
**THE REPRESENTATION OF BEAUTY MYTH IN THE SCHOOL FOR GOOD
AND EVIL MOVIE (2022).**

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Abstrak

*Mitos kecantikan seringkali membatasi perempuan, membentuk standar dan ekspektasi yang terikat pada tubuh dan kehidupannya. Penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana film fantasi *The School for Good and Evil*, terinspirasi dari dongeng, menampilkan karakter perempuan yang menentang stereotip kecantikan tradisional. Ini dilakukan melalui keberagaman fisik, penolakan fokus berlebihan pada penampilan, dan penekanan pada kualitas internal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menganalisis representasi mitos kecantikan dalam film tersebut berdasarkan teori *The Beauty Myth* Naomi Wolf. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi bagaimana karakter perempuan menentang stereotip terkait mitos kecantikan. Hasil analisis menemukan 20 data: 10 data merepresentasikan lima aspek mitos kecantikan Wolf (*beauty myth in work, beauty myth in culture, beauty myth in religion, beauty myth in sex, dan beauty myth in violence*), sementara 10 data lainnya menunjukkan penentangan terhadap aspek-aspek tersebut melalui karakter perempuan. Kesimpulannya, karakter perempuan dalam film *The School for Good and Evil* menolak ekspektasi penampilan eksternal dan menemukan kekuatan dalam keunikan mereka. Ini tidak hanya mendobrak stereotip kecantikan dalam narasi fantasi, tetapi juga secara implisit menentang standar kecantikan tidak realistis dalam masyarakat kontemporer. Apresiasi terhadap keberagaman kecantikan memberdayakan perempuan untuk menentang stereotip sempit, mengakui bahwa kecantikan terpancar dari kualitas internal dan keunikan individual, membangun rasa percaya diri, dan menolak tekanan standar tidak realistis.*

Kata Kunci: *Menentang, Mitos Kecantikan, Stereotip Kecantikan, *The School for Good and Evil**

Abstract

*Beauty myths often limit women, shaping the standards and expectations attached to their bodies and lives. This research analyzes how the fantasy *The School for Good and Evil* movie, inspired by fairy tales, features female characters who defy traditional beauty stereotypes. This is done through physical diversity, rejection of excessive focus on appearance, and emphasis on internal qualities. This research was used a descriptive qualitative method, this research analyzes the representation of beauty myths in the movie based on Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth* theory. This research also identifies how female characters defy stereotypes related to beauty myths. The analysis found 20 data: 10 data represent five aspects of Wolf's beauty myth (beauty myth in work, beauty myth in culture, beauty myth in religion, beauty myth in sex, and beauty myth in violence), while the other 10 data show resistance to these aspects through female characters. In conclusion, the female characters in *The School for Good and Evil* reject external appearance expectations and find strength in their uniqueness. This not only breaks beauty stereotypes in fantasy narratives, but also implicitly opposes unrealistic beauty standards in contemporary society. Appreciation of beauty diversity empowers women to defy narrow stereotypes, recognize that beauty emanates from internal qualities and individual uniqueness, build self-confidence, and resist the pressure of unrealistic standards.*

Keywords: *Beauty Myth, Beauty Stereotypes, Defy, The School for Good and Evil*

INTRODUCTION

Every woman is obsessed with beauty standards. According to Apriyantya et al (2023, p. 149), the benefits of being beautiful significantly influence others' perceptions, where beautiful and attractive women can use their appearance as capital to secure jobs and advance their careers, ultimately enhancing their status in the business world. This makes women obsessed with beauty standards. Stereotypes related to beauty standards are often related to mass media interference. The mass media indirectly always portrays a beauty with a perfect physical appearance such as the visualization of female models in fashion advertisements, airing skin whitening products, body caretakers until now still appearing on television screens or other mass media. According to Chung (2012, p. 1589), the mass media have played a dominant role in producing and popularizing this myth. One of the mass media that usually features the issue of beauty standards is movies.

