

**FIVE FACES OF OPPRESSION  
IN *JUST MERCY* MOVIE SCRIPT**

**THESIS**

By:

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG  
2023**

**FIVE FACES OF OPPRESSION**  
**IN *JUST MERCY* MOVIE SCRIPT**

**THESIS**

Presented to  
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

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**2023**

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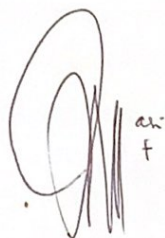
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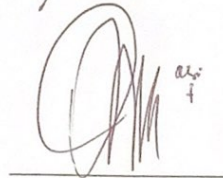
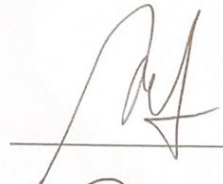
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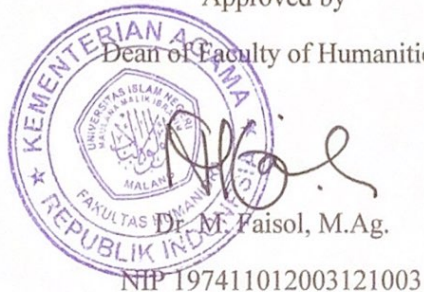
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**MOTTO**

*“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”*

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis sincerely to my father Mr. Anwar and do not forget to my beloved mother, The Late Ms. Siti Masfufah, who has provided an extraordinary support and thousands of prayers for me to complete this thesis.



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*Alhamdulillaahi Robil'Alamiin.*

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5. To my beloved mother who has left first to heaven, I thank you infinitely for your services in educating this one of your children. Thank you for teaching countless things. In the depths of sorrow and longing, the researcher dedicates this thesis to my dearest soul, beloved mother, the late Mrs. Siti Mas Fufah, who has passed away due to breast cancer. Despite their physical absence, his passion, love, and unwavering support continue to resonate within the hearts of researcher and guide their academic pursuits. Mothers are a source of inspiration, strength, and encouragement throughout their lives and educational journeys. Her boundless love, sacrifice, and unwavering faith in the abilities of researcher have been instrumental in shaping their character and academic pursuits. Her everlasting presence, even in her absence, serves as a constant reminder of the importance of resilience, determination, and accepting life's challenges.
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The Researcher

Mohammad Abdullah

## ABSTRACT

Abdullah, Mohammad. (2023). *Five Faces of Oppression in Just Mercy Movie Script*. Undergraduate Thesis. English Literature Study Program. Faculty of Humanities, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University Malang. Supervisor: Asni Furaida, M.A.

*Key Words: Oppression, Afro-American*

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In the current social and political context, the issue of oppression remains a relevant issue in many countries around the world. Oppression refers to the unfair treatment or oppression experienced by certain individuals or groups based on their race or ethnicity. The script for the film *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham, is a cinematic work that raises issues related to the problem of oppression faced by the Afro-American community in the United States. This study aims to analyze and understand the representation of the structural problem of inequality from oppression in social justice as depicted in the film script *Just Mercy*. The researcher uses literary criticism which can involve a close analysis of a particular literary text or group of texts. This study can involve engaging and examining the literary devices, themes, and symbols used by the author. The researcher also uses a sociological approach that focuses on texts and the theory of oppression by Iris Marion Young to analyze the types of oppression that occurred to Bryan Stevenson describing in his efforts to liberate black people who are unrepresented and unjustly punished. then, the researcher conducts a thorough reading and examines the data from the relevant movie script text to answer the research questions. In this study, the researcher found that people who were oppressed in the movie script lived in a society that practiced structural oppression against them. First, they experience five forms of oppression, namely exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.

## ABSTRAK

Abdullah, Mohammad (2023) *Lima Wajah Penindasan dalam Naskah Film Just Mercy*. Skripsi. Program Studi Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Humaniora Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Asni Furaida, M.A.

*Kata Kunci: Penindasan, Afro-Amerika*

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Dalam konteks sosial dan politik saat ini, isu penindasan tetap menjadi isu relevan di banyak negara di dunia. Penindasan mengacu pada perlakuan tidak adil atau penindasan yang dialami oleh individu atau kelompok tertentu berdasarkan ras atau etnis mereka. Naskah film *Just Mercy* oleh Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham, merupakan sebuah karya sinematik yang mengangkat isu-isu yang berkaitan dengan masalah penindasan yang dihadapi oleh komunitas Afro-Amerika di Amerika Serikat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan memahami representasi masalah struktural ketidaksetaraan dari penindasan dalam keadilan sosial yang tergambar dalam naskah film *Just Mercy*. Peneliti akan menggunakan kritik sastra yang dapat melibatkan analisis dekat dari teks sastra tertentu atau kelompok teks. Studi ini dapat melibatkan dan memeriksa perangkat sastra, tema, dan simbol yang digunakan oleh penulis. Peneliti kemudian menggunakan pendekatan sosiologis yang berfokus pada teks dan teori penindasan oleh Iris Marion Young untuk menganalisis macam-macam penindasan yang terjadi pada Bryan Stevenson yang menggambarkan upayanya untuk membebaskan orang kulit hitam yang tidak terwakili dan dihukum secara tidak adil. kemudian, peneliti melakukan pembacaan teliti dan menelaah data dari teks skrip film yang relevan untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menemukan bahwa orang yang mendapatkan penindasan dalam skrip film tersebut berada dalam masyarakat yang mempraktekkan penindasan yang bersifat struktural terhadap mereka. Pertama, mereka mengalami lima bentuk penindasan, yaitu eksploitasi, marginalisasi, ketidakberdayaan, imperialisme budaya, dan kekerasan.

## مستخلص البحث

عبد الله، محمد (2023) خمسة وجوه للاضطهاد في سيناريو فيلم "Just Mercy". البحث الجامعي، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي. كلية العلوم الإنسانية. جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرف: أسني فريدا، الماجستير.

الكلمات الأساسية: الاضطهاد، الأفرو-أميركي

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في السياق الاجتماعي والسياسي الحالي، تظل قضية الاضطهاد قضية ذات صلة في العديد من البلدان حول العالم. يشير القهر إلى المعاملة غير العادلة أو الاضطهاد الذي يعاني منه أفراد أو مجموعات معينة على أساس عرقهم أو عرقهم. سيناريو فيلم Just Mercy للمخرج ديسن دانيال كريتون وأندرو لانام، هو عمل سينمائي يثير قضايا تتعلق بمشكلة الاضطهاد التي يواجهها المجتمع الأفريقي الأمريكي في الولايات المتحدة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل وفهم تمثيل مشكلة عدم المساواة الهيكلية من الاضطهاد في العدالة الاجتماعية كما هو موضح في سيناريو فيلم Just Mercy. سيستخدم الباحث النقد الأدبي الذي يمكن أن يتضمن تحليلاً دقيقاً لنص أدبي معين أو مجموعة من النصوص. يمكن أن تشمل هذا البحث وتفحص الأجهزة والموضوعات والرموز الأدبية المستخدمة من قبل المؤلف. ثم يستخدم الباحث نهجاً اجتماعياً يركز على النصوص ونظرية الاضطهاد من قبل إيريس ماريون يونغ لتحليل أنواع الاضطهاد التي تعرضت لها برانين ستيفنسون الذي وصف جهوده لتحرير السود الذين لم يتم تمثيلهم وعوقبوا بشكل غير عادل. بعد ذلك، يقوم الباحث بالاطلاع وفحص البيانات من نص الفيلم ذي الصلة للإجابة على أسئلة البحث. في هذا البحث، وجد الباحث أن الأشخاص الذين تعرضوا للقمع في سيناريو الفيلم كانوا في مجتمع يمارس عليهم الاضطهاد البنيوي. أولاً، يتعرضون لخمسة أشكال من الاضطهاد، وهي الاستغلال والتهميش والعجز والإمبريالية الثقافية والعنف.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Literature is composed in a structured format to convey ideas, emotions, or other distinctive facets of human experiences (Rexroth, 2023). Reading literary work fosters imagination (Kamberelis et al., 2017). The reader can have a thorough understanding of the authors' lives and social situations using imagination. This implies that a person's difficult life circumstances could inspire literature. The claims lead one to the conclusion that literature is a written art with a sense of worth. It depicts actual life and conveys the state of society's way of existence.

The fact that the majority appears to have more control than the minority is one sign that a person is struggling in life. People's actions, including how they should act, what they must do, and how they should live their lives, are under the control of the powerful system (Brevani 2009). Someone in a position of authority appears to oversee everything. This system frequently manifests as a government, directing a community's actions and behaviors and setting guidelines for how their lives should be lived.

In the current social and political context, the issue of racial oppression remains a relevant issue in many countries around the world. Racial oppression refers to the unfair treatment or oppression experienced by certain individuals or groups based on their race or ethnicity. In the book *The New Jim Crow*, by Michelle Alexander (2010) describes the criminal law system in the United States as a system

of social control unparalleled in world history, although it has little to do with actual crime trends. he revealed,

*"The stark and sobering reality is that, for reasons largely unrelated to actual crime trends, the American penal system has emerged as a system of social control unparalleled in world history. And while the size of the system alone might suggest that it would touch the lives of most Americans, the primary of its control can be defined targets largely by race." (Alexander, 2010)*

Through the practice of mass detention and injustice in the criminal justice system, the criminal justice system indirectly prolongs racial oppression against black people. the use of racial profiling and the over-targeting of specific racial communities, which has resulted in significant inequalities in detention and sentencing (Alexander, 2010, p. 105). Thus, a discriminatory legal system plays a role in maintaining racial oppression in the United States.

American history reflects how race has become an underlying factor in the systemic oppression that occurs in society. Through cases such as the colonial period and the slavery system, it is clear how Africans were used as slaves and systematically oppressed. However, even after the Civil War that was supposed to end slavery, writer Douglas A. Blackmon revealed that the system of racial oppression did not stop there. Instead, he highlighted a new system that was emerging, namely "forced labor" or "modern slavery". This shows that the forms of racial oppression may change with historical changes, but the essence remains the same, namely systemic oppression of certain racial groups.

Racial oppression is a phenomenon involving the abuse of power, discrimination and injustice against a group based on their race or ethnicity (Cudd, 2006). In the United States, racial oppression has been a significant problem in this

country's history. One group that has experienced systemic racial oppression is the Afro-American community.

However, although the struggle against racial oppression made significant progress through the civil rights movement in the 1960s, new challenges emerged in the 1980s. This era was marked by political and social shifts that impacted the Afro-American community. Inequalities that still exist in the criminal justice system, limited access to quality education, and economic inequality are relevant issues for this community.

Referring to the book *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (1988), James D. Anderson explains how limited access to quality education is a form of ongoing racial oppression. Anderson stated, "Systemic educational inequality has limited opportunity and hindered the social and economic progress of African-American communities" (Anderson, 1988, p. 132). This quote shows that racial oppression continues through inequalities in access to education that affect the progress and well-being of African-American communities.

In the context of criminal law, racial oppression of African Americans continued to occur in the 1980s. The practice of racial profiling and the abuse of power by law enforcement officials is still a serious problem. Data and research show that there is a disproportionate trend in the arrest, detention, and punishment of African Americans. For example, according to research conducted by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in 2018, African-American individuals

are much more likely to be arrested and punished more severely than white individuals involved in similar cases (ACLU, 2018).

In the context of race, African-Americans are often victims of discriminatory acts by security forces and the wider public. Cases of violence, unjust arrests, and abuse of power are still common, especially in situations involving police. In addition, a legal system that is still not fully even and fair is also one of the problems faced by Afro-Americans. The many cases of injustice and mistreatment perpetrated by security forces and the legal system have generated mistrust and insecurity among the Afro-American community.

Destin Daniel Cretton and Andrew Lanham's script for the film *Just Mercy* chronicles the struggle of Bryan Stevenson, a human rights attorney, against racial injustice in the United States criminal justice system. The story centers on cases involving individuals who are systemically oppressed and overly chastised, especially among African Americans. Through a strong narrative and deep character portrayal, the film depicts the challenges Stevenson faces in fighting for justice and fighting racial oppression.

The researcher conducting this research aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the film script *Just Mercy* and relate it to the theory of oppression in general. By analyzing important elements in the script, such as character development, storyline, and themes raised, we will explore how this film depicts racial oppression in the criminal justice system. In addition, this research also aims

to understand the messages that the script wants to convey regarding issues of race, justice, and social inequality.

