

**THE REFLECTION OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AND
MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS
IN THE FILM *PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS* BY GABRIELE MUCCINO**

TERM PAPER

Submitted in part-fulfilling for obtaining

Strata One (S-1) Degree



Oki Delani Sujana

2010130018

**STRATA ONE (S-1) OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS
DARMA PERSADA UNIVERSITY
JAKARTA
2014**

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT PAGE

I hereby declare that term paper is the result of my own work, not a half or total plagiarism of someone else's, and all of the sources quoted or referred to have been stated correctly.

Name : Oki Delani Sujana

Reg. No : 2010130018

Signature :

Date :

TEST FEASIBILITY APPROVAL PAGE

The term paper submitted by:

Name : Oki Delani Sujana

Reg. No : 2010130018

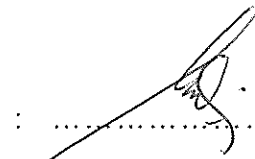
Study Program : English Department/ Strata one degree (S-1)

The title of the term- : THE REFLECTION OF THE AMERICAN
paper DREAM AND MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF
NEEDS IN THE FILM *PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS*
BY GABRIELE MUCCINO

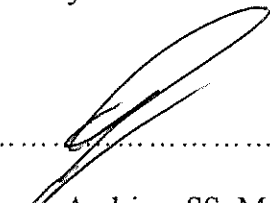
has been approved by Advisor, Reader, and Head of English Department to be tested in front of the board of Examiners on 2014 at the English Department, the Faculty of Letters, Darma Persada University.

Advisor : 

Dra. Karina Adinda, MA

Reader : 

Drs. Rusydi Muhammad Yusuf, M.Si

Head of English Dept. : 

Tommy Andrian, SS, M.Hum

APPROVAL PAGE

The term paper has been tested on 2014

By
BOARD OF EXAMINERS
Consisting of

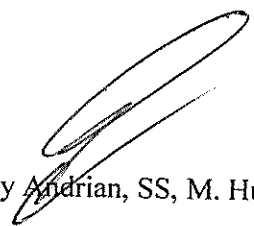
Advisor :
Dra. Karina Adinda, MA

Reader :
Drs. Rusydi Muhammad Yusuf, M.Si

Chair of Board Examiner :
Tommy Andrian, SS, M. Hum

Approved on 2014

Head of English Department


Tommy Andrian, SS, M. Hum

Dean of Faculty of Letters


FAKULTAS HUMANIA

Syamsul Bachri, SS, M.Si

PREFACE

Alhamdulillahirabbil'allamiin, owing to Allah SWT's mercy and blessing, finally I could complete this term-paper well, which entitled *The Reflection of American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in film Pursuit of Happiness by Gabriele Muccino*. This term-paper is submitted to the Strata One English Department of University of Darma Persada as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the Strata One (S1) degree.

I would like to say thank you to my parents, Uja Sujana and Cicih Kurniasih because of their endless pray and priceless advices, I was finally able to finish this research and finish my education in University of Darma Persada.

Completion of this research cannot 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. Dra. Karina Adinda, MA as the Adviser who patiently guided and helped me in the preparation of this research.
2. Drs. Rusydi Muhammad Yusuf, MA as the Reader who thoroughly checked and corrected the word by word in this term-paper.
3. Tommy Andrian, SS, M.Hum as the Head of English Department.
4. Eka Yuniar, SS as my Academic Adviser who patiently guided and helped me in the preparation of my study every semester.
5. All lecturers of English Department who have given me so much knowledge and experiences.
6. My friends in English Department, class of 2010 until 2013, who always support and give many advices for me in every semester. You are the best for me.
7. My friends in PARKIRANSKY, all of you are the best in this faculty and also in my life. Thanks for all your supports and advices in good times and in bad times. You are the best for me.

8. UKM SOCCA as my soccer team. Thanks for your time to give me the best place in your team. I am so proud to be a part of your team. I hope this team will be the best team at the next time.

Through this research, I hope, it can be very useful for every people who wants to expand their insights about the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and American Dream. I realize this research is far from perfect. Therefore, opinions, suggestions and criticisms are welcome.

