

Resistance to Domesticity in Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall*: A Feminist Viewpoint

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Abstract—The status of women in society is often overlooked and defined only through the presence of men. This situation tends to exclude women from socio-cultural, economic, and political contributions to society, which can be reproduced in literary texts. In particular, Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall* (1855) reflects the miserable position of women in 19th century America and demonstrates that women must resist manhood's power to achieve a certain ontological sense in life. Via a context-oriented technique, our analysis aims to explore the practical means through which Ruth, the protagonist of Fern's *Ruth Hall*, resists domesticity to achieve self-realization and social freedom from feminist theoretical viewpoints. According to the analysis, Ruth resists domesticity through events, endurance, self-reliance, and in terms of language. Despite social standards, Fern's representation of Ruth's financial success highlights how women can surpass gender boundaries. Fern's depiction of Ruth further demonstrates how the writings of female authors offer a distinct viewpoint on their place in history. It was envisaged that this analysis could advance our understanding of women's lives in patriarchal societies from feminist theoretical viewpoints.

Index Terms—domesticity, feminism, gender, self-reliance, social class

I. INTRODUCTION

The notion of women's marginalization in society is not a new phenomenon. Women tend to be marginalized by a system characterized by men's power and dominance and are often considered inferior creatures that can be defined only through the presence of men (Bannet, 2000; Nasution, 2016). This situation excludes women from any social, cultural, economic, political contributions to society. Fern's *Ruth Hall* (1855) illustrates this situation and pauses for a while to reflect on the miserable situation of women in 19th century America. Ruth Hall, the heroine, struggles against the norms of masculinity that shaped American society (Fern, 1986). In one case, according to Hartnett (2002), Fern's description of Ruth's achievement exemplifies how 19th-century women can surpass gender constraints, despite societal norms (Hartnett, 2002). While conferring to criticism, Fern shows that when women submit to the conservative way of domesticity and agree to be subservient to men, they tend to be suppressed. Nevertheless, when they struggle to achieve self-determination, they tend to "renovate" their reality and prosper inside and outside of their households as well as become self-reliant (Larson, 2009).

On the flip side, Grasso (1995) contends that *Ruth Hall* is a feminist public demonstration of resentment and is considered as a conscious political device. Grasso argues that God has granted women the capability to be intelligent and acquire talents, and therefore they must be allowed to express this ability through writing. According to Larson (2009), Fern's *Ruth Hall* does not merely narrate the story of Ruth and her matrimonial life but also portrays how the woman, as an eventual widow, succeeds to acquire economic freedom without reliance on men or someone else. She describes how women are deprived of the dignity, respect, and treatment they deserve in the male-controlled society and inclines to transform this reality (Larson, 2009).

Moreover, Ross (2002) discussed the female writer's coherent discourse in the 19th century and attempts to replicate the experience that was previously specified as playwrights further achieve a high level of popularity with their fictional works and cognizance of the viability of gender transformations, as well as how publishers utilized this experience to their advantage. Ross points out that through the protagonist, Fern attempts to bring this facet of experience to her readers. The discussion further interprets Fern's satirical exploration of "men of taste" to demonstrate the men's true color as well as their undeserved status of social and class masculinity at that time.

After the demise of her spouse, Harry, Ruth becomes destitute and reliant on her entourage's support, including her brother, father, and in-laws. She undergoes much difficulty trying to face the world alone with her two children. Fortunately, Ruth gets employed as a writer after several rejections. This job steadily leads to her self-determination and achievement. According to Harris (2006), Ruth resists domesticity, moves to the masculine marketplace, and negotiates

her capital value to achieve freedom. Likewise, Larson (2009) highlights the negative influence of women's domestic discourse through literary works, particularly the novels *Ruth Hall*, *Our Nig*, and *Incident Life of a Slave Girl*. The author considers how women can resist subjugation in the absence or death of their spouses. According to Larson, Ruth, the protagonist, represents a good example of how women can resist subjugation to attain success. For Ruth, the writing job helps her to become prosperous and self-reliant.

