

## Exploring Women's Marginalization in Selected Poems from 'Dear Girl' by Aija Mayrock

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### *Abstract*

*The aim of this study entitled “Women’s Marginalization in Selected Poems of Dear Girl by Aija Mayrock” was to analyze the issue of marginalization against women as depicted in selected poems from Aija Mayrock’s “Dear Girl” (2020). “Dear Girl” (2020) mostly showed poetries that speak about the injustice faced by women in society which make women experience marginalization. In addition, “Dear Girl” also consists of inspirational messages from the speaker and her empowerment of women so that they can occupy equality and equal rights like men. This study uses qualitative methods to analyze and reveal the phenomenon of marginalization in the form of gender-based unfair treatment that is carried out by society unconsciously in social life, especially to women. The data were analyzed through words and quotations by using Simone De Beauvoir’s (1953) feminism theory and presented in the form of an essay. The results of the study showed that marginalization depicted in the poems was influenced by the position of women who were considered inferior in society due to the social construction and social values that were not in their favor, the marginalization also occurs since women were considered unable to decide because of the society’s paradigm of their nature and also the patriarchal system that marginalize women so that they cannot make their own decisions, then the domestication also triggers marginalization because women cannot freely play their roles in public spaces.*

**Keywords:** *decision making, feminism, marginalization, public space, qualitative methods*

### **A. Introduction**

Nowadays, many women are free to choose the jobs they want and occupy high positions in a company where women's decisions are considered important. Even so, women still experience gender injustice in all aspects of their lives in society. This is unconsciously make women experience marginalization which has a negative impact on women. The marginalization of rights experienced by women makes women's position cornered and even difficult to get the opportunity to make a decision. According to Larasati (2021, p. 446), although human rights should not be gendered, women do not always have the same access to and implementation of basic human

rights as men. In our daily life, men are sometimes very easy to get their rights compared to women. This makes women into a corner position in society with the phenomenon of marginalization they face.

Marginalization is closely related to feminism. Ratna (2005, p. 588) sums up that feminism is the generalization of women as a concept and a critique of social theory to obtain women's rights. It means feminism emerged as part of a social, political, and ideological movement with the same goal of establishing, defining, and achieving gender equality in the personal and social spaces. Women often get different treatment because they are a woman, the treatment itself is negative judgment and prejudice that comes from gender, it means that marginalization is still faced by many women in the social environment. Therefore, women are trying to express their desires, such as the right to work and take a part in society.

The marginalization of women's rights weakens the image of women and gives some people the chance to act arbitrarily against them, this is not good and leads to unfair treatment of women. Schiffer and Schatz (2008) state that the term "marginalization" refers to a person, group, or population existing outside of general society, on the margin of people in positions of power, cultural domination, and economic and social welfare. This statement implies the position of women that women are treated differently in society because the main power is still dominated by men which causes women to be marginalized. Furthermore, marginalization that experienced by women is a serious issue in a society where women's position is often lower than men. In solving the problem of marginalization, the term women empowerment emerged. Germaine Greer (2018) says that how could a woman ever know how far she has come if she never lets herself go? How can she ever know how far she can walk or how quickly she can sprint if she never takes off her high-heeled shoes? This implies that a woman can choose and do whatever she wants which is enough to explain that women empowerment means making women as the subject who can have the potential as well as the feasibility to make their own choices like men.

Many amazing women in the world try to resist women's marginalization in their lives. In an article entitled "This Issue Is Personal For Me", Obama (2016) explains about Malala Yousafzai, a girl from Pakistan who struggles to make women also have equal access to education. Malala was shot in the head for attempting to attend school, and the terrorists who nearly murdered her were trying to quiet her voice, suffocate her goals, and lose her of her authority. The Malala case shows that women still accept marginalization of right and injustice in participating in society. This makes the position of women constantly cornered so that it is difficult for them to get equality for the rights that belong to them.

Another article entitled "37 Inspiring Women Who Shaped Feminism", Fisher and Sanchez (2020) shows another amazing woman portrait is Emma Watson, she is an actress and model originally from London. Emma Watson is best known for playing the character Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter films. Watson tried to fight marginalization of women by introducing her gender equality campaign, HeForShe, in her speech at United Nations Headquarters in 2014. She wanted to try to get as

many men and boys as possible to support gender equality. Thus, women no longer experience injustice so that they have equal rights to men.

Many literary works depict women's marginalization because it still occurs in society. Poetry is a literary work that functions as a means not only to entertain readers but also to inform the public, as seen in the study of women's marginalization through poetry. Poetry also helps readers in understanding other people's feelings, thoughts, and ideas about life.

