

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter aims to explain the theory applied in this study. The theory will be used to analyze the film *We Bought a Zoo* by Cameron Crowe under the focus of animal rights. The Ecocriticism theory by Cheryll Glotfelty is considered to be the most appropriate theory to be applied. The focus of the theory is The Rights of Animal suggested by Tamara R. Roleff (1999). Considering the using of film as the object of the study, narrative and non-narrative aspects of the film will be included to support the analysis.

##### 2.1.1 Ecocriticism

Since this study is concerning to the environmental issue, *Ecocriticism* is the basic theory to lead the writer in analyzing the problem in the *We Bought a Zoo* movie. Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and environment. The interconnections between nature and culture, especially the cultural artifacts of language and literature, will be taken as an object by Ecocriticism. As a critical stance, it has one foot in literature and the other on land, as a theoretical discourse which negotiates between the human and non-human (Glotfelty and Fromm 1996).

In Glotfelty's book *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), William Howarth states:

*Eco* and *critic* both derived from Greek, *oikos* and *kritis*, and in tandem they mean, 'house judge'. This statement can be defined as 'a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effect of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action'. So, the *oikos* is nature, a place Edward Hoagland calls "our widest home" and the *kritos* is an arbiter of taste who wants the house keep in good orders, no boots or dishes strewn about to ruin the original décor (Glotfelty and Fromm 1996).

From this statement, it can be said that ecocriticism is a critical thinking where it puts nature as a place to settle. As being an appropriate place to settle, we must keep it clean; take care of it, so it can be a good place to live.

Some scholars like the term ecocriticism because it is short and can easily be made into other forms like ecocritical and ecocritic. Additionally, they favor eco- over enviro- because, analogous to the science of ecology, ecocriticism studies relationships between things, in this case, between human culture and the physical world. Furthermore, in its connotations, enviro- is anthropocentric and dualistic, implying that we humans are at the center, surrounded by everything that is not us, the environment. Eco-, in contrast, implies interdependent communities, integrated systems, and strong connections among constituent parts (Glotfelty and Fromm 1996).

Discussing about Ecocriticism, Glotfelty is one of significant figures who should be considered. Moreover, *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), one of books she made was the first of its kind, the collection of ecocritical essays which until 1990s had not been recognized and considered as significant movement (Glotfelty and Fromm xvi-xvii). *In addition, Don Scheese in his essay titled Some Principles of Ecocriticism* says that,

...Ecocriticism is most appropriately applied to a work in which the landscape itself is a dominant character, when a significant interaction occurs between author and place, character(s) and place. Landscape by definition includes the non-human elements of place--the rocks, soil, trees, plants, rivers, animals, air--as well as human perceptions and modifications (asle.org 2011).

It signifies that Glotfelty's concepts are appropriate and suitable to become the approach while doing a research about environmental issue. To be remembered that Ecocriticism is the study of the relations between literature and physical environment. All ecological criticisms share the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it (Glotfelty and Fromm xviii-xix). Ecocriticism was initially understood with the aims of earthcare. Its goal was to continue, to the struggle, to preserve the biotic community (Coupe 4).

### 2.1.2 The Rights of Animals

As the aim of this study is to reveal the representation of animals' rights in a zoo that indicates in the *We Bought a Zoo* movie, the writer uses other theory to support the analysis that related to the rights of animals by Tamara L. Roleff (1999). Roleff argues that animal has their own rights in order to possess their rights to free of suffering. In her books *Rights of Animal*, she stated:

According to a 1995 survey commissioned by the Associated Press, two-thirds of Americans agree with the statement, "An animal's *right* to live free of suffering should be *just as important* as a person's." This overwhelming public support shouldn't come as a big surprise. No one likes to see an animal suffer. Indeed, kindness towards animals is a praised virtue in our society. Animal rights is really little more than an effort to live up to this ideal (Roleff 18).

Some individuals believe that no animal should suffer pain because of human activity. Others believe that some use of animals is allowable, so long as no unnecessary pain is inflicted upon any animal. Yet others believe that any human need is more important than any need that a non-human animal might have. Somehow, the need of animal is not always taken as important as human. According to Roleff (1999):

Rights are an amorphous human concept developed within a culture and differ considerably, depending on the culture and society, and

only defined and upheld within the laws and social conventions of a particular society (Roleff 105).

