CONCEALING FRAILTY WITH MASCULINITY:
INVESTIGATING TOMBOYISM IN FROG MUSIC NOVEL

A Thesis
Submitted to Letters and Humanities Faculty
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Strata 1

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ABSTRACT


The purpose of this research is to analyze how tomboyism portrayed through Jenny Bonnet character in Frog Music (2014) novel by Emma Donoghue. This research using the descriptive qualitative method in analyzing the story and the character. To support the analysis, the writer uses Robert DiYanni’s characterization theory and tomboyism concept. Jenny Bonnet described to have some particular tomboy characteristics such as independent, persistent, boisterous, engaged in outdoor activities, brave, and wild. Jenny appeared to be a total masculine she even always cross-dresses, brings a gun, and riding a motorcycle. She also filled a masculine exclusive space that she works as a frog hunter, a job commonly done by men and not usual for women. She is a persistent tomboy who always fights for her rights to keep her tomboy identity that was rejected by law and heteronormative norms. From this research, Jenny Bonnet proved that tomboyism might not appear just because a girl dislike her gender identity, but also to hide something behind such as unpleasant past and life. Moreover, her tomboyism also strengthen the stereotype that being a woman means weak while acting as a boy might show strength and power. She also proved that tomboy identity could be used as a self-defense, as Craig and LaCroix stated that one of tomboy identity functions is as protective identity.

Keywords: Tomboy, Tomboyism, Gender-Bending, Female-Masculinity, Cross-Dressing.
APPROVEMENT

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2018
LEGALIZATION

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The thesis entitled above has been defended before the Letters and Humanities Faculty’s Examination Committee on March 28th 2018. It has already been accepted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of strata one.

Jakarta, March 28th 2018

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DECLARATION

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

Jakarta, 4 March 2018

Nur Wulan Sari
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Jakarta, March 2018

The Writer
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Tomboy is a phenomenon that has begun in the mid-nineteenth century in America and inevitably became a fixture in American culture and literature (Abate ix). This phenomenon still exists in the following century. During the rise of second-wave feminism in the 1970s and early 1980s, there are several fictional works such as movie and novel that portrayed tomboy or gender-bending character (Abate x). In *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 8th Edition* tomboy means a young girl who enjoys activities and games that are traditionally considered to be for boys. Tomboy is seen as a gender-bending behavior, such as cross-dressing, androgyny, and transsexuality (Klusáková 9). Tomboy also considered a young girl who fill a liminal space between woman and man gender binary (Sumner ii).

Tomboyism evolved as a concept against the system of gender, race, sexuality, and class-divisions of American white, children and teenage middle-class female. And this concept works to reconstruct these categories through the process (Klusáková 9). It is also as a conduct against femininity. While “normal” women dictated to wear skirts, dresses, make-ups, and act in certain ways, tomboys tend to refuse. In a period of time when femininity equated with frailty, tomboyism turns out as the solution (Abate xii). Feminists recognize tomboyism as a reaction to patriarchal society, as the prompt of feminist opinion, specifically in relation to life-phase which most of them connected with tomboys, in childhood to early adulthood period, and the time when women writers and lifestyle advisers in mid-nineteenth
century encouraged tomboyism. The queer theorists called the tomboy as “pre-butch” or the pre-condition of woman manly behavior. Meanwhile, lesbian authors considered it as proto-lesbian (Klusáková 9).

Most of the tomboy characters leave their tomboy behaviors in their adolescence (Sumner ii). Though, this action called “tomboy-taming” is not generalized for all tomboys. Some of the characters prefer to have tomboy as their adulthood personality (Abate xx).

According to Michelle Ann Abate in her book Tomboys: A Literary and Cultural History tomboy characters repeatedly described with some specific features, they are, motherless, habitually involved in boisterous outdoor activity, possess dark figure such as dark hair and brownish skin tone (specifically for white tomboys), being called by things like wild or uncivilized (Abate xii).

The phenomenon of tomboy and the character of it has been involved in many literary works, for example, Scout Finch from Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird (1960), Jo March from Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women (1868), and Jenny Bonnet from Frog Music (2014) novel by Emma Donoghue. Those characters depict tomboy in some ways, such as act boyishly, love outdoor activities, and wear boys clothing. Scout Finch from To Kill a Mockingbird is a motherless almost-six-years-old girl who lived with her father, brother and the family’s cook. She always plays and engaged in outdoor activities along with her brother and a friend who is a boy. Jo March from Little Woman is a fifteen years old teenage tomboy who does not have interest in romance and marriage and loves outdoor activities. Meanwhile, Jenny Bonnet from Frog Music is an adult
boisterous tomboy from a broken family. She used to be a “normal” woman and also had a boyfriend.

Compared to those two characters, Jenny Bonnet is unique for that she used to wear women apparel in her childhood and began to be a tomboy in her adulthood. That fact makes this character interesting to have a further analysis. Even though this character is not the lead character of the story, it has a significant role in it. What makes the character more attracting to be analyzed is because Jenny Bonnet is very persistent to appear in men attire despite the law that opposed her to wear clothing that does not belong to her gender.

_Frog Music_ is a novel written by Emma Donoghue, an Irish-Canadian playwright, literary historian, novelist, and screenwriter. She also wrote the million-copy bestseller book _Room_. _Frog Music_ was released in 2014 by Picador. Donoghue claimed this novel inspired by true events. She clarified that most of the characters of the novel come from historical records. There are approximately sixty newspaper articles about Jenny Bonnet, and the U.S. Federal Census from 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910 (Donoghue 376). One of the records was found in Daily Alta California, Volume 28, Number 9754, 20 December 1876. The unsolved murder case inspired Donoghue to write this novel.

The storyline begins in the heat of September 1876, a woman named Jenny Bonnet was shot dead through a motel window. She was a boisterous woman who appears in men apparel. She loved to ride a motorcycle (which she stole from a man), always brought a revolver, and acted in manly attitude. Before her death, she worked as a frog hunter for French and Chinese restaurants supply. This job is not
a common woman job at that time, it was usually done by man. She also experienced living in jail for forty days for appearing in the apparel of opposite sex. Though, she insisted to wear her manly outfit afterward. After her death, her friend, Blanche Beunon who is an exotic dancer and prostitute, tried to find her murderer. In the process, Jenny’s past, back when she wore skirts, was gradually uncovered. She was a child star and her parents were musical actors. Her mother became an alcoholic after losing her third child and neglecting her other two. On the consequence, the family was broken. Blanche, her younger sister, died later at the state asylum at Stockton. Sosthenes Bonnet, her father, live separately from her in Oakland afterward. Five years back before her death, Jenny tried to commit a suicide by taking a poison. It was because her lover wasted all her money on gambling which broke her heart. It turns out that she was a soiled dove (prostitute) too before she met Blanche Beunon. In the end, Jenny Bonnet dressed in a nightshirt for her funeral. Finally, her true killer found by Blanche, it is John Jr., the motel owner’s son. He killed her for he disappointed that Jenny “making a whore of Blanche” and to save Blanche from her.