Women's marginalization is not only represented in real life but also represented in literary works, for instance, is "Dear Girl" poem by Aija Mayrock. "Dear Girl" is very important to study because the issues in it are still very relevant to today's social problems, especially women's marginalization. In this book of poetry, the author shows how women face injustice such as they live under the control, also society's paradigm, and societal values that make their rights become more limited and treated unequally in society. This study uses a poem that depicted women's marginalization as a reflection of the speaker's and all women's experiences in real life. This book of poetry is divided into five chapters and consists of 93 poems, the first chapter is "The Search For Truth In Silence" (16 poems), the second is "The Freeing Of The Tongue" (21 poems), the third is "Deep Wounds, Deep Healing" (17 poems), the fourth is "With Love" (20 poems), and the last is "To The Sisterhood" (19 poems). However, there are 11 poems from two chapters of "Dear Girl" which were chosen to be analyzed since the selected poems have a strong issue of women's marginalization. Aija Mayrock uses "Girl" in the title and some of her poems that refer to all girls in the world who faced marginalization and then grow up to become a woman who through her various thoughts dares to act and then heals the wounds she and other women have. This poem also tries to convey that women must speak out for their right to equality and as fellow women, we must support each other to end marginalization of women through the voice of women's empowerment.

Aija Mayrock is an author, poet, and performer. She was published the poetry book "Dear Girl" that discuss women's marginalization issues. She was enraged with all the treatment faced by her and the other women. The speaker depicted in the poem is a woman, the poet herself, who tries to speak boldly about marginalization of women by showing some of the bad treatment women receive and causing them to be treated unfairly in society.

The writer was interested in analyzing the marginalization of women that is depicted in selected poems entitled "Dear Girl" (2020) by Aija Mayrock. There are several reasons why this study is interested in studying the poem. Firstly, because the poem reflected women's problem namely marginalization which the problem still happening now. Secondly, this poem has a good moral message which shows that we, as women, should be brave people to give our opinion about truth and do anything as long as it is right to achieve equality.

By the explanation above, women's marginalization was chosen with Simone De Beauvoir's (1953) theory of feminism and choice is applied in "Dear Girl". In "Dear Girl", the speaker completely portrays the marginalization of women while also trying to fight it, those are going to be analyzed in this study. So the writer conducted this

thesis entitled: “Women’s Marginalization In Selected Poems Of *Dear Girl* By Aija  
Mayrock”.

## **B. Method**

A descriptive qualitative approach was applied in this study and used the poem as the object for this study to be analyzed in essay form. The data were in the form of quotation or sentences from the line or stanza of the poem which can be narration or the speaker's line. Moreover, women's marginalization was portrayed by the lines and stanzas in the poem. Cresswell (2017, p. 4) shows that qualitative research is a method of knowing that explores a social or human problem and is based on several methodological disciplines of inquiry. The writer collected data and analyzes them. This approach was rich in detail, and it was written in essay form rather than numerical form, as is the case with the quantitative method. The results of this study can assist people in learning more about how women's marginalization is reflected in a collection of poems. The data for this study came from Aija Mayrock's selected poems of "Dear Girl" (2020). The poetry book was published on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. There are 11 poems that only related to the topic of this study. The poems strongly captured the marginalization issues happened to women using the theory of feminism by Simone De Beauvoir (1953). The writer did some procedures in collecting the data for this study. To began, read the poem many times in order to understand the meaning and messages of the poem. Second, when collecting data for the study, recognize and marked the critical quotes that include women's marginalization issues. The data collected and classified in this study were analyzed based on the feminism theory by Simone De Beauvoir (1953). The collected data were classified according to the term of marginalization including position in society, decision making, and private-public space roles. The data was then interpreted based on the feminism and marginalization that the speaker of the poem experienced. The information gathered from the poem's quotations was analyzed and published in an essay. The analysis was taken from "Dear Girl" by Aija Mayrock (2020) then analyzed using the supporting theory.

## **C. Findings and Discussion**

This chapter includes the findings and analysis of women's marginalization that are represented through the selected poems from "Dear Girl" (2020) by Aija Mayrock. In this book of poetry, there are five chapters with different discussions. The title of chapter 1 is "The Search For Truth In Silence" which consists of sixteen poems containing how women experience bad treatment and injustice, the rights of women who are limited in their roles and thoughts, treated differently which are taught to be obedient groups, and differences in parenting between men and women that start marginalization from childhood. Next, chapter 2 entitled "The Freeing Of The Tongue" which consists of twenty-one poems talks about how women are positioned and seen in society, given salaries that are not equal to men, women's self-esteem is lowered, lives according to society's standards, and some contain empowering women to make decisions for herself and make social changes related to the position and views of women. Then, chapter 3 entitled "Deep Wounds, Deep Healing" consists of seventeen poems containing the empowerment of women to take their rights and get a position in society and one of them is the empowerment of men to respect women. After that, the title of chapter 4, "With Love", consists of twenty poems about women