Jakarta, February 2014

Writer

Oki Delani Sujana

ABSTRACT

Name : Oki Delani Sujana
Study Program : English Department S-1
Title : The Reflection of American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in film *Pursuit of Happiness* by Gabriele Muccino

This term-paper discusses about the theme of a literary work of film by applying 2 (two) approaches; intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. Through the intrinsic approach, the concepts are: characterization using showing method. Beside that, there are also characterization through the action of the character such as: behavior and the motivation of the figure. For the extrinsic approaches there are American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow. This term-paper explains about Chris Gardner as a father who was struggling for achieving American Dream and getting the top of his needs, happiness. In this research, film *Pursuit of Happiness* and the script are the primary sources and supported by some of relevant theories, concepts, and definitions which as secondary sources.

Keywords: American Dream, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Setting, Characterization

ABSTRAK

Nama : Oki Delani Sujana
Program Studi : S1 Sastra Inggris
Judul : The Reflection of American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in film *Pursuit of Happiness* by Gabriele Muccino

Skripsi ini membahas tema karya sastra dalam sebuah film dengan menggunakan 2(dua) pendekatan, yaitu secara intrinsik dan ekstrinsik. Dalam pendekatan intrinsik, terdapat konsep-konsep: Karakterisasi melalui metode tidak langsung (Showing) kemudian adapula karakterisasi melalui tindakan para tokoh yang diantaranya melalui tingkah laku dan motivasi yang melandasi; dan untuk pendekatan ekstrinsik terdapat American Dream dan Teori Kebutuhan Bertingkat dari Abraham Maslow. Skripsi membahas tentang Chris Gardner yang merupakan seorang ayah yang berjuang untuk meraih American Dream dan mencapai puncak dari kebutuhannya, yaitu kebahagiaan. Film beserta naskahnya merupakan sumber primer dalam skripsi ini dan didukung oleh teori-teori, konsep dan definisi terkait yang menjadi sumber sekunder.

Kata kunci: American Dream, Teori Kebutuhan Bertingkat dari Abraham Maslow, Karakterisasi, Latar

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT PAGE	ii
TEST FEASIBILITY APPROVAL PAGE	iii
APPROVAL PAGE	iv
PREFACE	v
ABSTRACT	vi
<i>ABSTRAK</i>	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background of The Problem	1
B. Identification of The Problem	2
C. Limitation of The Problem	2
D. Formulation of The Problem	2
E. Objective of The Research	3
F. Framework of The Theories	3
G. Methodology of The Research	7
H. The Benefit of The Research	7
I. Systematics of The Research	7
CHAPTER II: FILM THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS BY INTRINSIC APPROACHES	9
A. Characterization Analysis	9
1. Chris Gardner	9
2. Linda	17
3. Christopher	19
B. Motivation of Chris Gardner	22
C. Setting	24
1. As background for action	24
2. As antagonist	25
3. As a means of creating appropriate atmosphere	27
4. As a means of revealing character	28
5. As a means of reinforcing theme	28
D. Plot	30
1. Exposition	30
2. Rising Action	31
3. Climax	32
4. Falling Action	33
5. Denouement (Resolve)	34

E. Summary of The Chapter.....	35
CHAPTER III: THE REFLECTION OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AND MASLOW'S NEEDS HIERARCHY	37
A. American Dream.....	37
1. Definition of American Dream.....	38
2. The American Dream of Chris Gardner.....	38
2.1 Gold.....	39
2.2 Glory	42
2.3 Gospel	45
B. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy.....	47
1. Definition of Maslow's Needs Hierarchy	47
2. The Needs Hierarchy of Chris Gardner.....	48
2.1 Physiological Needs.....	49
2.2 Security Needs	52
2.3 Social Needs.....	55
2.4 Esteem Needs.....	58
2.5 Self-Actualizing Needs.....	59
C. Summary of The Chapter.....	62
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION	64
A. Conclusion	64
B. Summary of The Term Paper.....	65
C. <i>Ringkasan Skripsi</i>	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	67
SCHEME OF THE RESEARCH.....	68
BIODATA.....	69

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Problem

"Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions."- Dalai Lama¹. Life is just a common life if we do nothing inside it. on the other hand, life become beautiful if we do something; something good, memorable, and unforgettable. We just have one time live in this planet, so which one do you prefer to choose? make it ordinary or make it beautiful.

"If one dream should fall and break into a thousand pieces, never be afraid to pick one of those pieces up and begin again." - Flavia Weedn². Dream and life are like a pair to get anything. Life without dream is just like walking without path so that dream, if we never realize our dream, we will never get what the real meaning of life is.