Many movies raise the issue of beauty standards such as showing the female lead must have a beautiful face, white skin, straight hair, and a slim body. So that the influence of mass media such as this movie raises the stigma of society that beauty must be tall and slim, have white skin, have straight hair and so on. This perception makes women feel uncomfortable with their own bodies and it also is harmful because they are underestimated and difficult to accept if they do not suit the beauty standards that exist in their environment which are influenced by beauty myths. According to Luthfiyahningtyas et al (2024, p. 1995), beauty myths will continue to grow and increasingly influence women's mindset to always follow the beauty standards that exist and develop in society.

Many movies have raised the issue of beauty myth, one of which is titled *The School for Good and Evil* directed by Paul Feig. *The School for Good and Evil* movie was chosen as the object of my research to prove that the myth of beauty is not only seen from physical appearance, but can also be seen from various other aspects such as inner beauty, namely beauty that radiates from the heart and good behavior. By defying traditional beauty standards and subverting expectations, *The School for Good and Evil* encourages women to accept their individuality and recognize the multifaceted nature of beauty. In addition, this study examines the beauty standards represented by female characters in *The School for Good and Evil* movie.

This research uses the theory proposed by Naomi Wolf in 2002 to analyze aspects of beauty standards in female characters in the movie. Naomi Wolf's theory has six aspects, namely work, culture, religion, sex, hunger and violence. However, in this research only five

aspects were found, namely the aspects of work, culture, religion, sex and violence in The School for Good and Evil movie which is the main object of this research. The main purpose of this research is to broaden people's perspective on beauty standards that are developing today. Beauty standards are not only analyzed from the physical appearance of women but also include other beauty standards depicted in the movie. Therefore, this research can describe the inner beauty standards represented by female characters in The School for Good and Evil.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of the Research

This research uses qualitative methods. According to Creswell (2003, p. 17), qualitative research methods are methods that emphasize an in- depth understanding of social phenomena through open-ended questions to collect data from interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials, which are then analyzed using text and image analysis techniques to identify relevant themes and patterns. This analysis focuses not only on description, but also on interpreting the meaning and socio- cultural context behind the phenomenon, resulting in a comprehensive and holistic understanding.

Subject of the Research

The subject of this research is The School for Good and Evil movie which was released on October 19, 2022. The movie is directed by Paul Feig and the screenplay is written by Paul Feig and David Magee. The movie is a fantasy film adaptation of Soman Chainani's book series of the same name, The School for Good and Evil, which was published in 2013.

The main characters of this movie are Shopia Anne Caruso as Shopie and Sofia Wylie as Agatha, both of whom are best friends. There are elements of beauty myths in The School for Good and Evil movie. The movie features female characters that represent beauty myths based on Naomi Wolf's theory. The movie also tries to deconstruct and defy beauty standards through its storyline and characters.

Data Collection

Data collection techniques are methods used by researchers to obtain information or data needed in research, as well as being an important step in research methodology (Daruhadi & Sopiati, 2024, p. 1). According to Fadli (2021, p. 40), data

collection in qualitative research needs to be considered, because the quality and completeness of the data collected determine the quality of the research. Therefore, the selection and application of appropriate data collection methods is crucial. In this research, data was obtained from *The School for Good and Evil* movie 2022. This data is then qualitatively analyzed to answer the research problems. The data collection steps in this research include: watching the entire *The School for Good and Evil* (2022) movie to understand the story and get an overview of the beauty myth; re-watching the film, focusing on female characters related to the beauty myth; identifying and collecting data through monologues, dialogues, and visual scenes related to beauty myths; and managing the collected data for deeper analysis.

