

**CULTURAL INVASION THROUGH WOMEN'S STANDARD  
OF BEAUTY DEPICTED IN MARGE PIERCY'S POEMS:  
*BEAUTY I WOULD SUFFER FOR AND WHAT ARE THE BIG  
GIRLS MADE OF?***

**UNDERGRADUATE THESIS**

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**STUDY PROGRAM OF ENGLISH  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL STUDIES  
UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA  
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in Marge Piercy's Poems: *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What  
Are The Big Girls Made Of?***

**UNDERGRADUATE THESIS**

**Presented to  
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for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra***



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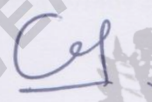


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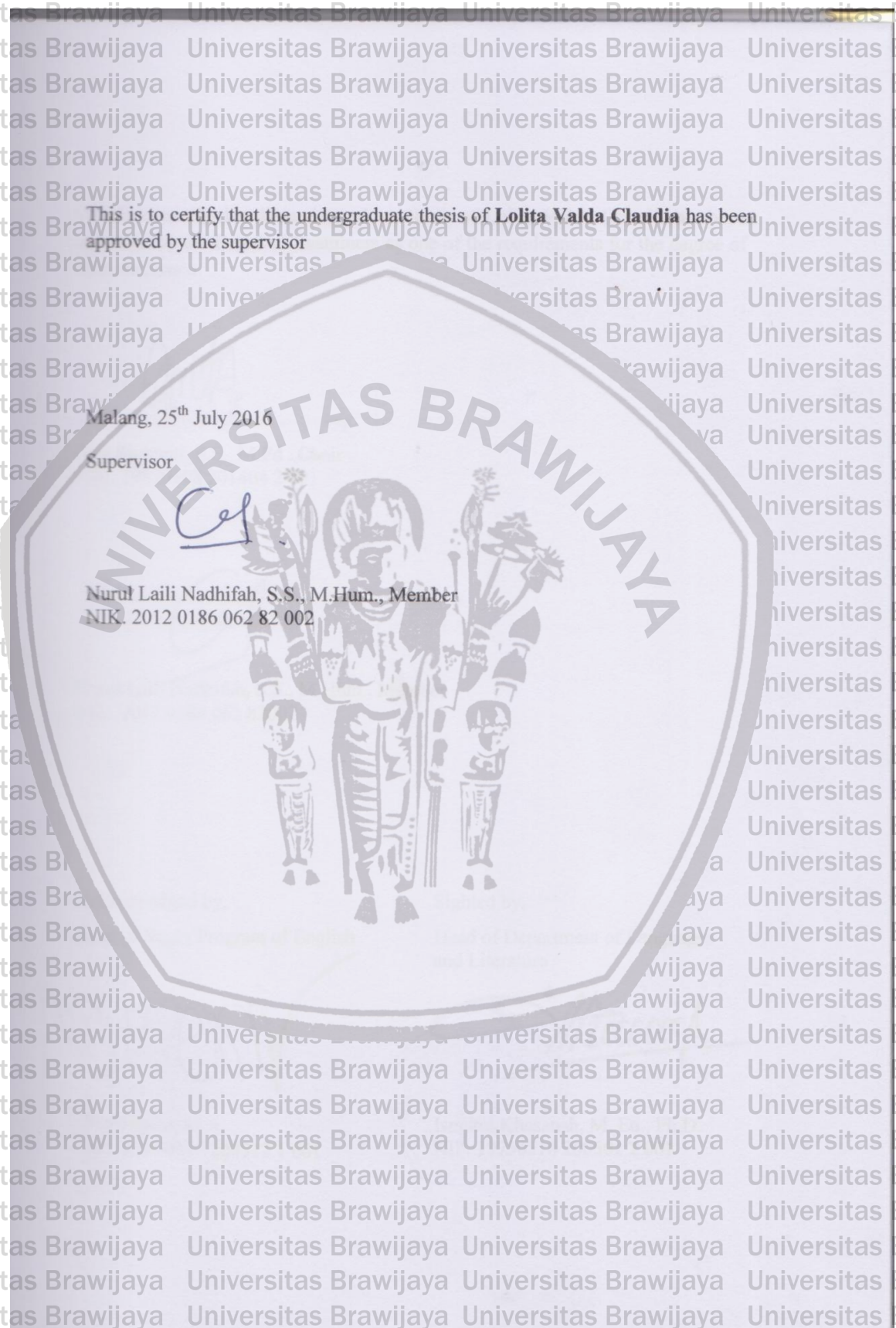
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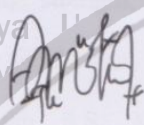
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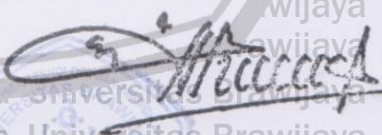
  
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The Writer

## ABSTRACT

Claudia, Lolita Valda.2016. **Cultural Invasion Through Women’s Standard of Beauty Depicted in Marge Piercy’s Poems: *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?***. Study Program of English, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. Supervisor: Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum.

Keywords: cultural invasion, beauty standard, American women, Marge Piercy, *Beauty I Would Suffer For*, *What Are The Big Girls Made Of*.

Cultural invasion aim to indoctrinate the subordinate class to make them becomes the ascendant’s followers. It influences many aspects of women’s social life including the way women and society build a concept of beauty. *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* by Marge Piercy portrays society’s expectation of beauty ideal in the 1970s and 1990s. Therefore, the study conducted analyzes on how society at that time constructs beauty standard through culture also the impacts to women.

This study used socio-cultural approach to analyzing the content of the poems because it relates to society also its culture. This study implied the theory of cultural invasion in analyzes the social condition of American women as the inferior group that invades by the superior group. Theory of ideology, power and hegemony are used in analyzes the capitalist issues. Whereas, beauty myth concept by Naomi Wolf used to analyzes the perspective idea about beauty ideal. Last, the theory of American women and society also used to analyzes sociological condition also its culture in that era.

In this study, the writer found that products of the capitalist and mass media are used to spreads an ideology of beauty standard at that time. That condition leads to the impacts of beauty standard to the American women in that era those are; the obsession of “Twiggy” and “Heroin Chic” body ideal, disdained by society and extreme diet. Besides, the writer also found the respons to the standard of beauty that indirectly has contribution in build other positif definition about beauty.

## ABSTRAK

Claudia, Lolita Valda, 2016. **Invasi Budaya Melalui Standart Kecantikan Wanita yang Digambarkan pada Puisi-Puisi Marge Piercy: *Beauty I Would Suffer For* dan *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?***. Program Studi Bahasa Inggris, Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Brawijaya. Pembimbing : *Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum.*

Kata Kunci: invasi budaya, standart kecantikan, perempuan-perempuan Amerika, Marge Piercy, *Beauty I Would Suffer For*, *What Are The Big Girls Made Of*

Invasi budaya yang mengarah kepada pendoktrinan terhadap kelas subordinat yang menjadikan mereka sebagai pengikut kekuasaan. Hal ini mempengaruhi banyak aspek kehidupan sosial perempuan termasuk bagaimana cara perempuan dan masyarakat membangun sebuah konsep standar kecantikan. *Beauty I Would Suffer For* dan *What Are The Big Girls Made Of* oleh Marge Piercy menggambarkan ekspektasi masyarakat terhadap kecantikan ideal pada era 1970an dan 1990an. Oleh sebab itu, studi ini dilakukan untuk menganalisa bagaimana masyarakat pada masa itu membangun standar kecantikan melalui budaya juga dampaknya terhadap perempuan.

Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan sosio-kultural dalam menganalisa isi puisi karena isi dari puisi tersebut juga berhubungan dengan budaya. Studi ini juga mengarah pada teori invasi kebudayaan dalam menganalisa kondisi sosial dari perempuan Amerika sebagai kelompok inferior yang diinvasi oleh kelompok superior. Teori ideologi, kekuasaan dan hegemoni digunakan dalam menganalisa isu-isu kapitalis. Sedangkan, konsep mitos kecantikan oleh Naomi Wolf digunakan dalam menganalisa gagasan prespektif mengenai kecantikan ideal. Terakhir, teori perempuan Amerika dan masyarakat juga digunakan dalam menganalisa kondisi sosiologis juga budayanya pada era tersebut.

Pada studi ini, penulis menemukan bahwa produk kapitalis dan media masa digunakan untuk menyebarkan ideologi dari standar kecantikan pada era tersebut. Kondisi tersebut mengarah pada dampak yang ditimbulkan dari standar kecantikan kepada perempuan Amerika pada saat itu yakni; terobsesi dengan tubuh ideal dari “Twiggy” dan “Heroin Chic”, disingkirkan oleh masyarakat dan ekstrim diet. Disamping itu, penulis juga menemukan respon terhadap standart kecantikan yang secara tidak langsung telah berkontribusi dalam membangun definisi positif lainnya tentang kecantikan.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Art is a creation of the object as an expression of human experience and feeling. There is a particular purpose for someone to express their emotion about beauty, sadness, surprise, happy, even guilt. Our understanding of art depends on our knowledge and experience about the world, cultural knowledge, knowledge that gained from personal experiences, and even knowledge about the art process itself which have important roles of creates an art. Tolstoy (1997, p.10) stated art is the communication of feelings from artist to viewer through certain external signs. Artists are people inspired by emotional experiences use their skill with words, paint, music, movement, etc to embody their emotions in a work of art with a view to stimulating the same emotion in an audience. In the end, art is a subject of controversy and self-evident, which means that they want to prove to the audience that they are an artist who makes a creation that can be categorized as an art. Thus, art creates a literature to be its product.

