

## **HYPERREALITIES IN POPULAR WORLD FILMS (HIPERREALITAS DALAM FILM-FILM POPULER DUNIA)**

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### **Abstrak**

Fenomena hiperealitas telah melingkupi hampir seluruh masyarakat pascamodern dewasa ini. Hiperealitas terjadi ketika realitas bukan lagi merupakan kenyataan yang terjadi di lapangan, melainkan merupakan sesuatu yang dibuat atau simulasi dari fakta yang ada. Fenomena hiperealitas yang sangat dekat dengan masyarakat dapat dilihat dalam berbagai tontonan, salah satunya film-film populer. Film – film populer yang mengandung realitas berlebihan merupakan tontonan yang paling dinantikan oleh sebahagian besar masyarakat. Adapun tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengungkapkan bagaimana hiperealitas diwujudkan di dalam film-film populer dunia. Konsep mengenai hiperealitas dalam perspektif pascamodernisme dari Jean Baudrillard akan dipakai dalam untuk menjawab persoalan dalam penelitian. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif analisis dengan pendekatan budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Masyarakat postmodern juga lebih menyukai film-film yang berbau hiperealitas dan mengacuhkan nilai-nilai realitas sosial di masyarakat. Hal ini dibuktikan karena banyaknya film-film yang berbau hiperealitas sukses meraih berbagai macam penghargaan dan menjadi ikon perfilman dunia sebagai film terlaris sepanjang masa.

**Kata kunci:** Hiperealitas dalam film, masyarakat pascamodern, film-film populer

### **Abstract**

The phenomenon of hyperreality has encompassed almost all postmodern society today. Hyperreality occurs when reality is no longer a reality that occurs in the field, but is something that is created or simulated from the facts. The phenomenon of hyperreality that is very close to the community can be seen in various spectacle, one of them popular movies. Popular films that contain excessive reality are the most awaited spectacle by most of the people. The purpose of this study is to reveal how hyperreality is manifested in popular films of the world. The concept of hyperreality in the postmodernism perspective of Jean Baudrillard will be used in answering the question of research. This research uses descriptive analysis method with cultural approach. The results show that postmodern society also prefers films that contain hyperreality and ignore the values of social reality in society. This is evidenced by the number of successful films grabbing various awards and becoming the world's film icon as the best-selling film of all time.

**Keywords:** Hyperreality in Films, Postmodern Society, Popular film

## INTRODUCTION

Today, film is a part that can not be separated from the life of the world community. The reality of images moving inside the screen, whether on a television screen or in a movie theater, seems to be the real as a reality that happens in people's lives. This is the feature of postmodern society, where reality is no longer a reality that occurs in the field, but is something that is created or simulated from the facts. People are amazed by the spectacle that is a false reality, even some of them want to imitate the style, language, and nature of the actors in the film. This phenomenon is called the phenomenon of hyperreality, where many of the artificial reality that arises even seem more real than the existing reality.

The postmodern world is a world in which the realities have disappeared, and are replaced with false realities. As Stated by Featherstone (1998) that Postmodernism is seen as the final cultural logic of capitalism. This is in the third stage of the world of capitalism, the consumer society in the post-World War II era. Consequently, consumer societies are viewed as culturally saturated societies. In this case, production is tailored to be consumed with the circulation of 'signs and images' that give rise to simulative cultures, such as Disneyland and 'stylistic interactions' that weigh on traditional traditions, the cultural sphere of literary and art production.

Another representation of postmodern work can be seen in Barbie dolls. Barbie is an example of the apparent reality that existed in today's postmodern society. A doll, which is nothing more than a children's toy and a tertiary need, suddenly becomes a conversation of all societies. Created without reference to body proportions and fair beauty, Barbie appears as a doll with beauty and body perfection that goes beyond the image of human beauty. In short, she is a perfect human figure. Barbie seems to be born as a Barbie who really exists with all her outlaws. It goes even further into the model and determinant of a woman's beauty. Consequently, there are many women who dream of a body like Barbie. It is this phenomenon that underlies Baudrillard's idea of Hyperreality. According to Baudrillard (1983), the reality of culture today is rampant becoming an artificial reality that is even more real than reality. With television and mass media, for example, artificial reality (images) is more real than the original reality. People like Rambo, Barbie dolls, Jurassic Park, or Doraemon looks closer and more real in our lives than our neighbors. Hyperreality is the reality itself, that is, an era that

is guided by models of reality without origin and reference (Baudrillard in Hidayat (2012)).

