

**PROVING THE DIFFABLE'S INDEPENDENCE IN ARTHUR PENN'S**

***THE MIRACLE WORKER* MOVIE:**

**AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting  
Bachelor Degree in English Department**

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**2009**

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

*The Miracle Worker* movie is a drama film which is directed by Arthur Penn, and written by William Gibson, one of the great American artists. This movie was released on July 28, 1962 in USA, and produced by Fred Coe with Playfilm Productions as the company with total runtime around 107 minutes (1 hour 47 minutes), and distributed by United Artists. (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056241/>). The music of *The Miracle Worker* movie was arranged by Laurence Rosenthal, and the cinematography was made by Ernesto Caparros. This movie use English as the language and USA as the country in the process and also as the setting of place ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TheMiracleWorker\(1962\\_film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TheMiracleWorker(1962_film))). *The Miracle Worker* movie was starring by Alison Elliot, David Strathairn, Kate Greenhouse, Lucas black, and Hallie Kate Eisenberg.

The director of *The Miracle Worker* is a man who has full name Arthur Hiller Penn. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on September 27, 1922 (age 86). He is a film director and producer of some movies. He had made a lot of great movies, such as *Inside* (1996), *Penn & Teller Get Killed* (1989), *Dead of Winter* (1987), *Target* (1985), *Four Friends* (1981), *The Missouri Breaks* (1976), *Night Moves* (1975), *Little Big Man* (1970), *Alice's Restaurant* (1969), *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), *The Chase* (1966), *Mickey One* (1965), *The Miracle Worker* (1962), *The Left Handed Gun* (1958). Arthur Penn amassed a critically acclaimed body of

work though the 1960s and 1970s, keenly focusing on leftist themes relevant to the times. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur\\_Penn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Penn)).

*The Miracle Worker* tells about the life of a family which is set in Keller home in Tuscumbia, Alabama (southern of U.S.). Captain Arthur Keller is the head of this family who is hearty gentleman person. His wife is a young gentlewoman with a sweet girlish face named Kate Keller. They have two children, James Keller and Helen Keller that comes from different mother. The center point of this family is on Helen Keller. Exactly she is a very smart little girl, but since she got a scarlet fever in the age of 18 months, the illness leaves her blind, mute, and deaf. Sealed off from the world, Helen cannot communicate with anyone, nor anyone with her. Often frustrated and desperate, Helen flies into uncontrollable rages and tantrums that terrify her hopeless family.

Then Captain Keller just thinking of if there only one last way to serve his daughter, putting her into an asylum, but in other side his wife told that there must be another way. Then, Helen's aunt-Ev- proposes Captain Keller to send a letter to Dr. Chisholm from Perkins Institute for the blind, but Dr. Chisholm cannot do anything so that he recommends Dr. Alexander Bell to hold that problem. Finally, the best student was pointed to teach Helen, her name is Annie Sullivan-the Miracle Worker.

For the first time she came, Helen was in uncontrolled condition because Mrs. Kate always gave her a sweet candy when Helen was in trouble. Annie was so confidence to teach based on her background experiences as the same condition as Helen was. Captain Keller did not believe at all on Annie's ability to teach, but

Annie never gave up and always struggling to make Helen knows about the word and its meaning.

Once upon a time, Captain gave a statement to Annie that he was not satisfied with her work and think to fire her. But Annie is a very strong woman, she asked for some days to prove that exactly Helen is normal and could be taught. Annie ordered a small house in the Keller's garden as the place to teach Helen, she needed to live with Helen only. Captain accepted that requirement but only in two weeks.

When Helen knew that she was left by her parent she became angry and does not get in touch with Annie. This condition makes Annie confused but never thinks desperate to teach. Annie did not want Helen became a different person in her family, so Annie thinks she has to struggle to teach Helen with hand-moving words. She has to prove that she can do it whether the Captain's family was in hopeless. Finally Annie woke Percy up to help her to persuade Helen for learning.