who are often hurt because their lover only judges a woman's physical appearance. The last, chapter 5 entitled "To The Sisterhood" consists of nineteen poems about women who support each other for equality and how women are considered useless. Furthermore, it is said that the speaker is mostly spoken through the poet's own experience as well as her point of view as a woman. Most of the poems are addressed to girls, young women, and women as a way to convey messages of inspiration and empowerment of women by using their experiences of marginalization as opportunities to rise and get equality and justice for women. Based on the explanation of each chapter of the poetry book above, eleven poems will analyze which discuss the issue of women's marginalization taken from two chapters, they are: chapter 1 entitled "The Search For Truth In Silence" consists of five poems and in chapter 2 entitled "The Freeing Of The Tongue" that consists of six poems.

### **1. Female's Inferior Position in Society Depicted in "Dear Girl"**

This sub-chapter will discuss the position of women who are considered more inferior to men in social life due to the construction of society and also societal values that are not in favor of women. This will be discussed in two chapters of "Dear Girl", entitled "The Search For Truth In Silence" and "The Freeing Of The Tongue". In the chapter "The Search For Truth In Silence", there are two poems that will be discussed. Then, in the chapter of "The Freeing Of The Tongue", three poems will be analyzed.

#### ***1.1 The Search For Truth In Silence***

This poem will show that the most significant evidence of marginalization against women is that women live in second place while men are considered as subjects. It is depicted in the following quotation:

I come from a line of wild women  
divine in their pursuit of truth.  
For the women I come from  
do not run with the wolves;  
they lead the pack.  
(Mayrock, 2020, p. 10)

The first quote of the poem from the title "The Search For Truth In Silence" by Aija Mayrock represents the position of women who are considered inferior in society since only the man is considered the leader. In the poem above, the speaker uses the pronoun "I" which refers to herself experiencing the phenomenon of injustice. Furthermore, the title of the poem, if it is related to the first poem, implies a fact that has been unaware of the position of women who have been sidelined in society.

The poem above consists of 5 lines, in lines 1-2 "I come from a line of wild women divine in their pursuit of truth." These lines show that the speaker has been living under injustice which has made her a group of women who dare that refers to the phrase "wild women". The wild women group arises because only men are considered leaders while women are only supporter. This makes women a group that looks inferior to men which will be explained in the next line. In lines 3-5, "For the women I come from do not run with the wolves; they lead the pack." The speaker has experienced injustice in society so she says "do not run" against other women so they do not go through the same thing as her. Based on the article "Where Does the Leader of the Wolf Pack Walk?", Chris (2021) says that the wolf is the person who leads the pack, in this case, the leading species is alpha which is a male wolf so the diction

"wolves" is interpreted as a man. These lines indirectly reveal that the position of women so far is considered only to depend on men, it is known that men lead a group of people referred to from the phrase "lead the pack", for example being the head of the household or the head of the office.

In conclusion, this poem describes the feeling as a woman who feels her position is completely sidelined by society. This happens because women experience repression as a minority where the dominant group is taken by men. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 25) states that people have spent a lifetime trying to prove that a woman is stronger, weaker, or equal to a man. This statement shows that women are still a gender whose position and ability are doubted by society so that they are compared with men. This also leads to the position of a man where they are the more visible position in society, while women are only a comparison even though both are part of social beings. It means that being a minority in a society that only recognizes the position of men is a form of women's marginalization.

Besides that, another phenomenon that shows injustice is the the position of women who are considered only as objects and do not have equal rights makes them look inferior. This is shown in the following quote:

Dear Girl,  
oftentimes we women start to rise,  
then certain people devise a plan to disenfranchise.  
Whether it's our bodies or rights,  
entice us with movements,  
unite us through persecution.  
Dear Girl,  
open your eyes.  
We have come so far it's easy to resign.  
We've got "equality"  
but public policy shows the contrary, honestly.  
One in six women could be raped in their lives  
and it's mostly seen as a victimless crime.  
What should every girl know?  
You are not some puppet in a puppet show.  
Expose the double standards,  
the hypocrisy, the hate.  
It is never too late.  
This is the moment of girls taking the reins.  
It is Time's Up.  
It is Me Too.  
It is everyone from me  
to you  
who has spoken  
or stayed silent.  
(Mayrock, 2020, p. 11)

The second quote from the poem entitled "The Search For Truth In Silence" by Aija Mayrock speaks about the cornered position of women in society. The speaker is a woman, or the poet herself, based on the use of "me" in the poem while "we" and "our" refer to the speaker and her people. The poem is considered as a woman's

personal opinion representing other women about some people who ignore women's rights and position in society. This poem consists of 25 lines without stanzas and is in the form of a free-verse. The speaker speaks her mind and directs the message to the girls who believe that it is time for them to gain their rights as well as their position in society. It is clear that the speaker is furious when women try to get equality but someone always fails them.