Literature is a creative act and also an art that has important roles in human life. Mc Fadden (1978, p.56) describes literature as a canon which consists of those works in language by which a community defines itself through the course of its history. It includes works primarily artistic and also those whose aesthetic qualities are only secondary. The self-defining activity of the community is conducted in the light of the works, as its members have come to read them or

concretize them. In other words, literature portrays some aspect of human life such as art, history, language and works which have influence for the writer to creating a literary work.

There are a lot of literary works that has influence in human's life, one of them is poetry. According to Ollila/Jantas (2006, p.3) poetry is any kind of verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story, or express any kinds of emotion, idea, or state of being. Poetry has helped human achieve artistic and creative expression since its creation. However, poetry has not only helped its composers. Poetry has contributed to its readers and fans immensely as well. It serves as a means of therapy for the people it entertains in several ways through the way the person interprets and relates the work to his or her own experiences in order to feel better or less alone about a situation in their life. It also has evolved over the course of time. Poetry is the process of creating a literary piece using metaphor, symbols and ambiguity, but the end of the process called as a poem.

A poem is an arrangement of words that contains meaning. It is a piece of writing that expresses the writer's thought and feelings in order to set a mood. It can be happy or sad, simple or complex with implicit word that known as connotative language. The utility of connotative language is not only to express the meaning but also to express special symbol and intention of why this poem is created. Using connotative language in a poem also can explain the condition of society that impact the author's feeling in their poem. According to Strachan, John R; Terry, Richard, G (2000, p.119) A poem is an art form in which human

language that used for its aesthetic qualities in addition to, or instead of, its semantic content. Through the meaning behind of a poem the reader can understand the feeling, expression, meaning also event or tragedy in the society that depicted in the poem. In this research the writer chooses Margie Piercy's poem entitled *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* as the object of the study.

Terry McManu (2014, para.5) in Marge Piercy's official websites stated that a poet named Marge Piercy was born in Detroit, Michigan on 31 March 1936.

Her mother named Bert Bernice Bunnin and her father named Robert Douglas Piercy. Piercy had one brother, fourteen years old from her mother's son from previous marriage. Piercy developed her love of Judaism from her Orthodox, Yiddish from her grandmother. She is the first one in her family who has an opportunity to attend college and get a scholarship to the University of Michigan (B.A., 1957). She is winning several Hopwood awards for writing such as Arthur C. Clarke Award for science fiction (1992), Bradley Award, NEPC (1992), Brit ha-Dorot Award, Shalom Center (1992), May Sarton Award, NEPC (1991), Golden Rose Poetry Prize, New England Poetry Club (1990), Carolyn Kizer Poetry Prize (1986 and 1990), and a National Endowment for the Arts award (1978). Her first six novels remained unpublished, in part because of their

feminist content. Piercy was active in the radical Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in the late 1960s. By 1970s, however, she had become disillusioned with the devaluation of women, of Judaism and Zionism, and of creative writing by the New Left. Finally, she left the SDS and became actively

involved in the women's movement, a commitment which continues to full and validates her artistic work. Piercy's poems were inspired from everywhere and everything about socialist feminism, woman movement, and classification of beauty. Katherine Payant (1994, p.25) stated that Piercy is viewed as a woman of socialist feminist tradition. She is seen as an individual who questions institutions of capitalist society, especially as the impact on women.

Marge Piercy's official website (2016, para 3) *Beauty I Would Suffer For* was published in 1978. It is a Marge Piercy's work which is also one of the objects of this research. This poem tells about a woman who tries to fit into society's beauty standard and does extreme way such as surgery that makes her sick. In the end of the poem, she imagines if she lives in the 17th century which is the era of "Italian Renaissance" body ideal that popular with big bone, big body and round stomach she will happy because she can eat anything she wants without worries about getting fatter. In the 1970s, women believe the popular image of beauty called as "Twiggy" body ideal which is the opposite of "Italian Renaissance" body ideal that marked with a slender body and trim hips that become the main reason of anorexia and bulimia. This condition makes women do certain beauty ritual such as diet to keep their stomach slim.

In Marge Piercy's poetry book entitled *Early Girls (1997), What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* was published in 1998. It is about a woman named Cecile. She depicts how women re-tool and manufacture themselves into what society wants.

In this poem, the imaginer of girls that trying fit into society's standard described with the physical appearance aspects such as the way they dress up in fashionable

clothes and makeup. It becomes a huge influence for the women and makes it as a standard of beauty without considering the inner beauty aspect or natural beauty itself. The poems contain the truths about what women have always felt when not being accepted by society, or in order to be accepted by society. They will do anything to fit into society's standard, even though it means that they have to do extreme surgery and drugs. Piercy's poetry, specifically, *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are Big Girls Made Of* are illustrated the conditions of disrespectful in society to a woman's beauty also the impact of capitalist product which influence society in creates beauty standard.

Today's society has high expectation for women's beauty and the roles of women in society. Besides there are many women's movements that campaign about women's right and equality, but some women are still want to fit into a specific category called as "beautiful". If they failed to make society called her "beautiful", then they will fit into another category called "ugly". In this case, the label of "beautiful" has changed into something that makes women think that beauty is about physical appearance without considering other aspects and unfortunately it already becomes the culture in American women. This condition cannot be separated with a cultural invasion that uses culture as a bridge to invade the target. It aims to indoctrinate people mindset and make them follow the culture of the invader. Ironically, this culture invasion has influenced the important aspects in human life such as fashion, technology, food and one of the vital ways, invasion can influence the way women build a concept of beauty.



Since there is standardization of woman's beauty in the society that still occurs nowadays, this study is significantly to show that beauty should not have standard that makes woman depressed, obsessed and suicide because beauty is universal. *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* are chosen to be the material of this research since it is a fine representation of a case showing the damage of cultural invasion of women's beauty standard that changes woman's mind, behave and the way woman's describe "beauty" itself. By studying this poem the reader also may know that certain message behind the poem that woman's beauty standard in society can influence the way woman's thinking and act. This poem also brings a powerful message to the reader about to be beautiful in their own way and not to compare them self to the other woman, because all women are beautiful and they have to be respected.

### **1.2 Problems of the Study**

*Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girl Made Of?* are good representation of beauty standard which constructed by society through culture invasion in 1970s and 1990s. However, the study conducted for this thesis discusses how society shapes American women's beauty standard in 1970s and 1990s through culture invasion also what the impacts of the beauty standard to women in 1970s and 1990s.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to find out how society in the 1970s and 1990s creates beauty standard through cultural invasion also the impacts of beauty

standard to women in 1970s and 1990s in Margie Piercy's poem entitled *Beauty I would Suffer For* and *What Are the Big Girls Made Of?*



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter contains several sections which help the writer to analyze the problem of study chosen in the previous chapter; those are theoretical frameworks and previous study.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

##### 2.1.1 Socio-Cultural Approach

Society and literature are portrayed of human action, often presents a picture of what people think, say and do in the society. C. Wright Mills (2003, p.33) says “the sociology perspective as the intersection of biography (the individual) and history (social factors that influence the individual)”. It can be said that sociology is an approach to understanding human behavior by placing it within its broader social context. According to Nimesh Karunatilaka (2009, para 2) the term "Sociology" is derived from the Latin word *Socius* which means to “associate” and the Greek word *logos* means to study or science. Thus, the etymological meaning of sociology is the science of society. Swingwood (1972, p: 29) stated that sociology as the scientific and objective study of people in society, the study of institutions and social processes. In the other words, sociology is a social object of study that living in one group called society and it formed social groups, social stratification, social institution, social interaction, social change, social dynamics, cultural and other social phenomena.

Literature and society cannot be separated. They have correlation from one to another and it also a reflection of society's condition at that time. Some of the literary works are made up based on life experience and portray the real situation in particular time. It depicts the interaction of people with others as a part of society. Roshni Duhan (2015, p.193) argues that:

The reflection of the age depends on the quality of the mind in which it is reflected. If a work of literature is to be judged by the quality of this reflection, it is apparent that it depends on the quality and nature of the reflecting mind.

Society has important roles to create and influence human's mind, it helps people to shape their identities. Beside society has correlation with culture in the process of shaping people's identities. According to Brown (2008 p.30) the term 'culture' refers to the language, beliefs, values and norms, customs, dress, diet, roles, knowledge, skills, and all the other things that people learn that make up the 'way of life' of any society. According to Barley et al (1988, p.37) culture is viewed as a form of social control, it is seen as impossible for people (or any other group) to control the culture unilaterally and to change it in a predetermined way.

