

**AMERICAN SUCCESS PHENOMENON
REFLECTED IN *THE FIRM* BY JOHN GRISHAM (1990):
PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE
APPROACH**



RESEARCH PAPER

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background Of Study

Literature as a work of art gives us possibility and ease in comprehending other worlds, realities that are happening in certain society and the value system which are adhered by that community. Literature also opens our mind for new experiences and invites us to come into the world, which is beyond our expectations. It seems that one who wants to understand the social condition of certain community must learn the literature produced by the member of that community, because literature written on certain period has direct relationship with the norms, customs and social condition which prevail at that moment. In making literary work an author will always be influenced by reality on the society as the inspiration of the creative processes to the work it self. The creative process of an author has made the social life reality a new different world of imagination as a representation of his experiences toward the social life around them.

Novel is one of literary works, which tells an important thing in life of people or characters elected by the author. All novels are explorations of persons, in possible milieus living out relationship that are probable to experiences and guided by shared norms and expectations, social and physiological laws and customs. They create society, the making of novel is making of a world; a persistently developing, changing world in language and

persuasion of the reader into the practices and principles by which it supports it and remain coherent.

The Firm novel is one of American popular literature. There are many phenomenon aspects in American successfulness and segments of popular culture that can be studied, story of American hero, success and story of freedom so forth, are often being exposed and exploited in motion picture, fashion, advertisement, bestseller novel, and other product. The popular phenomenon culture plays important role in the development of American society contemporary, and also American people's way of life, opinion, habit and attitude are influenced by advertisement, magazine, radio, television and book.

Pollack is the stage manager or producer he has talented, intelligent director is also a first-rate actor; perhaps that's why he communicates so well with his stars. Pollack studied with Sanford Mainer at New York's Neighborhood Playhouse, and briefly served as one of its acting coaches, before embarking on his own career on stage and television. While acting in the 1962 movie *War Hunt* he became friendly with Robert Redford, who was making his screen debut. When Pollack decided to move behind the camera, Redford was eager to work with him. They have since collaborated on seven films: *This Property Is Condemned* (1966), *Jeremiah Johnson* (1972), *The Way We Were* (1973), *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), *The Electric Horseman* (1979), *Out of Africa* (1985), and *Havana* (1990). *Out of Africa* in fact, won Pollack his first Academic Award as Best Director.

Pollack was also nominated for the wrenching Depression-era drama *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1969) And the crackerjack comedy *Tootsie* (1982), which forced him back in front of the camera when Dustin Hoffman insisted that Pollack play his agent in the movie, which he did, delightfully. In 1992 he appeared in *The Player* contributed the funniest scene to *Death Becomes Her* as Meryl Steep's addled doctor, and delivered a superb seriocomic performance as Judy Davis' errant husband in Woody Allen's *Husbands and Wives*.

In recent years Pollack has devoted more time to producing than directing, numbering among his credits (as producer or executive producer) *Honeysuckle Rose* (1980), *Songwriter* (1984), *Bright Lights, Big City* (1988), *Major League*, *The Fabulous Baker Boys* (both 1989), *Presumed Innocent*, *White Palace* (both 1990), *Dead Again*, *King Ralph* (both 1991), *Fischer and Flesh and Bone* (both 1993). He also executive produced the high-profile cable TV series "Fallen Angels" in 1993, and then returned to the director's chair for *The Firm* (1993) and *Sabrina* (1995). (<http://us.imdb/SidneyPollack/html>).

Ambition as one of psychoanalytic principles is part of the psychoanalytic study. For Americans, they have a great ambition to be success and hard work is it essential key will linger forever in the collective mind of American people. It will always be a part of American Dream. American modern society will be seen a' land of opportunity by its people and the people of another country, even in this modern era. This country give equal

chances for all of people to have successful life and realize their dreams. Not all American people live in happy prosperous life; still many of them are below by poverty line. As informed by US Information Agency that about fourteen percent of the population is below the poverty line established by the federal government (US American Agency, 1986: 65). The member of American modern society always dream of being successful in improving their material and spiritual well. The basis definition for success is material object and hard work is believes to the key of success. It seems that hard work is viewed as an important aspect if some one wants to be success in United stated. Even there is a belief that the poorer you are, the more you should save, and the harder you should work:” The first principle is that in order to move up, the poor must only work, they must work harder that the class above them (Glidden in Harris, 1990:370).

Ambition is the original system of the personality; it's same with *Id*. *Id* is also called the irrational, instinctual, and unconscious part of the psyche Freud (Bressler, 1994: 150) Human being cannot be separated from phenomenon and reality of life. They sometimes have experiences in sadness, happiness, hesitation and ambition. These can occur in daily life in every condition. The reaction of human being to threat or act damaging that never felt before cause them ambition to get something. We can see in our daily life when the students are ambition to get good mark, they will do the best to their selves to get their ambition.

