Men in Fantasy: Redefining Masculinities in the World of Fandom

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Abstract
The analysis on the text produced by women readers particularly the fans of Harry Potter is conducted to discover their reception to the novel through their slash fiction using Iser's reader response theory. More specifically, this study is an endeavour to figure out how the women attempt to redefine masculinities in cyber space through the portrayal of main characters in their slash fictions. The object of research includes several slash fictions written and uploaded in www.fanfiction.net by three Indonesian women as fans of Harry Potter novel. They are furthermore analysed using Norman Fairclough's method of critical discourse analysis. Result of analysis shows that the women offer subversive ideas towards the concept of hegemonic masculinity through their definition on men's body, sexual activities, as well as role and behaviour. Given that cyber space offers more freedom and less control than does the offline world, it is potential that the women generate a counter discourse towards the dominant ideology. Apart from this, the findings reveal that they are not totally capable to liberate themselves from the dominant ideology in conjunction with its discourse of hegemonic masculinity, albeit the anonymity and freedom offered by cyber space within which they reconstruct such concept.
Key Words: fan fiction, slash fiction, masculinities, cyber space, reception, fans.

I.   Introduction

The discussion about how media represents men and women concerning their bodies and social roles is not the only topic of media and gender study. Apart from this, it also relates to how media determines its gendered market as well as how men and women audience respond the media text. This study is an attempt to figure out the response of women fans of *Harry Potter* in cyber space. In this study, cyber space is not merely considered as a medium, but more as an arena for the women fans to be actively involved in responding the text through their works named slash fiction. As a genre of fan fiction, slash fiction is a fiction written by fan of certain text. Slash borrows the source text's character, plot and settings, which does not totally imitatethe patterns due to its focus on homosexual relationship between male characters portrayed in the source text as heterosexuals. It is interesting that the study of academicians who has big concern with fan fiction shows that slash is mostly written by heterosexual women. This is seemingly closely related to the characteristic of cyber space which offers anonymity, fluidity and less rigid control than does the offline world, which is full of normative rules. For this reason, the women fans are freer' to do fans activities also known as fandom activites.

Talking about media fandom means having discussion about the phenomenon of media text fans along with their activities. Fandom is frequently given negative lable due to the word 'fan', a short form of 'fanatics'. With reference to the meaning of 'fanatic', fans are frequently assumed as those so obsessed by a certain media text that they often behave deviantly. One of the phenomenal histories in media fandom is when the rock legend John Lennon was shot to death by one of his fanatic fans David Chapman on 8 Desember 1980. Other examples of 'deviant' behavioursare what Charles Mason (also *The Beatles* fan) and John Hinkley (Jodie Foster's fan) did. They all show 'deviant behaviour' which provides the base of assumption that fans are psychopaths whose frustrated fantasies of intimate relationships with stars or unsatisfied desires to achieve their own stardom make them take violent and antisocial forms(Jenkins, 1992:13).

The negative stigma of fandom seems to derive fromessentialist's assumption that considers audience as passive consumers who get negative impact from media text they consume. In terms ofHarry Potter fans women writing slash fictions, such assumption is definitely irrelevant. The women cannot be regarded as those merely consume, even though it cannot be denied that they consume the source text. However, as de Carteau says (1984), consumer has changed since they are capable of creatively taking and manipulating the products they consume. They are actively involved in text signification and take part in producing cultural symbols (Fiske, 1997). Meanwhile, Hill (2002) says that fan fiction should not be assumed as merely fanatism. He also considers

fan fiction as 'fan scholars' since they also work throughtheir writings; creatively write stories in their own versions.

The fandom phenomenon is matter-of-factly never free from various productive activities. The fans' activities are not only about consumption as well as fans convention, but also about various text productions : songs, poems, fanzines (fans magazine), as well as videos. Talking about fans and their favourite texts is not only talking about thier fascination on the texts but also about their dissapointment and frustration on them.Fans are attracted to a text as it provides them a source to explore certain issues and feels frustrated of it because such texts cannot fully satisfy them (Jenkins, 2000). On account of fan fiction, Derecho says that fan fiction is literature of the subordinate, because most fanfic authors are women responding to media products that, for the most part, are characterized by an underrepresentation of women(Hellekson, 2006: 71).

As it has been mentioned, slash is mostly written by heterosexual women. In spite of its focus on homosexual relationship between the characters, slash is uniqely different from pornography fictions commonly seen in patriarchal media text. When the pornography fictions expose sexual intercourse in shallow and very technical atmosphere, slash illustrates sex in terms of commitment and emphasizes on couples' emotional exploration. This attracts the attention of academician who believes that slash contains ideology of gender roles in spite of a mere sexuality illustration.The ideology constructed inslash is particularly related to masculinities. Slash is an attempt of women in redefining masculinities (Jenkins, 1992).

