

CHAPTER 3

EXTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Reverse Discrimination Phenomenon

According to Certiorari to The Supreme Court of California (1977-1978) the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial quotas could not be used to reserve spots for minority applicants if white applicants were denied a chance to compete for those spots, marking a significant moment in the debate about "reverse discrimination". Allan Bakke, a white applicant, was rejected in the admission of the University of California, Davis School of Medicine despite having higher test scores and grades than some minority applicants who were admitted under a special program designed to increase minority representation. The university had set aside a certain number of spots specifically for minority applicants as part of its affirmative action program. Allan Bakke claimed that the university's use of racial quotas was unconstitutional. In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court decided that the university's use of racial quotas was unconstitutional. However, the Court also ruled that race could still be used as one of many factors in the admissions process. The decision struck down the specific quota system but allowed race to be a factor in creating a diverse student body. The Court ruled that the use of fixed racial quotas, where a certain number of spots are reserved for minority students, was not allowed (Wilkinson, 1978).

Fullinwider (1980, 24) uses the term preferential hiring to describe situations where an individual is hired based on characteristics such as being Black, traits that are unrelated to job performance. Similarly, Nunn (1973, 153)

discusses reverse discrimination through the concept of the “C-group”. This concept refers to those who have historically been subjected to unjust discrimination based on non-moral attributes like race, gender, or ethnicity. In his view, reverse discrimination occurs when policies are designed to favor members of the C-group, thereby disadvantaging individuals outside of it in the present.

3.2 Racial Conflict between Caucasian & African-American Community in America during the 2000s

In an article titled *Jena Six* which was written by Sonya Morris (2006) it is explained about the case of Jena Six. This accident occurred based on another tragedy involving the founding of noose under a tree that is often used as a place for African-American student to hangout during school time in Jena High School a multiracial school courtyard. This founding believed by the targeted community as a warning sign from the white supremacist and later become the main reason of racial tension between two communities in the school which located in Jena, Louisiana.

During the high tension between the students which separated by their racial background, Justin Barker was hospitalized and the African-American students were charged with attempted murder after an incident involving six African-American students; Robert Bailey Jr., Carwin Jones, Theo Shaw, Bryant Purvis, Mychal Bell, and Jesse Ray Beard, and a white student, Justin Barker. This tragedy occurred on 4th December 2006. The seriousness of the accusations provoked intense criticism and civil rights issues, which led to a demonstration on 20th September 2007, in which almost 20,000 protesters gathered in the 3,000-

person town of Jena, Louisiana, to express disapproval of the apparent racial injustices in the legal system. Major media outlets, including The New York Times, Chicago Tribune, and BBC, covered the incident and its aftermath extensively, which increased public awareness of racial inequality in American schools and the legal system as a whole.

Citing from *New York Times* article (2022), another racial tension between Caucasian and African-American community also happened in 2020 when an African-American citizen named as George Floyd became the victim of police brutality. This accident recorded and became a national sensation causing a big protests and a racial movement targeted to the African-American rights which popularly known as Black Lives Matter. In the video, a police officer known as Derek Chauvin showed holding his knee on Floyd's neck as he gasped for breath. During the video it can be heard that Floyd keep mentioning that he had difficulty in breathing due to the officer behavior. There are various opinions on this case due to the police testimony that George Floyd appeared under the influence of drugs.

Protests broke out all throughout Minneapolis as video of George Floyd's arrest was made public. In response, police shot protesters with rubber bullets and used tear gas. Property destruction, including business fires and looting from local business spot also spotted during the protests. State officials blamed the escalation on a number of crucial errors, most notably the contentious choice made by the Minneapolis Police Department to evacuate a precinct that protesters eventually took and burned. This resulted in what Governor Tim Walz called "absolute

chaos," with major damage witnessed throughout a five-mile stretch of the city damage not seen since the riots in Los Angeles in 1992. Major cities around the country, including Los Angeles and New York, were swiftly affected by the disturbance.

3.3 Racial Discrimination towards White American Rappers

According to Hess (2005) in his article titled *Hip-hop Realness and the White Performer. Critical Studies in Media Communication*, the hip-hop industry's discrimination against white American rappers is mostly a result of the genre's historical and cultural connections to African-American identity. Since hip-hop became a platform for underrepresented groups to express themselves, especially African Americans, artists' authenticity is frequently evaluated in relation to their personal hardships and experiences. Therefore, white rappers have a difficult time building credibility in a culture that views African-American people as fundamentally different. A good example of this dynamic is the divergent career paths taken by musicians such as Vanilla Ice and Eminem.

Vanilla Ice was discredited because of his manufactured story of urban hardship and his overt promotion of whiteness, which cast him as a symbol of cultural appropriation rather than true artistic talent. Eminem, on the other hand, has managed these issues by highlighting authenticity through autobiographical lyrics that speak to both African-American and Caucasian audiences, and by portraying his whiteness as a part of his own narrative. This change brings to light a larger discussion about race and authenticity in hip-hop, a genre where white musicians are still forced to constantly navigate their identity because it is

still primarily connected to African-American culture.

Hess (2005, 374) also mentioned in his study, the criticism directed towards white rappers reflects not only the views of certain artists but also a broader conflict in society about racial representation in music. White artists have been viewed with suspicion because of the historical background of white appropriation of hip-hop musical styles, which has led to the belief that they are trying to profit off African-American culture.

The industry's marketing tactics, which frequently put white artists in a way that can distance them from the community they aim to engage, exacerbate this criticism. Regarding to this matter, white rappers face challenges navigating a scene where their success is frequently seen through the prism of privilege and appropriation, which makes it harder for them to be accepted within the hip-hop community.

3.4 Eminem and Tom MacDonald's Biography

Citing from Biography article (2024), Marshall Bruce Mathers III or famously known as Eminem, a white American musician that got his success in hip-hop genre. Eminem grew up in a broken family, with his father who left him when he was still an infant and avoided every attempt to contact him. Deborah “Debbie” Nelson, his mother who during that period raised him only with her strength and could not maintain their financial situation. That is why Eminem and his mother moved frequently to another city. Due to his itinerant lifestyle, it gave a huge impact in his teenage period. During high school, he often treated as an outsider and he also experienced bullying from fellow student such as being

the target of physical abuse in his high school environment. He failed three times and later dropped out at the age of 17. Even though he was a drop out student, Marshall showed a high curiosity and affinity in language. He already had high level knowledge in English vocabularies at a young age.

Even though hip-hop or rap music was almost exclusively produced for African-American community, Eminem as a white American still managed to enter the industry with his knowledge and skills. He started his rap career by entering various rap scenes such as rap battles. With his skill even with his appearances he finally being recognized and respected in rap scenes. His career's breakthrough came in 1997 when Dr. Dre, one of the most famous producers and rappers during that time, signed him to his label and provided Eminem to create music. This moment marked Eminem acceptance in the hip-hop industry even though he still faced discrimination and rejection as a white person during this period, but he still managed to become one of the best rappers that ever existed.

Additional information about Eminem's experience as a white American rapper in hip-hop community could be viewed in his interview with Rolling Stone. In the 2004 Rolling Stone interview conducted by Touré, Eminem reflects on his experience as a white American artist in the industry dominantly by African-American community and the criticism following his career. During this interview Eminem mentioned how racial identity affected his career and how the community viewed him as a rapper. He stated that his achievement during his career was shaped because of his racial identity not his musical abilities and the accusations that he represented a disruptive influence on youth culture (Touré,

2009). The interview thus provides evidence of how Eminem articulates the pressures and the backlash he faced as a white rapper in a genre rooted in African-American culture..

Citing from *LAD Bible* titled *People are Just Finding out How Eminem Actually got His Stage Name* which was written by Brenna Cooper (2004), during his career's journey, a character or alternate ego was born. Hi alter ego character known as Slim Shady. Slim Shady was an alternate character showed more anger and uncensored to express his frustration on the world. Eminem found this character after his failure on his debut album titled *Infinite*.

Outside of his career in the hip-hop industry, Eminem is known as a good father figure to his children. He mentioned his daughter Hailee throughout his career including on one of his song "Mockingbird" which dedicated to his daughter. This behavior contradicted his father involvement on Eminem's childhood. Eminem himself married to Kim Scott, a girl he met when he was 15 years old and Kim was only 13. Kim claimed also had a broken family background heavily from her father figure on her family. This couple registered their marriage in 1999 before Eminem left for his first tour, but later they divorced in 2001 (Biography.com Editors, 2024).

Eminem entered the hip-hop landscape when there were still many rejections from the industry, even from hip-hop fans that majority came from African-American community. While Tom MacDonald entered the hip-hop scene when there were a lot of white people in the industry. Tom shows his interest in music more specifically to hip-hop genre since he was young. He

started with learning musical instrument and idolized Eminem as white American Hip-Hop icon. He started producing music as the medium to express his thoughts. As his career progressed, he released many songs that discussed his appearance as white who also often received discrimination from other races (Siddiqui, 2023). Information about the experience about discrimination he received during his career could be seen in the interview with Inked Magazine. In this interview, he stated that he feels limited in what he is allowed to say without being labeled as racist or privileged. Tom MacDonald argues that the critics he got judge him likely due on his racial identity, which he interpreted it as a form of reverse discrimination. Unlike Eminem experience, MacDonald framed his experiences in more confrontational and ideological terms (Inked Mag Staff, 2021).

Before entering the hip-hop industry, Tom pursued his career as a professional wrestler under a gimmick name “Allstar”. Tom faced struggle in his life due to alcoholic lifestyle, peaked in 2017 when he severed mental breakdown. 2018 marked the beginning of his rap career when he released a single “Dear Rappers”. Throughout his career, he releases multiple songs which viewed as a controversial song such as “White Boy” and “Fake Woke” by the music community. But this “controversy” which heavily brought in his songs and his persona gave a successful career marked by his record in Billboard Hot 100 debut with “Fake Woke”. As of 2024, Tom’s net worth is estimated to be \$800,000 (MacDonald, 2024).