

SOCIAL INJUSTICE PRINCIPLES IN JENNY BICKS'S MOVIE SCRIPT *THE GREATEST SHOWMAN ON EARTH 2015*

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the representation of social injustice in the film script of *The Greatest Showman on Earth*. The film, released in 2017, is a musical drama that tells the story of P.T. Barnum, a visionary who creates the Barnum & Bailey Circus and becomes one of the most famous showmen in the world. However, the film has received criticism for its depiction of social injustice, particularly in its representation of marginalized communities such as people of color and individuals with disabilities.

The research will employ a qualitative analysis of the film script, focusing on the themes, characters, and storylines that address social injustice. The script will be analyzed for its accuracy in depicting the representation of social injustice principles.

Keywords

Injustice, Principles, Script, Literature.

INTRODUCTION

Justice is the quality of treating someone, their acts, or something else fairly. When it can defend the rights of others and grant rights to those who are deserving of them. Justice is another indicator of an order's legitimacy in the life of the country, community, and state. Justice is the process of assigning an appropriate punishment for actions or treatments, whereas injustice is arbitrary behavior that benefits one of the contesting parties. On the other hand, unfairness or a lack of fairness and honesty are examples of injustice (Dorling, 2015, p. 34).

This subject is very close in daily life, yet still unnoticed or even structurally intended to be unrecognizable (Dorling, 1979, p. 45). Mankind and its culture have developed in their civilization in responding about how this world run in the notion of justice. the discussion and actualization to respond is something that make progress about what is



justice and injustice. Thus, reform and reflection are the not something to be accomplished rather that a constant need over change.

However, to continue the notion of justice and injustice are also the subject which being responded as a constant need over change and time in popular literature production. Jenny Bicks Movie's Script the Greatest Showman on Earth in 2015 is the instance which responded where the injustice is not the accidental phenomenon but highly structural and constructed partially, alienated what others experience unfairness. Despite its formula of popular literature, one shall rejoin that the movie script might leave the discussion which allowing the literary critic is executing the rest.

The narrative was taken from the reflection of reality which is the discrimination towards 'unique' people by P. T. Barnum on his circus at 1800s. Where in this narrative production was intentionally occurred in the design about which tells the story of a man who has a strong desire to make his dreams come true, the man is P.T Barnum. Barnum is a family head who was fired from the company where he worked because the place was going bankrupt. After being fired from his job Barnum tries everything, he can earn money for his family. From buying the museum with bank loan money but the museum was empty of visitors. Until finally Barnum's daughter gave the idea to fill something alive into his museum until finally Barnum opened a circus and looked for circus performers who were different from usual, namely those with unique talents and appearances.

This object was emerged in the causal of production image about injustice which leded the understanding of injustice are the responsible of every mankind. However, beside the ideal causal initiation, the pragmatic cause also emerged by the massive consumption which adapted in the form of movie. However, one shall remember its reputations are also considerable initiation to start taking the object as the project of literature research. The reputation of this object has taken the movie grossed \$435 million worldwide, making it the fifth-highest-grossing live-action musical film of all time(Bradshaw, 2017, p. 1). Indeed, the several awards are also rejoiced such an instance AARP Movies for Grownups Awards in 5 February 2018 for Best Grownup Love Story (Won), Billboard Music Awards in May 1, 2019 for top soundtrack The Greatest Showman: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack (Won), and nominated in Critics' Choice Movie Awards in January 11, 2018 for Best Song.

Despite those musical reputation, this research fulfilled to serve the most the base contribution where literary works has the social element as the composition, thus the social injustice might preserve in the intrinsic structure. However, as regarded that literary works has the social realm as its composition, sociology of literature as a branch of discourse emerged to become the suitable foundation as the corridor of interpretation in this research. Thus, it served and specialized area of study Injustice in the object which focuses its attention upon the relation between a literary work and the social structure in which it is created(Alan Swingewood, 1974, p. 29).

Finally, in corresponding those provocation as a background. This research shall sentence that the subject is taken in the discussion about The Social Injustice Principles In Jenny Bicks's Movie Script The Greatest Showman On Earth 2015, which the scope of critic in the sociology of literature tradition.

This research is not an arbitrary project which created unintentionally, yet this research is the sake to rejoice the continuation in the discussion of justice, social in justice, and sociology of literature criticism. By doing so, Here are one of previous research which support and ignited this research as inspiration and step to be continued.