In lines 1-3 “Dear Girl, oftentimes we women start to rise, then certain people devise a plan to disenfranchise.” These line shows that the speaker is annoyed that women are very difficult to get their rights. Then, in lines 4-6 “Whether it’s our bodies or rights, entice us with movements, unite us through persecution.” The speaker implied that women both fought for their position and rights but often experienced oppression which made them unite in a movement to achieve their goal of equality. The speaker is also trying to motivate the women seen in lines 7-9, “Dear Girl, open your eyes. We have come so far it’s easy to resign.” These lines still clarify the previous line which implies that women have experienced oppression for a long time and they must get out of the treatment, this oppression makes women's position look inferior which will be explained in the next line.

In lines 10-13, “We’ve got “equality” but public policy shows the contrary, honestly. One in six women could be raped in their lives and it’s mostly seen as a victimless crime.” By highlighting the word 'equality' using quotes mark, the speaker emphasized that women actually have equality but the public policy does not provide it, the speaker said that some women experience oppression such as sexual harassment but public policy responds to these cases unfairly so that women are considered not harmed and not victims even though it clearly undermines the position and self-esteem of women while the perpetrators are sometimes left alone. The speaker also stated the position of women which was again interpreted as inferior in lines 14-17, “What should every girl know? You are not some puppet in a puppet show. Expose the double standards, the hypocrisy, the hate.” There is a connotation of “puppet” which means a stuffed toy that looks like a human or animal that is made to entertain people and is controlled by someone behind the scenes. These lines are emphasized by the speaker as evidence that women are still seen as objects that can be controlled by others, this clearly makes women's position and existence lower than others. Women must rebel and express all the oppression they experience so that their existence and position in society can be seen. In the last lines, “It is never too late. This is the moment of girls taking the reins. It is Time’s Up. It is Me Too. It is everyone from me to you who has spoken or stayed silent” which was implied as an expression from the speaker that so far some women could only be silent and did not dare to take control of their rights. This leads to the impact of marginalization where women feel their position is not visible so they do not dare to fight the injustice that befell them. That way, the speaker tries to motivate women to rise and control themselves so that the position of women is no longer considered inferior by society.

This poem talks about the position of women who are considered unimportant or even only seen as objects so that they can be controlled and ignored. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 273) sums up that it is only normal for the future woman to be offended by the limitations posed by her sex. This further emphasizes the meaning of the poem



above that women have limitations related to their rights because of their position who was born as a woman. They are also considered only as objects that make others think that women can be controlled by others. Thus, marginalization is identified because women are given limitations which makes women not treated equally.

### ***1.2 The Freeing Of The Tongue***

Some of the poems in chapter 2 “Dear Girl” also discuss the same thing as the poems in chapter 1, namely how women are considered as gender who are excluded from their position and existence. It illustrates the following quote:

Dear Girl,  
I wish I could hold you and say  
the world will protect you.  
But I know it will not,  
and in some way,  
you, too, know it will not.  
Maybe that’s why when people tell you,  
“You’re too young to understand,”  
you smirk with that twinkle in your eye.  
Because the moment you were born,  
you were sexualized, objectified,  
power never recognized.

Dear Girl,  
I know that if this world harms you,  
attempts to break you,  
you will rise  
broken and bruised.  
The world is no match  
for that flame in your eyes.

(Mayrock, 2020, p. 28)

The first quote of the poem entitled “The Freeing Of The Tongue” by Aija Mayrock implies the position of women who are ignored by society and their existence is again objectified. This poem consists of 19 lines in the form of a free-verse because the speaker expresses her inner feelings about the injustice and discrimination faced by women. The speaker uses the pronoun "I" which refers to herself which tries to tell a fact about how women have been positioned over the years. The title of the poem, if it is related to the first quote, is interpreted as a woman's effort to express all disappointment and annoyance at the injustice that they have felt so far only because they are women.