The film is one of the pillars of postmodern art in addition to television and other art media. Film is also a commodity, art, and ideology. As stated by Jameson, 1983: p. 133, "Post-modernism is the symbol of destruction point among the transcendental art and the common culture". As an art product related to postmodernism, films are the work and creativity of artists displayed in the form of images, and moving images. Postmodern films like the present era are wrestling with the various principles, theories, and models of postmodern art aesthetics that exist for use as a medium of creativity.

One of the prominent features of postmodern films is its character that puts forward visions, images, special techniques, and effects rather than presenting the material of story, characterization, plot, narrative, or social reality (Strinarti, 1995). Postmodern films are also characterized by their obscure nature, even clashing the boundaries of reality and imagination, fact and fiction, production and reproduction, and past, present, and future. The postmodern film in this sense becomes a kind of simulacral and simulated world representation as Baudrillard puts it, an artificial world in which reality is shaped, engineered, and loses any real reference to reality. The desire to exploit the signs and icons of popular culture is also a marker of the postmodern film. Cartoons, comics, science fiction, adventure stories, detectives, K-pop music are also the dominant inspiration in postmodern films. Furthermore, films utilizing these popular cultural signs want to look more real than reality. This is a world of hyperreality, the concept of Baudrillard.

Popular films that contain excessive reality are the most awaited spectacle by most of the people. They do not even hesitate to spend a big pocket to be able to watch the films in the cinema. These facts are what makes the author interested to create a paper with the title "Hyperrealities in Popular World Films". In this research, I took five data by the world's best-selling films. There are Avatar, Twilight, Scream, Harry Potter, and Batman. These five films are Box Office films, whose presence is highly anticipated by the world community. Therefore, this article aims to reveal how hyperreality is shown in Hollywood movies that once occupied the box office abroad.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Jean Baudrillard's Concept of Hyperreality**

Jean Baudrillard was born in the town of Riems, western France, on January 5, 1929. His parents came from a peasant family who later moved to the city of Paris and worked as an employee of the Public Service Department. As stated by Horrocks and Jevtic (1999) that Baudrillard had experienced the heyday and bankruptcy of Fascism. The thinkers who inspired him were Roland Barthes and Karl Marx with his masterpieces. Baudrillard produced many works, such as the book *The Object System* (1968), *Communications* (1969), his translation of Bertolt Brecht and Arnold Weiss. Marcel Mauss a structuralist anthropologist regarding gift or gift, and Georges Bataille on expenditure or shopping (Lechte, 1994: 233). In agreement with the last two thinkers, Baudrillard rejects Marx's principles of value and argues that human consumption activity is essentially a non-utilitarian activity (Baudrillard 1993: 68).

In 1983, his magnum opus, *Simulations* (1983), was published in the English edition. In this soon-to-be-classic book, Baudrillard introduces a characteristic of Western society today. According to him, today's Western culture is a representation of the world of simulation, the world formed from the relation of various signs and codes randomly, without a clear relational reference. This relationship involves the real sign (fact) created through the production process, as well as the apparent sign (image) created through the process of reproduction.

In the simulated culture, the two signs are stacked together and intertwined to form a unity. It can no longer be recognized which the real, the real, and the fake, the false. It is all part of the reality that today's Western society lives and lives. This unity is called Baudrillard as a simulacra or simulacrum, a world awakened from a clutter of values, facts, signs, images and codes. Reality no longer has a referent, except for the simulacra itself (In Hidayat 2012).

According to Jean Baudrillard, one of the characteristics of the postmodern period is the hyperreal society. Baudrillard's thoughts are based on several assumptions about human and media attachment, which Baudrillard calls the Mediascape reality (Baudrillard, 1983: 16). In reality mediascape mass media becomes the most dominant cultural product. With the mass media, the media is now no longer limited to the extension of the human body, but the media is now at the same time forming his identity.

The development of science and technology today with the micro-processor, remote control, telecard, laser disk, and internet in Baudrillard's view not only extend the body or the human nervous system, but even more fantastically capable of reproducing reality, the past and nostalgia ; creating new realities with artificial reality, conjuring up fantasies, illusions, even hallucinations into reality; and folding the reality so that nothing more than a television screen, cinema, flashdisc, and the internet (Pilliang, 1998: 197).

