THE REPRESENTATION OF GENDER BIAS IN FILM DUA HATI BIRU (ROLAND BARTHES SEMIOTIC ANALISIS)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to interpret the representation of gender bias in the film Dua Hati Biru using Roland Barthes' semiotic interpretation, referring to how film as a cultural work becomes a factor of social constructionism and reflection on gender roles in a patriarchal society. This film is a continuation of the film Dua Garis Biru which depicts the dynamics of the lifestyle of the newlywed couple Bima and Dara who experience many social and psychological conflicts based on gender role inconsistencies. The representation of women and men in this film illustrates how stereotypes and cultural norms play a role in shaping expectations and acting towards individuals based on gender. Using qualitative descriptive methods, the researcher analyzed ten selected scenes that show power relations between genders in the context of households, childcare, and careers. The analysis was carried out by identifying signs (signifiers), signified, and cultural myths contained in scenes, dialogues, settings, and other visual symbols. It turns out that the results of the study show that this film implicitly and explicitly embeds gender inequality, such as men in decision-making, the double burden of women at home, and social pressure on the ideals of mothers and fathers. Providing something that represents not only depicts social reality in Indonesia, but can also influence audience opinion towards gender norms. This finding reinforces the urgency of critical awareness towards media content and the need for more inclusive and gender-fair film production. Thus, this study adds a contribution to the academic and social discourse on gender bias in popular media, as well as being an important reference book for filmmakers, educators, and gender activists to provoke more equal social change through visual media.

Keywords: Gender Bias, Film, Representation, Roland Barthes, Semiotics

INTRODUCTION

Film is a powerful visual medium for representing social and cultural realities, including gender bias. In this context, Dua Hati Biru is an interesting film to analyze because it explores the complex relationship between men and women and the challenges, they face in a patriarchal society (Noonan & Brock, 2023). Released on April 17, 2024, as a sequel to the 2019 film Dua Garis Biru, it focuses on the struggles of a married couple and young parents dealing with deeper social, emotional, and gender-related issues. This family drama continues the story of Bima and Dara, played by Angga Yunanda and Aisha Nurra Datau, as they try to build a harmonious life with their son, Adam (Nugroho, 2024).

Based on 2024 BPS data, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) decreased from 0.459 in 2022 to 0.447 in 2023, while the Gender Development Index (GDI) increased from 91.63 to 91.85 during the same period, indicating progress. Despite this progress, the data still reflects gender disparities that need to be addressed urgently. Given this reality, this study aims to further

examine how this film can serve as a reflection of existing social norms and how it can influence society's perspective on gender roles and rights within families and society (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024).

The issues raised in this study include the portrayal of female and male characters, as well as the narratives and scenes that shape viewers' perceptions of gender bias. In this film, we see how female and male characters are often trapped in situations that reflect injustice, both in romantic relationships and in broader social interactions. In a broader context, the urgency of this research becomes particularly important, as understanding these representations can help foster greater awareness and discussion about gender bias, as well as encourage media producers to be more sensitive to these issues in their work (Adi Wijaya & Firmanto, 2021).

Roland Barthes' semiotic theory and Stuart Hall's theory of representation offer important perspectives on how gender bias is portrayed in media, especially films. Barthes explains that signs are formed from the link between the signifier and the signified, which can create myths—ideological meanings shaped by society and seen as 'natural.' In Dua Hati Biru, these myths may appear through symbols, dialogue, or character portrayals that reflect social and gender roles (Karmakar & Pal, 2023). Hall, meanwhile, argues that representation is not a direct reflection of reality but an active process shaped by cultural codes. He points out that gender representations in film can either support or question patriarchal norms, depending on how meaning is created and understood by the audience (Hall, 2009). Barthes' theory remains a key tool for analyzing how signs shape meaning in culture and communication (Barthes, 1988).

Research by Dewanta (2020) titled "Semiotic Analysis in the Film Dua Garis Biru by Gina S. Noer" states that this film presents complex symbols in depicting the emotional journey of female characters. Through semiotic analysis, Dewanta found that the use of color, costume, and dialogue plays a crucial role in creating a narrative that highlights women's struggles against limiting social and cultural norms. These findings affirm that film is not just mere entertainment, but also a powerful medium for conveying social messages and breaking gender stereotypes (Dewanta, 2020).

Research by Nurima et al. (2024) titled 'The Image of Women in The Film "Hati Suhita" Directed by Archie Hekagery' states that the film represents women as strong and independent individuals, even when faced with traditional challenges. This finding shows that female characters in the film do not only serve as complements to the narrative but also as agents of change who are capable of making their life choices. This research emphasizes the importance of positive representation of women in films as a way to inspire audiences and change societal perceptions of women's roles (Nurima et al., 2024).