In conjunction with the issue of masculinities in the source text, it is necessary to understand that *Harry Potter*still reflects dominant culture with the discourse of hegemonic masculinities portrayed by gender stereotyping and gender inequality (Heilman, 2003). As the subordinate frequently represented disproportionately by media texts in patriarchal world, the women respond the text by constructing their expectation underrepresented in the source text. Through fantasy they embellish in their fictions, the women redefine masculinities from their perspectives as heterosexual women.

Conseptual Framework

As an analysis of the text produced by active readers, this study attempts to answer problems concerning masculinities in slash fiction as the response of *Harry Potter* fans women in cyber space. For this reason, some conceptual frameworks are used in this research. One of them is the reader-response criticism particularly Wolfgang Iser's theory of Aesthetic Response.Reader response criticism derives from the notion believing that the intended meaning of an author will never be really figured out. For this reason, it can be said that text is meaningless without the existence of readers, who play important roles in the signification process of the text. Readers actively give meanings to the text instead of finding meaning within it. In *The Act of Reading,* Iser writes about what he calls Aesthetics Response, which explains not only the interaction between readers and text, but also the readers' unique, imaginative capacity that readers bring to the text. Iser describes Aesthetic Response as Iser describes aesthetic response as follows: "Aesthetic response is…to be analyzed in terms of a dialectic relationship between text, reader, and their interaction. It is called aesthetic response because, although it is brought about by the text, it brings into play the imaginative and perceptive faculties of the reader, in order to make him adjust and even differentiate his own focus" (1978: x). Furthermore, Iser states that "The significance of the work, then, does not lie in the meaning sealed within the text, but in the fact that the meaning brings out what had previously been sealed within us (1978: 157). On account of the author as the one producing text, Iser believes that an author, although theoretically the only possible ideal reader, as he has experienced what he has written, does not in fact *need* to duplicate himself into author and ideal reader, so that the postulate of an ideal reader is, in his case, superfluous" (1978: 29). If the author were to duplicate himself or herself into being both the author and ideal reader, nothing would need to be communicated between the author and ideal reader, rendering the whole work unnecessary. This relates to Iser's notion of the text as a performance of meaning, with the reader as both an audience and a director. As Iser claims, "we can say that literary texts initiate 'performances' of meaning rather than actually formulating the meanings themselves. Their aesthetic quality lies in this 'performing' structure, which clearly cannot be identical to the final product, because without the participation of the individual reader there can be no performance" (1978: 27).

Since there is such a stress on the communication between author and writer in Iser's theories, one may be curious as to the aspect of the text that allows the reader to interpret the text in their own way apart from what is communicated to him or her by the author. The answer to this question is what Iser refers to as "blanks" or gaps in the text. These instances in the text occur when something crucial to understanding the text is "missing" and must be "filled in" by the reader. Iser claims, "whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins. The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves. Hence the structured blanks of the text stimulate the process of ideation to be performed b the reader on terms set by the text" (1978: 169). The blanks within the text serve as an opportunity for readers to join the different segments of the texts in a way that produces a meaning that is in accordance with their own interpretation of the text thus far. Such blanks also emphasize the difference between the language of the text and the language of everyday life:

"Blanks…signaliz[e] both the absence of a connection and the expectations we have of everyday language, where connectability is governed pragmatically…They point up the difference between literary and everyday use of language, for what is always given in everyday language must first be brought into existence in fiction" (1978: 183).*Blanks* play important role in what Iser names as the *game of imagination* played by authors and readers. The text itself merely serves as a set of rules that guide the playing of the game but do not determine its final outcome. The reader's decision to play the game, and his or her enjoyment of the game, is dependent on the balance between the blanks and what is explicitly stated in the text (1978: 108).

Besides reader-response criticism, this study also borrows Connel's thought about hegemonic masculinity, which he explains as *the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to* the *problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women* (1995: 77). Such concept is strongly influenced by Gramsci's concept of hegemony (1971). While Connel uses the term *hegemonic masculinity,* Barker defines what he calls as traditional masculinity as related to strength, power, calmness, action, control, independence, self-sufficiency, friendships among men and works (2008: 302). Meanwhile, in Seidler's view (1989), the concept of masculinity considering men superior and women as the ones subordinated derives from the enlightenment era believing that reason is the only source of knowledge. Furthermore, Seidler also says that the reason legitimated as the only source of valid knowledge in the perspective of modern philosophy has been regarded independent as the opposite of emotional aspects (1989: 14-15). Based on the characteristic of masculinity as stated above, it can be concluded that hegemonic masculinity refers to the ideal characteristic must be owned by men comprising physical and non-physical aspects. Such characteristic must be owned by men so that they can be regarded as the real masculine men. For this reason, in this context the effeminate men as well as homosexuals are included in the subordinate, and thus it can be said that homosexual men masculinity is the subordinate masculinity.

