THE ANALYSIS OF BLAKE GAINES AS A FEMALE HERO IN
SAN ANDREAS (2015) FILM

A Thesis
Submitted to Faculty of Adab and Humanities
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Strata One Degree (S1)

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ABSTRACT


This study focuses on the character analysis of the main female character—Blake Gaines—and the female hero characteristics that main female character has in *San Andreas* (2015) film. This research aims to understand how Blake as the main female character described and how Blake as female hero depicted in *San Andreas* film. Qualitative method and feminist film critics are used in this study.

It is found that the character Blake Gaines is depicted as a female hero with friendly, trustworthy, smart, brave, and dominant characteristics in this film. However, the film cannot entirely escape from the stereotypical characteristic of a woman. The woman’s dependency over man is still reflected from Blake as a main female character. This film also confirms that it is difficult for women to be entirely independent, no matter how strong she is, she is still a woman who needs a man.

**Keywords:** Female Hero, Feminist Film Critics, Feminism Approach
APPROVAL SHEET

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2016
LEGALIZATION

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The thesis entitled above has been defended before the Adab and Humanities Faculty’s Examination Committee on August 23rd, 2016. It has already been accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of strata one.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other or diploma of the university or another institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Jakarta, June 2016

Deny Gunawan Susandi
Acknowledgement

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

First of all, the writer would like to thank Allah SWT for all favor and guidance in completing this paper. All praise belong to Allah, the Creator of living things from being nothing to existence. Many salutation and benediction be unto the noblest of the prophet and messenger, Muhammad SAW.

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Jakarta, 23rd June 2016

The Writer
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

There are so many films which depict the role of the female character, ranging from the role of woman as a child in the family, as a mother, to the woman who act as a superhero. For the last-mentioned character, woman as a superhero, or at least women who have the freedom to do many things (from rescuing lives, argues, contribute, etc.), there are many films show this character, such as Agent Carter in *Captain America* (2011) (later this character is made into TV series since 6th January 2015) and Black Widow in *Captain America* (2014) who are both described as female powerful superhero characters. Another superhero female character is Beatrice Prior in *The Divergent* series (2014, 2015, 2016), Cherry Darling in *Planet Terror* (2007) film, until Lara Croft in *Tomb Raider* (2001) film.

Heroine or female hero is a protagonist who is aligned with the hero because of extraordinary courage in a film (Grammarist). Based on Merriam-Webster dictionary, simple definition of the female hero is “a woman who is admired for great or brave acts or fine qualities” and full definition of the female hero is “a mythological or legendary woman having the qualities of a hero”. Action female hero is often described within feminist film theory as ’pseudo male’ or as being not ’really’ woman (Hills). This variation occurs because female hero’s value are not perfect and intact on one side, like a really worth feminist or
worth masculine. On its development, the female hero really changes the stereotype of women/actress in the film like the feminist who fight for the women position and gender equality. The strong masculinization of the female hero often creates a break with the classical representation of feminine passivity in cinema, a transformation that affects her body representation to a degree that questions the received nation of gender (Giukin). Aligned with that idea, from the article entitled *Dissolution of Gender Binary and Stereotypical*, the traditional gender binary system is gradually falling apart through the cinematic representation of new female heroes who subvert the patriarchal construction of femininity (Chia). Associated with it, gradually, the stereotypes of women in movies change. Especially in the action film that shows the character of the woman as a "super-hero" or "female-hero".

The story of Female Hero appears when *Blonde Venus* (1932) film and *Lady from Shanghai* (1946) film which portray woman differently. Both film depicts woman neither helpless victim nor phallic substitute (Kaplan 6). Although the woman in the film (noir films) still depicts as *femme fatale*—woman who is dangerous and often die at the end of the film. Then, development of the female hero grows when *My Brilliant Career* (1979) film release. It conveys a new story about a female hero: in love with a wealthy neighbor, the female hero makes him the object of her gaze, but the problem is that, as female, her desire has no power (Kaplan 29). In 1977, stereotypical female hero changes when *Looking for Mr.Goodbar* (1977) film release. The film introduces to the public about the idealized mother in the shape of the female hero herself: in her daytime life,
Teresa is a loving, nurturing teacher of deaf children. Warm and sensitive in this Mother role, Teresa is particularly helpful to the most needy child in her class, Amy, who is poor and black (Kaplan 77).

In 2015, Warner Bros Picture film produced *San Andreas*—a film about the earthquake that happened in San Francisco, which also depicts a female hero. Blake Gaines, daughter of Ray Gaines, is the female hero who tries to save herself from this earthquake. In the process of saving herself, Blake joined in a "group" which consist of two men: Ben (male, a man Jobseeker) and Ollie (male, younger brother of Ben). They meet when they sit in a lobby room at Daniel’s office. Daniel is a boyfriend of Ema—Blake’s mother. Blake sits there to wait for Daniel to accomplish his tasks, while Ben prepares to face a job interview, and Ollie accompany his brother. When Ben starts the interview, Ollie has a chat and talk a lot with Blake in the office lobby.

The process of self-rescue from the earthquake that destroyed the city began shortly after Blake and Daniel was about to leave the building. The earthquake occurred at the time when Blake, Daniel, and Daniel's private driver was still inside the car. The Parking lot is destroyed and makes them trapped in the car. Daniel’s private driver died, while Blake stuck in the car. Daniel, who previously says he wants to look for help to release Blake who trapped in the car, just left and not come back. Fortunately, Blake rescued by Ben and Ollie who knew Blake stuck there.

