EDNA PONTELLIER’S LIBERATION AGAINST THE OPPRESSION SEEN IN KATE CHOPIN’S THE AWAKENING: A MARXIST-FEMINIST STUDY

AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra in English Letters

By

ERIKA ARIPARNO

Student Number: 124214013

ENGLISH LETTERS STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS
FACULTY OF LETTERS
SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY
YOGYAKARTA
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Defended before the Board of Examiners
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"What seems to us as bitter trials are often blessings in disguise"

-- Oscar Wilde --
For my beloved parents
For my irreplacable, loveable brother and sister
For “my sweetie best Vipen”
For all 2012 fellows
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my Lord, Jesus Christ, because his blessing has showered me every single day to finish this undergraduate thesis. I would like to deliver my greatest appreciation to my beloved parents, brother and sisters: My superhero daddy Ariparno Sudarnoto, my wonder mom Veronica, Erik A, Erina A, Evita A. They are my biggest support, source of my happiness, love, and motivation. They are my only “HOME”. I also want to thank my sweetie one for encouraging me, holding me in any situation, being there when I need him. I am very grateful for having Drs. Hirmawan Wijanarka, M.Hum as my undergraduate thesis advisor who has guided, encouraged, and advised me during the process of writing until I finishes this undergraduate thesis. I want to thank Pak Harris Hermansyah Setiajid, M.Hum for the detail correction and feedback that help me to improve my research. I also want to thank my one and only academic advisor, Ni Luh Putu Rosiandani S.S., M.Hum for being my guidance.

I am thankful for having all of lecturers and staffs of English Letters Department who have taught me great things. I dedicate this undergraduate thesis to my beloved parents for the countless blessing and support they gave to me. The last but not least, I want to thank my annoying girls Uyel, Eko, Ecen for all dummy-silly things we have done together.

Erika Ariparno
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ABSTRACT

ERIKA ARIPARNO. Edna Pontellier’s Liberation Against the Oppression Seen in Kate Chopin’s The Awakening: A Marxist-Feminist Study. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2016.

A Marxist-Feminist study is a branch of Feminism that initially focuses on the way woman is oppressed through class differences between man and woman, and patriarchal system. This thesis aims to reveal the form of Edna Pontellier’s oppressions and liberations against the inequality of social class and gender discrimination.

There are two objectives in this study. First, this study wants to reveal the inequality of social class between Edna and her husband and her husband’s society that leads Edna to such oppressions. Moreover, this study also wants to show the oppressions of gender discrimination or gender stereotype performed by Leonce and Creole Society toward Edna. Second, this study wants to reveal Edna Pontellier’s form of liberations to free herself from such oppression.

To depict the inequality of social class’ oppression, the researcher applies the theories on class. Accordingly, the researcher uses theories on gender discrimination to elaborate Edna’s oppressions about sex-role discrimination. To reveal Edna’s liberations, the researcher applies the theories on woman’s liberation. The method used in this study is library study. There are some steps applied in this study: close reading, collecting supporting sources from books of theories and internet articles which are in line with the topic, analyzing the two problem formulations uses a Marxist-Feminist approach to depict the inequality of social class and gender discrimination.

There are three points that can be concluded. First, the researcher finds the oppressions of the inequality of social class that come from Leonce and the upper class Creole Society. Her husband portrays the upper class’ lifestyle who only focuses with business and financial matter. Second, Edna becomes the object of a gender-role discriminated by his husband. She is not a “mother-woman”, but her husband keeps stereotyping that a wife should be a “mother-woman” to take care of the household and the children, while father is not. Third, by seeing the oppressions that she gets, Edna performs some liberations to free herself from the inequality of social class and gender discrimination. She starts to consider herself with the middle class. She refuses her husband’s command related to business and Creole Society’s reception. Then she moves out into a small house in order to live her small life and to free herself from the household responsibility, she also earns some money to be as equal as her husband, so she can stand on her feet without ruled by her husband. Lastly, she commits suicide at the sea as the symbol of liberation.
ABSTRAK

ERIKA ARIPARNO. Edna Pontellier’s Liberation Against the Oppression as Seen in Kate Chopin’s The Awakening: A Marxist-Feminist Study. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letter, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2016.

Marxist-Feminist adalah cabang Feminisme yang berfokus pada penindasan wanita melalui perbedaan kelas antara pria dan wanita, dan patriarkal sistem. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkapkan bentuk penindasan dan pembebasan oleh Edna Pontellier terhadap ketidaksetaraan status sosial dan diskriminasi gender.


CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Generally, what people consider as a social status does exist in every society. The differences of social status among people who live together in a society trigger distinction among them, for instance, the way of using money between high and lower class. Day argues “In very broad terms, the word ‘class’ refers to division in society. The term did not exist in ancient Greece where the usual word for such division was Genos meaning race, mere meaning category” (2001: 2). From the above statement, class precisely brings up contradiction in society because high and lower class people are no longer in the same level of economic status. There are amount of things differentiate high and lower class people. A man comes from the upper class society certainly has a different life style and a way of treating other people compared to a lower class man. The upper class men are always busy in running business with their partner. They just want to keep in touch with people come from the upper class.

When it talks about social class, it is closely related to gender. Class and gender are the most sustainable issues faced by every human being in a social system. Those two things cannot be separated and are attached to one another because it is constructed by the society itself. In this context, Creole society believes that a husband and a wife share different role. A wife is demanded to work only in a private sphere while a husband has nothing to do with that area. A
wife should follow her husband’s command because a woman lives under a man’s authority to fulfill his needs. The statement is revealed by Abeda Sultana to support the above idea,

Patriarchy is the prime obstacle to women’s advancement and development. Despite differences in levels of domination the broad principles remain the same, i.e. men are in control. The nature of this control may differ. So it is necessary to understand the system, which keeps women dominated and subordinate, and to unravel its workings in order to work for women’s development in a systematic way. In the modern world where women go ahead by their merit, patriarchy there creates obstacles for women to go forward in society. Because patriarchal institutions and social relations are responsible for the inferior or secondary status of women. Patriarchal society gives absolute priority to men and to some extent limits women’s human rights also. Patriarchy refers to the male domination both in public and private spheres (www.banglajol.info.com).

It shows that a woman is less powerful than a man both in public and private area. A woman does not have the same right either in a public or a private sphere. It takes a man’s domination or exploitation which is called as a patriarchy system. Besides, the upper class man affect to male’s domination over a woman. In this kind of situation, a woman’s movement either in a public or a private sphere is limited. She is not allowed to earn money yet to stay at home. A woman is expected to be obedient and loyal to their man, who is her husband. According to Sharon Smith’s comment:

The domestic slavery that Lenin referred to is central Marxist theory on women's oppression: The source of women's oppression lies in the role of the family as a reproducer of labor power for capitalism--and in women's unequal role inside the family. (www.socialistworker.org: 2013).

Through the above statement, the way a woman is oppressed by using her as the object to work for capitalism, in this context, a wife is used by her husband as a tool to work for the sake of his business. He considers his wife as a worker to
maintain his own business and to keep up his good name. A husband tends to
demand his wife to give all of her love, time and affection to their children, while
husband does not, it proves that there is no equal role in the family. That is the
reason why a woman experiencing such oppressions during marriage life. Looking
at what the researcher has discussed before, in this study, the researcher points out
an ordinary, middle class woman, during her marriage life is the one who taken
controlled and exploited by her husband who is the upper class of Creole society.
The way her husband oppresses her by using her as a tool to maintain his business
and to keep up his good names in society. Furthermore, her husband treats her
bases on his class which does not fit Edna at all. She is only given some money
and wealth by the upper class husband rather than his time, love and affection and
she is considered as one of his valuable things to be kept, not a lover to be loved.

The oppression of a woman is like a ticking bomb that can explode when it
comes to the right time. The form of a woman’s ticking bomb shows a woman’s
liberation or a woman’s movement. A woman’s liberation shows the struggle of a
woman by looking for or gaining the equal social status and role which are often
taken for granted by men.

In this study the researcher would like to focus on the form of liberations
against the inequality of social class and gender discrimination resulted in the
oppressions experienced by Edna Pontellier in her marriage life in Kate Chopin’s
The Awakening. The position of a woman in patriarchy system is one of the
biggest problems in a marriage life nowadays. Husband is meant to work outside
the house without concerning their children and household problem, while woman is expected to stay at home in order to take care of the children and the household.

The reason why the researcher chooses this novel, *The Awakening* as a study because this novel is such a great literary work in form of novel written in 1899. This novel is worth to study since this novel labeled as one of feminist fiction’s examples in the era where patriarchy has its part in society system. *The Awakening* tells about a married couple come from the different economic backgrounds. They are addressed as Mr. Leonce Pontellier and Mrs. Edna Pontellier in this novel. This novel deals with a woman's dissatisfaction with her new social status as the upper class and the role of her husband who assign her to be what her husband wants. Besides, this novel discusses about the social class gap between a husband and a wife that leads a wife into several oppressions in marriage life. The upper class husband, instead of giving his time and love, he always gives money and wealth to his wife. Her husband’s way of treating is not suitable for her who comes from the middle class. As a business man, her husband demands Edna to be a fully “mother-woman” who stays at home to take care the children, yet Edna denies that condition. Additionally, this novel is considered worth to discuss since it shows the liberations and four liberations of a woman’s attitudes toward the unjust social status and gender discrimination; it depicts the beginning of a woman’s movement in that era. Edna’s character shows that a woman has a power to change her position in order to be as equal as man so she can rule her own life without being controlled by a man. Kate Chopin describes Edna Pontellier as a major character to show a woman’s struggle in purpose.
B. Problem Formulation

In this study, the researcher would like to analyze the form of oppressions and liberations experienced by Edna Pontellier to oppose the inequality of social class and gender oppression. This study points out such oppressions experienced by Edna Pontellier during her marriage life with an upper class man of Creole society and liberations of Edna to against such oppressions.

