

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background**

Lyrics is a part of literature. According to JA Cuddon, The term 'literature' usually refers to major genres: epic, drama, lyric, novel, short story, etc. (JA Cuddon, 2013). Nowadays, many people in the music industry, namely musicians, are competing to create something new and interesting to be heard by their listeners. Because, every lyrics in a song have a meaning to convey. Usually, song lyrics are often used as a means to express feelings, voice experiences, or promote social messages. So the lyrics in the song may come from the musician's personal experience. Because of this, musicians are often pioneers in promoting many things including Lesbian through their works.

Lesbian is a term used to describe a woman who feels romantically, emotionally, and sexually attracted to another woman. This is in line with what Crawford said, Lesbians are women who have sexual and emotional desires for other women or women who consciously identify themselves as lesbians (Crawford, 2000: 94).

The LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) phenomenon is a global problem today. The current increase in the number of LGBT people is due to the increasingly intense efforts of movements that encourage acceptance of their existence and campaigns that are increasingly intensively carried out throughout the world. However, Lesbians themselves are still considered taboo by some people, including people in Indonesia.

Although in Europe, LGBT people are more accepted. But still, this LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender) phenomenon still often raises pros and cons. For the majority of people who feel that lesbians violate the norms of society or those who are against the term, do not accept the idea of lesbians being present in

their midst. Because they believe that LGBT is deviant behavior, which can damage morals, is also considered a sin when viewed from a religious perspective. As for those who agree or pro with the existence of LGBT people, they hope that LGBT people can be accepted in society on the basis of humanity and freedom of self-expression for each individual.

Therefore, although still considered taboo, according to Santoso, LGBT people in Indonesia itself continues to increase. In percentage terms, the LGBTQ population in Indonesia is estimated at 3%. Thus, if the total population in Indonesia is 280 million, there are an estimated 7.5 million LGBTQ individuals. In this context, if 100 people gather, it is estimated that 3 of them are LGBTQ individuals.(Santoso, in Yasa 2023).If in Indonesia the LGBT is still a controversial thing the increase in the LGBT community can be so rapid, then it is not surprising that in western countries the LGBT phenomenon is no longer a taboo and is even used as a life style. This does not happen naturally, but because the LGBT people are aggressively making various efforts to normalize and portray that LGBT is a common part of society. Through various media, both electronic and print. So in this research,the researcher want to show that LGBT people are increasingly campaigning for their rights, as well as normalizing same-sex behavior because they believe that it is normal and not deviant behavior, they try to voicetheir opinions in various ways, including the production of films, songs, and television shows, and the lifestyle of LGBT people is often portrayed as natural and normal.

In this case, through the production of songs, musicians who are pro-LGBT and those who are also lesbians use songs as a tool to voice acceptance and equality without discrimination against their sexual orientation. One of them is Norwegian singer-songwriter Maria Ulvem Ringheim or better known by her stage name "Girl in

Red", she started her career by composing songs in her bedroom. Her debut EP was released in 2018, titled Chapter 1. The following year, in 2019 when her second EP was released. She decided to combine both EPs into one album, titled Beginnings. Girl in Red's works are mostly from her own personal experiences, so she does not hesitate to show that she is a lesbian in her works. As in the three songs that will be examined in this research, namely Girls which was released in 2019, We fell in Love in October which was released in 2018, and Forget Her which was also released in the same year, 2018.

Through the works of Girl in red, the researcher wants to dig deeper into how lesbian attitudes are depicted in the lyrics of her songs and what factors drove her to create songs that contain lesbian attitudes in it. As we know that, LGBT people are increasingly campaigning for their rights, as well as normalizing same-sex behavior because they believe that it is normal and not deviant behavior, they try to voice their opinions in various ways, one of which is songs, songs can be a tool to voice their opinions and desires to the public.

## **1.2 Statements of Problem**

From the background explanation above and also the title of this research, "Lesbian Attitudes Depicted in Girl in Red Song Lyrics: Girls, We fell in love in October, and Forget Her", there are several problem statements:

1. How are lesbian attitudes depicted in three selected lyrical song by Girl in Red?
2. What are the factors that drove Girl in Red to express lesbian attitudes in its three songs?

### **1.3 Scope of The Research**

This research focused on identifying how are lesbian attitudes depicted in three selected lyrical songs by Girl in Red and what factors drove Girl in Red in creating a songs that contain lesbian attitude in it. So that the problems to be discussed do not expand anywhere and remain focused on the subject matter.