The definition about rights posed above implies that everything, including human and non human, in this earth has their own right to possessed. Moreover, the rights that built is depends on the culture around them. It means that, not all rights that built in this universe have the same position to apply in every action.

That is why the United States made a law that manages animal rights, called Animal Welfare Act. The Animal Welfare Act was signed into law in 1966. It is the only Federal law in the United States that regulates the treatment of animals in research, exhibition, transport, and by dealers. Other laws, policies, and guidelines may include additional species coverage or specifications for animal care and use, but all refer to the Animal Welfare Act as the minimum acceptable standard. The Act is enforced by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), APHIS (The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), and Animal Care agency. The AWA was firstly design for protecting the animal trade (dogs) that happening at that time (Roleff 8).

By observing the rights of animal, people should understand more about the definition of rights. Like what have been said by Roleff (1999) that:

...We must reject all the irrational and emotional influences that can lead us astray. This includes our feelings of compassion, our intuitions, and even our most deeply held beliefs. To weed out our hidden prejudices we must be willing to question everything we

believe to be true and accept only those beliefs which survive critical scrutiny (Roleff 19).

Based on the definition posed above, to distinguish the treatment towards animal, as human who had a common sense, people are assisted to treat the animals equal. So, there is no belief that human is superior than animal.

## **2.2 Related Studies**

There are several studies conducted in understanding ecocriticism. The first one is a thesis conducted by Evie Triana, which is a fresh graduate student in English Department of Airlangga University. The title of her thesis is "*Animal Rights in Sara Gruen's Water for Elephants: An Ecocritic Study*". Triana's thesis is discussing about the rights of the animals in circus that had been carried away by the one who is in charge of the railroad circus show, August. Railroad circus was booming in the great depression era where many people were enjoying an animals' show in the certain place. By relating to the theory of Ecocriticism, August is depicted as the human and also as the owner of the land which implies as the supreme. In this novel, the writer interest with the issue which is animals' rights that tells about abuse toward animals' circus that had been done by human which should be well treated. The relation between human and animal has a specific connection that animal could understand human's command. Through this novel Triana found that this story could reverse the hierarchy which human and animal is equal.

The second study is a PhD thesis conducted by Syned Dale Makani Mthatiwa titled "*Human-Animal Relationships and Ecocriticism: A Study of the Representation of Animals in Poetry from Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa*". Mthatiwa's thesis analyses the manner in which animals are represented in selected poetry from Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa. It discusses the various modes of animal representation the poets draw on, and the ideological influences on their manner of animal representation. The study determines the extent to which the values expressed in the poems are consistent with, or different from, current ecological orthodoxies and the ways in which the metaphors generated in relation to animals influence the way we treat them. The study shows that in the selected poetry animals occupy a significant position in the poets' exploration of social, psychological, political, and cultural issues.

The last is the work of Marie Blosch titled *The History of Animal Welfare Law and the Future of Animal Rights* (2012). This thesis is focused on the moral and legal status of animals. The writer uses historical approach to explore the tension between the humane impulse to diminish animal suffering and the sense of human superiority that permits animal exploitation. Debate flares the hottest over the question of whether the appropriate legal remedy is to regulate animal welfare or to grant animals rights. The issue is sometimes framed as a choice between providing animals with larger cages or releasing them from the cage altogether, but it is more nuanced than those two options might suggest. She concludes that animal rights theory could build on the precedent set by the anti-cruelty laws if legal rights for animals are used as a shield to protect animals from the excesses of

property rights rather than as a way to elevate animals out of their status as property.

As a result, the similarity among those studies is all of them discussed the same issue about animal rights. The first study analyzed the establishment of animal rights law, the second study analyzed the representation of animals from three different poetries, and the last study analyzed the unfulfilled basic needs of animal railroad circus. Therefore, this study, by contrast, attempts to analyze the representation of zoo in *We Bought a Zoo* movie which deceives us from the loss of animal rights in living free. Yet, the previous studies will be used to expand the analysis of this study.