After two weeks, Captain came to fetch his daughter. Annie said that she needs more time again, but captain refused it. As the result, in the first day Helen back home and was in uncontrolled condition again. She did not want to eat by using a spoon, and when she got a water pot, she sprinkled it to Annie spontaneously. By that time Annie holds Helen to fill that pot with water by a pump. In this scene the miracle occurred. When Helen touched water, she remembered her first word "wa-wa". Finally Annie was success to make Helen come to speak a word and all of Kellers' family members were pride to the

strength of Annie's efforts which could become a miracle for Helen was a diffable person.

There are many responses to the performance of *The Miracle Worker* movie, some of them such as: from Alsanro in United States "The acting was good. The script writing however was mediocre and lacked elements of excitement. The plot line at times became uninteresting, but the ending was dramatic and captivating. I found this movie to be of mediocre quality. I would not consider the movie extremely entertaining, but would suggest watching it to learn more about Helen Keller" (<http://www.answers.com/topic/the-miracle-worker-play-3>). The second comment came from Didier Tass who say that: "This movie was one of the great American films--for the ages, and it was a story that needed to be told" (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056241/#comment>).

From those comments the writer could take a note that actually *The Miracle Worker* movie have a good filming production and education value. It is determined in the plot line, theme and of course in the character of the actors and actresses.

Now we look at the other view to this dramatic movie from the film industries. *The miracle worker* movie had been produced as the television show in twice and also twice for the cinema, CD, and DVD version: first was directed by Arthur Penn and second by Nadia Tass. This movie got much appreciation from any organization. The results of awarding onto *The Miracle Workers* are as the winner of 6 categories: from Academy Awards (USA), BAFTA Awards, Laurel Awards, National Board of Review (USA), Photoplay Awards, and from San

Sebastián International Film Festival; and nominated in 10 categories in some awards such as Writers Guild of America (USA), Golden Globes (USA), Directors Guild of America (USA), BAFTA Awards, and Academy Awards.

The interesting points of this movie are seen from the character and characterization, casting, and theme. The characters that mostly explored in this movie are Annie Sullivan and Helen Keller. They individually have different characterization. Annie Sullivan as the teacher -who brings the miracle into Keller's family- is an unstoppable person that never thinks to give up while facing any problem in her life. The second major character of this movie is Helen Keller, a little girl who has got a miracle in her life. Because of her handicap, she is often being uncontrollable personality, but in other side she was a smart girl. Also the other characters are supporting very well.

The other interesting point is the casting which were resulting the best player to do the characters needs. Alison Elliot who plays the character for Annie Sullivan is very smart and could be the best actress in this movie. Then Hallie Kate Eisenberg as Helen Keller, she also become a miracle little actress in this movie because in her young age she could play the role very well.

The last interesting point is on the theme. The theme of this movie is that the diffable are not necessarily dependent upon others. The positive thinkers would be said that they have to be an independent person despite of their physical disability. Because all of people in this world need a change and transformation to get a new or a better life. Because of this theme, the main character needs to solve

the problem with proving the independence of Helen to be received well in Keller's family.

As the audience, the writer also gives his comment onto this movie. The struggle of Annie Sullivan to overcome the thing that seems impossible becoming the dream does come true. It is very good character he ever seen, because it is unique. In one side she was a hard woman, but in other side she was a smooth teacher. Here the major character tries to prove the Helen's –whom is diffable- independence with all of spirit she have.

Literature is a permanent writing that expresses and communicates thoughts, feelings and attitudes toward life and the world (George 1965: 16). Meanwhile, psychology is the scientific study of behavior and the mind (Passer and Smith, 2004: 3). Furthermore, Jatman (in Endraswara, 2003: 97) confirm that there is a tight correlation between literature and psychology indirectly as well as functionally. Psychology and literature have the same object indirectly, that is human being. Functionally, psychology studies the real psyche while literature studies the imaginative psyche.

Because of the most taken part on *The Miracle Worker* is the character and characterization, so that the writer thinks it is most suitable to study based on the main character. In this case the writer concludes that the most appropriate theory would be use to analyze the data is an individual psychology.

