

**STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES**  
**IN PAUL HAGGIS'S *THE CRASH*:**  
**SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

*Crash* is a movie written by American director, Paul Haggis. It is directed by Paul Haggis, and produced by Bob Yari, Bobby Moresco, Cathy Schulman, Don Cheadle, Mark R. Harris, and Paul Haggis. Distributor of this movie is Lions Gate Films, and production Co by ApolloProscreen. It was released on Friday May 6, 2005 in the United States. Run time of this movie is 113 min. The genres of this movie are crime and mystery, drama. This movie is performed by Sandra Bullock as Jean, Don Cheadle as Graham, Matt Dillon as Ryan, Jennifer Esposito as Ria, Shaun Thoub as Farhad, Thandie Newton as Christine, and more cast.

This movie tells about several stories interwoven during two days in Los Angeles involving a collection of inter-related characters, a police detective with a drugged out mother and a thieving younger brother, two car thieves who are constantly theorizing on society and race, the white district attorney and his irritated and pampered wife, a racist white veteran cop (caring for a sick father at home) who disgusts his more idealistic younger partner, a successful Hollywood director and his wife who must deal with the racist cop, a Persian-immigrant father who buys a gun to protect his shop, and a Hispanic locksmith and his young daughter who is afraid of bullets.

There are many responses toward *Crash* movie. **Mike Jones**, the reader of **Washington Post** suggests that *Crash* was a great movie, “I thought *Crash* was a great movie, seeing that it was the first time I had seen it. It left me a little confused at first, but then I watched it again. The second time I watched it, I really

understood the concept of the movie and why certain characters behaved the way they did. It really touched me to because I felt like I knew how they were feeling; overall it was a great movie.” (<http://www.metacritic.com/film/titles/crash>)

**Tyrahoke** in the *Chicago Sun-Times* comments that *Crash* was an amazing movie, “I Thought it was a great movie, cause it centers around residents of Los Angeles who are somehow involved in a way with what happened at the beginning of the story, done very well and is kind of upsetting but it does make you think a lot about your own feelings and stereotypes, I’m happy we watched it” (<http://community.user-comments.com>)

Besides the positive response, there are also the negative responses about crash movie. They are **A.O. Scott** and **the author mwalker-3**. **A.O. Scott** in the *NY Times* states that he didn’t like *Crash*, “I hated this movie.” **A.O. Scott** said that a movie of ideas cannot be reductive in its treatment of those ideas, “I don’t believe all narratives have to follow a conventional structure, and not all narratives have to be character-driven. But a movie that depicts racist behavior is not the same as a movie that has something fresh to say about racist behavior” ([www.zap2it/movies/news.com](http://www.zap2it/movies/news.com))

**The author mwalker-3** from **United States** comments that this movie was so bad,”The locksmith's role was well acted and of course Don Cheadle was good as was Matt Dillon. But please...the rest of the roles were so overacted probably because of the sensationalized writing style. To think that each of the characters was connected in some way that putting the "Hollywood spin" on a ludicrous concept. Brendan Frazer was miserable. To the amateur movie watcher, this was a great film. Gives me a break. Anyone can yell and scream or write a movie where every scene is about racism. I felt like I was watching one scene from twelve separate movies. De-Hollywood the dialog makes twelve different movies around

each of the scene. Then you might have something worth watching.”

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0375/usercomments>)

The *Crash* movie's director, Paul Haggis, and star Don Cheadle will work behind the scenes on the project from Lionsgate TV, the company responsible for *Weeds* and *Mad Men*. Though it will not feature actors from the big-screen version, *Crash* could redefine Starz in the same way that *Men* did AMC. The Cabot house is actually director Paul Haggis's own house. With only a budget of \$6m for this film, director Paul Haggis had to cut the costs by using his own house for scenes and even his own car for other scenes. A total of 130,000 screeners were sent out to AMPAS and the various guilds and critics.

