
THE DEPICTION OF LIBERAL FEMINISM AS REFLECTED IN THE MAIN CHARACTER OF BAD MOMS MOVIE (2016)

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis terhadap penggambaran feminisme liberal pada karakter utama Amy Mitchell dalam film Bad Moms (2016), menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif yang didasarkan pada teori feminisme John Stuart Mill. Melalui pemeriksaan sistematis terhadap 39 data yang diperoleh dari dialog, tindakan eksternal, dan refleksi internal Amy, studi ini mengungkapkan bahwa Amy mengalami perjalanan transformatif dari seorang ibu yang kewalahan dan patuh menjadi seorang wanita yang berdaya yang menantang norma-norma kaku dalam peran keibuan dan kehidupan profesional. Penelitian ini menyoroti bagaimana Bad Moms secara kritis menggambarkan tekanan yang dihadapi ibu modern sambil mempromosikan tema otonomi, kesetaraan, reformasi sosial, dan pemberdayaan, sehingga berkontribusi pada studi film feminis dengan menggambarkan peran film dalam memfasilitasi dialog tentang hak-hak perempuan, identitas, dan keadilan sosial dalam budaya kontemporer. Dengan menganalisis cara Bad Moms mencerminkan dan menantang norma-norma sosial, studi ini menunjukkan relevansi berkelanjutan feminisme liberal dalam mempromosikan hak-hak perempuan dan keadilan sosial saat ini.

Kata kunci: Liberal feminisme, karakter utama, film

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the portrayal of liberal feminism on the main character Amy Mitchell in the movie Bad Moms (2016), using a qualitative descriptive approach based on John Stuart Mill's theory of feminism. Through a systematic examination of 39 data obtained from Amy's dialogues, external actions, and internal reflections, this study reveals that Amy undergoes a transformative journey from an overwhelmed and submissive mother to an empowered woman who challenges the rigid norms of motherhood and professional life. This research highlights how Bad Moms critically portrays the pressures facing modern mothers while promoting themes of autonomy, equality, social reform, and empowerment, thus contributing to feminist film studies by illustrating the role of film in facilitating dialogue about women's rights, identity, and social justice in contemporary culture. By analyzing the ways in which Bad Moms reflects and challenges social norms, this study demonstrates the continued relevance of liberal feminism in promoting women's rights and social justice today.

Keywords: Liberal feminism, main character, movie

INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a series of political, ideological, and social movements that share a common goal to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social equality between women and men; two sexes (Raina, 2017). By the improvement of the world of literature, feminism had a profound impact on literature and film, influencing the way gender and women's issues are portrayed and explored. Feminism in literature and film emphasizes the need for diverse and realistic portrayals of women. Feminism seeks to challenge and break down traditional gender stereotypes, allowing for the creation of complex, multidimensional female characters.

Feminist literary and film criticism has developed extensive theoretical frameworks, e.g. liberal feminism. Liberal feminism, as a feminist ideology, is concerned with achieving gender equality through legal and political reforms, emphasizing individual rights, equal opportunities, and freedom of choice for women. Cottains (2021) analyzed that liberal feminism is also called egalitarian feminism, that is, feminism demands political equality – women's suffrage, access to the labor market – but also equal rights in matters of marriage, education or work (equal pay), as well as liberal feminists assert the right to play an active role in society and to be treated equally as their male counterparts. Movies influenced by liberal feminism may focus on women's pursuit of education and careers, highlighting the importance of equal access to educational and professional opportunities. Films may depict women breaking into male-dominated fields or striving for leadership roles.

"Bad Moms" (2016) is a movie directed by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore. "Bad Moms" is a comedy film that follows the lives of three overworked and overwhelmed mothers who decide to break free from societal expectations and embrace their "bad mom" alter egos. The main characters are Amy Mitchell (played by Mila Kunis), a working mother who is fed up with trying to be the perfect parent; Kiki (played by Kristen Bell), a stay-at-home mom who feels underappreciated by her husband and kids; and Carla (played by Kathryn Hahn), a single mom who enjoys a carefree and rebellious lifestyle. The movie revolves around the trio's journey to reclaim their independence and rediscover their individuality.