In the context of analysis using the theory of oppression, this research looks at how oppression is reflected in the movie script *Just Mercy*. This theory emphasizes that oppression is a form of domination and injustice experienced by racial minority groups under a system dominated by the majority group. In this film, racial oppression is revealed through the cases faced by Stevenson, in which Afro-American individuals are subjected to injustice and violence related to their race.

By applying the theory of oppression in the analysis of this film's script, this study aims to provide deeper insights into how oppression is reflected in the visual narrative and dialogue. The researcher looks at how policies, practices, and social structures related to race influence the treatment and legal decision-making of individuals from racial minorities. This analysis will also pay attention to how oppression is manifested in the relationships between characters and the power dynamics depicted in the film script.

Through this research, it is hoped that a more comprehensive understanding of how the film script *Just Mercy* describes oppression in the criminal justice system and how the theory of racial oppression can be applied in the context of film analysis. This research can also provide a basis for further discussion on the importance of just and inclusive social change in the criminal justice system, as well as efforts to overcome racial oppression. This research also employs a couple

of previous studies to maximize the literature review and get as much information within the exact scope of the study as possible.

The very first study is from *Get Out: Moral Monsters at the Intersection of Racism and the Horror Film* by Isabel Pinedo (2020). This movie demonstrates the pliability of the horror film to critically and provocatively address racism as it is experienced today, to a vast and diverse public. It proves that popular entertainment can critique existing power relations of post-racism and white power while reaching a large audience, gaining critical awards, and making a profit, the measures of success that Hollywood understands. However, the theory used is far different with the one research that used in *Just Mercy*.

Additionally, there is a literature called *The Ideology of Racism in Contemporary Hollywood Films on Netflix: A Case Study on All the Boys I've Loved Before* by Briandana, Marta, Mijan and Fauzi (2022). This journal would be helpful to help understand how hard it is to get rid of racism. The ideology sticks for a long time since numerous people would still act superior or narcissist towards the other races. Furthermore, DezelinBrigitha, Julian, Satyawati Surya, and Nita Maya Valiantien (2021) wrote a journal with the title *Racial Discrimination Issues as Shown by Solomon and Patsey In 12 Years A Slave Movie*. This literature is an amazing study which eventually talks about the same object of research as the current one, which is the black community. However, the movie was different, as well as the theory employed. The racial discrimination issue provides a great help for this research, since it demonstrates the same way of slavery that has taken place in a long time within the black race.

The fourth one is *The Reflection of Racism Towards African American in Selma Movie*, by Yusrina Rahmatillah, Singgih Daru Kuncara, Nasrullah Nasrullah (2020) which talks about how African - American was treated unfairly, just like how this current study is concerned about. The racisms are institutionalized racism, personally mediated racism and internalized racism. This literature also shows how racism in a movie isn't an unknown problem. The fact that it still exists for a long time makes researchers invested.

Alviniyanti, Rezky (2019) proposed a writing called *Racism on Spike Lee's Black Klansman Movie: A Critical Discourse Analysis*. This study used CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) to investigate the characteristics and nature of racism in the movie, which is different from this study, however, the context is relevant and connected. The research of *Just Mercy* employs Young theory, but along with some steps from the CDA, in order to know more and deeper regarding the movie script.

The next one is *Trapped in the Mouse House: Trapped in the Mouse House: How Disney has Portrayed Racism and Sexism in its Princess Films* by Jessica L. Laemle (2018), in which she amazingly explained the study of racism and sexism that occurred in the most popular types of film among all ages; Disney princess. This is a great addition to acknowledging how racism tends to take place in any movie genre.

In addition, Catur Nugroho (2019) with the title *Pemaknaan Rasisme dalam Film (Analisis Resepsi Film Get Out)*, also explains how racism often occurs in any



movie. The film *Get Out* highlights some people who feel the right of being superior just like in *Just Mercy*. The film also shows how racism usually start by the white narcissistic supremacy, which is incredibly relevant to this research.

*A Semiotic Analysis of Racial Discrimination in The Movie Script Just Mercy by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham* by Prisanta Varesa (2021) discuss the film *Just Mercy* in a well-mannered way. The writing gives out knowledge in regards to semiotic analysis of racial discrimination towards the colored community. The GAP that the researcher can take is, in the research above contains Charles Sanders' semiotic theory, which focuses on analyzing semiotics as well as discrimination, but in the discrimination the work above does not use discrimination theory at all. While this study entitled *Five Faces of Oppression Found in the Just Mercy Movie Script* using Iris Marion Young's theory, where the five faces of oppression is a theory used to sort out characteristics that can be seen in an action or situation of injustice in the five faces of oppression.

The next study is called *Racism Issues Delivered in Lupin Film Series* (2021) by Rabitah Tasya Amaliah Lubis and Cindenia Puspasari. Based on their research, the director has decided to include scenes depicting the bigotry of black people in France have faced in this film. Indicators of racism, which include racial stereotypes, racial discrimination, and racial violence, can be found in any society.

The last one is from Nicole Talmacs (2020), *Africa and Africans in Wolf Warrior 2: Narratives of Trust, Patriotism and Rationalized Racism among Chinese University Students*. It appears that attitudes and perceptions of black Africans

continue to be negatively associated with poverty, low civility, and mistrust. These connotations are derived from a number of factors other than the film's production, although the film's objectification of the African Other in order to present a potent China was a factor.

As with earlier studies, this study applies Iris Marion Young theory of oppression to analyze the *Just Mercy* film script. However, it is different from previous research in terms of its focus on the research object. As a result, this research fills the existing literature gap by conducting a more comprehensive exploration of oppression using Young's theory, especially in the context of the *Just Mercy* film script. Prior to this research, there had been no research that specifically examined the application of young's theory to analyze oppression depicted in the *Just Mercy* movie script.

## **B. Problem of Study**

The Researcher has formulated two problems in this study to be analyzed, as follow:

- 1) What forms of racial oppression experienced by Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian reflected in the movie script *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham?
- 2) How do the oppressed characters survive the oppression in the movie script *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham?

## **C. The Significances of the Study**

The study's findings should be both theoretically and practically valuable. Theoretically, this study should spark curiosity about how oppressions are depicted

in the movie script *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham. Practically, it is expected that this study increases knowledge and awareness of racism and social issues. Racial acts in real society will be less likely as awareness increases.

#### **D. Scope and Limitation**

The scope of this study is oppression, using theory oppression by Iris Marion Young (1990) The data only be taken from Movie script *Just Mercy* and the limitation of this study is only taken by the event that revolve in the two main characters; Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian.

#### **E. Definition of Key Terms**

- 1. Afro-American:** Refers to a person or group of people who live in the US and is a member of a race of people with dark skin that originally came from Africa. Many people use the terms interchangeably, with some variations such as African American, or Black American (Halford H. 1985).
- 2. Oppression:** According to Young, oppression is a form of structural injustice that occurs because of everyday practices in society that are well-intentioned, but result in injustice. Oppression consists of five faces, namely exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, violence, and invisible power (Young, 1990).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In this study, the focus is on the Oppression that occurs in the Movie script Just Mercy. Therefore, this study contributes to the sociological perspective and theory of oppression put forward by Iris Marion Young. Therefore, this section will explain in detail the relevant theoretical basis to support this research topic. It will discuss the Sociological Approach as a theoretical basis, and then proceed with Oppression Theory which includes Oppression as a Structural Concept and Five Aspects of Oppression, namely Exploitation, Powerlessness, Violence, Marginalization, and Cultural Imperialism.

#### **A. Sociology of Literature**

Sociology of literature is the approach to literature that investigates human social life as a reflection of society at the time a work was created. Goldmann argues (Wasik and Liliani, 2019) that sociology of literature is an endeavor to meaningfully connect the text of specific authors with specific historical conditions. This indicates that sociology of literature represents the connection between history, literary work, and author. Because literary work is created by the author, the relationship among them cannot be separated. Consequently, the author is a member of society and a person who is directly involved in society.

Wellek and Warren (Yunitri, et al., 2019) assert that the relationship between literature and society consists of three types: the sociology of the author, the social content of the work, and the impact of literature on society. First, the sociology of the author is created, which refers to the social position of writers in

society in relation to the socio-cultural context of the author and the author's social ideology. Second, the social content of the work is reflected or redefined in the literature as the community's reality. Third, the impact of literature on society refers to the extent of literature's social impact on those who appreciate a particular literary work.

Swingewood and Laurenson (Makatita, 2022) distinguish three types of sociology of literature. First, a sociology of the author's home society that emphasizes on the author's social condition. The sociology of the author's life plays an essential role in the creation of his literary works. Thirdly, sociology of the reader refers to the reader's reaction to a literary work.

Sociology, according to Cragun (Feinstein, et al., 2022) is the study of human social life; it reveals how people interact with one another, how groups and societies differ, and how social influences human behavior. Literature attempts to give meaning to our existence. Sociology is an endeavor to understand how we live. Sociology and literature are distinct disciplines, but both possess the ability to explain the meaning of a literary text. According to the sociology of literature, a literary work is not independent. It has constant ties to society. It is regarded as a sociocultural phenomenon and a social product. Madame de Stael's proposal to analyze the influence of religions, customs, and law on literature and the influence of literature on religions, customs, and law is credited as the first explicit attempt to treat literature sociologically (Vana, 2020). The study of sociology of literature cannot be separated from society because the author is a member of society and the literary work focuses primarily on social phenomena within society. On the other

hand, it investigates the relationship between artists, particularly authors, and society.

Swingewood and Laurenson (Makatita, 2022) state that there are three sociological orientations to literary studies. The first is sociology of the society, followed by sociology of the author and reader.

### 1. Sociology of Social Structure

Sociology of the society pertains to the author's social condition in the community in which he or she resides. Thus, when an author writes a literary work, it influences the stage of writing literary works directly or indirectly. Laurenson and Swingewood (Makatita, 2022) contend that literature can be analyzed in relation to history and used to comprehend history itself.

### 2. The Author's Sociology

The second approach to literary sociology, according to Swingewood and Laurenson (Makatita, 2022), shifts the emphasis away from the social situation of the writer. The writer's existence plays a significant role in the creation of his literary works. It implies that the status of the author affects the literary work, regardless of whether he or she is from a lower to middle class or a higher class.

### 3. Sociology of the Audience

The sociology of the reader is the reader's reaction to a literary work. According to Swingewood and Laurenson (Makatita, 2022), the sociology of the reader's response to literature and how literature can influence the reader's social life is the subject of their study. Every literary work conveys a message from the

author to the reader. Nonetheless, not all implied messages in a literary work are acceptable to the reader. The reception of the literary work and its social message in the reader's social life depends on the reader's response.

Regarding the sociology of society in relation to Swingewood and Laurenson's (Makatita, 2022). Theory of Literature book's sociological literature perspective, the researcher focused on sociology. This implies that the sociology of the society she lived in reflected the social phenomena she observed. In other words, the author's work and society could not be separated because the author was inspired by society life.

## **B. OPPRESSION**

Adjustment of the theory is one of the important understanding frameworks in understanding social dynamics and injustice that occurs in society. Foucault (1975, p. 101) states that adjustment is "a person can put a political project to eradicate illegality, generalize the function of punishment and limit, to control it, the power to punish. From this emerge the two lines of objectifying crime and criminals." This approach emphasizes the role of social forces and structures in producing and maintaining inequality and settlement. The theory of truth, as proposed by Foucault, provides an important perspective in analyzing how power works in society. This theory recognizes that settlement is not limited to exploitative forms alone, but also includes aspects such as social control, domination, and individual freedom. In doing so, this approach helps us understand that settlement does not only occur at the individual level, but also involves a wider social structure.



According to Iris Marion Young, she was a feminist thinker who made significant contributions to the theory of oppression. In his book *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990, p. 39), Young presents a theory of oppression that focuses on the structural and cultural aspects of oppression in society. According to Young, oppression does not only occur through individual actions, but is also maintained through social and institutional systems that affect the daily lives of individuals.

It is said that by recognizing the role of social structures in oppression, we can understand that inequality and oppression are not only personal or individual in nature but are also the result of systemic injustice that exists in society. By looking at the cultural, institutional, and structural dimensions of oppression, we can identify and change systems that generate and sustain injustice.

In addition, Young (1990) also proposed the concept of "cultural oppression" which acknowledged that oppression is not only related to economic or political inequality, but also occurs in the cultural realm. In this context, cultural oppression occurs when certain groups are considered inferior or worthless in the existing cultural hierarchy. For example, the oppression of racial or ethnic minority groups can occur through stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination in cultural representation.

### **1. Oppression as Structural Concept**

Oppression as a structural concept refers to the ways in which social institutions and systems perpetuate disadvantage and injustice based on social

group memberships. In her book *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Iris Marion Young (1990) argues that oppression is not the result of the choices or policies installed by a few people in power, but rather due to the embedded norms, habits, and symbols that underlie institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules.

