

# Rewriting Women in Romance Through Taylor Swift's Song

Yuli Mahmudah Sentana

French Literature Department/ Faculty of Cultural Science, Halu Oleo University, Indonesia  
[sentana@uho.ac.id](mailto:sentana@uho.ac.id)

## Abstract

Romance is always referred to as a way for men to dominate women through the identity, roles and attitudes that women must carry out in a love relationship. However, in the development of feminism, the breaking of masculine and feminine stereotypes has the effect that love no longer restrains women. As a female singer and songwriter, Taylor Swift tells many romance stories in her songs. This research discusses how Swift rewrites women in romance. The twelve selected songs explain that women know their existence, identity, position, and thoughts in romantic relationships. Gender equality in romance is also expressed in these songs through how women can become subjects in romance. She has the same role, status, desires and rights as men in romance. Women cannot only choose to break up but also take responsibility and face separation as well as men. She dared to separate, did not whine, and could continue life without her lover.

**Keywords:** Gender, Rewriting Women, Romance, Taylor Swift

## INTRODUCTION

The story of two creatures who love each other is romance. Beautiful stories emerge when we search for romance because romance is synonymous with love. We can see the happy ending in Cinderella, who finds a prince who loves her. Romance stories mainly involve happiness. Romance stories with a core story about love can also show other sides, such as the struggle of love itself. The struggle for love also presents various problems, ranging from the union of love to the complexity of relationships. This love struggle could end in happiness, like a classic romance story, Rapunzel and Snow White, or bring about a bitter life like Titanic. However, romance could be a tragic story of two people who love each other, like Romeo and Juliet. The suffering that arises from love is also part of the romance story itself.

Love is a complicated process between two people (Quigley, 1999). Sometimes, this process causes problems that result in misery or the end of the love story itself. The complexity of romance begins when a man finds the perfect woman for him; he will be obsessed with always meeting the woman he loves. This feeling of passion makes men see only perfection in the woman they adore. In order to get a woman, a man will do anything. Even in the early days of a relationship, he will do romantic things to please his lover enthusiastically. However, when the relationship returns to normal, the man's euphoria about romantic actions disappears slowly, and he will return to normal. This change makes women feel that men are no longer interested in them, whereas men feel that this is normal for them. This change in male behaviour can become a love

problem that will end the love relationship if each other does not understand.

Men do not become logical when they fall in love; they cannot see the bad things in women, but that is not the case with women. She becomes logical when falling in love by evaluating men from their material aspects, such as physical appearance, social status and financial condition (Quigley, 1999). Women will choose the best of all the available options based on logical reasons, making them different from men, who are only based on narrow thinking. Women hope for men who can support them regarding social status and finances. Even though they have had a long relationship, if a woman feels her lover cannot support her financially, it complicates the romance story. However, the complexity of romance does not always have a negative meaning; on the contrary, it can provide exciting emotions.

Previously, romantic relationships were a symbol of male dominance over women because men used love as an excuse to dominate women (Heiss, 1991). They understand that women must obey and give everything to men in the name of love. However, these stereotypes are starting to be broken. Men no longer have to wear suits and ties; women no longer have to wear skirts and high heels. Men are not born to be unfaithful, and women are not born only to love, respect and obey men. Likewise, women are not destined to love housework, and men cannot do housework (Whitehead, 2003). These ideas have become ancient, that identity is not born but a product of humans. This thought development ultimately influences romance, changing the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity.

In its development of romance, feminists no longer see love as an opportunity for men's

domination over women. Falling in love can be the answer to the madness in this world (Goodison, 1983). Even though suffering is possible, happiness and growth as a human remains. Women's energy can also be lost and drained due to love, but women can feel more and find themselves with love. Falling in love makes a woman realize that something important has happened to her and that this is the centre of her life. There may even be unusual narcissism or enjoyment of the experience gained. The strength of feelings resulting from love can give confidence and new meaning to life. Even though women cannot control it, there is no doubt that love is a carrier of enormous power.