Emerged from Anggraini Anggraini, Unpris Yastanti, and Astrida Khairani in 2020, which the title is Verbal Bullying In The Greatest Showman Movie Directed By Michael Gracey. The purpose of the research in this movie is to determine the cause of verbal bullying and the effect of verbal bullying in the movie The Greatest Showman, directed by Michael Gracey. This method of research uses a qualitative approach. To analyze the movie the writer watched the movie several times and used the theory of books or online journals. In The movie The Greatest Showman there is a verbal violent scene such as (1) Taunting (2) A feeling of resentment (3) Hostility (4) Contempt. While the effect of bullying against victims is (1) Decreasing confidence (2) Feeling intimidate (3) Feeling isolated (4) Prolonged depression (5) Feeling dissimilar (6) Feeling stress. The results of this research are (1) the cause of verbal bullying are hostility, A sense of lack of confidence and attention seeking, A feeling of resentment, the Negative influence of media.(2) The Effect of bullying are Feeling dissimilar and Decreasing confidence.

However, it also remains that social justice refers to a political and philosophical theory that focuses on the concept of fairness in relations between individuals in society and equal access to wealth, opportunities, and social privileges(Dorling, 2015). The focus

of social justice today is more on advancing human rights and the lives of underprivileged and marginalized groups who have traditionally experienced prejudice in society. Many of these groups have experienced discrimination based on sex, age, wealth, ethnicity, heritage, social class, religion, and other characteristics. The pursuit of social justice frequently results in initiatives to redistribute wealth to impoverished groups by offering them chances for employment, financial support, and educational help.

The notion of the trilogy author-work-reader is chosen in this study as the ideal corridor of sociology of literature to be taken into consideration in order to restore the standing of sociology literature in this field of this study. Jenny Bicks's movie script *The Greatest Showman* 2015 as the object which provides the injustice scenery and phenomena that served as the meta-narrative bridge of respond.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the research problem is explained in the following section.

Social Injustice Principles in Jenny Bicks Movie's Script the Greatest Showman on Earth 2015

Injustice theory is referred into the state which define and distinguish the status of injustice among the opposite and others. Thereby injustice theory is the portrayal of characteristic that contain fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning. However, injustice can be understood as the status as an arbitrary action. Injustice generally concerns the distribution of something against the rights of a person or group which is carried out disproportionately (Bufacchi, 2011).

Thereby, in certain amount of injustice form, it holds the principles which determined the understanding to denote. As follow that the principles of social injustices are hold in four fundamental properties, namely equity, access, participation, and rights (Dorling, 1979).

a) The Principles of Equity

About how people are given resources that are suitable for their needs and socioeconomic standing. Contrarily, with equality, everyone has access to the same resources to assist them reach the same goal (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006.) Things that are equal are frequently not equitable



because of the more complex demands of some people and groups (Dorling, 1979). The sample explains as follows:

Jenny Bicks's Movie Script pg. 32

BARNUM: You're over-thinking it. We aim to show people the wonders of the world...

ROTH: Wonders? Is that what you call freaks being paraded for entertainment?

*BARNUM: Sir, the man you are calling a freak is * my colleague, and my friend...*

*ROTH: Oh, is that how you treat your friends? Putting them on display for everyone to gawk at? I hate to waste ink on this atrocity, but I have a duty to warn the public. And when I'm finished, I hope *you will be finished as well.*

Roth finishes his drink and departs, leaving Barnum worried.

Through this identified datum, hereby is necessary to sentence that the character namely Barnum has emerging in such a sense of given resources that are suitable for their needs and socioeconomic standing (Dorling, 2015). It is a total property where the author in this work portraying such a way of contextuality whereby the point of view is being clashed to identify the disability and its notion of equity. But it is also regenerate of a discussion narrative about the possibility to put away the disability to be settled as a minor also at the same time this narrative struggling to seek the place for them in utilizing their capacity. Even ironically as being object of entertaining indeed connotatively as "Wonders" as the equity for the sake of theirs socioeconomic.

b) The Principles of Access

The notion of access can be referred to provide everyone a fair start in life, the basic social injustice principles of access to resources, facilities, and opportunities refers to the extent to which people from diverse socioeconomic categories have equal access to these items. The state of access in this framework of principle serves only to affirm what is sovereign in humans as beings and selves (Dorling, 2015). The sample explain as follows:

Jenny Bicks's Movie Script

BARNUM: I was so proud of you tonight, Caroline. You were amazing up there.



CAROLINE: I really wasn't. (then) I've actually decided to quit the ballet.

BARNUM: Quit?! Why?

CAROLINE: I started too late. I'll never catch up. I'm just not good enough.

BARNUM: Not good enough?! You were the best dancer on that stage!

Caroline insecurities about her skill could be considered as a social injustice in the form of principle of access, caroline felt she was too late to learn ballet, she felt inferior because she doesn't have an access to learn the ballet dance in early age, she faced inequality in accessing the ballet lesson at early age.

