

**A PROJECT JURNAL**  
**THIRD WAVE FEMINISM IN BEYONCE KNOWLES'S "RUN THE**  
**WORLD (GIRLS)"**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In this extended essay, the writer is interested in doing research by analyzing the music of American R & B singer, Beyonce Knowles entitling "Run The World (Girls)". The writer chose this song because the writer sees that, the song emphasizes on actions the girls can carry on the song contains the struggle of the girls to reign the world. The girls color the society with their ability. In the daily life, girls become the one common topic which is often discussed. The purpose of writing this extended essay is to know more the meaning of the song lyric in several aspects, such as self-actualization, education, social status and others. Moreover, this extended essay is to figure out the society and feminism through the lyric.

Feminist criticism is used to interpret and give an evaluation of the lyric. The writer chooses to analyze the song lyric because it tells how the girls struggle to get their desire's rights. Beyonce, as the writer of the song had experienced the treatment of being the second class in the society. The song represents her opinion

and what she wants to prove that is girls can have more power. The writer analyses which showed about what Beyonce truly wants to justify when it comes to judging girls.

This extended essay discusses the third wave feminism elements which exist in the lyric. The theory to support the analysis is postulated by Rosmarie Putnam Tong (2009). The writer deliberately uses her feminist theory on the subject of third wave feminism because it is easy to interpret the lyric and is suitable to the study of American popular culture.

The advantage of the essay is that the writer can see some of the final aspect which are in the lyric experience of discrimination as well as historical or flashback experienced by girls in the United States in particular, where the girls are regarded as the second classes in the society proven by the word in the lyric which says “mother”. In general, this analysis helps girls in the world not only in the United States to understand their power of the position in the society. Most of the lyrics in the song encouraged to take the role as a leader in the world.

The writer is able to understand the purpose of the song which is the empowerment of girls through lyric which shows the existence and privilege of girls. For the reader this extended essay does not only give information about girls' struggle in the society to rule the world but it also gives information about the theory of third wave feminism, which explains about the girl struggle in the modern era through music. The construction of this extended essay is also beneficial for the reader when they are about to make feminist criticism in the

future. Most importantly, the writer and the reader understand that the girls deserve to be respected, protected and championed.

## II. LITERARY REVIEW

### 1. Third Wave Feminism

Third wave feminism means feminism from different categories whether it is cultural, background, ethnicity, nationality, religion and color (Tong, 2009:285). Third wave feminism represent all women regardless their background. The contribution of women whether in social, political, educational or cultural effort become agenda.

The third wave feminism take care of the problems of women from any color. The special aspects for the goal of third wave feminism include the problem of women as the second class citizen especially the women of different races. Third wave feminism tries to find the solution for these problems. Because the member of third wave feminism come from different background, the solution are also vary. For the problem of women as the second class citizen, one of the solutions is to put in the art work in the form of songs.

Many songs have been written to change the image of women as the second class citizen. The song contain messages to encourage the women to depend on themselves and be independent of men's power. The songs are not only

sung by white middle class women, but women of different races. In the songs, women can express their feelings and project their dreams which they cannot fulfill in the society. The actions of the women to rebel against the power of the men is justified in the song.

## 2. Actualization, education, background and status of women related to third wave feminism

According to Tong in her book *Third wave feminism*, “Self-actualization is the desire to achieve self-fulfillment to become what a person is potential of” (Tong 2009:270). In the context of feminism, self-actualization applies to women as the desire to prove to the society that women have power and can role the society. Self-actualization is not only the goal of white women. The women of different races, especially black women also have the desire to achieve self-fulfillment. Moreover, the black women are always behind the white women and men.

Not only self-actualization that become the goal of third wave feminism but also equality in education. Even though women is struggle to achieve equality of education has been done since long time ago, the truth is many women especially the black women of are still behind the men in terms of education. That is why third wave feminist try to make the women from different background get education as high as men do. This will make women equally intelligent as men.

Besides education, third wave feminism also has agenda in rising women social status. Naturally, women become wives and mothers in the eye of

society. However, the status of women as wives or mothers does not make them any not powerful enough powerthan men. There are many positionsfor women in the society instead of being wive and mothers, women can be leaders or a followers depending on their capability and their intention.

### III. METHODS

This extended essay is analysed using content analysis method. The content analysis method is used to describe how the third wave feminism is contained in the song lyric. In this content analysis the object of this study is the song lyric. This method enables the writer to explain the message which implicitly exists in the lyric of the song.

The analysis in the study is concerned with the lyric of “Run The World (Girls)”. The lyric was written by Beyonce. The reason why Beyonce wrote the song is to be discussed in the analysis chapter. The singer of the song is also Beyonce:she sings the song by herself because she wants to deliver the message of the lyric plainly. Besides singing a song by herself, Beyonce also takes the role as the performer in the music video. However, this study does not include the analysis of music video because the focus of the study is on the song lyric.