Oppression in this sense is structural, rather than the result of a few people's choices or policies. It's causes embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules. Understanding oppression as a structural concept is crucial to dismantling it and creating a more just and equitable society (Cudd, Ann E, 2006).

Mike Oliver's work on the concept of oppression and the development of a social theory of disability is another important contribution to the understanding of oppression as a structural concept. Oliver (1990) argues that oppression is a fundamental aspect of the experience of disability. The experience of disability is not simply a matter of individual impairment but is also shaped by the social and cultural context in which it occurs. Oliver contends that the social model of disability, which emphasizes the role of social and cultural factors in the experience of disability, is a more accurate and useful way of understanding disability than the medical model, which focuses on individual impairment. Oliver's work has been influential in the development of disability studies as a field of inquiry and has contributed to the ongoing struggle for disability rights and social justice.

Members of these communities use the term oppression to characterize the unfairness of their circumstances, and the context in which they do so reveals that oppression is a family of concepts and conditions. As said by Young (1990 p.64) "I have arrived at the five faces of oppression—exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence as the best way to avoid such exclusions and reductions".

## **2. Five Faces of Oppression**

### **a. Exploitation**

According to Young (1990) in her book, exploitation is one of the five faces of oppression identified by which refers to the unfair use of the labor or resources of others for one's own benefit. Exploitation is a form of oppression perpetuated through systemic inequalities and imbalances of power.

Young's main explanation of exploitation, she said "through a steady process of the transfer of the results of the labor of one social group to benefit another" (Young, 1990, p.49). The focus of this analysis is not on the distribution of wealth between a select few and a large number of economically disadvantaged people, but rather on the structural relationships between these groups. This oppression enforces inequalities and power relations through socially imposed rules about what work is, who does something for whom, how work or work is repaid, and the social processes by which work results are appropriated. These kinds of relationships are mass-produced on a regular basis in places where the powerful use

the energy of the weak to maintain and increase their own position of authority and wealth.

In the end, in his book, Young said, "Unjust exploitation occurs when one group gains unfair advantage or resources from another group. This occurs through a transfer of energy leading to an unequal distribution of benefits. Social institutions such as rules, laws, and economic systems can allow some people to accumulate wealth while limiting access for others. The redistribution of goods alone is not sufficient to address this inequity, as the practices and structural relationships that support exploitation remain unchanged. Therefore, structural and institutional changes are needed, including reorganization of institutions and decision-making practices, changes in the division of labor, and changes in culture and norms that support equity, justice and sustainability. Only with this comprehensive change can we achieve true justice where exploitation is no longer allowed or supported by social institutions (Young, 1990, p. 53).

#### **b. Marginalization**

As young said in his book "Marginals are people the system of labor cannot or will not use" (Young, 1990, p. 53). The term "marginal" refers to those the workforce management system either cannot or does not want to hire. They are punished or denied opportunities for gainful employment. The labor market system governs access, management, and distribution of work in society. The motivations behind marginalization range from discrimination based on gender, race, religion,

or sexual orientation to a lack of physical or mental abilities seen as crucial in the labor market.

In addition, Young also said that “the most dangerous form of oppression” (Young 1990, 53). and also “whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life” and is therefore exposed to severe material deprivation “and even extermination” (Young 1990, 53). Young statement about the dangers of marginalization illustrates the serious impact that marginalized individuals or groups experience. Their marginalization excludes them from useful participation in social life, resulting in significant material inequality.

This includes economic constraints such as unemployment, unstable employment, or low wages. In addition, marginalization can carry extreme threats, including the physical elimination of the group. This highlights the destructive impact when marginalized groups are not only ignored, but also eliminated or treated with violence by the dominant power. This argument emphasizes the importance of fighting marginalization and oppression to create a just and inclusive society, where every individual and group has equal opportunities in social, economic and political life, and is recognized and protected in their rights and dignity.

### **c. Powerlessness**

The Marxist notion of class reveals the structure of exploitation in society, in which some people derive power and wealth from the work of others. Young said that the division between the capitalist and working class is still relevant in

contemporary society, with the distinction between professional and non-professional workers creating the everyday distinction between the "middle class" and the "working class." Participation in decision-making is limited, and dominance is exercised through the widespread power of agents who mediate in the decisions of others. Power and autonomy in making decisions that affect their lives are limited for the vast majority of people, who are also subjected to forms of oppression other than exploitation (Young, 1990 p.56).

Furthermore Young also said that, the powerless status of nonprofessionals is seen in their lack of authority, status, and sense of self compared to professionals. Professionals have status advantages because of the education and specialized knowledge they acquire, as well as the ability to develop skills and gain recognition. They also have work autonomy and authority over others, whereas non-professionals lack this autonomy and are often under professional authority. The division between the "middle class" and the "working class" does not only occur in the workplace, but also affects other social aspects, such as culture, living environment, and education. Mobility between status groups tends to be limited, with children of professionals tending to become professionals and children of non-professionals remaining in their groups (Young, 1990 p.57).

#### **d. Cultural Imperialism**

Another type of oppression is Cultural Imperialism, according to Young:

“Cultural imperialism involves the universalization of a dominant group's experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm. Some groups have exclusive or primary access to what Nancy Fraser (1987b) calls the means of interpretation and communication in a society. As a consequence, the dominant

cultural products of the society, that is, those most widely disseminated, express the experiences, values, goals, and achievements of these groups" (Young, 1990, p.59).

Other groups that are different or not included in the dominant group experience cultural oppression and marginalization, losing autonomy in interpreting and communicating their own experiences and culture. This results in inequalities in cultural representation and recognition, and limits individual freedom to develop identities beyond the boundaries set by the dominant group. In addition, cultural imperialism reinforces stereotypes and clichés about culturally dominated groups, causing stigmatization, discrimination and restrictions on identity development.

Young also said "W.E.B. Du Bois called "double consciousness"—"this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (Du Bois, 1969 [1903], p. 45)"

Individuals who experience dual consciousness always see themselves through the lens of others, and measure their self-worth based on the negative perceptions assigned to them by the dominant culture. This creates ridiculous feelings of disgust and pity in going about everyday life. Double consciousness is a detrimental psychological impact of cultural imperialism. Individuals experiencing dual consciousness refuse to fully identify with devalued, objectified, and stereotyped visions of themselves. They want recognition as human beings who are equal, active, have hope and potential, but receive judgments that only consider them different, marked, or inferior by the dominant culture.

This suggests that cultural imperialism not only creates inequality in society, but also has a detrimental psychological impact on culturally dominated



individuals. It is important to be aware of this impact and work to overcome dual awareness by promoting cultural recognition, respect and equality within society.

#### **e. Violence**

One of the last of oppression is, violence. According to Young "Violence is systemic because it is directed at members of a group simply because they are members of that group" (Young, 1990, p.62). Systemic violence reflects patterns or structures that exist within an entire system or society. The violence occurred repeatedly and consistently, where members of certain groups were targeted simply because they were members of that group. This is closely related to structural inequality in society, where violence is directed at groups that are victims as a result of the prejudices, stereotypes and biases that exist in the social system.

Systemic violence also perpetuates power dynamics, in which the dominant group uses violence as a tool to maintain their dominance. The effects of systemic violence extend beyond individual actions and create collective trauma, exacerbate social inequalities, hinder the progress of oppressed groups, and trigger a perpetual cycle of violence. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the existence of systemic violence and work to overcome structural injustices and promote equality and justice in society.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

In this chapter, the researcher will describe the approach used in this research. This includes the research design, data sources, data collection, and data analysis. Thus, the reader will get a clear picture of the steps taken in carrying out this research.

#### **A. Research Design**

A scientific study is one that employs a rigorous approach to data collection, analysis, and reporting to address a particular research question. For this approach, it requires a method that act as a roadmap for achieving the necessary results. Research techniques are an essential element of any study since it gives researcher a way to discover the answers to their research questions. To provide the greatest results and in line with the study's objectives, the research approach must be consistently followed from the start to the end of the research process.

This research seeks to investigate the social and racial issue in the Afro-American community as depicted in the movie script *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham. The Researcher uses literary criticism that could involve the close analysis of a particular literary text or group of texts. The study could involve identifying and examining the literary devices, themes, and symbols used by the author, as well as exploring the cultural and historical context in which the text was produced. The research might also involve comparing the text to other

works of the same genre or time or considering the text in relation to broader literary movements or theoretical approaches. The goal of this type of research would be to gain a deeper understanding of the literary text and to shed light on its meaning, significance, and impact.

## **B. Data Source**

In this study, the researcher use data sources from the movie Script *Just Mercy* by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham, that be examined to obtain results that are able to answer the research questions. Researcher used data sources from the *Just Mercy* script by Destin Daniel Cretton & Andrew Lanham which was published in 2018 with a total of 163 pages by Warner Bros. Ent. at Burbank, California 91522. The data is in the form of quotes, dialogue, and events in the movie script.

## **C. Method of Collecting Data**

The method used in this study is the first, the researcher watches the film to understand the story. Then, the researcher collected data by reading the film script and re-watching the video from beginning to end. The researcher analyzed it by using the theory of five faces of oppression (1990).

## **D. Method of Analyzing Data**

Researcher first collect the data to determine which is closest to the research objectives before performing the analysis. Once the data is collected, the researcher then carry out an analysis. The process involves sorting, categorizing, analyzing,

and drawing conclusions from the data. During the sorting stage, the researcher reviews the data and separate it into relevant categories. The next step is categorizing the data into groups based on their relationship with the theory being applied. In the analysis stage, the researcher examines each piece of data considering the theory, using Marxist theory as a starting point. This help to address the research questions and lead to the interpretation and conclusion of the results.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter contains descriptive explanations with supporting data from the *Just Mercy* film script. It aims to answer formulated questions regarding the extreme prejudice that exists between whites and blacks in Alabama, United States of America. This chapter is separated into two sub-chapters. The first subchapter talks about five faces of oppression experienced by Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian. While the last chapter explains the oppressed characters survive the oppression.

#### **A. Forms of Oppression Experienced by Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian.**

Racism is frequently systemic and structural, and not always conscious, overt, or readily apparent. Systemic and structural racism are forms of racism that are pervasively and deeply embedded in systems, laws, written or unwritten policies, and entrenched practices and beliefs that produce, condone, and perpetuate widespread unfair treatment and oppression of people of color, resulting in adverse health outcomes (Opperman, 2019). Residential segregation, unfair lending practices and other barriers to home ownership and accumulating wealth, schools' reliance on local property taxes, environmental injustice, biased policing and sentencing of men and boys of color, and voter suppression policies are examples of what *Just Mercy* depicts.

The term "structural racism" or "structural racial oppression" refers to the aggregate of ways in which societies foster racial discrimination through mutually

reinforcing systems of housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media, health care, and criminal justice (Hook, 2004). Most people undoubtedly think of racial slurs, hate crimes, and other overtly racist actions when considering racism. There are, however, less obvious manifestations of racism that are ultimately more destructive. At least for those who are not its victims, structural and systemic racism is often invisible. *Just Mercy* is one rare movie script, which confronts a specific atrocity head-on, and delves beneath the surface to reveal the structural biases that enable that injustice. Based on a true story, the movie script depicts an innocent black man being falsely convicted, imprisoned, and sentenced to execution. This highlights the unjust treatment of black people by the American legal system.

This discussion contains the oppression of black people in *Just Mercy* movie script by employing the Five Faces of Oppression framework, which are known as Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural Imperialism, and Violence. Young's oppression theory is part of a larger endeavor that seeks to challenge the traditional liberal conception of justice as the equitable distribution of goods and resources. According to her, justice "should not only refer to distribution but also to the institutional conditions necessary for the development and exercise of individual capacities and collective communication and cooperation" (Young 1990, 39). Therefore, injustice refers to "two forms of disabling constraints, oppression and domination" (Young 1990, p. 39).

Therefore, the concept of oppression should not be limited to totalitarian/authoritarian communities, but rather it should be applied whenever a group suffers

"some inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thoughts, and feelings" (Young 1990, p. 40). Young denies, however, that a single set of criteria could be used to describe the oppression of women, Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans, Jews, lesbians, gay men, Asians, old people, working-class people, and physically/cognitively disabled people in the United States (or other liberal-democratic societies). Rather, according to Young, oppression is a "cluster" concept that refers to a family of concepts and conditions that she divides into five categories: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. It is conceivable for an oppressed group to experience more than one of these forms of oppression, as these categories are not mutually exclusive.