Tony Bennet (2005, p.43) stated that cultural study is an innovative interdisciplinary field of research and teaching that investigates the ways in which "culture" creates and transforms individual experiences, everyday life, social relations and power. Research and teaching in the field explores the relations between culture understood as human expressive and symbolic activities, and cultures understood as distinctive ways of life. Because culture is the result of people perspectives and action over time and there is always an unpredictable side to cultural evolutions.

Since culture has an important component in creating identities for society, in this study the writer used socio-cultural approach as the approach to analyzing the objects *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What are the Big Girls Made Of?* by Marge Piercy. However, the poems closely related to the social interaction and cultural issue about beauty standard that happen in society especially among the women in America in 1970s and 1990s.

### 2.1.2 Cultural Invasion

Taylor (1920, p.1) stated that culture is a complex whole, that is contains the knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, mores and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society". This statement also suitable with Schaefer (2002, p.5) describe culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects and behaviours. It includes the ideas, value, customs and artifacts of a group of people. Culture helps people understand about their environment because the way people interact with each other and perceive an environment also see the world from different perspective is a part of culture.

Since the poems are being invaded by its culture, cultural invasion leads to indoctrinate subordinate class to make them become the ascendant's followers.

In culture invasion, there are two opponent groups known as the superior and inferior. The superior group or ascendants is a group that has a position of dominance in controlling the powerless group. According to Jadt (2011, p.15) ascendants refer to the capitalist as the power holder and finance owner. Inferior or subordinate is a powerless group that does not have authority to control. In this

situation women are the powerless group that used by the capitalist as market business. Barker (2002, p. 158) defines capitalism as an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods by investments that are determined by private decision and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.

Zulfiqar (2014, para 2) remarked that the capitalist invades the target by using many kinds of ways such as art and audiovisual as the easiest way in spreading of cultural invasion. Besides, he also argues that “cultural invasion is unavoidable unless every nation starts producing their local products and programmes.

However the nation should stop relying on foreign imports. It is because the things are produced and imported always brings the ideology of the maker”.

Capitalism does not only brings an ideology but also changes the meaning and influences society especially women in build a concept of beauty through its power.

### **2.1.3 Ideology, Power and Hegemony**

Since cultural studies become the theory of this study which is related to Marx and Gramsci that have a brief explanation about ideologies of power.

Ideology refers to the ways in which society as a whole adopts the ideas and interests of the dominant economic class, Marx and Engels (1989 p. 11). Marx’s model of ideology rests upon a historical materialist perspective, which asserts that material reality is the foundation of social consciousness. However, through the dominant ideologies of capitalism which is the working class take for granted their exploitation within economic structures of inequality. Ideology enters

Marx's theoretical framework to explain how the subordinate class take exploitative relations of production for granted, as something solid and unchangeable stated by Mark C. J. Stoddart (2012, p.196). This kind of explanation of ideology refer to the idea of the power group.

According to Stoddart in his essay entitled *Social Thought & Research*, Vol. 28 (2004, p 197) argues "power resides in the complex relations of force within society. It is present and observable; it is real". Foucault (1995, p.2) explained the concept of power is everywhere as well as in his theory, power is "omnipresent". It comes from everywhere and is produced every moment.

Foucault also sees power as a relation of force that only exists in action. Power is mainly exerted by the dominant bourgeois class through the medium of ideology by working on the popular mentality via the institutions of civil society and thus establishing hegemony.

Stated by Stoddart (2010, p.137) the notion of hegemony is rooted in Gramsci's differences between force and consent as alternative mechanisms of social power. By contrast, hegemonic power works to convince individuals and social classes to subscribe to the social values and norms of an inherently exploitative system. In industrial capitalist societies, hegemonic power is the prevalent form of social power and the state relies on forcing only in exceptional circumstances. Barker (2002, p. 56) remarks:

Hegemony is not a static entity but is constituted by a series of changing discourses and practices that are intrinsically bound up with social power. Since hegemony has to be constantly re-made and rewon, it opens up possibility of challenge to it; that is, the making of a counterhegemonic bloc of subordinate groups and classes.

Hegemony has a big part in creating the process of cultural invasion through beauty standard. From explanation above, hegemony occurs when a way of life, way of thinking and views of grassroots own imitative and accept the way of thinking of the hegemonic group. In particular, the capitalist set the concept of beauty ideal to develop the beauty myth.

#### **2.1.4 Beauty Myth**

Naomi Wolf stated in her book entitled *The Beauty Myth* (1990, p.9):

In the two decades of radical action that followed the rebirth of feminism in the early 1970s, Western women gained legal and reproductive rights, pursued higher education, entered the trades and the professions, and overturned ancient and revered beliefs about their social role.

Wolf's quotation above describes that women today already achieve their right to education, entered trades and professions, reproductive right and revered beliefs in society life but they are still struggling to be beautiful as society perspective that create among them. This phenomenon makes them believe that beauty is only about women's appearances. This is what are beauty myth tell about. Women are thinking that beauty is about having slim body, tall, blonde hair, thin lips, and others. As an example, woman's beauty ideal in 1970s is called "Twiggy" body ideal which marked with super thin body that makes the beginning of "anorexia" and "bulimia". As the opposite, the trend is changing into Heroin Chic body ideal that popular in 1990s which is marked with slender body, slim hips and also imagery of heroin junkies. From the example, indirectly standard of beauty in



society is changing every decade of time and it would be hard for women to live if they fight off every day to be beautiful like society want. Wolf (1990, p.270) says:

The beauty myth countered women's new freedoms by transposing the social limits to women's lives directly onto our faces and bodies. Response, we must now ask the questions about our place in our bodies that women a generation ago asked about their place in society.

Women will suffer every day from their anxiety of being beautiful and thinking about every expectation of their appearance. Wolf (1990, p.271) stated middle-class, educated Western women have been controlled by various ideas about female perfection. At the end, women are struggles to fulfill that beauty's ideal feature to represent their beauty. Yet, the beauty myth is not naturally rooted in women's mind but constructed by culture and society. Wolf (1990, p.271) says:

Just as the beauty myth did not really care what women looked like as long as women felt ugly, we must see that it does not matter in the least what women look like as long as we feel beautiful. The real issue has nothing to do with whether women wear makeup or don't, gain weight or lose it, have surgery or shun it, dress up or down, make our clothing and faces and bodies into works of art or ignore adornment altogether. The real problem is our lack of choice.

It can be concluded, according to Wolf, women can resist the beauty myth if they start to see that beauty is not a competition among the women or society.

Women have a choice to be beautiful just the way they are as long as they feel comfortable and beautiful without considering what society tell about the standard of beauty.

## **2.1.5 American Women and Society**

### **2.1.5.1 American Women and Society in the 1970s**

In the 1970s is not only famous with bell-bottoms and the rise of disco, but it was also an era of economic struggle, cultural change, women movement and technological innovation. Women movement, cultural change and society's beauty standard becomes the most powerful issues in that era. Society shapes men and placed them to become more importance on the physical attractiveness of women than men do on the physical attractiveness of men. That condition makes women's social opportunities are more affected by their physical beauty than are men's so that women are under more pressure to conform to an ideal beauty that society has made. According to Spade and Valentine (2008) says "the socially constructed notion that physical attractiveness is one of women's most important assets and something all women should strive to achieve and maintain". The most famous phenomena of women's beauty ideal that happen in the 1970s called "Twiggy" which is marked with super thin body also as the beginning of "anorexia" and "bulimia".

Mazur (1986, p.1) stated the words "anorexia" and "bulimia" barely known a decade ago, in common its use to describe self-destructive eating habits, particularly of young women. This phenomenal has changed the society's body ideal image that influences young women to fit into that body's goal such as slender body with trim hips. To be accepted in the "Twiggy" body ideal, young women do extreme diet, include significant weight loss, intense fear of weight gain, preoccupation with low-fat or low-calorie foods, specific eating rituals and

habits, excessive exercise, and social also emotional withdrawal. Wolf (2002, p.183) stated, that the medical effects of anorexia include hypothermia, edema, hypotension, bradycardia (impaired heartbeat), lanugos (growth of body hair), infertility, and death. Medical effects of bulimia include dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, epileptic seizure, abnormal heart rhythm, and death. When the two are combined, they can result in tooth erosion, hiatal hernia, abraded esophagus, kidney failure, osteoporosis, and death. Although many women diet to reach this Twiggy's body ideal and starving themselves without realize that they were already passed beyond the point of a slender body until they have anorexia or bulimia and death. Its phenomena cannot be separated from the psychological pressure of capitalized construction of society's condition that happen at in the 1970s.

#### **2.1.5.2 American Women and Society in the 1990s**

Throughout the decade, American women continue to face an impossible standard. If in the 1970s women are obsessed with "Twiggy" body ideal, the 1990s is the era of "Heroin chic" that marked with pale skin, dark circle, derneath the eyes and angular bone structure. According to Allise (2010, para 1) argues "Heroin chic" emerged in the 1990s as a high-class fashion trend which appropriated visual imagery of heroin junkies and their environment into fashion photography. This phenomena, was a reaction to against "healthy" and vibrant look of models that become a trend in the 1980s which is called "Supermodel" era.