In terms of homosexual men, Edwards says that they are different from heterosexuals. He defines gay masculinity as subordinate masculinity concerning the concept of love and personal relationship, which is very rarely found in the discourse of hegemonic masculinity. Masculinity is not only about physical satisfaction through sexual penetration, but also about emotional attachment in more intimate relationship (1994: 107). What Edward says about gay masculinity which is described to be more feminine and not limited to sexuality is in line with what Jenkins says about slash as the object of this study. According to Jenkins *"...Slash depends not simply on a mapping of conventional male and female roles onto the relations between two male characters, ... Rather, slash explores the possibility of existing outside of these categories, of combining elements of masculinity and femininity into a satisfactory whole…"* (1992: 199).

Since this study take data from the internet, it is very much essential to refer to the study of cyber space in cultural study context, which is not focused on the technological aspect, but more on its socio cultural one. Technology is not only regarded as a tool, but more than that as defined by Kaplan and Manners that it is 'not only the machine and tools used by certain culture, but also the way how such tool are organised in its usage, and moreover, the fact that scientific knowledge enables the birth of such things' (Slouka, 1999). In *An Introduction to Cyberculture,* David Bell explains about what he calls as 'subcultural or countercultural use of cyberspace' (2001: 163) which is divided into two groups: those that use cyberspace to advance their project, in the same way they might use other forms of communication; and thus that signal an expressive relationship to the technology through subcultural activities ... " (2001: 163).Sincethe cyberspace in this study is not only considered as a medium but more as an arena of audience who are actively involved in the process of giving meaning to the text they consume, the second thought of Bell about cybersubculture is considered more appropriate. The term *subculture* is debatable, concerning the prefix 'sub' which means 'beneath', which makes *subculture* regarded as the culture that lies 'under'. As a matter of fact, *subculture* cannot be considered as unimportant or unstandard culture. Thornton says that *subculture* should be assumed as something subordinate, subaltern or subterranean, as explained by Bell that subculture is *"... a term used to describe 'groups of people who have something in common with each other ... which distinguishes them in a significant way from other social groups' ..."* (2001: 164). Furthermore, Thornton in Bell emphasizes that not every group that shares similar interest and stands opposition to other group can be considered subculture. "They must be doing some kind of cultural work with those interests and that opposition" (2001: 164). On account of such 'cultural work', Hebdige says in *Subculture: the Meaning of Style* that 'cultural work' *"…is often codified through dress, 'attitude' and lifestyle, and circulated through the subculture's own 'micromedia' output: music, fanzines, flyers and so on "* (1979).

Fanzine (fans magazine) as one of cultural works mentioned by Hebdige is the pioneer of fanfiction recently booming in cyberspace. For this reason, not only does this study considers fan fiction as fans' response, but also as cultural work reflecting sub-ordinate culture in cyberspace. The internet users actively involved in the site of fan fiction not only use internet as a medium, but also do their fandom activies in it; expressing their minds by uploading their own fictions, collaborating and having interaction with other fans, as well as

expressing their expectations. This corresponds to what Bell says about subcultures as thosethat signal an expressive relationship to the technology through subcultural activities" (2001: 163).

This study attempts to critically analise how the fans women of *Harry Potter* redefine the meaning of masculinities though their works named slash fiction. The data is limited in accordance with the research focus, namely slash fiction with *Harry Potter* as the source text written in Bahasa Indonesia. The data is taken from slash fictions in www.fanfiction.net chosen in accordance with the purpose of study i.e to figure out how masculinities are defined by Indonesian women as the author of analysed slash fictions as well as the fans of *Harry Potter.*Using Critical Discourse Analysis provided by Norman Fairclough in analysing the data, the study tries to figure out how masculinites are defined by the fans women of *Harry Potter* in their slash fictions, as their response to the concept of hegemonic masculinity they find in media texts in patriarchal culture. In *Language and Power*, Fairclough (1989) devides his critical discourse analysis into three stages: description, interpretation and explanation. In the stage of description, language is used as the analysis unit. The following stage is interpretation explained by Fairclough as that containing important principle in critical discourse. In this stage the text analysis is not to be isolated from the social context where a certain text becomes part of. It is furthermore seen the intertextuality between a certain text and other texts. The final stage is explanation, in which it finds the answer to the power relation as the background of a certain discourse as well as the struggle process as the reaction towards the power relation. The explanation on the power relation is substantially talking about the ideology prevailing as seen in the discourse. Meanwhile, the explanation on the struggle process as a reaction to the power relation is substantially talking about the social effect prevailing on the discourse.