### **1. Exploitation**

In contrast to the overt style of dominance exercised in precapitalist societies, class distinction and dominance are sanctioned much more covertly in a capitalist society, despite the fact that formally, i.e., legally and politically, it "removes traditional juridically enforced class distinction and promotes a belief in the legal freedom of persons." Therefore, it begs the question: how can class distinctions continue to exist between the affluent and the working class? How specifically can the distinction between those who own the means of production and those who labor for them continue to exist? Young believes that the theory of exploitation resolves this conundrum.

According to Young (1990, 49), exploitation consists of some people, namely the working class, exercising their abilities "under the control, for the purposes, and for the benefit of other people," namely the owners of the means of production. To be more precise, exploitation is the transfer of the worker's energy and power to the capitalist for the primary purpose of enhancing the capitalist's power without compensating the worker. In addition to the loss of control, exploitation also entails material deprivation and loss of self-respect.

Despite the fact that Young bases her account of exploitation on Marxist literature, she criticizes Marxism for failing to account for other forms of dominance and exploitation besides labor exploitation, namely racial, sexual, and emotional exploitation. Women, for example, are subject to specific forms of exploitation in which they expend their energies and power, frequently through emotional and sexual services, typically for the solitary benefit of men and to enable them to engage in more important and creative work, thereby enhancing their status as men. Young considers this transfer of energy from women to men to be exploited because it is frequently unobserved, unacknowledged, and unreturned.

In *Just Mercy*, this is shown from the movie script, where it depicts the majority of Alabama's black population as living in low-income areas, making it difficult for them to employ attorneys to defend themselves against unfair treatment. Furthermore, it also acknowledges how exploitation is a normal thing in the area of Alabama, where it is not usual to see a black person own a thing or work for himself, even, at some point black people are considered to be poor and started working since they are kids.



*EXT. COUNTRY ROAD (ALABAMA)/ROADBLOCK - DAY*

*He notices something up ahead, slows to a stop to see--  
SEVEN POLICE CARS block the road with 14 OFFICERS, guns drawn and  
aimed at him. He TURNS down the MUSIC. Fear ripples through him as --*

*SHERIFF TATE (late 30s, white) approaches the truck, unsettling ease in his  
step.*

*Walter shows both hands as Tate reaches the window.*

*WALTER*

*Afternoon, sir, need to see my license?*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*Oh, no, that won't be necessary.*

*Tate seems almost friendly as he looks at the trailer of logs, then over the truck,  
brand new rims on the wheels.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*These rims look Nice truck. expensive*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY - Rev. 4/25/19 (Tan Add'l Photog)*

*CONTINUED:*

*WALTER*

*Oh, they ain't much. Got 'em from a junkyard.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*(nods; subtle beat)*

*Who you workin' for?*

*WALTER*

*Run my own pulpin' business.*

*(tries to keep it light)*

*If y'all need any trees cleared, happy to help you out.*

*Walter smiles, but it's like Tate didn't even hear him.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*No boss to check in with, huh? Must be real nice. Free to roam wherever you  
want in your fancy truck. (p.3)*

These scripts indicate how surprised and uneasy the white is to know that some colored people are able to hold onto their life without exploitation from the white ones, thus they tend to become arrogant about it. Another example would be Bryan's mom, the moment she knew that Bryan would receive such a low income.

*ALICE*

*Howie told me you're making fourteen thousand dollars a year?*

*BRYAN*  
*What didn't he tell you?*  
*ALICE*

*You could have taken any of those job offers in D.C. and been set for the rest of your life.*

*BRYAN*  
*You know that's not what I want to do.*

*ALICE*  
*I didn't want to work two jobs my whole life, either, but I did it so my children could get ahead, not so they could go make half of what I was making ten years ago. (p.13)*

In these conversations, Alice said that she was working two jobs in order to survive and made sure that her kids all got into a good life. A poor and hard living condition is a product of such exploitations, and obviously getting out of it is not an easy thing to do. Capitalism is utilized by exploitation to subjugate. According to the economic theory of capitalism, individuals are free to exchange commodities. Yet, whenever this has occurred throughout history, it has resulted in the formation of distinct classes of people: the rich and the impoverished. Karl Marx, the originator of socialism, asserted that capitalism produces "haves" (those with wealth) and "have-nots" (those without wealth). In a capitalistic society, the "haves" typically exploit the "have-nots" for their labor. As a result, exploitation establishes a system that perpetuates class distinctions, keeping the wealthy wealthier and the poor poorer.

## **2. Marginalization**

To be marginalized is to be excluded from the labor system of a society. Young asserts that marginalization is perhaps "the most dangerous form of oppression" (Young 1990, 53). This is due to the fact that a "whole category of

people is expelled from useful participation in social life" and is therefore subjected to severe material deprivation "and even extermination" (Young 1990, 53).

Material deprivation is not the only negative consequence of marginalization. To be materially deprived implies not only that one lacks the necessary material resources to endure, but also that one is dependent on others to gain access to these resources. Young will be subjected to the often "arbitrary and intrusive authority of social service providers and other public and private administrators" if he is dependent on the state for survival. In other words, dependency frequently necessitates the suspension of fundamental rights — i.e., privacy, respect, and individual choice — for the sake of survival.

Young, echoing other feminist authors, contends that the severe oppression faced by dependents is partially the result of liberalism's highly individualistic model of citizenship, in which citizenship is viewed as fully autonomous and independent. If this is the case, then individuals who have been marginalized from the labor force and, as a result, have become dependent on the state for survival are considered to be citizens of second-class status. As there is a trade-off between living a comfortable life and being subjected to arbitrary and intrusive powers, even if marginals led relatively comfortable material lives, this would not be sufficient evidence that the wrongs of marginalization have been rectified. In addition, Young argues that even if marginals' rights were respected by institutions tasked with assisting them, "injustices of marginality would remain in the form of uselessness, boredom, and lack of self-respect" (Young 1990, 55).

The act of marginalization can be seen from Bryan's perspective during his time at Harvard, Bryan engaged in a couple of discussions regarding the death penalty, in which he is more interested. There were moments where he replied to other law students; focusing on how segregated and systematic black people's oppressions are.

*BRYAN*

*Every way you look at it, race is the greatest predictor of who gets the death penalty. times more likely to get the death penalty if the victim is white*

*LAW STUDENT*

*The reliability of that study is debatable.*

*Bryan glances at the Law Student, used to this type of classmate over the years. He doesn't hold back --*

*BRYAN*

*Over 2000 murder cases subjected to 230 nonracial variables. It was reliable enough for the Supreme Court to accept.*

*LAW STUDENT*

*But they still rejected the argument.*

*BRYAN*

*Because they were afraid of trying to fix something they believed was unfixable. And they were wrong. (beat) In his dissent, Justice Brennan ridiculed the ruling as a fear of too much justice."*

*BRYAN*

*I think they're just being realistic. A certain amount of bias in our judicial system is inevitable. It's just a hard truth we have to learn to live with. This triggers a fire in Bryan unseen before.*

*BRYAN*

*Live with? The whole point is that some of us don't have that luxury. (p.10-A9)*

The frustration that occurred to Bryan is surely non-debatable in this case, the way that the other students feel it is just something non-white need to live with, when it is directly affecting the main aspect of living is truly immoral and questionable.

Young explained that marginalization is the act of relegating or confining a group of individuals to a lower social status or to the exterior limit or margin of

society. It is a procedure of exclusion overall. In some respects, marginalization is worse than exploitation because society has determined that it cannot or will not employ these individuals for labor. People are typically marginalized on the basis of ethnicity. Aboriginal communities in Australia, which were excluded from society and moved further and further from their homelands as cities grew, are a prominent example. The marginalization of Aborigines occurred when society prioritized the requirements of whites over those of the marginalized. Thus, marginalization and whiteness are closely related.

Most marginalized communities in the United States are racially marked. Nonetheless, this ethnic exclusion occurs in countries other than the United States, affecting Blacks and Indians in Latin America and Blacks, East Indians, Eastern Europeans, and North Africans in Europe.

However, marginalization is by no means restricted to racially identifiable individuals. In the United States, a disgracefully high percentage of the population is marginalized, including elderly people who are fired from their jobs; young Blacks or Latinos who cannot find their first or second jobs; many single mothers and their children; other people who are involuntarily unemployed; many mentally and physically disabled people; and American Native Indians, particularly those living on reservations.

Marginalization excludes an entire group of individuals from meaningful participation in social life. As a consequence, these groups are subjected to severe material deprivation (lack of access to basic resources) and even genocide.

Furthermore, some of the social and racial obstacles that Stevenson must surmount are disguised as impersonal government actions. The original case against McMillian was brought about because he was reviled by whites for having an affair with a white woman; thus, racism is central to the narrative.

*BERNARD*  
*Sorry, Minnie.*

*MINNIE*  
*It's okay. It ain't no secret.*  
*(beat)*

*Few months before the murder, Johnny D got caught messin' 'round with a white woman in town. When her husband found out, he made sure everybody knew 'bout it.*

*(beat; frustrated)*  
*People started talkin', and the stories kept growin'. He went from a cheat to a drug dealer to head of the Dixie Mafia. So when someone finally called him a a killer, nobody thought twice*

*UNCLE LEO (70s), confined to a wheelchair but with the voice of a leader, speaks up.*

*UNCLE LEO*  
*They can call it what they want, but we all know this is just another way to lynch a black man.*  
*A handful of VOICES agree. Then --*

*MINNIE*  
*There ain't no excuse for what my husband did to me and this family. Damn fool hurt me bad. (beat; strong) But he's still the daddy of my kids. (p.41)*

This shows how people actually react towards the engagement of white and black in the same situation. As we acknowledged, the Afro - Americans would be always at fault. Johnny D, is the one who cheats, the one who uses drugs and the one who kills. Eventually, the management of a white building denies Stevenson and Ansley's request to rent office space on the grounds that the duo's work is likely to be controversial. When Bryan arrived in Alabama, he found out that the place owners did not want to rent the office, due to the view that what he is doing is immoral.

*BILL*  
*(to Eva)*  
*You said you were the director.*

*EVA*  
*Director of operations, and you're making me look really bad in front of my boss*  
*right now.*

*BILL*  
*(to Bryan)*  
*She told me you were a lawyer, but nobody said it was for murderers on death*  
*row.*

*BRYAN*  
*We're providing legal services to people who need help.*

*BILL*  
*And you'll have to do it someplace else, 'cause I can't have people like that*  
*coming around here.*  
*Bryan takes a breath. He's used to people judging his clients like this.*

*BRYAN*  
*Not everyone is in there for good reason.*

*BILL*  
*They're locked up for something, and I don't want that something in my building.*  
*Sorry, but it ain't up for discussion. (p.15a)*

From these dialogues, it can be seen that social exclusion, also known as marginalization, happens when particular groups of individuals are prohibited from participating in specific aspects of society. This limitation of access to institutions and opportunities can be caused by a variety of circumstances, such as historical bias and a lack of money. Another example would be the moment of Bryan explains his life to Walter. Because the movie script is expressly based on the Black experience on both sides of the law, there are a number of similarities between Walter and Bryan's daily lives.

When Walter and Bryan first meet, Walter is skeptical that Bryan can assist him, as he believes that numerous other attorneys have attempted and failed to save him from death row with minimal effort. Walter has never experienced the extreme

prejudice that Bryan has, so he views him as a young, naive Black man who believes he can influence the inherently racist judicial procedure that has dominated the South. Bryan hesitatingly responds,

"BRYAN

*I grew up down a road just like yours, pumping sewage from our yard, sharing a playground with the pigs and chickens... When I was a teenager, my grandpa was murdered, but no one outside our community cared, because to them, he was just another black man killed in the projects.*

*(beat)*

*I know what it's like to be in the shadows.*

*(shrugs; matter-of-fact)*

*That's why I'm doing this.*

*Walter takes this in, deeply moved.*

WALTER

*That's a pretty good answer.*

BRYAN

*(smiles)*

*Anything else you want to know? I'm an open book. Walter thinks, more comfortable now. (p.48-49)*

This is the first and most significant verbal connection between the two characters in the movie script, establishing their shared ethnic history as a connection that can aid Walter's legal case.