During the nineties, every fashion spread and catwalk was dominated by waif-like models with washed-out skin and apathetic expressions. Calvin Klein led the way, signing Kate Moss to front their 1993 campaign (Haigney, 2011, para 1). She appeared in simple and revealing outfits which showcased her protruding bones. Sets were styled with props more suited to a bedsit than a supermodels penthouse; Chloe Sevigny's 1997 editorial in *The Face* saw her sitting on the floor of a poorly lit and messy bedroom next to a pile of money, looking sick, tired and strung-out. Those condition used by the capitalist to spread an ideology of beauty standard of "Heroin Chic" through media and create new trend of beauty. Bryan Denham (2003, p.6) addresses these media issues in relation to "Heroin Chic" through his article *Folk Devils, News Icons and the Construction of Moral Panics*, suggested that there is a tradition in the media of inciting 'moral panic' within society through hyperbole, exaggeration and the proliferation of 'mass truths' with no factual basis. All media reports that heroin use within the youth demographic dramatically increased during the popularity of "Heroin Chic" body ideal.

As the number of women's magazines increased in the 1980s and 1990s, the competition began to drive the way advertisements influence the content. The ads in magazines began going to extremes for sales and used influential ways to drive the type of articles that accompany them. Naomi Wolf (1991, p. 20), in *The Beauty Myth*, writes that when you read about skin care products and diet plans you are not reading a free speech, but a blurred line between editorial freedom and the demand of a consumer-driven free market. In the same way, television and the

internet have the power to present the same type of messages as seen in magazines. Advertisers use all forms together to reach the largest audience possible and, as a result, spread messages about ideal beauty.

While society create unrealistic beauty icon called “Twiggy” or “Heroin Chic”, capitalist comes and brings product that promises a solution for women and easily affected in emotionally and psychologically from being constant targets of a system driven by the market and the profit motive. Socialisworker.org (2012, para 3) stated capitalism is a system where production is based on profit as opposed to meeting human need. It means that manufacturers are constant to find new ways to sell new products, and new consumers to sell them to. Tragically, all of these women “problems” such as fears of old, anxiety of body weight and insecurities of wrinkle that advertisers pinpoint come down to a woman's physical appearance. Television, web commercials, magazine, newspaper and billboards offer an instant way to get better skin, better hair and less belly flab that simply lead to a “changing your appearance for better you”.

In this case, the understanding of society about the beautiful woman had been contaminated by the demands of the market. Capitalism brings society's comprehension about beauty into advertisements product that spreads to the world through social media. This condition makes women do not have any chance to be what they are want to be also they feel unconfident being themselves and think that beauty is a competition among women.

## 2.2 Previous Studies

Many studies used the poems as objects of study have been conducted by university of students. Since the study focuses on questioning the establishment of beauty standard done by certain society through culture invasion and its impact on the women's in the 1970s and 1990s era, there are two theses which are appropriate to be considered as previous studies. The first is a study conducted by Aditya Mukhza Gutama an English Literature student of University of Brawijaya entitled "The Ideology Of Capitalism Reflected In *Pretty Woman* Movie Through Edward Lewis Character". As the result of the study, by used theory of ideology he found that an ideology that created by capitalist has influences woman's psychology in the movie. However this previous study also uses ideology as the theory of study in analysing the psychological impact of capitalism, but the writer uses the theory of ideology to analysing cultural invasion that impacted to woman's beauty standard.

The second is performed by Melinda Ayu Wardani an English Literature student of University of Brawijaya entitled "Jazmib Biltmore's Experience related to the Beauty Myth Portrayed in *Path Girlz* Movie" (2011). It analyzes the main characters named Jazmib Biltmore who obsessed with tall and slim and Pecola Breedlove is obsessed with the blue eyes that make them follow the beauty standard in society. However, this previous study uses beauty myth as the theory to analyze the main character of the movie, while the writer use beauty myth as the theory to analyze the impact of beauty standard to the women in society in 1970s and 1990s.

## 2.3 Research Method

In conducting this research, two main steps will be taking. The first is deciding the object of the study and interpreting also analyzing the data. The details are explained in the subheading as follow:

### 2.3.1 Deciding the object of the study

*Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* are poems by Marge Piercy which are chosen to be the material object of the study.

Those poems were published in 1978 and 1998 that explore on how society creates beauty standard through cultural invasion and the impacts to the women in 1970s and 1990s era.

### 2.3.2 Collecting the Data

There were some steps to gather the data, such as; *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What are the Big Girls Made Of?* are read several times to validate the data, choose some theory in analysing the poems, read some references to see the background of analysis. The data, approach, theory and references that show the condition of society and the impact of cultural invasion through beauty standard are boldly marked.

### 2.3.3 Interpreting and Analyzing the Data

After collecting the data, the next step the writer took was interpreting and analyzing the data based on the approach and theory that the writer had choosen.

There are some theories used in this research, such as Socio-Cultural approach

and beauty myth concept by Naomi Wolf. It also includes the social condition in 1970s and 1990s phenomena such as “Twiggy” and “Heroin Chic” body ideal.

#### **2.3.4 Drawing the Conclusion**

The last steps are drawing the conclusions. The conclusions and suggestions based on finding discussed are presented in Chapter IV





### CHAPTER III

#### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Margie Piercy's poems have huge influences for many people especially women. Through her poems, Margie Piercy expresses her feeling about women's beauty standard in society. Based on the problems of the study in the first chapter, this chapter is focusing on society issues and culture invasion which is represented in Margie Piercy's poems entitled *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*. Applying socio-cultural approach, this undergraduate thesis will reveal on how society shapes women's beauty standard through culture also what are the impacts of beauty standard to women.

Culture invasion through beauty standard in Margie Piercy's poems entitled *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* are influenced by the capitalist products, culture invasion and beauty myth which are shown in the images of the poems that portrays beauty standard for women as powerless group.

From the explanation above, this chapter is dividing into four parts of the discussion. The first part discusses the products of capitalist that contribute in shaping standard of beauty which used as the bridge of in built beauty standard through culture invasion that is: fashion products. The second part discusses on the contribution of mass media in spreading standard of beauty. The third part discusses the impact of beauty standard to women in the poems those are:

obsession of “Twiggy” and “Heroin Chic” as an ideal body in the 1970s and 1990s, disdained by society. The last part is discusses respons to women’s beauty standard which brings other prespective of beauty itself among women.

### **3.1 Products of Capitalist that Contribute in Shaping Standard of Beauty**

Worldwide, millions of women and girls worry about their appearance, Rice (2010 p.23) believes women appearance shapes their self-esteem, career success and happiness. Ironically, this condition used by the capitalist to build a product that makes women believe that they will be more beautiful with the product of the capitalist. Darling-Wolf (2009 p.25) stated multi-billion dollar beauty industry has taken advantage of female consumers by fostering insecurities which are followed by a set of solutions that tell women and girls how to escape the tyranny of their bodies through the purchase and use of beauty products. In this part, fashion products have contribution in shaping standard of beauty among women in society.

#### **3.1.1 Fashion Products as the Products of the Capitalist.**

Jeffreys (2005, p.98) argues cosmetics, clothes and other beauty stuff are high-maintenance beauty practice since it takes up women’s time, energy and money. Those capitalist products play an important role since its used women’s weakness of their body as business market and as the result, women become obsessed with the products . There were nearly 11.7 million cosmetic surgical and non-surgical produces performed in the United States which is an increase of 500% in the number of surgeries performed over the last ten years (*Beauty at Any*

Cost, 2008, p. 3). This beauty obsession creates a billion dollar industry, which holds the power to shape and changes women's perceptions of beauty. In Marge Piercy's poem entitled *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* explains that fashion products have huge influence to women.

Marge Piercy's *What Are the Big Girls Made Of?*, portrays beauty's construction that is made by society in different period of time that is all written seven stanzas and 83 lines. This poem tells about a girl named Cecile and all of women who stuck in society's paradigm of beauty standard. Line 1-7:

The construction of a woman:  
a woman is not made of flesh  
of bone and sinew  
belly and breasts, elbows and liver and toe.  
She is manufactured like a sports sedan.  
She is retooled, refitted and redesigned  
every decade.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza 1 lines 1-7)

In the beginning of the poem Marge immediately said that *The construction of a woman: a woman is not made of flesh of bone and sinew belly and breasts, elbows and liver and toe.* It means a construction of a woman who is not like a human because she does not make from flesh of bone, sinew, belly, breast, liver and toe in which are the common elements that needed to make a perfect woman's body. In line 5, it explains a manufacture of *a woman is like a sports sedan.*

Marge used words *sports sedan* expresses a connotation of women who emerges from this society's manufactures where the women are considering not beautiful, but simply die-cuts of societies view on beauty at that time. Lines 6 the words *retooled, refitted and redesign* are the connotation of beauty standard which changes in every decade and makes women follow the different construction of

beauty in a certain period of time. In this poem, Marge wants to show that women who follow the society construction are like a *sports sedan* which is created by the capitalist as marketing business of their products in fulfill “beauty” predicate among society. Karen Johnson and Tom Ferguson in *Thrusting Ourselves* (1990, p.34) in pop culture, women’s body are setting as a mark and representation of a thing, product or commodity that mean to sell to the society and makes women’s body as the capitalist product addicted. Others, lines 8-11 in *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* also explains how clothes, cosmetics and beauty stuff are hugely influence in women appearance.

