

THE HUNGER GAMES: REPRESENTING THE NEW IMAGE OF AMERICAN POPULAR HEROES

Aidatul Chusna and Lynda Susana W.A.F.

aidatul.chusna@gmail.com; lyndafatmawaty@gmail.com

English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia

Abstract: This research is aimed at revealing the new image of American popular heroes as depicted in the novel adaptation film of *The Hunger Games* which is created as a trilogy, which consists of two more novels: *Catching Fire* and *Mockingjay*. This film is one of the most phenomenal films in 2013-2014, which grossed out up to \$407,999,255. This research used textual approach, which focused on the text as the object, that is *The Hunger Games* film. The result shows that *The Hunger Games* essentially brings the issue of slavery back into scrutiny. However, the creation of the heroin in the film is granted as the reconstruction of popular heroes in America. She is an inspiring female hero which is exemplified as the appreciation of women's values. Yet, the heroin is broadly defined with the qualities of rouge heroes as the characteristics are the representation of the belief and values associated with freedom to wash away the oppression restore the rights of the minority. In addition to the issue of slavery, the symbols of new hope and new spirit are implicitly emerged in the story. This attempt was proficiently done by the heroin, which was eventually created as the new image of the American heroes.

Key words: slavery, new image, American popular heroes, popular culture

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui imej baru tentang pahlawan di Amerika seperti yang tergambar dalam film populer yang diadaptasi dari novel yang berjudul *The Hunger Games*, yang merupakan trilogi yaitu *Catching Fire* dan *Mockingjay*. Film ini merupakan film yang sangat fenomenal di tahun 2013-2014, yang

meraup keuntungan hingga 407,999,255 dolar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan tekstual, dengan memfokuskan pada teks sebagai obyek penelitiannya, yaitu film *The Hunger Games*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film ini kental sekali menggambarkan isu tentang perbudakan. Tetapi, penciptaan pahlawan perempuan dalam film ini menunjukkan adanya rekonstruksi terhadap pop hero Amerika. Tokoh utama dalam film ini merupakan kebangkitan semangat dari munculnya pahlawan perempuan sebagai bentuk apresiasi terhadap nilai perempuan. Disisi lain, heroin dalam film ini dapat dikategorikan sebagai rouge heroes karena ciri-ciri dan karakternya merepresentasikan nilai dan norma yang berkaitan dengan kebebasan untuk menghapus operasi terhadap kaum minoritas. Selain isu tersebut, isu tentang harapan dan semangat baru juga melekat erat dalam cerita film ini. Hal ini tentunya ada pada heroin (pahlawan perempuan) yang merupakan perwujudan imej baru pahlawan di Amerika.

Kata kunci: perbudakan, imej baru, pop hero Amerika, pop culture

INTRODUCTION

This paper is aimed at discussing the new representation of popular hero in America as depicted in the film *The Hunger Games*. The existence of heroes seem not only very influential in the success of a film but far more in shaping behaviour and good attitude in life. Therefore, heroes are possibly represented as ideal human icon as part of a culture. The discussion of superheroes is important in order to understand American popular culture. In American popular culture, heroes bring the idea of equality in achieving any goals for whoever come and live in America. This suggests that heroes promote the idea of equality, justice and freedom in America.

The research is dealing with film analysis as the object is a film. Film analysis has gained its popularity in literature research as a film has become one of the most effective media to shape a new culture. In their book about popular culture, Nachbar & Lause (1992, p. 6) stated that “the need and desire of the producers of popular culture to reflect audience’s beliefs and values are in order to ensure that their product will be accepted by the masses, and the uncertainty involved in defining the precise nature of this *zeitgeist* deals with any particular time”. *Zeitgeist* is a German terminology which refers to the spirit of an era that relates the major beliefs and values of a culture during a specific period of time. This spirit definitely brings its own trend as reflected

by certain generation's taste. Therefore, the condition of *zeitgeist* keeps continuing whenever producers discover a successful formula¹.