Data Analysis

According to Budiyo (2013, p. 12), data analysis is an activity carried out after data collection ends by organizing and reviewing all data analysis that has been carried out during the data collection process with activities to improve and sharpen the analysis and draw temporary conclusions. This process plays an important role because data analysis is the core of the research process. Data analysis is done by interpreting raw data and producing valid and reliable information to answer research questions. In this research's data analysis process, several steps were taken: female characters in *The School for Good and Evil* (2022) were identified through monologues, dialogues, and visual scenes relevant to the representation of the beauty myth. The data was then categorized based on two key focuses: the five aspects of Naomi Wolf's beauty myth and characters who defy beauty standards. Finally, conclusions were drawn by summarizing the analysis's findings and addressing the research problems.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Beauty Myths in Female Characters

This research will analyze how the female characters in *The School for Good and Evil* movie represent the beauty myth based on Naomi Wolf's theory in her book entitled *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women*. This analysis focuses on five aspects of the beauty myth, namely work, culture, religion, sex and violence.

1. Work

In her book, Wolf argues that beauty myths in the work environment emphasize women to always look beautiful according to narrow and unrealistic beauty standards in the work environment in order to gain power. Beauty privilege is then used as a means of controlling women, where women are required to constantly invest time, money and energy in their appearance.

Datum 1

Dialogue performance at: 00:27:36-00:27:40

Prof. Dovey : **“Grace and beauty first.”**
 Lady Lesso : “Oh, if you insist, Clarissa.”
 Prof. Dovey : “So glad you agree.”



Picture 1 (Beauty Myth in Work). Scene Performed at:
00:27:36

In picture 1, it can be seen that Professor Dovey, the dean of the school for good, and Lady Lesso, the dean of the school for evil, want to give a welcome speech to all students of the school for good and evil because they are entering the new school year. Professor Dovey says, **“grace and beauty first”**, the dialog shows that beauty is always first and foremost. This scene relates to the myth of beauty in work that often prioritizes beauty and underestimates the abilities and potential of individuals who do not meet the prevailing beauty standards. According to Wolf (2002, p. 20), beauty develops and becomes very valuable, just like money in economic life. Therefore, the expression that a beautiful woman is “valuable” or a very high “asset” is often believed.

2. Culture

Beauty myths in culture arise due to cultural construction. Patriarchal culture places men's views as the main benchmark in assessing women's beauty. The beauty standards formed in society also reflect male expectations, so women feel that their beauty achievements are determined by male acceptance.

Datum 2

Dialogue performance at: 00:47:40-00:47:51

Agatha: “Psst, who that? Dark... Dark hair.”

Kiko : “Tristan. I caught his rose. I hope he invites me to the Evers Ball. **You have to get a boy to ask you, or you fail.**”



Picture 2. (Beauty Myth in Culture). Scene Performed at: 00:47:40

The dialogue in picture 2, “You have to get a boy to ask you, or you fail”, shows the representation of beauty myth in culture. According to John Berger cited in Wolf (2002, p. 58), the way men see women affects how women see themselves. Successfully obtaining invitations from men symbolizes men's acceptance and validation of a woman's beauty and worth and thus influences how women view themselves. If they do not get attention and recognition from men then they are considered to have failed to meet cultural standards of beauty.

3. Religion

According to Wolf, the beauty myth has become a new religion that women must adhere to. Where ideal beauty is a paradise that must be achieved for happiness. Failure to achieve this standard is believed to bring hell in the form of suffering and rejection.

Datum 3

Dialogue performance at: 00:50:34-00:50:51

Professor Manley: “Now prepare to drink up and see how ugly and powerful you can be. Reader, You're first.”

Shopie : “**No. I don't want to be ugly, its not who I am.**”



Picture 3 (Beauty Myth in Religion). Scene Performed at: 00:50:34

In picture 3, This dialog, **“No. I don't want to be ugly, its not who I am”**. Sophie's feelings are in line with Wolf's view of the beauty myth. According to Wolf (2002, p. 98), beauty myths function in a religion like manner, making the ideal beauty appearance 'heaven', the number of skin or fat cells a measure of 'godliness', and non-conformity 'hell'. Sophie, in this context, may have been influenced by this religion of beauty. She believes that beauty is the key to happiness, and being ugly is a curse that must be avoided.