In the *Pursuit of Happiness*, Chris Gardner (Will Smith) is a bright and talented but marginally employed salesman. Struggling to make ends meet, Gardner finds himself and his five-year-old son evicted from their San Francisco apartment with nowhere to go. When Gardner lands an internship at a prestigious stock brokerage firm, he and his son endures many hardships, including living in shelters, in pursuit of his dream of a better life for the two of them. Chris Gardner (Will Smith) is a family man struggling to make ends meet. Despite his valiant attempts to help keep the family afloat, the mother (Thandie Newton) of his five-year-old son Christopher (Jaden Christopher Syre Smith) is buckling under the constant strain of financial pressure. No longer able to cope, she reluctantly decides to leave.

Chris, now a single father, continues doggedly to pursue a better-paying job using every sales skill he knows. He lands an internship at a prestigious stock

¹"Dalai Lama's Quote" ; June 4,2013; available from http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_happiness.html

²"Flavia Weedn's Quote" ; June 4,2013; available from <http://www.quote garden.com/be-great.html>

brokerage firm, and although there is no salary, he accepts, hopeful he will end the program with a job and a promising future. Without a financial cushion, Chris and his son are soon evicted from their apartment and forced to sleep in shelters, bus stations, bathrooms, or wherever they can find refuge for the night. Despite his troubles, Chris continues to honor his commitment as a loving and caring father, using the affection and trust his son has placed on him as an encouragement to face his obstacles.

B. Identification of The Problem

Based on the background above, I identify that this movie is about a father who has many problems that insistent in his life. Failed in his marriage, left by his wife and being homeless are his problems in this film. However, he has a son who is very patient with him. Christopher is a little angle in his life. Chris Gardner can't reach his dream without Christopher. So that, I assume that the theme of this film is the reflection of the American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that become a great passion in his failure of marriage.

C. Limitation of The Problem

Based on the identification of the problem above, I limit this research to the problems which happens in this family but in other hand it is a factor in his successful life. To analyze this film, I use intrinsic elements such as: Showing Methods; What The Speaker Said, Motivation and Behavior of The Figure. I also use extrinsic elements such as sociology approaches; The American Dream and psychology approaches; Maslow's Needs Hierarchy.

D. Formulation of The Problem

Based on the limitation problem above, I formulate the problem: Is my assumption true that the theme of this movie is the reflection of the American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that become a great passion in a failure of marriage. In order to answer this question, I formulate the following problems:

1. Can Showing Methods such as What The Speaker Said, Motivation and Behavior of The Figure be used to analyze Chris Gardner's characterization ?
2. Can the concept of setting and plot be used to analyze this film ?
3. Can Showing Methods such as Behavior of The Figure and Motivation show the existence of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and American Dream concept ?

E. The Purpose of The Research

Based on the formulation problem above, the purpose of this research is to prove my assumption in *Pursuit of Happiness* film, the reflection of the American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that become a great passion in a failure of marriage. In brief, I take some steps as follows:

1. Analyzing the characterization by using Showing Methods.
2. Analyzing the setting and plot.
3. Reinforcing the theme by using American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs concepts.

F. Framework of The Theories

Based on the purpose of the research above, In this research, I use intrinsic elements such as: Showing Methods; What The Speaker Said, Motivation and Behavior of The Figure. I also use extrinsic elements such as sociology approaches; The American Dream and psychology approaches; Maslow's Needs Hierarchy

1. Showing Methods
 - a. What The Speaker Said

Unlike the direct methods of characterization already discussed, showing involve the gradual rather than the immediate establishment of character. Such a process requires rather than excludes the active participation of the reader and in so

doing calls upon what Foster called “intelligence and memory.”³ First, the reader should pay attention to the substance of the dialogue. Is it the important dialogue so it can develop the actions of the plot? If the speaker insists on talking only about himself or only on a single subject, we may conclude that we have either an egotist or a bore.

b. Motivation

In either case to understand the characterization of the character whether it is conscious or unconscious, it is necessary to identify the common pattern of conduct and behavior of the character.

In generally, motivation relates to the underlying encouragement of human nature as follows: love, hungry, greedy and etc.⁴

c. Behavior of The Figure

In order to build the character by the behavior, it is important for the reader to observe in detail for every events in plot. It is also reflects to the characterization of the figure, the emotion, and the psychology which unconscious followed with the value which shown.⁵

2. Setting

Setting in fiction is called on to perform a number of desired functions. It may serve five elements.⁶

a. 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:

³ “James H. Pickering, *Concise Companion to Literature* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1981), page 31.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 34.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 36.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 38.