Heroes in cinema suspiciously transformed the story into very beneficial access for the producer. So far, super heroes come with different models as produced by movie makers with flawless transformation. This means that the representation of superheroes is changing based on the society's beliefs and values in a certain period and is affected by its social context. For example, the icon of 1980's hero is represented by Rambo, then change into new form of superheroes in 1990's such as X-man. American heroes are believed to reveal modesty which possibly involved them in everyday activities or events, yet arise from commonplace of origins. By the time, super heroes transform their existence into various forms with imaginative and array superpower equipments.

American heroes are varied. They can be a leader such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. They also can be a celebrity like Elvis Presley, Jack Kerouac, and Madonna. However, the hero can also be imaginative characters such as Superman, Spiderman, or Batman. This condition highlights one thing that American popular heroes are not only someone up in the sky with his/her super power but also someone who live near us with the common qualities as ordinary human being (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, p. 315). Therefore, instead of common figures and background they share similarity features like their specialty and capabilities since these heroes come up as the pride for the American community and culture.

The story about a hero fighting against villains is a big hit in American film industries. A film about Superman, for example, the 'super alien' who stands up against the attack from his villains - Lex Luthor and General Zod has been reproduced in 2013 with the title *Man of Steel* that grossed out \$291,021,565 (imdb.com). Similarly, the story of the *Amazing Spiderman* has become one of the most successful films in 2012, followed by its sequels and prequels. And we never forget, at the same year, the conflict between Batman and his eternal enemy, the Joker in *The Dark Knight Rises*, becomes "a billion-dollar baby" (thehollywoodreporter.com). The success of the super hero movies, however, also includes *The Hunger Games*, a novel-adaptation movie,

¹ Formula is shortly defined as a set of ingredients which seems to reflect audience's desires. It is a structure of narrative or dramatic conventions employed in a great number of individual works (Cawelty, 1976, p. 5)

because it has gained \$152,535,747 in its opening week and \$407,999,255 total gross in US (imdb.com).

This research is about a new image of hero that deals with the transformation of the 21st era. As *Hunger Games* deals with slavery, people are paying attention to this problem without considering the global issues of the new form of heroin in cinema. The researcher believes that the reconstruction of the hero in this film results in an absolutely new form of hero in popular culture. Thus, this research is essential to discuss. It is important to reveal the new form of heroin in famous movie as many people do not realize that those heroes are magically created with the purpose of reconstructing the old heroes and promoting new ideology to the world. Former research which was done by Gary Engle suggested that Superman as the great American hero is truly mythic. He says, "Superman, who is depicted as uncompromised alien, is an immigrant. He comes from different planet which gives him super powers such as his strength, high mobility, and X-ray vision" (cited in Nachbar & Lause, 1992, pp. 333-334). All of these super powers are similar with the comic books that basically depict ethnic characteristics in which it protects and preserves the vitality of the foster community in which he lives in the similar way that immigrant ethnicity has sustained American culture linguistically, artistically, economically, politically, and spiritually. It was perceived similarly as the value of those American immigrant.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research, which applies textual approach by elaborating the theory of popular culture to analyze the object. The data of this research are sentences and actions from the film of *The Hunger Games*. The data are analysed by using content analysis method. This method seeks to analyse data within specific context in view of the meanings attribute to them (Krippendorff, 1989, p. 403). The first step is choosing the object or text of this research that is the film entitled *The Hunger Games*. The next step is qualifying the data by watching the movie. Then, the researchers did data sorting by focusing on the heroin's words and actions which reflect the ideas of the new image of American popular hero. Further, the cultural theory about American hero phenomenon in popular culture is applied to analyze and to correlate the heroin and American culture that can be seen from the film. Since the hero of *The Hunger Games* is a woman, the theories and approaches which concern about women issues are also needed. Thus, feminist criticism

theory is applied to support the analysis. The qualities of the heroin in *The Hunger Games* film are then categorized and are described as the form of a new image of American hero.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Feminist Criticism

Arising in early twentieth century, feminist criticism theory concerns on women's experience and language and it examines the way literary works and reinforce or undermines any cultural productions of women oppression in any fields. Elaine Showalter (cited in Newton, 1988, p. 268) divides feminist criticism into two categories: feminist critique and gynocritics. The first category is concerned with women as readers, women as the consumers of male produced literature, and with the significance of sexual code in a given text. The subjects of feminist critique include "the image and stereotype of women in literature, the omissions and misconceptions about woman in criticism, and the fissure in male constructed literary history.... also with the exploitation and manipulation of female audience, especially in popular culture and film, and with the analysis of woman-as-sign in semiotic systems" (Newton, 1988, p. 268).