In order to analyze Edna Pontellier’s liberations against social status and gender discrimination in *The Awkening*, the researcher formulates two questions as follows:

1. How do the inequality of social class and gender discrimination result in oppressions experienced by Edna?
2. How does Edna Pontellier liberate herself from such oppressions?

C. Objectives of the Study

There are two main goals to achieve through this research. The first one is to reveal the form of Edna’s oppression caused by the inequality of social status and gender discrimination done by Edna’s husband and the upper class Creole Society. This study also wants to reveal the form of Edna’s liberations after being oppressed by her husband and the upper class Creole Society.
D. Definition of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, there are three terms that necessary to be further explained.

The terms that are used to analyze the topic in The Awakening by Kate Chopin, as follows

*Liberation* as defined by Linda Napikoski states that woman’s liberation is the ideas of feminist advocacy, women’s equality and rejection of male supremacy. Women's liberation as a movement works for social and economic rights while seeking ways to free women from oppression and gender discrimination (www.womenshistory.about.com: 2016).

The above explanation of liberation means that a woman already settles down to have their own rule of her life, otherwise man is going to hold the rule and authority of woman again. The liberation of woman in this case is having the same chance and opportunity in social life. They are no longer restricted in private nor in public sphere. A woman can choose her own path. The position of man and woman is slightly the same both in public and private sphere. Woman does not demand to be the only parent to take care the children or a “mother-woman” for their child anymore.

*Oppression* as defined by The Dictionary of Feminist Theory, the oppression of sexism as a system of domination (Humm, 1989:194).

The definition of oppression means that someone is not treated as good as how it used to be treated, simply because that person does not belong to the same
social class, race, and sex. High class people certainly demand lower class people to do and be like what they want. Bad situation or unfair treatment may ruin someone’s life and put someone’s life in misery. An oppressed person is mostly powerless because she or he doesn’t have the same right and economic power to against powerful people.

*Marxist-Feminist* as defined by Martha E. Gimenez is a critical of capitalism, so much so that avoidance of Marxism's alleged reductionisms resulted in dual systems theories postulating various forms of interaction between capitalism and patriarchy ([www.colorado.edu.com](http://www.colorado.edu.com): 2000)

The definition of Marxist-Feminist above means that the oppression of woman comes from both sides. The first side comes from capitalism which relates to social class of both parties. The second side is coming from a patriarchal system.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part of this chapter is the review of several studies discusses *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin. The second part of this chapter is the review of related theories. It is the review of several theories that conducted by the researcher to analyze the novel. The third part of this chapter is theoretical framework. The compilations of the conducted theories are applied in answering the questions of problem formulation in this study.

A. Review of Related Studies

*The Awakening* tells about Edna’s desire to find and live fully within her true self after experiencing such oppressions from the inequality of social class and gender discrimination done by her husband and the upper class *Creole society*. The researcher applies a Marxist-Feminist study to reveal the social class gap and gender stereotype problems. This part provides five studies conducted by different researchers. The first and second studies discuss a woman’s struggle in a married life, the third and fourth studies discuss about the novel, and the fifth study discusses about the approach that is applied in this study. Those studies are provided because they are related to the case or topic in this study: the form of Edna Pontellier’s liberations from such oppressions.

The first related study review is from Bintang Berlianti, a student of English Letters study program of Sanata Dharma University. In her study,
Berlianti analyses the main character and *Creole society*’s character and how the society’s character influences Edna Pontellier’s self-actualization.

The aims of this thesis is to find out the way the main character’s self-actualization is developed in the novel through her behavior, actions, and relations with the other character though the society seems to hamper the main character to actualize herself. First is describing the characterization of Edna Pontellier. The second is trying to find out how the society of the main character is described in the novel. The third is trying to reveal how several characters in the society influence the development of Edna’s effort toward self-actualization (2007: 3-4).

Different from Bintang Berlianti who analyzes the development of the main character’s self-actualization influenced by the society’s character where she lives, in this study, the researcher shows how Edna liberates herself from such oppressions done by Leonce and the upper class *Creole Society* because inequality of social class and gender discrimination. The approach used by the researcher is different from Berlianti’s approach because the researcher applies a Marxist-Feminist approach to analyze this study while Berlianti’s thesis applies a psychological study.

Besides, Bintang Berlianti who finds out the struggle of the main character opposes the society in *The Awakening*, other people’s theses also discuss about it. Edna Pontellier’s struggle against gender discrimination is clearly found in *The Awakening*. The second study is taken from from Dona Windasari Septiana, a student of English literature of Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, who also finds similar case in the study she researches for her undergraduate thesis.

Edna becomes Leonce’s object to be oppressed. He only allows Edna to be aware of the house condition, the children, the image of the family because they are rich, and the last is to please Leonce’s feeling. The third, seeing the oppression that she gets, Edna does some rebellion in order to free herself from the patriarchal culture that make her remain silent (2015: xi).
From the above statement, we acknowledge one of Edna’s liberations or reactions in order to set herself free from her upper class’s husband and to set herself free from the ideal “mother-woman” believed by the Creole Society. The reaction of Edna Pontellier portrays a woman’s movement to be an independent woman. In this study, the researcher discusses both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects through a Marxist-Feminist approach in this novel. It is different from Dona Windasari Septiana who focuses only the struggle against patriarchy in order to free herself from Patriarchal society. However, in this study, the researcher focuses not only about patriarchy but also about how a husband stereotypes a wife’s duty and also the gap of social class’ background that oppress Edna. Septiana applies a Feminist perspective on her study, while the researcher applies a Marxist-Feminist study in her study.

Related to the novel which the researcher is studying, the third studies, Laurie George uses the same novel states:

With these concepts clarified, students readily detect the male characters' phallogocentric language. They see how Léonce Pontellier objectifies his wife, equating her with the many material possessions that he, with his primarily financial values, worships. They also see how his insisting that Edna respect and conduct herself according to his values, as Adèle Ratignolle centers her life on her husband, steadily alienates her from him, leaving the Pontelliers by the novel's midsection without "anything to say to each other." (www.people.virginia.edu: 1899).

The above statement wants to state that Leonce Pontellier as her husband from the upper class brings such oppressions towards Edna Pontellier about the material possession. From the above notion, the concept of phallogocentric language of the male character can be detected by the student because of the choice of words and sentences applied in the article. This study is also different
with Laurie George’s study that focuses only the elaboration of Edna and Leonce Pontellier characters as a tool to teach students how to detect the phallogocentric language without concerning deeper on a Marxist-feminist aspect. The researcher wants to focus on the oppressions and rebellions of Edna Pontellier caused by social class and gender discrimination which are seen through a Marxist-Feminist approach.

*The Awakening* is proven to be an outstanding novel as a media of teaching students in school by Laurie George in his study. Moreover, Marion Muirhead (2000:42-54) also uses Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening* as the object of his analysis, the fourth related study review is “Articulation and Artistry: A Conversational Analysis of *The Awakening*”, in this study focuses on how Edna Pontellier as the protagonist articulates her feeling about her social position in determining the causes of Edna’s conflict. The demonstration of the important of using language in defining social position, for instance Edna’s attempts to use language to reposition herself socially. Edna's failure to articulate her feelings and to gain access to discourse contributes to her demise, as does being denied access to her chosen profession of painting, another form of self-expression (2000: 42).

Though the novel of the study is similar, yet it is totally different from Marion Muirhead’s study, in this study, the researcher would like to analyze the oppressions caused by the gap of social class and gender discrimination that demands a wife to be fully a “mother-woman” in a private sphere. Also, the researcher would like to analyze how Edna Pontellier liberates herself from such oppressions.
Related to the approach that the researcher applies, a Marxist-Feminist study, the fifth study reviewed is “How capitalism survives? Marxist-Feminist perspective”, a paper within the framework of the 11th Historical Materialism Annual Conference written in Vernon Square, Central London that states:

The Historical Materialism annual conference in London has emerged as a pivotal site for critical, engaged, constructive, and provocative scholarship and activism internationally. This is a fitting place for focusing the (re)emergence of Marxist-Feminist historical materialist analysis. Now in our third year at HM, the 2014 Marxist-Feminist stream of the conference is seeking contributions that continue in the tradition of dynamic and original reflections of previous years, and also those that press the boundaries and take on the bold challenges posed by debates old and new. The question ‘how capitalism survives?’ resonates strongly with a range of feminist critiques on the Left (2014: 34)

By having the above statement, it mostly discusses about how capitalism survives seen through a Marxist-Feminist perspective. The application of the approach in both the researcher’s study and fourth study is the same, but the aims of the approach are different in both studies. In this paper, the researcher’s aims to apply a Marxist-Feminist study is to see the form of a woman’s oppressions in her marriage life caused by the gap of economic status of two parties.

