

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Boys Don't Cry is a 1999 American independent drama film based on the real-life story of Brandon Teena, a transgender man who was raped and murdered on December 31, 1993 by male friends after they found out Teena had female genitalia. The film features Hilary Swank as Brandon Teena and Chloe Sevigny as Brandon's girlfriend, Lana Tisdel. The film is set in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Falls City, Nebraska, but was mainly filmed in Greenville, Texas, a small town about 45 miles northeast of Dallas. This film was directed by Kimberly Pierce and the producer crews are John Hart, Eva Kolodner, Jeff Sharp, and Christine Vachon. The screenplay was written by Kimberly Pierce and Andy Bienen. It was released at October 10th, 1999 in New York by Fox Searchlight Pictures and the duration running in 166 minutes with an estimated production budget \$2 million.

Kimberly Pierce as *Boys Don't Cry* movie director was born in September 8th, 1967, Harrisburg Pennsylvania, USA, and she has a younger brother. She has B.A in English and Japanese literature from University of Chicago and an M.F.A in film from Columbia University. She lived in Japan for two years and worked as a photographer, and has written magazine article about movie. Graduated from Miami Sunset High School in Miami, Florida and is a former classmate of comedian Mark Ginzo and also considered directing memoirs of Geisha in 2005.

While taking graduate film classes at Columbia in New York, she had read in an April 1994 issue of the village voice about the life and death of Brandon Teena as she came to be known. Brandon Teena's story made headlines that year. She was in physical term, a female. But Brandon loved women. When she cut her hair and ventured from Lincoln to Falls City, she told everyone she was Brandon, a guy, and started winning the hearts of several females and falling in love with one.

Kimberly was moved that she knew she had to tell the story on film. So she went to Falls City to research, she went to the farm houses, sat in the room in which Brandon was executed along with two witnesses. She interviewed people who knew her, hung out at the convince store where Brandon hung out. She was attended at the trials of the two men later convicted in Brandon's killing. She was researched with her subject in Nebraska and interviewed lesbians and transsexuals; she set out to make her film she started to work on the screenplay, and four years later finished with help from screenwriting partner Andy Bienen. Then there was the matter of raising enough money to shoot it. She struggled at first, but in the final year the finances started rolling in, in fact before the lead actress was signed. She was looking all over the country, but there was no girl who could play Brandon. Because a videotape arrived in the mail, finally she found the girl who could play Brandon and this beautiful, androgynous person just floated across the screen, cowboy hat on, big sock in his pants, gorgeous boy jaw, boy voice, boy ears, boy eyes, boy forehead.

It was Hillary Swank, whose previous work had included television experience, as well as feature like “The next karate kid” (1994) and “Buffy the vampire slayer” (1992). Because her allegiance to her obsession with the subject, then she hired Swank but demanded that she live as a guy for four weeks prior to filming, go to store, the restaurant, the bathroom, dressed and acting like a guy. In its finished state *Boys Don't Cry* rides a crest of freedom as Brandon becomes the person she always wanted to be.

Boys Don't Cry is independent drama film and it became financed and a relatively low budget production but it became a huge success film and received awards and nominations. Best actress in leading role (Hillary Swank) and nominated best actress in supporting role (Chloe Sevigny) in Academy Awards, Best performance by an Actress in motion picture and Best performance by an Actress in Supporting Role in Golden Globe Awards, Breakthrough performance female and Outstanding Directorial Debut (Kimberly Pierce) in National Board Review, Best Performance by an Actress in Motion Picture Drama (Hillary Swank), Best Performance an Actress in Supporting Role-drama (Chloe Sevigny), nominated Best Pictures-Drama and Nominated Best Director (Kimberly Pierce) in Satellite Awards, Best New Film maker For *Boys Don't Cry* in BSFC Award. In addition film critic Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times listed it as one of five best films of 1999 and in 2006. Premiere magazine put Swank's performance in 83rd place in list of the 100 greatest movie performance of all time; it also ranked it as one of the “25 most dangerous film”.

Brandon Teena is a transman (born female) or a young woman with a gender identity crisis, who identifies and lives his life as male under the name of Brandon Teena. He wishes to start a new life and also to do so, than he decides to moves to Falls City, Nebraska. One night, Brandon encounters Lana Tisdell and her friends, ex convicts John Lotter, Tom Nissen and Candace. Brandon quickly develops a friendship with Lotter, Nissen and Candace and becomes romantically involved with Lana, who is unaware of his biological sex. Brandon moves in with Lana and her mother. During his time in Falls City, Brandon gains popularity with many local residents.