Meanwhile, *Gynocritics*, a French-adapted term *la gynocritique*, is concerned with woman as writer, which means focusing on literature written by women. It includes female creativity, female language, the trajectory of female literary career, literary history and the studies of particular writers and works (Newton, 1988, p. 268). Above all, as Tyson said "the goal of feminist criticism is to increase our awareness of women's past and present experiences and to promote our appreciation of women's value in the world" (cited in Newton, 1988, p.119).

B. American Heroes

The creation of superheroes chiefly demonstrated their particular abilities and characteristics, yet it has great implication on viewers. Nachbar & Lause stated that the popular American heroes are men and women, which are basically aimed at proposing the belief that anybody is capable to achieve similar goals (1992, p. 315). As a consequence, the status of being the most important person in America is possible for anyone who was born in America.

This is aimed to emphasize the belief that everyone is equal as s/he has the same right and opportunity to retrieve and achieve the best on her/his efforts.

In American hero films, familiar conflicts are also embedded in the heroes created from America such as the conflict of individual freedom versus democracy. It can be identified that American heroes are not represented as aristocrats, but they demonstrate modesty which was revealed from common place of origins and, are engaged in everyday activities and events. This idea is indeed an attempt to represent the members of the culture and furthermore, the ideals of that culture. Further, Nachbar & Lause stated that the characteristics of heroes embody a set of beliefs and values that their society and cultural embrace (1992, p. 316). Yet, heroes have certain common characteristics which according to Nachbar & Lause is broadly categorized into two, they are citizen heroes and rouge heroes (1992, p. 316) which are explained as follows:

(1) Citizen heroes

This kind of hero is typically both men and women who embody myths associated with the mainstream American, the traditional values of the community and the nation. These heroes must be the defenders of the community and they must put their gifts and qualities to work so that the culture is preserved and the society is prosperous. The examples of citizen heroes are George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, who are gifted with military and political strategies that put them in eternal memory of the legends (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, p.317).

(2) Rouge heroes

Rouge heroes are the heroes who are the representatives of the beliefs and values associated with individual freedom, with the need to challenge the mainstream when its powerful currents threaten to wash away minority rights in the favour of the majority rules. Rouge heroes do live fast, die young, and sometimes leave a beautiful corpse. Further, they act out of the fundamental American fantasy of absolute personal freedom in a land of infinite frontiers, endless roads and limits set only by themselves. They often represent subgroups of a certain culture which feel similarly alienated from a larger community (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, p. 320).

From both of the definitions of the heroes above, it can be highlighted that citizen heroes preserve the culture represented by people as emblems, in

which it is the way how we see ourselves and how we want others to see us. Meanwhile, rogue heroes are closer to the regular icons of symbolism of people that is generated by our strong feelings about them. In other words, citizen heroes make life and culture possible but rogue heroes make it exciting and fun (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, p. 321).

FINDINGS

The Hunger Games is a movie adapted from a novel with the same title written by Suzanne Collins. It is a novel which presents the miserable life of District 12 who has to waive to the authority of Panem, the new country that rules with totalitarian law. It is resonant with the contemporary society that we live in today. We are devastated by the effect of climate change and war. Floods, earthquakes, and cyclones happen daily in different parts of this planet. The Merapi eruption in late October and early November 2010 is a case in point. More than 200 people were killed during the eruption and 400,000 residents were evacuated from the affected area (edition.cnn.com). Moreover, war, poverty, famine, and crimes also show the apocalyptic condition of the world today. District 12 of Panem exemplifies the helpless society controlled by the wealthy people. It is the poorest district in Panem. Compared to those in the Capitol, People in District 12 live miserably; it's so hard to find food in this area that many are starved to death. A palpable contrast is shown in the film: the dim atmosphere, wretched houses, and faint faces of the District 12 people, in contrast with the colourful scenery, luxurious lifestyle, and smiling faces of the Capitol society. The film expresses the juxtaposition of the two classes through its setting as well as its storyline.