B. Review of Related Theories

There will be three theories explicited in this section. Those theories are explicited in order to help the researcher achieves more understanding about the study. The first review of theory in this study is the theory of social class. This theory is applied to analyze the gap of social class among those two main characters that results in the exploitation of a woman’s side. The second theory presented in this study is the theory of gender discrimination. This theory helps
the researcher to analyze the way the main character is discriminated and exploited to be a fully “mother-woman” in private sphere. The third theory is applied in this study is the theory of women’s liberation or women’s movement. This theory aims to help the researcher to see how a woman starts to make such movements to free themselves. Those three theories are utilized to discover the main character’s form of oppressions and liberations as the concerns of this study.

1. Theory of Social Class

Social class is a crucial matter to some people in some society where they live. Class’s struggle and distinction happen among people because the imbalance of social status among people within a society. Social class automatically defines who is the powerful and the weakest one, and leads the weakest one to the alienation’s situation. Hence, it is important to apply the theory of social class. In *The Beginning Theory: Marxist Criticism*, Peter Barry states:

Marxist sees progress as coming about through the struggle for power between different social classes. This view of history as class struggle (rather than as, for instance, a succession of dynasties, or as a gradual progress toward the attainment of national identity and sovereignty) regard it as ‘motored’ by the competition of one social class by another is seen especially in modern industrial capitalism, particularly in its unrestricted nineteenth-century form. The result of the exploitation is alienation (2002: 132).

From the above notion, the struggle is clearly seen through the competition between two or more different classes which are upper class, middle class and lower class. The class distinction makes the lower class as the source of human exploitation to work for the upper class. The exploitation is absolutely resulted in alienation or oppression forms since the lower class people put aside by the upper class. It proves a life within the upper class society where people are dominated
by money and business, they want to make friend because of the benefit they get from that person, if that person does not have any benefit for them, literary that person will put aside.

Moreover, the differentiation of one another within a group of people in society does exist. People might find a way to make their own group of social classes that able them to distinguish themselves with others. It shows that a class status affects people’s social life in their behavior. The differentiation of class makes people treat others according to the classes they belong to. Furthermore, the social’s life among people is limited by the consideration of a social status and the distinction of “higher” and “lower” class. The same statement issued by E. Digby Baltzell states that the behavior patterns, values, and attitudes of group of people differentially situated in any class system are presumably conditioned by both position and subjective class position (social access, family position, and so forth) (1966:267). In addition, the higher status of someone, the stronger he is in the society than the inferior one. It is in line with the statement stated by Raymond Aron in Social class, Political Class, Ruling class as his contribution to Class, Status, and Power, Second Edition:

The ruling class would be situated between the elite and the political class: and includes those privilege people who, without exercising actual political function, influence those who govern and those who obey, weather because of the moral authority which they hold, or because the economic or financial power they possess (Aron, 1966: 204).

As in Weber's Theory of Social Class, there are two strengths owned by a person when she/he has a high social class provided as follows:
The first strength is power. Weber defines power as the ability of an actor to realize his or her will in a social action, even against the will of other actors. Power relates to the ability to command other people in a particular domain where she or he master in. Then, economic power owned by a person to control material resources: to direct production, to monopolize accumulation, and to dictate consumption. They have the ability and authority to hold the rule and demand other people.

The second strength is domination. Domination is the exercise of authority. Possession of power in a sphere results in dominance. Weber shows three ideal types of domination: charisma, tradition and rational-legal. The concern of traditional authority is based on the belief in the legitimacy of well-established forms of power.

2. Theory of Gender Discrimination

Gender is a part of human being and cannot be separated from human. Moreover, people are often trapped by an ideal characteristic of a man and a woman constructed by society and it is not given when a man and a woman were born. The term “gender” stands for social, cultural and psychological meaning sticks upon biological sexual identity. It means that “gender” is a social product that bases on sexual differences. Jennifer Coates in Man, Woman, and Language in line with the previous statement by stating that gender “is used to described socially constructed categories based on sex” (1993:2). The previous statement means that the different gender between a man and a woman caused by the different position of a man and a woman in society and it contributes to what a man and a woman should do. According to Linda Brannon in Gender:
Psychological Perspectives (1996: 168), to support the above statement, she states that, the different position of a man and a woman is seen from two ways. The first is a gender role which consists of activities that men and woman engage in with different frequencies. The second is a gender stereotype which consists of belief about the psychological traits and characteristics as well as the appropriate activities to a man and a woman. It starts from the early nineteenth-century, there are two divisions of gender classifications: men are shaped for public and business while women are shaped for domestic area: children and the household. Emma Jones argues in one of her study that:

Society of the nineteenth-century gave a heightened meaning to what it means to be a woman. According to the commonly known ‘code of true womanhood’, woman were supposed to be docile, domestic creatures, whose main concerns in life were to be the raising of their children and submissiveness to their husband (www.literature-study-online.com: 2003).

Every human despite of its gender, a man and a woman supposed to be equal in socially and privately. Yet in this case, a woman often suffers from the gender inequality. It is depicted by Judith Lorber states that:

The goal of feminism as a political movement is to make women and men ore equal legally, socially, and culturally. Gender inequality takes much different form depending on the economic structure and social organization a particular society and on the culture of any particular group within that city. Although we speak of gender inequality, it is usually women who are disadvantaged relative to similarly situated men. Women often receive lower pay for the same or comparable work, and they are frequently blocked in their chances for advancement, especially to some positions. There are usually an imbalance in the amount of housework of child care a wife does compared to her husband, even when both spend the same amount of time in paid work outside the home (2010: 13).

From the notion above, the gender inequality is mostly experienced by a woman rather than a man, though both of them have the similar quality as human being. Woman is sometimes forced to do the imbalance housework in a domestic
area by their husband. A husband is believed to work outside the house, while a wife is demanded to be a fully “mother-woman” in a private sphere especially housework. According to Tyson (2011: 141-142), Patriarchy gives a man power by promoting traditional gender roles. Traditional gender role of work distinctions are constructed by society, between man and woman. Man and woman in a patriarchal system who violates traditional gender role is considered as an unnatural, or even an immoral person.

The researcher finds another theory that supports the theory from Judith Lorber. Another theories of gender inequality comes from Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza’s thought, she explains in the sexiest society, a woman predominant role in life is to be man’s helpmate, to cook and work for him without being paid, to bear and rear his children, and to guarantee him psychological and sexual satisfaction (1993:56). They live together, but in fact they have different roles and activities. She continues her statement by saying that woman’s place in in the home, whereas man’s place is in the world earning money, running the estate, schools, and churches (1993:56). The inequality and differences between a man and a woman still put up a man in a higher position than a woman, and a woman does not fit a man’s position in the public sphere. This statement is also in line with the previous theory that states in spite of a century struggle for equality, a woman has not yet succeeded in obtaining leading positions and equal opportunity in the public and societal realm (1993:56).
3. Theory of Woman’s Liberation

Edna Pontellier, in this study tries to perform some liberations in order to achieve woman’s equality (in both a public and a private sphere) to set herself free from the upper class’ way of treating and the social construction of an ideal “mother-woman”, which is called as a patriarchal system. The gender discrimination seems never end, up until a woman realizes in the way she receives unfair or not suitable treatments from a man. A woman is supposed to realize and make such movements to be as equal as a man because a woman has the same right and opportunity in a public and a private sphere. A woman fights to seek gender equality and oppose such oppressions to have the same right as man. A woman rebels to against the oppressor and a patriarchal system. In order to strengthen the above statement, Humm says that the struggle against patriarchy started after woman becoming conscious of themselves and criticizing their symbolic interpretation in society (1994:3).

There are many kind of Feminism: Liberal-Feminism, Radical-Feminism, Marxist-Feminism, socialist-Feminism, and Post-Modern Feminism. More explanation is presented as follows:

*Liberal-Feminism* is mostly serving woman who already have a dominant position in society. It concerns with gaining the equal rights throughout legislative reforms.

*Radical-Feminism*. Radical-Feminism promotes separatism between man and woman. The main concern is only the glorification of woman.
**Marxist-Feminism.** Marxist-Feminism initially concerns with class differences between man and woman, and patriarchy as concomitant oppressing force to capitalism. It views media as the accomplishment in both patriarchal and capitalistic processes.

**Post-Modern Feminism.** It only concerns with language and psychoanalysis. It concerns with fluidity and discourse analysis.

The above elaborations guide the researcher to find the appropriate approach which is a Marxist-Feminism. The concern of a Marxist-Feminism is to fight and to gain the equal rights caused by class differences between a man and a woman and a patriarchal system.