This story is set in the 19th century, which also the time when national movements focusing on women’s civil rights and early feminism began to rise (Shippee 3). Tomboy also considered as a protective identity for girls who lack maternal affection, orphaned, or live in a broken family. Many of nineteenth and twentieth-century literary works depict tomboy characters as an orphan or lack of influence from their mothers. As mentioned in the synopsis, Jenny Bonnet lived in
a broken family, in which her sister died in an asylum and her mother became alcoholic and abandoned her children and family.

Another point which interesting from this novel and Jenny Bonnet character is, that she seems to appear and act as a tomboy to conceal her past and to prevent the equation of femininity as frailty. Tomboyism was noticed to be the alternative of gender, where it lays between femininity and masculinity, so, Jenny Bonnet is likely to do so and is able to be considered as a gender bender. The concept of tomboyism is considered suitable to support this research because it explains about tomboy characters in literature and tomboys through history.

Furthermore, the research on tomboy character could give tomboy more space in gender discussion which often forgotten to be discussed in the history of women’s gender roles and sexual identity seminal works (Abate 408).

B. Focus of the Study

The writer focuses on tomboyism portrayed by Jenny Bonnet as the tomboy character in *Frog Music* novel.

C. Research Question

1. How does the tomboyism portrayed by Jenny Bonnet in *Frog Music* novel?

2. What does the function of tomboyism used by the character in *Frog Music*?

D. Significance of the Study

As the topic about tomboy is rarely discussed in the English Letters Department of UIIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, the writer hopes that this research would give new information about the topic and hopefully there are more students or researchers who would give their attention to this topic. The writer also hopes
that readers would be reminded that actually tomboyism has become a familiar phase for many young girls around them, that some grown up women experienced being a tomboy during their childhood. As Klusáková stated that childhood to early adolescence period is the life phase that mostly connected with tomboyism (Klusáková 9).

E. Research Methodology

Research methodology is a method to solve a problem of a research in systematical way (Kothari 8). Methodology of the research contains some essential components, they are objective of the research, research method, technique of data analysis, the instrument, and the unit of analysis.

1. The Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is to discover how tomboy portrayed through Jenny Bonnet character in Frog Music novel and to find out the function of tomboyism practiced by the character.

2. The Method of the Research

The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive method which not based on some specific numbers, but focused on descriptive data, words that written or spoken, and behavior that able to be observed (Taylor et al. 7). Based on this method, the writer will read, analyze, and explain the meaning behind the written words in the Frog Music novel.

3. The Technique of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of analyzing data which begins with organizing, reducing, and describing the data, and after all of these it
continues with the process of making conclusions or interpretations from the data, and guaranteeing those interpretations (Schwandt 6). In this research, the writer uses qualitative descriptive data analysis technique which done by choosing *Frog Music* novel which has a tomboy character in it as the corpus, reading the corpus, marking some words that thought to be relevant to the research, re-reading the corpus multiple times, searching for theories and journals that are suitable for the topic and applied it to the research paper, analyzing the collected data, explaining the research findings and making conclusion.

4. **The Instrument of the Research**

Research instrument is something that used to perform research process such as observing data, recording data, processing data techniques, etc. (Kothari 7). So, based on that definition, the instrument of this research is the writer herself as she worked on collecting and observing the data, and gathering some knowledges related to the topic from some texts and journals to support the analysis.

5. **The Unit of Analysis**

The unit analysis of the research is *Frog Music* novel by Emma Donoghue, released in 2014 by Picador.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Previous Research

The writer has not found any undergraduate research, thesis, or journal that use *Frog Music* novel as the corpus. However, there are several journals discussing tomboys in culture and literature.

The first journal is “Tomboy as Protective Identity” by Traci Craig and Jessica LaCroix. This journal mainly explaining tomboy as an identity and its functions. Craig and LaCroix explained that tomboy as identity could give a limited protection for women and girls such as protection towards straight girls’ and women’s sexual reputation, protection for lesbians who prefer to conceal their sexual orientation, and an access to exclusive male activities. This paper examines the literature related to their statement that tomboy is used as a protective identity in the U.S. contemporary culture. Based on those literatures they have examined, the writer of this article explored the result of these protections and the boundaries as well.

The first point of tomboy identity protection is protection for straight girls’ and women’s sexual reputation. Craig and LaCroix explained, with supports from some articles that tomboy identity could protect women from the society negative assumption of being female. In many cases, women who have too many male friends or more than one lovers are usually labeled as “prostitute” or “nymphomaniac”. In contrary, men who conduct the same behavior would be praised for their sexual power. Moreover, girls or women who are not involved in
heterosexual activity would be labeled as boring, dull, conservative, and lesbian. The function of tomboy here is, to protect girls or women who frequently interact with boys or men from those labels. Furthermore, this identity also protects them from the prejudice about their sexual orientation. The society would agree on tomboys’ masculine behavior as long as they would show some hint of femininity, not only feminine appearance, but also signs of heterosexuality. Tomboy athletes could be a good example for this.

There are some women who appear as a tomboy because it is easier to move in pants and sneaker than in skirt, dresses, or heels, and also, there are some women who refuse to wear dresses or heels for they are symbols of femininity and oppression. In addition, to dress as a tomboy considered to be healthier. There are parents who wanted their daughter to be tomboys because tomboys often do outdoor activities meanwhile traditional femininity tend to have negative health issues. Femininity always related with passivity and inactivity, and also female fashions such as heels and corsets could harm someone’s health physically.

The second protection is protecting lesbians who prefer to hide their sexual orientation. Manly lesbian women could use the label of tomboy to conceal their actual sexual orientation by simply say that they have always been a tomboy. By knowing it, they could show that they are “not” lesbian but rather tend to act against gender standardization. Moreover, by knowing someone was a tomboy as a child, it would let some lesbians continue their tomboy behavior.

The third protection is protected access to male-exclusive activities. Tomboys are usually able and welcomed in masculine spaces by using their
identity. Even though there are benefits related to access, there are also the consequences. Tomboy masculinity might protect them from sexism and objectification, but, it might lead them to be “one of the guys”, misogynist, sexist, or involved in other women objectification.

Craig and LaCroix use some interviews of women who are tomboys or used to be a tomboy to support their journal. They also used some references such as journal or book speaking of tomboyism, gender, sexuality, and lesbianism. The method used for this journal is qualitative research using some interviews from journals or articles. Craig and LaCroix prove that the experience of tomboy is important because it shaped female experience and many of them perform and accept it. The identity of tomboy also leaves a broader question and exploration of how it affects sexual reputation, orientation, and exclusive access to masculine activities, and how the tomboy identity is actually functions and the boundary of it.

In conclusion, Craig and LaCroix’s explained in this research that tomboy identity provides girls and women wider access across gender boundary and protect them in some ways such as exclusive access to male space, protect them from negative judgment about their sexuality and reputation, and conceal lesbians’ sexual orientation. Even though this identity provides protections, it also comes with the consequences and limitations.