Conducting a research study on liberal feminism from the perspective of the 2016 movie "Bad Moms" could be valuable for culturally relevant film that resonated with a wide audience, making "Bad Moms" movie an accessible and relatable entry point for discussions about feminism and gender roles in modern society. Also, "Bad Moms" movie provides a

platform to explore the challenges and expectations placed on mothers, shedding light on how these relate to broader feminist discussions about women's roles and autonomy. Furthermore, The purpose of this study are to identify the elements of character represented in “Bad Moms” movie main characters, and also doing depth-analysis on liberal feminism values of the main characters depicted in “Bad Moms” movie.

This study utilizes specific film and the characters offer a unique lens through which to examine feminist principles and the portrayal of women in modern society. Also, this research combines elements of film analysis, feminist theory, and character studies to provide a comprehensive perspective. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how feminist ideals are represented in popular culture.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Nawawi & Martini (1996) said that, the qualitative descriptive method is a research that describes the object of research. Descriptive qualitative method is research that describes the object of research based on the facts that appear or as they are. The technique chosen here is through analytical techniques that open up insights and can examine in more detail the characteristics of the main character in bad moms movie and will be connected to the theory of liberal feminism. Qualitative design prefers to collect data by looking directly at objects related to the problem without having to interview individuals or go directly to the location to research.

Time and Place of the Study

Since this research was written until the completion of this research, all were completed at the University of Bangka Belitung. In addition, this research was conducted from October 2023 until May 2025. The research data consisted of watching the movie Bad moms while searching and understanding the story and characters. Then, the data is grouped according to the concept of liberal feminism until September 2024. From September 2024 to March 2025, the data was studied to answer the research. The final step concluding the results of the study was carried out in May 2025.

Object of the Study

The object of this study is the movie Bad Moms, this movie was released in 2016 directed and written by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore, has been downloaded from Prime video. This research will focus on the main character in the movie, namely Mila Kunis as Amy who represent the mother figure with her respective character and

background as a work mom that illustrate what is happening in life today, especially as a mother.

Data Collection

For the technique, this research used the documentation technique that have correlation to get the data. According to Sugiyono (2017:227) there are several techniques of data collection, namely observation, interviews, documentation, data analysis, and validity testing. In this research only takes documentation approach, because this research only focuses on films and reading material. Therefore this research is included in the tehcnical documentation.

Document are records of events that have passed, and document and document are any written-materials, films, or recordings that have been prepared at the request of investigatigators (Sugiyono,2013:240). It means that in qualitative research, the writer used some documents that have correlation to get the data. There are several steps taken in collecting data for this research, namely as follows :

1. Download the movie with the title “bad moms” from the prime video platform.
2. Watch the whole movie from beginning to end.
3. Rewatch, take notes, and analyze each scene of the movie "bad moms" based on the character and characterization of the main character who will be the object of research.
4. Understand each scene that shows the behavior of the main character that represent values of liberal feminism.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection procedure has been carried out, the data is finally ready for investigation. Data collection and data analysis are related to each other. The point is that when the data collection process is carried out in research, the data analysis process is also carried out at that time. The research divides the activity of data analysis into three parts : data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

The following are the steps of analysis carried out in this research :

1. Data Reduction

It refers to the processed of reducing the data, it means that the data used is only the data which related to the case of the research. Therefore, the data

that are not related to the research will be excepted from this research, so it will not be used anymore. In data reduction, the researcher only use particular data that are accurate and needed for analyzing the problem of this research.

2. Data Display

In this step, the data were being organized in order to gather the result, then the conclusion drawn based on the data being analyzed. The better the data, the more valid the result will be. The data can be displayed in the form of charts, table, or graphics. Data display is used for gathering the information related to the case being analyzed. Therefore, based on the data result, it will be decided whether the research is still need to be continue or the conclusion should be drawn when the data is already adequate.

3. Conclusion Drawing/Verification

Conclusion is a step where the data being gathered conclude regarding the result found in this research. In drawing a conclusion, the result of the research should be valid in order to give clear explanation. The clarification of the result that need to be concluded should be accountable.