Cecile had been seduction itself in college.  
She wriggled through bars like a satin eel,  
her hips and ass promising, her mouth pursed  
in the dark red lipstick of desire.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza 2 lines 8-11)

Line 8 tells about a girl named Cecile who stuck in society’s paradigm. She forced herself to be fit into the society’s beauty standard and changes her styles in every period of time that makes her becomes the beauty icon in college. In lines 9-11 show that *she danced in bar nimbly and her appearance attracted people’s eyes with her small hips and ass*. Cecile has beautiful face and body that can attracted people’s eyes easily. In that poem Cecile pursed her mouth with dark red lipstick to express her confidence. A physical appearance is a main reason to attract people’s attention. People will notice a woman if she is pretty with attractive body and bright color of makeup. According to Wolf (2008, p. 20-21) a woman looks like a million dollars, she’s a first-class beauty, her face is her fortune. In the bourgeois marriage markets of the last century, women learned to

understand their own beauty as part of this economy. A woman defines as a thing that can be sold to the society using her beauty including the way she wears clothes, makeup and follows the trend that can be changes in every decade. The consumers of capitalism create a fantasy of “otherness,” commodified it through the creation and promotion of the clothes, cosmetics and beauty stuff that changes in every decade. Lines 41-43:

Here is a woman forced into shape  
rigid exoskeleton torturing flesh:  
a woman made of pain.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of*, stanza line 41-43)

Here women are forced to be a robot that is controlled by society. In the last line, it becomes the ironic part of the poem. It seems like Marge answers of the title of the poem *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* : a woman made of pain. It is an irony and sad to remember. In this stanza, women are struggled to be beautiful, wear fashion products that is build by capitalist as tools to make women feel more “beautiful” and spread beauty myth among them. This condition shows in Marge Piercy poems entitled *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* in lines 49-52 :

an image in her mind she can never  
approximate, a body of rosy  
glass that never wrinkles,  
never grows, never fades.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza 5 lines 49-52)

In this part Marge explains women’s expectation about their body and their obsession of being young, have a beautiful face which never wrinkles, old and fades like a glass. The reader will see the irony after reading this poems, “problems” of women are used by the capitalist to get a profit. Some of the products of the capitalist cosmetic, botox and anti-aging as the solution of

women's expectation of *a body of rosy glass that never wrinkles, never grows, never fades*. In Thomas Cash book entitled *Effects of Cosmetics Use on the Physical Attractiveness and Body Image of American College Women*, reported individuals often actively control and modify their physical appearance and physical aesthetics across situations within relatively brief periods of time (1989, p. 249). In other words, makeup uses differently in different situations because it makes women feel more self-confident. As follows, in the contemporary beauty market, hundreds of anti-aging products are marketed to fade skin discoloration, reduce redness, rejuvenate skin and diminish fine lines (Choi and Berson, 2006). According to a 2007 American report, an estimated US\$3 billion dollars are spent on botulinum toxin type A (Botox) and other injectable facial fillers which are renowned to have "long lasting improvement of facial wrinkles" (Niamtu, 2009, p.13). This is an important realization, especially for the beauty industry and the marketing of the products within the industry.

### **3.2 The Contribution of Mass Media in Spreading the Ideology of Women's Beauty Standard.**

In western culture, media plays a significant role in shaping women's and girl's relationship to their bodies. Newsom (2011) in her essays stated that in the film *Miss Representation* teenagers were found to spend an average of 31 hours per week watching television, 17 hours per week listening to music, 3 hours per week watching movies, 4 hours per week reading magazines, and 10 hours per week online, averaging 10 hours and 45 minutes a day of media consumption

Through imagery in advertising and in popular culture, women and girls receive

the message that their value largely depends on their physical appearance. In lines

72:

Why should we want to live inside ads?

(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza 7 lines 72)

Socio-cultural standards of feminine beauty are presented in almost all forms of popular media, barraging women with images that portray what is considered to be the "ideal body." Such standards of beauty are almost completely unattainable for most women. A majority of the models displayed on television and advertisements are well below what is considered healthy body weight. Mass media's use of such unrealistic models sends an implicit message in order for a woman to be considered beautiful, she must be unhealthy (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). The mindset that a person can never be "too fat or too thin" is all too prevalent in society, and it makes it difficult for females to achieve any level of contentment with their physical appearance. Lines 72 Marge asked to the reader "*why should we want to live inside ads?*". It explains that modern women are living inside ads. They try to copy what is inside the ads and try to be what the ads want to be and ads makes women feel "normal" to live up to this ideal. Women whom live in images of the media today that represents an unrealistic and even dangerous standard of feminine beauty which have a powerful influence on the way women view themselves.

Mass media shows which target encourage women to be concerned with health by airing storylines about health and illness. Simon De Beauvoir said "one is not born but made a woman", media is playing the best role in making this statement true. With such patriarchal values bonded with capitalist ideas they have

reinforced chains over people, especially women. The culture of domination that covered by media as exploitation of women's body also give opportunities to capitalist products such as fashion industry, cosmetics and beauty stuff make women live in the construction of society or market business by capitalist through media (Idi Subandi, p. 57). The way she moves, wears clothes, make up and accessories are constructed on the ground of her ideology and reinforced by the media. According to Ashley Amstrong (2010) in her speech women are constantly bombarded by the media to attain a standard of beauty that is comparable to perfection. This unrealistic standard of beauty is resulting in a number of mental and physical health problems for young girls and women. It comes into a statement that woman made of pain and brings huge impacts to women in 1970s and 1990s

### **3.3 The Impacts of Cultural Invasion through Women's Beauty Standard**

Jean Kilbourne argues that pressure on women and girls to conform to beauty "ideals" has become worse over the years and those criteria for meeting such standards has become more demanding (Kilbourne, 2010). This condition make women to be expected have a perfect body through extreme ways.

Understanding the impacts of the beauty standard that shapes by society are important since women are the biggest market business for the capitalist also as the victim of the capitalist products itself. Marge Piercy's poems entitled *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* and *Women I Would Suffer For* are the evidences of what women feel about "Twiggy" and "Heroin Chic" that become beauty ideal in



the 1970s-1990s which bring a lot of influences for women's mindset about beauty.

### 3.3.1 The Obsession of "Twiggy" and "Heroin Chic" Body Ideal in the 1970s and 1990s

Western beauty "ideals" for women are framed as a white, youthful, thin, able-bodied and physically "good looking" woman. Brown & Jasper (1993, p. 76)

stated that in American culture, women and girls learn their body is a measure of their economic value, which explains by so many women and girls believe

changing their body size or shape can change their life "Twiggy" and "Heroin Chic" body ideal are popular in the 1970s-1990s which make women obsessed to

fit into this standard. Dean A. Haycock in his official website *Encyclopedia of Mental Disorder Obsession* (2016, para 2) obsession is an unwelcome,

uncontrollable, and persistent idea, thought, image, or emotion that a person cannot help thinking even though it creates significant distress or anxiety. In

Marge Piercy's poems women become obsessed of beauty ideal which is shown line 44-48 :

How superior we are now: see the modern woman  
thin as a blade of scissors.  
She runs on a treadmill every morning,  
fits herself into machines of weights  
and pulleys to heave and grunt,  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza 5 | lines 44-48)

In this stanza, Margie tells about the beauty ritual that already becomes a culture and still occurs within modern woman nowadays. The rituals that woman still does in the modern era is including her struggle to get slim. *How superior we*

are now: see the modern woman thin as a blade of scissors in this part, Marge used simile in describe the beauty ritual of modern women. She said *How superior we are now* it shows to againts the standard of beauty among modern women's body which *thin as a blade* as the symbol of beauty especially for women who has very thin body they will feel more superior than women who are not have slim body. Line 46-48 Marge explains that even though they already reach the goals of beauty standard but some of the women still worry about their weight and *run on a treadmill every morning try to fit herself into machines of weights*. This condition makes women have an eating disorder as a result of Western beauty pressures and obsession can have, it has been found that 3% of women will struggle with eating disorders at some point in their lifetime (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002). In line 47 *and pulleys to heave and grunt* it clearly describe how women push their body, their mind and themselves into a society's beauty ideal and deal with all of society rules without considering the risks for women's life. This condition cannot be separated with the conditions of society when the poem was published.

