

CONFLICT CONCERNS EXPLORED IN THE FILM "THE BATMAN" 2022 DIRECTED BY MATT REEVES

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ABSTRAK

This dissertation explores the theme of conflict depicted in the 2022 film "The Batman". The movie centers around a character known as The Riddler, who has murdered several officials in Gotham City and exposes their hidden, darker sides, leading to conflicts with various factions. Conflict, defined as disagreement stemming from differing viewpoints, is the focal point of this analysis. The objective of this study is to delineate the types of conflicts portrayed by the antagonists and to elucidate the resultant impacts. To achieve this, a sociological approach was adopted, supplemented by two theoretical frameworks: Nina Genneby and Ruben Markosyan's theory, and Kun Maryati and Juju Suryawati's theory. Additionally, a descriptive qualitative research methodology was employed to dissect the film. The findings reveal two primary types of conflict: interpersonal and inter-group conflict. Furthermore, seven positive consequences are identified, including enhanced internal solidarity, the fostering of intriguing inter-group dynamics, mobilization of previously passive citizens, the emergence of resilient individuals, stimulation of innovation, facilitation of evaluation, and the formulation of new compromises. Conversely, four negative repercussions are observed, such as the rupture of personal relationships and group cohesion, property damage and loss of life, alterations in individual behavior, and the potential for domination by the victorious faction.

Keywords: *conflict, sociology, batman*

INTRODUCTION

Literature encompasses all forms of written expression, although not every written work qualifies as literature in the strictest sense. Additional descriptors like "aesthetic" or "artistic" are often used to differentiate literary works from everyday texts such as phone directories, newspapers, legal documents, and scholarly writings (Klarer, 2004). The term "literature" is most aptly applied when referring to imaginative literature, as it is produced through the author's creative imagination. Literature transcends mere factual documentation or recounting of real events; instead, it has the ability to construct its own world through boundless imagination (Wellek & Warren, 1963). From the experts' definitions of literature, it can be inferred that literature entails written works imbued with beauty, ideas, and imaginative expression.

Films serve as a means of communication, conveying information, ideas, and depicting various settings and lifestyles. While these aspects are significant, films offer more profound experiences that resonate with viewers. They provide avenues for seeing and feeling deeply gratifying emotions. Films often immerse audiences in compelling stories centered around characters that evoke empathy, although they may also explore concepts or delve into visual and auditory elements deliberately (Bordwell, Thompson & Smith, 2017). These cinematic experiences are meticulously crafted and purposefully designed, offering viewers opportunities for profound emotional engagement and thought-provoking contemplation.

Film is a multifaceted and intricate phenomenon encompassing social, psychological, and aesthetic dimensions, comprising narratives and visuals complemented by music and dialogue. This complexity renders film a multidimensional and significant product within contemporary society, on par with other media forms (Siregar, 2000). From this definition, it can be inferred that film serves as a medium for conveying accumulated information or ideas through illustrated storytelling accompanied by music or dialogue.

Moreover, film and literature are regarded as expressions of the human intellect, with both aiming to enrich human understanding and imagination. Despite initially being perceived as separate entities, the connection between film and literature dates back to ancient times, gradually evolving into a symbiotic relationship characterized by creative exchange (Ramrao, 2016). While literature encompasses various genres such as short stories, novels, dramas, and poetry, film initially evolved from photography and painting, ultimately becoming a distinct art form with its own narrative techniques and visual language.

Additionally, both film and literature share the common goal of stimulating human imagination and fostering cultural progress. They complement each other rather than serving as substitutes, akin to the relationship between letters and sounds in communication. Through their portrayal of action, imagery, and words, film and literature elevate human consciousness and offer insights into the human experience (Ramrao, 2016).

Furthermore, conflicts are integral to storytelling in films, serving to maintain audience engagement and reflect the complexities of human life. While perceptions of conflict vary, ranging from avoidance to viewing it as an opportunity for personal growth, conflicts are universally acknowledged as a perpetual aspect of human existence (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014). Thus, conflicts in films serve not only as narrative devices but also as mirrors of human experiences and opportunities for character development.

Conflict is characterized as a process wherein one party perceives its interest conflicting with those of another party. Typically, individuals tend to focus solely on the visible aspects of conflict, such as heated exchanges or opposing actions, without considering the broader context of the conflict process (McShanne and Glinow, 2008). From this perspective, conflict arises from differing viewpoints or approaches to a given situation, leading to disagreements between involved parties.

The choice of "The Batman" film as the subject of this research stems from its recent release earlier in the year, presenting a fresh and unexplored topic for investigation. Furthermore,

the film's action genre adds to its appeal, eliciting adrenaline-fueled excitement for researchers. Notably, "The Batman" offers a plethora of conflicts, ranging from conflicts among main characters and villains to conflicts between villains and officials. The researcher is particularly intrigued by uncovering the pivotal events within the film that contribute to its chaotic narrative.

According to IMDb (International Movie Database), "The Batman" 2022 has garnered recognition in various award categories, including the ACCEC Award for Favorite Movie and Favorite Movie Actor (Robert Pattinson). Directed by Matt Reeves and boasting a cast of 135, the film is a production of DC Films and premiered in Indonesia on March 2, 2022.