In the 19-line length of the poem, the speaker begins her line with a concern for women expressed in lines 1-6, “Dear Girl, I wish I could hold you and say the world will protect you. But I know it will not, and in some way, you, too, know it will not.” These lines speak of the truth that the world has been impartial to women. This shows that the position of women is sidelined in society so that women do not get protection from the people around them. In lines 7-9, “Maybe that’s why when people tell you, “You’re too young to understand,” you smirk with that twinkle in your eye.” It can be interpreted as an assumption from the speaker regarding people who think that women do not know how their position and existence is seen in society, which actually women know consciously and will be explained in the next line. In lines 10-12, “Because the

moment you were born, you were sexualized, objectified, power never recognized.” It was indicated by the speaker that women actually already know the facts about their position in society because since birth they have been subjected to treatment that demeans their position. There is a "sexualized" diction that implies that a woman's body is only seen from the sexual aspect, while other aspects are omitted. Her body is no longer neutral because every part of it becomes aurat (body parts [required by Islam] to be covered) so that women cannot feel freedom over their bodies, followed by the word “objectified” means that women are considered objects. As an object, it is owned or intended to be enjoyed by others, in this case, men. The power that women have is not even considered important as in line 12 "power never Recognized".

The speaker closed her poem with a motivational message to women as well as showing how society places women in a disadvantaged situation which is shown in lines 13-19, “Dear Girl, I know that if this world harms you, attempts to break you, you will rise broken and bruised. The world is no match for that flame in your eyes.” It is interpreted as a fact that women often get a treatment that makes them feel isolated and looked down upon by society. The speaker also tried to believe that women would not give up fighting against all the injustices and marginalization that befell them. The speaker also revealed that the world that sometimes gives injustice to the position of women is not comparable to the spirit intended by the “flame” diction that women have.

This poem describes the position of women who are marginalized and demeaned because of societal values that are not in favor of women. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 268) sums up that women as subjects can claim autonomy in sexuality and childbearing, but to be a 'real woman,' a woman needs to accept herself as the other. This statement is following the above poem where women are recognized or seen only in terms of sexuality, while they are often ignored or oppressed when they want to reveal other aspects that they have as a woman. This can clearly lead to marginalization of right where women's position are treated unfairly and made the second gender.

Furthermore, women's marginalization can also occur due to parenting between boys and girls. Different parenting patterns can make people have different expectations or assumptions between the two in cases like this it can make women treated unfairly. This can be seen from the following quote:

Raise your daughters like you raise your sons;  
the inequality did not begin with her birth,  
the inequality begins when you choose to raise your  
daughter in a box labeled “ladylike”  
and your son, in no box, with no label.

(Mayrock, 2020, p. 30)

The second quote of the poem from “The Freeing Of The Tongue” by Aija Mayrock represents the speaker's view on how women grow in the construction of a society that makes their position unequal to men. The poem refers to the injustices against women that the speaker may get. This poem consists of 5 lines whose meanings are interrelated with each other. The speaker uses a connotation in expressing the limitation of roles against women.

In line 1, “Raise your daughters like you raise your sons;” which was initiated by the speaker as an order or suggestion to parents not to distinguish parenting patterns

between boys and girls. This leads to a problem that arises because of differences in parenting and will be explained in the next line since the speaker uses semicolons as a connector. In line 2, “the inequality did not begin with her birth,” the speaker revealed the problems that arise because of parenting, namely in the form of injustice. The speaker informed that injustice is not caused by the birth of a child who is destined to be female. In the next line, the speaker displays the true cause of injustice in lines 3-5, “the inequality begins when you choose to raise your daughter in a box labeled “ladylike” and your son, in no box, with no label.” There is the word "box" as a metaphor for a living space. It can be understood the meaning that marginalization arises because girls live and are raised with several demands such as having to be polite and also act like a respectable woman which is referred to from the connotation of "ladylike", while boys are left free without demands in their lives which are referred to from the phrase "no labels". The poetry captures the marginalization that speakers and other women experience because of parenting. Differences in parenting between boys and girls are the beginning of why women are treated unfairly in society.

This poem tells how women are treated unfairly by being limited in their roles while men are the opposite. This clearly makes women's position is seen as more inferior than men's because women are considered not free creatures and are under parental control regarding the way they behave. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 275) states the idea of the Other emerges when man defines himself as a subject and free being. This has the same meaning as the poem above which the speaker implies that different parenting between boys and girls can make boys become subjects in society because they are not expected to be like what their life is while women will be position as the Others because they are trapped in an expectation since childhood.

Another phenomenon that shows women have an inferior position in society because of the demands, rules, and even societal values attached to them. It will be discussed from the following quote:

Growing up in a world  
that has taught me to look sexy,  
get a degree,  
maybe a little rhinoplasty,  
but never,  
never  
disagree with misogyny.  
A world that has taught me  
that being a woman  
means living in fear  
that your basic health care  
will disappear,  
or  
that your paycheck  
might somehow be smaller  
than a man  
who does the same job,  
or  
that your boss will tell you to stop giving him  
eyes

“If you want a raise, you gotta compromise.  
Show me what lies above those thighs.  
Boy, please.  
The moment you misidentified everything,  
you forgot  
that a hundred years ago  
I could not vote.  
(Mayrock, 2020, p. 41)

The third poem from “The Freeing Of The Tongue” will show how women are treated lowly because of the stigma and demands of society on them as women. This poem consists of 27 lines in the form of a free-verse because the speaker conveys her feelings regarding what she has experienced so far as a woman. The speaker is a woman, or the poet herself, based on the use of "me" in the poem. Moreover, the speaker uses the pronoun “I” as the subject to emphasize that she herself is the one who deals with the phenomenon.

