

Negativity in Joker Character

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Abstract. Characters in films are always created by applying basic human traits which are then built on conflicts and relationships between other characters. This relationship can generate motivation, need, desire and even fear. Negativity is usually always a part of that relationship because the expression of negativity is considered capable of provoking controversy and continues to be a curiosity because negativity is not something neutral. Negativity is also not nothing or zero but something that is not defined by itself but by its effect, it causes the quality of dualism. Joker is Batman's most famous antagonist. The film titled Joker directed by Todd Phillips tries to target how the Joker character whose real name is Arthur Fleck (Joaquin Phoenix) is constructed. This construction does not appear by itself but a result that stimulates it. Arthur Fleck's behavior in this film is considered an answer or response to the stimulation and the negativity manifests itself through Arthur Fleck.

Keywords. KFilm, Joker, Negativity, Todd Phillips, Joaquin Phoenix.

1. Introduction

The history of clowns appears far from what we might expect. Besides, clowns are also identified with many national cultures. In 2500 BC, for example, there was a dwarf clown who was able to make Pharaoh the ruler of Egypt laugh. YuSze, a clown during the ancient Chinese Empire who according to legend was the only figure who was able to influence Emperor Qin Shih Huang to paint the great wall of China. Hopi, the native American has a habit of appearing like a clown to interfere solemn ritual dances with ridiculous acts. Clowns in ancient Rome were stupid people called stupidus [1].

A red nose, big shoes, colorful clothes, and a face decorated with heavy whitening cream are the typical features of clowns. Basically, clowns are expected to be a means of entertainment, especially in children's shows, but on the way, the public is shocked with a new perception that clowns are terrible and dangerous. Film is one of the most influential in spreading that influence. Through the genre of horror films that depict clowns as cold-blooded killers or ruthless robbers such as the killer clown character in the film *Poltergeist* and *It* in the 1980s. The film, which is used as a media for mass communication, is one that encourages negativities to develop.

Joker, as one of the enemy characters of the superhero Batman, is closely related to the clown character. Joker is his clown's name. The Joker character who has been filmed several times portrays the role of a terrible and dangerous clown. From those played by Jack Nicholson, Heath Ledger, Jared Leto to the most recent Joker, Joaquin Phoenix, are always depicted with terrible and dangerous things even

though with the latest term that says bad people are born from good people who are always oppressed. This leads to the element of negativity. Negativity is in the realm of metaphysics as a condition of humans. His phenomenal expression is not only destruction, but also vanity, suffering, melancholy, trauma, neglect, failure, death and so on. Negativity is not something that is zero, but something, something that is not defined by itself but from the effects it causes. Social damage can be referred to as social negativity because aggressive and destructive attitudes are included [2].

Deanna Loewenhagen, a professional clown, said, "We appear during the day, we don't go out at night, we don't jump out in front of people, we don't want to scare children." [3]. From what Loewenhagen said that clowns don't go out at night, there is already a conflict with what's in the film so far. The perception of clowns experiences negative expressions. In the film, clowns often threaten especially when night falls. The perception in the film is not the same as the reality of the profession that clowns are actually fun, such as the legendary figure of the clown Bozo and Ronald McDonald who have a positive representation. The existence of negativity in the fact that it makes nothing disappear but less. In mathematics negative is assigned a minus sign. Minus is a deficiency and not absence or zero, so negativity is a reality, a minus reality. And because it is not unreal, but real, that negative is a force that sucks in and makes things minus like itself.