<http://hollywoodinsider.ew.com>)

Although originally released in 2004, the film did not qualify for the following year's Academy Awards, as it did not play at least one week in L.A. (as Academy Awards rules require for eligibility). When it finally opened in L.A. the following year, the film did qualify for Oscar consideration for 2005, and it went on to win the Best Picture Oscar for that year. It won three Oscars for Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay and Best Editing of 2005 at the 78th Academy Awards.

When the Oscar nominations were announced in January 2006, this film, which was the only Best Film nominee to be already available on DVD, jumped from 103 to 23 in Amazon's list of bestsellers. Box Office total \$54,557,348. The Oscar Best Motion Picture at the Academy Awards "*Crash*" stirs a sensation in US. This movie is praised for its realistic theme. It touches upon a sensitive but long-lasting topic racial discrimination. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0375/trivia>)

As the researcher for one, three appeals appear in this movie. They are plot appeal, character appeal, and theme appeal. The plot appeal from this movie is the different stereotypes society has created for those backgrounds affect their

judgment, beliefs and actions. The researcher observes this movie from the scene when Farhad is a Persian-immigrant storeowner who fears for the safety of his family because everyone thinks of them as terrorist because of the September 11, 2005 attacks. His store gets broken into and there is graffiti written all over the walls. He hires Daniel to fix the lock on the back wall that Jean and Rick hired.

Farhad supposed that Daniel is the agent in behind of all. When Daniel goes home to his family, Farhad approached him, while pointed the gun in Daniel's face. Farhad asked to Daniel to give come back his money. At the same time Daniel's little girl saw and knew that her father hasn't been invulnerable to bullets waistcoat then she runs out to meet him. As she runs out the front door, then she jumps in front of Daniel, she hug her father. Suddenly Farhad shouted bullet and hit Lara's back. Nevertheless, fortunately the bullet was blank. Therefore, Daniel and his daughter, Lara saves. Daniel tells the little girl that an angel is watching over them because he did not die.

There are many characters in this movie where each of the characters has the different opinion to the others. The several characters of different racial backgrounds collide in one incident. The character appeals in this movie when the movie storied about Cameron and Christine. They are a black well off couple. They experience racism when they are driving home from a party. A white police officer pulls them over for driving while black. He makes them both get out of the car and does a search on both Cameron and Christine. Officer Ryan has Cameron and Christine stand next to each other so Cameron can see what he does to his wife. Ryan runs his hands up Christine's legs and fingers her. Cameron does nothing to stop this violation of his wife because he is afraid of the legal consequences of speaking out against a white police officer.

Cameron and Christine got in a fight when they got home because Christine was angry that Cameron did not stick up for her to Ryan. Ryan also had a white partner with him, Hansen, which thinks the inappropriate search is wrong but it does nothing to stop it because Ryan is his partner. Christine is very angry with her husband that just silent and did not try to fight the police officer when Christine was despised by Ryan. She agreed and hated her husband, especially the police officer. Nevertheless, never expected when she was experiencing an accident, exactly the police officer, Ryan who helped her. The officer that was very hated by her and ever despised her, exactly becomes a hero that saved her from a tremendous accident.

The last appeal is stereotyping appeal; it is about a Muslim man, he is Farhad inside a firearm store, attempting to buy a gun. The owner, Dirk is a white Caucasian male that presents a negative attitude towards the customer, Farhad because of his Muslim background. This feeling triggers in the owner, Dirk, negative attitudes based on the assimilation and stereotypes with the Muslim race. Being immediately associated with the Al Qaeda terrorist group, which was responsible for suicidal bombers that have killed thousand of Americans.

Basic story from this movie in fact is about existence of turbulence between ethnic. They are black people, white people, Persian-immigrant, a Mexican, and an Asian that they all live in Los Angeles. Between one ethnic to the other ethnic is debasing each other and disfiguring one another. Nevertheless, in one side of stereotypes and prejudices that addressed between one ethnic to the other ethnic is correctness. In fact, between one ethnic to the other ethnic are requiring and equipping, although in the beginning must be surrounded by various hostility and prejudice.