Considering the pros and cons of the experience of love in women's lives, love stories have penetrated women's lives. Poetry, novels, songs and films become suppliers that develop love stories where people do not question stories that have been repeated thousands of times. Further examination assumes that all these representations of love are responses to society's natural concerns and reflect reality (Shumway, 2003). What is presented in literary works about love is a reality in society. The romance story in *Hamlet* is a form of women's helplessness that represents the era. Ophelia's love for Hamlet is a form of exploitation of love where she cannot build her identity through her inability to think and act about her life. In *Normal People* by Sally Rooney, published in 2018, women are no longer objects in romance. Marianne chooses to love Connell, realizes the risks, and leaves him when Connell makes her uncomfortable. Thus, literary works also experience developments in which women are no longer objects in romance. The rewriting of women in romance has begun with the result that women today are different from

women in the past who were unable to express the feelings they experienced.

Taylor Swift is a famous female singer; she writes her own songs and is also a songwriter for several other singers. In 2024, he has 11 albums and has performed many concerts in various countries. She has also won many awards, totalling 111 in 2024 (*Statista*, 2024). Most of Swift's songs discuss romance. Also, she is known as a songwriter who often writes about her ex-girlfriends in her songs, so people often ask which ex-girlfriend inspired her songs. Thus, in her songs, she explains a lot about women's identity, attitudes and thoughts in romance. In his song entitled *Look What You Made Me Do*, he describes the change in women due to love into women who are no longer innocent (Alekt et al., 2020). Swift changes women's perceptions in general and that romance can transform women into rugged and robust figures.

This research discusses how Swift, as a woman, changes the perception of women in romance through her twelve songs. The twelve songs chosen are songs that tell romance and the thoughts of women themselves. Positions and thoughts on love, falling in love, and breaking up through her songs are a breakthrough in a woman's identity today. As a famous singer today with millions of fans (her *Instagram* has 283 million followers), whatever she says can influence women. Through *Speak Now*, she describes the attitude of a girl who wants a monogamous romance (Brown, 2012). She emphasized politeness and explained women's courage in acting and expressing their desires.

## **METHODS**

In this research, researchers used descriptive research methods with a feminist approach. A feminist approach is used not only to

examine gender equality in a social phenomenon but also to see how women are written. The subjects of this research are all the utterances contained in twelve Taylor Swift songs. The object of this research is all the words, phrases, and sentences in twelve Taylor Swift songs that contain the rewriting of women in romance. The songs were read repeatedly, and then the parts containing women's attitudes, thoughts, and choices in the romance they experienced were recorded. Next, the data that has been recorded is analyzed using a feminist approach. The feminist approach used is how women are rewritten in romance. Today's women have experienced a revolution that has changed their position, changing their perspective on romance. Three things are used as references in analyzing this research: how women are aware, women who place themselves as subjects, and how mature they are in dealing with breakups.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Women's consciousness in romance**

As a romantic relationship between two people, romance creates complications or problems. The complications in romance do not make romance terrible, but quite the opposite. If someone has a lover or is in love with someone or is in love, it means that she or he is experiencing the most beautiful emotions indah (Whitehead, 2003). However, people who fall in love also have a high probability of suffering from the consequences of love. The complications of a love relationship can lead to rejection, disputes, and loss, which can result in life's misery. These possibilities of suffering do not stop people from falling in love because love also has the possibility of happiness.

The possibility of happiness lies in hope in the form of expectations for a partner; this is what romance is. Humans want to be 'special' for

someone so that they want to be wanted and loved (Whitehead, 2003). We still want old-fashioned ways of expressing our feelings of love, such as celebrating important days, birthdays, anniversaries, gifts, flowers and small surprises. These small celebrations show that the romance is still warm or on fire, meaning that the love built is still alive by showing the burning flames of love. In traditional romance, men play the role of players who 'chase' women, while women must be able to play the role of someone who can be 'chased'. Thus, there are stereotypes of masculinity that men must adhere to and stereotypes of femininity that women must adhere to in order for a romance to progress. In the end, this traditional romance emphasizes the dominance of men over women, and at this time, these methods have begun to be slowly revolutionized.

Women are aware of pursuing romance, and she is no longer Ophelia, who accepts what she is told and cannot decide for herself. Women today have the power to choose; they are no longer extended dolls who cannot think and act. Whatever happens to her is her choice; it is done with full awareness.

*You don't have to call anymore  
I won't pick up the phone  
This is the last straw  
Don't wanna hurt anymore  
And you can tell me that you're sorry  
But I don't believe you baby  
Like I did before  
You're not sorry, no no, no no*

The song fragment above not only describes how women dare to take action by leaving men, which women might not have been able to do previously but also symbolizes women's independence. She is an independent figure who can think and see what is good and bad for herself. Women today dare to make decisions, and being

alone due to breaking up is not scary. She may love her lover, but the treatment she receives makes her worse and hurts her. The decision made by this woman was not just a momentary emotional gibberish; she had also thought about everything.

