

**THE RISE AND THE FALL OF THE AMERICAN DREAM OF  
CHARACTER GEORGE JUNG IN THE MOVIE *BLOW* BY  
DAVID MCKENNA AND NICK CASSAVETES**

**TERM PAPER**

**Submitted in part-fulfilling for obtaining  
Strata One (S-1) Degree**



by:

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JAKARTA  
2013**

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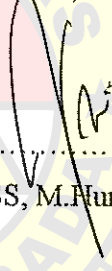
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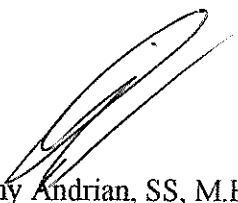
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## PREFACE

Alhamdulillahirabbil'aalamiin, owing to Allah SWT's mercy and blessing, finally I could complete this term-paper well, which entitled *The Rise and The Fall of The American Dream of Character George Jung in The Movie Blow by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes*. This term-paper is submitted in part-fulfilling for obtaining Strata One (S-1) degree in English Department, Darma Persada University.

Thank you very much to my parents, Umar Ben Hashim and Sofiah Umar because of their endless prayer and priceless advices I was finally able to finish this research and finish my education in Darma Persada University. Also to my brothers Amir Fiki and Ricky Agam who always give me spirit and encouragement.

Completion of this research can not be separated from the help and support from various parties. Therefore, I would like to say my thanks to those who give contribution for me in the completion of this research, which I listed as follows:

1. Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, MA as the Advisor who patiently guided me in the preparation of this research.
2. Tommy Andrian, SS, M. Hum as the Reader who thoroughly checked and repaired the word by word in this term-paper, also as the Head of English Department.
3. Dra. Kurnia Idawati, M.Si as my Academic Advisor who always guide me in the preparation of my study each semester. Also all English Department lecturers who have given me so much knowledge and experience.
4. My friends in English Literature, class of 2009, Lenggo, Ade, Aisyah, Asriar (Daan), Luhur, Donny, Sholah, Nurul (Eun-Chun), Adima (Dimbul), Dolly Hasbiar, Barkah (Bacha), Silvy, Dyas, Mijchela, Arry, Doli Bingar, Harfi Nira, and Siti Fadlin (Ariyn). Also to the junior class, Oki, Teguh, Adi, Dule, Margareth (Alet) and Fikar. You all have done so much to me over the years. Give the moral support and shared the knowledge. Always there in good times and in bad.

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7. Secretariat of the Faculty of Letters who always serve all my academic affairs, especially the main officer who often helped me, Armelius (Uda).
8. Library of Darma Persada University that has provided some of the books I need for my loan and I always return it lately.
9. All Britpop bands who always accompanied me during the completion of this term-paper. Your beautiful tones are always accompanied and encouraged me during the day or night.

All of which are written in this term-paper I hope it can be useful to anyone who read, especially for those who pursue the field of literature. I realize that this research is far from perfect. Therefore, suggestions and criticisms are welcome. I conclude this preface and I am sorry if there are mistake in the writing of all content on this term-paper.

Jakarta, June 2013

Writer

## ABSTRACT

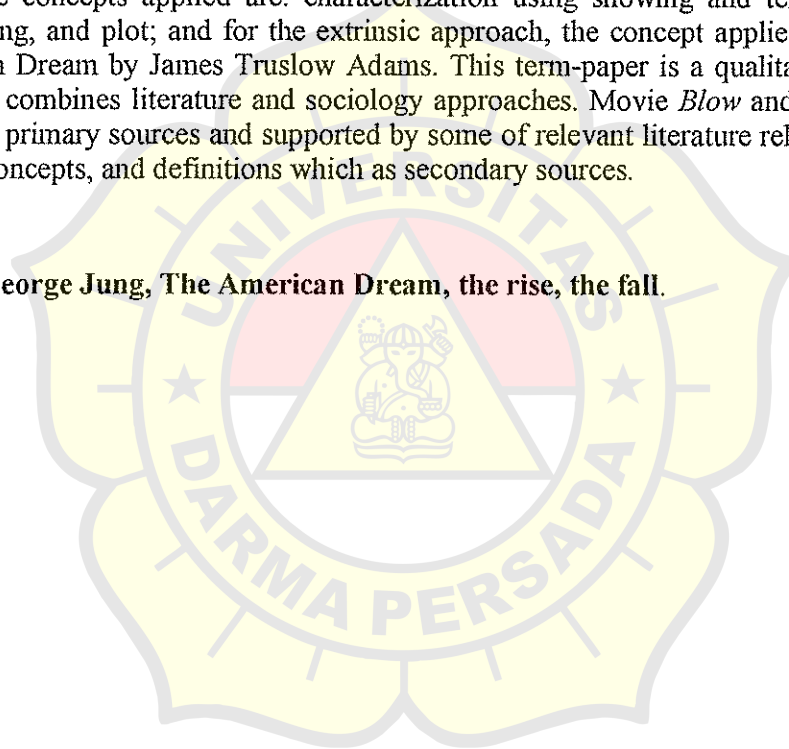
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Title : The Rise and the Fall of the American Dream of Character  
George Jung in the Movie *Blow* by David McKenna and Nick  
Cassavetes