Men's Body Image and Sexualities

The analysed slash texts focus on the homosexual relationship between Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy as well as Harry Potter and Tom Riddle. Through the first stage in Fairclough's CDA, it is figured out that the issue of masculinities defined by the women who write slash includes: 1) physical matter comprising body and sexual attraction; 2) interpersonal relationship comprising sexual activity, physical intimacy and emotional attachment; and 3) men's behaviours and roles described through main and supporting characters.

In terms of body image, each of the women authors of slash has her own uniqueness in making idealisation on men's masculine body. This proves that masculinities is not something monolithic as Connel says that "masculinity had to be a complex, and in some ways precarious, construction" (1995: 9). However, from the data analysis it is known that even though each of them has her own way in describing men's bodies, the women also share similarities. They have tendency to effeminate men with slim figure, well care taken skin as well as delicate face, instead of muscular bodies with stern face commonly associated with traditional or hegemonic masculinity, as can be seen in the following quotations:

"Harry can be said to be a pretty boy. How come? With a heart-shaped face, beautiful emerald green irises, and red lips that challenge anyone to kiss them. Harry's skin was a healthy tan from his habit of gardening and playing football. His body is slim for a boy, professionally shaped thanks to the sport he does. Her father's inherited black hair was caught between tousled and wavy, forming a strange harmony in framing her sweet face…" (Confeito: 2011- *translated*)

Confeito describes Harry's attractiveness by highlighting his feminine side. Through the word beautiful, heart-shaped face, beautiful eyes, red lips, it can be seen that the figure of Harry is a man who has a woman-like personality with cute and sweet facial lines, instead of having a fierce or fierce face. In other words, Harry Potter's physical appearance related to his face is idealized through the description of his feminine aspect. Confeito's description of Harry also explains his sexual attraction as a feminine man, which he shows through the expression of daring anyone to kiss him. Furthermore, Confeito also describes Harry's physical appearance through his slim body. It is interesting to note that the word slim is juxtaposed with the physical activities of gardening, playing soccer and sports. This shows that a slim body posture does not only mean a small and lean body, but also has implications for a healthy body because it is trained through physical activities such as football or gardening. Confeito describes Harry's masculinity through his slim and healthy body.

"He can't touch Harry, because Harry is porcelain on the edge of the table that can easily be broken, thin shiny marble that doesn't want to be dirty with finger prints, and gems that are impossible to reach because the light is so bright it dazzles the eyes" (HanariaBlack: 2012 – *translated*)

The figure of Harry Potter is described by HanariaBlack metaphorically by using the word porcelain which is easily broken, thin marble that is shiny, gems with bright light. The use of the phrases mentioned above can be interpreted that physically Harry is a young man with clean and smooth skin (like the texture of porcelain and marble) and bright color (like a bright shining gem). This is emphasized again by HanariaBlack with a clearer choice of words in the following quote:

"… at the other end, on a large bed covered with green curtains with red accents, you can see a small body peacefully sleeping with its chest rising and falling regularly.

… Draco caught his breath, then dragged his gaze down slowly to his neck, arms, elbows that were sinking under his red-gold blanket, wrists with blue and green veins sticking out against his skin which was pale from lack of sunlight, then stopped at the hands tapering fingers that have clean and pale nails" (HanariaBlack: 2012 - *translated*)

The feminine side of Harry Potter is increasingly emphasized in the quote above through the choice of phrases with tiny bodies, slender fingers and clean and pale nails. Like Confeito, HanariaBlack describes Harry Potter's physical appearance through the prominence of his feminine side. However, from the quote above it can be seen that the two are slightly different in describing Harry's physical appearance. If Confeito also refers to a healthy slender body, HanariaBlack only emphasizes a beautiful, soft and petite physical appearance. Harry Potter's body in HanariaBlack's fiction is described as looking more like the body of a petite princess, with pure white skin, so clean that her veins are visible because she is always secluded in the palace (rarely exposed to sunlight). Harry's physical appearance that looks 'very feminine' and even tends to be frail is represented by his metaphorical language about breakable porcelain. HanariaBlack does not refer to the idealization of a fit body due to sufficient physical exercise, but rather a body with a small stature that tends to look frail. Despite the differences between Confeito and HanariaBlack in the description of Harry's physical appearance, both refer to the physical appearance of a man who looks feminine with a clean, well-groomed body. The question of a clean and well-groomed male body is closely related to image to 'metrosexual man' who is often stereotyped as a homosexual man due to their great concern on taking care of their physical appearance.