RESULTS ANF DISCUSSION

This part describes the results of the research along with the discussion related to the main character studied from the film *Bad Moms* (2016). The results of this study present data obtained from data sources that are adjusted to the formulation of problems and research objectives. This research will combine the first and second problem formulations because they are interrelated. The data obtained is analysed in accordance with the theory used in this study.

A. Equality

A.1. Characterization through dialogue

Datum 20

Kiky : are you kidding me? This has literally been the best day of my entire life.

Amy : **Oh, honey.**

This exchange highlights the camaraderie between Amy and Kiki, showcasing their friendship and support for one another. Amy's response,

Oh, honey conveys warmth and affection, indicating her role as a nurturing friend. This dialogue emphasizes the importance of female friendships in navigating the challenges of motherhood. According to Boggs & Petrie, dialogue that reflects supportive relationships can enhance character depth, illustrating the significance of community in a character's journey (Boggs, 1999).

The exchange between Amy and Kiki exemplifies the nurturing and supportive nature of female friendships, particularly in the context of motherhood, which aligns with John Stuart Mill's theory of liberal feminism that emphasizes the principle of equality between the sexes. Mill argued that societal structures should not impose limitations based on gender, advocating for equal opportunities for women in all aspects of life, including personal relationships (Mill, 1869). Amy's warm response, **Oh, honey** signifies her recognition of Kiki's struggles and her willingness to offer support, illustrating how female friendships can serve as a counterbalance to societal pressures. This interaction enhances character depth, as it portrays women who are not only mothers but also friends who uplift each other, reflecting the communal aspect of Mill's vision for women's liberation. The camaraderie between Amy and Kiki underscores that true equality involves fostering environments where women can thrive through mutual support, empowering them to challenge societal norms and advocate for their rights. Their relationship embodies the idea that equality is not just about individual rights but also about the collective strength found in supportive relationships, ultimately contributing to the broader movement for women's rights and social change.

In conclusion, the exchange between Amy and Kiki serves as a poignant illustration of the vital role that female friendships play in promoting equality and empowerment within the framework of Mill's liberal feminism. Their nurturing relationship not only provides emotional support as they navigate the challenges of motherhood but also exemplifies the strength found in community and solidarity among women. By fostering an environment of mutual encouragement, Amy and Kiki challenge societal norms and highlight the importance of equal opportunities for women in all

aspects of life. This camaraderie reinforces the notion that true equality transcends individual rights, emphasizing the collective power of women to uplift one another and advocate for their shared interests. Ultimately, their friendship contributes to the ongoing movement for women's rights and social change, demonstrating that supportive relationships are essential in the pursuit of a more equitable society.

A.2. Characterization through External Action

Datum 05

Amy :..... **how was work?**

Mike : Oh I had two conference calls and then I took a nap. It was exhausting.

Amy : **I bet. I bet. Uh...**

This exchange illustrates the dynamics of Amy's relationship with her husband, Mike. Amy's question, **how was work?** indicates her role as a supportive partner, showing her interest in Mike's day. However, Mike's response reveals a sense of entitlement, as he describes his day as **exhausting** after minimal effort. This external action highlights the imbalance in their relationship, where Amy is actively engaged in her responsibilities while Mike appears to be less involved. According to Boggs & Petrie, such interactions can reveal underlying tensions and character traits, showcasing Amy's dedication and Mike's perceived laziness (Boggs, 1999).

Amy's inquiry, **how was work?** exemplifies her role as a supportive partner, reflecting her dedication to nurturing her relationship with Mike. Her interest in his day signifies a commitment to emotional labor, a responsibility often disproportionately shouldered by women in relationships. This dynamic aligns with John Stuart Mill's theory of liberal feminism, which emphasizes the importance of equality in all aspects of life, including personal relationships (Mill, 1869). Amy's response to Mike's claim of exhaustion after minimal effort—two conference calls followed by a nap—highlights her awareness of the imbalance in their partnership. While she actively engages in her responsibilities, Mike's perceived entitlement and lack of involvement in shared duties underscore the societal expectations that can perpetuate gender inequality. Mill argued that true equality requires both partners to recognize and value each other's contributions, fostering a sense

of mutual respect and shared responsibility. Amy's unwavering support and dedication to her role as a partner illustrate her strength and resilience, yet they also reveal the emotional toll of navigating a relationship where her efforts may not be equally reciprocated. This exchange serves as a poignant reminder of the need for women like Amy to advocate for their own needs and assert their worth within the partnership, ultimately contributing to the broader pursuit of gender equality that Mill championed.