From this journal, the writer found that there are differences and similarities between this journal and the writer’s research. The similarities between Craig and LaCroix and the writer are both of them use tomboy as their object. Beside using tomboy as their research object, both of this journal and the writer’s research use
On the other hand, there are some differences between them. Firstly, it is the object of the research. The object of Craig and LaCroix’s research taken from interviews of tomboys experience from some journals. Besides the object of the research, they aim for a different purpose in their research. Craig and LaCroix’s purpose is to examine the functions of tomboy identity. While the writer’s purpose is to describe the portrayal of a tomboy character in *Frog Music* novel.

The second journal is “*Tomboy Chic: Re-Fashioning Gender Rebellion*” by Jamie Skerski. This journal explaining about tomboy fashion, especially in the 21st century. Skerski stated that media and fashion industry has made tomboy as a fashion trend, in this situation, the idea of tomboy as gender rebellion shifted into tomboy as merely fashion rebellion.

The so-called tomboy fashion, according to Skerski, meant to re-define tomboy as merely a fashion trend. Magazines and TV shows exhibit how to dress like a tomboy and tomboy makeover. Tomboy “style” is also a product advising tomboys to emphasize femininity so that they would be noticed as female by male desire lens. In this case, dominant culture tried to emphasize that a “real” woman is biologically female, behave femininely and attracted to men. Commonly, tomboys would deny their boyish behavior when they reach adulthood. If they going to preserve the behavior and the privileges of it into adulthood, it would indicate a domination of female powerfulness. Practicing masculinity also would ruin the requirement of heterosexuality and female subordination.
In this journal, Skerski discusses tomboy chic increasing in pop-culture, and implied that tomboy as merely a fashion trend would endanger the actual intention of tomboy itself as the expression of gender rebellion. Furthermore, re-fashioning the identity of tomboy as merely a fashion statement instead of the substance is one of the strategies to reduce the potential tomboy radicalism. Ironically, tomboyism has been disagreeing with beauty standard, while the word tomboy and chic are opposing one another. Tomboy has always been refusing anything feminine including fashion trends while tomboy chic is nothing more than a trend of fashion. The fashion trend also dictates women into standardized fashion category that strengthen femininity rule which opposed to gender rebellion. Based on teen magazines articles, tomboy fashion exhibited by tomboy models wearing masculine clothing such as a blazer and tie combined with feminine accessories. In addition, the majority of tomboy models was White supporting the Western beauty standard.

Not only tomboy fashion that became a trend, there is also a trend of tomboy makeover. While tomboy fashion taught women to appear more tomboyish, the tomboy makeover aimed to transform masculine women to look more pleasing to heterosexual desire. Skerski gave an example from Rachel Ray show in 2008. In an episode, a boyish girl, Krystal, who was always used sporty clothes and never wear skirts said that she was always mistaken as a boy. So her friend Mike made her tried feminine clothes and surprisingly she liked it and felt comfortable in it. Skerski stated that there are parts in this segment that pointed out the consumption of male gaze for female body parts. It is obvious that this tomboy version is a way to minimize women masculinity potential in the “heteronormative” life.
In brief, tomboy chic fashion trend would lessen the substantial purpose of tomboy, because it is only a trend so that women who are not actually tomboy turned to be tomboy chic just because it is a trend instead of expressing gender rebellion. And it is also an irony that tomboyism is actually a rebellion, not a trend which constructed by society or media.

From this journal, the writer found some similarities and differences to the writer’s research. The similarities are, Skerki’s journal and the writer’s journal both use the qualitative method. Besides that both of them using the same method, it is also clear that both of them used different object of research. The objects of research by Skerki’s journal are the twenty-first-century tomboys and the data taken from magazines, articles, books, and TV shows. Beside the different objects, the aim of these papers is also different. Skerski aimed to explain and map out the subject of tomboy chic growing in pop-culture, while the writer aimed to describe tomboy character in Frog Music novel.

The third journal is “Studs and Protest-Hypermasculinity: The Tomboyism within Black Lesbian Female Masculinity” by Laura Lane-Steele. This journal examining Black lesbian female using ethnographic work by Steele herself. The topic of this journal focused on Black lesbians who recognized as studs (masculine Black lesbian). The data of this journal collected by doing interviews with five studs.

In this article, Steele stated that masculine Black females practice their masculinity to protect them from sexism, racism, and homophobia in their Black society or out of them. They realized that they oppressed because of their Black
skin and gender. According to Black masculine women, heterosexism, heteronormativity, and homophobia in or out of their community are related to race, class, and gender which created kind of different oppression to black lesbian women. Black lesbian studs, however, are not associated with the feminist. Steele argued that ironically historical oppression formed the same oppressive behavior in the community.

The studs’ masculinity is adopted from Black male masculinity which cannot be separated from the history of Black masculinities in the South. Since the slavery of their community, they had always been oppressed by the superior White men. Their access to political and economic fields was limited. The violence and torture towards them resulting in their effeminacy. This oppression resulting in masculinities protest that worked to shield the Black men and their community from racism, violence, and discrimination. This protest is known as protest-hypermasculinity. The studs adopt this kind of masculinity to gain privilege in the patriarchal culture.

Steele explained that physical appearance is important for the studs’ identity. Clothes, braided or short hair, boots, and glitzy jewelry are their common items. But there are also some women who did not take physical appearance as an important thing in being a stud, it is the mentality that considered more crucial. Even though these women dress in masculine attire, they did not indicate transsexual desire. They actually only feel more comfortable in their masculinity. These studs are against the hegemonic concept that masculinity requires biological male sexuality. They showed that biological sex is not a determination of gender
expression. In addition, even though these studs seemingly to have strict regulations in performing their gender, there are also some women who are not complying the regulations. There are women who identified as studs by other lesbians, though, they actually perform masculinity just because they feel more comfortable in male attire but still mentally feminine. Furthermore, there are also studs who got pregnant, they usually called “dick dykes” by other females in their community.

Stud-femme relationships surprisingly following some Black heterosexual normative rules. The studs who act as the “boy” in a relationship are dominant towards their femme lesbian partner. They use misogynist language towards their girlfriend such as “my bitch” or “my ho,” and other words that usually use by misogynistic men to degrade women. By being “one of the boys” allow them to risen their place in the social hierarchy where men are the superior. Performing masculinity prevent them from misogyny directed to other females. Although they have performed masculinity and be “one of the boys,” their position is still below men masculinity.

Ironically, even though these studs are lesbian, they practiced homophobia toward Black gay men. Not only homophobic towards Black gay men, they also do the same to stud–stud relationships. They considered it as inappropriate, weird, and gross. These women stated that there has to be a balance in a relationship, one must be a dominant and a subordinate. There must be a woman who plays the male role and a woman who plays the female role. It is confusing that these studs are homophobic toward other sexualities while they also performed unintelligible gender normative.
In conclusion, by being “one of the boys,” these studs are able to avoid sexism and misogynistic attitudes that might be directed to other women and gain some of the male privileges. Though, this kind of behavior is still very subordinate because of their race, sex, and sexual orientation. So, to gain power, they dominate femmes and gay men who are lower than them in their community’s gender hierarchy.

