

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter describes the theory used in analyzing the “Joker” along with the narrative aspects in examining the movie. Intrinsic elements including narratives. Narratives consists of theme, character, settings, and conflicts. Meanwhile social stratification will be the extrinsic elements in this research. In further, camera angle and camera shots would be the cinematography that exists in elaborating the “Joker” movie.

#### **2.1. Intrinsic Elements**

Intrinsic elements in movies are aspects in building the plot of the movies’ story. Robert Stanton expresses the intrinsic elements can be classified into plot, character, characterization, point of view, setting, conflict, and theme (1966:12). This research will focus on character, characterization, setting, conflict, and theme in the “Joker” movie.

##### **2.1.1. Narrative**

Abrams' concepts relevant to a movie analysis. Through the Fourfold Models, according to Abrams (1999:51), the mimetic aspect is one of the example in accurately the movie reflection or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is the originality of its representation to the subject matter that portrays, for instance is social issues in the “Joker” movie.

Abrams stated that narrative is a story that involves events, characters, and what the characters say and do. The narrative is not told, but evolves by means of the direct presentation on stage of the actions and speeches of the characters (1999:173). Furthermore, according to Bordwell and Thompson, narrative forms are most common in fictional movies; they can appear in all other basic types (2008:74). A narrative to be a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:75).

#### **2.1.1.1. Theme**

Theme is the basic idea of the movie storyline. According to Wellek and Warren, a theme is the attitude of the author towards the work, the reader, and life (1977:39). A theme is the basic elements in pursuing a work's storyline in the movie. In line, by understanding the theme of a movie work, the audience can know the topic or the main idea of the movie's story.

#### **2.1.1.2. Character**

Character plays an important role in the movie. Character is the individuals who inhabit the story, each with distinct traits, motivations, and developments. According to Bordwell and Thompson (2008:180), character refers to the beings or creatures encountered by the protagonists or antagonist during their quest. These characters are elaborately designed and executed, with detailed three-dimensional models and realistic movements.

### **2.1.1.3. Characterization**

Characterization is an attempt to show the character's behavior in the movie's storyline. As Bordwell and Thompson in *Film Art: An Introduction* stated:

“Characterization refers to the techniques an author or filmmaker uses to develop and convey information about characters in a narrative. Characterization helps to create a deeper understanding of the characters' personalities, motivations, and growth throughout the story. Whether introduced early in a synopsis or woven throughout the discussion of the plot and themes, effective characterization is crucial for engaging the audience and driving the narrative forward.” (2008:434)

Furthermore, characterization is a method authors and filmmakers use to depict characters' appearance, behavior, speech, thoughts, and interactions, enriching audience understanding and driving the narrative forward effectively.

### **2.1.1.4. Settings**

Settings refer to the time and place in which the story takes place. Based on the Bordwell and Thompson's book titled *Film Art: An Introduction* (2008:115), Andre Bazin stated:

“The human being is all-important in the theatre. The drama on the screen can exist without actors. A banging door, a leaf in the wind, waves beating on the shore can heighten the dramatic effect. Some film masterpieces use man only as an accessory, like an extra, or in counterpoint to nature, which is the true leading character.” (2008:115)

The meaning of "setting" in the context of the sentence is the environment where the story or drama takes place. Therefore, "setting" refers to the physical and natural context in which the drama or story unfolds, influencing the atmosphere and viewer's experience in viewing the movie.

Additionally, Abrams also stated that settings are a general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs in the art work (2009:330). This research will involve three aspects in settings: place, time, and setting of environments.

#### **2.1.1.4.1. Setting of Place**

According to Abrams, setting of places also refers to the location where the events in a work of fiction take place. This location may be a specific place with a name or initials, or it may be a location without a clear name (1999:285).

#### **2.1.1.4.2. Setting of Time**

The setting of time in a movie refers to the specific historical period or era in which the story unfolds. Abrams argues setting time is the process of describing what an actor or character does at the exact moment that an event in a story takes place. as at midday, dawn, night, early in the morning, evening, future, past, present, or in any other situation (1999:285).

#### **2.1.1.4.3. Setting of Environment**

Abrams (1999:285) stated the setting of the environment is highlighting related to behavior of the community's social life in the fiction's work. For instance: friendliness, customs, beliefs, behavior, et cetera (from "Social Conflict in Building the Moral Values in *the Birth of Nation* (1915) Film").

### **2.1.1.5. Conflict**

Conflict in literary works is an action that determines the storyline of a literary work. According to William Kenney, there are two types of conflict, namely external conflict and internal conflict (1966:5).

#### **2.1.1.5.1. Internal Conflict**

Internal conflicts occur in the mind of a character due to different desires or choices (William Kenney, 1966:5). The conflict is caused by a character's confusion since the character has two conflicting souls' desires or disappointment because what a character expects is not under the reality that happened.