This term-paper discusses about the theme of a literary work of movie with applying the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. Through the intrinsic approach, the concepts applied are: characterization using showing and telling method, setting, and plot; and for the extrinsic approach, the concept applied is: the American Dream by James Truslow Adams. This term-paper is a qualitative research that combines literature and sociology approaches. Movie *Blow* and the script are the primary sources and supported by some of relevant literature related to theories, concepts, and definitions which as secondary sources.

Keywords: **George Jung, The American Dream, the rise, the fall.**



## ABSTRAK

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George Jung in the Movie *Blow* by David McKenna and Nick  
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*Skripsi ini membahas tema karya sastra berupa film dengan menggunakan pendekatan intrinsik dan ekstrinsik. Melalui pendekatan intrinsik, diterapkan konsep-konsep: perwatakan menggunakan metode langsung (showing) dan tidak langsung (telling), latar, serta alur; dan untuk pendekatan ekstrinsik digunakan konsep the American Dream oleh James Truslow Adams. Skripsi ini adalah penelitian kualitatif yang memadukan pendekatan sastra dan sosiologi. Film Blow beserta naskahnya merupakan sumber primer pada skripsi ini, didukung oleh beberapa literatur yang terkait dengan teori, konsep, dan definisi yang relevan sebagai sumber sekunder.*

**Kata kunci:** George Jung, The American Dream, kemunculan, kejatuhan.



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Problem

*Blow* is a Hollywood film that tells the story of a cocaine cartel named George Jung, an American man. The movie which directed by Ted Demme and written by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes. It is the true story of George Jung life, a sizable drug cartel in the late 70's to 80's. The film's title is taken from the term of cocaine.<sup>1</sup> This is the forth film of David McKenna. He sold his first screenplay, *American History X*, to New Line Cinema at the young age of 26. His next works are *Body Shots*, *Get Carter* and *S.W.A.T.*, which has raised big success in theaters. Most recently, he made the jump into television, co-creating the Pentagon drama, *E-Ring*.<sup>2</sup> Nick Cassavetes, who worked with McKenna in writing this movie, is a son of actress Gena Rowlands and actor-director John Cassavetes. He is an actor, a writer and also a director. Several movies he directed are *My Sister's Keeper*, *Alpha Dog*, *The Notebook*, and *John Q*.<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of the story, George and his friend, Tuna, comes to Manhattan Beach, California. There they saw many young men and women who consume marijuana. So they see a business opportunity, and then finally they are interested to doing business of marijuana. Business has resulted and continues to grow. But one time George was caught and sent to prison. In prison he gets a friend named Diego. After freed from prison, he and Diego expanded cocaine business which is more promising. His business is successful and he is rich. He has a wife named Mirtha who is beautiful. When wealth and a beautiful wife he has, there just gets in the transverse. He was

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<sup>1</sup> "Blow"; October 17, 2012 ;available from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blow\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blow_(film))

<sup>2</sup> "David McKenna"; April 8, 2013 ;available from: <http://www.filmbug.com/db/343542>

<sup>3</sup> "Nick Cassavetes"; April 8, 2013;available from: <http://www.tribute.ca/people/nick-cassavetes/2577/>

betrayed by Diego. Finally he came out of the cocaine business and led a normal life with his wife and his daughter. At his birthday party, police surrounded his house and he is arrested for cocaine buffet and his Colombian cartel guest list. George back in jail, and when he gets out of prison, he has become poor. His wife and even his parents did not want to accept him. However, the only one he wants, his daughter, Kristina. He promised to takes her to California. But he had falls into poverty and do not have the power to takes his daughter from Mirtha, so he has to finds a way to get the money. He again contacts his colleagues and starts business again, so a large amount of cocaine flown from Colombia to begin his business again. But he was trapped by his friends who worked together with the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration). He was arrested and sentenced to 60 years in prison.