Among the phenomenal expressions of negativity, according to Hardiman, destruction is the most striking because it includes both the fragility of social life and the disintegration of the individual soul. Destruction is manifested in words, behavior, actions or meanings that persecute such as robbing, persecuting, torturing, insulting, bleeding, making fun of, spitting on, beating, stealing, harassing and so on. Humans are able to destroy each other by bowing under the dictates of instinct, through the destruction of humans into natural elements, both as perpetrators and as victims. Before the mass elements of plurality and tolerance are decadence, inconsistency, impurity, doubt, their souls longing for symmetry, consistency, purity and certainty of things without them knowing it has led them to the prejudice of stigmatizing and glorification of violence. The masses, terror and trauma are a triangle of human helplessness as an individual, not because they have no sense, but because they are afraid to use that reason publicly and choose to submit to the dogma of authority. The triangle is what marks the negativity of events that exists in society. The negativity manifests itself as destruction and destruction appears to both the victim and the perpetrator in different ways. The broken reasons in negative experiences has led them to judge the space of the soul that understands what it means to surrender to life itself. The negativity of grief and melancholy is the fact that collapse of life is no longer attractive to stop. Victims of negativity captivated by these minor notes of life cultivate a taste for destruction for themselves.

This paper will examine the Joker character played by Joaquin Phoenix whose real name is Arthur Fleck in relation to the expression of negativity. The element of negativity in Arthur Fleck is considered to be the basis for the construction of the Joker character.

2. Method

Negativity is manifested through behavior that does not appear by itself but is the result of something stimulating it. Behavior during the course of his life is considered an answer or response to the stimulus. Negativity can be said to be the stimulus. Character is created with a purpose not far from the search for identity, meaning, and purpose. Characters cannot be separated from the journey of their life or often referred to as backstory. The way the character is raised, what the environment is like, genetic factors and role models are the tools that help in constructing the character.

Based on this manifestation preference, the Joker character will be analyzed using the dualism method. Dualism is a philosophical view that affirms the existence of two separate spheres. Dualism is a concept which states that there are two substances that underlie the world. In view of the relationship

between body and soul, dualism claims that mental phenomena are non-physical entities. In its history, the term dualism itself has only been generally used since Thomas Hyde introduced this term in around 1700 to denote a conflict between good and evil [4]. Dualism is often used in the observation of the existence or relationship between body and soul, especially in the context of ideas. This research will focus on the Joker character played by Joaquin Phoenix and directed by Todd Phillips whose storyline is more directed at the origin of the creation of the Joker whose real name is Arthur Fleck.

Negativity also recognizes the term stigma in it. Stigma is a negative characteristic attached to a person because of the bad influence of his environment. Stigma is born from certain contingencies. Under normal circumstances, mistakes made do not have serious consequences. Stigma can then explain why humans are able to kill others without guilt, even with pride and ecstasy. This both explains his inferiority and shows that the stigmatized person is someone who is being harassed on the street, an object of hatred, a source of guilt and so on. In the stigma there is not only an invitation to insult, but also a phobia, because what is stigmatized is perceived as a threat. In bad situations, the stigma can be identified as deformed [5].

3. Results and Discussions

Negativity is a negative frame of mind. This thinking framework is manifested in awareness and personal behavior as well as expressed in collective behavior. Discourse and thought patterns place negative things as priority, more than that, negative things are accustomed to personal awareness and behavior and collective behavior. Joker is one of the antagonistic characters of Batman's enemies. Batman is the superhero and hero of Gotham City. The Joker is always depicted as a psychopathic, humorous, and cruel character. Joker is a dangerous character who has unique and deadly skills. Todd Phillips' version of the Joker character is closely related to a character who has a mental illness that can influence his thoughts, feelings and behavior which eventually forms Arthur Fleck into a Joker.

The negativity associated with the dualism of body and soul Arthur Fleck can be seen first from the city where Arthur Fleck has lived, Gotham. How people in Gotham city treat him. The negative thing in this element is the failure of the community to care for other members of the community. Arthur Fleck is a psychiatric citizen who can burst out laughing when he is feeling sad or experiencing nervousness at anytime when he is not expecting it. This too is something the sufferer cannot control. Arthur Fleck was constantly subjected to intimidation and torture when his illness appeared. Alienation, intimidation, neglect and even torture from the environment received by Arthur Fleck was driven by negative things in the form of mental illness that he had. He was in an inappropriate condition to laugh out loud. A negative view of Arthur Fleck who is not normal like any other.