#### **2.1.1.5.2. External Conflict**

According to William Kenney, external conflict is a problem that occurs with factors outside the human self. External conflicts shown through actions (struggles, squabbles, and physical struggles) where the conflict comes from outside the character, for instance: between humans and nature, humans and society (1966:5).

### **2.1.2. Cinematography**

Cinematography is essentially the art of visual storytelling and is a fundamental part of movie-making. According to Bordwell and Thompson, in controlling mise-en-scene the filmmaker stages an event to be filmed. The movie maker also controls the cinematographic qualities of the shot-not only what is filmed, but also how it is filmed (2008:162). One of the qualities of cinematography including the aspects of the shot

(Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:162). In this research, cinematography is divided into: Camera Angle and Camera Shots.

### **2.1.2.1. Camera Angle**

Bordwell and Thompson stated that camera angle is a position at some angle looking onto the shot's mise-en-scene. The number of such angles is infinite, since the camera might be placed anywhere (2008:190). Several camera angles can be used to convey meaning to the point of the shot because the angle of view created by the camera angle enhances the artistic appeal of an image. The elements of camera angle described by Bordwell and Thompson are follows:

#### **2.1.2.1.1. High Angle**

The high-angle position is looking down at the material within the frame (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:190). In a movie, high angle framing from a high angle presents a character in a movie as dwarfed and defeated (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.1.2. Normal Angle**

Normal angle or the straight-on angle is the most common angle that can be found in the movie (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:190). A normal angle is placed at eye level. It is meant to create an equal impression with normal objects or impressions.

### 2.1.2.1.3. Low Angle

The low-angle framing positions us as looking up at the framed materials (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:190). This angle framing from a low angle automatically presents a character as a powerful character (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

### 2.1.2.2. Camera Shots

Camera shot functions as the size of the shot and divided into three sizes: the close-up shot, the medium shot, and the long shot (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192), which is further subdivided into sections and has different motivational focuses, as follows:



*Picture 1*  
Camera Shots

Source: *Film Art: An Introduction* (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008)

### 2.1.2.2.1. Long Shots

In the long shot, figures are more prominent, but the background still dominates (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.2. Extreme Long Shots**

The extreme long shot provides the human figure is barely visible (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.3. Medium Shots**

The medium shot frames the human body from the waist up. Gesture and expression become more visible (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.4. Medium Long Shot**

Shots in which the human figure is framed from about the knees up are called medium long shots. These shots are common, since they permit a nice balance of figure and surroundings. (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.5. Close Up**

The close-up is traditionally the shot showing just the head, hands, feet. or a small object. It emphasizes facial expression, the details of a gesture, or a significant object. Camera sufficiently close to show only a small object, or the human head (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192). Close-up shots in further divided into three parts:

##### **2.1.2.2.5.1. Extreme Close Up**

The extreme close-up singles out a portion of the face (often eyes or lips) or isolates and magnifies an object (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.5.2. Big Close Up**

The big close up is often used to emphasize the emotional state of the object. This type of shot is usually taking the human object only the head (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.2.5.3. Medium Close Up**

The medium close-up frames the body from the chest up. Human figure shown from chest up (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:192).

#### **2.1.2.3. Sound**

In a movie, sound gave the spectator a more complete perceptual experience. Sound engages a distinct sense mode. More significantly, "synchronization of senses"-making a single rhythm or expressive quality both image and sound in a movie. Also, sound can actively shape how the audience perceive and interpret the image. In addition, sound that is used in a movie will help the audience to construct the same images differently depending on the sound (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:265).

#### **2.1.2.4. Dialogue**

Dialogue is a conversation between characters in the movie. Dialogue between characters is normally synchronized; the lips of the actors move at the same time that we hear the appropriate words (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:288). In addition, through dialogue could simply make explicit what has been implicit in a movie (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:424).

### **2.1.2.5. Mise-en-scene**

Taken from *Film Art: An Introduction* by Bordwell and Thompson, mise-en-scene includes costume and makeup, and lighting. As it stated:

“In the original French, mise en scene (pronounced meez-ahn-sen) means "putting into the scene," and it was first applied to the practice of directing plays. Film scholars, extending the term to film direction, use the term to signify the director's control over what appears in the film frame.” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:112)

Mise en scene was initially used for directing plays. In film, it describes the director's control over elements such as setting, lighting, costumes, and character actions, determining how scenes are visually presented and arranged for the camera.

### **2.1.2.6. Lighting**

One of the mise-en-scene aspects is lighting in a movie, as Bordwell and Thompson stated their book titled *Film Art: An Introduction*:

“In cinema, lighting is more than just illumination that permits us to see the action. Lighter and darker areas within the frame help create the overall composition of each shot and thus guide our attention to certain objects and actions. A brightly illuminated patch may draw our eye to a key gesture, while a shadow may conceal a detail or build up suspense about what may be present...” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:124)

Furthermore, brightly lit area can highlight an important gesture, while a shadow might hide a detail or create suspense about what could be exists in the movie.