The hero of *The Hunger Games*, as this paper mainly discusses, is presented as the leader of the helpless people of District 12. She is Katniss Everdeen, a young woman who is once the breadwinner and protector of her grief-stricken mother and her sister, due to the death of their father. She voluntarily takes her sister's place in an annual deadly game held by the wealthy, controlling Capitol. Known as The Hunger Game, the game is a punishment for the rebellion of the districts against the Capitol. Every year, each district has to send male and female tributes to take part in the game. These tributes have to compete each other and fight to death to be the lone victor of the game. Throughout her fights and rebellion in this gladiatorial game, Katniss Everdeen turns to be a hero and inspires her people and those from other districts to fight against the tyranny of the Capitol. She becomes a

new image of American popular heroism as she displays certain qualities that American people welcome and expect in this era. Below are three prominent qualities issued by the figure of Katniss Everdeen.

A. The representation of individual freedom

American people highly praise individual freedom as the core of Democratic value. It is guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence, “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness” (Jefferson in Hollinger & Capper, 2001, p. 134). The shared belief of individual freedom as the essential characteristic of free government binds Americans who come from diverse groups and countries (usa.usembassy.de/etexts/gov/peoplerights.pdf). A political scientist, Ralph Bunche observes how people believe in the glorification of American value that

every man in the street, white, black, red and yellow, knows that this is the “land of free”, the “land of opportunity”, the “cradle of Liberty”, the “home of democracy”, that the American flag symbolizes the “equality of all men” and guarantees to us all” the protection of life, liberty and property,” freedom of speech, freedom of religion and racial tolerance. (Myrdall in Hollinger & Capper, 2001, p. 250)

However, the reality speaks differently. Many people in America cannot enjoy their freedom. Many are marginalized regarding social and economic status, race, gender and religion. The practice of slavery describes how black people are marginalized and restrained due to their skin colour. Another example is women suffrage in America. America denied women’s right to vote until the ratification of Amendment 19, which provides full voting rights for women nationally.

The movie centres on Katniss Everdeen, the heroine, who strives to survive and triumphs in a bloody arena. The figure of the female hero presented in this film provides a new alternative of what people define as a popular hero. As Nachbar & Lause have mentioned, the characteristics of heroes embody a set of beliefs and values that their society and culture embrace (1992, p. 314). However, each hero may represent and crystallize different aspects of cultural mentality. Moreover, each also has different interpretations on the competing values of ‘democratic’ and individual freedoms manifested in his/her actions.

Katniss Everdeen is viewed as the representation of a rebellious teenager against the authority which controls her poor society. Her disobedience to the rules of the game is obvious. She is the concrete image of a person who highly praises the individual freedom and refuses the rules set by the authority which imprisons her life. It reminds us of the inspiring act conducted by a major American writer, Henry David Thoreau, who refused to pay the poll tax. His noncompliance to the government is due to his belief that the money raised is used by the government to support slavery and American expansion in Mexico. He believes that “the government is best which governs least; it means that government has to respect individual right and freedom of its citizen” (Hollinger & Capper, 2001, p. 404). Katniss Everdeen’s determination to disobey and challenge the rules of the deadly games shows the character of rogue hero who wants to defend her right to live free. She also represents a hero of the minority group, District 12, against the oppressive authority and domination of the Capitol society.

In either science fiction or fantasy genres, popular heroes are usually described as a gifted person such as Superman with his super power and ability to fly, Hulk with his power due to a chemical accidents, the ‘Fantastic Four’ heroes who gain their superpower after the gamma radiation, and Captain America who becomes superhuman after taking super-soldier serum, and in this case, Katniss Everdeen as a gifted archer. All these kinds of powers are used to defend their community. In addition, they possess certain qualities that the culture values highly. Although he is an alien, Superman shows his integrity and loyalty to the society in this earth. Similarly, Katniss Everdeen shows her loyalty and integrity to her partner in the games, which is against what the game’s producer’s will. Being the winner of the deadly game, Katniss Everdeen also shows her strong will and hard work to achieve the goal. She doesn’t partake in manipulation, betrayal or other wrongdoings to gain her victory.