B. Individual Rights

B.1. Characterization through dialogue

Datum 06

I don't know, I don't know Mike. This is really feels like cheating.

Amy's dialogue, **I don't know, I don't know Mike. This really feels like cheating** occurs when she found her husband's online cheating with another woman. Amy's words reveal her emotional turmoil and moral boundaries. The uncertainty in her repeated **I don't know** underscores her internal conflict and vulnerability, while the phrase **this really feels like cheating** highlights her sense of betrayal and the seriousness with which she regards her husband's actions. This dialogue not only exposes Amy's values and emotional honesty but also positions her as a character who is grappling with the boundaries of trust and fidelity in her marriage.

In this emotionally charged moment, Amy's dialogue, **I don't know, I don't know Mike. This really feels like cheating** serves as a profound expression of her internal struggle and the moral boundaries she upholds in her marriage. The repetition of **I don't know** conveys her vulnerability and the confusion she experiences in the wake of her husband's betrayal, reflecting a deep sense of emotional turmoil. By articulating her feelings of betrayal with the phrase **this really feels like cheating** Amy underscores the seriousness of Mike's actions and the impact they have on her sense of self-worth and trust. From the perspective of John Stuart Mill's theory of individual rights, Amy's dialogue highlights her assertion of her own emotional and moral agency. Mill emphasized the importance of recognizing and respecting individual rights, particularly in the context of personal relationships. Amy's inquiry not only seeks clarity but also demands

acknowledgment of her right to feel secure and valued within her marriage. This moment positions her as a character who is actively grappling with the implications of her husband's infidelity, asserting her right to question and seek understanding in a situation that fundamentally challenges her sense of dignity and respect. By voicing her feelings and confronting Mike, Amy embodies the principles of individual rights that Mill championed, emphasizing the necessity for both partners to honor each other's emotional integrity and uphold the foundations of trust and fidelity in their relationship. Ultimately, her dialogue serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of individual rights in fostering healthy, equitable partnerships, where both parties are held accountable for their actions and the emotional well-being of one another.

B.2. Characterization through External Action

Datum 10



Figure 1 Amy refused outright when Gwendolyn unilaterally appointed her as a food safety volunteer at the bake sale

No

Amy's firm and unequivocal **No** to Gwendolyn's demand is a powerful example of characterization through external action, as explained in characterization theory from Boggs. Rather than simply expressing her feelings through dialogue, Amy's refusal is an active, visible stance that reveals key aspects of her personality and development (Boggs). This external action—her assertive rejection—signals a critical shift in Amy's character from passive compliance to active resistance. Up until this point, Amy has been overwhelmed by the pressures of motherhood and the controlling influence of Gwendolyn, the PTA president who embodies the rigid, perfectionist expectations placed on women. By saying "**No**," Amy physically and verbally

rejects the authority Gwendolyn tries to impose, demonstrating her growing courage and determination to assert her own needs and boundaries. This moment is not just about denying a request; it is a clear act of defiance that marks the beginning of Amy reclaiming control over her life and decisions.

Amy's firm and unequivocal **No** to Gwendolyn's demand not only serves as a pivotal moment of characterization but also resonates deeply with the principles of individual rights articulated by John Stuart Mill. In this instance, Amy's refusal is a significant assertion of her autonomy and self-determination, reflecting her rejection of the societal pressures and expectations that have long constrained her. Mill emphasized the importance of individual rights as fundamental to personal freedom and dignity, particularly for women who often face external pressures to conform to traditional roles (Mill, 1869). By asserting her right to say **No** Amy actively challenges the authority of Gwendolyn, who represents the rigid and often oppressive standards imposed on women in her community. This act of defiance signifies a crucial turning point in Amy's character development, as she transitions from a state of passive compliance to one of empowered agency. Her refusal is not merely a rejection of a request; it embodies her struggle for recognition and respect as an individual with her own needs and desires. In this context, Amy's dialogue becomes a powerful statement about the necessity of asserting one's rights in the face of societal expectations, highlighting the importance of self-advocacy and the pursuit of personal fulfillment. Ultimately, this moment illustrates how the recognition of individual rights is essential for women to reclaim their identities and assert their place in a world that often seeks to limit their agency.