Overall, Fern's *Ruth Hall* suggests that women must resist manhood's power and pave the way for other generations to reinforce the concepts of freedom, liberty, equality, self-reliance, and ultimately womanhood. Ruth is the emblematic case in this sense. Thus, using a feminist approach, this analysis aims to explore the practical means through which Ruth resists domesticity to achieve self-realization and social freedom as portrayed in the chosen novel. The feminism approach functions as a theoretical platform that helps to unveil the manifestations of marginalization of women and provides practical means and recommendations to rectify this situation. It is envisaged that this analysis will advance our understanding of women's lives in a patriarchal system from the feminist theoretic viewpoints.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ruth Hall: Advancing the Idea of Women

An exponential rise of the nineteenth-century print culture resulted in a mixed-gender audience and writers. By the mid-1830s, "the New York city's 270,000 people could choose from over 50,000 and an ever greater number of weekly and monthly publications" (Greenburg, 1990, p. 15). The market revolution developed a literary public sphere that allowed many women to speak about their conditions. The public sphere "preserved certain continuity with the publicity involved at the prince's court, the bourgeois avant-garde of the educated middle-class learned the art of critical-rational public debate through its contact with the elegant world" (Habermas, 1989, p. 29).

In the gendered politics of power, females, especially middle-class females, found themselves becoming increasingly subservient to men (Abubakar et al., 2021). Foner (1997) argued, "there was an ideological division between the public sphere of men and the private sphere of women" (p. 1); thus, women could not be seen to be part of the market forces apart from working for the household. In the nineteenth century, the market revolution posed a threat to a male role as the main role among workers when more and more women came out to join the workforce. These circumstances gave a chance for women like Ruth to prove their capabilities within the open domain. On the contrary, Fern (Sara Payson Willis) wrote her novel, *Ruth Hall* (1855), as the text subverts the power arrangements of its day. Ruth Hall, the novel's eponymous heroine, goes through many stages of objectification before becoming a subject and ultimately a powerful woman. Treating the text as a social document leads that Ruth's resistance being directed at the ideological roots of the disciplinary power of patriarchy. The connection she creates between the text and the audience is a method of gaining support for creating women's realm as equal partners with men on social grounds. It promotes the idea of women as political and business leaders. Indeed, Ruth's is a story of a struggle for female agency.

According to Foucault and Blasius (1993), "the individual subject is not an autonomous agent, but rather a social construct. Agents, in contrast, exist only in specific social contexts, but these contexts never determine how they try to construct themselves" (p. 5). Though agents essentially exist within the systems of knowledge and power, these systems may not define the possible practices as well as how they can work out their motives, beliefs, or the activities they attempt to accomplish. Agents are seen as creative individuals, only that their creativeness happens in a specified social setting. For instance, a denial of independence need not involve a denial of agency. As pointed out by Foucault and Blasius, subjects continuously set off against the social contexts which influence them and still insist "they can reason and act in creative, novel ways to modify this background" (p. 5).

Ruth's journey from a happily married woman to widowhood, disempowerment, and finally gradual rise to literary fame is documented in this story. Her journey from non-entity to fame, on the other hand, has been long and complicated. When she loses her husband, her parents and in-law no longer want her, and they only unwillingly pay her a paltry sum. Generally, "there are three types of struggles: either against forms of domination; against forms of exploitation, or against the forms of which ties the individual to himself" (Foucault & Blasius, 1982, p. 212). As a result, she is diminished systematically; she is controlled and subordinated by her ties. Ruth devolves into an object, a non-agent, and a mere body. She has an antagonistic relationship with the patriarchal order. It marks the start of her journey of self-discovery and quest for an agency. She must win over the state of docility incited by the patriarchal disciplinary power, be independent, cultivate recalcitrance and place herself within the social domain.

