

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The American Dream is an ideology in the United States. This concept reflects the belief that individuals have equal opportunities to achieve success and upward mobility, regardless of their social status or background. In the book *The Epic of America*, the term "American Dream" was introduced by historian James Truslow Adams. He described it as the vision of a country where every individual can lead a more prosperous and fulfilling life, with opportunities aligned with their abilities and accomplishments (Adams, 1931:404).

The American Dream is a chance to realize a dream and better life as a whole. More specifically, it is thought to be the ideal setting for men from all over the world to realize their dreams. The value still exists in modern American culture and evolves over time. Many literary and visual works, including film, have discussed the American Dream from a variety of perspectives and story tenses.

Film is a type of visual art that tells tales, presents ideas, or records experiences through the use of moving images. To create a cogent and meaningful story, it combines a variety of elements, including cinematography, sound, editing, and visual effects. As stated by David Bordwell, on his book *Film Art: An Introduction*, movies can be defined as:

"A movie is a time-based art form that combines still images, moving images, and sounds to tell a story, express emotions, or communicate ideas. It is a medium that allows filmmakers to manipulate space, time, and

perspective to create a unique audiovisual experience for the audience." (Bordwell, 1997: 3).

Film can be utilized as a medium to communicate messages or ideas that might have an impact on the general population, as stated in the previous paragraph. In many American films, they frequently act as a reflection of American culture, morals, and social life. One of movie that reflects the American Dream is *Ford vs Ferrari*.

*Ford vs Ferrari* directed by James Mangold, is one such work of art. Based on real events from the 1966 24 Hours of Le Mans race, the film recounts Ford Motor Company's quest to outperform the dominant Ferrari team. It chronicles the collaborative efforts of Ken Miles (played by Christian Bale), a British race car driver, and Carroll Shelby (portrayed by Matt Damon), a former race car driver turned car designer, as they partner with Ford to develop a new racing vehicle capable of winning the Le Mans race. The movie vividly portrays the challenges Shelby and Miles face while designing and constructing the Ford GT40, a high-performance racing car intended to rival Ferrari's legendary models. Along the way, they must navigate corporate politics, egos, and the dangers of the high-speed racing world. The film is replete with thrilling racing sequences that showcase the strength and speed of the Ford GT40, as well as the talent and determination of Shelby and Miles. The 1966 Le Mans race serves as the movie's climactic showdown, where the Ford team must prevail despite mechanical issues, racing mishaps, and the formidable Ferrari competitors.

The writer aims to examine the movie *Ford vs Ferrari* directed by James Mangold, which is based on real events. The film portrays the story of Ford Motor Company Vice President Lee Iacocca's proposition to Henry Ford II in 1963 to acquire financially struggling Italian sports car manufacturer Ferrari. The objective was to boost domestic car sales through Ferrari's participation in the 24 Hours of Le Mans race. Enzo Ferrari uses Ford's offer as leverage to secure a more favorable deal with Fiat, enabling him to retain full ownership of Scuderia Ferrari. Ferrari's rejection of the deal is seen as an insult to Ford, Iacocca, and Henry Ford II. In response, Ford is determined to defeat Ferrari at Le Mans. Iacocca enlists the help of Carroll Shelby, a former Le Mans winner in 1959 who retired due to a heart condition. Shelby brings in the passionate British driver and mechanic Ken Miles. The writer's intention is to analyze the reflection of the American Dream in the movie.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

1. What conflicts do Carroll Shelby experience to achieve the American dream?
2. What reflection of American Dream are depicted in *Ford vs Ferrari*?

## **1.3 Aims of the Study**

In terms of the objectives of this research, the author has come up with a few different objectives, which are as follows:

1. To find out what are the conflicts faced by the main character to achieve the American dream.

2. To show the point of American dream values in film *Ford vs Ferrari*

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

For a more complete explanation, the writer limits the research to how Carroll Shelby as the main character in the movie Ford vs Ferrari and a citizen of the United States in achieving the American dream. To support this research, the author uses Abrams's objective approach which includes the study of intrinsic aspects. Theme, character, conflict, and setting will be the fundamental aspects that will be dissected in the following discussion by the writer.

#### **1.5 Previous Studies**

The theory of the American Dream has been the subject of a great deal of research in the past. The writer of this study cites five earlier studies that are connected to the subject as references to the study that they conducted themselves.

First, Corbin, W entitled *The Impact of The American Dream On Evangelical Ethics* (2005). Corbin discussed the American dream and American evangelicalism are intertwined in many ways, because "consistent with the American ethos, Evangelicalism offers a kind of spiritual upward mobility, a chance to improve your lot in the next world and also in this world. Evangelicalism's history may be traced back to the American story of democracy, laissez-faire economics, and personal liberty. It is confused with the freedom to pursue one's material aspirations and religious inclinations, the accomplishments of which are regarded as divine blessings and evidence of moral worth. Before delving into this perplexing

combination and its implications for evangelical ethics, a few words about the American ideal are required.