Soon after, Brandon is jailed for forging checks. He is put in the women's section of the Falls City prison. Lana then provides money to get Brandon out of jail on bail. Upon questioning Brandon on why he was put into a woman's prison. Brandon falsely tells Lana he was born a hermaphrodite, and will soon received a sex change. Lana then declares her love for Brandon, "no matter what he is" and the two pursue a sexual relationship. Her circle of friends (John Lotter, Nissen, Candace) subsequently learns that Brandon is anatomically female, Candace is not distressed over the discovery, but Nissen and Lotter become extremely angered. They then come after Brandon while he is staying at Lana's mother's house where they force Brandon to strip off his pants to reveal to Lana his "true" identity. Lana only looks when forced to.

Later on that week, Nissen and Lotter pursue Brandon and violently rape him in Nissen's car at a factory and they treat him. They return with Brandon to

Nissen's house. Although injured, Brandon escapes from Nissen's bathroom by climbing out of window. Lana convinces him to file a police report, though Brandon, in distress, then files a report on the situation. Nissen and Lotter become drunk, and despite Lana's warnings, set out to kill Brandon. He is hiding in a farm house with Candace and her baby. Brandon, along with Candace, is shot, while Lana is screaming desperately for them to stop. Lotter and Nissen continue shooting her. Lana wakes up on Brandon's dead body the next morning and falls into her mother's arms. The film ends with Lana leaving Falls City as a letter of Brandon's (written by Brandon to Lana before he die) is read in a voice over.

Boys Don't Cry drew immense critical acclaim in 1999, and managed to be a moderate box office success, despite being independently financed and a relatively low budget production (\$2 million) - mainly because of word-of-mouth. It also became a huge success through sales and rentals in 2000. Film critic Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times listed it as one of his five best films of 1999, stating "This could have been a clinical Movie of the Week, but instead it's a sad song about a free spirit who tried to fly a little too close to the flame while Janet Maslin of The New York Times called it "stunning", giving it four out of four stars.

Now, many lesbians in the United State decided to speak up their identity to public. They sue for equality before law, refuse any discrimination, and find protection for their rights and if they cannot find it, they will make it. In recent times, hundreds of foundations are organizations which support lesbianism. Their

struggle gives a good result. There are already several churches in the United State that perform same-sex union ceremonies. Through these ceremonies provide none of the legal benefits of marriage. In North America, groups of individuals are given equal protection of various federal, state or province, and city civil rights laws. There are including groups identified by race, gender, religion, national, degree of disability, and language. Thus list of right is gradually being extended to include sexual orientation.

Lesbianism is female homosexuality (Webster, 2006: 614). Lesbianism is not a disinclination to love man; it's rather an inclination, a positive, emphatic, emotional and in most instance, physical response to another woman (Symson and Jacques, 2007: 7). The word lesbianism is derived from Lesbos, a Greek island located in East Aegean Sea where the ancient Greek Lyric poet Sappho lived and ran a school for Girl in the 6th century BC.

Lesbianism has huge controversy today becoming an increasingly important problem. Because of modernization of life style and another specific reason of each lesbian that may makes fear of people, parent, event some sexologist that lesbianism becomes "unhealthy life style" and forbidden "sexuality life style". Sexual orientation refers to the direction of a person's romantic and sexual attraction. There are many common sexual orientations, such as: heterosexuals are people primarily attracted to another people of the opposite gender, homosexual (gay and lesbian) are woman or men who attracted same gender, bisexual are people can be attracted to someone of same and opposite

gender, and asexual are not romantically or sexually attracted to other people, they may enjoy with relationships. The American Academic of Pediatric has stated that sexual orientation probably is not determined by any one factor but by a combination of genetic, hormonal, and environmental influences.

But as human being lesbian whose love and natural appetite, they loved women and they want to have sex with woman. That is reason why lesbians are striving to get their rights. All human being are born free and equal in dignity and rights. All human rights are universal, independent, indivisible and interrelated. Sexual orientation and gender identity are integral to every person's dignity and humanity and must not be the basis for discrimination or abuse.

There are many kinds of a work of art. For example novel, drama, film, but not only the film that can be able to appreciate, but we can also treat the film script as a work of art. Basically, a text is as a literature text that content some values if literature there (Aminuddin, 2000: 55). So we can treat film script as a work of art and are able to appreciate it.

By watching and understanding "*Boys Don't Cry*", the writer was interested to analyze this movie because First, this film is based real life story. This film is very interest for watching because in the whole of the story tell us about some concept about woman rights. Where is not equal with man rights, and from this story woman can get their rights who is the fact have to equal with man.