From this journal, the writer found similarities in Steele’s article and this research. The similarities are, both Steele’s journal and the writer’s research using the qualitative method and both also exploring tomboy masculinity even though Steele’s work focuses more on Black masculine lesbian. Besides the similarities, there are also the differences. Steele used the studs as the object of research and collected the data through interviews. The aim of Steele’s work and this research are also different. Steele aimed to examine the studs in practicing their masculinity, while the writer’s research only analyzes the portrayal of tomboyism by Jenny Bonnet character in *Frog Music* novel.

B. Character and Characterization

A fictional character is an imaginary person made by the writer with some identifications and judgments (DiYanni 35). When people read a beautifully-written fictional character, the character will linger in their mind for sometimes even though they have finished the story (DiYanni 35).

In fictional works, characters can be categorized as major and minor, static and dynamic. A major character is the central figure and own a big portion of a story which sometimes called a protagonist who usually has a conflict with its
opponents which called antagonist. The major character, sometimes does not occupy only by one, it could be two characters and their relationship which dominate the story. One or more character supporting the story and major character called minor characters. This kind of character is usually static which means never change from the beginning of the plot to the end. In contrary, dynamic characters show several changes in behavior, intention, or thoughts as the story goes (DiYanni 35).

As written in Fiction: An Introduction by Robert DiYanni, characterization is how the writer presents and expose a character. Characterization method is the narrative description and explicit judgment towards the character, for example, facts and interpretative comment (DiYanni 36).

Again, DiYanni (37) mentioned six major techniques to reveal character in fiction: (1) Narrative summary without judgment. In this point, the author offered some narrations which contain a character’s actions without giving the character’s facts and direct information; (2) Narrative description with implied or explicit judgment. In this point, the readers will be given some information about the character and the interpretive comment (DiYanni 36); (3) Surface details of dress and physical appearance. In this point, some details such as dress and physical appearance used as a symbol of a character’s mind and condition; (4) Characters’ actions—what they do. In this point, a reader could judge a character through its actions; (5) Characters’ speech—what they say (and how they say it). In this point, a character’s words or speech could be used as a basis of judgment; (6) Characters’
consciousness—what they think and feel. In this last point, what a character is thinking or their state of mind could be used to make an opinion about the character.

C. Tomboyism Concept

The term of tomboy actually appeared in the sixteenth century. This term used to refer to boisterous courtiers men instead of rambunctious girls. The first tomboy term appeared in Oxford English Dictionary means “A rude, boisterous or forward boy” and took a word example from 1553. In the 1570s, its definition shifted to the opposite sex with similar behavior.

Tomboy is considered as complex identity in present U.S. culture. As a non-gendered social identity, it also gives protections for girls and women. Those protections are (1) sexual reputation protection for heterosexual girls and women. In this point, the identity of tomboy can defend girls and women who practice masculinity so that presumptions about their sexuality are protected; (2) protection for lesbians who are closeted. In this second point, tomboyism can offers protections for lesbians who would rather not to disclose their sexuality. (3) protected access to male privileged spaces, activities, and conversations. In this third point, tomboyism can obtain some privileges which restricted for women and require masculinity (Craig et al. 450).

Most Americans usually mentioned some traits that are part of tomboys’ behaviors such as loving outdoor plays especially the athletic ones, strong independent soul, likely to wear masculine apparel and use a boyish name as their nickname (Abate xvi). These traits has become codified culturally in the late twentieth century that twelve ideas of “Tomboy Index” was stated by some
psychologists. Abate quoted from 1996 article by Shawn Meghan Burn, A. Kathleen O’Neil, and Shirley Nederend (422) that there are some undeniable tomboyism signs:

(1) preferring shorts and jeans to dresses; (2) preferring traditional boys’ toys (e.g., guns, matchbox cars) over girls’ toys (e.g., dolls); (3) resembling a boy in appearance; (4) wishing to be a boy; (5) preferring traditionally boys’ activities (e.g., climbing trees, playing army) over traditionally girls’ activities (e.g., ballet, playing dress-up); (6) having girl friends that are tomboys; (7) participating in traditionally male sports (e.g., football, baseball, basketball) with boys; (8) engaging in loud or boisterous play with others; (9) preferring to play with boys over girls; (10) using traditionally girls’ toys in stereotypically boys’ activities (e.g., Barbie driving a Tonka truck); (11) engaging in rough and tumble play; and (12) playing with many different peer groups (e.g., tomboys, non-tomboys, boys) (Abate xvi).

White tomboy characters repeatedly described by the authors as having brownish skin and dark physical characteristics. For example, Jo March from *Little Women* novel owns brown skin tone and dark hair. Hazel Carby, Barbara Christian, and Jaqueline Jones explained that the idea of what was feminine or ladylike are owning white skin that always comes together with a particular socio-economic status (qtd. in Abate 17). Carby and Patricia Hill Collins explained that in the 19th century America, civility, propriety, and self-control were always being related with whiteness while unruliness, impulsiveness, and excess were being related with blackness (qtd. in Abate 35).

Moreover, because tomboys tend to involved in rumbustious outdoor activities such as climbing trees and throwing softballs (Abate xiii), they often called as wild and uncivilized. For example, the tomboy main character Capitola in *The Hidden Hand* by E. D. E. N. Southworth being called impertinent monkey and ridiculous ape (Abate xii). The tomboy protagonist in *The Hidden Hand* also
popularized some masculine apparel which became a trend called “Capitola look,” and the popular clothing including hats, boots and coats (Abate 3).

There are many narrative texts in the nineteenth and twentieth century portrayed tomboy figures as an orphan, motherless or lack of mother’s influence as they grow up. For instance, Scout Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird, she grew up without a mother to exemplify her on femininity. Masculine girl characters have shown that they are capable to choose their form of personality when they don’t have mothers to teach them conservative women’s gender role (Abate xvii-xix).

Tomboys may have embraced their tomboyism in their childhood or adolescence, but, it does not happen when they become an adult. In many narratives even the real phenomenon, tomboys would leave their tomboy behavior when they reach puberty. This phenomenon called “tomboy taming.” The greatest reason for girls or young women to leave their tomboy behavior was to get married and be a mother. If the character was too young to be bound in a marriage or the story did not include traditional marriage narrative, there are other ways in taming the tomboyish character, usually, the author of the story would have the tomboy in serious illness or injury. However, the tomboy taming process is not done by all tomboy characters, some of them still maintain to keep their masculine behavior and considered it important for their adult personality (Abate xix-xx).
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter, the writer is going to analyze the portrayal of tomboy in *Frog Music* novel through Jenny Bonnet as the central tomboy figure in the story. In analyzing the data, the writer uses tomboyism concept based on literary and cultural history. To give a clearer picture of how the character presented tomboyism, firstly, the writer is going to explain the tomboy characteristics that Jenny Bonnet as the central tomboy character possessed, and secondly, the writer is going to elaborate the tomboyism portrayed by Jenny Bonnet that took place in the 19th century using tomboyism concept.