Second, *The Reflection of Successful American Dream through the Character of Michael Corleone in Mark Winegardner's The Godfather Returns* by Dodi Rasyid Saputra (Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2008). Michael, who lives in the mafia world as an American born son and one of the most powerful mafia kingpins, wants to realize his dream of legalizing his business and spreading his influence to gain more power and wealth. Michael's characteristics and hardships are highlighted in this thesis as a representation of the American Dream.

Third, *Representation of American Dreams in The Good Lie (2014) film* by Luthfi Fadhlani (Faculty of Adab and Humanities, State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah, 2017). In this thesis, representation theory and the concept of the American Dream are employed. Utilizing representation theory, the author examines how the movie "The Good Lie" shapes the portrayal of its three central characters: Sudanese immigrants and Americans. Through this analysis, the study uncovers how the film visually and narratively constructs these characters. Furthermore, the research brings to light the explicit manifestation of American Dream ideals within the movie. Luthfi addresses the research inquiries by dissecting both the visual and textual elements of the film. Additionally, external sources beyond the movie are drawn upon to bolster the analysis.

Another study to help support the research is *The Pursuit of Property: A Reflection of American Dream in Nicholasa Mohr's A Very Special Pet (2019)* by

Novia Sitorus (Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, 2019). She chooses to focus her analysis on a specific intrinsic element in literary works, namely, the setting. She believes that the setting plays a pivotal role in shaping the themes, characters, and overall atmosphere of the stories she examines. Her goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how settings contribute to the storytelling process and convey broader messages in these works. In addition to her examination of intrinsic elements, she incorporates an extrinsic perspective by using the American dream theory as an analytical framework. Through this lens, she investigates how the concept of the American dream, characterized by ideals like opportunity, aspiration, and success, interacts with the narratives in the literary pieces. This approach enables her to explore how characters' motivations, pursuits, and challenges are influenced by their desires for the American dream. She seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying themes and social commentary present in these literary works through using an extrinsic viewpoint, which provides a spotlight on the larger cultural and socioeconomic settings in which these literary works are placed.

Last, *Akeelah Anderson's Struggle In Pursuing American Dream Based On Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs Theory In Akeelah And The Bee Movie* by Desy Auralita (Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, 2020). This thesis explores the movie *Akeelah and the Bee*, which tells the story of Akeelah Anderson, a young African American girl striving for the American dream through participation in a spelling bee. The research focuses on both internal elements like storytelling and visuals, and external factors, particularly the challenges children

face in pursuing the American dream and their strategies to overcome them. Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, the study reveals that African children's struggle to achieve their dreams often results from unmet needs in safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. The findings highlight the significance of social support as a crucial resource for African American children in surmounting obstacles on their journey toward the American Dream.

Expanding on prior studies that explore the reflection of the American Dream in film, the writer foresees that this article will provide readers with new perspective when it comes to interpreting how the American Dream is portrayed through the character of Carroll Shelby in *Ford vs Ferrari*.

## **1.6 Methods of the study**

This thesis uses two aspects of method. They are Method of Research and Method of Approach.

### **1.6.1 Method of Research**

In this thesis the writer uses library research as the method of data collection. The scripts, dialogues, scenes, in *Ford vs Ferrari* are used as main data in this research. As stated by George on his book *The Elements of Library Research*, Library Research is a method that requires some sources in order to find some factual opinions from the experts about the question of the research (George, 2008:6).

### **1.6.2 Method of Approach**

The objective approach is used to analyze intrinsic aspects and to support the researcher to find the findings on the American Dream. Objective theory is one

of four critical approaches proposed by M.H. Abrams. M.H. Abrams in *The Mirror and The Lamp* stated that

“Objective approach deals with a work of literature as something that stands free from extrinsic relations to the poet, or to the audience, or to the environing world. Objective approach describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else as a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its own end, and to be analyzed and judged by intrinsic criteria: such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements. Additionally, objective approach is free from author’s experience and social culture background. (Abrams, 1979: 26).”

From the previous statement, objective approach can be found in the intrinsic aspect such as, theme, setting, character and conflict. This theory highlights how crucial intrinsic elements are in defining a literary work's meaning. As a result, the researcher employed objective approach to demonstrate how the character's aspirations represent the American dreams. On the other hand, to analyze the extrinsic aspect that consists of the reflection of the American Dream in Carroll Shelby’s character in the film *Ford vs Ferrari*, the writer uses American Dream’s concepts that have been explained in the next chapter.



## **1.7 Organization of the Writing**

The paper consists of the following chapters:

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the content, including the research background, research problems, objective of the study, previous research, and writing organization.

### **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter contains the theoretical framework and research method used as a basis and guide for conducting research.

### **CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSION**

This chapter contains the result of the study based on the data analysis.

### **CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION**

This chapter contains the summary of the study result based on the data analysis.

### **REFERENCES**