

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Psychological problems among societies are not easy to be detected (either by parents or close relatives) and easily neglected by them. In fact, both teenagers and adolescents recently are suffering from depression, anxiety and stress which are common mental disorders that characterized by the absence of happiness and pleasure (Latif et al, 2017). Hence, the high prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms among society is a risk factor for their mental health and it can threat their future as well (Latif et al, 2017). Interestingly, psychological issues are not only can be found in the real life (Kardiansyah, 2016: Amelia, 2021), but also can be noticed as one of the themes in literature (Fitri and Qodriani, 2016; Sasalia and Sari, 2020).

Literature (from the Latin *litteraturae*) itself means a writing that refers to fictional and imaginative writings such as poetry, prose fiction and drama (Abrams, 2012; Bertens in Heaverly and Kasih, 2020) and it is known as a collection of literary genres and texts that are expressed by certain idea (Bennet and Royle, 2016). In this case, Bennet and Royle (2016) explained literature as something that is correlated to a written form such as books or script that contains imaginative works. However, because of a newform of technology is emerged in the late nineteenth century, another variety of literary work is formed which is known as movie (Boggs et al in Gofur, 2015). Bennet and Royle (2016) argued that movie is recognized as a unique

and powerful art form on a part with painting, sculpture, music, literature and drama. Moreover, similarly to novel, movie also share the same narrative capacities and tell stories from narrator's perspective (Sari and Aminatun, 2021), such as setting, characters, plot and themes (Afrianto and Ma'rifah, 2020; Sari and Oktaviani 2021).

Thus, in regards with psychological issues, the writer noticed that there are many authors presenting their writings by using psychological problem possessed by their (fictional) characters so that the readers aware and gain knowledge about it, such as psychopath, paraphilia, sexual disorder and many others. However, despite many of psychological problems that can be found in literary works, the writer chooses to analyze one of the uncommon mental disorder that is known as Erotomania or De Clerambault's Syndrome).

In short, Erotomania is a rare mental disorder where the patient has delusional belief that a person (commonly with higher social status) falls in love with her/him (Cipriani et al, 2012; Jordan et al, 2006). As it supported by Faden et al (2017) that erotomania is a relatively uncommon and misunderstood disorder that characterized by the presence of a persistent erotic delusion, although it was considered as a general disease or some kind of practice that was showing an exaggerated physical love (Berrios and Kennedy, 2002). However, as time passes, the experts then finally concludes that Erotomania or De Clerambault's syndrome is highly correlated to the condition where someone (the sufferer) beliefs that he/she is being loved by someone else (that he/she likes).

Accordingly, related to the case of erotomania, the writer found one of the modern literary works that contain with this psychological issue from the movie of *Joker* (2019) by Todd Phillips. The story of the movie is telling about a man, named Arthur Fleck who has job as clown but he has dream to be a comedian. Unfortunately, he has an anomaly condition known as Pseudobulbar Affect (PBA), a neurological condition that is characterized by an uncontrollable outburst of laughter or cries which may be disproportionate or inappropriate to the social context (Ahmed and Simmons, 2013). The condition of PBA makes him unable to control his laugh, especially when he is expressing his emotional condition (laugh in a larger proportion than is needed) and because of that anomaly, Arthur is being alienated and get bullied by the society surround him.

However, throughout this movie, despite of all the drama and action, the writer assumed that Arthur also having another psychological disorder of erotomania (De Clerambault's syndrome) which is seen from certain scenes during the movie and interestingly, Arthur's mother, Penny Fleck also considered having the psychological disorder similarly like Arthur. Hence, in this research, the writer is interested in discussing the erotomania or De Clerambault's syndrome that is seen in the movie of *Joker* (2019) by Todd Phillips. Moreover, the writer also noticed that the research of erotomania that is applied to analyze literary work still rarely can be found, so that hopefully, in the future, this research can give big contribution for the next researchers who are interested in gaining the information of erotomania.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of research above, the writer formulates the research questions into:

1. How erotomania are seen from the character of Arthur Fleck in the Phillips' *Joker* (2019)?
2. What are the cause of erotomania that are seen from the character of Arthur Fleck in Phillips' *Joker* (2019)?

1.3 Research Objective

Regarding to the research questions, the objective of this research is:

1. To describe erotomania that are seen in the Phillips' *Joker* (2019).
2. To describe the cause of erotomania that are seen from the character of Arthur Fleck in Phillips' *Joker* (2019)

1.4 Uses of Study

The uses of this research is divided into two main categories, they are theoretically and practically:

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

Theoretically, this research can be used as one of the references for the next researchers who are interested in conducting the similar topic discussion of psychological analysis in literature, especially about erotomania (De Clerambault's syndrome). Moreover, the writer also hopes that this research can enrich the readers' knowledge especially in the psychology of literature study.

1.4.2 Practical Use

Practically, the writer hopes that after reading this research, the readers are expected to learn about human beings, their lives, their problems so that readers can understand about another different side of a literary work, especially in the aspect of psychology. Hopefully, after reading this research, common readers can understand more about mental disorder, especially erotomania.

1.5 Scope of Research

In the movie of *Joker* (2019) by Todd Phillips, the writer noticed that there are many aspects that can be analyzed and discussed. However, in this research, the writer only focuses on describing the erotomania as seen in the movie and describe the cause of Arthur Fleck's erotomania. In doing the research, the writer conducts film semiotics by Metz in Stam (1992) to analyze the scenes from the movie related to erotomania and applies Kelly's theory (2005) of Erotomania (De Clerambault's syndrome).