American history has noted a quality possessed by Benjamin Franklin known as American Dream. It is a belief that people can aspire to material success if they follow a set of behaviour rules, set forth by the eighteenth century’s Benjamin Franklin (Trask in Piper, 1970, p. 213). In *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, he noted thirteen virtues which serve as a code and an expression of life, they are: temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquillity, chastity, and humility. By conducting these virtues in one’s habit, as Franklin believes, he would achieve happiness in life and goals.

Unfortunately, this is no longer considered important in American's life as materialism has overpowered them. Allen Ginsberg is concerned that America is "gone mad with materialism... prepared to battle the world in defence of a false image of its Authority. Not the wild and beautiful America of the comrades of Whitman... where the spiritual independence of each individual was an America" (cited in Lee, 2010, p. 9). The title of the film refers to a competition to survive and be the winner of a vicious game. Beginning as the reminder and punishment of the treason, *The Hunger Games* is held annually as merely entertainment for the wealthy society in the Capitol. This deadly game is broadcasted because the audience, the affluent society of the Capitol, likes this program. The irony of the game is that it forces the players, or the candidates of each district, to kill each other and survive in this TV program. Various threats and terrors are created to increase the tense of the game. The spectators are thrilled at watching the tributes battle each other to survive and claim victory. The conflicts and tense happened in the game add the popularity and success of the program. The more popular the game, the more sponsor it gets. In the end, money matters.

The movie of *The Hunger Games* shows the irony of American Capitalism. The district people represent the hopeless and oppressed society under the power and domination of the wealthy society; that is the Capitol. By breaking the rule of the game, Katniss Everdeen symbolizes the rebellion of the poor people from Capitalism.

B. The representation of ideal woman

The reason of constructing a heroin is apparently aimed to refresh the audiences' perception that men and women are equal. From decades, most of Hollywood movies tend to create men as the super heroes such as Batman, Superman, Robocop, Spiderman, etc. Yet, the existences of women super heroes are rarely chosen by the producer. Thus, the figure of a heroin in this film is strictly affectionate to the audiences that women are as men. The creativity to illustrate the heroin in this film is a kind of appreciation to open the world's mind that there is a great influence of women that can be explored and may appear beyond expectation. As seen in *The Hunger Games*, this is obviously a new reconstruction of superheroes to legitimate the value of women on their very own power.

The figure of Katniss Everdeen also brings new atmosphere for the women audience. Played by Jennifer Lawrence, the hero of the film provides the ideal image of woman in this century. Beautiful, well-shaped body, and

feminine look do not only belong to a princess, but a female superhero is also attributed with such appearance. Katniss Everdeen is not only admired for being a skillful archer, but also adored due to her physical appearance and fashion. The outfit that she wears in the parade to increase her popularity for the game makes her the most favourite amongst all of the candidates. Her beautiful appearance positively gives more quality to different images of an American popular hero. The figure of Katniss Everdeen challenges feminists' belief that femininity signifies 'the otherness' which put woman inferior to man. Feminists believe that women's quest for femininity and beauty is made as a problem and becomes the major cause of women oppression. This anti-feminine has lasted since the first feminist movements in the late eighteenth century to those in the late twentieth century (Genz & Brabon, 2009, p. 23).

Apart from her stand out appearance, Katniss Everdeen is an icon for strong and powerful woman who is able to stand on her own feet and makes her own choices in life. In her youth, she proves to be independent, financially and emotionally. She becomes the backbone of her family and becomes the protector of her sister. Her decision to replace her sister to be the tribute of District 12 for the Hunger Games shows her emotional independence. In today's era, woman is urged to make her own decision and to make choices in her life. Moreover, she shows her leadership which a superhero possesses. The leadership and independence that Katniss Everdeen exhibits in the story of *The Hunger Games* are the manifestation of postfeminist view that woman is an active subject who is capable and responsible with her own life. It calls for woman's autonomy which gives freedom to choose her own path of life. It breaks the notion that woman is passive and dependent on man.