The analysis continous to focus on the aspects of actualization, status and education. Those aspects are the message which the lyric wants to deliver. The actualization analyse the acts of girls mentioned in the lyric. Status analyse the

role of girls in society. Education has status to do with the capability of women to rule the world as the lyric mentions.

This content analysis is the method which leads the writer to accomplish this study. By using this method the analysis is organized and well-constructed. The theory to support the analysis of the study third wave feminism by Rosmarie Tong; whereas the approach of the study mainly focuses on a textual approach.

#### IV. ANALYSIS OF “ RUN THE WORLD (GIRLS)” LYRICS BY BEYONCE KNOWLES

The analysis of Beyonce Knowles’ “Run The World (Girl)” begins with Self-Actualization and social status. The song lyric is structured as follows,

Girls, we run this motha (yeah!)

Girls, we run this motha (yeah!)

Girls, we run this motha (yeah!)

Girls, we run this motha (yeah!)

In the first chorus verse above Beyonce takes the role as the singer and the performer. She sings to deliver the message of the song lyrics, while she performs in the music video to represent the girls power. The opening of the song calls out for all the girls in the world to run the earth. It refers to invitation to all the girls representing mother earth that women could control or take over the

world. The word "motha" is the woman as a representation of mother Earth, "yeah" all women agree.

This verse shows the self-actualization through the sentence “girls, we run this motha (yeah) shows that the girls want to show for everyone that they are able to rule the world. Beyonce as the singer gives the opportunity for all the girls to use their capability to control the world.

The writer also analys the connotation and imagery, especially auditory imagery. According to Kennedy “conotation : over tones or suggestion of additional meaning that it gains from all the context in which we havr met in the past” (Kennedy 1978:476). The connotation in this verse referse to the word “Run” the exact meaning of the word “Rub” is doing activity run, but in this verse shows different meaning that is control something. Imagery according to Kennedy is “ a word or sequence of words that refers to any sensory experience” (Kennedy 1978:464). This verse shows auditory imagery which makes the readers immagine the sound of somene who screams (yeah !).

Who run the world? Girls!

Who run the world? Girls!

Who run the world? Girls!

Who run the world? Girls!

The verse part still emphasize the role of the girls to dominate the world. The role keeps calling out to all the girls to take actions. Beyonce chooses the

word “girls” to show to the world that girls are as power full as men. It also shows that girls are not the one who are easily defeated. The calling reciprocally asks and answer the ones who run the world, and they are the girls.

Smilar with the previous verse, this verse also shows self-actualization. The girls want to convince once again who actually run the world is. Through interogative sentence “who run the world ?” and the answer “girls !” reflects that the girls want to claim that the girls are the world’s controler. Connotation and auditory immagery are still showed in this verse. The word “Run” does not show the exact mraning of its, but it shows another meaning that is to control something. Auditory immagery in this verse makes the readers image the sound of someone who says “girls !) loudly.

None of these niggas can fade me  
 I'm so good with this,  
 I remind you I'm so hood with this  
 Boy I'm just playing  
 Come here baby  
 Hope you still like me  
 F- you pay me

The part of the lyric above affirms that she wants to challenge the men by saying them as a “boy” to get close to men and see if they can do that. Through the first line until the thirs line show self-actualization. These lines show that the



power of girls are strong even they are from poor and slavery area. This verse shows connotation and visual imagery. Connotation are shown in lines “None of these niggas can fade me” and “come here baby” which are shown another meaning of this word. “fade” in this line means cover. In line “come here baby” the word baby shows that baby is in the men not a child. Visual imagery shows in word “niggas”. The readers can image the physical appearance of nigger through the word “niggas”.

My persuasion can build a nation

Endless power, with our love we can devour

You'll do anything for me

The part above affirmseven more that the will be subdue to Beyonce’s strength to control them. The word "persuasion" that is an invitation for all women and increase awareness of men that women can move to build the nation. The next lyrics are in line with the previous one. “Endless power, with our love we can devour” The word "endless power" means that women have strength. Maybe she is physically not as strong as male physical but with love "with our devour" women can do anything and make men as the subject and they can do anything for women “You’ll do anything for me”. “It’s hot up in here” the intent of these lyrics is the spirit of the passionate woman that shows their emotions.

This verse shows self-actualization through the first and second line. This verse reflects that even though women are not as strong as men they can manage

and build their own nation. The phrase with “with our love we can devour” shows that the kindness and love from women can take control of the world. This verse also shows figure of speech hyperbole. According to Kennedy “we speak, then, not literal truth but we use a figure of speech called overstatement (or hyperbole)” (Kennedy 1978 : 496). Hyperbole shows in line “My persuasion can build a nation”. This line shows that persuasion which is not strong can build something as a nation.