After that, Blake together with Ban and Ollie were trying to save themselves. They try to find a location that might be reached by Ray—Blake’s
father who also a member of the rescue team in America. Start from plans to Coit Tower which apparently failed because the area around Coit Tower was already full by the fire, until a plan to go to a building which in the development process that belonged to Daniel to avoid sea water which swept the city because of the tsunami occurred after other earthquakes. During that process, three of them showed their roles. Starting from Blake, Ben, until the youngest, Ollie, have their roles in the rescue from that disaster. But, something that needs to be highlighted is how Blake, who is the daughter of the member of American rescuers, has a significant role and is dominant in the survival process.

In connection with this, the writer wants to analyze how the character of Blake, as the one and only woman in the group, is described as having the freedom to argue, having the initiative to lead the group being able to cope with difficult situations. This research, entitled “The Analysis of Blake Gaines as a Female Hero in San Andreas (2015) Film”, is a research of literary works which related to women or research that examine the figures or female characters in a movie. To discuss this issue, feminism approach is the most suitable approach to be used in this research. It was also studied by Soenarjati Djajanegara (5) in her book entitled Kritik Sastra Feminis.

B. Focus of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, this study focuses on analyzing the character of Blake Gaines and her female hero’s value in the rescue process from an earthquake in San Andreas (2015) film which directed by Brad Peyton and produced by Beau Flynn, Hiram Garcia, and Tripp Vinson.
C. Research Questions

Based on the background of study and the focus of study above, the lifted problems in this research are:

1. How is Blake as the main female character described in *San Andreas* film?
2. How does *San Andreas* film depict Blake Gaines as a female hero?

D. Research Objective

In line with the issues formulated above, the purpose of the research on the film *San Andreas* are:

1. To understand how Blake as the main female character described in *San Andreas* film;
2. To understand how Blake as female hero depicted in *San Andreas* film.

E. Significance of The Research

By analyzing this film, especially the character of Blake Gaines, writer hopes that this research will give benefits to the scientific development of the study of film that led a female character in it. Then, the result expected can increase the reference for the research about literature works which using english as an introductory language, especially in the faculty of Adab and Humanities—English Language and Literature Department, and also can be used as a reference for the further literary researcher.
F. Research Methodology

This research methodology includes some aspects of research such as a method of research, technique of data analysis, an instrument of research, unit of analysis, and time and place of the research.

1. The Method of The Research

This research is qualitative research. In terms of meaning, qualitative research is the study of various studies and collection of various types of material empirically, such as case studies, personal experience, recognition introspective, life stories, interviews, artifacts, texts and cultural production, observational, historical, interactional, and various visual (Santana 5). In this research, the material being studied is film as a text.

The method being used is the descriptive qualitative method. Wiyatmi (54), in her book entitled Kritik Karya Feminis, describes that the descriptive method can be described as a troubleshooting procedure investigated by describing the state of the object of research at the present time based on facts that appear or as it is. She also continues that this method aims to describe systematically the facts or characteristics of the object of research factually and accurately.

In addition, the author also requires some supporting data. Supporting data is later used for the process of writing and execution of this study. Such as books, e-books, journals related to literary texts that is being researched, previous research, and the similar research which closely related to the theory or the topic.
Those things are useful to simplify the process of writing and execution of this study.

2. The Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing qualitative data, the writer uses character theory and feminist film critics. The writer uses the descriptive analytical method to explain the main female character in *San Andreas* film and describe how the film depicts Blake Gaines as a main female character viewed from feminist film critics theory to analyze. In this analysis, the writer explains the data related the research problems and analyzes them based on feminist film critics theory.

3. The Object of The Research

The object of this research is *San Andreas* (2015) film, produced by New Line Cinema (Warner Bros. Picture) and released on 27th of May 2015 (Premier) and 29th of May 2015 in Indonesia.

4. The Instrument of the Research

The instrument of this research is the writer himself to find qualitative data and to do the qualitative research about the main female character Blake Gaines in *San Andreas* film and describe how the main female character is depicted in the film using feminist film critics theory. Firstly, the writer watches the film carefully and marks some of Blake’s actions, dialogs, and appearances. Secondly, the writer analyzes the data by using character theory and female action hero stereotype and finally concluding the results.
5. **The Method of Collecting Data**

Repeatedly watching *San Andreas* (2015) film and read many of books and article that related to the focus of the study. There are two kinds of data here:

a. **Primary Data**

The source of primary data in this study is *San Andreas* (2015) film.

b. **Secondary Data**

Other sources that used in this research are sourcebooks or books theory (printed or e-book edition) and the result of previous research which related to the problem which becomes the object of the research. The book of literary theory and relevance theory for used in manage data are also needed here.

6. **The Unit Analysis**

The unit analysis of this research is *San Andreas* Film. It is a 2015 action film directed by Brad Peyton and written by Andre Fabrizio and Jeremy Passmore. It is a production by Warner Bros Pictures.

7. **The Time and Place**

The research starts on 23rd March 2016, at English Language and Literature Departments, State of Islamic Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The research is also conducted at Adab and Humanity Faculty’s Library, main Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Previous Research

Before the writer starts this research, it is necessary to know about the previous research is which similar with this research. The writer has not found any research that analyzes the same corpus. However, there are some researchers that analyze the same issue: female hero/heroine in the film.