If women were previously depicted as women who could not think and have choices, such as the characters Ophelia and Gertrude (Güneç, 2015), today's women have experienced an evolution. Women are confident individuals who have been involved in their life journey. Most importantly, women are not entirely dependent on men (Whitehead, 2003). This reality, of course, influences their attitudes towards men in romantic relationships. The sentence, *This is the last straw, Do not want to hurt anymore*, is a woman's decision or like a declaration to a man. Before he said this, of course, he had repeatedly discussed his problems and desires with men, but his lover had not changed. This behaviour of men hurting themselves makes women think and act by leaving men. Women have attempted to improve their romantic relationships by being patient and talking. The action of women speaking or discussing the problems they face is an evolution in which women do not just remain silent and accept suffering, but they try to eliminate this suffering.

*I remember when we broke up the first time  
Saying, "This is it, I've had enough," 'cause  
like  
We hadn't seen each other in a month  
When you said you needed space. (What?)*

Swift has not only once voiced how women try to improve romantic relationships. In another song, she also explains how women today do not just stand idly by in facing problems but also try to solve them. This way, we can see changes in women who are no longer silent when men hurt them. The song above describes an on-again, off-again

relationship and explains that women dare to speak up, express their opinions, criticize men, and address their relationships with men. Women are not only independent but also have a responsible attitude like men. His efforts to repair relationships mean that women's and men's responsibilities in romance are equal. Women are not a burden on men but are equal partners and have the same obligations in maintaining romantic harmony.

Taylor Swift's rewriting of women differs significantly from what appears in chick lit. Romance in chick lit has also experienced significant changes, although if viewed from a feminist perspective, the relationships between men and women offered are no more progressive than romance in harlequin stories. The women in it are shown to be modern, financially independent, not trapped in the domestic sphere, and more sexually assertive. However, in chick lit, women still need men to complement their identity, as if they still need men as saviours (Gill & Herdieckerhoff, 2006). Taylor wrote about women who dare to live without men and said that women's happiness does not lie in men. Painful romances and men who only make false promises make women want to end the relationship. The sentence "*We are never ever getting back together*" is repeated and used as the title, which is a woman's strong stance regarding her decision. The man's attitude hurt her and made her decide not to want anything to do with him, no matter what. This song proves that women today have a permanent stance and are aware of their existence in romance.

*Once upon a time  
A few mistakes ago  
...  
'Cause I knew you were trouble when you  
walked in  
So shame on me now*

Not only is she aware of her existence, but women are also aware of all the actions they take. In the song excerpt above entitled *I Knew You Were Trouble*, the woman realizes all the possibilities that will happen before the romance begins. Women have realized that their potential lover will bring disaster to their lives. Even though she wrote that it was a mistake, women's awareness and ability to see men's potential was renewed. Even though, in the end, she was hurt and broken, that was part of the choice she made. This new feminist perspective prioritizes women who can make good or bad choices. A woman can choose to love a man she knows will hurt her, and she also has the choice to leave him.

The three Swift songs above describe how a woman finally leaves a man after being in a romantic relationship for some time. Before making the final decision, women have first talked to men about their romantic problems. Today's women are not only able to speak their minds but are also able to see problems and provide solutions. In voicing their hearts to men, women can see how cultural patterns ultimately shape their emotional bonds. A woman who asks a man to change his attitude towards their relationship proves that she can feel and examine her experience and voice her dissatisfaction with the emotional relationship (Hite, 1987). Ultimately, Swift proved that women could analyze their emotional relationships with men.

### **Women as Subjects in Romance**

Romance has the possibility of women's unhappiness, but women do not give up on it. Not only are women aware of their position in romance, but they also position themselves as subjects in romance. Her position as an equal subject to men makes her still desire love despite the possibility of

suffering due to love. Women still want to appear feminine and attractive to men, but most importantly, women also want to look attractive themselves (Whitehead, 2003). This situation is proof that men's views are not that important for women because what matters is women's views of themselves. Women are no longer created to please men; women's beauty is no longer presented in men's eyes. Women want their beauty for themselves; as the term appears nowadays, women dress up no longer to attract men but to make themselves happy. In many of her songs, Swift explains that in romance, women are no longer objects; their existence is equal to men.