**C. Theoretical Framework**

The social class theory is utilized to answer the first problem formulation which is oppressions caused by the social class gap. Firstly, the researcher wants to study about the form of oppressions which are experienced by Edna concerning the inequality of social class and gender discrimination, then the researcher applies the theory about social class. The theories of social class apply to help the researcher more understands the context of oppressions caused by the inequality social status. The social class theories contribute to strengthen the idea of oppressions experienced by Edna Pontellier. The second theory is gender discrimination, the theory is applied by the researcher to answer the first problem in the problem formulations which is the oppressions caused by gender inequality. This theory points out the imbalance duty both parents should do that impacts to wife’s oppressions. This notion states that a woman has a goal to be as equal as a
man in any aspect of life. The revolt of a woman reflects the woman’s movement. The first problem’s answer stimulates Edna Pontellier’s liberations. The third review theory is woman’s liberation. This theory applied in order to help the researcher achieves more understanding of how the main character liberates herself in this study.

The oppressions of the inequality of social class and gender discrimination lead Edna to liberate herself for the sake of freedom from his husband and high class Creole society. Moreover, the three theories issued by the researcher are employed to answer all of problem formulations.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. Object of the Study

The object of this study is a novel entitled *The Awakening*, the original title is *A Solitary Soul*, by Kate Chopin. This novel is regarded as a late Victorian Romantic fiction, first published in 1899 by the H.S. Stone & Co. publishing house. At the beginning, only a few critics praise the novel’s artistry, most are very negative calling the book “morbid”, “unpleasant” and “unhealthy”. It is banned because it is seen as too bold work, but in the middle of nineteenth century until now, finally it is considered as one of the best feminist literary works that give the unsparing truth about woman’s submerged life. Though Kate Chopin gets no award for this novel, but this novel is assumed as the contributor of feminist’s movement. The novel has 121 pages and the novel which is analyzed by the researcher is published by Signet Classic, a division of Penguin Books USA Inc, first printing on April, 1976, and edited by Barbara H. Solomon. *The Awakening* publish many times and becomes a 10 best seller book listed in Amazon in 1993. (www.amazon.com).

*The Awakening* is a story of a married couple named Mr. Leoncé Pontellier and Edna Pontellier. It tells the reader about an ordinary, middle class woman married to a middle-age, upper class man of Creole society, Leoncé Pontellier. She misunderstands her feeling as love to Leoncé that makes her agree to marry him. She is depressingly unhappy with her marriage life and she experiences several oppressions caused by the social class gap and a patriarchal system that
portrays an ideal “mother-woman”. Leonce, her husband exploits Edna both in capitalism (Leonce’s businesses) and a private area (children and housework). Her husband and the upper class Creole society expect a “mother-woman” role, yet it is still far away from Edna’s mindset. The story starts with the flow of Edna’s adultery with Robert, a young man comes from middle class as Edna. Then, Edna realizes that the way of middle class’s treat is suitable for her. By then, she finds her freedom to liberate herself against her husband’s exploitation and the upper class Creole society.

Kate Chopin wants to emphasis the strong patriarchal system believed by the Creole society in 1899. The setting and the main character are adopted from the original society of Lousiana-Creole society, where she lived. Most of them are rich businessmen and elite members of the society and they are also educated people. Creole people love to gather and to celebrate a Tuesdays to know each other. In Lousiana, Creole people are very strict to the rule and there are a lots of limitation works for a woman. A “mother-woman” is placed in a private sphere: house and children. She needs to fulfill her main tasks to take care the household, children, and to please their husband’s needs. For a “mother-woman”, family is the most significant thing in her life.

B. Approach of the Study

In analyzing this novel entitled The Awakening, the researcher applies an appropriate approach to analyze the topic which is a Marxist-Feminist approach. The approach helps the researcher to analyze woman’s oppressions that are not
only caused by male’s domination in private sphere but also the different of social class both a man and a woman have. Therefore, the researcher decides to apply a Marxist-Feminist approach in order to answer problem formulations. According to Ashley Crossman:

Marxist feminism study makes a direct causal connection between capitalism and the subordination of women. This perspective believes that women are an exploited class in the capitalist mode of production, both by their husbands within families and by employers in the paid labor market (www.sociology.about.com: 2014).

From the above statement, the researcher concludes that a Marxist-Feminist approach suitable to analyze the oppressions of the social class’ inequality and gender discrimination experienced by Edna Pontellier during her marriage life because a woman is exploited and dominated by the upper class man for his own benefits.

C. Method of the Study

This study was a library research. The sources were obtained from books and texts related to the topic. The primary source that is used in this study was The Awakening by Kate Chopin. The secondary sources were some books of theories, internet articles, journals, historical data and other studies that were related to the topic.

There were several steps done by the researcher in analyzing this study. The first step was close reading. It was done by trying to focus and understanding the content of the novel and marking directly necessary things related to the researcher’s topic. Then, after understanding the content of the primary source, the researcher formulated two questions for the problem formulation.
The second step was looking for some references, books, articles and journals which were in line with the approach, a Marxist-feminist approach to support the researcher to answer the problem formulations. The researcher also searched on the internet and www.library.usd.ac.id in order to achieve more understanding about the novel’s content.

The third step was analyzing and answering the two problem formulations one by one by using the theories and the sources which were taken from books, internet articles, journals and other sources. The theories helped the researcher to analyze the form of oppressions experienced by a woman caused by the social class gap and gender discrimination; and another theory helped the researcher to analyze Edna’s movements to show the form of woman’s liberation. There were some related studies conducted to show that there was no same topic as the researcher did. The last step was summing up the analysis of the study.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS

In this chapter, there are two questions in problem formulations mentioned in the first chapter. The theories that are applied in chapter two and the methods of the study are utilized to answer two problem formulations. In order to make the analysis more systematic, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first part, the researcher reveals the form of oppressions caused by the inequality of social class and gender discrimination. The second part, the researcher shows Edna Pontellier’s liberations against such oppressions.

A. The Oppressions Experienced by Edna

In this novel, The Awakening by Kate Chopin, the inequality of social class and gender discrimination’s problems become a serious issue within a marriage life that bring either conflict or oppression toward a woman’s side.

In order to interpret the oppressions, it is necessary to reveal supporting dialogues depicted from the novel. Here are the oppressions of social class inequality and gender discrimination.

Edna is demanded to be a fully “mother-woman” to her children. She is unlike other women by whom she is surrounded, she is not a “mother-woman”, the one who is willing to sacrifice her true self to her husband, children, and household.
1. The Inequality of Social Class

There are two sides that create the inequality of social status’s oppression experienced by Edna. The first is from her husband, while the second is from the high class of Creole Society, yet her husband takes a larger portion than the society. The researcher portrays two characters in this part. The first character is Leonce Pontellier who is Edna’s husband characterized as an upper class man of Creole society. He is a successful person in his forty who runs several businesses of his own. Furthermore, he makes a good living and a popular figure in a society. He is described as a business oriented man because he adopts the upper class’ life and he takes his wife’s needs such as his time, love, and affection for granted. The second character is Edna Pontellier, the major character in this novel who is different from her husband and all her husband’s friends because she is a Presbyterian, an ordinary woman from Kentucky rather than an upper class of Creole Society, which means they belong to different social class. This novel tells about a young woman who married to a middle-age, high class Creole Society man. She is exploited by her husband for the sake of his businesses. His reaction bases entirely on how Edna’s attitude will affect his business’s prospects. His goals are strictly financial and superficial; he wants to "keep up with the procession" which portrays an upper-class’s life.

a. Oppression From Leonce Pontellier

In this part, the researcher discusses Edna Pontelier’s social class oppressions done by her husband, Leonce Pontellier. He is always busy to run his own businesses without really giving such attention towards his small family
particularly his wife’s needs. Leonce feels that he can buy favor with some money and replace kindness, happiness, time or attention to his wife with elaborate gifts that portray the upper class’s way of treating.

In order to see the social class gap between Leonce and Edna, the researcher conducts quotations from the novel to show that Edna is an ordinary woman which differentiates her with her husband’s class.

Mrs. Pontellier talked about her father's Mississippi plantation and her girlhood home in the old Kentucky bluegrass country. She was an American woman, with a small infusion of French which seemed to have been lost in dilution. She read a letter from her sister, who was away in the East, and who had engaged herself to be married. Robert was interested, and wanted to know what manner of girls the sisters were, what the father was like, and how long the mother had been dead (Chopin, 1899:9).

The quotation above leads to the assumption about Edna’s past life. She tells one of her friend, Robert, who comes from the same class with her about her childhood life. She is only an ordinary woman comes from an old bluegrass Kentucky which is different from Leonce’s social class. Related to her past life, Mrs. Pontellier is used to have a small life within herself in an old Kentucky bluegrass country before she married to Leonce Potellier. For now, the memories go miles away and she less enjoys her life after married to Leonce.

The researcher finds such oppressions that her husband does to her. As someone who lives the upper class’s life Leonce is identical with busy businessman, money oriented, full of demand, and endless meeting with his business’ partner. He tends to maintain a good relation with his clients because the financial matter comes first for the upper class people. Leonce also has the authority not to stay at home yet to stay outside, he gets himself busy with his
business’ clients rather than dines for a while at home with his family. He does not want to join the fun activities with his wife or Robert, but he prefers to spend his time meeting with client and playing billiards at the hotel. It is seen in the description.

"Coming back to dinner?" his wife called after him. He halted a moment and shrugged his shoulders. He felt in his vest pocket; there was a ten-dollar bill there. He did not know; perhaps he would return for the early dinner and perhaps he would not. It all depended upon the company which he found over at Klein's and the size of "the game." He did not say this, but she understood it, and laughed, nodding good-by to him. (Chopin, 1899:7).