This poem was published in 1997 which is known as the era of "Heroin Chic" body image which marked with waifish, extremely thin, translucent skin, and androgynous. This phenomenon cannot be separated with the popularity of serial tv "Baywatch" and underwear product Calvin Klein that used Kate Moss as the model of the product and marked as "Heroin Chic" beauty ideal in 1990s (Emma, *Revisiting the 90s moral panic over heroin chic*, 2015 para. 2). Wolf in her book *The Beauty Myth* (2009, p.181) stated up to one tenth of all young American

women, up to one fifth of women students in the United States, are locked into one-woman hunger camps. The weight-loss cult recruits women from an early age, and eating diseases are the cult's bequest. Throughout history society has focuses on beauty and body shape. Researchers have studied the social and cultural factors that contribute to the formation of an ideal body image.

In Marge Piercy's *Beauty I would Suffer For* that published in 1978 which is known as the era of "Twiggy". This is kind of body ideal that creates by society and capitalist for women to have boyish body, short hair, a minimal chest, and a slight frame also explain in this poem shown in the first stanza lines 1-5 states :

Last week a doctor told me  
anemic after an operation  
to eat: ordered to indulgence  
given a papal dispensation to run  
amok in Zabar's.  
( *Beauty I Would Suffer For*, stanza 1 lines 1-5)

In the begining of the poem Marge tells about an experience of a woman while she goes to a doctor, and the doctor tells that she has an anemic after an operation to eat. The sentence *an operation to eat* is kind of surgery which known as Gastric bypass surgery that usually do by people to get slimmer body and smaller stomach instantly. United State National Library of Medicine (2011, para 2) in official website stated :

there are two steps during gastric bypass surgery: the first step makes the stomach smaller. The surgeon uses staples to divide the stomach into a small upper section and a larger bottom section. The top section of stomach (called the pouch) is where the food which eat will go. The pouch is about the size of a walnut. It holds only about 1 ounce (oz) of food. The second step is the bypass. The surgeon connects a small part of your small intestine (the jejunum)

to a small hole in pouch. The food that eat will now travel from the pouch into this new opening and into the small intestine.

Gastric bypass surgery is like another surgery that has many risks, such as injury to the stomach, infection, and anemic that caused of poor nutrition in the body. After all of the extreme ways to make a woman look slimmer, she is not totally happy. Most of the people stay in hospital for 1-4 days and a lot of procedure that has to follow every day such as she will be asked to sit on the side of the bed and walk a little on the same day she has surgery, she may has a catheter in her bladder to remove urine and will not be able to eat for the first 1 to 3 days. This situation cannot be separated with the “Twiggy” body ideal that strives for a flat belly to considered as beauty.

In line 3 the doctor suggest her to *ordered to indulgence*, this is not only regular advice to save her anemic but also her life. She better starts to enjoy her life and eats a lot of things that she likes which is has a good nutrition for her body. The words *papal dispensation* in line 4 means a reserved right of the pope that allows for individuals to be exempted from a specific law. In this case those words used as a freedom key of woman who is stuck in society’s beauty standard.

Line 5 state *amok in Zabars*, the word *amok* derives from Malay languages that mean go crazy or wild. Carr Je/Tan EK (1976, p. 11) argue that this phrase is often used in a less serious manner when describing something that is wildly out of control or causing a frenzy. The word *Zabar* refers to a specialty food store at 2245 Broadway and 80th Street, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in New York City, founded by Louis Zabar. Marge wants the readers understand that a woman should not worry about what society thinks and express herself into a

favorite food. That is not a shame thing to eat delicious food and enjoy life just like go crazy to Zabar's food store.

### 3.3.2 Disdained by Society for Not Following the Standard of Beauty.

Society has expectation about women's beauty standard and there is always a consequence to women who are not following the rules in society. One of the consequence is disdained by society. As women who are not categorize as fashionable and beautiful, they will be disqualify and didain by society quickly.

This situation force women to follow the rules in society and not become themselves. This condition shown in *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* lines 17-21:

I thought in my superiority of the moment,  
whatever has happened to poor Cecile?  
She was out of fashion, out of the game,  
disqualified, disdained, dis-  
membered from the club of desire.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of*, stanza 3 lines 17-21)

Time changes and Cecile does not becomes the fashion icon and beauty anymore. People wonder what is really happens to Cecile. She is nor full fill the beauty standard in society, *she was out of fashion, disqualified, disdained and dismembered from club of desire*. She is out from the qualification of beauty icon.

In this case, Margie tries to say that women live in situation where being beauty is a must and there is consequence for not become a fashionable and follow the beauty standard in society. According to Blood (2005, p.10) when a woman ignores or fails to conform to the alleged standards of the ideal beauty, she is not only vulnerable to becoming an outcast from normality, desirability and

femininity but also blamed for resisting societal influences by accepting her body instead of changing it to fit the beauty ideal. The woman will be disdain, because she is not in the criteria of unrealistic of society's standard. People cannot lie to themselves that society has one specific criteria of beauty standard that must be followed by the women. The definition of beauty can be different for each person.

Edmund Burke (1956) argues people must conclude that beauty is for the greater part, some quality in bodies, act mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses. Thereby, beauty ideals are formed by social relations and cultural categories and practices which eventually created opportunities and commercialization of fashion and beauty industries which stated by Peiss (2000, page 5). There is a competition among women to fulfill beauty standard in society. Women will put beauty, look stunning and fashionable as the ultimate goal of life. It already becomes a culture in people's mindset and the image of what really happened to Cecile which is disdained by society as one of the consequence for not following beauty standard.

### **3.3.3 Extreme Diet to FulFill the Standard of Beauty**

Since beauty standard used by the capitalist to create fashion products and promising beauty myth to the women, this situation also bring a lot of pressure to women. They start to do extreme way to fit into beauty standard in society such as diet. A study with young native women found that almost half were dieting, 27% claimed they induced vomiting to lose weight and 11% used diet pills (Rice, 2009). Another study with Native-American women found that dieting and purging behaviors were common, especially among those who were heavier than

average (Brown & Jasper, 1993). Diet is one of impact beauty myth that happen to women in society and it shows in both of the poems that have a different period of time. In this, both poems Marge wants the reader to understand how are women suffer in fulfill the beauty standard in society. Lines 53-55:

She sits at the table closing her eyes to food  
hungry, always hungry:  
a woman made of pain.

(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of ?*, stanza 5 lines 53-55)

*She sits at the table closing her eyes to food. Hungry, always hungry: a woman made of pain.* It tells about how women suffer to get slim with do extreme diet that make them hungry every day. Wolf in her book *Beauty Myth* (2009, p.181) stated up to one tenth of all young American women, up to one fifth of women students in the United States, are locked into one-woman hunger camps.

The weight-loss cult recruits women from an early age, and eating diseases are the cult's bequest. Throughout history societies have focused on beauty and body shape. This condition come up with the conclusion of a woman made of pain. In first stanza lines 6-12:

Yet I know that in  
two weeks, a month I  
will have in my nostrils  
not the savor of rendering goosefat,  
not the burnt sugar of caramel topping  
the Saint-Honore cake, not the pumpernickel  
bearing up the sweet butter, the sturgeon  
(*Beauty I Would Suffer For*, stanza 1 lines 6-12)

In line 6-8 she said that *yet I know that in two weeks, a month I will have in my nostrils* these lines refer to previous part of the poem while the doctor suggest her to enjoy her meal and eat food with a lot of nutrition to safe her life

and her anemic. In the other side, these lines also shows the risk of her operation because she does not follow the rule that already given by the surgeon such as she cannot eat food with a lot of calories. Marge continues to lines 9 -12 *not the savor of rendering goosefat, not the burnt sugar of caramel topping, the Saint-Honore cake, not the pumpernickel bearing up the sweet butter, the sturgeon*. It means she eats a lot of food that she likes one of them is rendering goose fat. Rendering goose fat is a cooking fat rendered from the flesh of geese, this food has 57% monounsaturated fat, 28% saturated fat, 11% polyunsaturated (Steventon, 2014).

Another food that Marge said in the poem is Saint-Honore cake. Janine Marsh (2015, para 5) argue that it is a very challenging cake to make with several different components and there are lots of interpretations of how it should look.

The basics though must include the traditional elements of a base which is traditionally puff pastry and choux pastry; profiteroles or cream puff, dipped in caramelized sugar, chib oust cream, a type of crème patisserie or sometimes

Chantilly cream. Besides, tose cakes are delicious but it is imposible to eat by women who adore to be thin and get slimmer stomach especially for those who do an operation to eat. That kind food is only in women's dreams if they do an operation and surgeon asked them to eat liquid or pureed food without vomiting.

In lines 13-16:

but again the scorched wire,  
burnt rubber smell  
of willpower, living  
with the brakes on.