1. The Action Hero Revisioned: An Analysis of Female “Masculinity” in The New Female Hero in Recent Filmic Texts

This research has been written by Jo-Anne Shirley Goodwill as a dissertation in University Of South Africa, 2009. The research is about a hero which becomes a key archetype in Western culture. However, the hero has almost invariably been male, with associated traits deemed “masculine” within the gender binary. Feminists have begun to rigorously interrogate this binary, and the associated biological essentialism that precludes women from heroism. The fruits of this process are evident in recent popular filmic texts, which feature women as heroes. Goodwill examines developments in gender theory, propose a behavior-based definition of masculinity, and argue that the new female action heroes authentically perform this masculinity.

Then, Goodwill examines several selected recent films and television series, showing that the new female action hero proves that “masculinity” can be authentically performed by female-bodied persons, and moreover is a liberatory
model for ordinary women who wish to assert themselves in the public sphere. Finally, Goodwill argues that female action heroes model a new heroic archetype which embraces the best traits of both “masculinity” and “femininity.”

2. Fighting Like A Girl: Gendered Language in Superhero Comics

This research has been written by Rebecca Davis for Griffith Working Papers in Pragmatics and Intercultural Communication 6 (2013), Griffith University, 28-36, which is focused on the difference between the way male and female superheroes speak. This research also wants to look and explore the contradiction between female and male superheroes and analysis reflect the sexism in their appearance and narrative.

The results of this research are gendered language was found and make a contradiction between male and female superheroes, then the Rebecca Davis also found a trend in describing female superheroes for their looks rather than their power or strength.

3. The Discussion on Female Heroes in Respect of Gender Socialisation of Girls: Retelling Myths of Psyche, Artemis, And Katniss

This research has been written by Leni Marlina for Horizon Research Publishing in 2015. Leni explore and compare the journey of traditional female heroes with a contemporary female superhero and try to shows how to do an alternative activity for EFL (English as Foreign Language) college students in doing literary analysis by discussing the journey of three female heroes from ancient Greek myths and a recently young adult text (mythology book and film).
Leni also demonstrates that Psyche, Artemis, and Katniss (as male heroes) qualify as female heroes. After that Leni compares and contrasts the female heroes in respect of contemporary gender theory and the socialization of girls.

After reading and knowing about the previous research, the writer concludes that research on female action hero is still about the iconic female characters and mythical heroine. There are no studies that examines female in film action and categorizes as heroine or not based on their role in the action film. Therefore, the writer wants to adding and enriching research about female action hero, especially for Hollywood films in 20th century about analysis of the role of women in the action film. The difficulty of finding previous research which really discuss about female action hero in the Hollywood action film is the evidence about the lack of research on this issue. The writer hopes this study can add to the treasury of the film studies.

B. Theoretical Framework

Based on what has been written in the previous chapter, the object of this research is the San Andreas film. To analyze the film, the first thing that must be understood is the definition of film. According to the Oxford learner’s Dictionary of Current English 6th edition (Hornby 496), film has a meaning a series of moving pictures recorded with a sound that tells a story, shown on television or at the cinema or movie theater.

The two main purposes of making a film are to entertain the viewer and produces artistic results (Arnheim 9). To reach these purpose, every single part of a film must be perfect to make the viewer feel attracted from the beginning of the
film until the end of it. All crew that contained in the filmmaking process should have responsible, especially for the actors, actress, and the film director. They have a task to emphasize the expressive qualities of motion and thereby to define the character of the entire film as well as that of the single scene and the single shot (Arnheim 182).

In the book entitled “Film Studies” (2005), Butler writes an argument from Hugo Münsterberg which said that film is the art form of the mind (Butler 15). Then Butler explains it that the right pictures could bring a sense of emotional and mental harmony to the minds of the contemporary audience. In the other side, there are many film critics theories which appears side by side with the film development. One of them is Female Action Hero Stereotype which places a film, especially the female hero in that film, as an object of analysis. Besides that theory, the writer wants to use Character and Characterization in Film which used for analyzing the character of Blake Gaines in San Andreas (2015) film to reach the purpose of this research.

1. Character and Characterization in Film

Based on Looking at movies: An Introduction to Film 3rd edition (Basam and Monahan 134) the position of characters in the stories is very important, it is because the character is one of the elements of film narrative, play functional roles within the plot, either acting or being acted on. In the film, the characters do a lot of things, from moving, thought, expression, and many others that can be

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1 a professor at Harvard. His background was in psychology, with a particular interest in the perception of time and space, as well as reaction times and the concept of the persistence of vision.
analyzed and produces data such as the personality of the character. Corrigan and White (224) said that the process starts from identifying, analyzing, and understanding character’s aspects (appearance, gestures and actions, dialogue, clothes, character’s thoughts, personalities, expressions, and interactions) with the aim to reveals the personality of the character is called the characterization.

To reveal the characterization in the film, the book entitled *The Art of Watching Film* which is written by Joseph Boggs and Dennis Petrie (49) has eight kinds of characterization in the film. They are characterization through appearance, characterization through dialogue, characterization through external action, characterization through internal action, characterization through reaction of other character, characterization through dramatic foils, characterization through caricature and leitmotif, and characterization through choice of name. But, for this research, the writer would only use seven of them that the evidence exists in *San Andreas (2015)* film.

a. **Characterization Through Appearance**

The main part of this characterization is how researchers see a character visually and instantaneously through facial features, dress, physical build, and mannerisms and the way she or he moves which become the important means of establishing character (Boggs and Petrie 50). It means that every detail on the screen (where the characters will be studied appear) can give an influence and can be the data to be analyzed.