According to Adler as quoted by Ryckman (1985: 95) Individual Psychology is a science that attempts to understand the experiences and behavior

of each person as an organized entity, while psychology is a science which studies mental processes and human behavior (Kartono, 1987:388).

Alfred Adler was born in the suburbs of Vienna on February 7, 1870, the third child, second son, of a Jewish grain merchant and his wife. As a child, Alfred developed rickets, which kept him from walking until he was four years old. At five, he nearly died of pneumonia. It was at this age that he decided to be a physician. Adler attended elementary and secondary school with neither problem nor distinction (Feist, 1985: 60-61). He then entered the Vienna Medical School and again completed work with no special distinction.

From the background explanation above the researcher is interested to analyze the character of Annie Sullivan as the major character to prove the diffable's independence in that movie entitled "PROVING THE DIFFABLE'S INDEPENDENCE IN ARTHUR PENN'S *THE MIRACLE WORKER* MOVIE: AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH".

## **B. Literary Preview**

Movie *The Miracle Worker* which is directed by Arthur Penn's represents a classical movie, which was released in 1962, but it is very interesting to be analyzed because of its structural elements and its substances. As long as the researcher knows, there is no research that has been conducted before, whether in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Surakarta region or even for some universities in Yogyakarta. So, this research is the first study that ever constructed in Surakarta.

### **C. Problem Statement**

Based on the background, the researcher proposes a single problem statement. The major problem of the study is how does proving the diffable's independence reflected in Arthur Penn's *The Miracle Worker*?

### **D. Limitation of the Study**

This study is limited to the proving the diffable's independence of Annie Sullivan as the major character in the movie *The Miracle Worker*. This study uses the theory of individual psychology developed by Alfred Adler. It is as a means of analysis with consideration that human being has to struggle for proving everything dealing with the truth and superiority, in which formulation and development of personality are influenced by instability, unsatisfied and sometime unconscious factor.

### **E. Objective of the Study**

In line with the research questions proposed in the previous section, the objectives of this research can be depicted as follows:

1. To analyze the movie based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the movie based on the individual psychological approach.

### **F. Benefit of the Study**

The beneficial of the study relates with:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The result of this study could provide the information to improve the understanding and comprehending the knowledge in studying literature and give contribution to literary studies on Arthur Penn's *The Miracle Worker* movie.

2. Practical Benefit

The elaboration of this research could be used to give clear knowledge guidance for deeper understanding about the content of the play especially from the individual psychological perspective.

## **G. Research Method**

The research method covers type of research, object of data, source of data, technique of data collection and technique of data analysis.

1. Type of research

This research use the descriptive qualitative method which is focuses on the analysis of textual data.

2. Objects of the study

The researcher takes Arthur Penn's *The Miracle Worker* movie that released on 28 July 1962 (USA) as the object of study.

3. Data Source

There are two types of data source. The first is primary data source that is the play of the movie *The Miracle Worker* directed by Arthur Penn. The secondary data sources; consist of the other data related to the research such

as some books of Individual Psychology theories, movie script, commentaries, internet and other relevant information.

#### 4. Technique of Data Collecting

The method of collecting data in this research is library research, which is collecting and recording both primary and secondary data. These techniques are as follow:

- a. Watching the play repeatedly and learning the script
- b. Taking note of the important parts in both primary and secondary data
- c. Identifying the topic of the movie
- d. Determining the major character
- e. Classifying and determining the relevant data
- f. Arranging, researching and developing the selected materials into a good unity toward the topic of the study

#### 5. Technique of Data analysis

The technique of data analysis is descriptive. It described the structural elements of the movie and also analyzes it by using the individual psychological approach.

### **H. Paper Organization**

This research paper consists of five chapters. *Chapter I* is introduction, it deals with background of the study, literary review, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method and paper organization. *Chapter II* contains underlying theory of individual

psychology which will be used to analyze the movie. *Chapter III* presents the structural elements analysis and discussion of the movie. *Chapter IV* deals with analysis of theoretical aspect toward the impulse of courage and discussion. The last is *Chapter V* that contains conclusion and suggestion of the research.