In terms of interpersonal relationship, slash writer women construct their fantasy about sexual activites showing their attempt to stay out of the dominant culture. They choose to cross the boundary and enter the taboo area by describing homosexual activities in heteronormative patriarchal culture. Furthermore, sexual activites are not merely described through aggresivity and domination, but more through the emphasist on emotional exploration, tenderness as well as deep concern about spouse's feeling.

"…Relax, Draco. Lift your feet over my shoulders. Draco did as instructed. He hugged Harry tightly and kissed his cheek gently. 'Harry, I've always been waiting for this moment to come. I was always waiting for you to hug me and comfort me like this.'

Harry felt his heart race as Draco revealed yet another secret of his feelings. She closed her eyes slowly as she began to enter the body of the man she had loved for a long time. 'Well, I'm here Draco. I love you, baby.' Harry hugged Draco tightly and kissed his lips softly. 'I have loved you for a long time.' (Mizore, 2010 - *translated*)

It is interesting to note that during sexual intercourse, Harry uses words that refer to gentle, non-aggressive and hasty sexual behavior and places more emphasis on expressing feelings of love. The use of the word kissing the cheek gently, hugging me and comforting me, kissing the lips softly, I love you, shows that in sex Harry exhibits gentle behavior, does not dominate and really cares about the feelings of the man he loves. Sexual activity between the two is not described as an activity that only focuses on technical issues related to the body alone. For Harry and Draco, sex was not just a matter of penetration, but a way to express their deep feelings of love. What is more important to them in sex is not just the union of bodies but the feeling of comfort and being loved. It can be said that Mizore's description of sexual activity in the slash text above does not focus on physical matter, but rather on emotional closeness between partners.

What Mizore describes in her fiction becomes interesting when we pay attention to sex and masculinity in Seidler's view, which states that as a means of proving a man's self related to his masculinity, sex is often associated with power and conquest(1998: 39). In *Rediscovering Masculinity*, it is said that Kantianism in the Age of Reason era has constructed the notion that the modern world is a world of men; where the ratio is considered as the only thing that is stable and reliable as a source of knowledge. This ideology has also influenced the construction of masculine concepts, including in terms of sexual behavior, especially in the framework of heteronormativity. Sex is seen more as an achievement that strengthens the position of men as the dominant and controlling party.

Related to the influence of Kantian understanding on the construction of masculinity so that sex is seen more as a place to prove oneself as a 'real man' which is associated with power and conquest, at a practical level sex becomes an autonomous region. Sex is a mechanical matter because it treats the body like a machine so that things related to feelings of love and emotional closeness become unimportant or even irrelevant in sex. The partner's needs become unimportant because sex is seen as a means to express masculine identity, rather than as a way of sharing it with a partner (Seidler,1989: 40).

What is illustrated in Mizore's slash fiction can be seen as a rejection to the notion believing that sex is a medium of proving masculine identity which is closely related to power and conquest.This makes slash different from pornography text in the dominant culture with male audience as its target market. The pornography texts generally contain certain pattern of erotization of inequality and domination (Edwards, 1994). Nevertheless, as the various description about body, it is also seen the women's ambivalence about sexuality.

Among the anaylsed slash fictions, Confeito's *More Than Words*(2011) legitimates the notion relating sex to power and conquest. The data analysis shows that such ambivalence is caused by the feminisation of Harry Potter's body as the slash's main character. Being positioned as the effeminate man since the beginning of the text, Harry is described passive and dominated in sex. Meanwhile, his lover Tom is described as the one having power and behaving agressively. In other words, because Harry is feminine, he is illustrated as the passive and dominated part. Tom, on the other hand, is positioned as the dominating one because he is masculine.

"…Grinning, Tom turned his attention to Harry. Seeing the blush on his lover's cheeks, Tom's grin widened.
'My, my, such a naughty boy you are, darling'. Tom took off his tie, threw it carelessly, accompanied by his shoes and socks. Tom's fingers ran across Harry's body.
The blush spread across Harry's face. In her bound position she smiled half shy-half coquettishly at Tom.
'Then punish me, Master.'
Tom's gaze changed to that of a predator eyeing its prey. Without hesitation then he squeezed Harry's ass hard, silencing Harry's moans with a ferocious kiss.
'Gladly, my Pet.' …" (Confeito: 2011).