An Austrian physician Sigmund Freud found the psychoanalytic theory of human being personality. The term of psychoanalysis has fundamental assumption that the mental element of human. Freud described three components of personality they are *id*, *ego* and *superego* in the concept of psychoanalytic theory. These mental processes may cause human beings into chaos since the humans mind is structured in a way that the greater part of humans consciousness lies below the consciousness. Freud in (Norton, 1964: 114) states that “the great weight and density lie beneath the surface (below the lever of consciousness) so that they cannot fully control their psychic forces. Here the writer intends to conduct a study on the personality aspect of the main character, MC Deere in *The Firm* novel written by John Grisham.

John Grisham is best-selling novelist of the 90’s. He was born on 8, 1955 in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Realizing he did not have the right stuff for a pro career, he shifted gears and majored in accounting at Mississippi State University. After graduating from law school at Ole Miss in 1981, he went on to practice law for nearly a decade in Southaven, specializing in criminal defense and personal injury litigation. He explored first novel when he overheard the harrowing testimony of a twelve-year-old rape victim. After that, he becomes an American novelist that has written a lot of novel. *The Firm* is one of his best-selling novels, with more than 7 million copies in print, was on The New York Times best-seller list for 18 consecutive weeks. The Grisham’s works are *The Firm*, *The Brethren*, *A Time to Kill*, *The Pelican*

Brief, The Client, The Chamber, The Runaway Jury, The Rainmaker, The Partner, The Street Lawyer and King of Torts.

The actor in this novel is Tom Cruise (Thomas Cruise) he is the famous actor in a Hollywood one day in the not too distant future he would be considered one of the top 100 movie stars of all time, he would have probably grinned and told you that his ambition was to become a priest. Nonetheless, this sensitive, deeply religious youngster who was born in 1962 in Syracuse, New York, was destined to become Tom Cruise, one of the highest paid and most sought after actors in screen history. The only son (among four children) of nomadic parents young Tom spent his boyhood eternally on the move and by the time he was 14 he had attended 15 different schools in the US and Canada. He finally settled in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, with his mother and her new husband. While in high school, he developed an interest in acting and abandoned his plans of becoming a priest, dropped out of school, and at age 18 headed for New York and a possible acting career First actor in history to star in five consecutive novel that grossed \$100 million in the USA: A Few Good Men (1992), The Firm (1993), Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles (1994), Mission: Impossible (1996), Jerry Maguire (1996).For 1988, he became the first actor to have the distinction of starring in both the year's Oscar winner for Best Picture, Rain Man (1988).

This story is very interesting to analyzed, reflected in the Firm novel. It is the story of a hotshot young attorney lured to an apparently law firm that was not it appeared. Mitch McDeere the main character of this novel is

described as a lawyer newly graduated from Harvard College, who seek success. He dreams of being a successful lawyer by joining a law firm, name Bendini and Lambert. And his hard work is started from here. Besides, in this film also explain about the hard work of the FBI agents to enforce the law and the mafia family to cover up their illegitimate business. The phenomenon found in this novel will show that American people see the meaning of succeed in different perspective. In this study the discussion is going to describe the way of some American to make their dream come true in such competitive rude world

B. Review of Literature

Actually, *The Firm* written by John Grisham and produced by Sidney Pollack is belongs to the best seller. To prove the originality of study , the writer presents the previous writer related the topic. Tri Purwaningsih (2004) a student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta analyzed John Grisham sociological from genetic structuralism approach the tittle is “American Dream in *The Firm* Film Sociological Approach. Hesty Prabowoningsih (2001) a student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta analyzed John Grisham, Individual from genetic structure approach the tittle is “MC Deere Struggle of lawyer in *The Firm* By John Grisham: An Individual Psychology Analysis.

The present researcher wants to analyzes the novel from different analysis using individual psychoanalytic perspective, the tittle is “American

Success Phenomenon Reflected in *The Firm* : By John Grisham Psychoanalytic Perspective

C. Problem Statement

Considering the explanation and reasons, therefore the writer formulates the problem as follows:

1. How is MC Deere's Ambition reflected in John Grisham's *The Firm*?
2. How American people see the success the previous phenomenon in their opinion reflected in *The Firm*?

D. Limitation of the Study

Due to the writer's limited knowledge in literature, times and facilities, the study is primarily taken with in the scope of studying is to analyze MC Deere as the one of the major characters in novel *The Firm* written by John Grisham based on psychoanalytic Perspective.

E. Objective of the Study

Every discussion has a certain purpose and based on the formulation above, the objective of this research is to analyze the novel based on the psychoanalytic Perspective. The objectives that the writer wants to achieve are:

1. The phenomenon of success American reflected in *The Firm* novel.
2. The conflict happening in *The Firm* related to their dreams and ambition of being succeed

F. Theoretical Approach

The Importance of popular fiction in the American modern society has long been realized by many scholar from different kind of disciplines. It has significant roles in shaping people's habit, behavior and life style. Popular fiction is always created to please amount of people, consequently it must be able to communicate the values concept and beliefs that can easily accepted and comprehend. on the other hand audience often identify them selves to the character, problems presented in popular fiction.

