

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In the United States, racial concerns have been a major and persistent problem. The nation has struggled with systematic racism, inequality, and racial discrimination in several areas. Demographic changes, racial inequality, and economic impact, challenges faced by minorities, structural racism and discrimination, and public perceptions and skepticism are some examples of the complex and multifaceted nature of racial issues in America, encompassing demographic shifts, economic implications, systemic challenges, and public perceptions (Bowdler, J., & Harris, B. 2022). In America, a "racial issue" refers to a broad category of issues about race, ethnicity, and prejudice. These problems include historical injustices like slavery, segregation, and racial violence as well as institutional racism, economic inequality, and healthcare inequalities. Immigration, demographic shifts, and the requirement for laws that uphold equality and prohibit discrimination are all related to racial concerns. Due to the complexity of racial issues in America, a multipronged strategy that tackles both historical legacies and contemporary forms of injustice and discrimination is necessary (Smedley, 2023).

Racial concerns cover a broad spectrum of occurrences and highlight the ongoing fight against racial injustice as well as the significant effects of systematic racism on American culture in the 1920s. In 1920, America became increasingly divided along racial lines. For example, throughout the 1920s, there was a great deal of racial discrimination against African Americans, which was a source of

great concern for them (Louise Wood, A., 2018). Jim Crow laws' racial discrimination and segregation, together with ongoing racial segregation, negatively impacted many aspects of American life. People in Africa and America face systemic discrimination in employment, education, and home life (Hamilton, R. N., 2023). In addition, there is the Ku Klux Klan's racial intolerance promotion and efforts to hinder immigrants from entering the United States of America (Dixon & Wintz, 2015). Furthermore, during the Red Heat of 1919, which was characterized by racial heat in several cities, deep-rooted racial tensions, and violence were highlighted (Rahtz, H., 2016). The Osage Tribe in America also dealt with several racial difficulties in 1920, such as oil discovery, land allocation, and forced assimilation. They relocated to the Kansas Neosho River valley in the early 19th century after giving up their land in Missouri to the US government. The Osage were known for their unwavering rejection of the dominant American culture after they moved to a reservation in Kansas. They kept up their traditional housing and attire. They were also against the consumption of alcohol, which had been brought in by traders (Britannica, 2024). The Osage had a substantial agricultural and a sophisticated trading system, but their economy was based mostly on hunting and gathering. In the 1890s, grazing gained significance in the economy. Because of their grazing lease revenue, the commissioner of Indian affairs referred to the Osages as "the richest people on earth." The monetary consideration of petroleum profits did not arise until after the allocation of Osage in 1906–1907. The commissioner's remark had become more accurate by the 1920s (Louis, 2010).

According to Davis, L. E. (2016), the Osage people lost their traditional culture and language as a result of being compelled to embrace a more Western lifestyle by the U.S. Department of the Interior, acting under the direction of the Dawes Act of 1887. The Dawes Act allowed for the settlement of white people and split tribal territory into individually held parcels that could be sold. As a result, the Osage tribe lost its territory, and community life ended (Banaji et al., 2021). Banaji et al. (2021) also mention that the Osage tribe became extremely affluent when oil resources were found on their land in the 1920s, but this newfound prosperity also contributed to an increase in white settlers' targeting of the tribe.

In the book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, the Osage tribe experienced a lot of discrimination by the American government. As a minority, the Osage were forced to sell the land where they lived in Kansas, but despite selling the land at a price set by the government, the Osage were forced to move because their homes and ancestral graves were looted by the government and other white people because of the struggle for housing. The Osage tribe moved to Oklahoma and this was the second time the Osage tribe moved, which was before President Thomas Jefferson forced the Osage tribe to give up their territory between the Arkansas River and the Missouri River. The Osage chief declared that his people “had no choice, they must sign a treaty or be declared enemies of the United States.” Over the next two decades, the Osage were forced to give up nearly one hundred million acres of their ancestral lands and eventually found refuge in a 50 by 125-mile area in southeastern Kansas. And it was in this place that Mollie's mother and father grew up.