In a lengthy 27 lines of poetry, the speaker begins her poem regarding a cause that makes women's position low on lines 1-7, “Growing up in a world that has taught me to look sexy, get a degree, maybe a little rhinoplasty, but never, never disagree with misogyny.” These lines show the speaker's experience as a woman who lives under the control of societal values imposed on her, such as being a real woman, having to look sexy, going to high school, and having a sharp nose. Those who instill these values in women are in fact one of the groups who hate women, referred to from the “misogyny” diction which believes that women deserve to be cornered. This shows how women are positioned according to the demands of society, which makes women's position cornered and low because they cannot freely manage their own lives. Then other factors that make women considered inferior in society will be described in lines 8-12, “A world that has taught me that being a woman means living in fear that your basic health care will disappear,” delivered by the speaker when women are told by their environment that being a woman is a scary thing referred to from the phrase “living in fear” because of their position that may be cornered or subordinated, and then being a woman is also a matter of concern referred to the phrase “basic health care will disappear” which means that women are threatened with not having health insurance in their lives. This means implying that the position of women is not a priority, this will also be discussed in the next line. In lines 13-17, “or that your paycheck might somehow be smaller than a man who does the same job,” these lines show that again women are considered inferior in the work scope with given less pay than male workers who both have the same workload and hours. This could be due to the position of women who are considered that do not have the same qualities as men. In addition, women also often receive treatment that lowers their self-esteem as described in lines 18-22, “or that your boss will tell you to stop giving him eyes “If you want a raise, you gotta compromise. Show me what lies above those thighs.” Ironically, women are also victims of sexual harassment by their superiors where if women want a raise they have to lower their self-esteem by showing their body parts unclad referred to in the phrase “what lies above those thighs”. This makes women, even more, looked down upon because they are seen only as sexual objects. In the last lines, the speaker concludes the cause of women occupying a low

position in society which can be seen in lines 23-27, “Boy, please. The moment you misidentified everything, you forgot that a hundred years ago I could not vote” these lines show a fact when the rules and stigma that caused women's position to be low in society were fertile while in fact at that time women were not given the right to participate in regulating the current regulations regarding themselves.

In conclusion, this poem shows how women are positioned lowly because of the various demands, rules, and even the treatment they have faced so far. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 21) says that Plato thanked the gods for several blessings, the first of which was that he was born free, not enslaved; the second, that he was born a male, not a woman. This statement further strengthens that the position of women is under the position of men where women are considered only as slaves who must obey and accept all the demands, rules, and treatment given to them while men are included in the group who are free to regulate their own lives.

#### **4.2 Female's Inability in Decision Making Depicted in “Dear Girl”**

This subchapter will discuss women’s limited rights which are considered the inability to make a decision because of society's paradigm against them. This will be discussed in two chapters of “Dear Girl”, entitled “The Search For Truth In Silence” and “The Freeing Of The Tongue”. In the chapter “The Search For Truth In Silence”, there are two poems that will be discussed. Then, in the chapter of “The Freeing Of The Tongue”, one poems will be analyzed.

##### **4.2.1 *The Search For Truth In Silence***

The first poem will show women’s marginalization in decision making due to women's limited right, such as the following quote:

When a girl is born into a world  
where she has no control over her body,  
she learns to live in a body that is not hers, but owned  
by the state.  
She grows up to believe that obedience is her middle  
name.

When a girl is born into a world  
that does not value her body,  
she learns to exist on the periphery of society  
as if growing into her spine is too much to ask for.

(Mayrock, 2020, p. 16)

The first quote of the poem from the title “The Search For Truth In Silence” by Aija Mayrock depicts how difficult it is to live as a woman who lives under the control of others and makes her unable to decide things on her own. This poem consists of 10 lines in the form of a free-verse because the speaker expresses her inner feelings about how women live for years without being given the right to make a decision. The lines of the poem are irregular and dependent, which signifies the speaker's feelings of marginalize and the dilemma of uncovering the facts of injustice that may have been experienced by her and other women so far. The connection between the title and the first quote of the poem implies a hidden truth about how women are not given the right to make decisions for themselves.