The key of this characterization is about the words that can reflect a person’s personality. In our daily life, we can know how the people’s personality is when we talk with them or when we listen to their conversation with their friend. It can also be applied to the film. So, this characterization point is focus on “What the characters say” (Boggs and Petrie 50). Boggs and Petrie (50) also told that the attitudes and emotions of characters can be revealed in subtle ways through word choice and through the stress, pitch, and pause patterns of their speech. They use of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and particular dialects (if any) reveals a great deal about their characters’ social and economic level, educational background, and mental process (Boggs and Petrie 50).

c. Characterization Through External Action

Although appearance is an important measure of a character’s personality, appearance often misleading (Boggs and Petrie 51). The possible approach to reflect a character is through the person’s action. a character can have a different characterization than indicated in the beginning. Boggs and Petrie provide an example of a firefighter who saves a child. Although he has a major task to extinguish the fire, but essentially he described as a character who took risks to save a child. Every action and reaction, whether clearly seen on the dialogues or not, must be assumed, that they do what they do for a purpose, our of motives that are consistent with their overall personality (Boggs and Petrie 52).

d. Characterization Through Internal Action
Internal action is an action that maybe still unseen and unheard by the most careful observer or listener (Boggs and Petrie 52). Internal action or inner action occurs within characters’ minds and emotions and consists of secret, unspoken thoughts, daydreams, aspirations, memories, fears, and fantasies. There is the most obvious way to reveals inner reality, it is by taking us in visual or in auditory into the mind so that we see or hear the things that the character imagines, remember, or thinks about (Boggs and Petrie 52).

e. Characterization Through Reactions of Other Characters

In the film, there are conversations or dialogues between the characters. From the dialog, we can get much information. One of the information is about the characters. Boggs and Petrie (52) argue that the way other character view a person often serves as an excellent means of characterization. Sometimes, a great deal of information about a character is already provided through such means before the character first appears on the screen (Boggs and Petrie 53).

f. Characterization Through Contrast: Dramatic Foils

The use of foils is one of the most effective techniques of characterization (Boggs and Petrie 53). The intent of foils is contrasting characters whose behavior, attitudes, opinions, lifestyle, physical appearance, and so on are the opposite of those of the main characters. The effect is similar to that achieved by putting black and white together—the black appears blacker and the white appears whiter (Boggs and Petrie 53).
g. Characterization Through Choice of Name

The last method of characterization which told by Boggs and Dennis W. Petrie in the book *The Art of Watching Movies, 8th Edition*, and the writer want to use in this research is the characterization through the choice of name. It uses the technique named *name typing*—possessing appropriate qualities of sound, meaning, or connotation. Both of them give an example name such as “Dick Tracy” which is obvious and clear (Dick is slang for *a detective*; Tracy derives from the fact that detectives trace criminals) (Boggs and Petrie 54-55).

2. Feminist Film Critics

Understanding the feminist film theory is a necessary before analyzing film which focuses on the female character. The theory of critics which is used in this research is feminist film critics. The feminist film critics, which has a root from a feminist film debate in late 19th century, can be called as a movement which gives a space to feminist to explain how women are represented and positioned in the film—they get an active or passive role (McCabe 18).

Marilyn Fabe in her book entitled *Closely Watched Film* (2004) writes that film usually gives an active role to male a character while female character is given a passive role. This situation continues become a convention in the film especially western film and repeated on the level of a film plot (Fabe 211).

Breaking the text down into smaller units and the analysis which are so detailed until to the hidden textual operation at work in each segment as well as across the whole film text are the ideological analysis which is used by the researcher in analyzing the film. In the feminist film critics, looking for
ideological signs and formal contestation in relation to dominant film representations of woman become a focus on the ruptured text (McCabe 18). In the *Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies*, the ideology can be concluded as the system belief which holds impact and determines most people’s view of social order, but there also oppositional ideologies (such: marxism, feminism) which seek to change people’s consciousness, by replacing the dominant version of real condition of existence with their own.

Those ideologies and the theories which are used in feminist film critics, basically have the main goal. They are not only made the feminist intervention possible by giving a language to speak, but also to legitimize the feminist theoretical position to standing within current academic thinking (McCabe 16).

3. Female Action Hero Stereotype

Heroines or Female Heroes have their stereotypes which make them become so iconic from viewer’s gaze. But, there are 6 misconceptions about strong female characters which has been delivered by K.M. Weiland2 in her article entitled *Busting 6 Strong Female Character Stereotypes* (Weiland). They are:

- *First*, strong does not equal violent;
- *Second*, strong does not equal bossy;
- *Third*, strong does not mean she will not need to be rescued or coached or guided in her personal journey by another character;
- *Fourth*, strong does not mean the character cannot be loved or in love;
- *Fifth*, strong does not mean putting women in male roles; and
- *Sixth*, strong does not have to draw attention to itself.

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2 the award-winning and internationally published author of the bestselling Outlining Your Novel and Structuring Your Novel
Gladys L. Knight write a book entitled *Female Action Heroes* in 2010. In this book, she argues that many of the female action heroes who emerged from the late 1990s onward reflected the spirit of third-wave feminism, with its advocacy of looking good and being powerful, and some women still appeared who reflected values of second-wave feminism (Knight xxi). This happens because the development of film, which never stops until nowadays, was in unison with the era of feminist movement at that time.