Research by Agani & Lukmantoro (2024) titled "Marriage Women Select Careers: Indonesian Film Reception Analysis 'Dua Hati Biru' (2024)" states that this film successfully creates an engaging dialogue regarding career choices and marriage for women. Through reception analysis, the researchers noted that audiences responded positively to the portrayal of female characters striving to balance career and family responsibilities. These findings indicate that the film not only reflects the reality of women's lives in Indonesia but also opens up space for broader discussions about gender equality in the context of work and marriage (Afinada Aulia Agani & Lukmantoro, 2024).

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on how gender bias is represented in the film Dua Hati Biru using a semiotic approach—an area not widely explored in Indonesian film studies. It shows how film, as a cultural product, both reflects and shapes society's view of gender roles. This study also offers a fresh perspective by linking visual elements in the film to cultural myths

that shape gender understanding, providing a more critical view of media's role in shaping public perception. This research is important because it not only analyzes the film's content but also examines how audiences interpret gender messages in today's context of growing awareness about equality and resistance to stereotypes.

The problem statement in this research is: how is gender bias represented in the film Dua Hati Biru? This question aims to explore the dynamics of power that refers to unfair treatment based on gender that occurs in the interactions between characters, and how this reflects a broader social reality. By answering this question, it is hoped that this research can provide deeper insights into the issue of gender bias, as well as contribute to a broader discussion about the importance of fair and accurate representation in film and media. The results of this study can be used for relevant educational materials.

This research aims to analyze how 'Dua Hati Biru' represents gender bias through various narrative and visual elements present in the film. This study will identify various forms of bias that emerge, both in the context of relationships between characters and in broader social dynamics. Additionally, another objective of this research is to assess the impact of these representations on the audience's understanding, as well as how this film can trigger reflection and discussion on gender issues in everyday life.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore how gender bias is represented in the film Dua Hati Biru. This method helps the researcher understand the social, cultural, and psychological context behind the characters and gender dynamics. Data is collected through spoken and written words, gestures, experiences, and behaviors (Sugiyono, 2008). The study applies Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, which includes two levels of meaning. The first, denotation, is the literal meaning of a sign—the link between the signifier and the signified. The second, connotation, involves deeper meanings shaped by culture. At this level, signs create myths—cultural explanations that shape how people understand reality (Barthes, 1988).

The data sources in this research consist of two main categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through direct analysis of the film "Dua Hati Biru," which includes detailed observations of characters, plot, and dialogue related to gender bias issues. Meanwhile, secondary data is sourced from relevant literature, such as articles, books, and previous research discussing gender equality in media, as well as the cultural and social context relevant to the film's theme.

The sampling technique used in this research is observation, where the researcher collects data and records information through observation based on a representative sample (scene) that describes the context of gender bias. The population of this research consists of 7 scenes with a total film duration of 1 hour and 46 minutes. The research samples are determined through purposive sampling techniques with criteria for scenes (dialogues, settings, and sounds) that depict gender bias in the film Dua Hati Biru. The selection of samples is based on the suitability of scenes that represent gender bias. By using the observation sampling technique, the researcher can ensure that the data obtained systematically and accurately describe the subjects as presented in the film Dua Hati Biru.

The data collection technique in this research was carried out through semi-structured film text analysis. The text analysis involves observation of visual elements, dialogues, and narration in 'Dua Hati Biru' to identify the portrayal of gender bias. Additionally, to demonstrate

the gender bias that occurs in the film 'Dua Hati Biru', the researcher conducted in-depth observations by watching and showing scene by scene in the film that represent gender bias in the form of images, writings, and dialogues related to the data that will be systematically examined according to the facts presented in the film.

The data analysis technique used in this research is Roland Barthes' semiotic representation analysis technique. This analysis is used to examine the meaning of signs through three stages: denotation, connotation, and myth. The analysis is conducted in detail on every scene that contains gender bias. Denotation is performed to reveal the actual meaning of the existing signs, connotation is to understand the cultural and emotional meanings that arise from the sign, and myth expresses the ideological meanings and hidden social values in the representation of these signs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Research Results

Researchers use Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis to uncover gender bias representations in the film Dua Hati Biru. The data is presented in the form of tables consisting of scenes, signifiers, signified, denotative meanings, connotative meanings, and myths. The analysis reveals that several scenes reflect the functions of traditional gender roles in the interactions between Bima and Dara.

Tabel 1. Signified and Signifier in Film Scene

Signified	Signifier	Explanation
Bima works while carrying his child.	Scene at minute 11.03	The scene where Bima takes care of a child shows his dual role as a father and a worker (denotation). Connotatively, it suggests that men can balance parenting and work. This scene highlights a common societal belief that caregiving is only a mother's duty, and male involvement is unusual. The underlying myth is that men should focus on work outside the home, while women handle all household responsibilities (Li, 2023).
Bima was angry when Dara said she wanted to look for a job.	Scene at minute 34.20	When Bima becomes upset over Dara's desire to work, it shows a conflict in family gender roles (denotation). His reaction reflects the belief that men should be the breadwinners, while women should focus on domestic duties (connotation). This reinforces the social myth