The Osage tribe's habit of finding food by hunting had to stop because in 1887, American buffalo became scarce to hunt due to the accelerated development carried out by the American government which encouraged settlers to eradicate wild animals, and officials increasingly tried to turn the Osage tribe into well-dressed, English-speaking, and churchgoing landowners. Due to government interference, the Osage began to lose their faith in Wah'KonTah who was believed to be their god and many Osage tribe members began to embrace Catholicism.

In their new home, in Oklahoma. When the Osages discovered oil resources, the Osages became the richest tribe in the world in the 1920s, which is when many white people started living in Oklahoma. The Osage's wealth made white people greedy and tried to take away the Osage's wealth. The Osage tribe experienced terrible events with mysterious and unsolved murders. One of the victims of the mysterious murder is Anna, Mollie's younger sister, which has an impact on Mollie's psychology. Mollie tries to remain calm but she also blames others for her sister's tragic death.

On the other hand, the government issued unilateral regulations by regulating the rich Osage's financial expenditures, marrying off Osage children to white people, and forcing rich Osage girls to attend St. Joseph's Catholic missionary school. At the age of seven, Mollie's parents were told to enroll Mollie in St. Joseph's Catholic missionary school. At Mollie's school, she had to learn Catholicism and attend church activities, and Mollie had to take off her Indian blanket which was replaced by a white dress. Mollie is also one of the victims of an arranged marriage, and Mollie feels conflicted because if she does not want to be

arranged, she and her family will be punished by the government. This makes Mollie withdrawn and confined because she can't make a choice. Naturally, though Mollie accidentally falls in love and marries the white Ernest Burkhart. After marrying Ernest, Mollie's life still does not find peace because it turns out that she is a widow who married an Osage and has died and then she married Ernest. Mollie covered it up so that her husband would not divorce her and the government would not find out about it, because Mollie would be sentenced for it. Mollie copes with her anxiety by tidying up her house to cover up the details of her past.

There are several issues related to racism in this book, the first of which is ethnic racism. The book depicts various forms of ethnic racism experienced by members of the Osage tribe. They face unfair treatment and rejection based on their customs and culture. Second, ideological racism in which the Osage tribe cannot maintain ancestral land as their residence. They were unfairly cheated by the American government and forced to leave their homes. In addition, the beliefs of the Osage tribe began to change, they began to embrace Catholicism and forgot Wah'Kon Tah. Third, white privilege which is an unfair justice system in this book describes how the unfair justice system by the government affects the lives of the Osage tribe and the main character. They are faced with unfounded accusations and processed unfairly. Fourth, the Social Gap in the movie *If Beale Street Could Talk* describes the social gap that occurs between races in the United States. The regulations made by the American government are only partially beneficial to the American government and detrimental to the Osage tribe. The main character, Mollie faces difficulties due to the compulsion to go to school based on her family

background as a member of the wealthy Osage tribe, the American government forces Mollie to marry and be matched. And lastly, Mollie is faced with a difficult situation where she has to lie to her husband and the American government because she is a widow. This movie highlights the violence of the American government aimed primarily at racial minorities, namely the Osage tribe. And the Osage tribe became victims of the American government's abuse of power.

With the case experienced by the Osage tribe and its impact on Mollie's psychology, the researcher identified racial issues experienced by the Osage tribe using critical race theory and self-defense mechanisms uses as a tool to overcome Mollie's anxiety as the main character.

Based on this background, the researcher is interested in analyzing racial issues contained in the book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, and research on Native Americans, especially the Osage tribe, has not been done much by many previous studies. Of course, there will be many moral messages that we can get from this book which is packaged by the author to his readers. Which is where the book *Killer of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* is the work of David Grann, an American journalist who is a staff writer for The New Yorker, and an author (Grann. D, 2023). The book was published by Doubleday, an imprint of Penguin Random House in April 2017 and has been named a National Book Awards Finalist in 2017 (National Book Foundation n.d.).