You can't hold me (you can't hold me)

I work my 9 to 5, better cut my check

This goes out to all the women getting it in,

You're on your grind

To other men that respect what I do

Please accept my shine

Boy I know you love it

How we're smart enough to make these millions

Strong enough to bear the children

Then get back to business

See, you better not play me

Oh, come here baby

Hope you still like me

F- you hate me

This lyric says that the men could not resist or hold a woman, in the sense that they cannot restrict what women do. It also mentions the sacrifice that women do by working from 9 to 5 o'clock, but they can only produce half of the wages of the men. The treatment applies to all women. In this lyric the word "You" refers to the men who have to be on the status of women. But the part of the lyric also refers to the men who can appreciate the hard work of women. In this lyric women always understand what men like (Men like hard work results or women). Here, the lyric says that the women produce something, even in the form of the materials which she gains. Women are really strong, it is proven by the ability to bear all the burden of children. Women can maintain, protect and take care of their children. Then the women are able to return to the other work the other in the sense that, women who work outside the home. The lyric is clearly addressed to the men who are not allowed to try playing with women. It is understood the lyrics are still hopeful it can be interpreted that women are still preferable, given the affection of men. The use of swear word "F" heightens the emotion which Beyonce expresses to support her effort. She swears to show that women can also do what men do, perhaps Beyonce thinks that if men do certain things, women can surely do the same.

This verse is full of connotation. These are reflected in lines "Please accept my shine" and "Oh, come here baby" the word "shine" shows different meaning that it should. This word in the line reflects about effort that the girls have done. The word "baby" also shows different meaning. This word refers to men not a child.

Education is the next element of third wave feminism which Beyonce's wants to assert.

DJ don't be scared to run this, run this back  
 I'm reppin' for the girls who taking over the world  
 Help me raise a glass for the college grads  
 41 rollin' to let you know what time it is, check

This lyrics interrelated DJ played music as encouraging women desire to achieve something by running and inviting other girls to take over the world by taking a high education. High education can help the girls to get knowledge as the guidance for the girls if they want to defeat the men. Education and knowledge are the key points that make the girls stronger. Once the girls are educated their power increase higher than the power of men. Beyonce realizes these so she puts the assertion in the lyric. Connotation in this lyrics show in word "Run". This word reflect another meaning which is to control something.

Social background become the last element of the third wave feminism Beyonce affirms that. The song lyric is structured as follow,

Some of them men think they freak this like we do  
 But no they don't

Make your check come at they neck,  
Disrespect us no they won't  
Boy don't even try to touch this  
Boy this beat is crazy  
This is how they made me  
Houston Texas baby  
This goes out to all my girls  
That's in the club rocking the latest

The lyric means that men think they can control women, but in reality they cannot control the women because the men have something important that can only be fulfilled by woman. Beyonce explicitly mentions her story in this verse. She also mentions that she come from Texas. Historically reading, that Texas was previously occupied by the poor group in America because Texas was part of the states that support slavery. Here, Beyonce proves that her past as the part of the girls from Texas does not affect her life now. Now she can even control the men that wants to get close to her. She can stop them or accept them whenever she wants. Beyonce shows that she belongs to the group of the third wave feminists.

The first line in this verse shows that men think they can do everything but in fact, there are some important rules that can not be fulfilled by men. This verse shows personification and connotation." Personification is when non living things such as animals are acting like human" (Kennedy 1978 : 495). The third line

reflects personification through sentence "check come at they neck". "check" is non living thing but it is acted as human who have neck. Line which contains sentence "Boy this beat is crazy" shows personification and imagery auditory. Personification in this lyric showed through phrase "beat is crazy" it shows that beat is nonliving thing which can act crazy like human. The word "beat" also shows connotation because it does not reflect the exact meaning. In this line "beat" means the rhythm of the song. The word "beat" in this line makes the readers image the sound of the song.

## V. CONCLUSION

The writer chose the song entitled "Run The World (Girls)" by Beyonce Knowles to be analysed in this extended essay. The purpose of writing this extended essay is to know more about the meaning of the song lyric in several aspects such as self-actualization, education and social status of girls in society. In order to make this extended essay more scientific, the writer chose a theory of third wave feminism by Rosmarie Putnam Tong. The method of this extended essay is content analysis. It is used to describe the power of the girl in the lyric related to the third wave feminism.

The result of the analysis shows that most of the words in the lyrics are encouragement for the girls to take action in the world. The power that the girls have are in the form of confidence and the ability to dominate men by emotional power. It means that girls are actualizing themselves in taking over the world by

getting job and education. Education plays the most important role in helping girls to run the world. The song lyrics are also tell the story about Beyoncé's experience.

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