This is similar to what Dorling (2015) said that many societies provide its members with a wide range of goods and services, including education, healthcare, food, shelter, and leisure activities. However, there is frequently unequal access to these services. Therefore, the state of access in this context of principle is nothing but promote about what is sovereign in the human as being and self (Dorling, 2015). Upper class families can frequently afford to sent their children into a ballet school which is a tertiary needs, but a lower class family might be prioritizing something else in order to survive on a daily basis thus creating an injustice in accessing a ballet school.

c) The Principle of Participation

Participation principle might be denoted whereby each member of society is given the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns as well as a voice in any decision-making that affects their standard of and way of life through participation (Dorling, 2015). The sample explain as follows:

Jenny Bicks's Movie Script pg.15

Suddenly, a police WHISTLE. A SQUADRON of COPS swarms into the store. CUSTOMERS in line react with catcalls and BOOS.

COP: Sorry, Barnum. The State of New York will never condone lottery gambling.

BARNUM: A lottery isn't gambling! It's hundreds of people coming together with a dream --

COP: Yeah -- while you skim twenty percent!

BARNUM: Twenty? I skim thirty at least!

Another COP pulls down the Lottery sign and rips it up.

BARNUM (CONT'D): Oh, come on. I just paid two dollars for that!

As the COPS dismantle Barnum's makeshift lottery stand, he turns to see Caroline watching him. Barnum smiles bravely.

This scene represent injustice in the principle of participation, Barnum as a New York citizen cannot open a lottery stands to sustain his daily needs, the cops as an institution represented the New York city laws which forbid lottery even though Barnum argues that it is different than gambling they still label it as a gambling.

The scene is similar to what Dorling said about the principle of participation that participation is the process through which each member of society is given the chance to express their thoughts and concerns and a voice in any decision-making that has an impact on their way of life and level of living (Dorling, 2015). This injustice doesn't care on what Barnum said about the matter, in the scene even when Barnum argue that he put some money to build his lottery stand, the cops doesn't care and still dismantle it.

There is also an involvement of public service in this, Barnum's stand and the cops, the cops could be considered as a public service because it was created to enforce the laws in New York, this is similar to what Thirty (1988) said that involving them in decision-making processes about the types of public services required in their communities as well as guaranteeing their full involvement in political and cultural processes are all part of this. The cops was involved because Barnum open a lottery that goes against New York gambling rules, Barnum argues that his lottery stand is a public service because he gave the people of New York a dream when he sold them the lottery ticket, but the cops said otherwise and terminate Barnum involvement in New York cultural processes.

d) The Principle of Rights

Rights or human rights are sovereign and essential to societies that respect the civil, economic, political, cultural, and legal rights of persons, and if they are not upheld, governments, organizations, and people must be held accountable.

Those are the sequences of understanding, which in the redline is the sovereign of human as itself and subject being. The sample explain as follows:

Jenny Bicks's Movie Script pg.06

Philo SLAMS his hand on the table. Everyone jumps. Silence.

PHILO BARNUM: As of Monday, you'll join me on the farm.

IRENE: What about his schooling?

PHILO BARNUM: A waste of time. His place is in the fields.

YOUNG BARNUM: But father...!

Philo silences him with a sharp look. It hurts to say:

PHILO BARNUM: You can dream all you want, son. It won't put food on the table.

Barnum stares. He gets up, leaves the table, and exits.

This scene contained social injustice shown Barnum, Barnum as a child get his education rights taken by his father Philo Barnum, because of their socioeconomic position forced Barnum to work on the field, Irene tried to defend Barnum rights to get education but dismissed by Philo Barnum.

This scene goes against the justice principle of right as social justice and human rights are inextricably linked, and neither can exist without the other. Human rights are sovereign and essential to societies that respect the civil, economic, political, cultural, and legal rights of persons, and if they are not upheld, governments, organizations, and people must be held accountable. They hold a significant place in a lot of societies and are acknowledged on a global scale by organizations like the International Criminal Court and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006). In this scene it was Barnum's right to get education was taken by his own father who thinks that it is not important and doesn't give them food on the table, his father as noted above should tried in a court for his violation of his son human rights.

CONCLUSION

This study conduct whereby The Greatest Showman on Earth is a film script that tells the story of P.T. Barnum, the founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus. The film addresses the issue of social injustice by showcasing the discrimination faced by people



who are different, such as those with disabilities and people of color, based on the narrative of social injustice principle. However, it resulted the form whereby can be signified throughout the film, the detail narrative from characters face discrimination and prejudice due to their differences, including being rejected by society and being treated as outcasts, and it can be concluded in the three main form representation, namely racism, poverty, and social gaps.

In conclusion, *The Greatest Showman* tells a powerful narrative about social justice, highlighting the struggles faced by marginalized groups and the importance of acceptance, inclusiveness, and empathy. *The Greatest Showman* ultimately delivers a message of hope and inspiration, reminding audiences that everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their differences.

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