This is proof that people who are marginalized can be of any demographic because it can happen due to their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, sexual orientation, capacity to work, socioeconomic situation, and age. When it comes to accessing health care, quality education, and jobs that would improve their well-being, marginalized communities are frequently at a disadvantage. In addition, in the movie script they also explain how this marginalization has been around for decades; In a scenario in which he goes for a run in Monroeville, Bryan's dedication to his profession is demonstrated. As he jogs, he passes by the local church, courthouse, and residential neighborhoods. Bryan had mentioned the chapel to a



prisoner during one of his first visits as their legal counsel. Later in the movie script, when Bryan is feeling defeated, he says to Eva,

*EXT. ALABAMA RIVER - LATER*

*Bryan sits with Eva on a bench overlooking the wide, flowing river. In the distance, a larger dinner boat, The Harriet, a "historical" recreation of the riverboats used during the time of slavery.*

*ADD SHOT OF BRIE WALKING UP AND SITTING BESIDE BRYAN.*

*Bryan watches the boat move slowly toward them. Then –*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY - Rev. 4/25/19 (Tan Add'l Photog)*

*CONTINUED:*

*BRYAN*

*Nobody want to remember that this is where thousands of enslaved people were shipped in and paraded up the street to be sold. Ten miles from here, black people were pulled from their homes and lynched and nobody talks about it.*

*(beat)*

*You can talk about the civil rights movement, but only the good parts. Can't talk about schools becoming as segregated now as they were in the '50s. Can't talk about one out of every three black men ending up in prison. Can't talk about the fact that nobody ever apologized, or even acknowledged that they did something wrong.*

*Bryan stops here, the facts of the past threatening to overwhelm. Eva can see his pain, his eyes tight before -- (p.114-115)*

This scene parallels the previous one and accentuates Bryan's physical and metaphorical proximity to the fight for justice. Later, when Walter's situation is at its worst, Bryan travels to Alabama to be with the congregation. Over the singing crowd's heads, the camera pans around the entire sanctuary. Bryan is initially amazed by the tranquility, harmony, and happiness that this brings to those around him. Slowly, he begins to croon along and smile, indicating that he has regained confidence in himself and Walter's case. Bryan's confidence in himself and the community's capacity to help Walter is heavily reliant on religion, not as a subject but as a means of connection and community for him and his Black peers.

Bryan and Walter shared a moment of understanding based on their shared experiences as Black men, and other inmates on Alabama's death row have endured

comparable atrocities. For example, Anthony Hinton, who has been on death row for 28 years, frequently communicates with Herb Richardson and Walter, his cellmates. Bryan confronts the District Attorney and Sheriff Tate after Darnell, a crucial witness in Johnny D's case, is arrested, and experiences a similar instance of gaslighting. After providing Walter with a fraudulent alibi, the witness is arrested for perjury, despite the fact that he is telling the truth. Sheriff Tate tells Bryan,

*JUST MERCY - Rev.8/31/18 (Green)*

*CONTINUED:*

*The two men stare each other down a beat before Tate speaks, his words cloaked in infuriating charm.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*You know, I spoke to Ronda Morrison's mother yesterday. She was in tears, askin' me why some lawyer from up north was makin' them relive all this hell again.*

*BRYAN*

*(remains calm)*

*You can tell her it's because McMillian didn't kill her daughter. And whoever did is still out there somewhere.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*(shakes his head)*

*I know how desperate you must be to fulfill your fantasy of who we are down here. Just a bunch of corrupt Southern racists framin' niggers for murder. And you here to save the day. If that's the story you wanna believe, go right ahead. But I know Johnny D killed that girl, and he's going to answer for it.*

*BRYAN*

*How do you know that? You found entire case on the word of an indicted felon who had every no hard evidence and based your incentive to tell you what you wanted to hear.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*Ralph Myers gave us his testimony on his own accord.*

*BRYAN*

*And it made no sense! He couldn't finish a sentence without contradicting himself. (p.65)*

This is a fear stratagem employed by the defense to undermine their case. This diminishes Bryan's struggle against a racist system that intentionally fabricated evidence against an innocent man based on his skin color. Other than that, they repeatedly refer to black men with “n\*\*\*\*\*”, which is bad, cruel and very racist

to use. The term itself was the one that people from the middle-upper class used to say to their black slaves during the time of slavery. Using such a word for a human being is incredibly inappropriate and immoral. In conclusion, marginalization does exist in this movie script of Just Mercy, whereas it portrays how the black people were treated differently and separated with the whites due to bias in the system.

### 3. Powerlessness

According to Young, to be impotent is to be unable to participate in decisions that affect one's life circumstances. While it is true that most people are powerless in some way, Young gives particular attention to those she calls nonprofessionals, or the "working class" According to Young, nonprofessionals — i.e., the marginalized — lack work autonomy, have little room to exercise their creativity or judgement at work, lack technical expertise and authority, and communicate awkwardly in public or bureaucratic settings. The powerless do not elicit respect in the end (Young 1990, 56–57).

In this movie script, at the very beginning of the movie, scenes of powerlessness were already shown, whereas McMillian was prosecuted without any evidence and taken from his truck without any explanations;

*Walter locks eyes with him -- how does he know his name? He looks out the windshield to see 3 OFFICERS approaching with guns aimed at his head. Tate leans in close.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*Wanna make a run for it? 'Cause after what you done, I'd welcome a reason to do this right now.*

*WALTER*

*Sir, y'all must be confusin' me with someone. I don't know what. you think I done, but I was jus'*

*Tate abruptly throws open the door, grabs him by the neck, violently pulls him outside and SLAMS him on the hood. CAMERA PIVOTS, PUSHING IN ON his confusion and pain, framed by metal and sky as we -- (p.3)*

Thus, he was captured anyway and thrown into jail. In this movie script, racial tensions in the 1980s American South are investigated in depth. When Walter is pulled over in his truck and the police officer says:

*'Cause after what you done; I'd welcome a reason to do this right now. (p.3)*

It is clear that the focus of the movie script is on the systematic and racist mistreatment of African-Americans in the United States. Furthermore, the scenes moved to a moment:

*MONROE COUNTY NEWSCAST (DURING OPENING CREDITS):*

*-- A LOCAL MONTGOMERY REPORTER speaks to camera outside a bustling courthouse --*

*NEWS REPORTER*

*We know Monroeville as the peaceful town where Harper Lee wrote To Kill A Mockingbird. But last year, that peace was shattered by a brutal crime...*

*A PHOTO OF RONDA MORRISON (18, white, girl next door) displays beside him.*

*NEWS REPORTER*

*On the 1st of November, 18-year- old Ronda Morrison was found dead at Jackson Cleaners, where she worked as a part-time clerk. Morrison had been strangled and shot by Walter McMillian, known locally as 'Johnny D.'*

*-- A MUG SHOT of Walter "Johnny D" McMillian --*

*-- Sheriff Tate being interviewed on camera --*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*He's got a history of sexual misconduct among other things, so it don't surprise me he'd do something like this. Guys like that don't stop unless you make 'em.*

*NEWS REPORTER*

*After a trial that lasted a day and a half, McMillian was convicted by a jury who recommended a life sentence.*

*-- JUDGE ROBERT E. LEE KEY (60s, white) enters the courthouse.*

*NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)*

*But today, Judge Robert E. Lee Key overrode their decision and sentenced McMillian to death.*

*-- ANN DAVIS (40s) speaks through tears, overwhelmed. (p.5)*

These sentences indicate that Johnny D, also known as McMillian is a 'real' killer of Ronda Morrison. Ronda Morrison herself is a white girl while Johnny D is

a black man. The police took him to jail and the court relied upon a death sentence without any explanation, way worse is the fact that he is there without enough evidence.

At the next moment, McMillian met Bryan, who was at that time still an intern at Harvard Law School. While they are discussing, Bryan found out that Johnny D never had any real lawyer or any help for the cases, he was brought in without any acknowledgement and not a single way out. This moment opened Bryan's eyes that there is injustice served here in this prison, in fact, while Johnny D was supposed to be taken out of the meeting room, the police did not hesitate to hurt him and knocked on the door.

In general, respect implies that one's words will be acknowledged and that others will comply with one's requests based on one's authority, expertise, or influence. Due to their social status in and outside of the workplace, the powerless lack such respectability. Additionally, respect is frequently experienced along racial and gender lines. In other words, professional women must demonstrate their respectability in order to be regarded as such. Similarly, Black professionals must demonstrate their professionalism prior to being regarded as such. White working-class men, on the other hand, are frequently regarded with respect before their working-class status is revealed, in which this movie script also shows the moment when Bryan found out that Johnny D never had any real lawyer or any help for the cases, he was brought in without any acknowledgement and not a single way out.

This moment opened Bryan's eyes that there is injustice served here in this prison, in fact, while Henry was supposed to be taken out of the meeting room, the

police did not hesitate to hurt him and knocked on the door.

*Before Bryan can respond -- CLANK. The Guard opens the door, angry. He strides up to Henry, roughly CUFFS his wrists behind his back.*

GUARD

*(snarls to Bryan)*

*You should have been done two hours ago.*

*(CONTINUED)*

JUST MERCY FULL YELLOW CONTINUED:

BRYAN

*(surprised)*

*I'm sorry, sir, it was my fault. I didn't realize the time.*

GUARD

*You're supposed to watch the clock.*

*Henry WINCES in pain as the Guard SQUEEZES his cuffs and YANKS him to a standing position. Bryan stands, more distressed by this than Henry seems to be.*

BRYAN

*Hey! Stop that! He didn't do anything!*

GUARD

*You need to shut your mouth.*

HENRY

*(off Bryan's shock)*

*It's okay, Bryan.*

*(beat)*

*Don't worry 'bout me. Just come back.*

*The officer tries to push him out, but Henry plants his feet, leans back, strong and dignified. (p.8)*

At this moment, Bryan acknowledged his position, it doesn't matter who he is at the moment, as long as his skin colored is darker than the other person, no politeness would be served. This scene also provides a brief illustration of how white dominance is shown mutinously. Another instance would be the fact that Bryan's identity is unknown to the corrections officer who greets him upon his arrival at the prison, and he is promptly subjected to a strip search. When Bryan states that attorneys are not required to undergo searches during legal visits with their clients, the officer responds:

EXT. HOLMAN PRISON - DAY

19

*Bryan's Civic pulls into the parking lot. He gets out, straightens his jacket, and heads inside, determined.*

INT. HOLMAN PRISON CHECK-IN MOMENTS LATER

*Bryan's first time in the massive prison complex. He waits as JEREMY (early 30s, white), a muscular, heavily-tattooed guard, looks at his I.D., signs him in. Bryan notices the Confederate flag tattooed on his forearm.*

*Jeremy's SUPERVISOR (50s, white) doesn't look up from his automagazine.*

BRYAN

*I scheduled meetings with six clients today.*

JEREMY

*I ain't seen you before.*

BRYAN

*(calmly)*

*I just moved here.*

*Jeremy SUCKS at his teeth, stares at the I.D. again.*

JEREMY

*You really a lawyer?*

BRYAN

*(is he really asking?)*

*Yes.*

*Jeremy looks him up and down, suspicious.*

JEREMY

*Gonna have to search you... Go in that room and take everything off.*

(CONTINUED)

JUST MERCY – Rev. 8/31/18 (Green)

CONTINUED:

BRYAN

*(beat; shocked)*

*Attorneys aren't strip-searched for legal visits.*

JEREMY

*You ain't gonna visit shit unless you get in that room and strip.*

*Bryan stares at Jeremy, then to his supervisor, who still hasn't looked up from his magazine.*

JEREMY

*Let's go.*

*Bryan hesitates, wanting to argue, but quickly realizing he has no other choice.  
(p.21-22)*

Bryan hesitates, wanting to argue, but quickly realizing he has no other

choice or so-called powerless in front of him. Based on this remark alone, this officer, who has fewer credentials than Bryan, appears to believe he has more authority than he actually does. The officer believes that this degradation is necessary to reestablish the power dynamic that he deems appropriate due to the pervasive systemic racism in the United States in the 1980s and today.

