CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1.   Intrinsic Elements

Feminist film theory concepts of Kevin McDonald's will be discussed in this section. The application of feminist film theory reveals the ways patriarchal ideologies shape how gender and sexual inequalities are portrayed in movies. It connects feminism to larger societal community and political movements. The majority of early Hollywood productions focus on examining the contradictory position that women play. The statement "Woman is other, meaning that she is consigned to secondary social status and considered subordinate to man's privileged place as the universal subject" (McDonald, 2016:105) echoes de Beauvoir's theory regarding women's submissive position. Primarily because a movie is a visual pleasure for the viewers, women seem to be "coded for powerful visual and erotic impact" (McDonald, 2016:106). For the most part, women are only appreciated when they can be used for sexual displays that go across the narrative. Men are the active characters in the narrative, while women are reduced to objects of beauty and portrayed as objects of desire. The beauty of a woman is looked at as an object means her body is styled and broken up by close-ups, making her a flawless product.

The narrative itself is one of the essential components that make up a work of literature. To explain the narrative, the writer chooses the theory by Barsam & Monahan (2019). Given that Barsam & Monahan's theory looks at cinema's

narratology and since the aspect of feminism is demonstrated through the story of a movie, this is taken into consideration.

According to Brown (2018:7), narratology is an analysis of storytelling that aims to comprehend the art of narrative in great detail. It makes an effort to categorize these ideas into an all-encompassing system, describe the fundamental components of narrative, and pinpoint its common methods. While the narrative is a story. The filmmakers have chosen and structured events in a cause-and-effect order that unfolds over time to create this cinematic structure. Beyond the realm of film, narrative affects our society and daily existence (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:116). The narrative factors that will be examined are character and characteristics, setting, theme, and plot.

2.1.1. Character and Characterization

According to Brown, the word 'character' originates from the Greek word *charakter*, which means a mark of personality. Characters are independent entities with distinct identities so that the reasons behind their behavior and personality features may be determined from their words and deeds (2018:49). Meanwhile, characters were divided into round and flat categories by Barsam & Monahan (2019:121). A character that exhibits multiple small, repressed, or even contradicting features that could change considerably throughout the plot is referred to as a round character or a complex character. Because round characters are complex, viewers often identify them with characteristics that are similar to their own. This complexity also makes round characters appear more realistic. As the

narrative progresses, they evolve or advance. In essence, a flat character is a round character's contrast. They are rather simple, have few distinguishing characteristics, and don't vary much as the plot develops.

Consequently, without a goal for the character, the narrative cannot exist, no matter how the character is shaped. Every movie narrative relies on two fundamental components, as noted by Barsam & Monahan (2019:120): a character achieving a goal. Because they are the central focus of the narrative, characters need to have goals that they wish to achieve. The nature of that endeavor is determined by the character's background, position, personality, attitudes, and beliefs. These characteristics or attributes show how the characters respond to situations and challenges, form judgments, carry them out, and handle the fallout. A distinct story would be told as a result of the character's characteristics, which would influence decisions and actions that would take them down a different story.

The protagonist, also referred to as the hero, is the main character who works toward the goal; the antagonist, on the other hand, is the one who puts obstacles in the way of the protagonist's progress. Most stories involve multiple characters or make reference to supporting characters. Numerous secondary characters may have their own goals and needs, including those who share or support the protagonist's goal and those who do not. These characters' personalities and plots are not as well-developed as the protagonist's. The main purpose of these characters is to advance the plot or provide more context for the protagonist's goals (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:124).

2.1.2. Plot and Conflict

Barsam & Monahan (2019:131) define the plot as the particular actions and events chosen by the filmmakers and the sequence in which they present those events to the audience in a way that successfully communicates the story. The beginning, middle, and end of the story are the three fundamental sections that most narratives may be divided into. The story is introduced in the first act, developed in the second act, and resolved in the third act. Usually, the second act is the longest.

By introducing the common world, the first act serves to inform the audience about the type of story they are about to experience (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:124). Usually, the first several minutes of the film feature this. The character needs to be established in this act as well. The story often opens with the protagonist disclosing something about his present circumstances, usually by portraying him in an activity that also highlights some of the key characteristics of the character.

