

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach

This study applies a qualitative research mainly because this study explores a certain social phenomenon in depth by emphasising on describing “verbal portrayals of the current status of people and events in terms of kinds of characteristics and actions” (Thomas, p.33, cited in Lemma, P 2011, p.4). Qualitative research in this study makes use of descriptive approaches as this study is oriented to provide thorough descriptions so that interpretations of social phenomena, including its meaning to those who experience it, are able to achieve (Dey 1993, p. 3).

In correlation to this approach, textual analysis is also applicable regarding the primary object of analysis, which is a film, is treated as texts from which the researcher produces interpretations. A text in this context is more than just something readable or contains written words. It can vary from clothes to a group of people as long as an interpretation of any of them is produced through that something’s meaning.

Textual analysis is “a methodology –a data-gathering process– for those researchers who want to understand the ways in which members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are” (McKee 2003, p. 1). To name a few, its goal is to “understand the ways in which these forms of representation take place and the assumptions behind them” (McKee 2003, p. 17). Thereby, this study confirmatory enacts descriptive qualitative research using textual analysis.

In so doing in-depth analysis, such approaches are, then, extended to technique of data collection and technique of data analysis. The first technique attempts to collect as well as provide any valid and beneficial data taken from data sources. Meanwhile, the second plays as the analytical tools needed to interpret the data in order to meet the study objectives.

B. Data Sources

The primary data of this study is a film directed by Gus Van Sant entitled *Milk* in which was theatrically published in 2008 produced by Focus Features in association with Axon Films. Moreover, the primary source of analysis is Gayle Rubin's book *Deviations* and the secondary source is any printed or unprinted materials including scholarly books, journals, and articles in regards both to the film and the main queer theory proposed in this study.

C. Scope and Limitation

Scope and limitation are applied in this study as both are important to sharpen the analysis of the study and, hence, makes it more focus. Since this is a queer study, the scope of analysis will be placed on Harvey Milk, the most prominent gay character of the movie, in breaking the gay sexual stratification. Besides, other subjects, such as the historical and or cultural background of the film, as long as they have correlations in supporting the writer's arguments, also become the highlight of analysis. Meanwhile, the limitation of this study is placed on those aspects outside the

scope such as the explanation of becoming a homosexual, the complete history of sexuality, the audiences' responses, and the film production.

D. Technique of Data Collection

After encountered the two data sources, in order to have a depth analysis, observing the primary data or the film is conducted through watching it continuously in the means of perceiving the story of the film itself as well as its interpretations. Firstly, the technique of collecting the primary data in this study is by selecting the movie dialogues which identifiably depict the gay sexual stratification as well as the struggles of Harvey Milk in breaking the gay sexual stratification. Secondly, this technique is extended to the step of capturing the movie scenes which consist of the mentioned issues. Lastly, those identified dialogues and scenes are examined through film narrative and non-narrative elements.

As narrative and non-narrative have different, though interrelated, elements to be investigated, the ways in filtering the data using those two film elements are different as well. Using narrative film elements, the data are collected through plot, setting of time and place, and the film characters; whereas, using non-narrative elements, the collected data are taken from cinematography techniques: camera shots, camera angles, and colour. After having the data collected through those mentioned several ways, all the data are analysed in-depth using queer theory as further explained in technique of data analysis.

E. Technique of Data Analysis

Once all the collected data are gathered, they are then analysed using Gayle Rubin's queer theory emphasizing on sexual stratification. However, before going further in applying the theory, the data collected using narrative elements require the following basic questions, which need to be asked in the eye of queer theory, according to Charles E. Bressler in *Literary Criticism* (p. 260):

- What prejudices exist about any character's supposed sexuality?
- What social forces or constructs determine sexual identity?

The two questions could be further elaborated into two main steps as follows:

1. Finding the Binary Opposition

The use of this initial step is essential to show arbitrary terms presented throughout the movie. As such, the most appealing important binary opposition in this movie is seen from the character categorization: the heterosexuals and the gays. Those two categorizations help define who-labeled-to-whom in which further leads to the attributed terms amongst the distinctive characters such as the powerful and the powerless.

2. Analyzing Sexual Stratification through Binary Opposition

Once the binary opposition along with the label attributed to them is shaped, the sexual stratification can be seen. Since the sexual stratification in this movie is more likely social constructions rather than natural normalcy, this core step in revealing sexual stratification can uncover those

social constructions by exploring in what domains that the sexual stratification affects the homosexuals.

Thereafter, each data produced by narrative elements are then combined with those from non-narrative elements so that comprehensive data of analysis prevail. Non-narrative elements are, therefore, not merely about what, instead, why those cinematic techniques are being used in a film since it is highly believed to productively have its own way to symbolically 'speak' to its audience. Both data from narrative and non-narrative analysis are elaborated with Gayle Rubin's queer theory in order to seek out the findings of this study about gay sexual stratification as well as the way Harvey Milk breaks the gay sexual stratification.

CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS