



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***EXAMINING FEMALE IDENTITY IN SELECTED  
WRITINGS OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE***

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**FBMK 2014 34**



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IN SELECTED WRITINGS OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE**



By  
**AGUNG SUHADI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts**

**June 2014**

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## DEDICATION

In The Name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful

Speacial dedicated to my beloved wife and children are Emi Kosvianti, M.PH, Najwa Nur Syahirah and Muhammad Ar-Razi. They always give me support me to complete my Master of Arts (M.A.) Program in Department of English Languages, University Putra Malaysia. And very special thanks to all of my family members, they always support me to complete my study; “don’t give up, the God will give you the best one for your future”.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia  
in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

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**Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication**

This study investigates the effect of the prevailing patriarchal oppression towards female characters in Nathaniel Hawthorne's short stories searching for identity through the lens of radical feminism, focusing specifically on authority and power. It can be seen that Hawthorne demonstrates how female characters struggle to define their lives as best as they can under male societal strictures in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The rationale is that by understanding the effect of dominant patriarchal culture in the selected writings, the motivation towards the quest of identity among women of the period can be better understood. Hence, Hawthorne's collection of short stories serves as an indication and polemic of what happens to women when they are not allowed to attain their own identity independently of the men.

This thesis analyses the selected writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne namely *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844) and *Scarlet Letter* (1850). The result of this study reveals that Hawthorne has challenged patriarchal oppression through his writings, but he explores in different ways such as "confrontation", "bravery", "death as a triumph" and "self-reliance". In short, this research shows that Hawthorne in some ways exalts the rights of women to seek their own identity in society.

**Keywords :** *Female identity, radical feminism, patriarchal oppression, authority, power and Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings.*

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Sarjana Sastera

**KAJIAN IDENTITI PEREMPUAN DALAM KARYA-KARYA  
TERPILIH OLEH NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE**

Oleh

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Tesis ini akan mengkaji motif-motif terpendam dengan mengidentifikasi identiti perempuan dalam karya-karya terpilih oleh Nathaniel Hawthorne. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dampak kelaziman dalam budaya patriarkal terhadap identiti perempuan dan ini akan dibincang dengan menggunakan teori radikal feminisme, terutamanya kuasa. Hal ini diyakini bahawa Nathaniel Hawthorne menunjukkan bagaimana tokoh-tokoh perempuan berjuang untuk mendefinisikan hidupnya (*mencari identiti*) dalam budaya patriarkal di awal abad ke-19.

Memahami ide tersebut, dampak daripada dominasi budaya patriarkal dalam karya-karya terpilih oleh Nathaniel Hawthorne menjadi gagasan atau motivasi bagi tokoh-tokoh perempuan untuk mencari identiti, dan juga memberikan peringatan serta polemik ketika mereka mencuba membangun identiti yang berbeza daripada budaya patriarkal secara bebas.

Tesis ini akan membincang isu berkenaan dalam karya-karya terpilih oleh Nathaniel Hawthorne iaitu *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844) dan *Scarlet Letter* (1850). Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa Hawthorne telah menunjukkan perlawanannya terhadap penindasan oleh patriarki, tetapi dalam bentuk yang berbeza-beza seperti "konfrontasi", "keberanian", "mati adalah sebuah kemenangan" dan "jati diri". Pendek kata, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa Nathaniel Hawthorne dalam beberapa cara meninggikan hak-hak wanita untuk mendapatkan identiti mereka sendiri dalam masyarakat.

**Kata Kunci:** *Identiti perempuan, radikal feminis, penindasan patriarki, kuasa dan karya-karya Nathaniel Hawthorne.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, **Dr. Arbaayah Ali Termizi** for her constructive comments, remarks, and valuable suggestions in reviewing my grammar and style. She is a very critical and responsible supervisor; she wants her student to be successful in carrying out his research. Her willingness and kindness in providing me with ample information and clearing my doubts supported me all the way. A big “thank you” to **Associate Professor Dr. Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya** for your precious time and gentle guidance, I am indeed grateful. Thank you both.



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

This study will identify the intention of the author's conceptions on the images of women by using the theory of radical feminism which regards patriarchy as the root cause of women's oppression and subordination. This position views patriarchy as the oldest and most universal form of oppression and domination. Echols argues that radical feminism aims to challenge patriarchal oppression by opposing standard gender roles or "a reordering of society". This theory also advocates equal rights for all women in all aspects of life - socially, politically, professionally and personally (Echols 7). Danny Frederick defines the theory in this way,

Radical feminism purports to be concerned with equality for women; it has campaigned for a number of things on the grounds of equality for women. Each of these things could be objectionable on the grounds of sexual equality in the way sexes were treated in respect of them (1).

The main figures who struggle with radical feminism include Kate Millet, Marilyn French and others. They hold differing views as to the possible solution to achieving the shared outcome of total equality for women, but they have the same ideological belief systems which emphasize certain variables as the cause of women's oppression. Kate Millet (1977) argues the root of all inequalities and women's oppression is the patriarchal system (31). She uses the term "patriarchy" to explain the cause of women's oppression. Patriarchy subordinates the women to the men or treats the women as inferior men. It is similar to Marilyn French's position which is that patriarchy is a "sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege" (17). She further explains that patriarchy is "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general" (18). It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and women are deprived access to such power. Radical feminism posits that due to patriarchy, women have come to be viewed as the "other" to the male norm and as such have been systematically oppressed and dominated (Rhodes 4). Early radical feminists posit that the root cause of all other inequalities is the oppression of women. These categories of oppression may include the oppression based on gender identity, sexual orientation, perceived attractiveness, social class, and ability (5).

Therefore, this study examines the female characters in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings such as *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844) and *Scarlet Letter* (1850), in light of Kate Millet's radical feminism concepts to discover and challenge patriarchal oppression over women in Hawthorne's time, thus redefining women as those who have an identity which is separate from male definition. In order to explore

the forms of patriarchal oppression over women, this study begins the initial part of the first chapter by examining the various responses of critics to Hawthorne's portrayal of women characters in his works.

## 1.2 Nathaniel Hawthorne and Women

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) is acknowledged as one of the great American short story writers and novelists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He has utilized many themes in his writings, and one example of his themes is the portrait of the female and this is considered as revolutionary for his era. A critic of Carlson Patricia believes Hawthorne has created a wide range of female characters who are strong, independent-minded, self-confident and other types who are docile, fragile, and submissive. In addition, Charles Swann posited that some characteristics of Hawthorne's women are "strong and weak, charming and rueful, vivid and quiet" (2), but there is one thing that unites them all – 'they call out to the society around them [...] and they are shown as rebels with the great power of humanity' (6).

James Mellow says that Hawthorne portrays a gallery of courageous, young women protagonists who articulate the conflict between the old and new notions of female characteristics. Hawthorne also sympathizes with bold women characters who, instead of suffering silently, work toward their own emancipation. In this, he reaches beyond the inhibitions of his age in envisioning a better future for them and stands out as a champion for the rights of women. Nina Baym agrees with that idea and says, "the presence of women characters in Hawthorne's fiction is too pervasive, their role too striking, to be overlooked [...] and Hawthorne's women such as Hester Prynne, Zenobia, Miriam, Hepzibah, Phoebe and others are all exotically beautiful, endowed with oriental characteristics, yet are strong enough to challenge the patriarchal society in which they live" (3). Besides that, Mellow further argues that Hawthorne also presents a number of women characters who are victims of men and destroyed by male power. Through these various characters and their experiences, he explores the gender relations of his day. He also raises questions about the role of domesticity in shaping women characters and the role of emotion as well as reason in human experience (13). As reflected in some of his works, Hawthorne presents women as central figures and through them explores the legacy of the past and the ways in which women are shaped by their individual and community history. Sympathetic to most of the women characters who appear in his works, Hawthorne presents the complexity of women's lives at times of profound social change, whether in his own day or in the historic past (17).

However, some critics have given various responses to understanding Hawthorne's women. Roy Male says, Hawthorne creates women characters with either a malicious or an evil bent to relay to the reader a more allegorical meaning. Many would say he targets women without justification, while a reader may view him as a misogynist. Katharine Gilbert also comments that "Hawthorne in the past has been generally accepted as a misogynist, because he depicts negative conceptualization of his women's image" (72). Some critics who agree with Gilbert's assumptions are Louise DeSalvo, George Dekker, Alison Easton,

Samuel Coale, Gallian Brown and Lori Merish, J. Donald Crowley, and James D Wallece. As explained by Louise DeSalvo in *Nathaniel Hawthorne's Early Tales: A Critical Study*, "Hawthorne's portrayal of sexual behavior in his works signifies misogynist loathing [...] he delineates his female characters as cold and twisted" (26), even though he criticises the perverse purity of the male character. Similarly, Samuel Coale explains in *The Entanglements of Nathaniel Hawthorne: Haunted Minds and Ambiguous Approaches* as follows:

In Nathaniel Hawthorne the misogynistic patriarchal view that idealizes women in an attempt to veil the deep hostility toward them and believe that for Hawthorne, "grief and suffering, rather than being destructive to a woman, is, in fact, ennobling, so long as she does not become a social reformer as a result of it" (65).

He further argues each one of Hawthorne's novels leaves the reader "trapped within a misogynist point of view...with ...women submerged by the reigning forces of the patriarchy" (p.120). In *Blithedale Romance*, Hawthorne reveals patriarchy oppression but does not go much beyond it; the character of Coverdale is described as "a psychopathic murderous misogynist" (118).

George Dikker takes a different view and believes that Hawthorne sacrifices his feminist ideal for suffering love, while Gallian Brown and Lori Merish comment that, "Coverdale in *Blithedale* reinforces the consumerism of the culture's misogynist homophobia and materialism" (82). Other critics like Alison Easten criticize Hawthorne as a historical ironist who recognized Puritan excusses, for example the treatment in "*Gentle Boy*" and *The Scarlet Letter*, being a "faithful democrat" (as he characterized himself in the *Custom House*), recognized and explored his party's ideological weakness. In "Nathaniel Hawthorne and The Scribbling Women Reconsidered", David Leverenz and James D Wallece view Hawthorne's quarrel with the contemporaneous model of manhood which he depicts as "aggressive", "insensitive", and "murderously dominant" (31). They comment on Hawthorne's notorious ambiguity as a ploy, encouraging and frustrating the reader's "will to power" (230). Male rivalries and dominance-humiliation dynamics dominate Hawthorne's fiction in *My Kinsman, Major Molineux*, *Rappacini's Daughter*, and *Scarlet Letter*, culminating in the threat of homosexual rape. Those reviewers held different perspectives which criticized a misogynistic loathing of Hawthorne's female characters.

However, this assumption that Hawthorne is a misogynist is disputed by Nina Baym, Gloria C, Erlic, T. Walter Harbet who claim the misogynist label of Nathaniel Hawthorne is unfair. They further mentions Hawthorne never viewed women as unimportant people, but rather, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual partners. They explore Hawthorne's treatment of women in his arts and life (10), those like Jonathan Auerbach, Carolyn Heilbron who read Hawthorne's fiction "as a demonstration of women power". And others critics like Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar, Herbert Judith Pryer who placed Hawthorne's fictional woman "within the context of the prevailing methodology of his time". Meanwhile, in *Nathaniel Hawthorne: A Biography*, Arlin Turner demonstrates how women often

play crucial roles in Hawthorne's development and they inspire some of the women characters who appear in his fiction (356).

This researcher believes that there are still many responses toward Hawthorne's conceptions of the images of women, but one thing that can be underlined here is that Hawthorne not only exposes the negative sides of women, but he also explores how women defy the oppression by men in society. Based on the responses of many critics, it is evident that there are many complexities in Hawthorne's women characters, which are not yet completely defined. Therefore, reading the selected writings by Nathaniel Hawthorne has prompted a re-examination of his female characters that demands an effort to explore how he constructs the images of women through those short narratives. To discover this, this study turns to the selected writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne by investigating the female identity, which is defined as oppressed by men and how the women strive for an identity other than that defined by men.

To conclude, according to the responses of many critics, it is evident that there are many models of portrayal of female characters. Moreover, looking at the perspective of female identity by using radical feminism in Hawthorne's writings. This study examines female characters who struggle to search for an identity under patriarchal order. This researcher believes that Nathaniel Hawthorne describes his women's quest for identity and shapes his female characters accordingly.

### 1.3 Statement and Significance of the Study

Reading the selected writings of Hawthorne such as *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844) and *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) explores the duality of women's images and actually can not be resolved by simple understandings. This tangent raises some justifications or speculations of many critics. For examples, Gloria C. Baym, Erlich, and T. Walter Herbert expose "Hawthorne's treatment of women in his art", those are similar to Jonathan Auerbach, Carolyn Heibrun who read Hawthorne's fiction "as a demonstration of women's power" and Judith Fryer, Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar who place Hawthorne's fictional women "within the context of the prevailing mythology of his time". And others from various perspectives like Samuel Coale, Louise DeSalvo, Katherine Gilbert and George Dikker who claim that Hawthorne is a misogynist writer. These critiques viewed Hawthorne as a confused mixture of the supportive and the competitive (as cited in Alisan Easten, p.6). They argue whether Hawthorne is a feminist or misogynistic writer.

In these selected writings of this study, Hawthorne presents patriarchal oppression over female characters through authority and power, otherwise, he seems to exalt the right of his female characters. This can be justified by the concurrence of Hawthorne's active shaping of his heroines and the potential of the female characters to reverse the situation under patriarchal oppression. Thus, using radical feminism particularly patriarchy and oppression, his writings are analyzed to explore the ways female characters overcome patriarchal oppression in their

world. What make this radical feminist theory relevant to this study is that its concepts of “confrontation”, “separatism”, “death as a triumph” and “self-reliance” within radical feminism as proposed by Kate Millet for resisting patriarchal oppression are being utilized in the reading of the short stories. Her concepts are suitable for the reading of Hawthorne’s female characters in the midst of defining their identity.

This study is expected to add to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the extent of women oppression and resistance in Hawthorne’s works. Some researchers have tackled Hawthorne’s works from different angles that help position this current study in terms of a deeper understanding of the images of women in Hawthorne’s time. Thus, the result of this study contributes significantly to the literature on the field of feminism. Furthermore, it will add to the body of knowledge on these fields from radical feminism perspective and it contributes to generalization of the existing study of women’s images in society. The analysis and result would help the strategies and ways for resistance oppression. Radical feminist’s key concepts like “confrontation”, “separatism” and “death” and “self-reliance” challenge the concepts of women being considered as victim of men in Hawthorne’s era and provide an insight into the assumed superiority of men and their control of the structure of society in Hawthorne’s time. It particularly helps to unravel how heroines/women characters powerfully break the patriarchal oppression in the Hawthorne era.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are (1) to investigate the female characters under patriarchal oppression in selected writings of Hawthorne, particularly authority and power; (2) to examine how Hawthorne’s female characters resist patriarchal oppression. Through this, he explores female characters’s ways of resisting patriarchal oppression around their world. In order to explore the above issues, the concepts of radical feminist are applied such as confrontation, bravery, death as a triumph and self-reliance and oppression.

#### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

During his career as a writer, Hawthorne produced many works such as *Fanshaw* (1828), *The Blithdale* (1850), *The House of the Seven Bables* (1851), *The Marble Faun* (1860). Besides that, he also produced two collections of short stories are *Twice-Told Tales* (1837) and *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1844). His stories in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837) are *Ambitious Guest* (1835), *Young Goodman Brown* (1835), *Minister’s Black Veil* (1836), *Sister Years* (1839) *Wakefield* (1843). other tales are from *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1844) namely *Mrs. Bullfrog* (1837), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini’s Daughter* (1844), *The New Adam and Eve* (1846), *The Artist of the Beautiful* (1846), *The Gentle Boy* (1839), *The Snow Image* (1850) and so on. Through his writings, he utilizes various themes such as morality, selfishness, guilt, alienation, sin, and human nature. In *A Nathaniel Hawthorne Encyclopedia*, Mellissa asserts Hawthorne’s short stories combine morality and art; the consequences of pride, selfishness, secret guilt, the conflict between

lighthearted, somber attitude towards life, the influence of the past upon the present, the futility of comprehensive social reforms, the impossibility of getting rid of sin completely from the human heart, alienation and solitude, nature and natural impulses, and unconscious fantasy and dream (7).

Frederick Crew argues that Hawthorne's works are the deepest and most psychological of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because he is interested in the moral and psychological consequence that manifest themselves in human beings as a result of their pride. While, Reynolds divided the aspects in Hawthorne's short stories into three parts: firstly, he uses the New England regional past as the subject and the setting for his stories, showing great concern about the American past (16). Secondly, he is interested in legends, in the remote and in things that are clouded and obscure because of the passage of time. Lastly, his stories display a psychological insight into moral isolation and human emotion. He distrusted the claim of objective reason to be able to arrive at humanly relevant truth. His interest in the moral and the religious is primarily subjective and psychological.

Although there are various themes produced by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his works, the writings for this study are confined to his *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844), and *Scarlet Letter* (1850). Through these, the reader is clearly presented with the patriarchal oppression towards female characters of his time. The crucial effect of this oppression has systematically divided the line of identity between men and women. His writings are chosen as a medium to examine the female identity under patriarchal oppression in Hawthorne's era, which tends to equate women's role as being subversive, obedient and inferior. In these writings the female characters are depicted as actively being oppressed by male authority and power under patriarchal oppression and how Hawthorne's female characters ways to overcome patriarchal oppression around their world. To explore the above issue, this study focuses on the notion proposed by Kate Millet underlying the selected writings by Nathaniel Hawthorne. It underscores the hypothesis based on her theory of radical feminism, which illuminates female characters challenge the patriarchal oppression. Thus, this research aims to unravel female identity under patriarchal oppression as reflected in the selected writings and which will be discussed in chapter III and should provide some insights regarding previous studies have been done in Nathaniel Hawthorne's stories.

Based on the researcher own observation, it is believed that by applying radical feminist concept to the study of female identity under patriarchal oppression in Hawthorne's writings are indeed pioneering research since there are no other researchers conducted a study on the same topic.

## 1.6 Conceptual Theory

The chosen theory for this study is radical feminism, which will provide the bridge between literary texts and analysis. The concept of radical feminism is based on the idea of oppression and domination, which emphasizes patriarchy as the root of women's inequality and social dominance of women by men (Firestone

14). The radical feminists tend to be skeptical of political action within the current system and instead support cultural change that undermines patriarchy and its associated hierarchical structures. They also tend to be more into opposing the existence of political organizations in general, which is inherently tied to patriarchy (Koet and Levine, *at al.*, 1973: 4).

Using this concept will be a way to understand the oppression and domination over women in their quest to find their own identity. This present study will explore the process of patriarchal oppression in the postulation of Kate Millet which uses the term “patriarchy” in revealing the cause of women’s oppression and domination. She goes on to say it is exerted directly or indirectly in civil and domestic life, to constrain women. Kate Millet (1969) explains that patriarchal ideology is divided into two parts: (1) a set of beliefs that legitimize male power and authority over women, for example in marriage or a marriage-arrangement, and (2) a set of attitudes or norms supportive against wives who violate, or who are perceived as violating, the ideals of familial patriarchy (222 - 223). She also argues that the ideology within the patriarchy system is a set of ideas, explaining the social world (society as a whole) and, as a result, indicates explicitly and implicitly how power has been disturbed within this world (224). The dominance of ideology of men will disseminate and maintain social control by winning over the hearts and minds of the population, including the family and the church. In *Sexual Politics* (1977), she also explains:

Sexual politics obtains consent through the “socialization” of both sexes to basic patriarchal politics with regard to temperament, role, and status. As to status, a pervasive assent to the prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male, inferior in the female. The first item, temperament, involves the formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category (“masculine” and “feminine”), based on the needs and values of the dominant group [...] aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, “virtue,” and ineffectuality in the female. This is complemented by a second factor, sex role, which decrees a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct, gesture, and attitude for each sex. In terms of activity, the sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to the female, the rest of human achievement, interest, and ambition to the male [...] Those awarded higher status tend to adopt roles of mastery, largely because they are first encouraged to develop temperaments of dominance (26).