There are some characters that have an important role in the life of George. Diego, who learn him all about cocaine business, introduced him to his wife, and make him rich. His parents were not allowed him to stay with them also his unfaithful wife.

#### B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem, I identify the problem of the research is: the struggle of the main character George Jung who wants to take big risks becomes drug dealers in order to reach success and then he fell from his success. Therefore, I assume that the theme of the research is: "The Rise and The Fall of The American Dream of Character George Jung in The Movie *Blow* by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes".

#### C. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problem above, I limit the problem to the analysis of characters. The theories and concepts I use are;

characterization, plot, and setting, through the sociology approach is; the American Dream.

#### D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problem, the formulation of the problem is that whether the theme of this novel is *The Rise and The Fall of The American Dream of Character George Jung In The Movie Blow by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes*. To answer the questions, I take some steps as follows:

1. Can the methods of characterization be used to analyze the movie?
2. Can the plot and setting be used to analyze this movie?
3. Can the American Dream concept be used to analyze this movie?
4. Can the theme of the movie be reinforced by using the result of analysis of the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches?

#### E. Purpose of the Research

Based on the formulation of the research, the purpose of this research is to prove whether the theme of this movie is *The Rise and The Fall of The American Dream of Character George Jung In The Movie Blow by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes*. To fulfill this purpose, I have to take some steps as follows:

1. To analyze the characters by using methods of characterization.
2. To analyze the plot in this movie.
3. To analyze the setting in this movie.
4. To analyze movie by using the American Dream concept.
5. To reinforce theme by using the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches.

#### F. Framework of the Theories

Based on the above mentioned, in this research I use the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic approach. For the intrinsic, I use literary approaches. Meanwhile, for the extrinsic approach, I use the American Dream concept.

## 1. Intrinsic approach

The word *intrinsic* means something that is related to the essential nature of a thing. Through this approach, the writer uses the concepts of:

### a. Characterization

#### 1. Telling Method (*Direct*)

Telling Method (*Direct*) relies on exposition and direct commentary by the author. In telling – a method preferred and practiced by many older fiction writers – the guiding hand of the author is very much in evidence. We learn and look only at what the author calls to our attention.<sup>4</sup> Direct methods of revealing character-characterization by telling-include the following:

#### a. Characterization through the use of names

Names are often used to provide essential clues that aid in characterization. Some characters are given names that suggest their dominant or controlling traits, as, for example, Edward Murdstone (in Dicken's *David Copperfield*) and Roger Cillingsworth (in Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*). Both men are the cold-hearted villains their names suggest. Other ones are given names that reinforce (or sometimes are in contrast to) their physical appearance. Names can also contain literary or historical allusions that aid in characterization by means of association. One must also, however, be alert to names used ironically that characterize through inversion.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> James H. Pickering & Jeffrey D. Hooper, *Concise Companion to Literature* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

b. Characterization through appearance

Although in real life most of us are aware that appearances are often deceiving, in the world of fiction details of appearance (what a character wears and how he looks) often provide essential clues to character.<sup>6</sup>

c. Characterization by the author

In the most customary form of telling, the author interrupts the narrative and reveals directly, through a series of editorial comments, the nature and personality of the characters, including the thoughts and feelings that enter and pass through the characters' minds. By so doing the author asserts and retains full control of characterization.<sup>7</sup>

2. Showing Method (*Indirect*)

The method of characterization which involves the author's stepping aside, as it were, to allow the characters to reveal themselves directly through their dialogue and their actions.<sup>8</sup>

a. Characterization through dialogue

Some light fiction reproduces dialogue as it might occur in reality, but the best authors trim everything that is inconsequential. What remains is weighty and substantial and carries with it the force of the speaker's attitudes, values, and beliefs. The task of establishing character through dialogue is not a simple one. Some characters are careful and guarded in what they say: they speak only by indirection, and what we must infer from their words what they actually mean. Others are open and candid; they tell us, or appear to tell us, exactly what is on their minds. Some characters are given

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 27.