*Every time you call me crazy  
I get more crazy  
What about that?  
And when you say I seem angry  
I get more angry  
...  
But no one likes a mad woman  
What a shame she went mad  
You made her like that*

In the song *Mad Woman* above, Swift explains that women are not weak figures in relationships between men and women. She is no longer a weak figure who becomes an outlet for a strong man or a servant for a man like a traditional love story. Women can act and oppose men with the equality they have. If a dispute occurs, a woman does not want to be the one to blame; she can also become 'savage' or angry just like a man; she is not an obedient and crybaby figure. When men do unpleasant things, women can also become angry or crazy. Women have been able to express themselves, their feelings, and their anger. She no longer accepts all male treatment but is also capable of acting crazy if she is not treated well. Her anger and madness did not just happen, and it was all caused by men. Thus, a woman is not always loving and gentle; she can be affectionate or angry, gentle

or crazy. All women's behaviour also reflects men's behaviour towards them because of their equality.

This change in women's position not only changes the nature of women but also the nature of the romantic game, becoming no longer traditional. Men are no longer prolonged hunters; women are no longer gentle princesses waiting for their princes. Women today have the confidence to run for love, saying what they want or what is in their mind. As subjects, women can live life to the fullest according to their wishes so that women from all situations can seek love and romance whenever and wherever they are (Whitehead, 2003). This action is happening due to their equal position with men.

*I am not the kind of girl  
Who should be rudely barging in on a white  
veil occasion  
But you are not the kind of boy  
Who should be marrying the wrong girl  
...  
Don't say yes, run away now  
I'll meet you when you're out of the church at  
the back door  
Don't wait, or say a single vow  
You need to hear me out*

The setting in the lyric fragment above is a wedding in a church. The lyrics tell how a woman tells the prospective groom to leave his future wife and choose her. The setting chosen by the author shows how women are subjects in romance; they can look for love wherever they are and whenever they want. This song describes how a woman wants to ask a man to run away from his marriage, which is proof that a woman is no longer someone who waits for love to come, but she can also be someone who runs after love. Women are not only pursuers of love but can also be seducers, as seen in the sentence, "*But you are not the kind of boy. Who should be marrying the wrong girl? You need to hear me out*". This sentence seduces men and convinces them to

leave the altar to run with her. Women do not think about the place anymore when they search for love.

Swift not only shows women who seduce men but women who dare to show their desire for love are also shown. The patriarchal system produces masculine stereotypes and feminine stereotypes, such as how men are leaders and women are followers. Gentle is a woman's, strong and aggressive is a man's. In previous literary works, women were always created to fulfil existing stereotypes. Swift tries to break down the binary opposition created by patriarchy by presenting women who are no longer weak and gentle. Women can also aggressively pursue love, as the song *Speak Now* states. Exceedingly, she also breaks the stereotype of women being cowardly and timid.

*You should think about the consequence  
Of your magnetic field being a little too strong  
And I got a boyfriend, he's older than us  
...  
Of you touching my hand in the darkened  
room  
...  
You're so gorgeous  
I can't say anything to your face  
...  
There's nothing I hate more than what I  
can't have  
You are so gorgeous it makes me so mad  
There's nothing I hate more than what I  
can't have and  
Guess I'll just stumble on home to my cats  
Alone, unless you wanna come along*

The song *Gorgeous* not only breaks the stereotype of girls being shy and aggressive by chasing the boy they like. This song should highlight a woman who is not ashamed of her desires. Women's desires, women's desires for love, were previously taboo because women were presented as polite and shy. A good woman is a virgin who is not only able to cover her body but also her wild thoughts. The song *Speak Now* talks about single women who want a man to marry them; there is a

strong reason behind it, namely that the prospective groom's wife is not worthy. In *Gorgeous*, Swift describes how women with a partner can also desire other men even though they have no problems with their lover. This song not only shows women's seduction of men but also shows women's desire for men's bodies. The title of this song itself is a form of female worship of the male body.