A. Character Analysis of Jenny Bonnet

The story told in *Frog Music* novel is about Jenny Bonnet who murdered by a gunshot in a motel. After her death, her friend, Blanche Beunon, begins her journey to find who has murdered her tomboy friend. Through her investigation, she discovered her tomboy friend’s frail past. Even though she seems to be a playful and tough tomboy girl, she has a frail past and broken family. She seems to use her tomboy behavior to conceal her frailty. Jenny herself is a woman who always appears masculine and does masculine job and activities. She always appears in men apparel, riding a motorcycle, hunting frogs, and always bring a gun. Jenny always acts playfully, yells, and fights. The story set in 1876, in which it is not usual for woman to appear like men, and even criminalized. Jenny had been jailed for about forty days due to her masculine appearance. Though, she insisted to be a tomboy, while cops were keeping chasing her and fined her.
Jenny Bonnet’s tomboyism could be clarified by analyzing her characteristics in the first place. The writer uses DiYanni’s character and characterization methods to analyze and to understand the tomboy main character’s characteristics thoroughly. The character analysis could be analyzed through the narrative summary, narrative description, physical appearance, speech, actions, and consciousness. The character analysis of Jenny Bonnet is explained in the following paragraphs.

Frances Cogan explained that tomboy ideal that appeared in the mid-nineteenth century including self-sufficiency (qtd.in Abate ix). In the story, Jenny described as a financially independent woman. She worked as a frog hunter to make a living, which is not a common job for women at that time. She proves that she could stand on her feet to survive and even support her father’s living.

“That’s your trade? Hunting frogs?” Well, it would go some way to explain the young woman’s getup. “Don’t they give you warts?”
“That’s pure dumb superstition.” Jenny offers her small hands for examination. They’re brown but smooth. “Couldn’t you work at something…I don’t know, less disgusting?”
“Guess I don’t disgust easy,” says Jenny. “The City has three hundred restaurants, and all the French and Chinese ones need frogs.” (p. 18).

Jenny worked as a frog hunter independently for the Chinese and French restaurant. This job requires strength that she must catch and carry a heavy sack of frogs and not be disgust about it. Jenny’s tomboyish appearance eases her to do her job which is difficult to be done if she wears a skirt or heels. As what seen from Blanche’s mind, it explains why Jenny wears such a strange clothing for a woman. She also still maintains her father’s financial needs as she sometimes came to
Oakland to visit her father. Jenny actually had been a child actress when she was a child alongside her family, it shows that she had been a hard worker since she was little. Besides fulfilling her financial need independently, Jenny also does not have a frequent communication and good relationship towards her parents who used to send her to Industrial School. She chose to live alone without her parents and family.

According to Stockton, some famous tomboy characters work outside their home to maintain their life or their family, and in accordance to Abate’s statement that having a job outside is often perceived as a sign of the success of tomboy independency (Stockton 9). In addition, as explained by Craig and LaCroix, tomboy could give protection to girls to access male exclusive spaces, activities, and conversation (Craig et al. 450). By considering these statements and compare them with the story, the main tomboy character of this narrative gained access to manly activities, such as hunting frogs and riding a motorcycle. She also proves herself as an independent woman who does not depend her life on anyone.

In the story, Jenny was imprisoned because of her gender-bending appearance. What she wears was considered as an act of crime. Even though she has been freed, Jenny insisted to appear in the men apparel. Jenny shows that she is a persistent woman for she is holding onto what she believes.

*Out?* Out of…ah, doesn’t that just take the cake: a jailbird. “What were you in for?” “Oh, the usual. ‘Appearing in the apparel of the other sex.’ ” quotes Jenny in a pompous voice. Blanche frowns. Can that be an actual crime? “Well, if this outfit gets you arrested,” she asks with a hint of impatience, “what makes you keep putting it back on?” “It suits me,” says Jenny (p. 22).
In the text above, Jenny stated that she was jailed because she wears men clothing, and still wearing that after she was freed because she thought it suits her. Though the cops still chasing her and she has to pay fine. She still proud of her cross-dressing appearance when she said that in a pompous, self-proud voice. She does not obey the social norms by being a tomboy. Thus, Jenny shows that she is a persistent person based on her relentless endeavor to keep her tomboy identity.

In the story, Jenny has proven that she is a brave woman because she dared to defend Blanche when an American man harassed her verbally. The evidence is quoted in the following text from the book.

“You’re bothering the lady,” mentions Jenny. He turns to look her up and down. “You reckon I can’t afford her?” Jingling coins in his pocket. “Because for your information, I could hire six of this slut”—jerking his thumb at Blanche—“with change to spare.”

“As the fellow says,” Jenny remarks, “better keep your mouth shut and seem stupid than open it and remove all doubt.”

“You calling me stupid?” asks the fellow after a second’s delay, reddening as he shifts his quid of tobacco to the other cheek.

… Jenny hops down from the stool, a Harlequin in a pantomime. The American follows obediently, but when Jenny holds the door for him with flip courtesy, he backhands her into the wall. The crack of the young woman’s skull against a faded print of the Champs-Elysées makes even the most dogged drinkers glance up. (p. 20).

The American man was harassing Blanche while they were eating at Durand’s brasserie. The man humiliated her and saw her as solely a prostitute when he said that he could afford six girls like her. Jenny who felt annoyed tried to make him quiet, as the result, her words made the man upset. As seen from the story, Jenny was courage to threaten back the man who harassed Blanche. Even in this situation, she still remained calm, it’s shown when she still maintain to act
gracefully by opening the restaurant door for the man, even though in the end the man hit her head to the wall.

In many narratives, tomboy characters repeatedly described possessing dark features such as brown skin and dark hair (Abate xii). White tomboys seem to be created in many forms of non-whiteness, this made it seems paradoxical while actually, the tomboy code of conduct aimed to strengthen white women (Abate xii). This white-blackness, cannot be separated from the historical fact that Black women were capable to do masculine works more than white female as the result of slavery work (Abate 18).

In Frog Music, Jenny Bonnet also described owning the similar figure. Her skin is brownish and she has black short hair.

Not a man’s Blanche realizes. Not a boy’s, even. This is a girl, for all the grey jacket, vest, pants, the jet hair hacked above the sunburned jawline. One of these eccentrics on whom the City prides itself—which only aggravates Blanche’s irritation, as if the whole collision were nothing but a gag, and never mind who’s left with merde on her hem (pg. 13).

In the quotes from the text above, Jenny described to have brown sunburned skin and black hair. These are the dark physic of white woman which repeatedly appear as the tomboy icon in some popular narratives such as Jo March in Little Women by Louisa May Alcott, Laura Ingalls in Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder and Capitola Black in The Hidden Hand by E. D. E. N. Southworth (Stockton 8). The darkness of her skin caused by her frequent outdoor activities such as motorcycling.