B.3. Characterization through Internal Action

Datum 01



Figure 2 At the beginning of the film, Amy recounts her daily routine as a mother who takes care of and drives her childrens to and from school, and as an office worker who has to attend meetings all day long

I'm Amy Mitchell, and I'm a mom. after meeting, after meeting.

Amy's introduction, **I'm Amy Mitchell, and I'm a mom** serves as a foundational moment in her characterization, establishing her identity and the societal role she occupies. This simple yet profound statement encapsulates her self-perception and the expectations that come with motherhood. According to Boggs' characterization theory, particularly the concept of characterization through internal action, Amy's internal struggles and emotional state are revealed through her subsequent reflections and confessions (Boggs, 1999). Her acknowledgment of feeling overwhelmed and inadequate as a mother illustrates her vulnerability and the psychological burden she carries in striving to meet societal expectations of perfection.

By combining this internal action with John Stuart Mill's theory of individual rights, we can further understand the implications of Amy's characterization. Mill argued that individual rights are essential for personal freedom and self-fulfillment, particularly for women who often face societal pressures that dictate their roles and identities (Mill, 1869). Amy's internal conflict highlights the tension between her personal desires and the external expectations imposed upon her as a mother. Her struggle to reconcile these conflicting demands reflects a broader commentary on the limitations placed on women by societal norms.

In this context, Amy's dialogue becomes a powerful assertion of her right to express her feelings and seek authenticity in her role as a mother. By articulating her emotional experiences, she challenges the notion that mothers must conform to an idealized image of self-sacrifice and perfection. This act of self-expression not only reinforces her individuality but also aligns with Mill's advocacy for women's rights to autonomy and self-definition. Ultimately, Amy's characterization through internal action serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of recognizing and supporting women's

rights to navigate their identities and experiences authentically, free from the constraints of societal expectations.

C. Social Reform

C.1. Characterization through dialogue

Datum 23

of course I have, Mike. But I didn't break up our family to do it.

Amy's statement, **Of course I have, Mike. But I didn't break up our family to do it** reveals a complex layer of her characterization through dialogue, as described in Boggs' theory (Boggs, 1999). This response conveys Amy's honesty and emotional depth, highlighting not only her internal conflict and resilience but also her commitment to maintaining family unity despite personal hardships. Through this candid exchange, Amy's dialogue exposes her struggle to balance her own desires with the social expectations placed on her as a woman and mother, illustrating her nuanced negotiation of loyalty and self-assertion.

From the perspective of John Stuart Mill's theory of social reform, this dialogue reflects broader themes of societal expectation and the gradual transformation of traditional gender roles (Mill, 1869). Mill advocated for social reforms that would promote equality and freedom for women, emphasizing the importance of reforming societal structures that oppress women's choices and autonomy. Amy's words highlight the tension women often face between pursuing personal fulfillment and conforming to societal norms that prioritize family cohesion above individual needs. By affirming her experiences yet choosing not to **break up our family** Amy implicitly critiques the limited options available to women within patriarchal institutions and underscores the need for social reform to better support women's rights to autonomy and happiness. This dialogue, therefore, serves as a microcosm of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and social change that Mill championed, illustrating how personal narratives are deeply intertwined with the broader quest for reforming societal norms.

C.2. Characterization through external action

Datum 09



Figure 3 Amy explained that their father was working out of town and that she would handle everything herself today
So I'm gonna try to do everything my self today which should be fine

Amy's statement, **So I'm gonna try to do everything myself today which should be fine** exemplifies characterization through external action, as described by Boggs (Boggs, 1999). This declaration reveals Amy's determination and resilience as she takes on the challenge of managing her responsibilities independently. Her willingness to handle everything on her own signals a moment of proactive agency, reflecting both her strength and the pressures she faces as a mother and individual. This external action conveys not only her work ethic but also the underlying societal expectations placed upon women to manage domestic and professional duties without support.