In lines 1-4, “When a girl is born into a world where she has no control over her body, she learns to live in a body that is not hers, but owned by the state.” The

speaker was put out by the speaker regarding the fact that since women were born, they were not given the right to regulate their own space so women were forced to live under the control of others which was referred to from the phrase "owned by the state." This unwittingly leaves women with no opportunity to decide how they live their lives and express their bodies. Then, the speaker once again explained how women cannot decide things because they live under the control of others which is shown in lines 5-6, "She grows up to believe that obedience is her middle name." These lines prove that women live side by side with all the rules given to them and as if obedience is something that women must fulfill, because of that women are more limited in making a decision because they are considered only as implementers of decisions, not as makers who make decisions that will be explained in the next line. In lines 7-10, "When a girl is born into a world that does not value her body, she learns to exist on the periphery of society as if growing into her spine is too much to ask for." It was presented by the speaker that women are not given the right to make decisions because they live in positions that are not highly regarded by society as referred to in the phrase "periphery of society" because their existence is not respected by society then their opportunity to participate in decision making is lost. What's more, the speaker pointed out that women lost their participation in decision-making in the last line with the phrase "too much ask for." It means that women have to carry out a rule and make decisions rather than make their own decisions.

This poem captures the rights of women who are limited in making their own decisions because they live under the demands of society. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 273) says that being feminine implies being weak, futile, passive, and docile. It can be interpreted that women are required to obey a rule or the words of a certain person, while women also want to participate in deciding things for themselves without being forced by any group. In the poem above, women have limits on their bodies and are closely related to the word obedient which makes women more passive in social life. This treatment creates marginalization of women where women have limited rights to make decisions about their own lives.

Furthermore, the speaker also described women's marginalization in term decision-making as shown in the parenting styles of boys and girls where the values taught can make others consider and doubt women to make decisions. It described as the following quote:

You tell your daughter that she is being emotional, irrational,  
yet you tell your son that he is being strong, smart;  
you are teaching your daughter to doubt her feelings,  
to question her beliefs.  
And so when she is mistreated,  
she will think back to what was said  
under your roof  
and believe those gut feelings we speak of  
are merely irrational thoughts,  
while your son believes every thought he has is fair and right.  
Be careful how you raise your daughters.  
Be careful how you raise your sons.  
(Mayrock, 2020, p. 18)

In this second poem “The Search For Truth In Silence”, the speaker talks about things that are taught to women regarding their nature that make others doubt if women are allowed to make decisions or not. This poem consists of 14 lines which the speaker addresses directly to parents. The speaker forced herself to have the courage to tell that so far women cannot be decision-makers because of society's paradigm of women's nature.

In lines 1-4, “You tell your daughter that she is being emotional, irrational, yet you tell your son that he is being strong, smart;” these lines show the differences in the values imparted to the trait between boys and girls. Women are told that they rely more on their emotions and cannot think logically referred to as diction “irrational” while men are told that they are strong and think logically referred from diction “smart”. This leads to women who will find it difficult to get the opportunity to make decisions in society because society believes that decisions made by women will be complicated because of their unreasonable way of thinking while men have reasonable way of thinking since they considered smart. The speaker also told that women are taught to doubt whatever they think or feel in line 5, “you are teaching your daughter to doubt her feelings, to question her beliefs.” This line implies that doubt over the beliefs and feelings that women have makes women judged to be unable to make decisions because it will take a long time because there are too many considerations and doubts. Moreover, another impact of women's doubts will be explained in the next line.

lines 6-11, “And so when she is mistreated, she will think back to what was said under your roof and believe those gut feelings we speak of are merely irrational thoughts,” the speaker mentioned that when women are treated unfairly, one of them is not trusted to make decisions, then that is the impact of the values taught by their parents referred to from the phrase "under your roof" which fosters the stigma of society against women that the ideas they propose are unreasonable. Meanwhile in line 12, “while your son believes every thought he has is fair and right.” It can be interpreted that men will be more trusted in making decisions because men are believed to be able to decide things fairly and accurately. In the last line, “Be careful how you raise your daughters. Be careful how you raise your sons.” The speaker intended to pay more attention to parenting between boys and girls so that one of them does not experience injustice in society.

This poem talks about how women are unable to make decisions because of the nature and values that are taught to them. Pratama and Chaniago (2017) argue that when comparing the best decision-making, women's decision-making is emotional and full of complicated considerations, and it takes a long time, whereas male decision-making focuses on logic and rationality, and it is quick. Women often have limited rights, one of which is in making a decision only because of social assumptions regarding nature they have. The nature that is taught to women has created a paradigm in society that believes that women will take a long time to make decisions and the results will be very complicated. De Beauvoir (1953, p. 283) states that a woman is deeply concerned about everything that goes on within her, and she is far less visible to her own eyes, more thoroughly involved in the mysterious wonders of existence, than a man is. This difference in parenting patterns is one source of the problem of

marginalization where things taught from childhood are carried over until the children grow up, causing women to become an invisible group while men lead everything because they are trusted, strong and intelligent in making decisions.