Increasing and fighting for women social status is the main purpose of second wave feminist movement which happened in America and pioneered by *National Organization for Women* (NOW) as a forefront organization in fighting women’s rights (Tong 24). In the book entitled *Feminism: A Reader* (3), Maggie Humm explains that in times of that struggle, the goal of increasing women's awareness about the oppression of women is powered by *Women’s Liberation Movement* (WML). Then, post-modern feminism emerged as the third wave feminist movement which try to avoid every action that would restore the idea of referring to men's style (Wiyatmi 17). In addition, the post feminism movement also appears to challenging assumptions of hegemony which saying that oppression of patriarchy and imperialism is the universal experience of oppression (Brooks 3; Wiyatmi 18).

The development of feminist movement in those two periods gives an effect on the development of women’s stereotype in films which released in the early 1990s, late 1990s, and until this current era. Especially for action film,
women start to get different roles. In the past, the stereotypes of women like docility, delicateness, virtuousness, modesty, gentleness, emotionalism, physical weakness, dependency, gullibility, ability to nurture, a lesser intelligence than men were considered the ideal women in film (Knight xv).

Here are the two kinds of female action hero’s stereotype which is written in *Female Action Heroes* (2010):

**a. Hot Attractive Female Action Heroes**

This kind of female action hero’s stereotype raised because of Captain Kathryn Janewa, Sarah Connor, Buffy, and Xena who become popular because of their movies and movies series with the iconic at their power suit (iconic costumes), weapons, and abilities. The changing identity of women in these characters is they sought equality with men. From this period, the female who are beautiful and have emotions appear with girl power and can fight against the best of the men (Knight 22, 263-264).

Michelle Erica Green, in her article entitled *Having It All in the 24th Century*, argues that this kind of female action hero, especially for Captain Kathryn Janewa, can become the best role model for a girl who wants to become a great leader. It means that Janewa gives the real act about the role of women who can become the leader in the film, and also the real act about the second and third feminist movement.

For the appearance, this kind of female action hero’s stereotype has an iconic in their costume. For this part, of course, we can see the costume of Xena, Buffy, Sarah Connor, and Captain Janewa as an example because they are female
action heroes who have power suit, weapons, and abilities. Xena with her leather bustier with armor overlay and her warrior-style skirt, armbands and shoulder pieces, and knee-high boots; Buffy with her blonde hair and youthful and helplessly fashion conscious, she uses bright and trendy outfits (clothes like other young woman wear); for Sarah Connor, her ultra-fit physique and rock-hard arms, shown off to great effect by tank tops, cargo pants, aviator glasses, and sullen expressions; and Captain Kathryn Janeway’s power suit was her gold uniform, with its four gold pips worn on the right side of her collar, indicating her rank and authority (Knight 23, 192, 257, 325).

b. Progressive and Problematic New Protagonist

This stereotype of female action hero is brought or appear from the phenomenal female action hero named Lara Croft who is famous in the late 1990s until early 2000s. Progressive and problematic new protagonist character also called transgressive character, which means she does some things that considered taboo for a woman, the examples are tumbles, explores, sprints, and somersaults (Knight 210). This character also loves to challenge the traditional female paradigm like another female hero character in the century, such as play or do boys activities (Knight 211).

Gladys L. Knight (211) writes the argument of Deuber-Mankowsky which explained that a woman, especially from this character’s stereotype, is independent, eager to live life to its fullest, one who is liberated and feels superior to man (Knight 211). This condition, the woman feels superior to man and woman dominates, often shown by film especially while men are reduced to subordinate
or supporting (minor) roles and becomes the center of the action (Knight 208-211). Besides that, for this character’s sex appeal, a professor at Pratt institute named Claudia Herbst writes about “a new brand of feminism” called cyberfeminism. This cyberfeminism is about the ideal when a girl has girliness, aggression, action, and a sexy appearance (Knight 211).

For the appearance and characteristic, this kind of character has stereotype like what Gladys L. Knight writes (210-211). First, the colors of their clothes are often dark, such as browns, blacks, and greens which become the characteristic of an outdoorswoman. Second, based on what O’Day (213-214), they often use shorts. That shows their bare midriff it means exudes “femininity” and that their clothes are functional to leap easily into action. Third, they have characteristics such as attractive, smart, powerful, wealthy, ambitious, and sexy.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH FINDING

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the main female character, Blake, and how she is depicted as the female hero. In order to understand how she is described as female hero, it is necessary to understand Blake as a major character in the film. Then, the writer uses the guide which is written in *The Art of Watching Film, 8th Edition* (49-55) to understand Blake as a major character in the film.

A. The Character Analysis of Blake Gaines

Blake Gaines is identified as the main female character because of the plot that resolves around her from the beginning to the end of the story. Her name has a meaning that can be analyzed and give an information about her character. “Gaines” is a family name which comes from her father’s last name. Based on urbandictionary.com, Blake has two meanings: “A somewhat common name for a male; witty, dangerously handsome, clever and trustworthy” and “charming, courageous, and stunningly handsome”. Then, for “Gaines” the writer has not found any meaning of it. However, the word Gaines closes to the word gain which means: “something wanted or valued that is gotten”, “something that is helpful, resources or advantage acquired or increased”, and “the act or process of gaining” (Merriam-Webster). These meanings of “Blake” and “Gaines” give the characteristic of Blake from her name that she is a helpful girl, and always trying to get something.
Blake is an American girl who is born and grows in the California, United States of America. It makes Blake has an American accent which is heard when she talks with other characters in the film. The American accent which used by Blake is clearly heard when she starts the rescue process that made Blake always talk with Ben and Ollie who use English in British accent. Besides that, Blake also often say the slang or urban words (e.g. gotta and gonna) and swear word (e.g. asshole! and oh shit!) when she (with Ben and Ollie) starts to escape from the earthquake. Her language style, ranging from her accent to the use of the swear word, is similar with her father’s in uses of words. This shows that Blake personality is far from being girly because girly personality usually chooses good words to speak (Prayogi).