Arthur Fleck is someone who works as an entertainer clown. Clowns are the work of the lower classes. The lower classes are people who are always looked down upon and underestimated. In the course of human history, being looked down on and being belittled is a form of negative things that will be accepted if we don't have something to excel at. More ability or excellence is an achievement that can raise a person's degree and dignity. In this case the extra ability or advantage is represented by the figure of Thomas Wayne, another character who is the father of Bruce Wayne who will later become Batman, the hero of Gotham. Thomas Wayne is a successful businessman who is applying for mayor in Gotham because he wants to save Gotham from moral decline and economic recession. Arthur Fleck doesn't have this kind of integrity. Even Arthur Fleck can't help himself. Therefore, Arthur Fleck have results in negative things in the form of insults and even harassment that is reflected through co-workers and the boss where he works and at that time he also did not have the ability to fight back.

Arthur Fleck also uses the thick make-up characteristic of a clown mask which aims to manipulate his real face into the shape of a fake face. The fake face of the clown in this film is also explained by Thomas Wayne that a person wearing a clown mask is a coward. Someone who was jealous of those who were luckier than himself but he was afraid to reveal it by showing his true face. Especially when the clown mask became

a symbol of resistance to social inequality and the economic recession, how did the municipal authorities and government find it difficult to cope with the swift flow of demonstrations that occurred. This Arthur Fleck-inspired clown mask is a negative thing for the safety and convenience of the city. This also makes Arthur Fleck continue to be hunted by the police because he is also suspected as the murderer on the Gotham subway.

Negativity can also result in stigmatization. Form of dualism of negativity produces a dualism of stigmatization, namely the murderer (killer clown) and the hero (a symbol of anti-rich resistance). The dualism of stigmatization describes a concrete representation of social class conflict. The dualism of stigmatization produced by Arthur Fleck is polarized on destructive expressions of murder, chaos, and looting. Arthur Fleck was able to vent his suffering by killing people who represented a sense of responsibility for the suffering he had been experiencing. They are three young men who are employees of the Thomas Wayne company, Randall the co-worker who framed him, Penny Fleck the cruel stepmother, and Murray Franklin the idol who humiliated him. Stigmatization can explain why humans are able to kill others without guilt, even with pride and ecstasy. Stigmatized as a murderer, Arthur Fleck is a threat to the safety and convenience of the city so that the murderer must be caught and charged with the law. Stigmatized as a hero, Arthur Fleck is considered the inspiration for the anti-rich resistance so that in this position Arthur Fleck found a stage that he had not gotten in his dream profession as a clown.

4. Conclusions

The dualism of negativity becomes a polarizing pair. This pair of polarization mutually exclusive but these two different entities are interconnected and both exist together. The negativity which includes the dualism of body and soul, constructs the Joker character whose real name is Arthur Fleck. Negative things such as continued to envelop Arthur Fleck's life endlessly. From personal life to work environment. Arthur Fleck lives with a mental illness that is difficult to get good care of and works as an entertainer clown which is considered a lowly job and it doesn't go smoothly either. All point to alienation, intimidation, neglect and even torture against him.

This dualism of negativity also produces a dualism of stigmatization, namely a murderer (killer clown) and a hero (a symbol of anti-rich resistance) which produces destructive expressions in the form of murder, chaos, and looting. Stigmatized as a murderer, Arthur Fleck is a threat to the safety and convenience of the city. Stigma as a hero, Arthur Fleck is considered the inspiration for the anti-rich resistance so that in this position Arthur Fleck found a stage that he had not been able to get in his dream profession as a clown. The stigmatization embodies the values deviating from the negativity that form the end of Arthur Fleck's character construction, the Joker. This construction does not appear by itself but a result that stimulates it. Arthur Fleck's behavior in this film is considered an answer or response to the stimulation and the negativity manifests itself through Arthur Fleck. Negativity becomes the existence of the Joker.

5. References

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