to chronic exaggeration and overstatement; others to understatement and subtlety.<sup>9</sup>

b. Characterization through action

To establish character on the basis of action, it is necessary to examine the several events of the plot for what they seem to reveal about the characters, about their unconscious emotional and psychological states as well as about their conscious attitudes and values. Some actions, of course, are inherently meaningful in this respect than others. A gesture or a facial expression usually carries with it less significance than some larger and overt act.<sup>10</sup>

b. Setting

Setting in fiction is called on to perform a number of desired functions. It may serve five elements.<sup>11</sup>

1. Setting as background for action

When we speak of setting as background, then, we have in mind a kind of setting that exists by and large for its own sake, without any clear relationship to action or characters, or at best relationship that is only tangential and slight. To see whether setting acts as an essential element in the fiction, or whether it exists merely as decorative and functionless background, we need ask ourselves this: Could the work in question be set in another time and another place without doing it essential damage? If the answer is yes, then the setting can be said to exist as decorative background whose function is largely irrelevant to the purpose of the work as whole.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 38.

## 2. Setting as antagonist

Setting in the form of nature can function as a kind of casual agent or antagonist, helping to establish plot conflict and determine the outcome of events.<sup>13</sup>

## 3. Setting as a means of creating appropriate atmosphere

Many authors manipulate their settings as a means of arousing the reader's expectations and establishing an appropriate state of mind for events to come.<sup>14</sup>

## 4. Setting as a means of revealing character

An author can also use the setting to clarify and reveal character by deliberately making setting a metaphoric or symbolic extension of character.<sup>15</sup>

## 5. Setting as a means of reinforcing theme

Setting can also be used as a means of reinforcing and clarifying the theme of a novel or short story.<sup>16</sup>

### c. Plot

Plot defined as the deliberately arranged sequence of interrelated events that constitute the basic narrative structure of a novel or a short story. Events of any kind, of course, inevitably involve people, and for this reason it is virtually impossible to discuss plot in isolation from character.<sup>17</sup>

#### 1. Exposition

The exposition is the beginning section in which the author provides the necessary background information, sets the scene, establishes the situation, and dates the action. It may also introduce the characters

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 39.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p. 41.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 14.

and the conflict, or the potential for conflict. The exposition may be accomplished in a single sentence or paragraph, or, in the case of some novels, occupy an entire chapter or more.<sup>18</sup>

2. Complication

Sometimes referred to as the *rising action*, breaks the existing equilibrium and introduces the characters and the underlying or inciting conflict. The conflict is then developed gradually and intensified.<sup>19</sup>

3. Crisis

The crisis, also referred to as the *climax*, is the moment at which the plot reaches its point of greatest emotional intensity; it is the turning point of the plot, directly precipitating its resolution.<sup>20</sup>

4. Falling Action

Once the crisis, or turning point, has been reached, the tension subsides and the plot moves toward its appointed conclusion.<sup>21</sup>

5. Resolution

The final section of the plot is its resolution; it records the outcome of the conflict and establishes some new equilibrium or stability. The resolution is also referred to as the *conclusion*.<sup>22</sup>

d. Theme

Theme is one of those critical terms that mean very different things to different people. To some, who think of literature mainly as vehicle for teaching, preaching, propagating a favorite idea, or encouraging some form of correct conduct, theme may mean the moral or lesson that can be extrapolated from the work. Theme is also used sometimes to refer

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

to the basic issue, problem or subject with which the work is concerned.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Extrinsic approach

### The American Dream

The American Dream is a national ethos of the United States, a set of ideals in which freedom includes the opportunity for prosperity and success, and an upward social mobility achieved through hard work. In the definition of the American Dream by James Truslow Adams in 1931, "life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement" regardless of social class or circumstances of birth.<sup>24</sup>

In the definition of the American Dream by James Truslow Adams in 1931, "life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement" regardless of social class or circumstances of birth. The idea of the American Dream is rooted in the United States Declaration of Independence which proclaims that "all men are created equal" and that they are "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights" including "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."<sup>25</sup> The American Dream ensures to American society that everyone in America can reach success and happy life by working hard.

Albertine Minderop in her book, *Pragmatisme – Sikap Hidup dan Prinsip Politik Luar Negeri Amerika* said:

*Tahun 1920-an Gilbert K. Chesterton setelah berkunjung ke Amerika, menyimpulkan bahwa bangsa*

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> "The American Dream"; October 21, 2012; available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Dream](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Dream)

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*.