Additionally, Ruth could not work because of patriarchal hegemony: one of the ways to enforce disciplinary power is to keep women in the household enclosure. She is placed in power dynamics when she enters the patriarchal marketplace. Ruth provides resistance to masculine tyranny in tiny increments. As a writer, she can produce discourse in the form of sentimental rhetoric to mold public opinion in favor of the disadvantaged. Ruth Hall fought against all these exploitation genres: domination of the patriarchal social system, exploitation of the publishing sharks, and subjection of the unequal legal system. Ruth creates her strategy of combating these forces. Fanny Fern portrayed how Ruth gained the power to shape her future. Even when she is poor and she is not powerless. This makes people think of her like a man because she dared to call things by their proper names and the independence to express herself boldly on taboo subjects to the timid and clique-serving. The text is a discursive exterior that fights against male hegemony and paves the way for counter-hegemony.

In his now-classic essay *Class Consciousness*, Lukács (1920) points out that, in a straightforward and practical sense, “the fate of a class depends on its ability to elucidate and solve the problems with which history confronts it” (p. 1). This appears within his discussion of class consciousness development, separate from and transcending the individual consciousness of members of that particular class. *Ruth Hall* is written in the years directly following the world revolutions; the novel is complicit in the justification of the notions of the market as the primary determinant of value and the traditional gender divisions that would come to be known as domesticity. Gender roles are types of constraining values, limiting women's possibilities by outlining the acceptable behaviors for members of each sex. On the other hand, market discourse is an explanatory model, predicting and justifying successes based upon the ostensibly 'natural' laws of exchange. So, one discourse limits possibility while the other explains why those limits are put into place; either way, the discourses become deterministic. Each can be used to do the other's job: gendered norms or the market as the ultimate determinant of value.

The traditional gender roles associated with the domestic woman preclude any market discussion as a determinant of value; thus, a woman's value is determined primarily by her gender and not by direct market relations. For Fern, just the opposite is true. Fern's text argues that gender restrictions are essentially restrictions on the market's ability to determine the ultimate worth and should therefore be understood as merely a supplemental discourse. Ruth is, especially in her mind, first and foremost a mother to her children. The notion of women as homemakers is often translated as a justification for either their occasional forays into the market or as a justification for their permanent move into the marketplace since there is something in them that brings the home along with them, as Ruth demonstrates when she manages to bridge the gap between public and domestic spheres by writing about a home from home. Fern is engaged in the merging of the discourses of market gender norms reflected in domestic models are subservient values, operating beneath the market determinism and domestic gender norms. Fern's text suggests the place's rules. Though she does not challenge the notion that most women are the best fit for domesticated duties, such roles are determined in the marketplace, not by their value as a member of a particular gender.

III. METHODOLOGY

This analysis employs textual analysis where context-oriented technique is adopted to explore the practical means through which Ruth resists domesticity to achieve self-realization and social freedom as depicted in Fern's *Ruth Hall*. According to Klarer (2013), the context-oriented technique represents a “heterogeneous group of schools and methodologies which do not regard literary texts as self-contained, independent works of art but try to place them within a larger context” (p. 32). Specifically, the context of analysis could include gender, politics, nationality, history, or culture. Against this background, this analysis aims to explore domesticity resistance in Fern's *Ruth Hall* from feminist viewpoints.

Mainly, the analysis pays particular attention to the textual expressions in terms of resistance as depicted in the main characters, especially the protagonist Ruth, as connotation and fictitious forms are inseparable (Friedman, 1975). In addition to the textual exploration, inferred meanings are explored from the themes of resistance as portrayed in the chosen text. This is because written communication, including the novel, contains literal codes with inferred connotations. These connotations can further be construed to make worthwhile narratives. Therefore, the analysis discovers the fictional content of the chosen novel by aiming largely at character traits and contexts that denote resistance to domesticity. This is because the reliable way of ascertaining emergent themes is to relate the context and textual content (McKee, 2003; Younes et al., 2020).