(*Beauty I Would Suffer For*, stanza 1 lines 6-12)



For the writer, these are the most ironic part of the poem. To the women who obsessed to get a slimmer body and thin because society told to and even create “Twiggy” as the icon of beauty, women have to kill their own pretension and life in society’s rules. Women do not enjoy their life, guilty feeling while eating favorite food and anxiety of weight will influence her life and force them to do diet. *But again the scorched wire, burnt rubber smell of willpower, living with the brakes on.* In this lines she realized that after she cannot smell or eat this delicious cakes anymore, because it is imposible to get slim body and eats a lot of food. She chooses to break her willpower to eats that cakes and lives brakes on her mouth and hunger everyday. In the next part of the poem *Beauty I Would Suffer For*, Marge shows the irony of the society condition which is shown in lines 23-29:

how I would bend myself  
to that standard of beauty, how faithfully  
would consume waffles and sausage for breakfast  
with croissants on the side, how dutifully  
I would eat for supper the blackbean soup  
with madeira, followed by the fish course  
the meat course, and the Bavarian cream.  
(*Beauty I Would Suffer For*, stanza 2 lines 23-29)

These lines talk about how she feels if she is one of the woman in “Italian Renaissance”. She will happily to eat a lot of food that she likes and follows the rules of beauty standard. This is irony when a woman starts to dreams and eats food that she likes without thinking her body getting fatter and society’s comment but in reality she cannot do that. Because it is imposible to do in 1970s while she wants to eats a lot of food besides she also wants her body slim. Society will start to bully her body and appearance which is not suitable for “Twiggy” body ideal.

The thin ideal is often promoted through the shaming of “fat bodies” in public health institutions argues by Rice (2010, p.34). In Marge poem entitled *Beauty I Would Suffer For*, also describes how women feel about society’s standard that make them have no choice except the fact that they do not want to be “ugly” in society version. Hungry and diet one of ways that used in fulfill the beauty ideal.

Lines 26-28 stated:

Even at intervals during the day I would  
suffer an occasional eclair  
for the sake of appearance.  
(*Beauty I Would Suffer For*, stanza 2 lines 26-28)

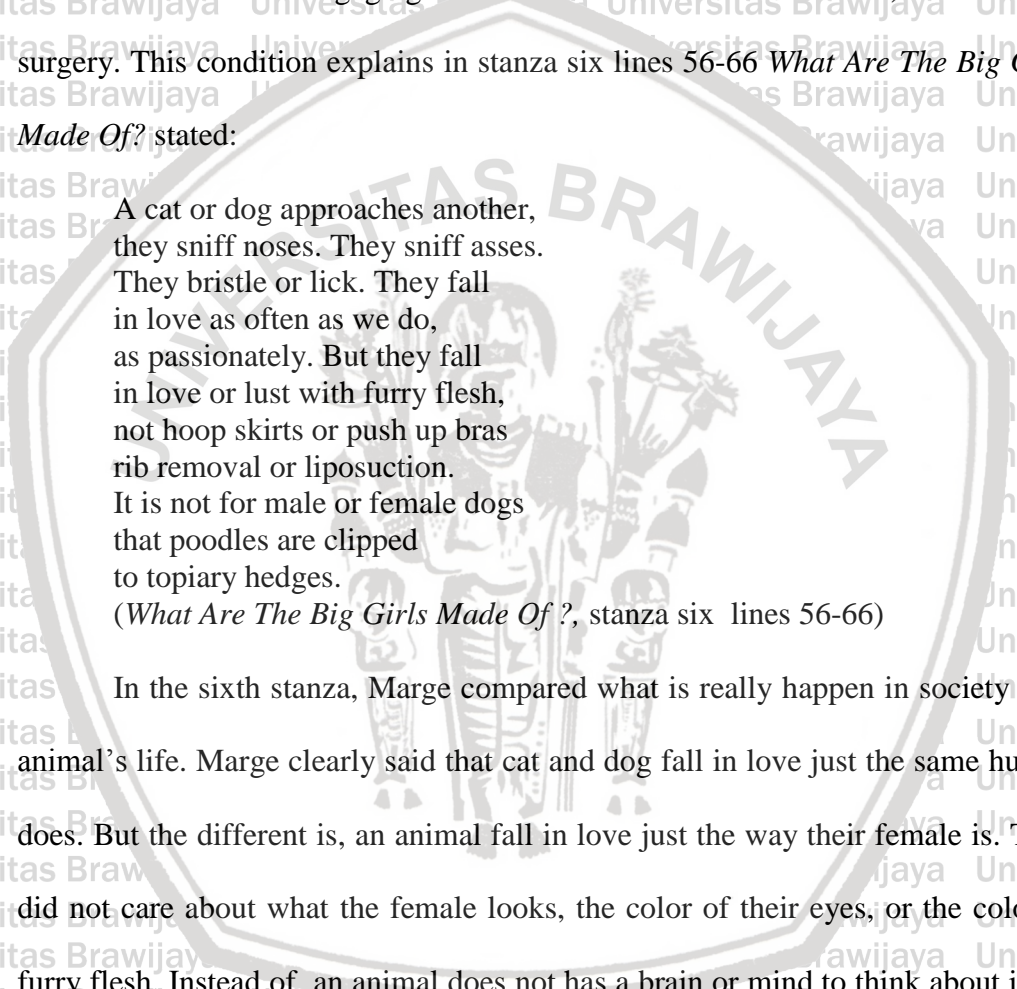
This part is she clearly said that *even at intervals during the day I would suffer an occasional eclair for the sake of appearance*. It means that she better suffer and feel hungry to eat eclair in a whole day to get good body ideal rather than eat a lot of calories and being fat which is not considered to be beautiful.

That is the beauty she would suffer for.

### 3.4 Respons to the Women’s Beauty Standard in Society

As the standard of beauty and body “ideals” intensify, more and more women will feel inadequate and strive to make drastic changes to their bodies to relieve their discomfort. However, while Western beauty pressures have a severe impact on women, many feminists have outlined various forms of resistance women can take to challenge these pressures. Darling-Wolf (2009, p. 256) argues, “in order to put our bodies to work against the dominant ideology, we need to find ways of re-appropriating dominant constructions of the body so that we can define our bodies in our own terms and create more positive imagery and metaphors”.

Some of the ways in which women do this includes love themselves, thinking that appearance is not immortal and being herself are the best decisions to be happy rather changes their physical appearance and thinking that beauty is about body ideal. And also makes connections with people who give them positive messages about themselves and engaging in rebellious behaviour such as diet, obsessed and surgery. This condition explains in stanza six lines 56-66 *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* stated:



A cat or dog approaches another,  
they sniff noses. They sniff asses.  
They bristle or lick. They fall  
in love as often as we do,  
as passionately. But they fall  
in love or lust with furry flesh,  
not hoop skirts or push up bras  
rib removal or liposuction.  
It is not for male or female dogs  
that poodles are clipped  
to topiary hedges.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza six lines 56-66)

In the sixth stanza, Marge compared what is really happen in society with animal's life. Marge clearly said that cat and dog fall in love just the same human does. But the different is, an animal fall in love just the way their female is. They did not care about what the female looks, the color of their eyes, or the color of furry flesh. Instead of an animal does not has a brain or mind to think about it but it is kind of a good example for a human. If an animal can fall in love without considering the looks of the female then why woman trying so hard to get attention of people with do unrealistic effort that they called as beauty and why society have to create unrealistic beauty standard if diversity of beauty itself is the real meaning of 'beauty'. Love is about something that people can feel, not people

looks in the eyes. There is no correlation between love and hoop skirts or push up bras. The character makes people fall in love. From this stanza Marge implicitly said that what woman does to herself is excessive even animal knows better how to fall in love in a good way without thinking too much about the female's looks like or force them to be another kind of animal. In seventh stanza lines 67-71 stated:

If only we could like each other raw  
If only we could love ourselves  
like healthy babies burbling in our arms.  
If only we were not programmed and reprogrammed  
to need what is sold us.  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza seven lines 67-71)

In this stanza Marge wished that if a woman does not worry about society's beauty standard among them, they will live in happiness because they care more about other people kindness and love themselves rather than force into what society's beauty standard which makes them suffer. It ironically said that in lines 70-71, *if only we are not programmed and reprogrammed to need what is sold us*. Again, Marge wonders if women are not follow the rules of beauty standard that already programmed and reprogrammed by society. As following in lines 73-77 stated:

Why should we want to scourge our softness  
to straight lines like a Mondrian painting?  
Why should we punish each other with scorn  
as if to have a large ass  
were worse than being greedy or mean?  
(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza seven lines 73-77)

In lines 73-74 Marge asked twice to the reader use connotative "why should we want to scourge our softness to straight lines like a Mondrian painting?"

In every human there is a kindness and softness heart that lives inside of her which makes them happy, then it changes like Mondrian painting which consists of white ground, a grid of vertical and horizontal black lines and the three primary colors that describe the opposite of softness heart itself. In lines 74-77 for three times, Marge asked the reader *why should we punish each other with scorn as if to have a large ass were worse than being greedy or mean?*. Those lines have deep meaning about what is really happening to society. It tells about it is fine for beautiful women to be mean or greedy rather than she has large ass. It seems like a woman who fit into society's standard can live easier and for the consequence woman who is not fit into society beauty standard will feel inferior, unconfident and hate their body. This kind of mindset can be very damaging to the self-esteem of someone who wants to be known for her creativity, her intellect, or her personality.