4. Sex

According to Wolf in her book, the beauty myth in sex is illustrated when men assume the standard of female beauty lies in the attractiveness of their sexuality. As a result, these representations shape a false and harmful perception that women must always fulfill a narrow standard of beauty by looking sexy and fulfilling men's sexual fantasies in order to be accepted and liked.

Datum 4

Picture 4 (Beauty Myth in Sex). Scene Performed at:01:24:29



According to Wolf (2002, p. 177), many men find women's beauty and sexuality beautiful. The value of female beauty is seen when men consider that their standard of beauty lies in the attractiveness of their sexuality. In the context of the scene between Shopie and Tedros, it can be seen that Shopie's sexual appeal, which is displayed through skimpy clothes and a sexier appearance, becomes a determining

factor in her success in getting Tedros' attention. This reflects how the beauty myth in sex works, by limiting women to a narrow and sexuality-oriented standard of beauty.

5. Violence

The beauty myth in violence, according to Wolf is the suffering women go through to gain love and acceptance. This suffering takes the form of sacrifices, both physical and psychological, that women make in order to achieve the beauty standards set by society. They are willing to undergo painful procedures, such as plastic surgery, extreme diets, or the use of potentially harmful beauty products, in the hope of meeting social expectations.

Datum 5

Picture 5 (Beauty Myth in Violence). Scene Performedat: 00:06:51



According to Wolf, (2002, p. 219), suffering is happiness to get love. In this context, Shopie may unconsciously believe that the physical and psychological suffering she experiences through the use of corsets is the price to pay in order to gain validation, acceptance, or love associated with the dominant beauty standard. Therefore, Shopie's feminine appearance can be interpreted as a visual representation of how beauty standards can be a form of violence that restricts and harms women in their quest to be beautiful, even when that suffering is perceived as a path to happiness or love.

B. Female characters who defy beauty myths

This research will discuss how The School for Good and Evil movie uses four female characters to criticize and tear down the stereotypes of the dominant beauty myths in society. Here are the characters who defy beauty myth stereotypes on five aspects of the beauty myth, namely work, culture, religion, sex and violence.

1. Work

Datum 6

Dialogue performance at: 00:27:43-00:27:49

Prof. Dovey: “Welcome, first-years students! **I am Professor Dovey, Dean of the School for Good.**”



Picture 6 (Beauty Myth in Work). Scene Performed at: 00:27:43

In picture 6, Professor Dovey introduces herself by saying, “**I am Professor Dovey, Dean of the School for Good**”, this dialogue is actually defying the stereotypical beauty standards that are often biased. According to Wolf (2002, p. 55), many black women want to look white by undergoing cosmetic surgery. However, Professor Dovey is here to debunk this notion. She proves that true beauty does not only emanate from skin color, but also from kindness and a strong personality. As such, Professor Dovey has become a symbol of resistance to unfair beauty stereotypes, as well as promoting a more inclusive and diverse concept of beauty.

2. Culture

Datum 7

Dialogue performance at: 00:32:53-00:33:02

Tedros: “Excuse me, milady. I believe, uh...”

Agatha: “That I don't belong here? Yeah, I know. **Don't want your stupid rose anyway. Oh, and by the way, this is what a normal girl looks like.**”



Picture 7 (Beauty Myth in Culture). Scene Performed at: 00:32:53

In picture 7, it can be seen that the scene where Agatha defies this beauty myth through her indifference to the rules. According to John Berger, as cited in Wolf (2002, p. 58), the way men see women affects how women see themselves. Agatha's straightforward dialogue, **“Don't want your stupid rose anyway. Oh, and by the way, this is what a normal girl looks like”**, sharply illustrates her rejection of the narrow definitions of beauty and normality imposed by culture, asserting that a woman's worth is not determined by visual standards or validation from men. She rejects the idea that women must conform to male gaze or cultural expectations to feel valuable.

3. Religion

Datum 8

Dialogue performance at: 01:13:30-01:14:21

Professor Dovey: “Agatha, everyone has a role to play here. In time, you will understand.”

Agatha : “No, I won't. I told you, I don't belong here.”