IV. MEANS OF RESISTANCE TO DOMESTICITY

A. Resistance through Events

Resistance to domesticity in the novel is depicted through the events. The events enrich the connection between marginalization and the victory of achieving the ideal situation. Resistance is discovered at actual and spiritual levels. Ruth “was vainly trying to look into the future” (Fern, 1855, p. 1) and to resist by insisting on her dreams. Despite being marginalized, she finds emotions in music, as she sometimes asked herself, “why a sweet strain of music or fine passage in a poem made her heart thrill and her whole frame quiver with emotions” (p. 2). Music, poetry, nature was a source of power for her spirit and a source of emotions for her heart. Ruth is highly connected to nature, as she “could not look upon this wealth of sea, sky, bud, and blossom; she could not listen to the little birds, nor inhale the perfumed breath of morning, without a filling eye and brimming heart” (p. 21). Her newly found freedom enlightened her spiritual resistance in her new house with Harry. Ruth enjoyed her freedom decidedly; she “danced about, from room to room, with the careless glee of a happy child” (p.20). Having her own house and enjoying her freedom was a means of resistance towards her family-in-law.

Ruth withstands marginalization through multiple intangible factors, such as “cold bathing, and philosophy” (Fern, 1855, p. 11). To resist, you need to have a strong personality, and she “was a too sensible girl to weep long,” instead, she always thinks about “what was to be done” (p. 11). Her father-in-law never succeeded in taking control of her, as Mrs. Hall once proclaimed that “you cannot get the upper hand of her in that line if she has mind that you shall not” (p.

23). Ruth's mind and nature prevent others from imposing ultimate control over her personal choices and possibilities. Ruth resisted the known cruel parenthood by offering her daughter an affectionate relationship with her father. In contrast to Ruth's experience, her daughter loves her father, and she always waits for him to come home. "Time for papa to come," said Daisy. At the same time, she waits for her father, reflecting Ruth's efforts to resist the known social constraints towards the fear of emotional expression.

Ruth's husband knows her power to resist, as he describes her once as a person who "can endure pain herself like a martyr" (Fern, 1855, p. 52). When her husband passed away, her powers of resistance soared up to protect her daughters and herself as well. "I must," said Ruth declaring her revolt against the abusive norms. She decides to work to take up her family's responsibilities, even though she is "as white as a sheet of paper" (p. 68). Ruth has the power of choice to resist the exploitation of her situation. Ruth has the option of staying subservient and convenient or fighting to achieve her desired life. The power of Ruth was apparent in keeping her daughters by stating that her "children are all I have left to love; in pity do not distress me by urging what I can never grant" (p. 74). As a result, she searched for a job as she "would accept assistance in no other way" (p. 91).

Also, Ruth was a responsible person for her decisions; she worked hard to secure her family. One of them described her appearance due to the hard work as "looking so pale to the mouth, and holding on to her side as if she never would move again." She added, "Poor Mrs. Ruth, she knows too much for that" (Fern, 1855, p. 94). Ruth resisted her conditions and refused to let her daughter; she refused to stay subservient by accepting the Marginalization imposed by the male domain in her surroundings. It is easy for Ruth to accept her conditions and to obey the mighty men's realm. On the contrary, she overcomes the harsh living conditions to reach her goal as an independent society member. She once "hire a room without a board, in the lower part of the city" (p. 132), paying no attention to her personal welfare, but rather insisting on achieving her sedentary life. Ruth's independent nature is explicit to the level that her mother-in-law described her as so "independent that she would never complain if she had to eat paving stones" (p. 137).

Ruth believes in her ability to succeed; she does not stay still waiting for solutions; she works hard to find opportunities. Ruth dares to ask for help; she once asked Miss Millet if she "thought there was any probability of success" and if she should "attempt to get a private school" (Fern, 1855, p. 112). Even when Mrs. Millet declines to help her, Ruth does not give up. For the sake of her children, "she would even go to the wooden man, Mr. Develin, and ask if it were not possible for her to obtain the primary school" (p. 115). Ruth receives no help either from Mrs. Miller or from Mr. Develin, yet "she was not to be discouraged, however, and sent in her application" (p. 117). Ruth was sure that she would not get the job without an introduction letter, but she believed in her abilities by trying all the available options. She was convinced "she could write as well as some of his correspondents, whom he had praised with no niggardly pen" (p. 134); she knows she has the talent that can be mean to her desired dreams.