The book has also contributed to the growing cultural reclamation of the history and experiences of the Osage Nation. The settlement of a lawsuit between the Osage Tribe and the United States government in 2011 over the mismanagement of tribal funds, as well as the appointment of the first Native American cabinet secretary, Deb Haaland, are signs of progress towards reconciliation and empowerment for American Indian tribes (James, 2023).

B. Problem Formulation

This undergraduate thesis is based on the book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann in 2017, takes two problem formulations as follows:

1. What are the kinds of racial issues that happened in David Grann's *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*?
2. How does Mollie overcome her anxiety in David Grann's *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*?

C. Objective of the Study

Based on the background and formulation of the problem above, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To analyze what types of racial issues happened in David Grann's *Killer of the Flower Moon: The Osage and the Birth of the FBI*
2. To find out what Mollie's anxiety in David Grann's *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage and the Birth of FBI*

D. Review of Related Studies

In conducting this research, the writer uses several previous studies as a reference. The first related study is a journal in 2019 entitled “Failed Protectors: The Indian Trust and Killers of the Flower Moon” by Fletcher, M. L. Researcher found this paper aims to reveal the capacity of racial issues that occur in the Osage tribe. The research correlates with a research journal from Fletcher M in 2019, focusing on the function of the Indian trust in managing Native American lands and resources, this research delves deeply into the historical context and legal framework of the organization and the author examines how tragic events in Grann's book could have been avoided had the Indian Trust existed to protect the Osage people from explanation and violence. There is no detailed mention of the theory uses in this study. However, it incorporates historical records, legal documents, and related literature to ensure a thorough examination of the Indian Trust's shortcomings. Using the historical analysis method, the research found that the United States Government has a duty of protection towards Indian nations as recognized in international law and affirmed by the United States Supreme Court. The federal government failed in its duty of protection, as evidenced by the Osage Nation case, through forced removal, termination of reservations, imposition of financial restrictions, and disparate treatment based on race. As well corrupt trustees, often prominent white citizens, cheated and stole from the Osage people, and the federal government failed to protect their property rights. (Fletcher, M. L., 2019).

The second study in 2021 conducted by Drent and Dennison “Moving to a New Country Again: The Osage Nation's Search for Order and Unity through Change” discusses the historical events that influenced the Osage Nation's migration and displacement, illuminating the socio-political elements that influenced their quest for stability. The authors place a strong emphasis on the value of cultural identity in the Osage Nation's efforts to maintain unity and order. The research emphasizes the value of cultural preservation and its function in their adaptation process by examining the cultural practices and traditions that have sustained the community. The forced exile of the Osage Nation from their ancestral lands and the difficulties they faced in adjusting to the new environment are highlighted in the historical background of this article. The authors look at how the Osage Nation, a unique cultural group, struggled to maintain harmony and unity while navigating the challenges of change. The study places special emphasis on the community's fortitude and efforts to overcome these challenges through group efforts and the revival of cultural elements. The research methodology uses is not fully explained in the article. The credibility and feasibility of this study would have been better if there had been a detailed explanation of the data collection procedures, sample size, and analysis methods (Drent, M., & Dennison, J., 2021).

The third related study is from Fira Esqy's thesis in 2022 with the title “Analisis Langgengnya Isu Diskriminasi Ras Terhadap Asian American Di Era Trump Menggunakan Konsep Critical Race Theory (CRT)”. There are two points of the object of this study, to describe the aims to understand and explain what factors cause racial discrimination against Asian Americans to still exist in the

Trump Era. This research uses the same theory from Richard Delgado. This research uses an object of Asian Americans in Trump's era and the conclusion of this research found that Racial Issues still exist in President Trump's era because there is dominant power that white people have. The existence of White Supremacy, which has been considered a normal thing in the social environment in America, has then become one of the normal in the social environment in America is then one of the reasons (Fira Resqy Novitasari, 2022). The theory uses in this thesis is the same as the research conducted by the researcher. While the issues, results, and objects are different.