From the above notion, the researcher wants to describe that her husband goes to Klien’s hotel for business matter and he leaves his little family dines without him. He chooses to spend his dinner with his client at hotel because the financial is superficial for him. From Edna’s statement above, it states that Leonce often leaves the dinner with family which means that her husband pays a little attention towards his family and puts money as his main focus. Edna who is used to know that her husband will not come back for dinner tries to understand his husband’s attitude bitterly. The implied meaning lies within Edna’s sentence “Coming back to dinner?” shows that hopefully her husband will come home to dinner together with them.

The following morning Mr. Pontellier was up in good time to take the rockaway which was to convey him to the steamer at the wharf. He was returning to the city to his business, and they would not see him again at the Island till the coming Saturday. He had regained his composure, which seemed to have been somewhat impaired the night before. He was eager to be gone, as he looked forward to a lively week in Carondelet Street (Chopin. 1899:11).

Leonce’s bustle to run his business continues to happen when he decides to go downtown for the sake of business. He is fine when he leaves his family for
almost one week. He does not pay much attention either his wife or children need him. Anything that relates to business comes first to him. Although the consequence of his business leaves his family, he still wants to be there as soon as possible. He spends a little quality time with Edna as well as his children. Moreover, when he leaves home for the sake of work, it can relief his heart’s anxiety for a while rather than stays at home for a long time.

Besides, it shows that Leonce treats Edna just like another possession he has at home. He does not treat her like a wife or a love partner. It is depicted through Mr. Pontellier’s personal opinion.

"What folly! to bathe at such an hour in such heat!" exclaimed Mr. Pontellier. He himself had taken a plunge at daylight. That was why the morning seemed long to him. "You are burnt beyond recognition," he added, looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage (Chopin, 1899:7).

From the description above, as a person who sticks in the world of business, Mr. Pontellier not only fails to appreciate the beach that brings his wife happiness, but also treats his wife as a possession. For his lifestyle, to bathe in such heat probably can burn his skin and he does not like to do that. On the other hand, Edna’s way of life is different from her husband. She likes to do activities, it makes her happy but, Leonce does not know and care of what makes Edna happy. He does not think of his wife as a lover that needs his attention and time, in addition he does not want to participate in Edna’s world because they have a different world.

As a man who comes from the upper class, the form of affection that Leonce provides and gives for his wife is some money to please her. "Mr.
Pontellier gave his wife half of the money which he had brought away from Klein's hotel the evening before. She likes money as well as most of the women, and accepts it with no little satisfaction” (Chopin. 1899:11).

The above quotation shows that that some money as the tool used by Leonce to please Edna rather than his time and affection. For Edna, money is a terrible substitute of time, attention and affection given to her little family. Although she accepts money from her husband, she does not feel happy and satisfied because all she needs are his husband’s time, attention to take care of her, and affection to please her.

A few days later a box arrived for Mrs. Pontellier from New Orleans. It was from her husband. It was filled with friandises, with luscious and toothsome bits--the finest of fruits, pates, a rare bottle or two, delicious syrups, and bonbons in abundance. Mrs. Pontellier was always very generous with the contents of such a box; she was quite used to receiving them when away from home. The pates and fruit were brought to the dining-room; the bonbons were passed around. And the ladies, selecting with dainty and discriminating fingers and a little greedily, all declared that Mr. Pontellier was the best husband in the world. Mrs. Pontellier was forced to admit that she knew of none better (Chopin, 1899:11-12).

When Leonce is away from home for business, he always sends a box for Edna. The way he pleases his wife is just the same by giving a gift as a substitute of his love, time and affection. When he sends his family an enormous boxes of expensive treats, all of the ladies declare that he is the best husband in the world, yet for Edna he is nowhere close to be called as a good husband.

In the following quote, Edna experiences such oppressions and she waits for her husband comes home to sooth her. When Leonce does come home and see Edna is waiting for him outside the house, he offers her a glass of wine instead of soothing her with his affection and love which are the things she badly needs than
a glass of wine which she does not wish to have. Since her husband holds an upper class life, he demands his wife to follow his lifestyle by offering her a glass of wine in a way of relaxing and solving her problem, she refuses to have a glass of wine. The proof is described as below.

Mr. Pontellier had prepared for bed, but he slipped on an extra garment. He opened a bottle of wine, of which he kept a small and select supply in a buffet of his own. He drank a glass of the wine and went out on the gallery and offered a glass to his wife. She did not wish any. He drew up the rocker, hoisted his slippered feet on the rail, and proceeded to smoke a cigar. He smoked two cigars; then he went inside and drank another glass of wine. Mrs. Pontellier again declined to accept a glass when it was offered to her. Mr. Pontellier once more seated himself with elevated feet, and after a reasonable interval of time smoked some more cigars (Chopin, 1899: 36).

Indeed, the oppression experienced by Edna grows bigger that she decides to abandon her husband’s home and move into a small house where she feels comfortable and suit her lifestyle she is used to have before married to Leonce Pontellier. A big and luxurious house of Leonce is not a warm and cozy home for her to stay: “Without even waiting for an answer from her husband regarding his opinion or wishes in the matter, Edna hastened her preparations for quitting her home on Esplanade Street and moving into the little house around the block” (Chopin, 1899:89).

As soon as his husband learns that his wife abandon a home and the children, he writes a letter for Edna to reconsider her decision to leave the house.

When Mr. Pontellier learned of his wife's intention to abandon her home and take up her residence elsewhere, he immediately wrote her a letter of unqualified disapproval and remonstrance. She had given reasons which he was unwilling to acknowledge as adequate. He hoped she had not acted upon her rash impulse; and he begged her to consider first, foremost, and above all else, what people would say. He was not dreaming of scandal when he uttered this warning; that was a thing which would never have
entered into his mind to consider in connection with his wife’s name or his own. He was simply thinking of his financial integrity. It might get noised about that the Pontelliers had met with reverses, and were forced to conduct their menage on a humbler scale than heretofore. It might do incalculable mischief to his business prospects (Chopin, 1899:98).

In *The Awakening*, Leonce Pontellier is depicted as a business oriented. Even when his wife abandons home, he asks his wife to reconsider her decision in order to avoid what people are going to say if they acknowledge their household’s problem and to avoid the incalculable business prospect he has run, so the business cooperation between Leonce and his partner will be fine. Leonce’s image in the society will also be saved. He does not truly ask Edna to consider because he really wants Edna in his house, yet other things like business prospect, financial matter, and good names come first for him to concern. He never thinks the reason why his wife leaves his home. His husband exploits Edna as the object to work for his own benefits.

b. *The Oppression from Creole Society*

The researcher finds another oppression of the inequality of social class from the upper class *Creole society*. Edna learns two very different societies and creates her own ideal of what is socially acceptable.

As time goes by, Edna is demanded by Leonce to take part in his husband’s social life which is the upper class of *Creole society*. She tries to involve herself in yet, she is in a way discriminated by the upper class of *Creole society* though she is already part of them. It is proven on the description below.

Mrs. Pontellier, though she had married a Creole, was not thoroughly at home in the society of Creoles; never before had she been thrown so intimately among them. There were only Creoles that summer at Lebrun's. They all knew each other, and felt like one large family, among whom existed the most amicable relations. A characteristic which distinguished
them and which impressed Mrs. Pontellier most forcibly was their entire absence of prudery. Their freedom of expression was at first incomprehensible to her, though she had no difficulty in reconciling it with a lofty chastity which in the Creole woman seems to be inborn and unmistakable (Chopin, 1899:14).

Married to an upper class man does not make Edna being respected by his husband’s society. She is never treated and welcomed like it supposed to be treated because she comes from middle class. The upper class people put her aside because she is not considered giving them any benefits. On the contrary, the middle class of *Creole society* do suit herself. They treats Edna nicely and warmly like a family. It makes Edna reveals her true self without being oppressed.

The middle class makes friend with anyone while the upper class chooses wisely who is taken as a friend. The upper class of *Creole society* does not really make friend with the middle class of *Creole society*. It portrays Edna’s life after married to an upper class man. She is not allowed to have an intimate relation with the middle class of *Creole society*, Robert Lebrun. This statement is portrayed when Madam Ratignolle asks Robert to stay away from Mrs. Pontellier because she is not a part of Robert’s class, as below.

She is not one of us; she is not like us. She might make the unfortunate blunder of taking you seriously." His face flushed with annoyance, and taking off his soft hat he began to beat it impatiently against his leg as he walked. "Why shouldn't she take me seriously?" he demanded sharply. "Am I a comedian, a clown, a jack-in-the-box? Why shouldn't she? You Creoles! I have no patience with you! Am I always to be regarded as a feature of an amusing programme? I hope Mrs. Pontellier does take me seriously. I hope she has discernment enough to find in me something besides the blagueur. If I thought there was any doubt--" (Chopin, 1899:98).

When Edna has an intimate relation with Robert, she is given what her husband cannot give such as his time, attention, and affection. Sadly, she is not
permitted to stay close to Robert, a middle class of Creole society. That matter absolutely results in Edna’s oppression because she does not have any freedom to make friend with anyone she likes.