The choice of words used to describe how Harry charmed his girlfriend Tom is a choice of words that emphasizes Harry Potter's position as a passive 'object'. In their intimacy, Harry is depicted in a tied position and saying 'Punish me, Master'. The description of Harry's tied position and the choice of the words 'punish' and 'master' have implications for the existence of an unequal power relationship between Harry and Tom. Harry Potter, a character who is popular and known as a heterosexual male in the source text, places himself as an 'object that is controlled', even asking to be controlled. Furthermore, the author describes Harry as 'prey', not unlike a powerless party in the context of his relationship with Tom. Likewise, the choice of predatory words and phrases, targeting prey, squeezing his buttocks and silencing him with ferocious kisses further emphasizes Harry as an object to be controlled and sexually exploited, and implicitly it can be seen that Harry also really enjoys his exploitation and objectification of himself. This shows that sexuality in Confeito's slash represents her idea which correspond to the notion of hegemonic masculinity that sees masculinities as the superior aspect to femininity. Confeito's sexuality is different from that of Mizore's that focus more on emotional exploration rather than physical pleasure: deep concern, commitment, comfort and mutual love.

From the previous analysis it can be concluded that the women fans of *Harry Potter* novel fill the gaps or blanks they find when interacting with the source text. It is mentioned in the beginnng that *Harry Potter* reflects the patriarchal culture with hegemonic masculinity as its reference. The characterisation of boys and girls in the novel is stereotyping, in which boys' position in Hogwarts school is llustrated more strategic than girls'. Furthermore, the character of Hermione described as a smart girl with bravery in making crucial decision is proven to be less powerful than the characters of Ron and Harry who are succesful in saving her life when they have to face the troll in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher Stone* (1997). Fleur de Lacour who is supposed to represent 'a masculine women' in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000) is matter-of-factly illustrated very emotional and incapable in the *Triwizard Tournament* that makes her defeated by her men competitors. This shows that what is expected by the readers to occur in the source text does not exist, that it becomes *gaps* or *blanks*. In other words, the source text does not really fulfil readers' expectation. When the reading process happens, what is seen as blanks is filled by the readers in accordance with their expectation as stated by Iser that such structured *blanks*stimulate the process of ideation to be performed b the reader on terms set by the text (1978: 169). When the source text implies the issue of gender with reference of hegemonic masculinity, the women fans try to construct their expectation on masculinity. The women offer subversive ideas concerning masculinites through their slash fictions. When the source text does not illustrate the matter of body in detail (Harry Potter is even portrayed as somebody with uninteresting posture) the women construct their expectation about man's body by illustrating effeminate men with delicate countenance called by Jung (2009) as *soft masculinity*. In terms of sexuality, the source text portrays Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy as heterosexual characters, whereas Tom Riddle's sexual orientation is not depictly described. Such gaps are filled by the slash writers by making them homosexual couples.

Cyberspace, Women, and Masculinities
The liquid characteristic of cyberspace offering 'freedom' as well as its anonymity gives big opportunity to the fans women in doing activities they find impossible or hard to do in offline world. On account of slash fiction,it is obviously seen how internet paves them the way to get into a room enabling them to exist and freely play with their fantasy, as well as construct their expectation to respond the media text they consume. When in offline world they have to face heteronormative dominant ideology placing them in subordinate position, cyberspace gives them opportunities to get rid of it. In other words, the fans women of *Harry Potter* use cyberspace's anonymity to hide their identities as slash authors in offline world. This proves that in

cyberspace the women authors of slash have opportunities to liberate themselves from the limitation of heteronormativity set up in offline world.

Apart from that, the liquid characteristic of cyber space offering anonimity does not mean that it is totally free from the heteronormative ideology in patriarchal culture. Through the online interviews it is figured out that the women authors of slash frequently receive many negative comments from slash readers in www.fanfiction.net due to their stories with gay characters. Moreover, they are also frequently labeled as 'immoral women' due to the fictions regarded as those against the cultural and religious norms. This proves that in cyberspace the women are still demanded to behave in such a way which correspond to the ideology of dominant culture in offline world. In other words, the liquid character of cyberspace is not automatically capable of giving unlimited freedom to the women authors.

Though cyberspace does not automatically liberate them, however, its unique characteristic offers a 'solution' for the women authors of slash. Besides the anonimity protecting them from negative label given by readers, the liquid and self-selective cyberspace naturally enables them to delete readers' negative comments in www.fanfiction.net. For this reason, it is obvious that the interactions in the site only happen between slash authors and readers who have no objection to slash or those who are fond of it. They frequently continued their interaction in social networks such as facebook and twitter. At this point it can be seen that such interaction is substantially a reflection of similar ideology shared by groups of people with the same interest. In other words, the slash authors and readers actively involved in the site are a group of people sharing similar interests as well as having cultural works in which they position themselves out of heteronormative dominant ideology. They do subcultural activity in cyberspace Bell states as *cybersubculture* (2001). Their activities in cyberspace are the activities signed by their infatuation in *Hary Potter* as well as their interest in slash fiction as cultural work making them different from other groups in patriarchal culture with heteronormative notion. This corresponds to what Thornton says that *subculture aren't just groups of people with common interests that stand in opposition to other groups; they must be doing some kind of cultural work with those interests and that opposition* (Bell, 2001: 164).