Moreover, the reality of this new technology has overcome the real reality and even become the new model of reference for society. Images are more convincing than facts and dreams are more believable than everyday life. This is a world of hyperreality: a reality that is more real than real, pseudo and explosive. In the world of hyperreality, the original objects which are the result of production wrestle into one with the objects of hypereal which is the result of reproduction. With television and mass media, for example, the artificial reality (images) is more real than the original reality. Under these conditions, reality, truth, fact, and objectivity lose its existence.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is a research that uses analytical descriptive methodology using Cultural Studies approach with hyperreality perspective by Jean Baudrillard perspective in society. In line with the writings of Lister and Wells (2000) which reveal that Cultural Studies as a study that looks at how cultures are produced, applied and consumed that can not be separated from everyday culture, by representational, visual or otherwise. This study divides the three levels of research, namely description, meaning, and ideology. Descriptions contain visually captured descriptions, meanings containing deepening of the visual description or expression of the meaning of the description, and the last is the ideology that is the deepening of certain meanings associated with a concept.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Hyperreality in Popular Movies**

Film is an art commodity most desirable and awaited its presence by most of the world community. movies can be said also as one of the most popular entertainment media, in addition to television of course. Watching movies,

whether in the theatres, or by simply playing DVD / VCD at home is the most fun activity. Movies are able to attract people's attention and some are based on the reason that film is able to deliver the message uniquely. The power and capability of the film reaches many social segments making the film potentially influencing its audience.

Film essentially shapes and represents reality. The content of the film itself is the result of the film workers forming and representing the various realities chosen by telling the events to form a story. Furthermore, film shapes and represents reality based on codes and ideologies of culture as a reflection of reality. Movies basically just transfer the reality to the glass screen without changing the reality.

However the development of the age, content and storytelling in films that should reflect social has shifted function. Most of the films in today's postmodern era are more incarnate to artistic commodities that are hyperreal. Postmodern film is a commodity, art, as well as ideology, the ideology of postmodernism. As an art product, the film is the result of creativity and ability of artists displayed in the form of images and moving images. As Stated by Dominic Strinati (1995) that one of the prominent characters of postmodern films is the nature that puts forward the appearance, the appearance of images - sounds, images, styles, and special effects, rather than mater narrative, characterization, plot, narrative or reality social (Sinatri, 1995: 229).

Referring to Jean Baudrillard (1993), in today's cultural realities the principle of value-for-use and exchange has been replaced by symbolic values and values. Appearance, status symbol, image, and sign are more important than meaning, content, and depth. Postmodern film is different from modern film, no longer pretend to find the meanings or reflect social conditions through story, characterization, or narration. Instead of being heroic, the postmodern philosopher chose to play around with style, image, media and signs. The postmodern film consciously exploits the possibilities of aesthetic exploration as its strength and appeal. On the one hand, postmodern films are conscious of its position as a commodity, which is nothing more than merchandise, which leads it to fulfill capitalism law of profit. But on the other hand, postmodern films at once want to open new aesthetic horizons by taking advantage of the opportunities given to experiment.

Postmodern films are also characterized by their obscure nature, even confusing boundaries between reality and imagination, fact and fiction, production and reproduction, and past, present and future. The postmodern film in this sense becomes a sort of representation of the simulacra world and the simulation and terminology of Jean Baudrillard, an artificial duania in which reality is shaped, engineered, and loses any real reality reference (hyperreality). The postmodern film is thus a film filled with worlds that no longer have references, chaos, and mixed between the signs, images, and themes of a world of games and imagination in its farthest range (Bertens, 1995)

The postmodern concept of Baudrillard's thought about the dominance of these symbols and values can be found in today's best-selling films. Surprisingly, the films most popular with today's society are the films included in the above explanation. No wonder if the films into the highest sales rating and the most popular among the community. Using Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, I will present some of the films that are included in the best-selling film of all time. Here are the best selling movies.

**a Avatar (2009)**

Avatar is a 3-D science fiction film directed by James Cameron. The film was released on December 16, 2009 worldwide by 20th Century Fox. The film revolves around a conflict in a world called Pandora, when humans and Pandora natives engage in war. Avatar movie nominated for Oscar including Best Picture and Best Director and won three categories, Best Visual Effect, Best Cinematography, and Best Art Director.

This film tells about Jake Sully (Sam Worthington), a former US navy who was wounded and disabled by the war. He was selected to participate in the Avatar program, which enabled him to walk again. Jake heads to Pandora, a lush jungle filled with all kinds of good and terrible creatures. Pandora is also home to the Na'vi tribe, a human-like creature with a primitive life and possessing human-like abilities. When humans tried to enter Pandora to mine the minerals there, the Na'vi tribe ordered his soldiers to protect his country from threats. Jake was recruited to be part of this project. Since humans can not breathe the air in the land of Pandora, they create a creature that resembles the Na'vi tribe they call Avatar. In Pandora, with Avatar's body, Jake can walk again. In the jungle of

Pandora, Jake saw a lot of beauty and danger. He also met a young Na'vi woman named Neytiri (Zoe Saldaña). As time passes, Jake mingles with the Na'vi tribe and falls in love with Neytiri. In the end, Jake was wedged between his destination sent by the mining company to Pandora and the Na'vi tribe, forcing him to take the side that would determine the fate of the Na'vi and humans in Pandora.