As Chelsea L. Stockton quoted from Abate, that those famous tomboy icons apparently represent White tomboys with darker skin and physical features, and this
linked to non-whiteness as to support and reinforce the tomboy code of conduct. Their brown skin is what differs them from traditional frail femininity which does not involved in outdoor activities (Stockton 9). Similar to that statement, Hazel Carby, Barbara Christian, and Jaqueline Jones explained that the idea of what was feminine or ladylike are owning white skin that always comes together with a particular socio-economic status (qtd. in Abate 17). Carby, as well as Patricia Hill Collins noted that America in the 19th century relates civility, propriety, and self-control with whiteness while unruliness, impulsiveness, and excess are related to blackness (qtd. in Abate 35). Many narratives such as films that portrayed non-white female characters that engaged both in male and female appropriate sports, so from this situation, the “natural” Black athlete myths develop that they considered having raw strength and “natural” ability. Furthermore, this myth also perpetuated by the image of non-white female characters that engaged in sports. As the result, the Black female always repeatedly associated with “natural” body (Lindner 334). So, it can be concluded that the white-darkness of Jenny is to defy from white-feminine ideals that required women to have white fair skin.

Beside dark physical features, how a boyish character dress might also portray the masculinity of tomboy. A clothing style, might be used as a symbol or identification of one’s identity. Clothing has a noticeable position in the identity social construction. Its preferences including social norms of appropriate ways of clothing and demonstrate a person’s social status and gender. In the earlier centuries, it was an important thing to mark someone’s space in public (Crane 1).
On the other hand, fashion could limit anyone’s movements and behaviors, for instance, women’s fashion in the Victorian era (Crane 2).

In the book, Jenny appears with complete men attire and men accessories. At that time, in 1876, it was unusual for a woman to appear like a man and even considered as an act of crime. Although she was the odd one, and even jailed once because of it, she still keep her masculinity to identify herself.

Not a man’s Blanche realizes. Not a boy’s, even. This is a girl, for all the grey jacket, vest, pants, the jet hair hacked above the sunburned jawline. One of these eccentrics on whom the City prides itself—which only aggravates Blanche’s irritation, as if the whole collision were nothing but a gag, and never mind who’s left with *merde* on her hem (pg. 13).

In the quotation above, from the point of view of Blanche Beunon who was hit by Jenny’s motorcycle, sees Jenny wears men attire like grey jacket, vest, and pants while she tried to give her a hand. In the story, she described to love riding her motorcycle, which could be considered as one of her masculine attributes. Jenny attempted to maintain her own identity against social norms by wearing masculine apparel even though she was sentenced to be jailed once and sometimes chased and fined by police officers. Her masculine appearance also symbolizes her revival from her frail past in which she was oppressed and broken-hearted by her lover, Adrian. She does not wear women’s clothing such as skirts and heels because they are limit her movement while doing her job.

As what Appleford quoted from S. Woodward in his book *Why Women Wear What They Wear* and M. Featherstone in his book *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* about the function of fashion, Woodward said that fashion used to build a natural appearance or idealized self, while Featherstone stated that fashion
works as the individual’s mask so they can hide behind it and shaped a crucial part of self-performance (Appleford 166). In association with Jenny’s case, as written in the evidence from the text above, she also used her tomboy clothing as her mask to exhibit her masculinity as well as hiding her feminine frailty. She also uses a motorcycle to emphasize her tomboyism. Additionally, as Michelle Ann Abate quoted from an article by Shawn Meghan Burn, A. Kathleen O’Neil, and Shirley Nederend (422) that there are some behaviors that indicate tomboyism, for instance, more likely to wear shorts and jeans, would rather choose to play with traditional boys’ toys than girls’, appearing like a boy, fond of boys’ traditional activities, like to play rough game, etc. (Abate xvi). In association with this statement, there is another evidence that Jenny also prefers to “play” with boys’ toys:

“My single army .45,” says Jenny with satisfaction. She hooks it up with one finger to show it off: reddish wood and silvery metal. Blanche reckons the thing must be a foot long. “This one strange class of female,” Ernest remarks to Arthur … “Why should your lot have all the fire-power? As they say, God made men and women, but Sam Colt made them equal” (p. 48).

Jenny explained that she always brings a gun although she never killed anyone with it. The men around her, Ernest and Arthur (who lived with Blanche), told her that it is strange for a woman to carry a gun. So, she replied that gun offers equality between men and women. The gun that she carries around might be used as a tool to scare or to make people believe that she has a power as she always seems proud talking about it and show it off to everyone she met, for example, show it to Ernest and Arthur when she stopped by Blanche’s flat and to the American man in the brasserie. It is also possible to be used as a protection. However, this also emphasizes women’s weakness and frailty when they have no guns, as it is
exaggerated in the widespread narrative that gun is a solution to women’s physical frailty to men (Carlson 370).

As what described in the evidence above, Jenny’s behavior also represents these tomboyism signs, such as, wearing men attire like pants, vest, and grey jacket, and love to ride a motorcycle which is quite unladylike for women in her era. In brief, Jenny uses her tomboy clothing not solely for its comfortability but also as a mask to conceal her frail femininity and to show that she has the masculine power.

As defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, tomboy is “a girl who behaves like a spirited or boisterous boy; a wild romping girl; a hoyden” (qtd. in Abate xiii). Some boisterous manners usually practiced by tomboy character. As repeatedly explained that tomboy is a girl that acts rumbustiously and love to be active. They also exhibit some childish or boyish behavior. Jenny Bonnet shows some form of this manner in the quotation below.

You must be lodging somewhere,” Blanche persists. “Been high-wheeling, mostly,” says Jenny. Zooming along on that contraption, day and night? “What, you sleep on the wing like some seabird?” “I take naps in parks or theaters, or on a friend’s sofa when I feel the need,” Jenny concedes (p. 22).

In the quotation above, Jenny told Blanche that she spends most of her time riding her motorcycle. Motorcycling is an outdoor activity that mostly done by men and is a rumbustious activity as its machine makes a lot of noise. In addition, Jenny also shows another boisterous behavior. The evidence is shown in the quotation below.

As she shakes out her aching leg, she realizes she’s alone. The daredevil’s run half a block up Kearny and is roaring in English at some gamins who’ve seized their chance to make off with her fancy machine. Serves her right if it’s gone! (p. 14).
After the accident of her motorcycle’s spoke that swallowed Blanche’s skirt, Jenny tried to make some urchins who were trying to ride her motorcycle leave by roaring at them. The word roaring that used in the text seems worked to emphasize her boisterous behavior and to make her seems childlike.

From this analysis, Jenny showed some manners and behaviors practiced by tomboys such as financially independent, persistent, brave, having dark physical features, wearing male clothing and engaging in boisterous activity.