After the character and his world have been revealed, something has to happen to change the normal or common world. To give the character a goal that will carry through the rest of the story, there needs to be an inciting incident (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:125). This unexpected incident initiates the second act, provides the protagonist with a goal, and creates tension in the narrative. This is when things get conflicting. Regardless of the source, obstacles are the essential component of the second act. Additionally, when the conflict worsens and the goals remain unattainable, the story usually builds toward its peak, or breaking point, known as the rising action. A story's crisis then occurs when it hits a turning point and begins

to move toward resolution. Everything appears impossible, and the goal is in jeopardy. The climax comes when the protagonist encounters a significant challenge. Typically, the protagonist has to overcome a personal weakness, take a big risk, or give up something important (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:128).

Lastly, is the resolution, or third act, once the objective has been achieved or not. The story ties up any loose ends and moves toward a resolution during the falling action. Each story will conclude with a resolution to the conflict, giving the audience a chance to rejoice or reflect on the last act (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:128–129).

2.1.3. Theme

A theme, according to Barsam & Monahan (2019:85), is a central notion that the movie conveys through its story or images. A story's theme is a recurring concept that gives it a greater significance and unified message. Not every movie is unified by a single, distinct theme, frequently, it combines multiple themes to convey a more complex narrative. The friction between moralistic and aspirational ideals can enable thematic complexity, which can provide viewers with a deeper and more meaningful experience.

2.1.4. Setting

A movie's setting refers to the period and location in which the narrative takes place (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:142). It specifies the time period, place, and nation in addition to giving the social, cultural, and educational backgrounds of the

characters and other crucial details that help the reader comprehend them. Within the feminist discourse, the context of the setting is typically separated into two categories: private and public. In contrast to public settings, which are any other locations outside of intimate areas where discussions are encouraged and unrestricted exchange of ideas is available, private settings refer to more private or intimate situations where trust is required. Setting can occasionally offer an implicit justification for behaviors or characteristics that viewers might otherwise see as peculiar because norms change over time and from place to place. This is due to the fact that a person's environment and personal characteristics frequently have an impact on their behavior and representation. In addition to providing viewers with crucial background knowledge that aids in their comprehension of plot developments and character motivation, the setting enhances and adds depth to the audience's perception of the film's entire universe.

2.1.5. Cinematography

The majority of cinematic language, according to Barsam & Monahan (2019:204), is derived from how people naturally interpret and respond to visual cues in their daily lives. Viewers will unconsciously recognize the camera's point of view as their own. As a result, cinematography is a crucial component since it conveys the subject's appearance and evokes strong feelings in the audience. Shot types are one of the most common terms in cinematography to explain this. In addition to showing character, shot types can also convey background or general

information, information about the physical subject, and information about the psychological subject. Shot types were categorized as an extreme long shot, long shot, medium long shot, medium shot, medium close-up, close-up, and extreme close-up by Barsam & Monahan (2019: 205–207).

2.1.5.1. Extreme Long Shot (XLS or ELS)

Usually, an extreme long shot is taken from a very far away distance. The subject is frequently a broad overview of a larger area that surrounds more focused areas where the action occurs. Generally, it provides broad background information. The extreme long shot is typically employed as an establishing shot in the first act of a film, serving to establish the scene's spatial context. Even when people are depicted in these images, their interaction with their environment is highlighted rather than the people themselves. It is particularly useful for portraying scenes with a large-scale activity, like battles.

Figure 2.1 Extreme long shot (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.2. Long Shot (LS)

The long shot is as much about the scene and circumstances as it is about any one individual, providing background and subject information in the same manner. In order to establish the location, the characters, and their actions at the start of a scene, long shots are frequently utilized as establishing shots. Characters' entire bodies are shown, frequently with sufficient physical detail for viewers to identify them, yet there is limited psychological information.

Figure 2.2 Long Shot (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.3. Medium Long Shot (MLS)

Between a medium shot and a long shot is a medium-long shot. One or more characters are photographed with it, typically from the knees up. The background is less prominent in this sort of shot, allowing the subject or subjects to take center stage. It is frequently employed for physical action scenes.

Figure 2.3 Medium Long Shot (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.4. Medium Shot (MS)

In a medium shot, subjects are framed from approximately the waist upwards, making them prominent enough in the frame to overshadow the background. It mimics the feeling of being close to someone without becoming intimate. Viewers can read progressively nuanced physical and psychological details about the increasingly prevalent subject. Medium shots are often used to depict interactions between several subjects.