The author describes not only the man's physical condition but also the man's age, which is younger than her boyfriend. Thus, women are the same as men in that physical appearance and youth attract them. This man's good looks fascinate women, meaning that not only men want beautiful women, but women also want handsome and young men. The position of a woman who wants another man when she already has a lover is a form of how the author rejects the stereotype of women as being a naive and loyal figure. Women are subjects who can see other opportunities for love despite already being in a relationship. Finding a man who is more handsome and younger and wanting him as a lover is realistic because, after all, women are human beings in general who want the best for them.

Women's desire for love is not only shown in their desire for love, but the author also shows their sexual desires. The author also describes his sexual dreams of men in the sentence "touching my hand in the darkened room" and how she imagined the man's touches in the dark room. This dark room is interpreted as a more private room for them to share their love. Not only that, she also invited the man to her house, which meant she wanted more than just eye contact. Women also express sadness about this situation; they want an attractive man they do not know until they dream of him. Women who dare to express their desires are fighting the stigma that only men can express their sexual

desires. A man does anything, seduction, deception, even rape, to obtain intercourse and is considered normal (Hite, 1994) because men are 'sex-driven'. In this song, the author argues that only men can seduce just for sex; women can do it, too.

Women's desire for love is not only shown in their need for love, but the author also shows their sexual desires. The author also describes her sexual dreams of men in the sentence *touching my hand in the darkened room* and how she imagined the man's touches in the dark room. This dark room is interpreted as a more private room for them to share their private activities. Not only that, she also invited the man to her house, which meant she wanted more than just eye contact. The woman also expresses sadness about this situation; she wants an attractive man she does not know, so she can only dream about him. Women who dare to express their desires are fighting the stigma that only men can express their sexual desires. A man does anything, seduction, deception, even rape, to obtain intercourse and is considered normal (Hite, 1994) because men are 'sex drive'. In this song, the author argues that not only men can seduce just for sex; women can do it, too.

In traditional romance, women are weak figures who can only cry and groan at their suffering due to love, but women are now able to fight and rebel against men. As an equal game, women have the same position and power as men. In responding to lousy treatment by men, women not only remain silent, but they are also able to fight back and even respond to the treatment they receive.

*But I got smarter, I got harder in the nick of  
time*  
*Honey, I rose up from the dead, I do it all the  
time*  
*I got a list of names, and yours is in red,  
underlined*  
*I check it once, then I check it twice, oh!*

*The world moves on, another day another  
drama, drama*  
*But not for me, not for me, all I think about  
is karma*  
*And then the world moves on, but one thing's  
for sure*  
*Maybe I got mine, but you'll all get yours*  
...  
*Ooh, look what you made me do*  
*Look what you made me do*

Swift explains how women are brilliant figures who cannot be fooled by men forever. Men's actions that hurt women will be repaid even twice as much. Men can hurt women until they become numb, but women can get back up and fight back. Just like karma, women may receive punishment for their mistakes during romance, and men will also receive their karma like women. Swift's statement explains that women are not inferior to men; they are subjects just like men. The failure of romance is not purely the woman's fault, as traditional romance blames women for the failure of love. Romance now has two equal subjects, so women play their games according to men's games. She will play beautifully if the man plays beautifully, and vice versa. The title of the song and the repeated refrain in this song explain that men play their roles badly in this romance so that women do the same.

A woman as a subject in romance does not only mean that she plays the same role as a man but also has the same rights as a man in a relationship. Women can speak up if men mistreat them by stating the desired changes for a better relationship. When romance hurts her, she easily let go of the romantic ties without fear of the social reaction she will receive. The label of love player is closely attached to men and women who are always victims of love because of their stupidity. However, Swift changed this stigma through the following song.

*I never trust a narcissist*  
*But they love me*  
*So I play 'em like a violin*



*And I make it look oh so easy*  
...  
*I never trust a playboy*  
*But they love me*  
...  
*They say I did something bad*  
*But why's it feel so good?*  
*Most fun I ever had (I did something bad)*

Women as victims in romance or as puppets for men is no longer the case. They now take the position of subjects, and when men play with themselves, they know with full awareness when they are being played. She also took a stand by following the fire game given by the man. If men lie, women will lie too. In this song, the male character has a bad attitude, namely being narcissistic and a playboy; the women realize this and play with the men again. The author feels men with these characteristics should not be shunned or feared. Women are always depicted as wanting a good and loyal man, but Swift offers a woman who dares to face the playboy. Not only that, women can also follow the flow of men's games. They can even trick playboys. The presentation that women also get pleasure from love games that men usually play is a symbol that women are no longer the subject of this romance story.