Systemic racism is so ingrained in systems, that it is frequently presumed to reflect the natural, inevitable order of things (Bulhan, 2004). Systematic and ubiquitous racism exacerbates the disadvantages of Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color in society. It is frequently attributable to intentional acts of discrimination in the past, such as laws mandating racial segregation in housing. Once in place, however, systemic racism is frequently self-perpetuating, with detrimental effects on health persisting even after explicitly discriminatory measures have been eliminated. The officer's desire to humiliate and disparage Bryan's status is evident, despite the fact that they are both law enforcement officers ostensibly tasked with protecting society. Bryan's independence and humanity are diminished further by the officer's cavalier attitude, as he says:

*INT. HOLMAN PRISON BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER*  
*Bryan stands shirtless as Jeremy feels through his jacket before tossing it on the table.*

*JEREMY*  
*Pants and underwear.*

*Bryan looks at him a beat before stripping the rest off and handing it to him. Jeremy feels through his pants, then --*

*JEREMY*  
*Bend over and spread.*

*Bryan doesn't move. This is as far as he goes. Jeremy decides it's not worth the battle. After a beat, he tosses Bryan's pants on the table. Lets him off the hook.*



JEREMY  
*You're clear.*

*He turns and walks out the door. Bryan takes a moment to let his adrenaline settle, the humiliation evident on his face.  
 He closes his eyes, catches his breath. When he opens them, enough strength has returned to grab his clothes.  
 Pants -- shirt -- tie. Then finally, his jacket. Each layer rebuilding a piece of his dignity until -- (p.22)*

Bryan stands shirtless in front of the officer, horrified by the officer's repulsive behaviour but hesitant to speak up for fear of being accused of overreacting. This is directly related to the reality that he is a Black man and the violent stereotypes surrounding Black men. The perspective of how black people are in low class exists in this scene.

In the movie script as well, the colored people were experiencing segregation due to the immoral old ways of portraying the white middle class as better compared to the other races which obviously lead to the living of powerlessness.

BRYAN  
*Nobody want to remember that this is where thousands of enslaved people were shipped in and paraded up the street to be sold. Ten miles from here, black people were pulled from their homes and lynched and nobody talks about it.  
 (beat)  
 You can talk about the civil rights movement, but only the good parts. Can't talk about schools becoming as segregated now as they were in the '50s. Can't talk about one out of every three black men ending up in prison. Can't talk about the fact that nobody ever apologized, or even acknowledged that they did something wrong. (p.114)*

This is such a reality of racism that still exists despite the fact that people in America sell the sentence which says that human rights are held in the highest regard. In the name of independence, the populace is aware that human rights, particularly those pertaining to servitude and prejudice, will be violated.

According to V.D. Berghe, author of *Race and Racism* (1967: 77–95), the abolition of slavery in North America coincided with the end of the American Civil War; however, it was quickly followed by a system of racial discrimination designed to maintain white (black) dominance. Berghe lists the removal of voting rights, segregation, and "lynching" as the three categories of policies ever implemented in the United States in *Race and Racism* (1967: 77-95).

The third tenet is the routine use of legal means to instill fear in the minds of black people in order to intimidate and commit mass homicide. Everyone desires contentment for the aforementioned reasons, but success is elusive. In a culture that takes delight in protecting human rights, this demonstrates that prejudice is alive and well. Segregation is an example of such prejudice. The period of segregation in the United States extends from 1880 to 1970. The continuation of Jim Crow laws is another defining characteristic. Segregation of black and white citizens was mandated by Jim Crow laws. It prohibited blacks and whites from sharing public utilities, schools, neighborhoods, and transportation. Blacks experienced overt prejudice from whites.

Marx's theory of socialism is connected to the concept of the powerlessness of Iris Marion Young: some individuals "have" power while others "have not." The powerless are under the control of the ruling class and are positioned to receive orders but rarely have the authority to issue them. Some of the fundamental inequities associated with powerlessness include the inability to develop one's abilities, the inability to make decisions, and the exposure to disrespectful treatment as a result of one's diminished status which can be seen in this script;

*SHERIFF TATE*

*Wanna make a run for it? 'Cause after what you done, I'd welcome a reason to do this right now.*

*WALTER*

*Sir, y'all must be confusin' me with someone. I don't know what you think I done, but I was jus' -- (p.4)*

In the United States, the marginalized do not participate in fundamental democratic processes because they believe they cannot or that their participation will be meaningless. In the majority of instances, it means not voting or participating in any decision-making process.

Nevertheless, the subtler forms of powerlessness are considerably more insidious. Both Iris Marion Young and the Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire believe that powerlessness is the most severe form of oppression because it permits people to subjugate themselves and others. It is easiest to clarify by making a connection to Harriet Tubman, the well-known African American abolitionist and escaped slave. Tubman once wrote, "Had they known they were slaves, I would have freed thousands more." In these remarks, Tubman conveys that some slaves were so powerless, thought so little of themselves, and were so indoctrinated by their slave masters' ideologies that they were unaware they were slaves. In fact, it is quite possible that some slaves were unaware that society was discriminatory and that they were being mistreated.

Additionally, this could be acknowledged because Alabama authorities have formed preconceived conceptions about Johnny D and other people of color, this demonstrates that his life, along with the lives of countless other people of color, is of no importance to them. Closure for a crime such as the one Johnny D is accused of committing has more profound racial structural implications in this

narrative. There are thousands of Black men like Walter McMillian or so-called Johnny D who were wrongfully convicted and imprisoned; their tales are comparable to Walter's. By this stage, Bryan remembered what Walter has said before the first time they met.

*A SHORT MONTAGE  
THE DAY PASSES BY –*

*-- Bryan's coat is on the chair behind him now, trying to keep up, taking down notes as he listens to another BLACK PRISONER, once again across the table.*

*Then --*

*--TWO MORE PRISONERS, one HISPANIC, one WHITE. SHORT JUMP CUTS. Similar framing. Sharing their stories, BITS OF DIALOGUE cut to form a single story of an unfair system –*

*PRISONERS*

*Met my lawyer one time.../Swear he on somethin', didn't even know my name.../All white jury.../Told me plead guilty or get the chair, so I said I was guilty.../Judge overturned my life sentence and gave me death, anyway!*

*Through it all, Bryan listens, taking notes until –*

*CLANG! Bryan looks up, a pad filled with notes, the next file on the table. The end of a very long day as --*

*END MONTAGE.*

*INT. HOLMAN PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY*

*A GUARD ushers in Walter McMillian, tired and worn from the last year and a half in prison.*

*Bryan stands, feels Walter's eyes on him as the guard leaves. Walter's face betrays no judgement.*

*WALTER*

*Where's the lawyer?*

*BRYAN*

*Um, that would be me.*

*(beat)*

*I'm Bryan Stevenson, it's good to meet you, Mr. McMillian*

*WALTER*

*(shakes his head)*

*You look young as my son.*

*Walter takes a seat, exhausted, drained of hope. Bryan can sense it as Walter speaks without looking at him.*

*WALTER*

*My last lawyer sat right where you sittin' and told me everything's gonna be okay. Then I was sentenced to death, my family run out of money, and he gone.*

*(looks at him)*

*What you gone do different?*

*Bryan scrambles, looks at the open file.*

*BRYAN*

*Well, uh... first thing we can do is appeal for a re-trial --*

*WALTER*

*We already did that and it was denied.*

*Bryan finds his footing, his schooling kicks in.*

*BRYAN*

*Okay, we can file for a reconsideration on that... then a direct appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeals, and work our way up to the State Supreme Court. If we're denied there, we can file a Rule 32, then a federal habeas, petition, and if all that fails, we'll take your case to the Supreme Court.*

*Walter looks at him, unconvinced. (p.24-25)*

This indicates, racism is such a big deal when you are in a life and death situation, all the black inmates were promised a life when it's all an illusion. They eventually ran out of money and left with no lawyer.

Similar to the DA's assessment of Walter, a large number of local residents have formed strong opinions about those on death row. Bryan and his local assistant Eva investigate the case and search for a place to establish a base of operations. When they arrive, they are greeted by a landlord who said:

*BILL*

*(to Eva)*

*You said you were the director.*

*EVA*

*Director of operations, and you're making me look really bad in front of my boss right now.*

*BILL*

*(to Bryan)*

*She told me you were a lawyer, but nobody said it was for murderers on death row.*

*BRYAN*

*We're providing legal services to people who need help.*

*BILL*

*And you'll have to do it someplace else, 'cause I can't have people like that coming around here.*

*Bryan takes a breath. He's used to people judging his clients like this.*

*BRYAN*

*Not everyone is in there for good reason.*

*BILL*

*They're locked up for something, and I don't want that something in my building.  
Sorry, but it ain't up for discussion.*

*EVA*

*They put Jesus on death row, Bill. He wasn't such a bad guy.*

*(ALT LINE)*

*How 'bout your complete lack of integrity, Bill? That up for discussion? (p.15A)*

As the preceding example illustrates, it is human nature to automatically presume the worst of convicted criminals. However, we must acknowledge that such assumptions perpetuate hostility toward rehabilitated and possibly blameless individuals. Without addressing the obstacles preventing their reintegration into society, we risk perpetuating a vicious cycle of social exclusion and criminal behavior. Opinions that degrade those who may have committed crimes impede Bryan's jail abolition efforts because crime creates a dichotomy of the virtuous victim and the terrible offender.

As a consequence, Bryan's anger grew, and he made a promise to Johnny D's family to improve. The justice system regards Black people very differently, irrespective of their educational attainment. And the 2019 movie script *Just Mercy* provides plain and concrete examples of this. Bryan's insistence that racist misconduct occurs within the injustice system is gaslighted by the suspicion that persists in every question the DA and the Sheriff ask him about his intentions to free Walter, his ability as a Black attorney, and his correct assumptions that they are racists. They perceive Bryan's decision to reopen Walter's case as an attack on their community, as they are staunch defenders of white privilege and traditional values.

Bryan is repeatedly threatened and degraded, which makes him feel like an outsider who does not belong. As previously stated, two police officers halt Bryan as he drives home late one night. The manner in which these white police officers treat him to instill terror and intimidation is illegal on multiple levels. Bryan is aware of the danger he confronts as a Black man in the southern United States. Bryan is aware of the risk he incurs by taking on the case of a man widely considered to be a murderer. Bryan is well aware of the risks he confronts as a newcomer to Monroeville, a predominantly white, prejudiced Southern community.

The movie script's potential impact on viewers depend on how accurately it depicts the prejudice experienced not only by Walter, but also by Bryan. The government has made it their mission to undermine Bryan's case at every opportunity. On that evening, the two officers are observed rummaging through Bryan's files, with one holding a pistol to his head while the other rips through them and removes several crucial documents. After the police depart, the audience is promptly reminded of Walter and Bryan's interactions with the (in)justice system. Bryan's expression as the police officers leave him in the dark reveals his inner conflict between surrendering and remaining firm. Regardless of their socioeconomic status, black males are categorized as criminals and suspects.

But Bryan was not fighting alone in this. Eva is an employee he works with. Eva's contribution to the movie script is indispensable. As a white woman who has endured numerous threats, she is aware of the dangers inherent in her association with a group whose mission is to free Black males from prison in the South. Minnie's portrayal as a forgiving wife who struggles to accept Walter's infidelity

but respects his place in the family could be interpreted as a celebration of women's resilience.

Eva sits silently and sternly, reaching out to touch Bryan's back as he sobs in her vehicle following the execution of Herb. Eva utilizes her white privilege throughout the movie script by holding back her tears so that the people of color around her can cry freely and uninhibitedly. Eva demonstrates that friendship and decency are the foundation of a just society. However, being born white does not mean that Eva is safe from judgment, people in Alabama portray white and black working together as a sign; whereas eventually, she received threats.

His arguments were correct, this movie shows misuse of authority in several of the scenes we've already spoken about. All but one appears to skirt the law to varying degrees. Bryan is stopped by police in the middle of the night, frisked while a gun is pointed at his head, and told that he is "*lucky*" to get off with a warning; this is an obvious picture of criminality disguised as police power. The circumstances of the stop in Walter's case and Bryan's race and social standing in the community suggest that not all stops are conducted legally and this shows that they have no power towards the authority in any manners.

#### **4. Cultural Imperialism**

Cultural imperialism is the "universalization of the experience and culture of a dominant group and its establishment as the norm" (Young 1990, p. 59). Given that the dominant group in a society is frequently in control of the cultural apparatus, the most widely disseminated cultural products reflect the experiences and values of that group. In addition, these cultural products reflect the dominant



group's interpretation of significant societal events and elements, including those of other societal groups.

Thus, according to Young, to be culturally subjugated is to be oppressed in two ways. On the one hand, it is to be distinguished by the dominant group's stereotypical interpretation of one's group. The oppressed group's experience is subordinated to the point of being nullified by the dominant group.

One of the breaking points is, in this movie that goes within the cultural imperialism analysis will be the fact that white supremacy was the primary motivating factor behind racism and injustice. Where it can be seen from this:

BRYAN

*Nobody want to remember that this is where thousands of enslaved people were shipped in and paraded up the street to be sold. Ten miles from here, black people were pulled from their homes and lynched and nobody talks about it.*

(beat)

*You can talk about the civil rights movement, but only the good parts. Can't talk about schools becoming as segregated now as they were in the '50s. Can't talk about one out of every three black men ending up in prison. Can't talk about the fact that nobody ever apologized, or even acknowledged that they did something wrong. (p.114)*

White supremacy is a racial ideology that asserts white people are to blame for every incidence of racism that exists in the world (Liu, 2019). Insofar as their identities are defined "from the outside," that is, "by a network of dominant meanings they experience as arising from elsewhere, from those with whom they do not identify, and who do not identify with them," (Young 1990, 59) oppressed groups, which in this film are black people, are marked out by stereotypes—that is, as different—because their identities are defined "from the outside" Nonetheless, oppressed groups are rendered invisible when the dominant group fails to acknowledge their perspectives, cultural expressions, and lived experiences.

