

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The population of the United States is characterized by its diversity and is composed of people from various racial and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, other races including black people become the minority of the population. This leads to the act of discrimination towards the black people. When explaining discrimination, it is still related to race because discrimination can occur to racial discrimination. According to Gordon, African people began migrating into the United States in the late 1600s and were brought to the colony of Virginia in Jamestown in 1619 (1968: 315). Black people were brought into America to become slave and work for the white people. Therefore, white people entitled to have superiority towards black people which cause the discrimination occurred.

It is important to recognize the historical significance of the resistance from black people that took place from the late 1940s to the late 1960s when discussing racial discrimination in the United States (Fairclough, 1990:388). Black people played a central and pioneering role in this movement, making diverse and impactful contributions, ranging from grassroots organizing to legal challenges and acts of civil disobedience. The movement aimed to challenge the historical roots of slavery, racism, and white supremacy in the United States by opposing legalized racial segregation, disenfranchisement, and oppression (Fairclough, 1990:389).

Facing racial discrimination in America in the 1950 was an experience filled with challenges and dangers. During that time, racial segregation was still legal and

strictly enforced in various aspects of life, such as education, transportation, housing, and employment by the system of Jim Crow Law that existed in America (Ruef & Grigoryeva, 2018:817). Black people often became targets of discrimination and violence, and they had little access to justice and legal protection. The impact of racial discrimination was felt by many black individuals, and the heroes and struggles of black people during this era are an integral part of American history and have resulted in significant progress towards racial equality (Ruef & Grigoryeva, 2018:818).

With that condition, the writer would like to use *Devotion* (2022) movie as the main object of discussion because the movie portrayed a racial discrimination towards black people. *Devotion* (2022) takes place in the 1950, specifically during the Korean War, where racial discrimination still persists in the United States and provides a strong and realistic portrayal of the racial discrimination faced by black people in the 1950. As the first African American pilot, Jesse Brown faced various forms of racial discrimination, ranging from insults and racial slurs from his fellow pilots to limitations on his life on the naval base and restrictions on entering certain areas. Jesse Brown's abilities as a pilot were also doubted and underestimated solely because of his race. He had to continually prove himself and work twice as hard to gain recognition.

This thesis analyzes the portrayal of racial discrimination in the movie *Devotion* (2022). It examines how Jesse Brown, the first African American aviator to complete the U.S. Navy's basic flight training program, suffered racial discrimination during his service in the U.S. military. The research delves into the

various forms of discrimination he faced, including both overt and subtle acts of racism from his peers and superiors through a close analysis of key scenes, character interactions, and narrative themes.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The writer has formulated several research questions:

1. How are the depictions of the intrinsic aspects of the movie?
2. What are the racial discriminations suffered by Jesse Brown depicted in *Devotion* movie (2022)?
3. What are the impacts of racial discrimination on Jesse Brown's life in *Devotion* movie (2022)?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the question above, objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the intrinsic aspects of the movie.
2. To analyze the racial discrimination suffered by Jesse Brown in *Devotion* (2022).
3. To analyze the impacts of racial discriminations on Jesse Brown's life in *Devotion* (2022).

## **1.4 Previous Studies**

The writer reviews some thesis and journals published. All the previous studies have the same topic with the current study, but have a different object and theory used.

The first one is a thesis entitled *Segregation Between The Blacks and The Whites in Pride movie* written by Sharita Fauziah Andnur in 2015 from Diponegoro

University. This study aims to investigate discrimination, particularly segregation, and understand the impact of the territorial separation between black and white individuals. The research results show that segregation between white and black people occurred in 1974. Apart from employment, housing for white and black people was also separated, which impacted the education they received, with white people receiving better education while black people did not. Territorial separation in social environments has a significant impact, and segregation also affects socio-economic factors.

The second related study the writer reviewed here is a thesis entitled *The Struggle of African American Women against the Double Discrimination Revealed in Hidden Figures* written by Tiara Ika Putri Christianingrum in 2018 from Sanata Dharma University. Christianingrum argues that working in the field for African-American women is kind of privilege during Cold War. Therefore, they still get discrimination in workplace. They faced the discrimination not only in the workplace but also in all spectrums of their lives.

The third related study the writer reviewed here is a thesis entitled *The Relation of Minority Group's Sport Attainment to Counter Racism: African-American at The Movie 42* written by Triastama Wiraatmaja in 2019 from University of Muhammadiyah Malang. This study found that African American as minority group were able to alter their life despite of racism through equal sports opportunity. Besides, this study has highlighted one pivotal area in which any minority group should concern to enhance their life; sports. Moreover, even though this study focusing more on the relation of the efforts made by minority group at

America, this study illustrates the importance of having initiatives in providing better opportunity related to sports to ensure a better life opportunity among minority groups all over the globe.

The fourth related study is a thesis entitled *The Analysis of Racial Discrimination Portrayed in Green Book* written by R. Kiambang Prakasa in 2020 from Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University Malang. This research aims to analyze racial discrimination and its effect on the main characters of Green Book movie. The theory applied in this study is theory proposed by Theodorson & Theodorson (1979) about racial discrimination. The data were taken from movie Green Book by reading and taking some evidence related to racial discrimination. The research method used in this study is literary criticism with descriptive data analysis techniques.

The last related study is a thesis entitled *The Portrayal of Racial Prejudice and Racial Discrimination on Straight Outta Compton Movie* by F. Gary Gray written by Muhammad Faiz Hisyam in 2023 from Diponegoro University. The theory used in analyzing this movie is the theory of racial prejudice and racial discrimination by S. Dale McLemore. The findings of this thesis show the types of racial discrimination and racial prejudice that exist in the movie Straight Outta Compton. The forms of prejudice and discrimination reflected in this movie are stereotype and intentional discrimination. This thesis also shows the impact of racial prejudice and racial discrimination.

In some of the theses mentioned above, all the theses discuss racial discrimination against African Americans in the United States in movie. However,

this research examines racial discrimination against African Americans in the movie *Devotion* (2022). While previous studies have explored racial discrimination in various civilian contexts such as education, sports, and workplaces, this research focuses specifically on the military context. By focusing on the movie *Devotion* (2022) and its portrayal of the 1950s military, this research delves into the specific experiences of African American military personnel, exploring how racial discrimination affected their service, relationships within the military, and overall military operations, which have not been the primary focus of previous studies.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The writer focuses on the racial segregation experienced by Jesse Brown, the first African-American fighter pilot in the U.S. military during the Korean War, as depicted in the movie *Devotion* (2022). This study analyzes acts of racial discrimination directed at Brown, including verbal abuse, social exclusion, and systemic barriers within the military. By examining specific scenes and dialogues from the movie, the analysis explores how these acts reflect broader societal norms of the 1950. The study connects these instances to established racial discrimination theories, providing a framework for understanding their impact on Brown's personal and professional life, as well as on military unit cohesion and effectiveness.

### **1.6 Method of Study**

#### **1.6.1. Method of Research**

The writer's method of data collection is library research based on this data, the writer employs a qualitative research methodology that enables the writer to investigate and gain a deeper understanding of the intricacy of a phenomenon

(Williams, 2007:70). By using this method, the writer focuses primarily on library research. Mary W. George's definition of library research as a method of data collection includes several sources that contain data related to the subject of the study (2008:6). Both primary and secondary data are used in the library research method. The scene and dialog footage from *Devotion* served as the primary source of data. In addition, the secondary sources used for this thesis include books, journals, websites, articles, etc.

In order to obtain the data, the writer will watch, understand, and evaluate the movie *Devotion* while focusing on the topic and gathering information from previous studies that have a topic related to this research. After that, the writer will review the notes taken from the movie and theories related to the movie, then analyze the results and organize the thesis.

### **1.6.2. Method of Approach**

In this research, the writer uses the objective approach by M.H. Abrams (1999) to analyze the intrinsic aspect of the movie. In the objective approach, a literary work is viewed as an independent entity, separate from the author, the audience, and the external world. It is seen as a self-sufficient and autonomous piece, or a complete world unto itself, meant to be valued for its inherent qualities. In the context of objective criticism, a work of literature is regarded as an entity that exists independently of its extrinsic connections to the poet, audience, or the surrounding world. It regards the literary piece as a self-contained and autonomous object, or as a complete world in itself, intended to be appreciated for its intrinsic value. The analysis and judgment of the work are based solely on intrinsic criteria, such as its

complexity, coherence, balance, integrity, and the interrelationships of its components (1999:52). The writer encourages the audience to engage with the work utilizing their emotions and imagination to assess the narrative and its resolution.

The writer utilizes M.H. Abrams' objective approach, commonly used in literary analysis, which is equally effective in examining films. Unlike literature, which immerses the reader in a solitary, text-based experience, films use visual and auditory elements to tell their stories, offering a vibrant, multi-sensory journey (Ramrao, 2016:150). The dynamic visuals and immersive soundscapes of films create an immediate and collective experience that transcends the limitations of a written text (Ramrao, 2016:150). This distinction highlights the unique impact of film and underscores its ability to create a shared narrative that resonates deeply on multiple sensory levels (Ramrao, 2016:150).

The writer uses sociological approach to get an understanding about the racism issue in the movie. In this research, the writer uses racial discrimination theory by Rebecca Blank (2004) that state the types of racial discrimination including, intentional discrimination, subtle discrimination, statistical discrimination, and organizational processes. This theory can help the writer to find the discrimination act against African-Americans inside the movie.

Additionally, the writer employs cinematic elements, as explained by Bordwell and Thompson (2013). Including mise-en-scene, camera shots, and sound design, to enhance the movie analysis. By incorporating these elements, the writer aims to analyze not only the narrative and thematic layers but also the atmospheric nuances and emotional intensities present in each scene (Bordwell & Thompson,



2013:2).

## **1.7 Writing Organization**

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter accommodates the background of the study, research problems, objective of the study, previous study, scope of the study, method of research, method of research, and writing organization.

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

This chapter describes the theoretical framework used for this study. The theoretical framework is the explanation of the theory used for analyzing the research problems which is the racial discrimination.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter consists of the result of the discussion and the answer from the research problem. The writer analyzed the racial discrimination conflict experienced by Jesse Brown as a the first African-American pilot fighter in United States military.

### **CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION**

This chapter contains the conclusion of the analysis result based on the research.

### **REFERENCES**