### **1.4 Objectives of The Research**

Referring to the background and statements of problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. To illustrate how lesbian attitudes are depicted in three selected song lyrics by Girl in Red.
2. To discover what factors drove Girl in Red to express lesbian attitudes in its three songs.

### **1.5 Significances of The Research**

It is hoped that the results of this study are expected to benefit readers, both in terms of theoretically and practically.

#### **1.5.1 Theoretical Significance**

It is hoped that the results of this study can provide information to other researchers and readers about lesbian attitudes depicted in a literary work and used as a tool to campaign for gender equality. Also the factors in creating a work that contain lesbian attitudes in it. In addition, it is also expected to provide instructions on how to combine these elements in creating new works that can provide innovative information to others.

#### **1.5.2 Practical Significance**

Practically, the researcher hopes that the results of this study can be a valuable source of reference for future researchers, especially in studying lesbian attitudes

contained in songs, which are used to voice gender equality. Therefore, the researcher hopes that readers can better understand how lesbian attitudes are depicted in the three lyrics of Girl in Red's selected songs and the factors that drove Girl in Red to make three of her songs contain lesbian attitudes. Hopefully this research can have a positive impact on readers, both directly and indirectly, so that readers can utilize the results of this research.

## **1.6 Review of Related Literature**

To support this research, the researcher refer to several previous studies that are relevant to the topic of this research. Some previous studies that can be mentioned are as follows. The first came from, Curry, Kelsey O.(2022), "Do You Listen to Girl in Red? A Thematic Analysis of Queer Women's Cultural Identity and Community Building on TikTok". This research uses the work of Norwegian singer-songwriter Girl in Red in her song "Girls". It seeks to understand the ways in which lesbians on TikTok express their identities and form supportive communities. It also provides an overview of the development of online communities since the early days of social media, as well as the impact of TikTok's innovative algorithms. The results also show that lesbians have understood and utilized TikTok's facilities to their advantage in expressing themselves and building community.

According to the researcher, the work used in this study is also one of the works that the researcher will analyze in her research. That is the song entitled "Girls" from the same singer-songwriter, Girl in Red. The difference lies is the purpose of each research. The researcher consider that this study is more focused on how the song "Girls" by Girl in Red is used by lesbians on TikTok to express themselves and build a supportive community.

Additionally, there are other study that are connected to this research under the title "Penggambaran Hubungan Lesbian dalam Film Anna" by Siautta, Fanesha Adolphine (2022). The purpose of her research is to describe the lesbian relationship in the movie "Anna". Her research used Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis method. The results of the research on the film Anna show that lesbian relationships in European countries are characterized by a sense of freedom, openness, and frankness. The implementation of Europeanization among EU member states has

given lesbian individuals the same human rights to live openly and equally in public spaces.

Choosing the portrayal of lesbians in the movie *Anna* as a comparative material for this study, the researcher considers that there is a connection between her research and this study. This research discusses how lesbians are starting to openly express themselves because nowadays the LGBT community, especially lesbians, has increasingly received support and acceptance from society. The difference is that her research uses a movie as the object, namely "*Anna*", while this research uses lyrics as the object of research, which are the works of Norwegian singer-songwriter *Girl in Red*.

## **1.7 Theoretical Bases**

### **1.7.1 Queer Feminism Approach**

Queer feminism is an approach in gender studies and feminism that explores gender identity and sexuality outside of the conventional framework set by society. This approach not only focuses on gender equality between men and women, but also questions and breaks gender norms that are considered social constructions. So again, Queer Feminism not only addresses gender equality between men and women, but also asks broader questions about the complexity of gender identities, including non-binary, trans and gender queer identities. It highlights that gender identity is not static and that many variations of gender identity exist outside of the traditional binary framework. This is in line with Sullivan's statement that, Queer theory rejects defining and differentiating spaces of gender, sex, and sexuality as they are fields that "refuse to be disciplined" (Sullivan: 2003).

The term "Queer" itself is used as an inclusive term that refers to individuals outside the heterosexual norm (which mostly consists of relationships between men and women) or those who identify as LGBTQ. This is in line with Chauncey's assertion that the meaning of "queer" is a strange or unusual situation that occurs to

humans in general. For example, a man who identifies as different from the average man and has no attraction to women usually refers to himself as "queer" (Chauncey 1994:101).

So basically, queer feminism aims to encourage society to be more inclusive and accepting of diversity in gender identity and sexual orientation, and avoid the imposition of strict gender norms. In other words, queer feminism challenges the notion that heterosexuality is the "normal" and "correct" norm, and argues that all forms of relationships and sexual orientations have equal value. This is in line with Teresa de Lauretis' perspective that gay and lesbian sexuality should be "understood and imagined as a form of resistance to cultural homogenization, counteracting dominant discourses" (De lauretis, 1991).