The selection of this title is predicated on the complexity of conflicts depicted in the film, promising a rich source of research findings. Specifically, the researcher has chosen to focus on The Riddler, a character whose strong presence in the film drives much of its conflict. Despite harboring ostensibly noble intentions for Gotham City and society, The Riddler resorts to sadistic methods, systematically eliminating corrupt officials. This incites shock and fear within Gotham City's populace, with The Riddler challenging Batman to collaborate in exposing corruption through cryptic riddles.

In "The Batman," the titular character serves as an inspiration for The Riddler, who adopts a similarly vigilante approach albeit with a more sadistic twist. The emergence of The Riddler's vendetta against corruption sets the stage for a gripping conflict that unfolds throughout the film, further underscoring the intricate dynamics at play within Gotham City.

METHOD

In this study, a qualitative approach is employed to delve into the conflicts depicted in the film "The Batman." This method seeks a profound understanding of the underlying reasons behind the conflicts, relying on human experiences as meaning-making agents in everyday life. Data for this research is sourced from the 2022 film "The Batman" directed by Matt Reeves, accessed via the HBO Go streaming platform, with a duration of 2 hours and 48 minutes. The data collection technique involves repeated viewings of the film to identify relevant scenes and analyzing the film's script to extract clauses containing conflicts. Additionally, supplementary data sources such as articles, books, and journals are consulted to provide further context. Data analysis is conducted through three simultaneous activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The study aims to yield a deeper understanding of the conflicts portrayed in "The Batman."

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the findings and analysis of the data, focusing on the examination of conflicts faced by the antagonist and their resulting impacts. The chosen object of analysis is "The Batman" film, wherein the researcher identifies various conflicts occurring in Gotham City instigated by The Riddler, and evaluates their consequences. Drawing from multiple theoretical frameworks, including those proposed by Nina Genneby and Ruben Markosyan, as well as Kun Maryati and Juju Suryawati, the researcher formulates the research questions. Two main types of conflict are identified: interpersonal conflict and intergroup conflict. The positive impacts of these conflicts include enhanced internal solidarity, improved group integration, fostering of dynamic relationships between groups, activation of passive citizens, cultivation of resilient individuals, stimulation of innovation and change, provision of evaluation mechanisms, and facilitation of new compromises. Conversely, the negative consequences encompass ruptured relationships and group unity, property damage, loss of life, alterations in individual personality, and the establishment of dominance by the winning group over the losing faction.

Analysis

Character Relation			
Hero		Villain	
The Batman	Gordon	The Riddler	Falcone
Selina	Other Police	His Group	Oz/Penguin
Alfred			Colson
			Pete
			Kenzie
			Mitchell

1. Type of Conflict

a. Inter Personal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict occurs when two individuals experience ongoing conflicts within their relationship on a regular basis.

Datum 1

During Mitchell's funeral, Gil Colson inadvertently drives his car into the church and discovers a bomb attached to his neck. He holds a cell phone with an incoming video call from The Riddler, who presents him with three questions to answer if he wishes to survive the explosive device.

Duration 01:05:24 – 01:05:45



Figure 1 (The Riddler on Video call with Colson)

The Riddler: Riddle number one...“It can be cruel, poetic, or blind, but when it’s denied, it’s violence you may find.”

Colson: Wait, wait, wait! Can you repeat that? “Cruel”? “Poetic”? The Batman: The answer is justice

Colson: Justice?

The Riddler: ***Yes! Justice! And you were supposed to be an arm of justice in this city, along with the late mayor and police commissioner, were you not, Mr. Colson?***

Analysis :

In the initial riddle, Colson responds with "justice." However, The Riddler perceives that Colson, who is supposed to uphold justice in the city, fails to do so effectively. Instead, Colson prioritizes serving those who offer him monetary incentives. This exchange signifies a conflict between the two individuals.

Datum 2

Context :

In a prison cell, during The Riddler's arrest, he is confined behind soundproof glass walls and restrained with handcuffs around his hands, neck, and legs. Despite his restraints, The Riddler requests The Batman's presence to discuss a matter. Upon The Batman's prompt arrival, he is met with an immediate protest from The Riddler.

Duration 02:09:50 - 02:10:45



Figure 2. (The Riddler Talk to The Batman on a Cell)

The Riddler: Bruce... Wayne. You know, I was there that day. The day the great Thomas Wayne announced he was running for mayor, made all those promises. ***Well, a week later he was dead, and everybody just forgot about us. All they could talk about was poor Bruce Wayne. Bruce Wayne, the orphan. Orphan. Living in some tower over the park isn't being an orphan. Looking down on everyone, with all that money. Don't you tell me. Do you know what being an orphan is? It's 30 kids to a room.***

Analysis :

The statements made by The Riddler in the conversation hold truth, as the promises made during Thomas Wayne's mayoral campaign in Gotham City were left unfulfilled. However, it's important to note that Thomas Wayne's sudden demise, merely a week after his election, could not be entirely attributed to his actions. Consequently, The Riddler demands that Bruce Wayne bear the responsibility for his father's actions while serving as mayor. This dialogue signifies a conflict between the two individuals.