Pandora (pronunciation / pændɔərə / pan-dohr-ə), is a fictional moon on James Cameron's Avatar movie and the setting on the Avatar video game. This month orbits a giant gas planet called Polythemis. Pandora is an extra terrestrial, shady month with a unique life. Pandora is inhabited by many beautiful creatures, but many are terrible. Pandora is also home to the Na'vi tribe. They are primitive humanoid tribes, but evolution is more advanced than humans. At three meters tall, with tails and blue skin, the Na'vi live in peace.

This Avatar movie is a representation of the author's imagination and wraps it into a groove so that it becomes the real reality. The characters and the background in the story are false and merely to make the audience's imagination mesmerized by the story in this movie. The reality shown in this story is the reality that is made real with the help of Non-Human characteristics, futuristic settings, excessive lighting, stunning special effects, popular music, and simple storyline settings. Film in this sense, becomes nothing more than just entertainment. At first glance we are amazed by the appearance of this film, but if we examine further, the meaning, depth and social reality in this film seems to have blurred and replaced with reality based on the author's imagination.

#### **b Twilight (2008)**

Twilight is a drama, fantasy and romantic movie based on Twilight's Stephenie Meyer novel. The film was released on November 21, 2008 and directed by Catherine Hardwicke with main characters played by Robert Pattinson (Edward Cullen) and Kristen Stewart (Bella Swan). Before Twilight the Movie was released, Stephenie Meyer had scored the Twilight series in novel form. The film tells the story of a love affair between a teenage girl named Bella Swan with Edward Cullen who belongs to the vampire class as well as the Cullen business and her family to protect Swan from the dangers of vampires - evil vampires.

Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart) is a new student who recently moved from a small town in America, Phoenix, Arizona, to a cold and rainy city, Forks, Washington. Her mother remarried with someone else and let Bella live with her father who worked as a cop in Forks. Bella is the figure of someone who is quiet, she does not expect anything that changes her during her stay in Forks until eventually the change comes after she meets a mysterious and enchanting person, Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson). Edward and his family always hide their identity to the people around who are in Forks, more specifically at Bella's school. Some of the students in the school know the Cullen family as a cold family and never socialize with anyone. He does not live since 1918 and he can not die. Edward mysteriously makes Bella curious until at last he falls in love with Edward. The Cullen family was visited by guests from other vampire families and they breathed fresh human blood nearby. Edward must fight to save Bella. This sequel is an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet with a love story that can not be expressed by words. The setting looks more modern with its attention-grabbing effect, a struggle for true love forbidden and a battle between vampires and death.

The contents and materials of a very simple romance story wrapped by modern settings typical of young people today and the effects of interest to make this twilight movie an icon for today's teenagers. Coupled with the presence of Robert Pattinson's face-looking figure and a pretty-faced Kristen Stewart plays the two main characters in the film. As if to be a pride and prestige for teenagers when they have watched this movie. So no wonder, many teenagers who dream of having a love story like in this movie, the love story with a vampire that in fact is a mere artificial author figures. The reality of this film is even a reality for teenagers who watch it. This film is able to make itself as a icon of love for young people today. The film that tells of romantic love like Twilight movie, clearly refers to the signs of popular culture as a reference new reality, which even seem more real than the real reality. With the characters in the film, we are made to forget that the characters are merely fictional.

### **c Scream (1996)**

Scream is a horror movie mostly located in Santa Rosa (California). Movies directed by Wes Craven include David Arquette, Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox, Matthew Lillard, Rose McGowan, Skeet Ulrich, Drew

Barrymore, and more. Its release date is December 20, 1996. This film is the first serial of the Scream movie series.

This film tells the story of the brutal murder of two high school students, Casey Becker, and her boyfriend Steve, schoolmate Sidney Prescott. The timing of this tragedy is really a difficult time for Sidney, which he knows a few days later is a year after his mother was raped and killed. That night he was called by the same man who had killed Casey and Steve, a mysterious man with a ghost mask and a black cloak called Ghostface. Ghostface terrorized Sidney both on the phone and at Sidney's home. In a panic, and in a state of fear, he suspects his lover, Billy Loomis, as an attacker himself.