C. The revival of American hope

Generally speaking, the concept of 'hope' is defined verily. In the Old and New Testament, hope is understood primarily as "reliance and trust in God to complete God's plan for humanity" (Peters, 1993, p. 2). It means searching for God's protection, trusting fully in God to fulfill promises of blessing, and waiting patiently on God to accomplish this. Thus, people can and should hope, since God fulfills all promises. Meanwhile, Descartes, in *Passions of Soul*, states that "hope is aroused when a desire for either the acquisition of a good or the removal of an evil is accompanied by the probability that this can be accomplished" (cited in Peters, 1993, p. 4). Great philosophers such as Philo, Saint Augustine, Aquinas, and Martin Luther laid a great emphasis on the value of religious hope.

American history noted that hope has become the character of the people since the coming of the Europeans to North America. America, according to Johnson, is known as a “New World; it attracts people from around world come to get better life” (1997, p. 13). He continues to note that Christopher Columbus has argued that men crossed the Atlantic not only to search for gold, but also to transform the world for the better. He further says that these adventurous and idealist young people seek for a new world, since Europe was too small for making their dream come true (Johnson, 1997, p.13). America is considered as a ‘Promised land’, a title which refers to a Biblical episode of Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land. America as a promised land is named by John Winthrop, who came and led Puritans to America, to build a new community as a redemptive act from the wicked old world. Winthrop dreamt on building an ideal society which could become an example for others, as stated in his sermon before his Puritan fellow: “we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us” (Johnson, 1997, p. 31). Until today, America becomes the land of hope for people worldwide.

Hopes and dreams mold the optimism of the American people. The myth of the American Dream proves the optimistic mood of American people. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* reflects the philosophy of hope or of optimism. Lemay (2009, p. 21) sees the autobiography as the formulation of American Dream, as it demonstrates that “man does have choice in the New World, that man can create himself”. Franklin’s *Autobiography* does not only shows the popular belief of American Dream, that is the rise of rags to riches, but it also signifies the rise from impotence to importance, from dependence to independence, and from helplessness to power. Moreover, it also shows that the American Dream is a dream of possibility - a hope for a better world, a new world, free from the ills of the old.

However, there are some times when Americans lose their optimistic mood. The economic crisis in the 1930s which is known as the American Great Depression portrays the time when Americans lived in despair. The Wall Street Crash in 1928 caused many people to lose their jobs and become unemployed. Today, America is also experiencing another economic crisis. According to Millbank, the 2014 NBC-Wall Street Journal poll shows fully 76 percent of respondents expressed their lack of confidence that the future generation will have better life. It was the lowest number ever measured in a survey which indicates Americans’ uncertainty and pessimism. Not only is pessimism found in an economic realm, but also found in broader aspects.

Fred Yang, a Democratic pollster, calls that pessimism is universal; it goes beyond wealth, gender, race, region, age, and ideology. This steep decline of American optimism has shown since the late 1990s and early 2000s. (Milbank, 2014)

Despite Americans' pessimism, Barack Obama brought forward the issue of hope in 2004 Democratic National Convention. Before the Iowa Caucuses, Barack Obama stated that "hope is the bedrock of this nation; the belief that our destiny will not be written for us, but by us; by all those men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is; who have courage to remake the world as it should be" (Jorge, et.al, 96). Obama's theme of hope becomes viral in America, and it evokes the people to build hope for better future.

In the discussion of Batman movies, Christopher Nolan argues that a superhero is a symbol of hope, that 'people aspire to do something better' (forbes.com). Katniss Everdeen, a high spirited young woman from a desolate society, emerges as a symbol of rebellion against tyranny. She becomes the symbol of hope for the minority group. *The Hunger Games* reflects the hope that every American can achieve his/ her dream. Hope that Katniss has given to the District people is what scare the enemy the most. Katniss also proves what Bruce 'Batman' Wayne says in the end of *The Dark Night Rises* that 'a hero can be anyone'. To sum up, an excerpt from Henry-Wordsworth Langfellow's poem entitled 'The Psalm of Life' below may tell us that we must always stand and fight to make our life note-worthy.