Ultimately, Ruth's faith strengthened her resistance to the circumstance; she believed her daughters "be proud of their mother" (Fern, 1855, p. 136). When her brother declined to help her, she "listened to the contents of the letter, with an old bitter smile, and went on writing" (p. 156). Ruth's key to resistance is her insistence on achieving her desired dream as she deeply believes in abilities and capabilities. Ruth does not surrender to the unfair application of society's norms. She resists paving the way for her and other females to gain their rights and express their true identity. The segregation of females must come to an end by resisting, insisting, and hoping. Ruth took the lead to stand against Marginalization by her hope and resistance.

B. Resistance in Terms of Endurance and Self-Reliance

The theme of endurance is portrayed to describe the resistance of the heroine. The theme is mainly deployed to enhance the dark side of resistance. Ruth Hall endured challenging societal conditions. She resisted the financial hardship along with the social surroundings conditions. After her husband's death, she had to endure harsh conditions. Her family gave up on her and refused to support her totally, "She knew how it could be when every door hope seemed shut" (Fern, 1855, p. 105); she was conscious about her choice. Ruth understood that freedom has a price, which is enduring. Ruth could not find a job as "people taking for granted that her relatives help her" (p. 91). Ruth accepted work paying no attention to her position as a female or her social conditions. Ruth tolerated the difficult working conditions until she looked "pale about mouth and holding to her side as if she would never walk again" (p. 94).

Ruth worked hard to support her family just equal to men. Ruth accepted a job offered by her cousins as a washer; she "bent over the washtub rubbed clothes till the blood started from her knuckles" (Fern, 1855, p. 94). Ruth sacrificed her health and her comfort to keep her daughters and to seize her freedom. She knew that she had to "pain to learn" (p. 129), which is the price for freedom. For Ruth, "life seemed to score worth the pains to keep its little flame flickering" (p. 144), as from her point of view, pain and hard work will pay her off one day. Theme succeeded in clarifying the motif of Ruth in enduring such harsh conditions. Ruth lived on a "pint of milk and a loaf of bread" (p. 100), and "she hired a room without a board, in the lower part of the city" (p. 132).

Moreover, Ruth's powers exceeded the man's ability to cope with the nineteenth conditions. Ruth tolerated a society that did not believe in women or even offered them equal opportunities with men. In the beginning, she did not "know too much for that" (p. 94), but "she tried very hard" (Fern, 1855, p. 100). The theme helped the reader to comprehend the necessity of resistance and the power of endurance. Ruth stated that for her to achieve her freedom, "there will be desperate struggle first, there will be scant meals, sleepless nights, weary days, throbbing brow and aching heart" (p. 136). Theme skilfully enhanced Ruth's consciousness about her choice and highlighted Ruth's power of endurance.

The endurance theme was exposed in an indirect method aiming to involve the audience effectively. The thematic feature added validity to Ruth's feminine battle and made feminism accessible to multiple audiences.

Besides, self-reliance is vital in generating the manifestations of resistance in *Ruth Hall*. The novel conveys the theme of self-reliance perfectly through multiple factors and clues. Ruth, in her life, longs for the wish of being independent and for leading a life of her own. Her struggle for identity in finding her own space is the main factor of the self-reliance theme. She struggles under the oppressive mechanism of a closed society to achieve her goals in life. The struggle of Ruth is exposed without hiding anything from her readers. The idea of self-reliance is simply mentioned explicitly in stating that "if she had to eat paving stones" (Fern, 1855, p. 137), she will resist domesticity and keep her daughters as well. The thematic indication is crafted through the cause-effect feature as if Ruth seeks her freedom, "there will be a desperate struggle first" (p. 136). Ruth's independent features were described by her friends as "a fine lady like Ruth would rather work to support her children than give them up" (p. 76). Ruth refused to accept favors, as her "natural independence revolted at the idea of receiving a favor from a stranger" (p. 148). Ruth resisted even as she struggled within society's margins. The thematic feature of independence enhanced the resistive nature of Ruth.