**B. The Tomboyism of Jenny Bonnet**

Before literary works with tomboy heroines was released, and tomboy became a cultural phenomenon, the term of it has appeared in the 16th century. The term of it was actually referred to gentlemen courtiers who act disorderly instead of rumbustious young women (Abate xiii). The definition of this term was gradually changed to refer a young girl who enjoys boys’ activities and games (OALD).

In this section, the writer focuses on the portrayal of Jenny Bonnet’s tomboyism in *Frog Music* novel by Emma Donoghue through the concept of tomboyism.

Some names such as wild and uncivilized are labeled to tomboy characters and so does Jenny Bonnet. The evidence as shown in the text below:

Jenny hops down from the stool, a Harlequin in a pantomime. The American follows obediently, but when Jenny holds the door for him with flip courtesy, he backhands her into the wall. The crack of the young woman’s skull against a faded print of the Champs-Elysées makes even the most dogged drinkers glance up (p. 20).

When Jenny jumped down from the stool, the author called her a Harlequin. In *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, Harlequin means “an amusing character
in some traditional plays, who wears special brightly colored clothes with a diamond pattern.” Jenny has always been described as a dazzling eccentric tomboy who always takes any problem as a joke to her. For example, when she hit Blanche with her motorcycle she does not take the problem seriously as long as none of them are badly injured. Her unusual clothing somehow represents “clown costume” that she always wears when she put on a tomboyish “show.”

Due to the boisterous outdoor activity by tomboys, they often labeled by the authors such as “wild” and uncivilized.” Tomboy characters such as Capitola Black in E. D. E. N. Southworth’s *The Hidden Hand* is being called by the other characters as an “impertinent monkey” and a “ridiculous little ape” (36) because of her tomboyish acts (Abate, xii).

Jenny also faced injustice when she declared what the judge did to her (prisoning her) is a violation of women’s right. Even though she defend herself for what she believed, the judge made her pay twenty for the protest instead.

“It’s usually a fine,” Jenny tells her. “The cops been catching me and letting me go every month or two for a couple of years now, all very cat and mouse.”

“How much of a fine?” Ernest wants to know, sitting down.

“Ten bucks—and then there’s the lawyer’s fee on top,” complains Jenny. “Once I made mine tell the judge that I considered the whole thing an infringement on the rights of women, and the son of a bitch fined me twenty” (p. 44).

From the text above, it proves that Jenny crossed the border between femininity and masculinity by wearing men apparel. She believes that women can wear anything they want out of gender standardization. Criminalize woman who appears like the opposite sex is an oppression and violation. In addition, the text above also proved that Jenny incapable of doing any protest to gain her rights.
The law of criminalizing the cross-dressers was established in the 19th century San Francisco. As written in the Revised Orders of 1863, in 1863 until the period of Civil War, the local law that prohibited cross-dressing in public space was passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (qtd. in Sears 170). This law was applied along with other moral violations such as public intoxication, profane language, and inappropriate clothing while bathing in San Francisco Bay (Sears 171). In General Orders, in 1866 the punishment was fine that varied from five hundred dollar penalty to five hundred dollars fine or six months of jail, and in 1875, it changed to one thousand dollars fine, six months in jail, and could be both (qtd. in Sears 171). The “suspects” of this law was varied, there are feminist dress reformers, men who impersonate female, and people without suitable gender identity and biological sex (Sears 171–172).

In the story, Jenny is lack of maternal affection and also she is from a broken family. In most narratives exist, tomboy character are usually motherless so they don’t have someone to exemplify how a “proper” woman should be.

“On losing a third child, Madame Bonnet took to the demon drink, neglecting her first two,” … “On her consequent demise the family was quite broken up.” Gone to the devil, wasn’t that what Jenny quipped when Blanche asked about the Bonnets? (p. 176).

From the quotation above, Jenny’s mother became an alcoholic after lost her third child. As the result, she was not taking care of her two daughters and eventually broken her family. Her sister, Blanche was treated in the asylum and died eventually while her father lives separately from his family afterward.
Many tomboy characters, for example, Jo March in Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* (1868) and Scout Finch in Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) are coming from non-traditional or incomplete family due to some reasons such as divorce, death, and many other conditions. Frankie Addams in Carson McCullers’ *The Member of The Wedding*, has an incomplete family; her mother died when she bears her baby, and as the result of her death, her father neglects his responsibility towards his family and parental role (Proehl 91). This case proves that family situation affects the growth of tomboyism on oneself (Proehl 11). This also happened to Jenny because her mother neglected her and become alcoholic that she does not take care of her children and exemplify her how to act femininely.

Overall of her masculine behavior, Jenny was used to be the opposite of her tomboyish self. In this point, Jenny decided to turn herself to act manly.

Is it a fact that just about every female ends up selling herself at some point? Blanche wonders grimly. Even Jenny turns out to have been a soiled dove whose *mac* broke her heart when he wasted all her money, driving her to try to end it all. What a hackneyed plot! Behind Blanche’s irritation at being lied to and made fool of, there’s crushing disappointment. Every misstep Blanche has made in her own life, it seems, Jenny made before her. The hypocrite! How dare Jenny have posed as a great eccentric, a dazzling original, the exception to all the rules of womanhood? (p. 249).

After Jenny’s death, Blanche found out that Jenny has done the same mistake she did. As described in the story she was a soiled dove, which similar to a prostitute, and her lover used all of her money on gambling. This situation made her heartbroken that she tried to kill herself by overdosing herself with laudanum. After all that happened to her, she decided to cover her frail past by turning into a masculine girl. It is a proof that her tomboy behavior used as a shield for her to end
her old life as a broken and frail girl. By being a tomboy she appeared to be stronger, have more power, and also more independent. She might seem tough, but behind it she was fragile. She used to prostitute herself while her boyfriend wasting all of her money and broke her heart. As seen from Blanche’s point of view, every mistake she made in her life, it seems like Jenny has done all of it before her. Furthermore, Jenny seems to use her tomboy behavior as a tool to survive her life, to leave behind her frail past and become a new person.

Capitola Black character by in *The Hidden Hand* uses her defiant gender identity to survive and eventually leave it once she devotes herself to traditional marriage. While Jo March character from *Little Women* does not use defiant gender identity to survive but to construct her own identity (Stockton 14). Meanwhile, in Jenny’s case, she uses her tomboy identity, to appear more powerful that made people think she is not vulnerable and frail. In addition, she also uses her gender-bending identity in order to survive her life that she lived independently and has to fulfill her father’s financial need by working as a frog hunter.

Most tomboy characters will leave their tomboyism when they reach adulthood to find suitors or because tomboyhood considered as childish. This phenomenon is called “tomboy taming.” In *Frog Music*, Jenny Bonnet is not leaving her tomboyhood when she reached adulthood phase. She leaves it when she died, or forced to leave it. Her murderer considered her as a danger to her own friend Blanche. Her tomboyism is symbolically tamed by death. The evidence is in the quotation below.