Professor Dovey: “What is wrong with you? Do you remember when I told you that magic follows emotion? The most powerful emotion is empathy. The passion you've shown tells me that you, young lady, are exactly where you belong. **You are the first real princess this school has seen in a long, long time.**”



Picture 8 (Beauty Myth in Religion). Scene Performed at: 01:13:30

In picture 8, it can be seen a scene Agatha defies the beauty myth in religion where beauty itself is treated like a religion or spiritual belief. According to Wolf (2002, p. 98), beauty myths function in a religion like manner, making the ideal beauty appearance 'heaven', the number of skin or fat cells a measure of 'godliness', and non-conformity 'hell'. This is reinforced by Professor Dovey's dialog stating, **“You are the first real princess this school has seen in a long, long time”**. This statement proves that external beauty is not a prerequisite for being a true princess, but rather it is

kindness, empathy, and courage that defines the image of a true princess, challenging the belief that only the beautiful are worthy or blessed.

4. Sex

Datum 9

Dialogue performance at: 01:29:27-01:29:32

Beatrix : “You are not taking that underdressed she-wolf instead of me.”



Picture 9 (Beauty Myth in Sex). Scene Performed at: 01:29:27

In picture 9, it can be seen a scene shows that Beatrix's character defies the beauty myth in sex. According to Wolf (2002, p. 177), many men find women's beauty and sexuality beautiful. Beatrix's dialogue, “You are not taking that underdressed she-wolf instead of me”, is an attempt to devalue and belittle Sophie's sexual appeal. Although Sophie succeeds in attracting Tedros, Beatrix tries to cancel out Sophie's victory by labeling her negatively. This is a rejection of the idea that sexual appeal expressed through revealing clothing is a form of superiority. She defies the idea that dressing sexy can or should override other qualities in a relationship or even in defining a person's worth.

5. Violence

Datum 10



Picture 10 (Beauty Myth in Violence). Scene Performed at: 00:06:42

In picture 10, it can be seen that the scene featuring the character Agatha with an appearance that does not follow the beauty standards in society is a strong statement

against the violence hidden in the beauty myth. As explained by Wolf (2002, p. 219), suffering is the happiness to get love. Agatha explicitly defies the idea that beauty should be synonymous with enforced femininity, such as having to wear dresses or corsets to shape a slender body. Her loose, masculine clothing choices show that she strongly rejects being beautiful in dress and is not willing to sacrifice her comfort or authenticity to meet society's expectations.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the findings presented, There were 20 data points in total: 10 representing beauty myths and 10 defying beauty myths. The 10 data that represent beauty myths in female characters are as follows: 4 data related to beauty myth in work, 1 data related to beauty myth in culture, 2 data related to beauty myth in religion, 1 data representing beauty myth in sex, and finally, 2 data indicating beauty myth in violence. In addition, there are 10 data from 4 female characters in the movie who defy stereotypes of beauty myths through their physical and personality diversity.

The 4 female characters who defy stereotypes about beauty myths are Prof. Dovey, Beatrix, Agatha and Shopie. There are 4 data that defies beauty myths in work, 1 data that defies beauty myths in culture, 2 data that defies beauty myths in religion, 1 data that defies beauty myths in sex, and finally 2 data that defies beauty myths in violence. An in-depth analysis of the monologues, dialogues and visualizations of these characters reveals how they refuse to fully submit to external expectations regarding appearance, and how they find strength in their uniqueness and individuality.

Suggestion

In future research, it is recommended to continue using *The School for Good and Evil* movie as the object of research, but with a different theory. The theory that is highly recommended to continue this research is to use semiotic theory in analyzing *The School for Good and Evil* movie. This approach will analyze in depth how the ideology of beauty and its opposition is communicated through signs and meaning systems in *The School for Good and Evil* movie. Semiotic analysis can identify visual codes (colors, costumes, makeup, setting), narrative codes (storyline, character

development), and cultural codes (symbols of good and evil) in the movie and symbols related to beauty standards.

TENTANG PENULIS

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