Figure 2.4 Medium shot of two character (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.5. Medium Close-Up (MCU)

A character may be seen in the medium close-up, roughly spanning from the center of the chest to the top of the head. The type of indicated closeness and physical and psychological detail that may be seen in the character's face, movements, and posture can start to emerge.

Figure 2.5 Medium Close-Up (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.6. Close-Up (CU)

The camera is up close and personal with the subject in a close-up, as their face fills the frame. The character's face is close enough to convey every nuance of their physical as well as psychological composition. This close intimacy provides it with an elevated sense of importance.

Figure 2.6 Close-Up (Barsam & Monahan, 2019:206)

2.1.5.7. Extreme Close-Up (XCU or ECU)

An object that has been exposed in remarkable physical detail or a portion of a subject's face fills the frame in an extreme close-up. The audience understands, or at least senses, that an object is significant and will be used in some way when it is displayed alone and with strong implicit meaning.

Figure 2.7 Extreme close-up of a radio microphone
(Barmas& Monahan, 2019:206)

2.2.   Extrinsic Elements

Since the research is primarily focusing on Phoenix, the female character in the movie *Top Gun: Maverick*, the feminist theory will be applied to this study. Equal treatment for men and women in all spheres of life, especially in areas of governance, decision-making, careers, and having children are demands made by feminism or feminist thought. Feminism, put simply, seeks to ensure that men and women are treated equally in all facets of life, particularly in public. Because the researcher believes that the approach is the most appropriate one, literary feminism theory will be the primary theory employed in this study. Although there have been many authors throughout history who have expressed their views on feminism, Simone de Beauvoir's idea will be the one used in this research.

French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir is well-known for her conception of feminism, which she developed in her book *Le Deuxieme Sexe*, also known as *The Second Sex*. *The Second Sex* diverges from Beauvoir's inquiry into the nature of women. Drawing entirely on her own experience, despite having published multiple critically acclaimed novels, she has always been referred to as "Sartre's long-time companion" (Beauvoir, 1949:11). Experiencing that much injustice and inequality, Beauvoir then began to write *The Second Sex*. Tracing the reasons behind women's social subordination is the primary focus of *The Second Sex*. Rather than seeing women as unique individuals in and of themselves, men have historically distinguished and identified women in relation to themselves. Women are always seen to meet society's demands, such as taking care of their children, being housewives, and to fulfill men's

desires. They are also considered unable to work or think independently. "The incidental, the inessential, and not regarded as an autonomous being" is how women are described (Beauvoir, 1949:25-26). She is the other, while he is the subject; he is absolute. The term "other" refers to any group inside the society that is not viewed as the "main" group because despite being half of the human population and having an equal number of men and women on the planet, women continue to face discrimination and stereotypes (Beauvoir, 1949:27).

"One is not born, but rather becomes, woman" is one of Simone de Beauvoir's most well-known quotations from the book (Beauvoir, 1949:330). The role that a female individual takes on in society is not determined by her biological, psychological, or economic destiny. This product that functions as a bridge between the masculine and feminine is developed by civilization. When males and girls were born, it began. They understand the world through their hands and eyes, not their sex organs. They examine their bodies with the same curiosity and indifference; they share the same interests and joys. As such, the treatment they receive begins to change as they grow. The little boy began to hear the saying, "A man does not cry, a man does not look himself in the mirror, or ask for kisses" (Beauvoir, 1949:333). He senses the superiority of others around him, which is represented by the penis.

For the girls, however, things are very different. She discovers that her world and the boys are different, and several things can cause her to view this difference as inferior. For instance, girls must crouch, undress, and most importantly, hide in order

to urinate—a humiliating and uncomfortable form of servitude, in contrast to boys, for whom the ability to urinate is like playing a free game in which one can express independence. Girls feel that while boys have the right to touch their penis, they can use it as a plaything while their genitals are taboo. She receives a doll in exchange for their "lost penis," which is something foreign. "The most satisfying replacement for this natural toy, penis, is a figurine with a human face" (Beauvoir, 1949:340). The doll is a passive object even though it simultaneously represents the entire body. The tiny girl caresses her doll and dresses her as she imagines herself to be pampered, while the boy seeks himself in his penis as an independent subject. It is untrue to say that the passivity that fundamentally defines the "feminine" woman is a biological attribute; rather, it is an attribute that she develops in her early years. It is a fate that society and her teachers have forced upon her. The boy's main benefit is that he positions himself for himself because of the way he lives for other people. He looks down on girls, he matches peers in toughness and self-determination, and he lives out his apprenticeship as a free movement into the world.