This theory is strongly relevant to the movie script of *Just Mercy*. In the

documentary, *Just Mercy*, civil rights attorney Bryan Stevenson describes his efforts to release unrepresented and unjustly convicted Black people. The movie script chronicles the extensive history of prejudice and inequality within the American criminal justice system, as well as the numerous injustices that have contributed to the current state of unrest. The Walter McMillian case is one of Stevenson's earliest works. McMillian was granted the death penalty in 1987 for the murder of a young white woman in Monroeville, Alabama, despite mounting evidence of his innocence.

In *Just Mercy*, Stevenson's other patrons, such as Herbert Richardson, are also introduced. Richardson was executed in 1989 despite substantial evidence indicating that he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and mental illness. Another client, Anthony Ray Hinton, was exonerated after being wrongfully convicted of murder and other offenses in Alabama. Through personal accounts, the video addresses racism, the effects of mass incarceration, mental illness, the death penalty, and the absence of accountability among law enforcement officials.

*SHERIFF TATE*

*You know, I spoke to Ronda Morrison's mother yesterday. She was in tears, askin' me why some lawyer from up north was makin' them relive all this hell again.*

*BRYAN*

*(remains calm)*

*You can tell her it's because McMillian didn't kill her daughter. And whoever did is still out there somewhere.*

*SHERIFF TATE*

*(shakes his head)*

*I know how desperate you must be to fulfill your fantasy of who we are down here. Just a bunch of corrupt Southern racists framin' niggers for murder. And you here to save the day. If that's the story you wanna believe, go right ahead.*

*But I know Johnny D killed that girl, and he's going to answer for it.*

*BRYAN*

*How do you know that? You found entire case on the word of an indicted felon who had every no hard evidence and based your incentive to tell you what you wanted to hear.*

*SHERIFF TATE*  
*Ralph Myers gave us his testimony on his own accord.*  
*BRYAN*  
*And it made no sense! He couldn't finish a sentence without contradicting*  
*himself. (p.65)*

The movie script's depiction of prejudice in the South is heartbreaking, but it is crucial that audiences see it for what it is. The unvarnished account of one man's life reveals the unfair and distorted ways in which communities, particularly in the South, viewed African-Americans of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, despite the fact that many are aware of the severe discrimination and prejudice black communities in the United States endure. Thus, it is evident that many innocent Black men and women have been wrongfully incarcerated, and some of them have even died behind bars.

Cultural Imperialism involves taking the culture of the ruling class and establishing it as the norm. The groups that have power in society control how the people in that society interpret and communicate. Therefore, the beliefs of that society are the most widely disseminated and express the experience, values, goals and achievements of these groups. That is why in this movie script *Just Mercy*, the white is known to be the rulers and the black are the followers, simply due to cultural imperialism.

## 5. *Violence*

Violence is the final manifestation of oppression, specifically systemic violence. When violence is directed at members of a group because they are members of that group, it becomes systemic. Moreover, the oppression of violence consists not only of direct physical violence, but also of the knowledge "shared by all members of oppressed groups that they are subject to violation due solely to their

group identity" (Young 1990, 62). Probably the most obvious and visible manifestation of oppression is violence. Members of certain groups are aware that they must fear unprovoked, arbitrary attacks on their persons or property. For instance, in this movie, the first time Bryan met Walter, both of them experienced such a violence;

*Before Bryan can respond -- CLANK. The Guard opens the door, angry. He strides up to Henry, roughly CUFFS his wrists behind his back.*

*GUARD*  
*(snarls to Bryan)*  
*You should have been done two hours ago.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY FULL YELLOW CONTINUED:*

*BRYAN*  
*(surprised)*  
*I'm sorry, sir, it was my fault. I didn't realize the time.*

*GUARD*  
*You're supposed to watch the clock.*

*Henry WINCES in pain as the Guard SQUEEZES his cuffs and YANKS him to a standing position. Bryan stands, more distressed by this than Henry seems to be.*

*BRYAN*  
*Hey! Stop that! He didn't do anything!*

*GUARD*  
*You need to shut your mouth.*

*HENRY*  
*(off Bryan's shock)*  
*It's okay, Bryan.*  
*(beat)*  
*Don't worry 'bout me. Just come back.*

*The officer tries to push him out, but Henry plants his feet, leans back, strong and dignified. (p.8)*

The intent of these attacks is to harm, humiliate, or demolish the target without regard for motive. In American society, women, African-Americans, Asians, Arabs, homosexual men, and lesbians face such dangers. Jews, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and other Spanish-speaking Americans must also dread violence

in at least some regions. Sexual violence in all its forms and hate crimes are pervasive examples of violent oppression. The majority, if not all, violent oppression is a direct consequence of xenophobia (an intense and irrational fear of foreign-appearing people, ideas, or customs).

There are many violences shown in this movie, such as psychological ones that Eva experienced as a result of being friends with Bryan who is black.

*Eva gets up and takes the phone*

*EVA*  
*Hello?*

*MALE (V.O.)*  
*(on phone)*  
*You the bitch workin' with that nigger lawyer?*

*EVA*  
*(beat; shocked)*  
*Who the hell is this?*

*Bryan turns in his chair, eyes locked on Eva*

*MALE (V.O.)*  
*(on phone)*  
*The guy that put the bomb under your house that's gonna blow your family all to hell. Y'all don't stop helpin' that nigger Johnny D, next time there won't be no warning'.*

*Dial tone. Eva rushes over to Chris and scoops him up.*

*EVA*  
*Okay! Why don't we all go outside and look at the stars.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY FULL YELLOW*  
*CONTINUED:*

*Doug and Bryan can see the fear she's hiding as they all rush out the door.*

*EXT. EVA'S HOUSE - LATER*

*Bryan stands on the front yard beside Eva, holding Chris.*  
*FOUR POLICE OFFICERS and a BOMB-SNIFFING DOG search the perimeter. Doug talks to the HEAD OFFICER, walks back to Eva.*

*DOUG*  
*They didn't find anything.*

*EVA*

*Are they sure?*

*Bryan notices an OLD SEDAN drive past, a YOUNG WHITE MAN in the passenger seat locks eyes with Bryan as they go. by. It sends a chill down his spine. Eva catches the exchange, gives Chris a squeeze. (p.48-49)*

These dialogues are another example of psychological violence that people tend to go through while they are being oppressed. While each of the five aspects of oppression—exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence—is conceptually distinct, any group can experience multiple forms of oppression, albeit in varying combinations. Nevertheless, the presence of any one of these five conditions is sufficient to classify a group as subjugated.

It is also important to note that Young's methodology excludes any type of hierarchization, meaning that there is no form of oppression that is more important or fundamental than others. In contrast, no demand for justice is either less urgent or more urgent in a society.

## **B. The Oppressed Characters survive the Oppression.**

The systematic oppression was done and finally come to an end because the characters, especially Bryan willing to go beyond and attacked the authorities. Fast forward, after all the work Bryan found a way out because the only witness of Johnny D's case, Ralph Myers led the way that he was forced under a very bad circumstance to agree and humiliate Walter. Basically, he was blackmailed. Their first met was not as smooth;

BRYAN  
*Mr. Myers... I know you made a deal with the State, but I don't think they told you Johnny D was going to die because of it.*  
(beat)

*I'm sure that's not easy to carry, and I'm hoping there's a part of you that wants to make things right.*

*Bryan lets that sit for a beat. Ralph seems to be listening.*

*BRYAN*  
*Something made you agree to this meeting.*

*RALPH*  
*Maybe I was just bored.*

*BRYAN*  
*I don't think that's true.*  
*(beat)*  
*Can we please talk about your testimony?*

*Ralph looks off, seems to really consider the question when -- BAM! He jumps, looks around, only to find a VISITOR BANGING on one of the vending machines. He begins to LAUGH, then --*

*RALPH*  
*From the first day they lock my nothing to do with, all them police wanna talk about is Ronda Morrison. Morrison this, and Morrison that. Sometime four or ass up in Escambia, for something I'm tellin' you I ain't had five of 'em in the room at the same time.*

*BRYAN*  
*They were questioning you about her the day you were arrested?*  
*Ralph looks at him nervously, dodges the question.*

*RALPH*  
*Alls I'm sayin' is, ain't nobody cared about a damn thing besides who killed that girl.*  
*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY Rev. 8/31/18 (Green).*  
*CONTINUED:*

*RALPH (CONT'D)*  
*And when people care about a thing that much, they do anything to get what they want.*  
*(MORE) (p.75-77)*

Because of this interaction, Bryan searched for other evidence in order to support his logic. Myers is one unlucky person who was put in the worst situation possible and was treated immorally because he did not want to satisfy the police. However, Bryan found the first record of his statement, in which he says that he has no idea who is Johnny D.

*INT. EJI OFFICE - NIGHT*

*Eva and Brenda at the table, pore over the photocopied files.*

*Bryan at his desk listening to the tapes on headphones -- faint VOICES bleeding through. Something grabs his attention. He jots a note. Hits STOP. REWIND. PULLS off his headphones –*

*BRYAN*

*You gotta hear this*

*He unplugs his headphones and hits PLAY so they can hear as RALPH'S VOICE fills the air*

*RALPH (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*I understand that, Sheriff...*

*BRYAN*

*That's Myers.*

*RALPH (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*That's what I'm trying to tell you, because I'm gonna be honest, I don't know a damn thing.*

*SHERIFF TATE (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*Is that right? BRYAN That's Tate.*

*RALPH (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*Yes, sir, it's righter than anything I've ever said.*

*SHERIFF TATE (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*And you would take a polygraph to the fact that you do not know who killed Ronda Morrison.*

*RALPH (V.O.)*

*(on tape)*

*That's right, sir, I will.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY – Full Yellow*

*CONTINUED:*

*SHERIFF TATE (V.O.)*

*(on tape; beat; frustrated)*

*And you would face the person that could testify –*

*RALPH (V.O.)*

*(on tape; firm and strong)*

*I will face any damn body in this world on that, 'cause it's a stone lie. And if you askin' me to frame a innocent man for murder, that just ain't somethin' I'm willin' to do.*

*Bryan STOPS the tape, looks to Brenda and Eva, stunned until --*

*EVA*

*Holy shit. (p.78-79)*



Turns out, this brought up something in Bryan's mind to do a streaming to gain interest that Johnny D was framed and under the circumstance of injustice, being treated as a black sheep whilst he did nothing to the poor girl. Eventually, this brought fresh air to the prejudice, and the court is willing to review the case, Myers in this one testimony felt that he needs to help Johnny D; thus the conversation went like this:

*The BAILIFF holds out a Bible, but Ralph is distracted.*

*BAILIFF*

*Sir, please stand and place your right hand on the Bible.*

*Ralph hesitates, then stands and extends his hand. BAILIFF Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God? (long beat) Mr. Myers?*

*RALPH*

*(snaps out of it),*

*Yes, sir. Sorry, guards got me up at two in the morning to get out here.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY Rev. 8/31/18 (Green) - CONTINUED:*

*Ralph rubs his face, sits. At the table, Walter with a deeply worried look. Bryan remains calm, approaches the stand, unsure of where Ralph's head is, proceeds with caution.*

*BRYAN*

*Mr. Myers, did you testify against Walter McMillian in August of 1988?*

*RALPH*

*(odd beat)*

*Is that when that was?*

*BRYAN*

*According to the record, yes.*

*RALPH*

*Okay, then. Sure, if you say so.*

*Ralph looks more nervous by the second, color draining from his face. Bryan fights his nerves, remains steady*

*BRYAN*

*What did you tell the jury when you testified?*

*Ralph sees Walter staring. He avoids his gaze, too afraid to face the source of his shame as he MUMBLES*

RALPH

*Don't think I can fully remember to be honest with you. Sorry, sir.  
Bryan's heart sinks. They haven't even begun and they're already losing him. A  
BREATH before --*

BRYAN

*It's okay. I have a transcript of your testimony here....  
Bryan walks to the table, grabs the transcript he's prepared --*