Interpretation as the second stage of CDA paves the way to see interrelation between the issue of masculinities in slash fiction and that prevailing in media texts other than the source text. On account of body, the data analysis shows that the idealisation of men's physical appearance in slash correspond to the concept of softmasculine body, about which Jun says (2009) to derive from the pretty boy Bishonen, a character in Japanese manga specially created for women readers as its market target. In Manga, men's physical appearances are illustrated as those with tall and slim posture, cute smile, long hair, as well as oval and feminine countenance. Even though the concept of masculinity concerning body in slash fiction refers to the character of pretty boy in Japanese Manga, it cannot be concluded that such concept merely refers to Japanese masculinity per se or eastern masculinity. Considering that the ideas in slash fictions are not completely free from the influence of source text which is the western text, it will be more relevant if the concept of soft masculine in slash is said to refer to masculinity emphasising on men's concern about their physical appearances. Today the ideal man's physical appearance is identified as the body with aesthetic values: cute and feminine countenance, fashionable, clean and well-care taken. This is obviously not free from the media role in constructing such ideal physical imagery. Media generally construct the figure of man who cares about his physical appearance through advertisement, films, television, music as well as sport stars categorised as metrosexual men. Mark Simpson says that a metrosexual is *a dandyish narcissist in love with not only himself, but also his urban lifestyle* (1994). Metrosexual men's love for urban lifestyle can be seen through their enthusiasm to consume beauty products and bodily care labelled *For Men*. At present it is often found various beauty centres for men as well as bodybuilding centres offering the building of ideal muscles such as sixpack. The annual 'L-Men' award is an example of how men's bodies with sixpack are idealised through capitalist products using media as an agent. The sixpack phenomenon is in fact not only popular among men but also among women who see it as men's sexual attraction as obviously seen in Mizore's comments in the author's note of *Another Time and Another Attitude* (2010).

In conjunction with cyberspace as an arena of giving meaning to the source text, it is known that cyberspace in this context enables the women to be freer in constructing their expectations about masculine body. In cyberspace, not only is the masculine body constructed by the women authors of slash, but also consumed by women readers of slash fiction. This proves that cyberspace enables female gaze to exist. Due to the female gaze in cyber space, it can be said that Mulvey's concept about *male gaze* frequently found in media texts as well as what Hayles says about *masculinitst bias* in virtual room (Trend, 2001) becomes irrelevant. On account of women slash authors, masculinist bias is potential in transforming into feminist bias.

In patriarchal culture, the discourse of men's sexuality in heteronormative notion cannot be separated from the discourse of the hierarchy of gender dichotomy that regards men superior. In other words, men are considered as the subject in sex, whereas women are the object. Since men are the subject, they are regarded as the aggressive and dominant parts who take initiative in sex, whereas the women are positioned as those who

obey men's agressivity. Furthermore, women's sexual pleasure is placed in the context of how they become the 'media' of men's sexual pleasure (Munti, 2005: 37).

Considering that women are regarded passive, patriarchal ideology has made sexuality taboo for women to discuss, at which the cyberspace plays its role. In the liquid space offering anonymity the women (slash authors) are brave to enter such taboo area and use their fantasy on sexuality. As Cumberland says, *"In cyberspace, where a woman cannot be criticized-or even identified-for her writing, one can see areas of curiosity and concern that could not be seen in arenas where women would have to pass through editorial hierarchies or expose themselves to the expectations of gender roles in public three dimensional life* (2000). It can be said that cyber space enables the women to become subject in sexuality rather than object.

It is interesting to elaborate the result of data analysis showing that even though the women have been brave to enter the taboo area in virtual room and attempt to be subject, they are matter-of-factly still strongly influenced by dominant culture which makes sexuality taboo for them to discuss. It is proven by the online interviews as well as author's notes that they basically feel ashamed of what they have been writing in slash. Mizore, for example, says that she has more than one facebook accounts (one account as a slash author, the other one as the real person). She believes that it is necessary to provide special account for slash readers since her real life friends are 'good women'. This implies her belief that what she has been doing as a slash author cannot be regarded as something worth-doing on account of 'good women'.