Blake appears with several different outfits. First Blake’s outfit is when Blake makes a call to her father to make a room for her bike in their house (Picture 01). In that scene, Blake is sunbathing beside the pool and wearing a black bikini. Then, in her second appearance (picture 02), when she welcomes her father's arrival, she is wearing a t-shirt and short jeans—usually called hot pants.

Picture 01 (00:13:29)  Picture 02 (00:19:21)
The next Blake’s outfit is a set of the dark brown leather jacket with white button-down shirt and long jeans. This outfit starts to be used by Blake when she goes to San Francisco with Daniel (picture 03), until the rescue process from an earthquake (picture 04).

The last outfit which used by Blake in the San Andreas film is when she wants to handle Ben’s injury in his thigh because punctured by the broken glass (Picture 08). The last outfit of Blake actually because of she opens her jacket and uses her shirt to be used as a bandage to cover Ben’s injury in the thigh. Then, the last her outfit is a maroon tank top, long jeans, and shoes.

Based on what Blake’s wear from the first time she appears in the film until the end, Blake is depicted as a girl who loves the casual outfit. It makes Blake perfectly portrayed as a girl with no interest in girly fashion (such: blouse,
dress, cardigan, skirt, etc.) and colors (such: pink, purple, baby blue, yellow), but it does not mean that she prefers to stay out of attention.

As a protagonist character, Blake’s description takes dominant portion in the film. As a result, her characteristics are revealed. She is depicted as friendly, smart, brave, trustworthy, and dominant which all of them will be described below:

1. Friendly

Blake is depicted as a friendly girl. Based on Cambridge online dictionary, the meaning of friendly is “behaving in a pleasant” or “kind way towards someone”. Blake as a friendly girl—behaves in pleasant and gives a good attitude—shown when she arrives in Daniel’s office and sits on the sofa which Ben Taylor is there. She casually greets Ben first and gives a smile to him.

![Picture 07 (00:24:37)](image)

![Picture 08 (00:24:39)](image)

(Blake comes and sits on the sofa)

**Blake**

: Hi. (Wave hands)

**Ben**

: Hello. (Breath heavy)

(00:24:37 - 00:24:39)

When Blake sits on the sofa, Blake friendly says “Hi” to Ben first, whereas Ben seen so nervous toward his job interview session. Moreover, Blake gives a sheet of tissue to Ben when he accidentally sheds his drink and dews his clothes.
Furthermore, she is also friendly to Ollie who sits in front of her. She does a conversation with Ollie about many things (even Ben does not like Ollie talks many things to the stranger).

From that situation, Blake friendly does a conversation with Ben and Ollie, Blake is analyzed as a friendly girl. Moreover, which makes Blake truly characterized as a friendly woman is the situation happens when Blake has not met Ben and Ollie before.

2. Smart

Blake is a smart girl who makes her very good at learning or thinking about things, and showing intelligence or good judgment (Merriam-Webster). Smart characteristics (which are owned by Blake) are shown in several moments in the film.

(Outside of the building)

Blake : I gotta get ahold of my parents. I gotta let them know I’m okay.
Ben : Cell phones aren’t working. I’ve tried.
Blake : (stand up) we need to find an electronics store. (look Ollie) Does that book of yours list businesses?
Ollie : (put out his book) my book has everything.

(00:50:09 – 00:50:16)
First, Blake is finally succeeded to get out of Daniel's building before the building collapsed because of an earthquake. When the emergency condition happens, she knows where she must go to contact her father when the cellular phone cannot be used, she goes to an electronic store and uses landline which is connected with the push-button phone.

Second, when Blake, Ben, and Ollie follow the evacuation route to go to the Coit Tower, Blake finds a fire truck that is damaged. Shortly after Blake finds it, she knows about the supply box in the fire truck. The supply box contained many things that useful for them, especially a handy talky.

Third, handy talky which is found by Blake in the fire truck can be used maximally by her. The reason is because Blake knows about the tactical channel which is owned by every city in the US to give information about what is going
Because of her knowledge, they (Blake, Ben, and Ollie) are survived from the Tsunami.

Fourth, when Ollie is in the electronics store, Ollie gets a green laser. In the fact, the laser is very useful when Blake and Ollie try to rescue themselves. Blake immediately gets a brilliant idea by uses Ollie’s laser to guide her father to the direction where Blake is. What Blake has done in the rescue process finally makes Blake and those two men can be saved by Blake’s father.

3. Brave

As a Brave girl, Blake seemed she does not have fear in herself. It is aligned with the statement on site that brave is feeling or showing no fears (Merriam-Webster). It is shown in some actions which Blake has done in rescue process from an earthquake. Some evidences that prove Blake is a brave girl are:

![Picture 12 (01:32:28)](image1)

![Picture 13 (01:15:52)](image2)

![Picture 14 (01:16:09)](image3)
First, when Blake can save and hug Ollie, who is scared when aftershocks\(^1\) occurred. Blake does not show any gesture which same as what Ben does. When aftershocks happen, Ben shows his frightened to an earthquake and falling objects.