Datum 3

Context :

In a jail cell, during The Riddler's apprehension, he is confined within a soundproof glass enclosure and bound by handcuffs on his hands, neck, and legs. The Riddler requests The Batman's presence for a conversation, prompting The Batman to swiftly respond and encounter immediate protest from The Riddler.

Duration 02:12:46 - 02:14:35



Figure 3. (The Riddler Talk to The Batman on a Cell)

The Riddler: Ahhh! This is not how this was supposed to go! Ahhh! I had it all planned out! We were gonna be safe here. We could watch the whole thing together.

The Batman: Watch what?

The Riddler: Everything! It was all there.

The Batman: You mean, you didn't figure it out?

The Riddler: Oh, you're really not as smart as I thought you were. I guess I gave you too much credit.

The Batman: What you have done?

Analysis:

During the discussion, The Riddler asserts that The Batman's intelligence is not as remarkable as he perceives. The Riddler reveals that he still has an unresolved plan, which The Batman fails to comprehend. The Riddler had anticipated that The Batman would grasp the intricacies of this plan, considering his success in solving previous puzzles. The disparity between The Riddler's expectations and reality incites anger in him, highlighting a conflict between them.

a. Inter Group Conflict

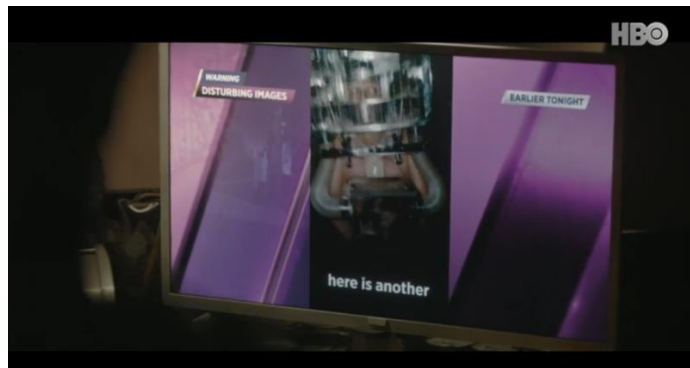
Inter group conflicts take place between various formal and non-formal groups. These conflicts often take place in organizations.

Datum 4

Context:

In a live stream broadcast on television, The Riddler announced that after he killed Mitchell, he would kill again. The next victim is Commissioner Pete, the chief of Gotham City police. He killed using rat poison.

Duration 00:37:35 - 00:38:05



Picture 04 (The Riddler in a Live Stream)

The Riddler: Here is another, who will soon be losing face. I will kill again, again, and again until our day of judgement.

Analysis:

In The Riddler's statement, he said that he would kill again. This shows that there are still many of Gotham city officials who are "dirty" and will soon be killed. This is one of conflict between individuals and groups, as The Riddler has a disagreement of Gotham city officials.

1. Impact of Conflict

a. Positive Impact

1.) Increased Internal Solidarity and in-group Integration Datum 5

Context:

On the night of Mitchell's murder, when the police were identifying the parts of Mitchell's body that were injured, and the reporters were taking evidence in the form of photographs at the scene. Commissioner Pete arrives and scolds Gordon for involving The Batman in this case, while he has to hold a press conference on the case right then and there. Commissioner Pete goes out to announce Mitchell's death to the citizens and reporters.

Duration 00:17:08 – 00:17:38



Picture 05 (Commissioner Pete at the Press Conference)

Commissioner Pete: Tonight, a son lost a father. A wife lost a husband. And I lost a friend. Mayor Mitchell was a fighter for the city, and I will not rest until his killer is found. ***This was a truly senseless crime, and we are actively pursuing every investigative lead we have in order to identify the perpetrator and hunt him down.***

Analysis:

At the press conference, Commissioner Pete said that we (he and the police) are actively pursuing any leads of the investigation and identify the perpetrator and hunt him down. In this case, Commissioner Pete and the police became more united in handling the Mitchell murder case. That means they can already be said to have solidarity because of the conflict between The Riddler and Mitchell.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of ten data extracted from "The Batman" film, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, from the perspective of Nina Genneby and Ruben Markyosan's theory, the movie illustrates two types of conflict: interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. The researcher identified three instances of interpersonal conflict and one instance of intergroup conflict within the data. Secondly, based on Kun Maryati and Juju Suryawati's theory, the film depicts twelve categories of conflict impacts. However, the researcher discovered seven positive impacts, such as enhanced internal solidarity and the emergence of resilient individuals, alongside four negative impacts, including property damage and changes in personality. Thirdly, it is evident from the data that The

Riddler aims to unveil dark truths about Gotham City officials, albeit with consequences affecting everyone. The most prevalent impacts encountered in the research are negative, particularly property damage and loss of life, aligning with The Riddler's primary agenda. This research holds significance for everyday life, as conflicts are inherent, and studying them provides valuable insights for understanding and managing interpersonal and societal dynamics.

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