In the world's broad field of battle
In the bivouac of Life
Be not like dumb driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife! (cited in Wiersbe, 1997, p.154)

CONCLUSION

The success of *The Hunger Games* shows the shifting interest of people in viewing a new figure of heroes in American films. Previously, a hero is a man with superpowers fighting against villains who become threats of the society. The figures of Superman, Batman, and Spiderman among others are very famous and familiar worldwide. These figures reflect the superiority of man over woman. However, *The Hunger Games* gives a new alternative of hero which reflects the existence and equality of woman in society. Katniss Everdeen, the

heroine of the film, represents an ideal woman in this era, due to the qualities that she exhibits throughout the story. Played by Jennifer Lawrence, Katniss Everdeen displays a skilful, independent, and beautiful young woman who is able to achieve her goal. Moreover, Katniss Everdeen calls for individual freedom which is considered as the highest value of American democracy. She also represents the revival of hope, which American people are losing and need most today. The combination of these qualities is presented in *The Hunger Games* as a new figure of a popular hero.

REFERENCES

- Castle, G. (2007). *The Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Cawelty, J.G. *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance*. (1976). Chicago: Chicago Press.
- Genz, S. & Brabon, B. A. (2009). *Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.
- http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/?ref_=nv_sr_4. Retrieved March 3, 2015.
- <http://www.forbes.com>. Retrieved March 3, 2015.
- <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com>. Retrieved March 3, 2015.
- <http://usa.usembassy.de/texts/gov/peoplerights.pdf>. Retrieved March 5, 2015.
- Jefferson, T. (2001). The declaration of independence (1776). In D.A. Hollinger & C. Capper (Eds.). *The American Intellectual Tradition. Volume I: 1630-1866* (pp.133-136). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, P. (1997). *A History of American People*. NY: Harper Collins.
- Jorge, M. E., et. al. (2011). *Politics and Emotions: Obama Phenomenon*. Heidelberg: Verlag.
- Krippendorff, K. (1989). Content analysis. In E. Barnouw, G. Gerbner. W. Schramm, T. L.; Woerth, & L. Gross (Eds), *International Encyclopedia of communication*, Vol. 1, pp.403-407). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/226.

- Kloppenber, J. T. (2011). *Reading Obama: Dreams, Hope, and American Political Tradition*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Lee, A.R. (2010). *Modern American Counter Writing: Beats, Outriders, Ethnics*. NY: Routledge.
- Lemay, J. A. L. (2009). Franklin's autobiography and the American Dream. In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Bloom's Literary Themes: The American Dream*, (pp. 21-36). NY: Infobase Publishing.
- McFarlane, B. (1996). *Novel to Film: An introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Milbank, D. (2014). *The Single Most Depressing number in the new NBC-Wall Street Journal Poll*. Retrieved March 3, 2015 from <http://www.washingtonpost.com>.
- Murray, S. (2008). *Materializing Adaptation Theory: the Adaptation Industry*. Salisbury State University.
- Myrdal, G. (2001). Selection from an American Dilemma (1944). In D.A. Hollinger & C. Capper (Eds.). *The American Intellectual Tradition. Volume II: 1865 to the Present*, pp. 249-257. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nachbar, J. & Lause, K. (1992). *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text*. Ohio: Bowling Green.
- Newton, K.M. (1988). *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory*. London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- Peters, C. H. (1993). *Kant's Philosophy of Hope*. NY: Peter Lang Publishing
- Saputra, A. (2010, November 16). Indonesia Mount Merapi volcano erupts again Friday. Retrieved December 30, 2015, from <http://www.edition.cnn.com>.
- Strinati, D. (2004). *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Thoreau, H. D. (2001). Resistance to civil government (1849). In Hollinger, David A. Charles Capper (eds.). *The American Intellectual Tradition. Vol. I: 1630-1865*, pp. 403-416. Oxford: OUP.

Trask, D. F. (1970). The end of the American Dream. In H.D. Piper (Ed.).
Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby: The Novel, The Critics, The Background. NY:
Charles Scribner's Sons.

Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical Theory Today*. New York: Routledge.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Be Heroic*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook.

The word "Celt" is rendered in a large, stylized, light blue font with a white outline. The letters are thick and have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance. The 'C' is the largest, followed by 'e', 'l', and 't'. The 'l' and 't' are connected to the 'e'.