A series of murders and mysteries that are difficult to solve to make a film called Scream is in demand by today's society. Regardless of the moral side or the content of the story, people seem to be challenged to watch a movie that has this Thriller genre. Yet if we examine further, the material and the content of the stories offered are very absurd. Although, there is a possibility in the real world there are events like this. But this movie can also be an example of society to commit acts of violence in real life, such as scenes in this kind of murder movie. Thus, what we are most afraid of is that such murder films can also educate the audience to act as they are in the story through scenes in the film depicted in detail. That's when the hypnotism featured in the movie can be a real reality.

#### **d Harry Potter (2001)**

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone) is a very successful film in 2001 which was lifted from the fantasy novel J. K. Rowling with the same title. The film was made in the Leavesden Film Studio and was released in 2001. The second, third and fourth books have also been adapted into the film.

Harry Potter is a seemingly ordinary child, living with a blood-related family with his, the Dursleys in Surrey. On his eleventh birthday, Harry finds out from a mysterious stranger, Rubeus Hagrid, that he is actually a magician, famous in the Wizarding World because it can withstand Lord Voldemort's evil attacks when Harry was a baby. Voldemort killed Harry's parents, but the attack on Harry failed to do so, leaving a lightning scar on Harry's forehead and causing Voldemort to die. Hagrid reveals to Harry that he has been invited to go to school

at Hogwarts, a School of Witchcraft. After purchasing his school supplies at Diagon Alley, Harry departs by train to Hogwarts via the 9 ¾ Platform hidden in Cross Station king.

The reality shown in this Harry Potter movie looks so real. The existence of a magic school with an educational system that is no less great with education in the real world and professors who teach in magic schools, coupled with a variety of elements of magic, making this film a spectacle of interest to all circles, especially children. Children's imagination becomes more challenged when watching this movie. So do not be surprised if some children believe that the existence of a magic school is really real. This Harry Potter film has obscured and even mixed the boundaries between reality and imagination as well as fact and fiction. Fantasy and special effects make this film to be truly quality even though the reality displayed in the story is an exaggerated and absurd reality. The Harry Potter films and the like are a representation of the simulacra world and simulations as illustrated by Baudrillard, the artificial world in which reality is shaped, engineered, and lost all realities.

#### **e Batman (1993)**

Batman (originally called the Bat-Man) is a super hero fictioner created by artist Bob Kane and author Bill Finger and published by DC Comics. This figure first appeared on Detective Comics # 27 (May 1939). He is also known for his many epithets as "the Caped Crusader", "the Dark Knight", "the World's Greatest Detective", or simply "the Bat"; in the original story and very much, Batman's identity is Bruce Wayne, a wealthy businessman. Bruce Wayne's name itself is taken from the name of the historical figure of Robert the Bruce and "Mad" Anthony Wayne.

He witnessed the killing of his parents as a child and was moved to fight crime with his own weapons. Batman operates in Gotham City, aided by his butler Alfred Pennyworth and his partner Robin. Unlike most superheroes, he does not have superpowers, he only uses intelligence, skills as a detective, science and technology, wealth, physical dexterity, and intimidation in the fight against evil. Batman's successful and popular films in all quarters including adults and children have turned out to be a heroic icon in today's postmodern era. Starting from Baudrillard's idea of the dominance of postmodern values and symbols of films, it

seems to make Batman's main character as an icon or symbol of this century's heroism. Whereas the Batman character is an artificial character of the author's imagination and in the real-life reality the hero or hero can be determined by him is a Batman or not. Raised from a comic story, the film clearly puts forward the material of story, style, and images rather than social meanings and realities. This Batman film through its non-human character, as well as a powerful effect has made the audience mesmerized and entertained by watching it. Thus, the film batman and the like is a film that is nothing more than just entertainment. This film is not a reference to the real reality that occurs in society. Because the content and material of the story and its characteristics are only the author's imagination.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the discussions above, the author can draw some conclusions. They are as follows:

- a Hiperality is the reality itself, which means that an era is guided by models of reality without origin and reference. Where, the real is not simply reproducible, but always and always reproduced.
- b Postmodern films such as these are forward visual, voicemail images, imagery, styles, and special effects rather than story material, characterization, narrative plot, or social reality (does not reflect social conditions).
- c Postmodern societies also favor films that contain hypocrisy and ignore the values of social reality in society. This is evidenced because of the many successful films of hypnosis won numerous awards and became a world cinema icon as the best-selling film of all time. The films include, Avatar, Twilight, Scream, Harry Potter, and Batman, as the author has described above.

Finally, the author hopes that a paper with the title Hiperrealitas in Popular films A Study of the World's Bestselling Movies can be useful for students who want to research the thinking of philosopher Jean Baudrillard, especially in the concept of hyperreality. The authors also expect advice and criticism for the sake of the preparation of this paper.

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