B. Gender Discrimination

In this part the researcher discusses Edna is discriminated or exploited to be a “mother-woman” in a private sphere. She is exploited by her husband that a wife should take care of children and the household while father does not. The society where she lives strongly holds a patriarchy system that a woman has less authority than a man. They are restricted to a domestic sphere. Whereas, she is unlike the other women by whom she is surrounded, she is aware that she is not a “mother-woman”, the one who is willing to sacrifice herself to her husband, children, and the household. The exploitation results in Edna’s oppressions.

a. The Oppression from Leonce Pontellier

In order to know how she is oppressed by her husband to be a fully mother woman, the researcher provides several quotations show that Edna refuses to be a mother woman, yet her husband keep exploiting her that a wife should be the only one who looks after children, husband, and the household. The description shows Edna is not a mother woman are mentioned as follows.

In short, Mrs. Pontellier was not a “mother-woman”. The mother women seemed to prevail that summer at Grand Isle. It was easy to know them, fluttering about with extended, protecting wings when any harm, real or imaginary, threatened their precious brood. They were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels (Chopin, 1899: 12).
According to the above quotation, Edna does not fit her new society’s which is a patriarchal society because she is not a mother woman who adores her family. A woman can be considered as a “mother-woman” when she considers her children and husband as tools to bring her happiness and peacefulness. She is not one of others women who devotes all her energy and attention to her children and husband.

Such a flat life she has after married to Leonce, it is difficult for her to have a good relationship with her children and her husband. She is already desperate with her unhappy marriage life that makes her become passionless toward her children. She fails to be what the society assigns her to be a mother woman.

She was fond of her children in an uneven, impulsive way. She would sometimes gather them passionately to her heart; she would sometimes forget them. The year before they had spent part of the summer with their grandmother Pontellier in Iberville. Feeling secure regarding their happiness and welfare, she did not miss them except with an occasional intense longing. Their absence was a sort of relief, though she did not admit this, even to herself. It seemed to free her of a responsibility which she had blindly assumed and for which Fate had not fitted her (Chopin, 1899: 23).

It clearly states that Edna does not feel happy when she is surrounded by her two children. It rarely happens that she thinks of her children. A “mother-woman” will always put her children above of all her activities and love her children unintentionally, on the other hand, Edna does not act such a thing. She sometime remembers them and sometime forgets them. Her children do not belong to her heart. When she does not feel like put up with them, she leaves the children to their nurse. Moreover, when she is in a loving mood, she gathers them
to her. This is an unfair treatment to her children or to others, like their nurse or grandmother, who act like a substitute mothers when Edna is not in her mood to love her children. She is not happy when she needs to spend her time with her children. Therefore, when all of her children are sent to their grandmother, she feels such a relief. It seems like she is free from a heavy responsibility that ties her for a long time. She feels a little comfortable when her children are outside the home. She considers children as a burden. Though she does not admit it, she really feels a freedom.

Another supporting passage is Edna’s point of view that proves she is not a mother woman for her little family when she is talking to Madame Ratignolle about what she will give and what she will not give to her children.

Edna had once told Madame Ratignolle that she would never sacrifice herself for her children, or for any one. Then had followed a rather heated argument; the two women did not appear to understand each other or to be talking the same language. Edna tried to appease her friend, to explain. "I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, I would give my life for my children; but I wouldn't give myself. I can't make it more clear; it's only something which I am beginning to comprehend, which is revealing itself to me." "I don't know what you would call (Chopin, 1899:52).

She does not understand why mothers can give all of their life to their precious children. All mothers always give the best and live for their family no matter what happens, they are ready to sacrifice anything without an exception for their family. Edna does not do the same because she thinks it is an unusual thing that a mother should do. The above statement shows when Edna and Adele have a disagreement over how much a woman should sacrifice themselves for her children. She only wants to sacrifice unnecessary things she has for her children.
such as some money she gets from her husband and her body, not her soul. She will keep the necessary part of her life only for herself not for her children and husband.

In general, a mother knows precisely the time when her children go to bed. Edna knows that her children ready to go to sleep with their quadroon as their companion. Yet, Edna asks the quadroons away and tells her not to come in again. Then, she sits and tells her children story which is not a proper time for her to do a thing. Instead of soothing them, she adds their wakefulness that makes them do not fall asleep.

They were very playful and inclined to talk—to do anything but lie quiet and go to sleep. Edna sent the quadroon away to her supper and told her she need not return. Then she sat and told the children a story. Instead of soothing it excited them, and added to their wakefulness. She left them in heated argument, speculating about the conclusion of the tale which their mother promised to finish the following night (Chopin, 1899:48).

She is not close with her children at all. She pays a little attention towards her children. She does not know that one of her children gets fever, until her husband tells her that Raoul is found sick. It really shows that Edna pays a little attention towards her children.

Mrs. Pontellier was quite sure Raoul had no fever. He had gone to bed perfectly well, she said, and nothing had ailed him all day. Mr. Pontellier was too well acquainted with fever symptoms to be mistaken. He assured her the child was consuming at that moment in the next room (Chopin, 1899:10).

She does not get panic when she hears a bad news from her husband says Raoul has a fever instead, she keeps assuring her husband that Raoul is in a very well condition before he goes to bed and nothing ails him all day long. Mr. Pontellier is well acquainted with fever, he is not mistaken that Raoul is sick. The
fact that Raoul is sick does not make her to be a really mother woman for her children. On the contrary, children are bothersome to her.

Her husband holds up his society’s system that a wife is demanded to be at home to take care household matters, while a husband is demanded to be a in public sphere. Mr. Pontellier exploits Edna that a wife is supposed to be in a private sphere. He is a dominating husband, he always forces Edna to do and be what he wants. He never assigns himself to be in both private and public sphere, simply like playing with his children. The statement previously is also seen in Einstein opinion,” Woman and man can easily accept every rule of patriarchy because they are conditioned to accept it by the process that called by sex-role stereotype where it is differentiate man and woman. Woman is allocated to the female sphere and male are allocated to the male sphere (Einstein, 1984:6).

The way Leonce exploits Edna happens when a wife should take care of children while husband should not. It happens when one of his children is found sick in their bedroom. Instead of looking after his children, he goes in and wakes his wife up and tells her to see and takes care of Raoul. Moreover, after telling Edna that Raoul is sick, he continues to lit his cigar and smokes like nothing happens because he assumes that it is a mother’s responsibility to take after his children. It shows that Edna is sex-role discriminated and exploited by her husband. Mr. Pontellier returns to his wife with the information that Raoul has a high fever and needs looking after. Then he lit a cigar and went and sat near the open door to smoke it (Chopin, 1899:10).
The result of gender discrimination above leads Edna to the oppressions felling. She cannot hold the oppressions that her husband does to her anymore. From the beginning, she remains silence and fulfills her husband’s needs. The fact that she is not that type of a “mother-woman” disables her to give abundance love toward her family and disable her to be a perfect “mother-woman.” She cries and lets herself alone sits on the porch shows that she is in an oppressed feeling.

Mrs. Pontellier was by that time thoroughly awake. She began to cry a little, and wiped her eyes on the sleeve of her peignoir. Blowing out the candle, which her husband had left burning, she slipped her bare feet into a pair of satin mules at the foot of the bed and went out on the porch, where she sat down in the wicker chair and began to rock gently to and fro (Chopin, 1899: 10).

Besides, Mr. Pontellier demands Edna to be an ideal wife for him. For instance, when he is coming home late at night, Edna is supposed to wake up and welcome him home.

His entrance awoke his wife, who was in bed and fast asleep when he came in. He talked to her while he undressed, telling her anecdotes and bits of news and gossip that he had gathered during the day. From his trousers pockets he took a fistful of crumpled bank notes and a good deal of silver coin, which he piled on the bureau indiscriminately with keys, knife, handkerchief, and whatever else happened to be in his pockets. She was overcome with sleep, and answered him with little half utterances. He thought it very discouraging that his wife, who was the sole object of his existence, evinced so little interest in things which concerned him, and valued so little his conversation (Chopin, 1899: 9).

Edna keeps laying in her bed although Mr. Pontellier already gets home. She does not care about her husband’s existence and lay in bed like nobody is coming home. Edna does not really pay much attention to what her husband says, when Mr. Pontellier tells her about the gossip that he gathers during all day. In Mr. Pontellier’s point of view, Edna’s lately attitude is totally wrong. A wife
should welcome her husband whenever it is and concerns about everything that her husband’s needs.

Patriarchy system makes a great barrier between a man and a woman. They are burdened with a different job in the society. A man takes the job outside the house. It is their responsibility to earn money for family. Woman is the more emotional side that leaves in home doing their regular job to finish the household things. A woman is burdened to give all of her love to their family. A woman needs to give a comfortable situation for the husband and children. By holding the patriarchy system, Edna is scolded by her husband for neglecting her children. Though, in family there is no strict rule that assigns a woman as the only person to look after the children. Again and over again, for him, it is just a mother’s role to look after children. If it is not a mother, who is on earth will do that thing. He puts his business above all of the household matters, even his children. He refuses to look after his children. He thinks that provides her family with some money is more important than looks after and gives his love to his children. In fact, both mother and father have a necessary role for their children’s growth. They should prioritize and give all their attention to children, it is not only from mother’s side but also father’s side to look after and give his attention.

