

GENDER VIOLENCE AND RESISTANCE IN FILMS AND LITERARY TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper undertakes a critical examination of the complex and multifaceted representations of gender violence and resistance in films and literary texts. By analyzing a diverse range of works, including those by prominent authors like Mahasweta Devi, Arundhati Roy, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, as well as thought-provoking films like "The Color Purple," "The Accused," and "Pink," this study seeks to illuminate the ways in which narratives can shape public discourse and influence policy. Through a feminist lens that prioritizes intersectionality and cultural context, the presentation explores themes of representation, visibility, and forms of resistance, highlighting the agency and resilience of survivors and the impact of these narratives on societal attitudes toward gender violence. The analysis will delve into the ways in which films and literary texts portray gender violence, including the physical, emotional, and psychological tolls on survivors, as well as the various forms of resistance employed by individuals and communities. By investigating the intersections of gender violence with other forms of oppression, such as class, caste, race, and culture, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex issues surrounding gender violence and resistance. Ultimately, this presentation seeks to demonstrate the importance of representation and visibility in promoting social change and influencing policy, highlighting the potential of films and literary texts to drive meaningful reform and challenge dominant narratives around gender violence. By shedding light on the experiences of survivors and the forms of resistance they employ, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complex issues surrounding gender violence and resistance, and to inspire further exploration and discussion of these critical themes.

Keywords: *Gender violence, resistance, films, literary texts, feminism, intersectionality, representation, visibility, social change, policy*

INTRODUCTION

Gender violence is a widespread issue that affects individuals and communities around the globe. It is a complicated problem that is rooted in societal norms, power dynamics, and cultural practices. Literature and film can play a vital role in raising awareness about gender violence and encouraging resistance. By highlighting the experiences of individuals and communities impacted by gender violence, these mediums can foster empathy, challenge societal norms, and inspire social change. The importance of this topic is immense. Gender violence impacts millions of people worldwide and can take various forms, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment. The consequences of gender violence can be severe, resulting in physical and emotional trauma and even death. Despite the seriousness of this issue, much work remains to raise awareness and drive change.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative and interpretative methodology, as the subject of gender

violence demands sensitivity, contextual depth, and ethical engagement rather than statistical measurement. Since the research focuses on representation, lived experience, and narrative resistance, the approach centers on close reading, critical interpretation, and contextual analysis of selected literary texts and films.

DISCUSSION

Portraying gender violence in literature offers a powerful way to delve into the complexities of this issue. In *"The God of Small Things,"* Arundhati Roy skillfully weaves together the stories of two Indian twins, Rahel and Estha, who face domestic violence, child abuse, and societal norms that support gender violence. The novel emphasizes how societal expectations and power dynamics can lead to the oppression and marginalization of women and children.

In *"Half of a Yellow Sun,"* Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie depicts the experiences of women during the Biafran War. She shows how war and conflict can worsen gender violence. The novel illustrates how women often find themselves in the midst of conflict and suffer disproportionately from violence and displacement.

The short story *"Draupadi"* by Mahasweta Devi offers another strong example of gender violence in literature. It tells the story of a young tribal woman named Draupadi, who is gang-raped by soldiers. This narrative highlights how women are objectified and treated as commodities in Indian society. It also reveals how Draupadi resists and challenges the societal norms that oppress her, asserting her agency and autonomy amid hardship. The film *"The Color Purple"* also powerfully depicts gender violence. Based on Alice Walker's novel, it follows Celie, a young Black woman in the rural South in the early 20th century. Celie's life is filled with poverty, abuse, and marginalization, yet she finds ways to resist societal norms that perpetuate her oppression. The film emphasizes how women of color are disproportionately affected by gender violence and demonstrates how they can find strength and solidarity within their communities.

Film serves as another impactful medium for exploring the complexities of gender violence. In *"The Accused,"* Jonathan Kaplan tells the story of a woman who is gang-raped in a bar, revealing how societal norms and institutions can uphold rape culture during the ensuing trial. *"Pink"* presents a similar narrative, focusing on three women accused of trying to kill a man who attempted to assault them. This film also underscores how women are objectified and expected to conform to specific norms in Indian society.

The chosen texts and films illustrate the significance of resistance and empowerment. The characters in these stories find ways to confront and challenge the societal norms and power dynamics that fuel gender violence. They assert their agency and work toward building a more just and equitable society.

Several theoretical frameworks can help us better understand gender violence and resistance in literature. Feminist literary theory, postcolonial literary theory, intersectional literary theory, trauma theory, and resistance theory offer valuable insights into the complex issues surrounding gender violence and resistance in literature.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the selected literary texts and films provide a compelling portrayal of gender violence and resistance. They reveal the complexity of the issue and how societal norms and power dynamics can sustain gender violence. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of resistance and empowerment, illustrating how individuals and communities can strive for a more just and equitable society. By examining the complexities of gender violence and resistance in literature and film, we can deepen our understanding of the issue and work toward societal change. Ultimately, this seminar aims to encourage social change and promote gender equality by emphasizing the need for resistance and empowerment in the face of gender violence.

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