In heteronormative patriarchy, people's behaviours have been constructed stereotypingly since their childhood. Even since birth, babies' clothes and accessories have been constructed with reference to masculinitiy and femininity dichotomy such as blue for baby boys and pink for baby girls. Such dichotomy then keep on going to the period of chid's development as what can be seen in child's toys, games, as well as people's attitude towards a child's behaviour. Girls are generally directed to the game identical with femininity and domestic role whereas boys are the other wise. People are more permissive to crying girls than to boys. Furthermore, in the era of media, when children choose to play game in the internet, such construction keeps going on. In online game, for example, when children have to create avatar as their alter ego, the choices offered are also directed to stereotyping gender dichotomy. This shows that the anonymity offered by cyberspace is not atomatically free from gender *stereotyping*, like that prevailing in offline world. Morse says that gender construction in virtual world is arbitrary, nevertheless, it doesn't reveal interaction that transcend the gender polarization.This is due to the fact that the values of encoded in the symbolic system prevail in the minds of the users (Trend, 2001). However, on account of women slash authors as seen in terms of body and sexuality, it it is potential that *feminist bias* exists concerning the definition of men's roles and behaviours. In cyberspace, the fans women have opportunity to place themselves as subjects objectifying men. In other words, cyberspace provides the same opportunity for anybody to become subject as well as object, in which gender relation is not an exception. As a matter of fact, nevertheless, the data analysis shows that *masculinistbias* in slash fictions prevails through the illustration of slash characters' roles and behaviours. In their slash fictions, the Harry Potter fans women legitimate the notion considering heterosexual men as those with more opportunity to play their roles in public, as well as those stronger and more rational compared to women and homosexual men.

What is defined by the women slash authors on masculinites cannot be separated from their reference beside the source text. On account of roles and behaviours, the online interview and questionnaires (March 2012) shows that the fans women of *Harry Potter* also join online manga fandom such as *Naruto,Monster,Gintama,* dan *Kuroshitsuji.* As what can be seen in the data analysis concerning body, the men characterisation in Japanese manga refer to soft and more feminine physical appearance. In other words, the male characters body in manga corresponds to the concept of *soft masculinity*, which are different from the one of traditional masculinity constructing the stereotyping of muscular body with stern countenance. It is interesting to point out, however, that on account of roles and behaviours, the male characterisation in manga is very stereotyping with reference to hegemonic masculinity. Izawa (2001) explains that gender relation patterns commonly found in manga still refer to the concept of hegemonic masculinity; considering men stronger, more stable, more rational and smarter than women and thus considered to have more right to get involved in public.

As an agent of ideological construction, audiovisual media are never free from the discourse construction concerning men's roles and behaviours with hegemonic masculinity reference. Many media advertisements expose illustration implying gender stereotyping and gender inequality. The illustration of gender relation in such media texts do not explicitly contain physical violence done by men to women, however, it can be seen as an attempt to anaesthetise women's critical consciousness on men's domination. This shows that what Bordieu (via Clark, 2004) says about symbolic violence is frequently constructed in media texts.

II.   Conclusion

The heteronormative patriarchy has constructed gender in a system of hierarchy, that places masculine gender in superior position. Concerning the issue of masculinites, the construction of such discourse refers to hegemonic masculinity regarding heterosexual men superior and more dominant than not only women, but also

homosexual men. In a practical level, media play their roles in such construction. The media's construction to the discourse of hegemonic masculinity is carried out through disproportionate representation of gender relation, i.e gender stereotyping and gender inequality. In a certain level, such construction has produced common sense believing that such stereotyping and inequality are natural. It can be said that since media actively participate in producing common sense, they become powerful ideological institution, and hence have potential to be the source of conflict and struggle.

The reading process of media text is never free from the struggle process, since every text basically does not really satisfy readers' expectation. This is closely related to the non-esenssialist notion believing that meaning does not lie within the text per se. Hence, it can be said that readers are active producers and the manipulators of meaning (Jenkins, 1992). According to Iser (1978), when the reading process of a certain text happens, the readers find *blanks* or *gaps* in the text that help to stimulate their imaginative potential. Furthermore, the balance between explicit aspect and blanks found in the text enables the readers to get involved in the game of imagination. Slash fiction is a real form of game of imagination played by women fans of *Harry Potter*. While the source text implies the ideology of heteronormative patriarchy, slash fictions lies outside of such heteronormativity. However, on account of those women's expectation of masculinity as heterosexual women, it is obviously figured out that their slash fictions do not offer different ideology from the source text. In a nutshell, the ideology of gender in slash fictions do not totally get rid of the dominant ideology with its reference of hegemonic masculinity.

As a room created by computer based technology, cyberspace offers anonymity, freedom and less control than offline world. In the space, anybody has the same opportunity to become subject and talk about what they expect, in which the fans women of *Harry Potter* who writes slash fictions are no exception. On ideological level, such women have big potential to produce a counter of discourse towards the hegemonic masculinity mostly represented in patriarchal media texts. Nevertheless, in terms of this study it is figured out that the ideas of masculinity formulated by the slash authors are not totally free from the influence of dominant ideology. In other words, the liquid cyber space offering anonymity and less control compared to offline world is proven not to be capable in liberating them from the patriarchal ideology rooted in offline world.

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