He reproached his wife with her inattention, her habitual neglect of the children. If it was not a mother’s place to look after children, whose on earth was it? He himself had his hands full with his brokerage business. He could not be in two places at once; making a living for his family on the street, and staying at home to see that no harm befell them. He talked in a monotonous, insistent way. (Chopin, 1899:10)
**b. The Oppression from Creole Society**

The Creole society strictly believes a patriarchy system, where all of mothers consider their children as the apple of their eyes. A mother is the one who sacrifices anything for their children’s happiness, additionally a wife who always worships her husband. Thou, they are doing others activities at home, they will not let their household in miserable. On the contrary, Edna is not a “mother-woman” like another women she is surrounded. She is busy with the outside activities and forgets her duty as a “mother-woman”. The above perception seen when Edna is further contrasted with Madame Ratignolle, an ideal “mother-woman” by her husband.

It seems to me the utmost folly for a woman at the head of a household, and the mother of children, to spend in an atelier days which would be better employed contriving for the comfort of her family." "I feel like painting," answered Edna. "Perhaps I shan't always feel like it." "Then in God's name paint! but don’t let the family go to the devil. There's Madame Ratignolle: because she keeps up her music, she doesn't let everything else go to chaos. And she’s more of a musician than you are a painter." (Chopin, 1899: 62).

Another quoted statement that makes Edna different from Madame Ratignolle is the moment when each of their children approaches them for something. Enda’s children only approach her for candy and show no desire to play with their mother. On the others hand, Madame Ratignolle’s children run toward her and hang on to her excitedly when she appears. Her children love and have desire to play with their mother. The description is mentioned as follow.

She stood watching the fair woman walk down the long line of galleries with the grace and majesty which queens are sometimes supposed to possess. Her little ones ran to meet her. Two of them clung about her white skirts, the third she took from its nurse and with a thousand endearments bore it along in her own fond, encircling arms. Though, as everybody well knew, the doctor had forbidden her to lift so much as a pin! (Chopin, 1899: 17).
B. Edna Pontellier’s Liberation from the Oppression

The following analysis discusses the way that Edna Pontellier liberates herself from such oppressions that has been mentioned in the previous part. Edna in *The Awakening*, is described to look for her freedom and try to be the one and only ruler of her life. Then, after she experiences such oppressions from her husband and the upper class Creole society, she cannot remain silence anymore. In order to make herself free, she performs several actions to liberate herself. She has the right time to liberate. She liberates herself from her restraints and achieves all the things that she desires. She is ready to liberate herself from the inequality of social class and gender discrimination that oppress her. Edna in this way chooses to be a frontal person rather than follows her husband’s command. A woman who rebels become the defenses as it is argued by Tyson. The defenses will keep themselves from becoming conscious of the experiences where they have been repressed (Tyson, 2011:83).

The main purpose of the liberation is seeking freedom in her life. The freedom means that to set herself free from the routine’s responsibility in the household that ails her all day and a freedom to become their true self, which is the person they are never been before, be what they want to be and do what makes them happy without exploited in capitalism (business) and a private sphere (children, a husband, and the household).

The marriage life which is experienced by Edna is not an easy thing for her to endure. She does not have a freedom to hold his own life, therefore she
performs four liberations to against such oppressions that are mentioned as follows.

1. **Considering herself with Middle Class Creole Society**

Mr. Pontellier who portrays the upper class man really dominated by wealth, money and business. Whenever he has time, he is going to spend with his business partner rather than having family time, then it makes a gap between Léonce and his family. He rarely be at home to play and to please his family. On the other hand, Robert is a middle class guy who earns some money for daily needs, therefore he has a lots of time to give what Edna’s needs such as time, love and affection. Robert who belongs to the same class with Edna understands very well what Edna’s needs. Robert showers Edna with his abundance of time, love and affection the things that her husband does not give to her. Léonce, is supposed to be the one who brings love, joy, time and affection for Edna, yet showers her only with money and valuable gifts that she does not wish to have. His life is surrounded by money and business so he attempts to compensate Mrs. Pontellier materialistically for the lack of the emotional support. The description shows that Robert understands what Edna’s needs is mentioned as follow.

Don't banter me," she said, wounded at what appeared to be his flippancy. He did not mind the entreaty, but the tone with its delicate note of pathos was like a reproach. He could not explain; he could not tell her that he had penetrated her mood and understood. He said nothing except to offer her his arm, for, by her own admission, she was exhausted. She had been walking alone with her arms hanging limp, letting her white skirts trail along the dewy path. She took his arm, but she did not lean upon it. She let her hand lie listlessly, as though her thoughts were elsewhere--somewhere in advance of her body, and she was striving to overtake them (Chopin, 1899:34).
Robert Lebrun understands the situation of Edna at that time. Even though Edna does not say she is in a terrible feeling and need someone to look after her, Robert understands and be there for Edna with his love and affection. He gives what Edna’s needs which are affection and time that her husband, Mr. Pontellier does not give to her.

When Robert moves to Mexico for the sake of job, her life seems dull without him, she is broken-hearted and it leads her to depression feeling. She misses Robert, the person who always gives her true love, time and attention rather than money that she does not really need.

I don't want to part in any ill humor," she said. "But can't you understand? I've grown used to seeing you, to having you with me all the time, and your action seems unfriendly, even unkind. You don't even offer an excuse for it. Why, I was planning to be together, thinking of how pleasant it would be to see you in the city next winter." (Chopin, 1899:49).

The above statement shows that Edna finds her true love in Robert. She is really falling in love with Robert because he is the one who can understand Edna for worse. Edna is shock to learn that Robert will go away. She does not ready yet to lose a person that gives her love, attention and affection. Moreover, she plans to stay together with Robert in the city next week. It is very contrary when her husband is away for job, she never misses her husband like the way she misses Robert.

Mr. Pontellier sets an authority that a wife’s job is looking after children, give all of her love toward her children. Generally, children need love, affection and attention from their parents, not only from mother’s side. He exploits Edna to be a mother woman, while he does not care about his family. When he is home, he
never plays with his children and it makes the children do not close to him. He always puts money and financial matters above all in his life’s priority. On the other hand, they are very fond of Robert, because Robert spares his time to play with Pontellier’s children. "When Mrs. Pontellier left him to enter her room, the young man descended the steps and strolled over toward the croquet players, where, during the half-hour before dinner, he amused himself with the little Pontellier children, who were very fond of him (Chopin, 1899:9).

2. Being a Disobedient Wife after Exploited by Her Husband’s Power

Edna’s liberation transforms her to a disobedient wife especially in front of her husband, Mr. Pontellier. She declines all of her husband’s request and does whatever makes her feels happy. One of the evidences is in the text below. “But her new and unexpected line of conduct completely bewildered him. It shocked him. Then her absolute disregard for her duties as a wife angered him. When Mr. Pontellier became rude, Edna grew insolent. She had resolved never to take another step backward (Chopin, 1899:61). It really shocks Mr. Pontellier about Edna’s changes from an obedient wife to a disobedient wife. It is depicted when Mr. Pontellier becomes rude, Edna can be ruder than Mr. Pontellier. That is one of Edna’s ways to free herself from her husband’s exploitation.

Before she becomes a disobedient wife, she is always controlled by her strict husband. She has to follow her husband’s request to attend Tuesdays where all of his business partner and family gather together. Thou she does not like to be there, she always keeps silent and follows her husband’s request because the event is necessary for his husband. Her husband also exploits her to reply all of his
business’ letters only for the sake of his business. At this time, Edna cannot hold her oppressions anymore. She turns out to be a disobedient wife as she declines her husband’s request to attend Tuesdays at home and does what makes she feels happy.

Edna could not help but think that it was very foolish, very childish, to have stamped upon her wedding ring and smashed the crystal vase upon the tiles. She was visited by no more outbursts, moving her to such futile expedients. She began to do as she liked and to feel as she liked. She completely abandoned her Tuesdays at home, and did not return the visits of those who had called upon her. She made no ineffectual efforts to conduct her household en bonne menagere, going and coming as it suited her fancy, and, so far as she was able, lending herself to any passing caprice (Chopin, 1899:61).

3. Earning Money and Moving Out

Mr. Pontellier always gives money and wealth as a key to exploits his wife to be at home, as a “mother-woman” and follow what her husband’s request. Moreover, that is a tool for him to please Edna. He does not notice about what things that make Edna feels happy. He only keeps comforting her with money and valuable gifts. Therefore, Edna liberates herself by earning his own money so that her husband does not have any control over herself. She also decides to move out into a small house by herself in order to free herself from her husband’s authority and the household’s responsibility. When she abandons her duties and the house, it assures herself that she already holds the authority to rule her own life. She chooses to be free and independent. It is depicted when Edna is talking to Mademoisella, as below.

I won a large sum this winter on the races, and I am beginning to sell my sketches. Laidpore is more and more pleased with my work; he says it grows in force and individuality. I cannot judge of that myself, but I feel that I have gained in ease and confidence. However, as I said, I have sold a good many through Laidpore. I can live in the tiny house for little or nothing, with one
servant. Old Celestine, who works occasionally for me, says she will come stay with me and do my work. I know I shall like it, like the feeling of freedom and independence” (Chopin, 1899:84).