Women were not assumed to call for their rights, protest against harsh conditions, or question the already known beliefs, customs, rituals, superstitions, and were "were treated as inferior to men" (Alshwayyat et al., 2021, p. 1181). Females have to exist, submitting and subordinating to the patriarchal system merely, but Ruth resisted all the tyrannical rules. "She was too sensible a girl to weep long, she wiped her eyes and began to consider what was to be done" (Fern, 1855, p. 11), announcing her dependency. As the female protagonist, Ruth is mostly an educated, aspiring or hopeful character caged within the margins of conventional society, who aspires to the dream of freedom and self-recognition. Her education and talents lead to independent thinking, for which her family and society became prejudiced and intolerant of her. Ruth struggles with the gap between tradition and modernity. Ruth seems to be quite helpless before resisting the social conditions. Because of the persistence of specific ideas constantly forced on women, she believes "she could get her head above water" (p. 113). Her Ruth considers resistance to be the ultimate goal of a woman's life, as with fighting the society norms, females can lead a life of their own. She nurtures the desire to be independent and lead a life of her own as well. Ruth wanted her life to go beyond the male dominance sphere. She believed that if she wanted to be free, she needed to look outside the family and society's margins. *Ruth Hall*, as a novel, managed to connote the theme of resistance to suggest an unconfined approach.

C. Resistance in Terms of Language

Fanny Fern scrupulously deploys symbolism, description, narration, and metaphors to convey the way the heroine and other female subjects resist the hegemony of their patriarchal society. Symbolism highlights the manifestations of resistance in the novel. The storyteller's experiences shape her literary style, and he used them to push for a feminist perspective in the nineteenth century. Ruth's passion for justice is depicted throughout the narrative through symbolism. Resistive methods that Ruth leaned on to keep on her journey were illustrated through symbolic language. Ruth symbolically wondered "why a sweet strain of music of fine passage in a poem, made her heart thrilled" (Fern, 1855, p. 2), highlighting the importance of Art. Symbolically Ruth explored the power of Arts as a source of support and traced it as a resistive means. Ruth lived in an era where self-expression was a sin, but there was "something in Ruth's own handwriting that's poetry" (p. 25). The writer emphatically traced poetry as a means of resisting and self-expression. Ruth as well as "strong earnest nature; she could not listen to the little birds, nor inhale the perfumed breath of morning, without a filling eye and brimming heart" (p. 21). Ruth explicitly exposed to readers the role of nature, poetry, and music in enhancing her resistive power.

Also, the symbolic language was not only to clarify the power of nature and arts but also to clarify Ruth's resistive personal traits. "Mrs. Hall is very delicately organized, one of those persons capable of compressing the happiness or misery of a lifetime into a few moments" (Fern, 1855, p. 45), representatively the imagery stands for Ruth's resilience and strength. Ruth's strength allows her to act differently in confinement society and to resist the rugged surroundings. The author's symbolic language demanded that a consistent cultural backdrop be grasped. The symbolic language worked as a foreground for the feministic cultural backdrop against the recognized marginalized cultural background. As a result, it provides a platform for many viewpoints to be presented: the novel and its symbolic language advocate for the liberation of women. The symbolic connotations give the feminist approach a richness that straightforward and political language cannot match. These literary stylistic strategies enable the audience to grasp otherwise abstract concepts.