Second, when aftershock happens, lots of glass are broken and fall. The glass shard stuck on Ben's thigh. At that moment, Blake bravely handle Ben’s wound in his thigh which is full of blood. She does not show if she is afraid to handle Ben’s injuries.

From those situations above, Blake is analyzed as a brave girl. Moreover, in general a girl is usually afraid when a disaster occurs and afraid of blood—while other characters in this film (Ben and Ollie) are afraid of disaster and blood. But, the conditions and what Blake has done is so different to how women in general.

4. **Trustworthy**

Blake is a trustworthy girl because she is trusted by Ben and Ollie. Based on Merriam-Webster online dictionary, trustworthy is able to be relied on to do or provide what is needed or what is right and “deserving of trust”. The moment when she gets trust from Ben and Ollie is shown in several scenes.

\(^1\) a minor shock following the main shock of an earthquake.
Blake: Listen, I know that this sound crazy, but you have to trust me that he will.
Ollie: Ben, did you know about the push-button phone working with the landline? The supply box? Tactical radio channels? I really think we should stick with her.
Ben: Okay.

(01:10:38 - 01:11:05)

From the conversation between Ben and Ollie above, Blake speaks to Ben about why she chooses that decision and reassures Ben to trust with her. In that process, Ollie also talks to Ben. Even the decision seems crazy, eventually, Ben understands and accepts that decision.

Blake is trusted by Ben and Ollie because Ben and Ollie know every decision that has made by Blake (especially when she decides to go to the electronic store) is based on what has been told by her father—who is a member of L.A Fire and Rescue. Then, because of the first decision is success and gives positive result, it makes Blake’s next decisions are easy to be trusted by Ben and Ollie.

5. Dominant

In the rescue process, Blake is dominant than Ben and Ollie. It means that Blake is more important, powerful, or successful than Ben and Ollie (Merriam-
Blake’s dominant toward Ben starts when their first meet in Daniel’s office and Blake is the one who starts the conversation by introducing herself first, asking many questions, and looks more confidence while Ben looks so nervous. Then, Blake is dominant in the rescue process also because Blake is the one who takes all decision to rescue themselves, gives the direction where they must go, and help Ben and Ollie when both of them are in danger situation.

Based on the explanation above about Blake’s characterization, Blake is identified as a friendly woman because she is easy to communicate with new people who she just meets; smart and an intelligent woman especially in rescuing process; brave when facing the earthquake that destroyed the city; a trustworthy woman; and dominant in all matters when she is compared with the two men who accompanied her—Ben and Ollie.

B. Blake Gaines as a Female Hero

Blake Gaines is depicted as female hero in *San Andreas* film. As what has been described in the previous Chapter, the female hero is a protagonist who is aligned with the hero because of extraordinary courage in a film (Grammarist). Courage, which means a mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty (Merriam-Webster), becomes an important point of a female hero. This argument, about Blake who is a female hero, is expressed not only in her character, but also on her appearance. The analysis of those factors will be described below:
1. Appearance

Blake’s appearance in the *San Andreas* film is one of the important things to be analyzed in order to understand how the film describes her as a female hero. The appearance of female hero can be identified from the outfit that is used by the character. Knight, in his analysis, uses the term “powersuit”, which is popular since the 1980s and is associated with the attire worn by business men and women to project confidence and authority, for the appearance or outfit of each female hero which is analyzed by him (Knight ix).

The outfit of Blake, ranging from the first time Blake appears in the film until the end, shows her particular characteristic. Blake is identified as an outdoors-woman\(^2\) that is because of her outfit’s color often dark (ranging from the bikini, the brown leather jacket, until maroon tank top). This fits with what is being said by Knight (210-211) about the dark color for the outfit (i.e. browns, blacks) which becomes the characteristic of an outdoorswoman.

Then, the outfit which is used by Blake when she is in Daniel’s house (T-shirt with Hot pants) is indicated that Blake seemed relaxed with the shorts that she wears, and she does not use girly outfit. It deals with the characteristics of the female action hero in the 20th century—they wear shorts to give an impression easily into action (O’Day 213-214).

A set of the dark brown leather jacket with white button-down shirt and long jeans is perfectly made Blake looks like a tomboy. Based on an article

\(^2\) A woman who likes outdoor activities
entitled *35 Cool Outfit Ideas for the Modern Tomboy* in stylecaster.com, the mixing between a leather jacket and long jeans become one of a variety of the suitable clothing combinations and the depiction of a tomboy.

The last Blake’s outfit (maroon tank top, long jeans, and shoes) is when she want to handle Ben’s wound by using her shirt to be used as a bandage to cover it. The last Blake’s outfit makes Blake as a main female character looks sexy, attractive, and become the *cyberfeminism* because of her sexy appearance (Knight 211). That outfit combination used by Blake until the end of *San Andreas* film.