Hence it can be said that between popular fiction and society exist a unique relationship. That be authors of popular fiction need the society as their source of inspiration, in contrast the society need that fiction as escapism. In fact research on popular fiction can involve so many complicated theories and approaches such as historical, psychological, sociological and many more. And this thesis, to analyze and to study *The Firm* Novel By : John Grisham Psychoanalytic Perspective approaches will be applied. This is application is in line with R. Spiller's statement in his book *Late Harvest*:

The application to the American field of new concepts, material and method of cultural and comparative cultural studies in the

disciplines of sociology, such study might involve value; social institution, role, behavioral habits, concept

and any other factor that from meaningful cultural configuration when limited when limited and defined by an area and period of time (Spiller, 1982:225)

Based on spiller explanation, psychoanalytic approaches can provide more needed complete information. Psychoanalytic approach is used in this thesis since it will be useful to understand the common phenomenon and issues exposed in The Firm Novel By: John Grisham. Because in this Novel telling about values, ambition, law, crime, and other problems or concepts that existed in society.

American modern society will be seen a' land of opportunity by its people and the people of another country, even in this modern era. This country give equal chances for all of people to have successful life and realize their dreams. It is like stated by Paludan. American had remained a land of opportunity, offering to all the chance to improve their material and spiritual well being(Paludan,1978: 2). Not all American people live in happy prosperous life; still many of them are below by poverty line. As informed by US Information Agency that about fourteen percent of the population is below the poverty line established by the federal government (US American Agency, 1986: 65). The member of American modern society always dream of being successful in improving their material and spiritual well. The basis definition

for success is material object and hard work is believe to the key of success, as stated by Paludan:

The basis for the American definition of success was material. The qualitative worth of individuals was measured in qualitative term. If you were worthwhile human being it was assumed you work hard and conversely. If you worked hard, you would have something to show it (Paludan, 1978:6).

It seems that hard work is viewed as an important aspect if some one wants to be success in United stated. Even there is a belief that the poorer you are, the more you should save, and the harder you should work :”The first principle is that in order to move up, the poor must only work, they must work harder that the class above them (Gilden in Harris, 1990: 370).

The American success phenomenon and hard work is it essential key will linger forever in the collective mind of American people. it will always be a part of American Dream.

G. Benefits of the Study

The benefits of this study are follows:

1. The Theoretical benefit is to give information and knowledge to the readers, especially to the literary study in *The Firm* Written by John Grisham.
2. The practical benefit is to get better understanding “How the major character’s ambitions are reflected in *The Firm film*.”

H. Research Method

To analyze the data found in *The Firm*, the writer uses the qualitative method in the study

1. Type of Research

This research belongs to qualitative research because it does not need a statistic to explore the fact. Qualitative research is a type of research, which is focused on analyzing of textual data and does not include any calculation and enumeration.

2. Object of The Study

The writer used the novel entitled *The Firm* as the object of the study. That is found in its original novel, published in the New York by John Grisham Agency copyright in 1990.

3. Type of Data and Data Source

The type of data employed in this research is textual data which consist of words, phrases, and sentences. The data are classified into two categories namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data are taken from the novel itself while the secondary data are taken from some books of literary and psychology theories and also other materials which relate to the analysis

The source data are divided into two there are:

a. Primary Data

The primary data source is from the novel itself that consist of dialogue, attitude, and characters, the way of thinking that are in the novel

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data source are from articles which deal with this novel, article about psychoanalytic and from the Internet website that support this research.

4. Technique of Data Collection

The method of data collection in this study is documentation. This study collects records of primary and secondary data in sort of documentation used as evidences. The writer will use the procedures as follows:

- a. Reading the novel and find the data this novel.
- b. Identifying the data obtained for the analysis.
- c. Going to the library to read scientific books, which have the relationship with the thesis. Making notes of the parts relevant to the analysis.
- d. The writer write necessary data and classify them into the categories which relevant for the analysis.

5. Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the writer uses descriptive qualitative analysis. In this case the writer will interpret the dialogue, text and content analysis, to gather the needed data. The writer will use the data to analyze the problem and the main character, Mc Deere, and his ambition to be success related his problem of life.

I. Research Paper Organization

The writer divides this research paper into five chapters. Chapter I is Introduction which includes Background of the Study, Literature Review, Problem Statement, Objective of the Study, Benefit of the Study, Research Methodology and Thesis Organization. Chapter II is Underlying Theory, Which explain about psychoanalytic Approach that supports the analysis. Chapter III is Structural Analysis, which includes the plot, setting, Character, Theme and Discussion. Chapter IV is Psychoanalytic Analysis of the novel and the Application of the underlying Theory in analyzing the problem. Chapter V presents Conclusion and suggestion for this thesis.