Description, narration, and the use of metaphors further illustrate the aspects of resistance in the story. The way resisting identities is represented through the language used to reflect Ruth's journey. The view of language functioning as a tool for representation provides information on some of an author's methods for creating the desired effect when building characters. Ruth's personality or qualities makes her who she is. The traits of Ruth's personality helped her in resisting the marginalization circumstances. The descriptive language instrument provides a detailed description of Ruth's nature. To introduce the reader to a resisting character, Ruth is described as a "practical woman" (Fern, 1855, p. 6), "proud and poor" (p. 138), "had a strong earnest nature" (p. 25), and "brave" (p. 19). The rebel nature of Ruth lies in her pride and power being. Even though she was "a fair paged" (p. 15), she "had the strong common sense" (p. 154) to choose resistance over fragility. The language as a tool used her to illustrate a must-have quality to resistance. The

dexterous word choice deepens the reader's experience and the connection to Ruth's life. The language also highlights that despite Ruth being a revolutionary character, she is still a "pattern mother" (p. 44) and "full of emotions" (p. 39).

In reality, "identities could be described as performances since they are constructed according to the roles acquired within different circumstances" (Robins, 2005, p. 172), even though Ruth is an independent identity and holds out against society. The language used within its limits makes Ruth's identities represented as freedom fighters to a reader's eyes. The writer manages to convey Ruth's power through language techniques, such as figures of speech, tone, and word choice. The denotative and connotative words are one of the main linguistic elements in *Ruth Hall*. The oral language is used effectively along with imagery to attach the audience to the factor of resistance. The self-reference oral language "I must, said Ruth controlling herself with a violent effort" (Fern, 1855, p. 68) contemplates the high-powered opposition that Ruth holds within her identity. She said, "I can never part with my children in a voice which is low but is perfectly clear and distinct" (p. 73); the oral language and the linguistic imagery create a vivid mental image of resistance and confrontation. The language permits the interpretation between insistence as a means of resistance; for instance, "month passed away while Ruth hoped and tailed" (p. 155).

Language also features Ruth's power, to clarify "they shall be heard of and she leaped to her feet Ruth said with strong heart it will" (Fern, 1855, p. 136). Ruth's resistance is based on insistence and power; with the help of the imagery and oral language, readers can form mental images of the resistance. The factor of language matters in *Ruth Hall* to come up with a whole life journey full of resistance and hope. *Ruth Hall* has taken writing as a protest, a way of mapping from the point of a woman's experience. The novel provides a fundamental and reciprocal relationship between oral and written language, creating vivid images of resistance. Language functioning as a tool for resistive character representation in a fictional text provides information on some of an author's methods for creating the desired effect when building characters. The language used skilfully in representing and creating repellent marginalized identities in a fictional text differs from the more traditional one.

V. CONCLUSION

This study discussed the practical means of resisting domesticity to achieve self-realization and social freedom as portrayed in Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall*. The power of resistance is reflected in the heroine's interactions within her social dimension. The analysis revealed that Ruth, the protagonist of Fern's novel, resisted suppression through events, endurance, self-reliance, and in terms of language. Ruth Hall is a perfect implication of this experience. Despite social standards, Fern's representation of Ruth's financial success highlights how women can surpass gender boundaries. Initially, Fanny Fern wrote *Ruth Hall* to support women and criticize gendered societies. Females require direction and inspiration to establish their opinions. *Ruth Hall* is a public display of rage by a feminist political-strategic tactic. The writings of female authors offer a distinct viewpoint on their place in history. The novel combines theology and domesticity, criticizing gender norms and, eventually, the patriarchal framework of American society.

In essence, women battled for more refined life and education. Fern proposes that women must be emancipated in response to their real-life predicament. The writer shows that ultimate equality between men and women is the ideal condition. Additionally, she believes that to reach a specific ontological sense in life, women must oppose the power of males and prepare the path for future generations to reaffirm the ideals of freedom, liberty, equality, self-reliance, and, eventually, femininity. Feminist literature aims to achieve greater equality, increase fair gendered norms, and create a less discriminatory culture. The feminist approach is instrumental in the transformation of women and how women's roles had been overlooked and undervalued in society. This analysis advances our understanding of women's lives in patriarchal societies from feminist theoretical viewpoints, particularly how they can survive and achieve equality with males. The analysis also indicates the need for awareness to support women as they connect with their knowledge and experience of gender-based oppression in the 19th century. It is, therefore, suggested that further research may draw a comparison of this phenomenon in contemporary novels.

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