### **1.7.2 Lesbian**

Lesbian is a term that refers to the sexual orientation or identity of a woman who feels a strong emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to another woman. The term can also refer to a sexual relationship, inclination, or identity between women of the same gender. The term "lesbianism" itself has a long history in the cultural, social and political spheres. The term comes from mythological stories about the poet Sappho from the ancient Greek island of Lesbos, who was known for her poems depicting love and intimacy between women. The term later became associated with sexual orientation between women. Lesbian is a label given to homosexual women, or women who have sexual and emotional desires for other women (Ricch, 2000:94).

Lesbianism is one element of the diversity of sexual orientations that is considered a form of freedom from the norms that society has established. Lesbianism can be a liberation from the expectations and power structures upheld by society. "Gay and lesbian sexuality should be understood and imagined as a form of

resistance to cultural homogenization, counteracting dominant discourses” (De lauretis, 1991).

#### **1.7.2.1 Physically and Emotionally Attraction Towards Women**

A lesbian usually feels strong emotional, romantic, and physical attraction to women. According to APA (2023) as a primary characteristic, a lesbian has a romantic or sexual interest in women. They may feel emotionally, physically, or both attracted to women. They find a deep attraction to women, in close emotional relationships and in intimate romantic relationships. For them, the beauty, attraction and connection they feel towards women can be used as a reason to initiate their love experiences. Lesbians is one element of the diversity of sexual orientations, where women find comfort, happiness, and a solid identity in seeking out and building relationships with other women as part of their love experience. So, it can be underlined that in general, lesbians is the sexual orientation of a woman who only feels attracted to other women.

#### **1.7.2.2 Lack of Attraction in Men**

Lesbians are not romantically or sexually attracted to men because their sexual orientation is towards women of the same gender. This is part of their sexual identity, where their emotional and sexual attraction to other women characterizes the lesbian sexual orientation. Lesbians feel a stronger emotional, romantic and sexual connection with women, which makes them less likely to be interested in romantic or sexual relationships with men. Most lesbians are not attracted to males as there is very little sexual arousal with the opposite sex. (Uzoeshi 2017).

#### **1.7.3 Self-Expression**

Self-expression through art is the process by which individuals use the medium of art, such as painting, music, literature, dance, photography, etc., to convey their



personal thoughts, emotions, and experiences. It is a way for an individual to express themselves, both verbally and non-verbally, and create works that reflect their identity, feelings, or worldview. According to Dewey (1934), art is a way for individuals to express themselves, explore ideas, emotions, and experiences, and interact with the world around them. Hence, as an overview, songwriters often use lyrics that reflect their personal thoughts, feelings, or experiences. These can be stories about their personal lives, emotional experiences, or struggles they have endured.

#### **1.7.4 Critique of Heteronomy**

Critique of heteronormativity is a process or approach critical of social assumptions and norms that emphasize heterosexuality as the only legitimate and dominant sexual orientation. Heteronormativity creates a framework in which heterosexuality is considered the universally expected and desirable norm, while other sexual orientations, such as homosexuality, bisexuality, and others, are considered deviations or abnormalities. Butler (1990) emphasizes that the recognition of diversity is also a form of resistance to dominant norms that limit individual freedom and marginalize those who are outside the norm. He highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing the diverse ways individuals express themselves, especially those that fall outside traditional gender norms.

#### **1.8 Conceptual Scheme**

In conceptual scheme, the researcher placed the conceptual scheme of the proposal. The purpose of conceptual scheme is so clarified the aim, scope and limits of the research. It helps the researcher conducting

## **1.9 Method of The Research**

### **1.9.1 Method of Collecting Data**

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive method. This is because this research all uses descriptions and does not use numbers at all. Descriptive method is a research method that tries to describe phenomenon, occurrence, event, that happens in the present. Creswell (1994) said the descriptive method of research is to gather information about present existing condition.

### **1.10 Techniques Collecting Data**

For data collection in this research, the researcher took several steps. First, the researcher listened to the three Girl in Red songs, namely Girls, We fell in love in October, and Forget Her one by one several times in order to understand the lyrics in detail. Second, the researcher searched for the lyrics of the three songs, namely Girls, We fall in love in October, and Forget Her, through online. Third, the researcher selected lyrics from each song to analyze. Fourth, the researcher marked all the lyrics that had been selected for analysis.

### **1.11 Data and Data Sources**

The data sources in this research are the lyrics of Girls, We fall in love in October, and Forget Her by Girl in Red.