### **2.1.2.7. Costume and Makeup**

Costumes have an important function in making a character alive in a movie.

As Bordwell and Thompson argue:

“Costumes can play important motivic and causal roles in narratives and may be quite stylized in order to call attention to their purely graphic qualities. In addition, costumes are carefully orchestrated with one another in their colors, their textures, and even their movements.” (2008:121-122).

Costume and makeup are unity that is attached to the character in the movie.

Makeup has been used in various ways to enhance the appearance of actors on the screen. In addition, makeup also accentuates expressive qualities of the actor's face (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:122-124).

## **2.2. Extrinsic Elements**

Extrinsic elements can be found outside of the story but give indirect influence on the structure of a literary work. According to Wellek and Warren, extrinsic elements include circumstances of individual subjectivity authors, psychological state, author of circumstances (social, economic, and political), religion, various works of arts, view of a nation's life, and so on (1949:9). This research discusses social stratification in the “Joker” movie using Max Weber’s social stratification theory as the extrinsic elements in the research.

### **2.2.1. Max Weber's Social Stratification Theory**

Max Weber's social stratification meaning divides a person to include a particular social system into layers according to dimensions of class, status, and parties (Weber, 1978:145). Class refers to economic differences and inequalities based on individuals' access to wealth, property, and income. Class stratification involves individuals or groups being ranked hierarchically according to their economic resources. Status relates to social prestige, honor, and esteem attached to different positions or lifestyles within society. Status distinctions are based on cultural and social criteria rather than purely economic factors. Last, parties refers to political power and influence within society. Parties are organized groups or associations that seek to influence social, economic, and political outcomes. As it divides into three sections of definition in social stratification's theory by Max Weber as follows:

#### **2.2.1.1. Class**

Weber stated that one of the composing social stratification is the object of class. In further, class is "any group of persons occupying the same class situation" (1964:424). He argues that class is a number of people that have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income (1970:181). Furthermore, class interest is only the average interests of discrete individuals sharing a common economic position: "classes" are groups or people who, from the standpoint of the specific interests, have the same economic position"

(1970:405). In consequence, class relates to the social stratification's economic component. It is predicated on how money, property, and economic opportunities—like resource ownership—are distributed throughout society. The upper class consists of those who own and manage the means of production, whereas the lower class is made up of people who must sell their labor in order to subsist.

#### **2.2.1.2. Status**

According to Weber, social status can adhere directly to a class situation and is determined by the average class situation of the status group member. Status membership, in turn, influences the class situation in that the style of life required to status groups makes them prefer special kinds of property or gainful pursuits (1958:39). Furthermore, Weber also stated that class and status are connected with each other even when they are distinct. Weber says, "social status may partly or even wholly determine class situation without, however, being identical with it" (1964:428). In short, status is something that is inherent in a person's life in society. Moreover, this aspect can be shown in education, religion, and society.

#### **2.2.1.3. Parties**

Weber stated that 'parties' live in a house of 'power'. Their action is oriented toward the acquisition of 'power,' that is to say, toward influencing a communal action no matter what its content may be. Their means of attaining power may be quite varied, ranging from naked violence of any sort to canvass for votes with coarse or subtle

means: money, social influence, the force of speech, suggestion, clumsy hoax, and so on to the rougher or more artful tactics of obstruction in parliamentary bodies (1946:194-195). Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that parties have a significant power in building social stratification. It alludes to the capacity to exert control or influence over people even in the lack of material prosperity or social standing. The capacity to use power and sway decisions is exemplified by influence and authority. Influential people, bureaucrats, and political leaders can exercise power even if they do not come from the wealthiest social or economic classes.

### **2.2.2. America Social Stratification in the 1980**

In 1900, America had a big change. One of the biggest changes towards that century was the “melting pot” that came to American society. Taken from a journal titled *Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America* (1979), Herbert Gans stated that the melting pot can be defined as a process that requires minority groups to adapt to the majority culture (Hans, para. 2, line 5). Furthermore, quoted from a journal entitled *The Melting Pot: Symbol of Fusion or Confusion?*, the tremendous immigration of the period, immigrants from entered the United States as it was known as "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe who gathered in conspicuous enclaves in the great cities of America (Gleason, para. 8, lines 6-7) which in turn affects and resulting a social stratification in America in the 1980.