It is even expected of a female to be married at her following stage of life. It is the fate that women are typically offered by society. Men and women have always been presented with marriage in very different ways. Although the two are dependent on one another, fairness has never been encouraged by this dependence. Women have never established contracts and transactions on an equal basis with men; they have always been a caste. "Man is viewed above all as a producer, and his presence is supported by

the work he gives to the group. He is a socially independent and complete individual" (Beauvoir, 1949:503). Women are partner workers, and most men find it beneficial to assign some household duties to women. Women are always given in marriage to men by other men and are always included as slaves or servants in the family group headed by fathers and brothers.

In social life, a woman will constantly follow her husband's professional relationships, whereas a man is bound to society as a producer and citizen through bonds of organic solidarity. Women work to strengthen relationships and maintain their position in the system of society so they can feel better than some people. Because her husband and kids have a stake in her, they are not aware of her enjoyment of flaunting her house and even herself. She has a societal responsibility to "represent," and it will be enjoyable to present herself to others. She also demonstrates it with her attire. "It is meant to show the woman's status in society, but at the exact same time to implement feminine," according to Beauvoir (1949:649), is the dual meaning of clothing. Women are even expected by society to transform into sensual objects. The aim of women's fashion is not to showcase them as independent individuals, but rather to separate them from their transcendence and present them as objects of desire for men.

Beauvoir's idea itself is inextricably linked to her lifelong acquaintance Sartre. Her brand of feminism was coined "existentialist feminism" (Beauvoir, 1949:37) because of its strong ties to existentialism. Existentialism introduces the idea that every subject proposes itself as a concrete transcendence through projects; that it can only achieve

freedom by continuously surpassing other freedoms; and that the only possible explanation for the existence of the present is its development toward an infinitely open future. However, in a society where men pressure women to see themselves as others, women should find and select who they are, just like all other humans who deserve to live autonomous lives. A woman's choice must also reflect her entire will and not only be the outcome of an external or internal force. Beauvoir develops at least four standards from this idea that women can follow in order to achieve equality with men or to establish themselves as subjects in society. These four standards include women's ability to labor, women's ability to be intellectuals, women's ability to bring about social changes in society or to make decisions, and women's ability to reject their otherness by associating with the dominant group in society.

2.2.1. Women being able to Work

Women have mostly succeeded in narrowing the gap that separates them from males through their employment. Her concrete freedom can also be guaranteed by her work alone. "The female vassal is cursed with the inability to do anything" (Beauvoir, 1949:813). She regains her ultimate transcendence when she is active and productive, and she validates herself as a subject in her work in a tangible way. She is aware of her accountability to the objectives she seeks and the rights she overtakes.

2.2.2. Women Being Able to be Intellectuals

Women have the ability to develop into intellectuals, that is, to join organizations that will advance gender equality. When women become the subject of thinking,

observation, and definition, it is not idleness; rather, it is intellectual activity that occurs when women process information, see, and define. Women's perspectives as individuals and as members of particular groups can be altered by freedom of knowledge acquisition and equal rights in intellectual achievement because "the intellectual woman knows she is offering herself; she knows she is a consciousness, a subject" (Beauvoir, 1949:818).

2.2.3. Women being able to bring about Social Change

Once more, women must work and engage in public life in order to bring about societal change. A woman must engage in social activities or employment that enable her to overcome the limitations that surround her if she is to realize all of her dreams. Beauvoir (1949:815) notes that "there are quite a few privileged women today who have gained social autonomy and transformation in their profession." Women can effect social change through their work, which will have a significant impact on both their surroundings and themselves.

2.2.4. Women being able to Reject Otherness

By identifying with the opinions of the dominant group in society, women can reject the otherness that is affixed to their image. A woman can only be herself in society if she breaks free from the stereotypes that society expects of her. According to Beauvoir (149:818), "Women must have access to the male world as man does to the female one in order to be a complete individual, equal to men." Because "if she succeeds, she will

think she has performed this magic conjuration, she will see herself become subject again," it implies, in a way, that women should have the same access to the public as men (Beauvoir, 1949:822).