Jenny’s corpse looks infinitely strange. Partly because the short hair’s been combed back neatly — more neatly than Blanche ever saw her wear it. The
dieners have made her look like … a girl. … The small brown hands are—not exactly joined as if praying, but clasped around a white flower. Incongruous, as if Jenny is personifying Virtuous Suffering in some tableau vivant. It’s not the pristine charity nightshirt that’s transformed her; that’s a neutral garment, one a man might wear. It’s more the fact that she’s not strutting, not swaggering, not moving at all: still (p. 289).

Jenny’s still body is the opposite of when she was lived as a mischievous girl who used to walk proudly. Her dead body could symbolize the end of her tomboy behavior. In her funeral, she has dressed appropriately in a nightshirt holding white flowers with neatly combed hair. Blanche stated in her mind that her stillness is what has changed her. She is not walking proudly anymore, but still and quiet like a frail conservative femininity characteristic. Jenny is one of a kind when it came to her tamed tomboyish behavior, while other tomboy characters are usually tamed by marriage pressure or pressure of turning into an adult, the character in this story is killed, so that her tomboyism tamed by death which the murderer considered her as a threat because her gender-bending behavior and also her sexual transgression.

As O’Brien explained in Encyclopedia of Gender and Society about tomboy taming that tomboy behavior is accepted to a certain period or particular ages, but this behavior has to be taken off during adolescence (O’Brien 31). While Abate in her argument said that tomboy taming is a narrative process that aims to eliminate a gender-bending girl’s non-normative behaviors, by choice or by force, and drive her to accept and use womanly behaviors when puberty started (qtd. in Stahl 52). Thus, both Abate and O’Brien clarified that tomboys demanded to leave their tomboyism when they reach adulthood.
In Jenny’s case, the tomboyhood was taken over by her death, in which she did not decide to leave her tomboyism, instead, she was forced to leave it. In *Little Women*, Jo March’s sister, Meg, reprove her tomboy behavior and explained that she has to leave her boyish manners because she is older and should remind herself that she is a young lady (Abate xix). But, if a tomboy character is too young to be married or the author did not wish to make the character engaged in traditional marriage narratives, the punishment or treatment to demolish gender-bending behavior are a serious illness or physical injury (Abate xx). Jenny’s parent used to send her to Industrial School, a school for delinquent children and teenagers. Blanche found huge scars on her back that Jenny got from that school. This is how her parents treated her to demolish her gender-bending behavior.

The boy who murdered Jenny told Blanche that he killed her for he is afraid that she would harm and give bad influence to Blanche after he saw them engaging in sexual activity.

“Always reckoned Jenny was just eccentric in her ways,” the boy says with a sob, “something of a character. But she turned out to be some class of he-she-I-don’t-know-what, making a whore of you!” (p. 350).

Blanche found out that John Jr. (the son of Mr. McNamara who owns the motel) is Jenny’s murderer. The boy who actually close to Jenny thought that Jenny’s behavior was only her character’s eccentricity and there’s nothing wrong with it. But his view of Jenny changed after he saw her and Blanche having sexual activity. That boy saw her behavior as a threat that could give bad influence to Blanche because she has treated her like a prostitute. He was in a rage that he decided to kill her. In this case, Jenny has done more than appearing as a tomboy,
she was also unintentionally has gone beyond sexuality norms. From this case, her
tomboy behavior might be the precondition of sexuality transgression. As, the
result, the boy who acts similarly as the society who against this bending behavior,
has decided to kill the woman along with her tomboy and tomboyism.

Hogan and Hudson stated that girls who evolve to be lesbian or heterosexual
adults have the possibility to experience tomboy identity, though, in the lesbian
community it is usually associated with butch identity (qtd. in Hall 556–557).
Kristen Beth Proehl explained in her thesis Battling Girlhood: Sympathy, Race and
the Tomboy Narrative in American Literature, tomboy term has already existed for
centuries and usually, it has a relation to gender subversion and sexual normative.
Furthermore, in Britain and America, its prefix tom has been in association with
working-class promiscuity and prostitution (Kristen Beth Proehl 14). For this
reason, Formanesk-Brunnel (671) explained that this term associated with
masculinity, promiscuity, prostitution, and lesbianism (qtd. in Kristen Beth Proehl
14–15). A tendency to a gender behavior could be seen in one’s everyday
interaction within society. As explained in Judith Butler’s heterosexual framework,
that constant sexuality exhibited through a constant gender behavior which clarified
by the heterosexuality practice (qtd. in Martin and Dinella 303). Agreeing with
these statements, Jenny’s masculine behavior eventually determined her sexuality
that she has violated sexuality and heterosexual norms.

Based on this analysis, Jenny Bonnet has an intense quality of tomboyism
that shown from her fashion, her physicality, her manners, and her relationship with
people in her life such as her family. Even though she seems dazzlingly playful and
perfect as a tomboy, she actually used it to conceal her past as a frail young woman. She also used her tomboyism to survive her life by working a masculine job. In the end, this behavior unintentionally has brought her to the stage where she transgressed normative sexual behavior. She is a misfit in the society that she has to be tamed to demolish her tomboyism.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

*Frog Music* is a novel set in Sacramento, San Francisco in 1876 with a tomboy female heroine in its story. This novel portrays friendship between a Burlesque dancer named Blanche Beunon and a tomboy frog hunter named Jenny Bonnet. From Blanche’s point of view, she discovered and learned Jenny Bonnet as a tomboy that used to be a frail girl. To explain how Jenny Bonnet’s tomboyism portrayed, this paper uses tomboyism concept and characterization by Robert DiYanni with the qualitative and descriptive method. A tomboy’s characteristic and how her tomboyism portrayed could be analyzed through particular tomboy characteristics and how a tomboy is narrated through the story.

Jenny Bonnet described to have some particular tomboy characteristics such as independent, persistent, boisterous, engaged in outdoor activities, brave, and wild. Jenny appeared to be a total masculine she even always cross-dresses, brings a gun, and riding a motorcycle. She also filled a masculine exclusive space that she worked as a frog hunter, a job commonly done by men and not usual for women. She really is persistent in keeping her tomboy identity, even death have to separate it from her. She always fights for her rights to keep her tomboy identity that was rejected by law and heteronormative norms.

In conclusion, Jenny Bonnet proved that tomboyism might not appear just because a girl dislike her gender identity, but also to hide something behind such as unpleasant past and life. Moreover, her tomboyism also strengthen the stereotype
that being a woman means weak while acting as a boy might show strength and power. She also proved that tomboy identity could be used as a self-defense, as Craig and LaCroix stated that one of tomboy identity functions is as protective identity.

B. Suggestion

This analysis focuses on the portrayal of tomboyism of Jenny Bonnet character using tomboyism concept and Robert DiYanni’s characterization theory. Actually, there are more could be explored besides what had been studied in this paper, such as stereotype on Chinese, French, and Irish immigrants, and also male gaze as Blanche Beunon is described as an erotic dancer. The writer of this research hopes that there are other researchers who are interested in studying this novel as well as varied issues offered in the story.


