CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the role of societal peer pressure in transforming Cady Heron through multiple phases in the movie *Mean Girls*. Utilizing Berger & Luckmann's theory of society as an objective reality theory, the findings based on the film's scene stills and dialogues can be interpreted as a method for researchers to employ American sociological theory within American films.

The analysis demonstrates that expectations and pressure were put onto Cady Heron through various forms of verbal cues. The expectations happened mainly in North Shore High School, due to Cady's new exposure to public school. They were deeply rooted within the society, because it was habitualized by a variety of actors, including both students and teachers. Therefore, North Shore High is an example of an institutionalized place. These expectations function as the typification that maintains the reality of society.

The findings reveal that societal peer pressure and encouragement significantly contribute to the transformations of Cady Heron. The effects were shown through internalization, legitimation, and externalization. In terms of appearance, she modifies her appearance to fit with the expectations of how a *Plastic* should be. In terms of behavior, she initially transforms into a narcissistic who only prioritizes herself into someone who recognizes accountability for herself. In terms of attitude, she initially transforms into a judgemental gossipper into an empathetic person with authentic interactions. The transformations proved that societal expectations influence Cady's identity.

Within the academic American Studies field, this study highlights how American teen comedy movies can be a media of representation about social dynamics and identity formation. For future researchers within the same field, they may examine how societal peer pressure functions in other cultural settings or how digital media modifies societal peer pressure. Future studies may continue to examine how societal expectations evolve in different contexts.

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