Millett’s definition of “sexual politics” is explained from a feminist point of view. It suggests that the “sexual politics” practised in society is the patriarchal politics of dominant males, who have a stereotyped sex category for the purpose of sexual hierarchy. As a result, men enjoy the privileges guaranteed by such patriarchal politics, and, at the same time, deprives women of their rights to equality by reinforcing the sex category, according to which women are expected to play their social roles as submissive, silent, and domestic daughters, wives, and mothers. In this way, men take women as their opposites or the Other. Millett’s definition of “sexual politics” reveals women’s low social status as women and explains

patriarchal politics as the cause of the practice of sexual hierarchy. Millett's "sexual politics" will enable women to be aware of their situation both in society and at home, to form their self-consciousness as women, to demand their equality with men, and to obtain their autonomy.

Furthermore, Kate Millett claims in *Sexual Politics*, "the situation between the sexes now, and through history, is [...] a relationship of dominance and subordination" (24-25). However, Millett points out that male supremacy does not "reside in physical strength but in the acceptance of a value system which is not biological" (27). Millett argues,

Because of our social circumstances, male and female are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly different - and this is crucial. Implicit in all the gender identity development which takes place through childhood is the sum total of the parents', the peers', and the culture's notions of what is appropriate to each gender by way of temperament, character, interests, status, worth, gesture, and expression. Every moment of the child's life is a clue to how he or she must think and behave to attain or satisfy the demands, which gender places upon one [...] to take a simple example: expectations the culture cherishes about this gender identity encourage the young male to develop aggressive impulses, and the female to thwart her own or turn them inward (*Sexual Politics* 31).

Thus, according to Millett, the sex category, "based on the needs and values of the dominant group", has become stereotyped: "aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male" and "passivity, ignorance, docility, 'virtue' in the female" (*Sexual Politics* 26). In this sense, constructing stereotypes has become an important strategy for the male to subordinate the female. To resist male domination, the female characters can show their own ability, the radical feminist key concepts like "confrontation", "separatism", "death" and "self-reliance" are applied to resist the oppressor around the women's life, as Elaine Showalter asserts in *A Literature of Their Own*, that women have the authority or power to describe women's own experiences (99) and that women "have always had to struggle against the cultural, historical force, oppression, that relegated women's experience to the second rank" (36). For radical feminists, women's confrontation, separatism, death, and self-reliance can be transformed to reduce, to stop or even to face the adverse effects of oppression. These are as a method located in practice, whereby women could interrogate their experiences in the light of systematic male domination. This perspective is always interested, it is a political activity which locates the origin of women's oppression in patriarchy, and which tries to find the ways to overcome it.

The postulations of radical feminist are applied to examine the female identity under patriarchal oppression as practiced in the selected writings by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Women, by understanding the "*Sexual Politics*" of men will be aware of their situation or "self-consciousness" under patriarchal oppression in society or at home, and demand to extricate from men's oppression to be free, independent and self-determining individuals. This researcher believes that her

postulations can lead one to explore women's identity under oppression of men and as the best way to unravel their oppression.

### 1.7 Definition of Key Terms

This section presents the key terms in this thesis. These terms are important to understand the content of this thesis easily. They are: radical feminism, patriarchy, women's identity, and women's oppression.

*Radical feminism* – It stronger focuses on the patriarchy which makes male holds the power and dominance, it sees patriarchal order as the main root of oppression over female (Willis 2000). She explains that women's oppression has a biological factor, due to women being bound to the birth process and raising children that keep them in a position dependent on men in order to survive [...] and the feminist movement should participate in a "biological revolution" that could free them from biological oppression (28). For radical feminist, the oppression can be reduced or resisted through its concepts like "confrontation", "separatism", "death", and "self-reliance".