*Crash* appointed two of the behaviors observed; they are; Prejudice and Stereotypes. Stereotypes and prejudices are part of psychology study. Psychology study itself could be used as a way to know more about the work of literature knowing the way out or over in the problem, the mental illness and self-defense on facing the problem.

The researcher is interested in analyzing *Crash*, because it is an interesting movie. It is interesting because this movie told about issues of race and gender cause a group of strangers in Los Angeles, and there are many themes that can caught from this movie, such as race relations, inner city blues, social injustice, class differences, intersecting lives, crumbling marriages, and crisis of conscience. This film also appears stereotypes and prejudices inter race. For two days in Los Angeles, a racially and economically diverse group of people pursues lives that collide with one another in unexpected ways.

Considering to the explanation above, the researcher tries to analyze the movie by using social psychological approach because of consideration below. This movie stories about issues of race and gender cause a group of strangers in Los Angeles, appear stereotypes and prejudices, where each of race have the differentials opinion against the other race, and most of the opinion mutual humiliated, and it is incriminated a group of people not only one people so the researcher choose the social psychological approach.

Based on the thing above, the researcher wants to conduct the further studies entitled **“STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES IN PAUL HAGGIS’S *THE CRASH: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH.*”**

## **B. Literature Review**

As long as the writer knows, there is no one research that has been conducted to study the same film. In this opportunity, the researcher decides to conduct a research on stereotypes and prejudices in Paul Haggis *The Crash*. Here the researcher uses social psychological approach.

## **C. Problem Statement**

Based on the background of the research, the writer proposes a problem statement. The problem of the research is why do the stereotypes and prejudices appear in Paul Haggis's *The Crash*?

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

In this research, the researcher focuses on the analysis of the stereotypes and prejudices that influences the psychological of personality in each of group in Paul Haggis's *The Crash* by social psychological approach.

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

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. to analyze the movie based on the structural elements of the movie, and
2. to analyze the movie based on the social psychological perspective.

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

The benefits of the study are as follows:

1. This study can give significant contribution to the development of literary study.

2. This study helps the researcher to get more knowledge or information especially based on social psychological approach in line with stereotypes and prejudices in Paul Haggis's *The Crash*.

## **G. Research Method**

### **1. Type of the Research**

In this study, the writer uses the descriptive qualitative method as type of the research. It purposes to analyze the movie based on the structural elements of the movie and to analyze the movie based on the social psychological perspective.

### **2. Type of the Data and the Data Source**

The type of data in this study is a text that consists of words, phrases and sentences.

There are two data sources in this study. They are the primary data source and secondary data sources.

#### **a. Primary Data Source**

The primary data source of the study is "*Crash*" movie by Paul Haggis.

#### **b. Secondary Data Source**

The secondary data source consists of the other data, which have relationship with the study, such as some biography of the author, and other relevant information.

### **3. Technique of the Data Collection**

The ways of collecting data are as follows:

1. selecting of the movie that is researched,
2. watching and comprehending the movie that is researched,

3. choosing the approach that suitable with the movie, and
  4. coding the data that suitable with the movie.
4. Technique of the Data Analysis
- The ways of analyzing the data are as follows:
1. Analyzing the data based on social psychological approach,
  2. Analyzing the data to find the opinion of each psychologist based on “*Crash*” movie, and
  3. Analyzing the data based on the characterization of the player in the movie and then implicated a conclusion.

## **H. Paper Organization**

Chapter I is Introduction that consists of the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method, and paper organization. Chapter II delivers underlying theory, which covers the notion of social psychology, social relation, structural element of film, and theoretical application. Chapter III is structural analysis, which presents structural element of film and discussion. Chapter IV discusses social psychological analysis, and Chapter V draws the conclusion and suggestion.