Especially for the combinations of outfit that she wears at the end of the film (maroon tank top and long jeans) become so iconic to the characterization of Blake as a female hero character. This is because these combinations give an impression of easy to do many things, include rescue process. Moreover, the clothes look so iconic like another female hero in other stories (such as Kathryn Janewa, Sarah Connor, Buffy, and Xena)

2. Characteristic

The characteristic of Blake Gaines in the film gives an effect to her roles in the rescue process. Those roles are ranging from the first time she comes out of Daniel’s building until she is "discovered" by Blake’s father. The role of Blake in the rescue process shows that she is a female hero because Blake is superior than

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1 Stylecaster.com is a fashion website under sheknows media—the number-one women’s lifestyle digital media company with 81 million visitor per-month.
2 Cyberfeminism is a term which is said by Claudia Herbst about character’s ideal when a girl has girliness, aggression, action, and a sexy appearance (Knight, 2010: 211)
those two men (Ben and Ollie) and she dominates. Her characteristic which supports her as a female hero is described below:

Generally, the dominant characteristic which is owned by Blake makes her has an important role in the rescue process. Especially on each situation which forcing them (Blake, Ben, and Ollie) to make a decision quickly, Blake is the only person who is able to do it. She does not only make a decision, but also give the reason why she make it and why Ben and Ollie should follow her decision. The examples are when they try to find how to contact Blake’s father and when they must abort the mission to reach Coit Tower. On that situation, Blake quickly gets the idea about where they must go and what new plan needed to replace the failed plan.

Intelligence and smart which contained in Blake also gives big impact to her roles in the rescue process. The evidence of how smart Blake is when she suddenly remembers about the supply-box, which contained in a broken fire truck, and what tools can be found in it. In that supply-box, Blake finds a pair of handy talky which is known by Blake that it can give an information about the progress of the disaster which has happened in the country to all cities in America. It really works, from that handy talky, they know that the Tsunami would hit the city soon and Blake, Ben, and Ollie accelerate their step to the building where they are going.

The rescue process which is performed by Blake to Ben and Ollie is successful because it is based on a trust to Blake. Blake is trusted by Ben and Ollie because every decisions that she takes have a strong reason. Even in the
hardest decisions like turn into the opposite direction of evacuation route is accepted by Ben and Ollie.

From those explanations above, the role of Blake is significant. Her role in the rescue process is not only depicted from her action, but also from the recognition or speech of another character. In the end of film, Blake reassembles with her family. Ben and Ollie, who is also rescued by Blake’s father, converge with Blake’s parents. At that moment, Ray thanks to Ben and Ollie because they had been there for his daughter. But, Ben says to Ray that the fact is when the rescue process, Blake is there for Ben and Ollie.

In conclusion, Blake is depicted as a female hero, especially the progressive and new problematic protagonist category, in San Andreas film because the characteristic of Blake—superior than men and dominates—fits with the characteristic of the progressive and new problematic protagonist category which is written by Knight (211). Moreover, the position of Ben as a man in the film is only as a supporting (minor) character that has minor roles. For her appearance, her sexy outfit makes her looks like an outdoorwoman—by her outfit’s dark color, and tomboy which fits with the characteristics of a female hero.

However, the film cannot entirely escape from the stereotypical characteristic of a woman. The woman’s dependency over man is still reflected when Blake needs man help to leave the destroyed building and be rescued. Although Blake is dominant, smart, and brave to deal with the emergency, she cannot leave the place by herself. She needs help from man, in this film is her
father. This film confirms that it is difficult for women to be entirely independent, no matter how strong she is, she is still a woman who needs man.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION

A. CONCLUSION

This research is about analyzing the character of Blake Gaines and her female hero’s value in the rescue process from earthquake in the *San Andreas* (2015) film. *San Andreas* is a film about the earthquake that happens in San Francisco, which also depicts a female hero. Blake Gaines, daughter of Ray Gaines, is the female hero who tries to save herself from this earthquake. This research aims to understand how Blake as the main female character described and how Blake as female hero depicted in the *San Andreas* film.

Blake Gaines, who is the main female character in this film, is identified as a friendly woman because she is easy to communicate with new people who she just meets; smart and an intelligent woman especially in rescuing process; brave when facing the earthquake that destroyed the city; a trustworthy woman; and dominant in all matters when she is compared with the two men who accompanied her—Ben and Ollie.

Based on her characteristics (superior than men and dominates), Blake is depicted as a female hero—especially the progressive and new problematic protagonist category. Her superiority is supported by the condition that Ben who has only has minor roles—known as a minor character. Beside her characteristics, Blake’s female hero characteristics also come from her appearance. In the film,
her sexy outfit, her outfit’s color, and her tomboy outfit make her look like an outdoor woman which fits with the characteristics of a female hero.

Even though, the film cannot entirely escape from the stereotypical characteristic of woman. The woman’s dependency over man is still reflected when Blake needs man help to leave the destroyed building and be rescued. Although Blake is dominant, smart, and brave to deal with emergency, she cannot leave the place by herself. A help from a man is still needed by Blake. In this film, the man who helps Blake in the end of film is her father. This film confirms that it is difficult for women to be entirely independent, no matter how strong she is, she is still a woman who needs man.

B. SUGGESTION

San Andreas (2015) film, which is directed by Brad Peyton, describes about a woman who has female hero values in her character. The woman is Blake Gaines. She is not only success to save herself from an earthquake, but also she success to bring and lead two men to be saved by her father.

To get the right comprehension of the film or the literary work itself, researchers should use the right theory in analyzing film or literary work. San Andreas (2015) film actually can be analyzed from many point of view, but in this chance, the writer uses female hero theory to analyze it and proving the existence of female hero values in the main female character—Blake Gaines.

In this occasion, the writer does suggest to everyone who interest in literature research to analyze this film from other aspect or use the female hero
theory for other film, so the next research will produce different results and enrich
the knowledge of literature studies especially for female hero studies.
Works Cited


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APPENDIX

Picture: San Andreas (2015) film