The “Joker” movie has its setting in America and was taken at a time around the 1980. It represents America was in the grips of severe economic problems and made an impact towards America’s social stratification condition at that time. Social stratification is one of the results of a deep recession in the American economy in 1980. The first social stratification that is clearly visible is the existence of a distinct social class between the upper class and the lower class in America, as these shown are defined into blue-collar workers and the white-collar workers in the occupation field. Cited from Investopedia titled *Blue-Collar vs. White-Collar*, blue collar workers refers to jobs that involve physical or manual labor, often in manufacturing, construction, and similar sectors. The "blue" in "blue collar" refers to the traditional color of factory workers' uniforms. Meanwhile, white-collar workers are used to describe work performed within offices, especially in the service sector, such as administration, management, finance, et cetera. The "white" color in "white collar" symbolizes formal clothing that is often worn by professionals in the office. Furthermore, quoted from the book titled *The Urban Underclass*, in the 1980, blue-collar workers could be, and often were laid off. According to research result by the Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office (CBO) titled “Displaced Workers: Trends in the 1980s and Implications for the Future”, in 1980 at America, 10.000 people got laid off from their job because of their employers closed or relocated facilities (Reischauer, 1993:12). On the other side, the white-collars workers are generally occupied many job field in America. The white-collar workers, especially middle managers in large-scale

enterprises enjoyed virtual life tenure; dismissals were rare and only for grave reasons for the white-collar workers rather than the blue-collar workers (Jencks, 1991:42).

Aligned with social class, it made the social status in American society in the 1980 influenced by factors such as education, employment, and wealth. Individuals with high education and prestigious jobs tend to have higher social status than those with low education and jobs, as it related to access to education was markedly influenced by socioeconomic status (Karabel, p.524).

In early 1980, Ronald Reagan was running for a president in America along with his party that supported him, which was Republican Party. When Ronald Reagan ran for president in the United States in 1980, the country was facing significant challenges and undergoing substantial social, economic, and political changes. The economic issue was experiencing high inflation, known as "stagflation," which is a combination of stagnant economic growth, high unemployment, and high inflation rates. This economic situation created widespread dissatisfaction among Americans (Blinder, 2013). Furthermore, one of the social issues when Reagan running for president was the rise of the conservative movement which led by the "Moral Majority," to reduced government intervention in the economy (Martin, 1996)

Social stratification not only consists of class and status. Parties are an important aspect in the order of social stratification in building American society. In the American 1980, there was two-party dominance of public offices from the

presidency to the counties which are Republican and Democratic parties (Eldersveld, 2000:390). In 1980, cited from a book titled *Political Parties in American Society* (2000), the Republican party had the power in controlling American society as it showed in 1980 Reagan from the Republican party received 51 percent. Meanwhile Carter 41 percent, and Anderson 6.5 percent of the votes. (p.55) and Reagan was elected as America's president.

In the 1980, the Republican party had power in leading American society starting from the government, authority in America's employment space, until the state finance. The Republican party members dominate the white-collars, as it stated by Eldesverd that the Republicans were left with a coalition of white-collar and non-union whites (2000:391). Furthermore, the center of gravity of wealth is on the Republican side while the center of gravity of poverty is on the Democratic side in America (Eldesverd, 2000:215). It can be shown that parties had a big impact in controlling America in the 1980, not only the political aspect, but also the state's funding.

An article titled *The 1980s American Economy* written by Mike Moffatt, at that time, the president, Ronald Reagan, cut social programs to eliminate government regulations that affected consumers, workplaces, and the environment. It caused structural unemployment and impact on job discrimination. The structural unemployment caused by the mismatch between the skills or qualifications possessed by workers and the requirements demand existing in the labor market. Moreover, America had a recession in the economy sectors in 1980. Several mining and facture

industries never fully recovered from the recessions. Additionally, there was uneven growth among the service sector businesses. Other industries—such as communications, railroads, and water transportation—saw job losses. As a result of the interplay of job gains and losses among industries, the 1980 witnessed the shifting of another 6 percent of employment from goods-producing to the service-producing sector (Plunkert, para.2, lines 14-19).

Furthermore, the economic recession over the course of the decade, manufacturing output remained relatively stable at roughly 23% of GNP, despite a decline in factory jobs from 23% to 18% of total employment. This sustained movement of jobs into the service economy did not come with a loss of industrial output. Despite the plentiful supply of labor, the scarcity of factory positions, and the financial difficulties faced by many businesses, some labor unions agreed to wage reductions or benefit cuts (Plunkert, para.4, lines 1-3). The 1980 economy recession, which lasted from January to July and resulted in yielded a net loss of 1.1 million jobs or 1.2 percent of employment in all industries.

Moreover, the economic recession is one of the factors that resulting a social stratification in America – as it is shown in the character of Arthur Fleck in the “Joker” movie. In further, money, property, economic opportunities, parties exist in making a social stratification in 1980 as the result of economic depression that made a social stratification in American society that will be discussed in the third chapter of this research. Moreover, this research helps to understand class dynamics, status, and

political power influence in American social stratification in 1980 represented in the  
“Joker” movie.