Beautiful women are so much more than beautiful looks. The people who truly matter will recognize that. In this stanza, Marge also wants the reader realize that women should be kind to herself and understand that it is fine not to follow the society's standard. It is important to be yourself with good attitude rather than be a part of society but we do not feel comfortable about it. The last stanza lines 78-83 stated:

When will women not be compelled  
to view their bodies as science projects,  
gardens to be weeded,  
dogs to be trained?

When will a woman cease  
to be made of pain?

(*What Are The Big Girls Made Of?*, stanza eight lines 78-83)

This is the most painful part that Marge wants to tell us. There are questions to society, to all of the women in the entire world and to the readers.

*When will women stop to looking herself and her own bodies as science projects or gardens to be weeded and when will a woman cease to be made of pain?* a

woman should starts to respect herself and society have to see a woman is a person. She is not a thing that should be owned or programmed and reprogrammed. She is a person who needs to be respected her choice, her looks, her opinion and her perspective about beauty. That is because beauty cannot be standardized and categorized or constructed. Beauty is diversity that has many different backgrounds of reasons and history of someone opinion about 'beauty'.

Beauty is not made of pain, it is made of happiness and women have to realize that. The writer analysis also suitable with Katia Koernoer's statement one of American beauty blogger (para 7, 2015) :

“society is giving teenagers unrealistic expectations of what it means to be beautiful. We should be building people up, showing them all the things that make them beautiful without makeup and high heels and waxing and everything else. We should stop using the phrase "beauty is pain" because beauty shouldn't have to be painful. We should be encouraging others to stand tall in who they are, be confident, and shine with the beauty they already have. I'm not saying that all beauty products are bad. I'm saying that they shouldn't be thought of as necessities anymore. Beauty isn't pain, beauty is confidence beauty is just beauty”

*Beauty I Would Suffer For and What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* by

Marge Piercy are poems make the readers realize that beauty standard has been constructing through culture since before the modern era which marked with the 17th-18th century beauty ritual which reflected in the poem. Those poems also make women understand that beauty should not be standardizing which make

them suffer because beauty is not made of pain. Beauty is made of kindness, care  
each other, confidence and love themselves.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### 4.1 Conclusion

*Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* describe how society in the 1970s and 1990s creates beauty standard through culture invasion and the impact to the women. Women's beauty ritual always changes in every decade and still occurs until nowadays that brings huge impact for women. Thus, those works also make the reader specially women and society to change their perspective about beauty standard towards women.

In those poems, there are two cultural commodities that are influenced by the capitalist to spread their ideology of culture invasion through beauty standard. The products of capitalist and mass media are the main factors that influence beauty standard in the 1970s and 1990s. The influence of products capitalist such as fashion products and mass media such as ads are lead the impacts to women in that era and those are; the obsession of "Twiggy" and "Heroin Chic" body ideal, disdained by society and extreme diet. Besides, respons to the beauty standard in society also brings new prespective for women in describes the meaning of beauty itself. In addition, women should understand that beauty is not competition which makes them obsesses, depressed, stressed even suicide or makes them changed their body shape through extreme ways such as plastic surgery and diet. Beauty is universal that every person has their own perspective about beauty and society should respect that. In those poems show that women should realize the meaning



of beauty is happiness and it is not made of pain. In these poems, Piercy also invites all of women and society to stop judge about physical appearance and start to care each other, spread kindness and love themself. The capitalist products may always take opportunities of women's problems. But if women can understand that they are beautiful inside and outside with being herself without worried about society's opinion, capitalist will not see women as a business market anymore.

The capitalist will see a woman as a person that should be respect.

#### 4.2 Suggestions

There are some suggestions given to the next researchers. First, the following researchers are suggested to analyze *Beauty I Would Suffer For* and *What Are The Big Girls Made Of?* poems by using feminist approach to see the background of feminist revolution that happene while the poems published.

Second, the next researchers still can use Margie Piercy's poems then compare them to another poem with the same theme using psychological approach to see the psychological impact of the women because of the beauty standard that is constructed by society. Thus, the next researchers also can explore the background Margie Piercy's life to see if there is connection between the poem and Margie's life experience.

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## Appendix I. Marge Piercy's Poem

### Beauty I Would Suffer for

By: Marge Piercy

Last week a doctor told me  
anemic after an operation  
to eat: ordered to indulgence  
given a papal dispensation to run  
amok in Zabar's.

Yet I know that in  
two weeks, a month I  
will have in my nostrils  
not the savor of rendering goosefat,  
not the burnt sugar of caramel topping  
the Saint-Honore cake, not the pumpnickel  
bearing up the sweet butter, the sturgeon  
but again the scorched wire,  
burnt rubber smell  
of willpower, living  
with the brakes on.

I want to pass into the boudoirs  
of Rubens' women.\* I want to dance  
graceful in my tonnage like Poussin nymphs.  
Those melon bellies, those vast ripening thighs,  
those featherbeds of forearms, those buttocks  
placid and gross as hippopotami:  
how I would bend myself  
to that standard of beauty, how faithfully  
would consume waffles and sausage for breakfast  
with croissants on the side, how dutifully  
I would eat for supper the blackbean soup  
with madeira, followed by the fish course  
the meat course, and the Bavarian cream.  
Even at intervals during the day I would  
suffer an occasional eclair  
for the sake of appearance.

## What Are Big Girls Made Of?

By: Marge Piercy

The construction of a woman:

a woman is not made of flesh

of bone and sinew

belly and breasts, elbows and liver and toe.

She is manufactured like a sports sedan.

She is retooled, refitted and redesigned  
every decade.

Cecile had been seduction itself in college.

She wriggled through bars like a satin eel,

her hips and ass promising, her mouth pursed  
in the dark red lipstick of desire.

She visited in '68 still wearing skirts

tight to the knees, dark red lipstick,

while I danced through Manhattan in mini skirt,

lipstick pale as apricot milk,

hair loose as a horse's mane. Oh dear,

I thought in my superiority of the moment,

She was out of fashion, out of the game,

disqualified, disdained, dis-

membered from the club of desire.

Look at pictures in French fashion

magazines of the 18th century:

century of the ultimate lady

fantasy wrought of silk and corseting.

Paniers bring her hips out three feet

each way, while the waist is pinched

and the belly flattened under wood.

The breasts are stuffed up and out

offered like apples in a bowl.

The tiny foot is encased in a slipper

never meant for walking.

On top is a grandiose headache:

hair like a museum piece, daily

ornamented with ribbons, vases,

grottoes, mountains, frigates in full

sail, balloons, baboons, the fancy

of a hairdresser turned loose.

The hats were rococo wedding cakes

that would dim the Las Vegas strip.

Here is a woman forced into shape  
rigid exoskeleton torturing flesh:  
a woman made of pain.

How superior we are now: see the modern woman  
thin as a blade of scissors.

She runs on a treadmill every morning,  
fits herself into machines of weights  
and pulleys to heave and grunt,  
an image in her mind she can never  
approximate, a body of rosy  
glass that never wrinkles,  
never grows, never fades. She  
sits at the table closing her eyes to food  
hungry, always hungry:  
a woman made of pain.

A cat or dog approaches another,  
they sniff noses. They sniff asses.  
They bristle or lick. They fall  
in love as often as we do,  
as passionately. But they fall  
in love or lust with furry flesh,  
not hoop skirts or push up bras  
rib removal or liposuction.

It is not for male or female dogs  
that poodles are clipped  
to topiary hedges.

If only we could like each other raw.

If only we could love ourselves  
like healthy babies burbling in our arms.

If only we were not programmed and reprogrammed  
to need what is sold us.

Why should we want to live inside ads?

Why should we want to scourge our softness  
to straight lines like a Mondrian painting?

Why should we punish each other with scorn  
as if to have a large ass  
were worse than being greedy or mean?

When will women not be compelled  
to view their bodies as science projects,  
gardens to be weeded,  
dogs to be trained?

When will a woman cease  
to be made of pain?





## Appendix: Berita Acara Bimbingan Skripsi

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5. Tanggal mengajukan : 28 Juni 2015
6. Tanggal selesai revisi : 12 Juli 2016
7. Nama Pembimbing : Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum
8. Keterangan Konsultasi :

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2.	11 September '15	Persetujuan Judul	Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum	
3.	15 September '15	Konsultasi I	Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum	
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5.	23 Oktober '15	Konsultasi bab I & II	Nurul Laili Nadhifah, S.S., M.Hum	
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11.	15 Maret '16	Konsultasi bab III	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
12.	23 Maret '16	Revisi bab III	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
13.	28 Maret '16	Revisi bab III & konsultasi bab IV	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
14.	6 Mei '16	Revisi bab IV	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
15.	27 Mei '16	ACC Semhas	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
16.	15 Juni '16	Seminar Hasil	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
17.	17 Juni '16	Revisi setelah semhas bab I-IV	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
18.	23 Juni '16	ACC Ujian Skripsi	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
19.	27 Juni '16	Ujian Skripsi	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
20.	12 Juli '16	Revisi setelah ujian bab I - IV	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum
21.	19 Juli '16	ACC penjiilidan Skripsi	Nurul Laili Nadhifah,S.S., M.Hum

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