The difference between this study and previous studies is that previous studies only focus on one object such as social problems or political problems, and previous studies use different theories from this study. Previous studies also did not discuss the psychology of the Osage tribe and Mollie as the main character. In this study, researcher incorporate racial issues experienced by the Osage tribe which have an impact on Mollie's psychology.

E. Research Methodology

In this research, researcher uses qualitative research methods, by collecting data qualitatively and presenting it descriptively. It describes the situation or area of interest factually and accurately. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative research method is a way of understanding data that is gathered in the form of words or text, analyzed, and described by earlier studies to produce the final result in the form of a written report. Qualitative research refers to a type of research methodology that aims to explore and understand social phenomena from a

subjective perspective. It involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numeric data such as observations, and textual material to gain insight into an individual's experience, meaning, and social context. "Beliefs and patterns of behavior upheld by a society." Finding the fundamental structural components of social existence is the goal (Durkheim, 1982: 4-5).

This is because qualitative research methods emphasize how and why people behave, think, and construct meaning as they do, not on what people do or believe in general. Therefore, qualitative researcher focusses on things in their natural environment while trying to understand or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings given by different people to various phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 2).

Robert K. Yin defines analyzing qualitative data as the methodical process of looking over and analyzing non-numerical data and evidence gathered using a variety of qualitative research techniques. With an emphasis on comprehending the underlying context, linkages, and meanings given to the phenomenon under inquiry, this analysis seeks to identify patterns, themes, and insights within the data (Yin, p. 184–185, 2016).

1. Data and Source of Data

a. Primary Data Source

In this research, the primary data is from the book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann published in 2017.

b. Supporting Data

Researcher need supporting data as the basis for metadata. "Secondary data refers to data that has already been collected by someone other than the user for purposes other than the particular research project at hand" (Bryman, A., & Bell, E., 2015). Furthermore, the researcher collects secondary data from articles, books, journals, and other online sources.

1. Method and Technique of Collecting Data

The researcher collected the necessary data from the book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann. In collecting data, the author first finds out the needs of this research and then identifies by focusing this research on the actions, dialogues, and comments made by the characters in the book, after finding the phenomenon from the book then immediately classifies it. The researcher classifies the phenomena in the book into two parts, namely the collection of phenomena where the Osage tribe gets racial discrimination and the collection of phenomena by Mollie's struggle of her self-defense against racial discrimination.

2. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

In this study, the research uses American interdisciplinarity which consists of two theories, namely Delgado & Stefancic's Critical Race theory and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. To connect the two theories, the researcher uses two approaches, namely the sociological and the psychoanalysis.

In addition, the researcher uses a sociological approach because the research conducted by the researcher was a critical race study of the book *Killers of the Flowering Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, the most suitable approach is sociology. This theory also links elements of ethnicity, ideology, and white privilege. The researcher uses a psychological approach to examine the impact of the phenomenon of racial discrimination experienced by the main character, Mollie.

To reveal the problem formulation of how Mollie applies a defense mechanism as a way to reduce her anxiety. In analyzing this study, the researcher uses Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. The researcher analyzes Mollie's psychoanalysis as the main character in Grann's Book, especially on how she overcame her anxiety with defense mechanisms. Regarding Mollie's experience and the way, she overcomes her anxiety.

F. Presentation

The presentation of this study is important to help readers understand this graduating paper. This undergraduate thesis was presented in four chapters. Chapter I focuses on the researcher's ideas in conducting this study including the background of the study, scope of the study, objectives of the study, review of related studies, theoretical approach, and research method. Chapter II covered the theoretical framework. Next, Chapter III talked about the discussion. Chapter IV consisted of a conclusion and suggestions.