

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents background of the study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and the limitation, and definition of key terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Film has become one of the most popular media in literature nowadays. Film is a new form of literary work. It differs from other previous literary work, such as novel and drama. But, Film has also the sameness with drama and novel because it uses actors as major means of expression and has elements contained in drama, short story, or novel. The Film makers may also get inspirations from short story or novel to be filmed in order that the readers are easier to enjoy than enjoy novel or short story because it spends less time to see the description through its depictions. Klarer (2006) states:

Film is means of photographic depiction far surpass the means of realistic portrayal in the theater. Film is categorized into performing art because it uses actors as its major means of expression. The visualization of the action is not left merely to the imagination of a viewer, but rather comes to life in the performance.

Film gives a new color for literary work because it is a new media to convey the message that the author has through its photographic depictions. Film has also the elements of literary works, such as: the plot, theme, setting, and character and

dialogue. Besides, there are elements which include camera angle, editing, *mise-en-scene*, montage, etc. supporting the atmosphere of the scene. These elements make the representation of this visual and audio-visual literature form becomes interesting form of media.

Since Film is included literary work, so it may represents the reflection of human life. Therefore, it can be one of media to teach social, culture, moral, or behavior including racism. Racism is attitudes and discriminatory behavior toward people of given race. As Stewart (1981) states that ‘Racism refers to heredity differences in such traits as skin color, eye color, or eye shape related to discrimination and unequal treatment of people. In certain society, one race may be considered superior or inferior. This will influence the member of the race’.

Based on the theory stated above, racism means giving discriminative attitude and unequal treatment toward certain people because of race. It may make certain race feel considered superior or inferior because of the discrimination and unequal treatment. Discussing racism, Hyman & Sheatsley in Myers, (1987) states, in 1942, a majority of Americans agreed that “there should be separate sections for Negroes on street cars and buses”. This is the example of racism toward Negroes done by the Whites. This unequal treatment is a social action which may affect social conflict. Racism is one of facts occurring in human social life. It has been inspiring the Film makers to depict into a good Film. Therefore, study on racism is necessary to conduct.

*Men of Honor* is the Film based on the true story of Carl Brashear, who was the first Negro to serve as a diver in the United States Navy. He was born to a poor

farming family and joined the Navy in hopes of bettering himself. When he came to navy academy, he gets insults from the Whites. He ignores the insults which lasting for long time done by the Whites to Niggers like him. Although he always gets discrimination and unequal treatments with other Whites navies, he tries to prove that nigger has the equal ability or even higher than the Whites. When Brashear applies for diving school, he first encounters Master Chief Billy Sunday, a tyrannical diving instructor. Sunday does little at first to encourage Brashear's ambitions, and to be a diver, Brashear discovers racism in the military which is an ugly fact of life when his white comrades refuse to share barracks with him. But Brashear's courage and determination make an impression on Sunday, and the two men become allies as Brashear must fight prejudice, military bureaucracy, and even a crippling injury in order to realize his dreams. Brashear proved that Whites' negative prejudice about Negroes was not entirely right. This Film is directed by George Tillman Jr. It was released in theaters: on November 10, 2000, wide on DVD: on April 10, 2001. Based on the information from Film Info (Berardinelli, James. 2000) this Film won Oscar Award and two other Academy Awards.

Racism is expected to give the explanation about the social phenomena which is a social action causing conflict toward Brashear's career. Therefore, the writer is interested in conducting this study entitles *Racism toward Negroes in the George Tillman Junior's "Men of Honor" Film* to describe the phenomena about the attitudes toward certain people based on given race.

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

1. How is racism toward Carl Brashear, as a Negro, exposed in the *Men of Honor* film?
2. How is the reaction of Carl Brashear, as a Negro, toward discrimination in racism in the *Men of Honor* film?
3. What is the effect of discriminative attitude toward Carl Brashear, as a Negro, on White Americans in the *Men of Honor* film?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

1. To describe racism toward Carl Brashear, as a Negro, in the *Men of Honor* film.
2. To explain the reaction of Carl Brashear, as a Negro, toward discrimination in racism in the *Men of Honor* film.
3. To know the effect of discriminative attitude toward Carl Brashear, as a Negro, on White Americans in the *Men of Honor* film.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The result of this study has significance for several parties. The first is for English Department students. The students can take the lesson about racism, which can bear the conflict between human and enable them to underestimate other race outside their own race. Furthermore, it is expected to encourage students to study much more about film which is a reflection of society and behavior. The second is for lecturers. The lecturers can use this study as reference when they teach social and culture, especially about racism or film. The third is for other researchers. It is hoped that this study can be an inspiration for them who are interested in analyzing films.

## **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

The scope of this study is focused on racism. Racism studied here is racism toward Negroes in *Men of Honor* film. The data analyzed includes actions, dialogues, and events which reflect racism faced by major character, Carl Brashear. And it is limited on racism which is exposed, the reaction of Carl Brashear toward discrimination, and the effect of discriminative attitude toward Carl Brashear on White Americans in the film *Men of Honor*.

## **1.6 Definition of the Key Terms**

*Racism* is the belief in viewing people's ability or quality based on the race. It is accordance with Stewart (1981: 199) who states that 'racism is the belief that race is very important in determining people's abilities and that people should be treated as inferiors or superiors on the basis of race'.

*Negroes* are citizens or residents of the United State who have origins in any of the black populations of Africa  
([encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/African-American](http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/African-American)).

*Negroes in this Film* are black American people who join the navy.

*Men of Honor* is the film based on the true story of Carl Brashear, who was the first Negro to serve as a diver in the United States Navy, directed by George Tillman Junior's.