From the perspective of John Stuart Mill's theory of social reform, Amy's resolve to **do everything herself** highlights the ongoing struggle against societal norms that expect women to bear disproportionate burdens without adequate recognition or assistance (Mill, 1869). Mill advocated for reforms that would alleviate oppressive gender roles and promote equitable sharing of responsibilities, enabling women to fully exercise their individual rights and freedoms. Amy's statement therefore underscores the urgent need for social change to support women in balancing multiple roles and to challenge the cultural narratives that burden them with unrealistic expectations. Her external action of taking charge alone not only demonstrates personal strength but also serves as a subtle critique of the status quo, aligning with Mill's call for societal reform that fosters equality and empowers women to live autonomously and with dignity.

D. Empowerment

D.1. Characterization Through Dialogue

Datum 19

Come on, kiki, live a little.

Amy's playful exhortation, **Come on, Kiki, live a little** serves as a revealing example of characterization through dialogue in Boggs' framework, highlighting aspects of Amy's personality and relational dynamics (Boggs, 1999). This brief, encouraging statement showcases Amy's spirited and supportive nature, as well as her role as a catalyst for change within her social circle. Through this dialogue, Amy embodies confidence and a willingness to challenge inhibitions, inviting Kiki—and symbolically, others—to embrace freedom and self-expression.

Amy's words embody a call for personal liberation and the affirmation of individual agency (Mill, 1869). Mill emphasized the importance of self-determination and the right of individuals, particularly women, to pursue their own happiness and growth free from societal constraints. By urging Kiki to **live a little** Amy advocates for breaking free from restrictive norms and embracing experiences that foster empowerment and self-discovery. This dialogue underscores Amy's alignment with Mill's vision of empowerment as a necessary step toward equality, illustrating how interpersonal encouragement can inspire women to assert their rights and explore their identities beyond traditional boundaries. Ultimately, Amy's line reflects a moment of empowerment that resonates both personally and socially, emphasizing the transformative power of supportive relationships in advancing women's liberation.

D.2. characterization Through External Action

Datum 14



Figure 4 Amy, Kiky, and Carla's first meeting at the PUB. After sharing their complaints and experiences as mothers, Amy suggested that they fight against the rules that restrict their lives

Let' be bad moms!

Amy's rallying cry, **Let's be bad moms!** serves as a bold act of characterization through external action, vividly illustrating her defiance against prevailing societal norms as described by Boggs' theory (Boggs, 1999). This succinct, provocative statement functions as an emphatic rejection of unrealistic expectations imposed on mothers, signaling a moment of collective empowerment and resistance. Through this external action, Amy positions herself and others to embrace imperfection and challenge the restrictive ideals of "good" motherhood, revealing her growing confidence and willingness to redefine social norms on her own terms.

From the lens of John Stuart Mill's theory of empowerment, Amy's declaration encapsulates the assertion of individual autonomy and freedom from oppressive societal constraints that limit women's identities and roles (Mill, 1869). Mill championed the right of women to break free from constricting social conventions and to claim the liberty to define their own paths. By inviting others to **be bad moms**, Amy subverts traditional narratives that equate motherhood with self-sacrifice and perfection, advocating instead for authenticity, self-acceptance, and the dismantling of patriarchal standards. This moment crystallizes the core feminist ideal of empowerment as active resistance and self-definition. Amy's external action thus becomes a powerful symbol of liberation, challenging dominant discourses and fostering a reimagining of motherhood rooted in freedom, agency, and solidarity.

E. Challenging Social Norms

E.1. Characterization Through Dialogue

Datum 13

We're killing our selves to be perfect, and it's making us insane.