*Nice to meet you, where you been?*  
*I could show you incredible things*  
...  
*"Oh, my God, look at that face*  
*You look like my next mistake*  
*Love's a game, wanna play?"*  
...  
*Got a long list of ex-lovers*  
*They'll tell you I'm insane*  
*'Cause you know I love the players*  
*And you love the game*

In the song *Blank Space*, women are not only able to handle playboys, but they are also able to become love players or playgirls. Women can follow the flow men offer and pretend to be what men want. This pretence creates a beautiful relationship,

even if only for a moment, until their proper form emerges and causes the romance to end. The author also offers women who can play men and have many ex-lovers. Women no longer think about what society thinks about what they do. Having many ex-lovers is not a disgrace for women as it is not a disgrace for men. If men have many ex-lovers because they like romantic games, then women like players who are men themselves. Women today still want to be treated traditionally romantically by men even though they still want freedom (Whitehead, 2003). This concept aligns with the nature of men who treat women remarkably only at the beginning of a relationship. Men treat women like dolls as if they were dolls that could be thrown away when boredom strikes.

Women accept and like all the sweet treats from men during this romance. When men start to change their behaviour, women will also change lovers and settle down with their new men. In this way, the woman is no longer the object being played with but also plays along, and she even welcomes the man at the start of the game of love as if she knows that the game has begun. Women's awareness of the game proves equality in the romance. Taking part in this game, women reject the stigma of having to be 'good girls', which, according to Hite, is still widely taught in families to young women. Girls are still prevented from finding out, exploring and discovering their sexuality and are called "bad girls" when they try (Hite, 1994). Having lots of men, women not only enjoy the game, but women can also explore their sexuality.

### **How Women dealing with breakups?**

The stereotype of women is not only weak but also emotional and cannot control their emotions, in contrast to men who have stable emotions. In traditional romance, romance failure

makes women worse off because women place their lives on men socially, financially and emotionally. Separating from their partner for women is something 'big' that is not easy to do. Society tends to blame women for separation as a form of women's inability to be 'good' women. Social pressure on romantic failure makes women stay in toxic relationships even though women have to lose themselves. In this modern era, women are financially, socially and emotionally independent, so having a partner or being single does not make a difference in women's values. This independence impacts women's courage to get out of toxic relationships.

Women are even more often the initiators of a breakup than men. This breakup is also supported by the fact that women have control and reason for the outbreak of the romance (Sprecher, 1994). There is a possibility for infidelity in every romantic relationship, both emotional infidelity and sexual infidelity. If an emotional affair occurs, even though it is difficult for her to forget it, a woman can still forgive a man. In contrast to sexual infidelity, women prefer to leave their partners rather than forgive (Shackelford et al., 2002). Swift also shows in many of her songs how women prefer their happiness to being in a bad relationship

*Hey, now you say you want it back  
Now that it's just too late  
...  
But people like me are gone forever when you  
say goodbye*

In the song *All You Had to Do Was Stay* above, Swift rejects her lover, who returns to her. This situation shows how women have control over themselves and cannot be influenced or manipulated by men. Separation is a better thing than being with a man who hurt her. The author also shows a woman's firm attitude and does not whine after the

breakup; she will walk away and not be allowed to return to the man who hurt her. The song, *We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together*, tells the story of an on-again, off-again relationship, and no matter what her ex-lover does, the woman who has decided to leave will not shake it.

Not only do they have a strong opinion not to return to a toxic relationship, but women are also able to handle heartbreak well. The stereotype that women prioritize emotions over logic has been refuted by the ability to choose to leave rather than get hurt. Nevertheless, women's success in overcoming pain has also gone beyond the stereotypes assigned to women.

*I forgot that you existed  
And I thought that it would kill me, but it  
didn't  
And it was so nice  
So peaceful and quiet  
I forgot that you existed  
It isn't love, it isn't hate  
It's just indifference*

In the song above, Swift describes a woman who can forget her lover after separation. Not only was he able to forget, but he also overcame the pain caused by the separation. That the world feels peaceful after separation is proof that women can live emotionally independently and do not need a man to support their lives. Swift writes that women today are more progressive and have a mature emotional side, not childish and full of revenge for the breakup of their romance. There is no feeling of hatred for men or regret or sadness explaining how women choose their interests, and they put themselves at the most essential level. He only explained that separation only gives a woman a feeling of indifference, which means she will focus more on herself, not on feelings of love or hate.

