are you saying you want to be prime minister?”

Margareth : “What I’m saying is that someone must force the point, say the unsayaable. None of these men have the guts.”

From the dialogue between Margareth and Denise, Margareth said that she wants to be the prime minister to change the things. She also said that several men in the parliament are not having a guts to do or change something. According to Felski’s theory, women can be balances power in the aspect of social and also in the politics itself. Women also can be the agent of change when she can balances the power itself in the politics.

Dialogue 16. Margareth giving her speech in front of the leader opposition (01:17:39 – 01:18:09).

Margareth : “And I put the Honourable Member opposite that this is not a day for him to carp, find fault, demand inquiries – they will happen I can assure him of that for we have nothing to hide, no . . . this is a day to put difference aside, to hold one’s head high and take pride in being British.”

From the dialogue above, we can see that this scene is when Margareth giving his speech in front of the leader of the opposition. This scene is after the Falklands crisis has been resolved and British won the war. According to the Felski’s theory, women can be balances in the politics. The balances itself is to make peoples in the politics become one and agree in one thing. In here, Margareth wants to make the parliaments become one after the Falklands crisis and being proud become being British in one nation.

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CONCLUSION

For the conclusion itself, in the end, feminism value by the main character that women need to be equal in every aspects of life such as in the education, work, opportunity, and so on. We can see that the equality aspects in the film is represented in the film. By Margareth being different from another woman, she wants to have an opportunity in the rights, education, and also in the work life, sepecially when she becomes the member of the parliament and also being the British prime minister later on. And also in the film, women is having an important role in the political side such as being the member of the parliament and being the prime minister. We can see in the film that Margareth can be the balance of the power in the parliament and also she have an important role in the British political history by being the member of the parliament and later on being a prime minister.

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