		that working women are prone to negative judgment and can cause conflict (Rengkaningtias, 2018).
Bima participates in parenting discussions even though he is a man, which should be a normal thing.	Scene at minute 42.12	The scene where Bima joins parenting discussion, mostly attended by mothers, shows his active role in caregiving (denotation). It also challenges the cultural belief that caregiving is only for women and that men who take part are going against traditional gender roles (connotation). This questions the social myth that raising children is solely a woman's responsibility and that male involvement is unusual (Pohan et al., 2023).
Bima is shopping for vegetables.	Scene at minute 54.30	The scene of Bima shopping for daily necessities shows his participation in an activity traditionally associated with the role of a mother (denotation). This challenges the view that household chores are solely a woman's domain and highlights the need for fair role distribution within the family (connotation). The strongly held social myth asserts that men should not perform household tasks, as this contradicts traditional gender roles. (Widyawati, 2021).
Dara gave shopping money to Bima because Bima did not have money to support his wife.	Scene at minute 01.00.02	The scene where Dara gives grocery money to Bima highlights Bima's dependence on his wife in household finances (denotation). It contradicts gender stereotypes that men are the primary earners and illustrates the need for role variation within the family (connotation). The prevailing myth portrays men as the sole financial providers, while women

		manage the home, neglecting the fact that reality may be different (Ibna, 2022).
Bima feels insecure due to the difference in educational background with Dara, who is more educated or has higher achievements.	 Scene at minute 01.15.16	The scene where Bima feels less confident due to his educational background compared to Dara illustrates the underlying tension of inferiority complex (denotative meaning). It highlights the social perspective where education determines an individual's value and place in the social hierarchy (connotative meaning). There is a prevailing myth that there is a correlation between higher education and having a higher status as well as skills (Wirawanda et al., 2019).
Bima cried, which shows his emotional expression as a man.	 Scene at minute 01.19.38	Bima couldn't hold back his tears, despite the social pressure that men shouldn't show emotion (denotation). This challenges the stereotype that men must hide emotional weakness and always appear strong (connotation). According to common myths, men are expected to be firm, focused, and tough. However, this scene challenges those gender norms rooted in society (Andreas, 2021).

Discussion

The film Dua Hati Biru presents representations of gender bias, both explicitly and implicitly. Representation, according to Stuart Hall, is the process of creating meaning through signs and symbols (Hall, 2009). An analysis of 7 scenes was conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which distinguishes between denotative and connotative meanings (Barthes, 1968).

1. Gender Bias in Family

This film shows how gender roles in the family are shifting due to the clash between modern and traditional values (Suchana, 2024). In one scene, Bima's mother scolds him, saying, "Be someone of dignity as a man!" On the surface, Bima is helping with childcare, but this suggests

that men should focus on earning money, not on domestic tasks (Barthes, 1968). This reflects the myth that men doing housework are less masculine (Brahmana, 2017). Likewise, Dara faces pressure from her mother to prioritize family over career, reinforcing the idea that women belong at home. Brahmana (2017) notes that many women are still confined to the role of housewife and lack personal freedom. Bima and Dara's parents reflect patriarchal views where men are providers and women manage the household. Although Bima and Dara try to divide roles more equally, they still face social pressure. Efforts toward gender equality are emerging, but are not yet widely seen in Indonesian families (Isro'iyah & Riinawati, 2025). Overall, the film explores attempts to challenge traditional gender roles and highlights how these efforts are often resisted. As Isro'iyah & Riinawati (2025) observe, Indonesian society is still transitioning between old and new values (Marks et al., 2009).

2. Media Representation and Gender Reality

This film not only reflects reality but also shapes it. Stuart Hall mentions that representation is the production of meaning through language and symbols (Hall, 2009). For example, the scene where Bima cries becomes a symbol of emotional expression by men, which is usually considered taboo. Through Barthes' semiotics, this film has revealed meanings that reinforce social myths about gender roles. As noted by Hasan et al. (2025), media indeed plays a crucial role in the construction and preservation of gender myths in society (Hasan et al., 2025). Thus, Dua Hati Biru operates within the bias of gender roles in modern households in Indonesia, while simultaneously depicting the clash of traditional and modern values that remain relevant in the current social context of Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of 7 scenes in the film Dua Hati Biru, it can be concluded that this film does not actively perpetuate gender bias, although elements of gender bias are still clearly visible. The film functions more as a representation of existing social realities in society, showing how gender bias remains maintained in various aspects of life, especially in domestic roles, expectations in the workplace, and society's views on the roles of fathers and mothers in raising children. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, this analysis reveals that the gender bias depicted in this film is representative, reflecting a realistic snippet of societal views shaped through a long history and patriarchal social structure.

Based on the analysis results, this research has several limitations while also opening up opportunities for future research, both theoretically and methodologically. The main limitation lies in the scope of the study's objects, which are still limited to a certain number of films, thus they are not able to represent the overall dynamics of gender bias representation in the film industry widely. For future research, it is hoped that more films will be analyzed from various genres and different time periods to see how the construction of gender bias evolves over time.

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