Second, the characterization in this movie is very strong. In each event that happened in this movie reflected the positive and negative side of each

character. It can be seen from their behavior, and ten from how did they face and solve their conflicts with other person.

Third, the film served dripping with violence, anger and sexual deviation, so the audience can get inspiration and understanding about others life and learn more how to find the meaning of life. Moreover, it also tells about relationship between men-women and women-women.

The last, lesbianism itself is a hot interesting topic nowadays. Many magazines, sites on the internet, story or even novels and film discuss and explore it. In this film, the script writer wants to explore deeper about lesbianism and aspects of it.

The research employs an individual psychological theory, to reveal the main character's problem because the theory is connected with the problem discussed. According to those reasons above, in this research the writer plans to analyze **“CAUSES OF LESBIANISM REFLECTED IN *BOYS DON'T CRY* MOVIE BY KIMBERLY PIERCE (1999): AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH”**.

B. Previous Study

In this study, the researcher presents the previous study dealing with the movie entitled *Boys Don't Cry* by Kimberly Pierce. As far as her understanding, there are two studies which analyzed *Boys Don't Cry* movie. The first was conducted by Jennifer Esposito (2003) from Millersville University. The title is

The Performance of White Masculinity in *Boys Don't Cry*: Identity, Desire, (Mis)Recognition. She focused her research the movie *Boys Don't Cry* to investigate the performances of White masculinity and how Brandon Teena's body becomes constructed as a contested site. She argues that the movie reinscribes the normative nature of White masculinity by showcasing Brandon Teena's failed performance as a performance while allowing the biological men to just be men. The movie was not able to allow Brandon to exist in the borderlands a space where he did not have to be labeled outside of his own desires. The film contains Brandon, categorizes him as lesbian.

The second researcher is Rista Ariani, a student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in 2009. In her research entitled "The Right for Recognition of Lesbianism in Kimberly Pierce's *Boys Don't Cry*: A Feminist Approach" focused on human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Those studies are useful for the writer as a guide to analyzed *Boys Don't Cry* movie. Although the research's object is same with both researches but there are some difference from those in research focused and research approach. The writer plans to develop those research by analyze the causes of lesbianism on this movie and use an individual psychological approach.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the research, the researcher proposes a problem statement. The problem of this research is “What are the causes of lesbianism reflected in *Boys Don't Cry* movie?”

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher will focus on the analyzing of the causes of lesbianism in *Boys Don't Cry* movie, viewed from individual psychological approach.

E. Objective of the Study

According to problem statement above, the objective of the research are follows:

1. To analyze the movie based on its structural elements by finding characters and characterizations, setting, point of view, plot and theme.
2. To analyze the film especially the main character of Brandon using the Psychological Approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

The reason why someone makes a research is to get the benefit from it. By so doing, the writer expects some benefit are produced from this research, those are:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The result of this study expected to be able to give theoretical contribution in literature study, particularly psychological study on literature.

2. Practical Benefit

This study can develop the writer knowledge about the Kimberly Pierce's *Boys Don't Cry* movie particularly related to the psychological study about causes of lesbianism.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Research

This research applies descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is a research which employs the method of collecting, describing, classifying and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusion.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *Boys Don't Cry* movie script.

3. Type of the Data and Source of the Data

The type of the data is the text; image and scene of movie entitle *Boys Don't Cry* directed by Kimberly Pierce. The writer divides the data source into two categories; they are primary data source and secondary data source.

a. Primary data source

The primary data are taken from the script of *Boys Don't Cry* movie.

b. Secondary data source

The writer takes the secondary data source, including reference and materials related to the study whether taken from internet. The script of the movie is downloaded from internet and it is added by the researcher to reach the completeness.

4. Method of the Data Collection

The method of data collection in this study is the library research. It involves both primary and secondary data. The ways of collecting data are follows.

a. Watching the movie several times and determining the character that will be analyzed.

b. Reading some related books to find out the theory, data and information.

- c. Making notes of important parts in both primary and secondary data.
- d. Classifying the data into categories.
- e. Drawing conclusion to get the result.

5. Method of the Data Analysis

The method in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis in which the data collected, described and then analyzed. It concerns with the relationship between the movie and the psychological approach theory to show how causes of lesbianism is reflected in the story.

H. Research Paper Organization

The researcher organizes the research paper into five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction which consist of background of the study, previous study, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theories that explain the notion on individual psychological theory and basic assumptions of individual psychological of Alfred Adler, structural elements of the movie and theoretical application. Chapter III is structural analysis of the movie, include the structural element of the movie. Chapter IV is individual psychological analysis that deals the discussion. Chapter V draws conclusion and suggestion.