Amy's urgent declaration, **We're killing ourselves to be perfect, and it's making us insane**, serves as a compelling example of characterization through dialogue as outlined by Boggs, revealing her critical

consciousness and emotional intensity (Boggs, 1999). This statement captures Amy's growing awareness of the destructive pressures imposed by societal expectations, particularly on women, and her willingness to voice a candid critique of these norms. Through this dialogue, Amy emerges as a character who not only recognizes the harm caused by the relentless pursuit of perfection but also challenges the cultural scripts that enforce such unattainable standards, signaling her transformation into a challenger of oppressive social conventions.

From the perspective of John Stuart Mill's theory of challenging social norms, Amy's dialogue embodies a call for reform and liberation from restrictive gender roles that dictate women's behavior and identities (Mill, 1869). Mill advocated for the dismantling of societal expectations that limit individual freedom and justice, emphasizing that true equality requires questioning and revising oppressive norms. Amy's blunt acknowledgment that striving for perfection leads to self-destruction critiques the patriarchal ideals of womanhood and motherhood that valorize sacrifice and flawlessness. This moment demonstrates her alignment with Mill's vision of social progress through critical reflection and active resistance to harmful traditions. Ultimately, Amy's dialogue serves as a powerful vehicle for calling attention to the mental health toll of societal pressures, advancing a feminist discourse that challenges the status quo and advocates for more humane and equitable standards for women's lives.

E.2. Characterization Through External Action

Datum 08



Figure 5 Amy firmly kicked Mike out of her house because he was caught cheating

Amy : **get out!**

Mike : What?

Amy : **Get the fuck out of my house.**

Amy's forceful command, **Get the fuck out of my house** exemplifies characterization through external action, vividly demonstrating her assertion of power and boundary-setting within the narrative, as explained by Boggs (Boggs, 1999). This direct and emotionally charged statement marks a critical moment where Amy rejects subjugation and asserts her autonomy in a confrontational manner. Her use of profanity underscores the intensity of her resolve and the depth of her frustration, signaling a break from passive roles often assigned to women in similar situations. Through this external action, Amy actively reclaims her space and voice, challenging the dynamics of control and submission.

Amy's assertive expulsion of Mike embodies a powerful rejection of patriarchal norms that have historically silenced women and constrained their agency (Mill, 1869). Mill advocated for the dismantling of oppressive social structures that limit women's freedom and the right to self-determination. Amy's decisive statement disrupts traditional expectations of female passivity and compliance within domestic and relational spheres, embodying Mill's call for women to claim their rights boldly. This moment of confrontation serves not only as personal empowerment but also as a symbolic act of resistance against societal norms that uphold male dominance. Amy's external action thus represents a transformative assertion of independence and challenges the status quo, highlighting the feminist imperative of reclaiming power through direct and unapologetic action.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This research discusses liberal feminism from the characterization of characters in the film *Bad Moms* (2016). This research focuses on the main character of the movie, Amy Mitchel. This research uses John Stuart Mill's theory of liberal feminism which discusses 5 value to reach of liberal feminism namely, equality, Individual Rights, Social Reform, Empowerment, Challenging Societal Norms. Of all the characterizations of the main character, the characterization based on dialogue that contains the value of challenging social norms is the most dominant in the main character's journey to fight for equality and justice for herself and others. This happens because Amy Mitchel has the awareness and desire to

get out of the rules of society that limit her space and fight the patriarchal system that has long been in power in the PTA organization. She felt that being a mother and career woman with all the duties and obligations confined her to do more. She believes that everyone has the right to freedom of choice, neither women nor men are superior. Therefore, she wants to fight and change the existing system by entering and becoming the system itself and let the members choose which system deserves to be in power.

Suggestion

This study examines the value of liberal feminism found in the characterization of the main character in the movie *bad moms* (2016). This research uses Boggs' characterization theory and Rosemarie Tong's liberal feminism theory that only focuses on one main character, Amy Mitchel. While in the movie there are 2 more characters who have different backgrounds of motherhood. Future research can analyze liberal feminism in the characters of two mother characters that have not been discussed in this study. Future research can also conduct a comparative analysis between *bad moms* and other films with similar themes, to find out how the depiction of liberal feminism varies in various contexts. The development of research on liberal feminism in film can also help understand how film can be used as a tool to raise public awareness.

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