#### **4.2.2 *The Freeing Of The Tongue***

In the second chapter of “Dear Girl”, some of her poems will also discuss women’s marginalization because women are given limits in deciding things for their own bodies. It represents in the following quote:

Giving girls and women the decision  
to take control of their bodies  
is equality.  
Equality is having access to contraception  
with no exception, no stigmatized perception;  
a day when women are taught  
that their sexuality need not be hidden,  
boys are given condoms in high school  
while girls are taught to live under a different set of rules—  
rules that encourage purity and modesty,  
a monopoly on a woman’s body.  
(Mayrock, 2020, p. 32)

The first poem from “The Freeing Of The Tongue” describes a social phenomenon where women are not given the right to make decisions about their bodies. The poem consists of 11 lines without a stanza with the theme of sexuality, therefore, some dictions might make the reader a little disturbed. The title of the poem implies women's complaints are conveyed because they are treated unfairly which makes it difficult for them to make decisions for themselves because of the rules they face.

In lines 1-3, “Giving girls and women the decision to take control of their bodies is equality.” The speaker implied that women still live side by side with injustice and marginalization because they are not given the right to make decisions over their body control which is the phenomenon that will be shown in the next line. In lines 4-5, “Equality is having access to contraception with no exception, no stigmatized perception;” It is implied that so far education and access to contraceptive use (as a tool for preventing pregnancy) have not been implemented equally between men and women, which will be explained in the next line. In lines 6-8, “a day when women are taught that their sexuality need not be hidden, boys are given condoms in high school” it can be interpreted that women are not given education or access related to the use of contraceptives referred to from the phrase "sexuality need not be hidden" while men are introduced to one of the contraceptives in the form of condoms. This leads to limitations that women have because they are not left to decide whether they want to use contraceptives or not even though they are accessible to both men and women. Then the last line shows the facts opposite to line 8 which can be seen in lines 9-11, “while girls are taught to live under a different set of rules—rules that encourage purity and modesty, a monopoly on a woman’s body.” These lines show that when men are taught about their sexuality, women are still living under rules that require them to be innocent and polite, referred to as the phrase "rules that encourage purity and modesty" which prevent them from being given the same education. This clearly makes women unable to decide what things are good for maintaining their sexuality



and makes women limited in making decisions about their own bodies because their bodies are controlled by the norms and rules that are associated with them.

To conclude, this poem shows a social phenomenon where women find it difficult to make decisions in controlling their bodies because their lives are burdened by rules related to themselves. De Beauvoir (1953, p.567-568) says that women themselves recognize that the world is masculine as a whole; those who created it ruled it, and still dominate it today are men. This statement further reinforces that a set of rules is still dominated by men as decision-makers. That way, if it is related to the meaning of the poem above, a woman does not have the decision right to control her own body because apart from their body being controlled by other people, their body also lives under the rules that are specifically for them.

#### **D. Conclusion**

After analyzing previous chapters, there are some conclusions in which the selected poetries from “Dear Girl” (2020) by Aija Mayrock can be divided into three categories of women’s marginalization with feminism theory by Simone De Beauvoir (1953). The marginalization are represented through the poet’s main subject which is the speaker herself. In this study, marginalization occurs a lot towards women since they are considered the second sex or supporter.

The issue of women’s marginalization in “Dear Girl” selected poems by Aija Mayrock (2020) are found in terms of female’s inferior position in society, female’s inability in decision making, also female’s limited roles in public space. The terms which are depicted in the selected poems are based on the feminism theory by Simone De Beauvoir (1953). The first term is female’s inferior position in society since women are considered as the second gender or the Other and it makes women seen as inferior and not treated fairly by society. The second term is female’s inability in decision making shows when women have live under some control and rules also society’s paradigm towards their nature so women inability to make a decision in society or even for their own life. The last is female’s limited roles in public space when women do not have safety while access public space which makes their roles more limited in public space. In addition, the book of poetry “Dear Girl” also shows that women have always been perceived as objects that are obedient, emotional, dependent, irrational, living under control, and sexualized. Meanwhile, men are described as subjects that dominating, independent, rational, strong, and free to control their life. These images created marginalization of women, mostly in society.

In summary, the poems captured how women struggle against marginalization because of their gender that considered as supporter. The injustice occur mostly because of the differences in position in society that makes women look inferior such as women as objects and men as subjects, women living under control while men are free to express themselves, and so on. Based on data and analysis, all women of any skin color and transgirl women in the world have the right to be treated equally and fairly as men in the same way.

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