*There'll be happiness after you  
But there was happiness because of you*

*Both of these things can be true  
There is happiness*

In the song *Happiness*, Swift also explains how women can live a good life after the breakup. Women do not deny that romance can take them to an unforgettable and emotionally solid level and that men can give them infinite happiness. However, after breaking up, women can also find happiness elsewhere. Romance can provide beautiful and unforgettable experiences, but women also want the freedom to live their life journey independently of anyone (Whitehead, 2003). When a breakup is inevitable, women can still seek and find happiness. For women, there are no longer traditional stories like in the past, and now there is only democratic love. What brings happiness is what women choose, whether it is in the romance or the breakup itself. The attitudes of women who no longer hate insult men or their ability to find happiness after breaking up convinced that women are not as emotional as society labels them. Women can act maturely to overcome love problems, face the reality they find, and continue life with or without a man in their life.

## CONCLUSION

In traditional romance stories such as Cinderella, Snow White, and Rapunzel, women are always written as weak figures who need men. Love stories are always synonymous with men as protectors of women. Love is said to be one of men's tools in dominating women because women will do anything for men so that they are not abandoned. However, in the development of feminism, the societal stereotypes began to change, in balance with the breaking down of masculine and feminine stereotypes. The gender inequality that is echoed also has an impact on romantic relationships between men and women.

Taylor Swift, a famous female singer and songwriter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, tells many stories

between men and women in her songs. The twelve songs chosen tell romantic stories, both love itself, problems and separation. These songs discuss women's awareness of romantic relationships. Women are aware of their existence, identity, position, and thoughts that also exist in that relationship. Swift also writes about gender equality through how women can become subjects in romance. Women also have roles, statuses, desires, and rights equal to men's. Not only that, women also have the ability and courage to leave their partner if the romance is not worthy of them. Women are no longer stupid, naive, or cowardly when facing problems in love. When separation arrives, women and men can also take responsibility for the separation they choose. Not only does she not whine about men, but she can also live without her lover.

## REFERENCES

- Alek, A., Marzuki, A. G., Hidayat, D. N., & Sari, E. N. A. (2020). A Critical Discourse Analysis of song "Look What You Made Me Do" by Taylor Swift. *Eralingua: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing Dan Sastra*, 4(2), 154–161.
- Brown, A. (2012). 'She isn't whoring herself out like a lot of other girls we see': Identification and "Authentic" American Girlhood on Taylor Swift Fan Forums. *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network*, 5(1).
- Gill, R., & Herdieckerhoff, E. (2006). Rewriting the romance: new femininities in chick lit? *Feminist Media Studies*, 6(4), 487–504.
- Goodison, L. (1983). Really being in love means wanting to live in a different world. *Women and Romance: A Reader*, 157–172.
- Güneç, M. (2015). OPHELIA AND GERTRUDE: VICTIMIZED WOMEN IN HAMLET. *Journal of International Social Research*, 8(41).
- Heiss, J. (1991). GENDER AND ROMANTIC-LOVE ROLES. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 32(4), 575–591.

- Hite, S. (1987). Women and love: a cultural revolution in progress: The Hite report. (*No Title*).
- Hite, S. (1994). Women as revolutionary agents of change: The Hite reports and beyond. (*No Title*).
- Quigley, R. (1999). *01 Lesson: Beautiful Women Prefer Nerds!: a Real Man'S Guide on How To Find, Date, and Romance the Perfect Woman*.
- Shackelford, T. K., Buss, D. M., & Bennett, K. (2002). Forgiveness or breakup: Sex differences in responses to a partner's infidelity. *Cognition & Emotion*, 16(2), 299–307.
- Shumway, D. (2003). *Modern love: Romance, intimacy, and the marriage crisis*. NYU Press.
- Sprecher, S. (1994). Two sides to the breakup of dating relationships. *Personal Relationships*, 1(3), 199–222.
- Statista. (2024). Major Awards Won by Taylor Swift Worldwide as of 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1450499/music-awards-taylor-swift/>
- Whitehead, S. (2003). *Men, Woman, Love And Romance: Under the Covers of the Bedroom Revolution*. Summersdale Publishers LTD-ROW.