BRYAN

*At the trial, do you remember testifying that you were unwillingly made part of a  
capital murder and robbery on November 1, you at a car wash and asked you to  
drive his truck because his arm. hurt?*

(CONTINUED)

JUST MERCY - FULL YELLOW  
CONTINUED: (3)

RALPH

*(nervous; scratches)  
Yes, sir. I guess so.*

BRYAN

*Do you remember saying that you drove Mr. McMillian to Jackson Cleaners,  
subsequently went into the building, and saw McMillian with a gun, standing  
over the body of Ronda Morrison?*

RALPH

*(beat; nods)  
Yes, sir.*

*Bryan locks his eyes on him--*

BRYAN

*Mr. Myers, was the testimony you gave at Mr. McMillian's trial true?  
In his seat, Walter leans forward, praying for truth as Ralph stares at Bryan,  
about to speak until he glances past him again, back to Bryan. Then, finally,  
with great pain --*

RALPH

*I don't know.*

BRYAN

*(remains calm)  
You don't know?*

RALPH

*Don't... think I remember.*

*Walter sinks in his seat as A MURMUR fills the courtroom.  
Behind him, Minnie stares in shock as John shakes his head.  
Tommy WHISPERS to his assistant as he scribbles notes.  
Bryan notices Ralph glance past him again. He turns, follows Ralph's gaze to  
Tate, staring harshly back at him from his seat. Ralph is frozen in fear until --*

*Bryan deliberately steps between Ralph and Tate, blocking their view of each other. Gently locks his eyes on Ralph.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY - FULL YELLOW*

*CONTINUED: (4)*

*BRYAN*

*Mr. Myers. Do you know who Walter McMillian is?  
Ralph hesitates, gathers his strength.*

*RALPH*

*Yes, sir.*

*BRYAN*

*Is he in this room?*

*RALPH*

*Yes, sir.*

*BRYAN ?*

*Can you point him out?*

*Ralph fully looks at Walter for the first time, points. Neither man looks away, connected by their common status in the margins of society. Bryan sees this, continues carefully.*

*BRYAN*

*I'd like to ask again. Was the testimony you gave at Walter McMillian's trial true?*

*Ralph keeps his eyes locked with Walter for another beat until -- he looks down, gathers all the courage he has before looking back at Walter. Finally, he speaks --*

*RALPH*

*No, sir, not at all.*

*A wave of GASPS and WHISPERS rolls through the audience. Tommy sits in his seat, completely stunned Walter sits back, eyes still locked on Ralph as*

*JUDGE FOSTER*

*Order, please!*

*As the courtroom quiets, with increasing momentum*

*BRYAN*

*Did you see Mr. McMillian on the day that Ronda Morrison was murdered?*

*RALPH*

*No, sir.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY Rev. 9/14/18 (Goldenrod)*

*CONTINUED:*

*BRYAN*

*Did you drive his truck to Monroeville that day?*

*RALPH*  
*No. Never did.*

*BRYAN*  
*Did you go into Jackson Cleaners and see Mr. McMillian standing over Ronda Morrison's body?*

*RALPH*  
*Absolutely not.*  
*Bryan lets this sink in, looks at him with care. Then --*

*BRYAN*  
*No further questions. (p.101-102)*

These sentences caused a big deal and movement in the court, whereas the enemy was trying to gaslight Myers that he is telling lies, but fortunately he stands by what he said.

*INT. BALDWIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER*  
*Tommy questions Ralph, mid-way through his cross- examination.*

*TOMMY*  
*Mr. Myers, didn't you work out a deal with the State to get a lighter sentence if you testified to the truth?*  
*Ralph thinks a beat, then --*

*RALPH*  
*If I testified... but the truth ain't got nothin' to do with it. is tellin' the truth when it agrees with what they wantin' for you to say. But if it ain't what they wanna hear, Ralph is a liar. When it come to them, Ralph Myers*

*TOMMY*  
*Well, how do we know you're not lying now? How do we know, you ain't just upset about the deal you got, and you feel like somehow by you changing your story, it might help you get out?*

*Ralph's fear is gone completely now, ready for a fight. (p.102-103)*

After all these chaotic moments, the judge agreed to review the previous trial and order a retrial based on the testimonies, along with some others as well which says they are being threatened and even fired from their jobs because they are not willing to agree with the police to capture Johnny D. Bryan set up a motion, in which by the very last minute Mr. Chapman who was a representative for the people join the motion and let Johnny D out of prison, as well as the death sentence.

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*Mr. Chapman, what is the State's position on this motion?*

*Tommy sits there, deep in thought, playing with his pencil. He stays silent long enough to make it awkward.*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*Mr. Chapman?*

*TOMMY*

*Yes, Your Honor. Sorry, I'm just...*

*Tommy reluctantly stands, unsure of what to say.*

*TOMMY*

*I'm troubled, Your Honor.*

*The Judge glances at Bryan, confused by Tommy's statement.*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*You're troubled?*

*TOMMY*

*Yes, Your Honor, sorry I...*

*(hesitates)*

*People in this community want to go to sleep at night knowin' that if someone commits a terrible crime, that someone is gonna be punished for it...*

*(beat)*

*But... I've taken another look at the evidence, and...*

*Tommy turns to Walter's people standing in the back. Another long glances at Bryan, then to the Judge. beat...*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*Mr. Chapman, please.*

*Then finally Tommy thinks for another beat. Then Finally --*

*TOMMY*

*The State does not object to the motion, Your Honor.*

*A stunned beat. MURMURS in the courtroom.*

*(CONTINUED)*

*JUST MERCY - FULL YELLOW*

*CONTINUED: (3)*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*(to Tommy)*

*To be clear, Mr. Chapman. Are you joining the motion to dismiss all charges today?*

*TOMMY*

*(beat)*

*Yes, Your Honor.*

*The MURMURS grow louder from the courtroom as*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*Order, please.*

*Silence falls. Judge Baschab is quiet a beat, considers everything. Then, she looks at Tommy and Bryan.*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*Well, y'all made my job easy today.*

*Walter and his family hold their breath, nervous and unsure as to what this means as*

*JUDGE BASCHAB*

*In the case of The People vs. McMillian, the court hereby grants the defendant's motion.*

*(beat; looks to Walter)*

*All charges against you are dismissed, Mr. McMillian. You're free to go.*

*Walter sits in stunned silence, trying to process as –*

*His family erupts in JOYFUL SOBS. Minnie hugs John and Jackie. Eva hugs Brenda. Tate shoots Tommy a disappointed look as he walks out the door.*

*(p.137-138)*

The last thing from the court scene is that Johnny D is free to go, all charges are dropped and he is innocent from the start. This movie script illustrates the pervasiveness of systemic prejudice in contemporary society. Likewise, the same holds true for the legal system. In the documentary, *Just Mercy*, civil rights attorney Bryan Stevenson describes his efforts to release unrepresented and unjustly convicted Black people. The video chronicles the origins of racial prejudice and inequity in the American criminal justice system, shedding light on the numerous injustices that have contributed to the current state of unrest.

The first significant case of Stevenson involved a man named Walter McMillian. McMillian was unjustly convicted and executed for the 1987 murder of a young white woman in Monroeville, Alabama. Here, Stevenson's other patrons, such as Herbert Richardson, are also introduced. Richardson was executed in 1989 despite substantial evidence indicating that he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and mental illness. The movie script itself addresses racism, the effects of mass incarceration, mental illness, the death penalty, and the absence of

accountability among law enforcement officials. Bryan Stevenson, the author of *Just Mercy*, argues that:

*“The opposite of poverty isn't wealth, the opposite of poverty is justice; that the character of our nation isn't reflected in how we treat the rich and the privileged, but how we treat the poor, the disfavored and condemned. Our system has taken more away from this innocent man than it has the power to give back. But I believe if each of us can follow his lead, we can change this world for the better. If we can look at ourselves closely. And honestly. I believe we will see that we all need justice. We all need mercy. And perhaps, we all need some measure of unmerited grace” (p.142).*

This means that where there is no justice, the majority of people exist in poverty, despair, and terror. Each of these individuals had experienced despondency, which is the loss of all hope. In practice, the concept of 'oppression' cannot be represented by traditional distributive theories of justice. In addition, oppression is not a unified phenomenon with a fundamental essence. To make sense of oppression, we must revise our social ontology accounts to acknowledge the existence of "groups." Oppression can be experienced by social groups in any of the five crucially distinct ways listed below: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. Individuals within these groups may be subjected to all, multiple, or a single form of oppression, as well as dominant groups/positions in other contexts. A revised social ontology that accounts for the existence of these groups demonstrates that redistribution of material commodities cannot eradicate these forms of oppression.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

This chapter is the final part, the researcher will present a summary of chapter IV which includes the results and discussion of this research. In conclusion, it will be divided into 2 which will be adjusted to the research question. Furthermore, the researcher will also provide suggestions to future researchers who will continue this study.

#### **A. CONCLUSION**

After analyzing the phenomena in the Just Mercy film script, this chapter consists of two points, the first, summarizing the results of the analysis of research findings, and the last, based on research findings, the results of the research show two important points:

##### **A. Forms of oppression experienced by Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian.**

The movie script uses first-person testimony to discuss issues that are in the five faces of oppression such as exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence contained in the Just Mercy movie script. The results in the analysis can be concluded. In the Exploits in the movie script listed, it can be used by white people to subjugate other Marginalization means being excluded from the work system of a society. Most of the marginalized communities in the United States are racially marked. Marginalization excludes entire groups of individuals from meaningful participation in social life. Next is powerlessness. In the script of this film, at the beginning of the film a scene of powerlessness is seen, while McMillian is being charged without evidence and taken from his truck



without any explanation. Fourth is cultural imperialism which means being subjugated culturally means being oppressed in two ways. The experience of the oppressed group is subdued until it is eliminated by the dominant group. The portrayal of prejudice in the film's script in the South is heartbreaking, but it's very important for audiences to see it for what it is. The last one is violence, violence is the last manifestation of oppression, especially systemic violence. We can see in one of the scenes where when bryan meets his client but has exceeded visiting hours, the client is attacked by a guard who hurts, humiliates, or destroying the target without regard to motive.

#### **B. The oppressed characters survive the Oppression.**

This systematic suppression was carried out and finally ended because the characters, especially Bryan, were willing to go beyond their limits and attack those in power. Fast forward, after all of Bryan's work finds its way out because the only witness in the Johnny D case, Ralph Myers leads that he is forced under very bad circumstances to agree and humiliate Walter. There is no justice, the majority of the people will live in poverty, despair, and terror. Each of these individuals has experienced despair, that is, the loss of all hope. In practice, the concept of 'oppression' cannot be represented by traditional distributive justice theory. Moreover, suppression is not a phenomenon that is one with the fundamental essence. To understand oppression, we must revise our social ontology account to acknowledge the existence of "groups". Oppression can be experienced by social groups in one of five very different ways listed below: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Individuals in

these groups can be subjected to all, many, or one form of oppression, as well as the dominant group/position in other contexts.

## **B. SUGGESTIONS**

In regard to the conclusions, the results of this research can lead to suggestions for the following parties.

Students of the English Literature Department should pay close attention to any instances of prejudice or social oppression in a film script. This study demonstrates that films can be used to study language, society, and culture, among others. It is an advantageous medium for those who wish to expand their cultural knowledge. Understanding the phenomenon of intercultural communication in social life will be enhanced for students, particularly those in the English Language Department, who acquire language through film.

This research represents only a small portion of English Literature study, particularly those focusing on social factors and social dimensions. It is anticipated that this research will inspire other sociolinguistics-interested researcher to conduct additional research from intercultural communication perspectives. Due to the fact that this study employs social factors and social dimensions, it is recommended that other researcher employ alternative parameters. Not only a movie script but also other written texts and any observable communication phenomena can be the subject of study.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE



Mohammad Abdullah was born in Surabaya on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1999. He graduated from MAN Surabaya in 2017. During His study on Senior High School, he actively joined extracurricular and become Member of the Scout Troop KH. agus Salim Admiral Malahayati MAN Surabaya, and he became member of Student Council. He started his higher education at the university in 2019 and finished in 2023. While at university, he joined an intra-campus organization, Himpunan Mahasiswa Jurusan (HMJ) Sastra Inggris, in 2020- 2021 and 2021-2022. On 2020-2021 he became Organizational Staff of HMJ Department of Student Relations and also in 2020-2021 he become Secretary in the English Fiesta Event. Then, on 2021-2022 he joined HMJ Organizational Staff Department of Student Interest and Talent Development, and also in 2021-2022 he became responsible as Steering Committee of Maliki English Festival, Department of English Literature.