*Patriarchy* - Patriarchy or a patriarchal situation is based on the "rule of father" or as "rule of men over women". According to Kamarae, it was originally used to describe the power of the father as head of household, thus moved to see male supremacy and female subordination. She further explains patriarchy as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate and oppress women" (4). She sees patriarchal exploitation as "the common, specific and main oppression of women" (5). She also highlights the ability of women to reproduce and their economic productivity within the household as the main form of oppression.

*Female Identity* – Noonan argues the word "identity" deals with self-concept or self-identity; it is how someone views himself/herself and how others observe about one (7). This word can be defined as the construction produced and reproduced along the axes of gender, race, class, and sexuality (3). He adds, that identity as "the combination of acts, hierarchal social, history, culture that define and shape the self-concept" (6). In short, women's identity deals with the concept of self of the women, how it is produced and reproduced within its relation to social, historical and cultural.

*Women Oppression* – Mackinnon indicates that women oppression is "the state of being oppressed" (54). She defines it as "the act of subjugating by cruelty, force, etc, or the state of being subjugated" (56). This idea thus develops to criticize the root of women oppression under the patriarchy system. Stacey sees oppression that occurs in patriarchy as "not unintended" (54). It does not stem from secondary consequences like "biology, socialization, sex roles, or the class system". It is a primary structure characterized by strong and deliberate intentions (59). Oppression of women brought about by women is in some instances considered as a secondary consequence of patriarchy.

## 1.8 Methodology

This study is a textual analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's selected writings. It will examine women's identity under patriarchal oppression as practised in selected writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne. The use of concepts of radical feminism which underscores the patriarchal order and its process in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings will allow one to understand the portrayal of women's identity in Hawthorne's era, which presupposes that women are oppressed, passive, powerless and dominated. Thus, the concepts of Kate Millet will be applied to examine female characters under patriarchal oppression. She underscores the notion of the patriarchy which emphasizes women's oppression. Her concepts like "confrontation", "separatism", "death" and "self-reliance can help researcher to unravel women's oppression, so as to materialize their freedom.

The main material of this study is the selected writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne. In order to conduct more detailed analysis, it is necessary to take the supporting ideas of other feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Marry Wollstonecraft, Shulamith Firestone, and others. Their ideas will provide the critical reviews of radical feminism and feminist's literature to look at the portrait of women's identity in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings.

## 1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into four chapters; Chapter One introduces and summarizes the study. Chapter Two is the literature review. Chapter Three presents the analysis and interpretation by examining female characters under patriarchal oppression through the lens of radical feminism. It will be materialized through the analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings namely *Minister's Black Veil* (1836), *Wakefield* (1843), *Birthmark* (1843), *Rappacini's Daughter* (1844) and *Scarlet Letter* (1850). Chapter Four concludes the study and provides an overview of the main findings of the research and an assessment of how radical feminism can contribute to the study and analysis of literature. The following is a summary of the contents of each chapter:

*Chapter 1, Introduction.* This chapter gives an overview of the scene of female characters in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings. It discusses where Nathaniel Hawthorne as a writer of late 19<sup>th</sup> America has portrayed some models of female characters roles in his time; some strong, brave and self-confident characters, but at the same time he also portrays his female characters as passive, obedient and subversive. Therefore, this study examines female characters under patriarchal oppression in Hawthorne's writings by using radical feminism concept of Kate Millet. It identifies the research objectives that determine the area, scope, focus, and emphasis of the study. Finally, it summarizes the research discussion arising from the data as organized in this thesis.

*Chapter 2, Literature Review.* This chapter presents the review of the concepts of feminism, radical feminism, patriarchal oppression, and domination. After that, the review will be narrowed down to the patriarchal oppression and domination as

reflected particularly in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings. And it highlights the previous study to show radical feminism can give a contribution of knowledge to the field of the study.

*Chapter 3, Analysis and Findings.* This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section is a discussion on women's identity under patriarchal oppression in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings. The second section comprises an examination women overcome their identities under patriarchal through the concepts like "confrontation", "separatism", "death" and "self-reliance".

*Chapter 4, Conclusion.* This final chapter presents an overview of the main findings of the research and provides an evaluation of how radical feminism can contribute to the body of knowledge on the subject of women within the patriarchal system on Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19<sup>th</sup> century America.

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