The second evidence shows that Edna does not pay attention to her husband’s decision anymore. Either her husband let her go or not, Edna hastens her preparation to move out into her small house as soon as possible.

Without even waiting for an answer from her husband regarding his opinion or wishes in the matter, Edna hastened her preparations for quitting her home on Esplanade Street and moving into the little house around the block (Chopin, 1899:89).

From the above notion, Edna is no longer controlled and exploited by her husband’s instruction and authority. She rules her own life by gaining some money and moving out from that big house, the place she does not feel home at all. Edna demands freedom and independent that she never feels before because of her goal is to be as equal as her husband so that she cannot be exploited to follow her husband’s command both in a business and a household.

4. Committing Suicide

She comes to the moment that she does want to look after her children, does not want to look after his husband’s business, and does not want to live without Robert. At the same moment, she can not change the patriarchal system believed by Creole Society, furthermore the only way to escape by committing suicide. Those feelings lead Edna to commit suicide at the sea, when she swims for the first time, she discovers her own strength. Moreover, she has a deep connection that reliefs her heart every time she comes to the sea. “A feeling of exultation overtook her, as if some power of significant import had been given her to control the working of her body and her soul. She grew daring and reckless,
overestimating her strength. She wanted to swim far out, where no woman had
swum before (Chopin, 1899:32). When Edna learns how to swim, she gains great
confidence, power and strength in herself.

The voice of the sea is seductive; never ceasing, whispering, clamoring,
murmuring, inviting the soul to wander for a spell in abysses of solitude; to
lose itself in mazes of inward contemplation. The voice of the sea speaks
to the soul. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft,
close embrace (Chopin, 1899:18).

The sea itself is an important symbol in this novel. It represents an
individual liberation. When Edna learns to swim she learns to rely on herself. Her
awareness of an independent identity grows, so she does not need other
relationships, even her family. She wants to imitate the sea, where it is a place of a
freedom, whether it is whispering, clamoring or even murmuring. The sea has
their own preference to act like what the sea wants. The sea is not controlled and
tied by anything. In addition, the voice of the sea sounds like it understands her
pity’s soul. The water of the sea is calm like it keeps holding and hugging her
with a deep love. Therefore, she feels comfortable by the sea.

In the end, Edna’s form of liberations in order to get her freedom to be as
equal as her husband are seen as a woman’s movement to against the inequality of
social class and gender discrimination.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

There are two factors such as the inequality of social class and gender discrimination that trigger the oppression of Edna Pontellier during her marriage life. In the first analysis, the researcher finds Edna who is an ordinary woman, oppressed by her husband ways of treating, another oppressions experienced by Edna is exploited both in capitalism (a business) and a private sphere (children, a husband, and the household). Leonce is a person who attaches to the upper class life, so he is defined as the one who always busy with his own business, financial matters come first for him and he often takes her wife’s needs for granted. He pleases his wife by giving money and valuable gift that her wife does not really wish to have. The most essential things his family’s needs are his time, love, attention and affection as a father and husband, yet he does not afford it and take them all for granted. Furthermore, Edna is just another possession for him to maintain a good relation with his business partner. Edna is also oppressed by the upper class Creole society. She is not allowed to have an intimacy relationship with middle class people, for instance Robert. She cannot fit the upper class’ life. The one who concerns Edna the most is Lebrun who comes from middle class Creole Society. They have a good talk and treat Edna like a family.

Leonce is the one who earns some money for family, so he exploits Edna to be a fully “mother-woman” and follows whatever he asks. Weather Edna is a “mother-woman” personality or not, she is still demanded by her husband to be an ideal “mother-woman”. Edna is ruled by her husband that a wife should give all of
her love and time to look after the household and to worship her husband. Leonce only demands Edna to give her love to their children, whereas children also need love from their parents not only from a mother’s side. Her husband stereotypes a perfect ideal of a mother woman by contrasting her wife with Madame Ratignolle. He wants Edna to imitate her, yet Edna cannot be like what her husband wants her to be because she is not that type of a mother.

The third and the last conclusion is such oppressions seem cannot be endured anymore by Edna. Finally she decided to take several actions to liberate herself from such oppressions. Firstly, she has an intimacy relationship with middle class people. She feels comfortable with Robert than her husband because Robert gives her true love, time and affection.

Secondly, she turns to a disobedient wife, she refuses his husband’s command to reply the letters for his husband business partner’s wife. She dares to refuse his husband’s request to not attend Tuesdays, where his big family and business partners gather together.

Thirdly, she earns her own money and moves out into a small house without her husband’s permission. She earns her own money in order to be as equal as her husband, so she can rule her own life and seek what makes her happy. She starts to abandon every rule from her husband that she always follows before. She becomes an independent woman by living separately from her husband. Then she moves into a small house which she calls as a home. She loves to be in her small house rather than his husband’s luxury house. Additionally, she is free from the sake of the household that ails her.
The last liberation is commit suicide, at the sea as her victorious ending to let all of her burdens go away. She feels happy when the first time she learns to swim. She wants to imitate the sea that portrays a freedom and independent. The moment she touches the water at the sea, the moment she feels all of burdens she has are taken away by the water.
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APPENDIX

The summary of The Awakening

The Awakening explores one woman's desire to find and live fully within her true self. Her devotion to that purpose causes friction with her friends and family, and also conflicts with the dominant values of her time.

Edna Pontellier's story takes place in 1890s Louisiana, within the upper-class Creole society. Edna, her husband Léonce, and their two children are vacationing for the summer on Grand Isle, an island just off the Louisiana shore near New Orleans. They are staying at a pension, a sort of boarding house where each family has their own cottage but eat together in a main dining hall. Also staying at the pension is the Ratignolle family; Madame Ratignolle is a close friend of Edna's, although their philosophies and attitudes toward child rearing differ fundamentally. Madame Ratignolle is the epitome of a "mother-woman," gladly sacrificing a distinct personal identity to devote her entire being to the care of her children, husband, and household.

In contrast to Madame Ratignolle's character is Mademoiselle Reisz, a brilliant pianist also vacationing on Grand Isle. Although Mademoiselle Reisz offends almost everyone with her brutal assessments of others, she likes Edna, and they become friends. Mademoiselle Reisz's piano performance stirs Edna deeply, awakening her capacity for passion and engendering the process of personal discovery that Edna undertakes — almost accidentally — that summer.

Another Grand Isle vacationer is the young and charming Robert Lebrun. Robert devotes himself each summer season to a different woman, usually married, in a sort of mock romance that no one takes seriously. This summer, Edna is the object of his attentions.

As Edna begins the process of identifying her true self, the self that exists apart from the identity she maintains as a wife and mother, Robert unknowingly encourages her by indulging her emerging sensuality. Unexpectedly, Robert and Edna become intensely infatuated with each other by summer's end. The sudden seriousness of his romantic feelings for her compels him to follow through on his oft-stated intention to go to Mexico to seek his fortune.

Edna is distraught at his departure, remaining obsessed with him long after she and her family have returned to New Orleans. As a result of her continuing process of self-discovery, she becomes almost capricious in meeting her desires and needs, no longer putting appearances first. Always interested in art, she begins spending more time painting and sketching portraits than on household and social duties. Léonce is shocked by Edna's refusal to obey social conventions. He
consults Dr. Mandelet, an old family friend, who advises Léonce to leave Edna alone and allow her to get this odd behavior out of her system.

Edna continues her friendships with Mademoiselle Reisz and the pregnant Madame Ratignolle. Mademoiselle Reisz receives letters from Robert, which she allows Edna to read. Meanwhile, as a result of her awakening sexuality Edna has an affair with Alcée Arobin, a notorious womanizer. Her heart remains with Robert, however, and she is delighted to learn that he is soon returning to New Orleans.

She has grown ever more distant from Léonce, and also become a much better artist, selling some of her work through her art teacher. These sales provide her a small income, so while Léonce and the children are out of town, she decides to move out of the mansion they share and into a tiny rental house nearby, called the "pigeon house" for its small size.

Much to her distress, she encounters Robert accidentally, when he comes to visit Mademoiselle Reisz while Edna happens to be there. She is hurt that he did not seek her out as soon as he returned. Over the next weeks he tries to maintain emotional and physical distance from Edna because she is a married woman, but she ultimately forces the issue by kissing him, and he confesses his love to her.

Edna tries to express to Robert that she is utterly indifferent to the social prohibitions that forbid their love; she feels herself to be an independent woman. Before she can explain herself, however, she is called away to attend Madame Ratignolle's labor and delivery, at the end of which Madame Ratignolle asks Edna to consider the effect of her adulterous actions on her children. Edna is greatly disturbed to realize that her little boys will be deeply hurt if she leaves Léonce for another man. To this point, she had considered only her own desires.

When she returns to the pigeon house, Robert is gone, having left a goodbye note. Crushed, she decides to kill herself, realizing that she cannot return to her former life with Léonce but is also unwilling to hurt her children personally or socially with the stigma of divorce or open adultery. The next morning she travels alone to Grand Isle, announces that she is going swimming, and drowns herself (www.cliffsnotes.com).