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.⁷

b. 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.⁸

c. 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.⁹

d. 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.¹⁰

e. 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.¹¹

3. 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.¹²

a. Exposition

The exposition is the beginning section in which the author provides the necessary background information, sets the scene, establishes the situation, and

⁷*Ibid*, p. 38.

⁸*Ibid*, p. 39.

⁹*Ibid*, p. 40.

¹⁰*Ibid*, p. 41.

¹¹*Ibid*, p. 42

¹²*Ibid*, p. 14.

dates the action. It may also introduce the characters 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.¹³

b. 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.¹⁴

c. 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.¹⁵

d. Falling Action

Once the crisis, or turning point, has been reached, the tension subsides and the plot moves toward its appointed conclusion.¹⁶

e. 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*.¹⁷

4. American Dream

Albertine Minderopin 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 Amerika adalah satu-satunya bangsa di dunia yang terbentuk berdasarkan suatu sistem. Esensi sistem tersebut adanya keyakinan bahwa keselarasan masa depan terletak pada individu.

¹³*Ibid*, p. 16.

¹⁴*Ibid*, p. 17.

¹⁵*Ibid*.,p. 17.

¹⁶*Ibid*.,p. 17.

¹⁷*Ibid*.,p. 17.

Kiprah kehidupan ini melahirkan istilah frontier yang didukung oleh keyakinan yang sangat populer, yakni The American Dream.

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.¹⁸

(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. The gait is the birth of frontier life which 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 interpreted as the spread of liberal democratic principles. Third are their efforts to achieve greatness and glory.)

5. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy

Albertine Minderop in her book, *Psikologi Sastra: Karya Sastra, Metode, Teori, dan Contoh Kasus* said: *Hirarki teori kebutuhan bertingkat dari Maslow adalah sebagai berikut, kebutuhan fisiologi, contohnya perasaan lapar dan haus; rasa aman, contoh, keamanan dan stabilitas; kepemilikan dan cinta, contoh, rasa kasih sayang dan identifikasi; penghargaan, contoh prestise dan harga diri; aktualisasi diri, contoh, pencapaian semua potensi manusia—kebutuhan inheren, kapasitas dan pengembangan potensi.*

¹⁸ Albertine Minderop, *Pragmatisme – Sikap Hidup dan Prinsip Politik Luar Negeri Amerika* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2006), p. 10.

*Masalahnya yang terpenting, menurut Maslow ialah seseorang harus terlebih dahulu mencapai kebutuhan yang paling mendasar sebelum mencapai kebutuhan di atasnya.*¹⁹

(My translation: The Maslow's hierarchy of needs is like as physiological needs, for example hunger, thirst; Safety needs, for example, security, stability; Belongingness and love needs, for example, affection, identification; Esteem needs, for example, prestige, self-respect; Need for self-actualization, for example, the achievement of all human potential, inherence needs, the capacity and development of potential.

According to the Maslow, the important thing is someone should pass the fundamental need before he achieves the next needs.)

G. Methodology of The Research

Based on the purpose of the research above, I use areflexive research methodology in order to find the harmony between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow and American Dream concept by collecting the data from every source.

H. The Benefit of The Research

Through this research, I hope, it can very benefit for every people who wants to expand their insights about the harmony between the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and American Dream. Through the existence of the collection of data from various sources is expected to help this research in achieving the assumption in this film, so that, this research can be useful and can be resumed.

I. Systematics of The Research

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, it consists of: Background of The Problem, Identification of The Problem, Limitation of The Problem, Formularization of The Problem, The Purpose of The Research, Framework of The Theories,

¹⁹ Albertine Minderop, *Psikologi Sastra: Karya, Metode, Teori, dan Contoh Kasus* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2011), p. 50.

Methodology of The Research, and The Benefit of The Research and Systematics of The Research.

CHAPTER II: ANALYZING FILM *PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS* BY INTRINSIC APPROACHES, it consists of Intrinsic Approaches such as : Showing Methods: What Speaker Said, Motivation and Behavior of The Figure. Beside that, there are also setting and plot in this chapter.

CHAPTER III: THE REFLECTION OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AND MASLOW'S NEEDS HIERARCHY, it consists of the analysis of the theme through sociology and psychology approaches such as: American Dream and Maslow's Needs Hierarchy.

CHAPTER IV: CLOSING, it consists of the conclusion that showing the theme of this film is "The American Dream and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs become a great passion in a failure of marriage", conveying review concerning of the fine points that is covered in every chapters as well as the implications of research on other variables.