*Amerika adalah satu-satunya bangsa di dunia yang terbentuk berdasarkan suatu sistem. Esensi sistem tersebut adanya keyakinan bahwa keselarasan masa depan terletak pada individu. Kiprah kehidupan ini melahirkan istilah frontier yang didukung oleh keyakinan yang sangat populer, yakni The American Dream.<sup>26</sup>*

*Konsep The American Dream mencakup: gold (emas), gospel (agama), dan glory (kejayaan). Penjabaran dari ketiga unsur diatas adalah, pertama, tujuan para pendatang ke Amerika mengejar kekayaan materi atau sumber daya alam. Kedua, upaya mereka menyebarkan agama atau keyakinan atau ideologi yang belakangan ini dapat diartikan sebagai penyebaran asas demokrasi liberal. Ketiga, upaya mereka meraih kejayaan dan keunggulan.<sup>27</sup>*

(My translation: In 1920 Gilbert K. Chesterton after a visit to the United States, concluded that the American nation is the only nation in the world that is formed by a system. The essence of the system is the belief that the future harmony lies in the individual. Gait is the birth of frontier life, supported by a very popular belief, namely The American Dream.

The concept of the American Dream include: gold, gospel, and glory. Elaboration of the above three elements are, first, the purpose of the immigrants to America pursuit of material wealth or natural resources. Second, their efforts to spread their religion, belief or ideology that latter could be

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<sup>26</sup> Albertine Minderop, *Pragmatisme – Sikap Hidup dan Prinsip Politik Luar Negeri Amerika* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2006), p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

interpreted as the spread of liberal democratic principles.  
Third are their efforts to achieve greatness and glory.)

The term “American Dream” is used in many ways, but it essentially is an idea that suggests that anyone in the US can succeed through hard work and has the potential to lead a happy, successful life. Many people have expanded upon or refined the definition to include things such as freedom, fulfillment and meaningful relationships. Someone who manages to achieve his or her version of the American Dream is often said to be “living the dream.” This concept has been subject to criticism, because some people believe that the structure of society in the US prevents such an idealistic goal for everyone. Critics often point to examples of inequality rooted in class, race, religion and ethnicity that suggest that the American Dream is not attainable for everyone.<sup>28</sup>

From above explanation adopted from several sources can be concluded that the American Dream is a concept of thoughts that has been brought by the American frontier long time ago, continues to be taken until now and passed on to all future generations in America. American Dream is a concept to encourage the spirit of the settlers at that time, to achieve prosperity in the new world they inhabit and to form a strong and prosperous nation. However, the American Dream in the present is not always a reference to the American society, because the orientations not too suitable for American society today.

#### G. Methods of the Research

Based on the framework of the theories, I use a variety of qualitative research methods, research literature type, interpretive/analysis research type

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<sup>28</sup> “The American Dream”; October 21, 2012; available from <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-the-american-dream.htm>

with the method of data collection in the form of movie *Blow* as a primary source and supported by some of the literature related to the theory, concept and definition suitable as a secondary source.

#### H. Benefits of the Research

Based on the methods of the research, the benefits of this research are firstly it could be useful for anyone interested in deepening knowledge of the film *Blow* that inspired by the true story of a drug dealer. Secondly, it could be useful for those who study about the American Dream. Finally, I hope this research could be useful for anyone who will conduct a research about literary works.

#### I. Systematic Organization of the Research

Related with the title of this research, the systematic presentation is written as follows:

CHAPTER I entitled INTRODUCTION, contains: Background of the Problem, Identification of the Problem, Limitation of the Problem, Formulation of the Problem, Purpose of the Research, Framework of the Theories, Methods of the Research, Benefits of the Research, Systematic Organization of the Research.

CHAPTER II entitled MOVIE *BLOW* THROUGH INTRINSIC APPROACH, contains: a glimpse of characterization, setting, and plot.

CHAPTER III entitled THE RISE AND THE FALL OF THE AMERICAN DREAM OF CHARACTER GEORGE JUNG, contains: a glimpse explaining of reflection of the reaching and the losing of the American Dream concept on the main character George Jung.

CHAPTER IV entitled CONCLUSION, contains conclusions indicate that the movie theme is *The Rise and The Fall of The American Dream of Character George Jung In The Movie Blow by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes*.