

**Myths as reflected in joel zwick's film
*My Big Fat Greek Wedding***

By:

Umi Kadarsih

C.1303049

Approved to be examined before the board of examiners
Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Sebelas Maret University

On April 17, 2006

Thesis Consultant :

1. Dra Zita Rarastesa, MA

(_____)

Thesis Consultant

NIP 132 206 593

Head of English Department

Drs Riyadi Santosa, M.Ed

NIP. 131 569 264

APPROVAL OF BOARD EXAMINERS

Approved by the Board of Examiners

Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts – Sebelas Maret University

On

The Board of Examiners

- | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|
| 1. Drs Bathoro MS, MA | (|) |
| Chairman | NIP 130529731 | |
| 2. Fitria Akhmerti Primasita, S.S., M.A. | (|) |
| Secretary | NIP 132205442 | |
| 3. Dra Zita Rarastesa, MA | (|) |
| First Examiner | NIP 132 206 593 | |
| 4. Dra. Endang Sri Astuti, M.S. | (|) |
| Second Examiner | NIP 130902533 | |

Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts

Sebelas Maret University

Dean

Dr. Maryono Dwirahardjo, SU

NIP 130 675 167

PRONOUNCEMENT

Name : Umi Kadarsih

NIM : C 1303049

I declared truthfully that this thesis entitled **Myths As Reflected in Joel Zwick's Film, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*** is not plagiarism or other's piece of work.

The terms belonging to other works were noted for the academic sanctions comprising the cancellation of the thesis and the academic title.

Surakarta, April, 2006

Umi Kadarsih

Motto

I can do everything through Him who gives me strength

Phillipians 4:13



Dedication

- **Jesus Christ**
- **My family**
- **Andri Nugroho**



ABSTRACT

Umi Kadarsih.2006.C 1303049. Myths as Reflected in Joel Zwick's Film *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*.English Extension Program. Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Sebelas Maret University

This thesis took the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* as its object of research. It is a romantic comedy movie directed by Joel Zwick and produced by Warner Brothers in 2002.

This thesis discusses the transformation on Toula's life, both physical and psychological. Toula is the main character of this film. She is a 30 year-old Greek girl that made a breakthrough in her traditional Greek, family. The research was conducted to find out the myths existing in American society reflected in the film. This research uses the semiotic film theory and sociological approach. Semiotic film theory is used to understand and to interpret the hidden meanings that are conveyed by the film. Sociological approach is used in this research to find out and to understand the myths that are living in American society.

Based on the analysis, the researcher found that there were three myths reflected in the movie: myth of beauty, myth of romantic love and myth of nuclear family. Each of the myth was reflected through the dialogue, characters' facial expression, gestures, costumes and how the cinematographic elements are used.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding contains American values and also Greek values that are packed in an entertaining movie. From the discussion of this thesis, it can be seen that the director of the movie wants to show that American culture is better than the Greek culture.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is an honor for me to write my gratitude related with the thesis I have made. I realize that I could not finish this thesis without the support of many people. Many persons have encouraged me so I could step into this part. Deepest gratitude I also like to dedicate to:

1. Dr Maryono Dwi Raharjo SU, the Dean of Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts
2. Drs Riyadi Santosa MA, the head of the Extension English Program for his advises and time
3. My consultant, Dra Zita Rarastesa, MA for her huge helps, care and time. I realize that I could never complete my thesis without you. I don't know if I don't have you as my thesis counselor. You're just what most people say..'one in a million'.... Thanks a lot Mam. You're the best of all....
4. Dra Fitria Akhmerti Primasita for guiding me to do the revision.
5. Dra Endang SA, MS the secretary of the Extension English Program for helping me dealing with administration stuffs.
6. My beloved Mom and Dad for their love, care and support.
7. My brothers and sisters, for giving me chance to accomplish my college. For my niece and nephew, Putri and Adith
8. My unforgettable friends, Maya and Tian for the friendship we have for all this time. You're always have a place in my life...sorry if I didn't show it much. Both of you are precious for me.

9. Part of my soul, Andri Nugroho, for the courage, for precious moments, and for wonderful times we've had. For your will to take me where ever I wanted to go. For your patience and for all the things you've given me. You've brightened up my days...love you..
10. *Gerombolan Si Berat*, David, Robert, Andi, Aldo, Elda and Intan, for being my friends in accomplishing this thesis. Great to know you all guys....
11. Anies Fortina, for her printer and time...thanks sis
12. Hubert, my 'new' friend for helping me so much with this thesis. I never know that you're totally different from what I thought before. Thanks a lot bro...really nice to know you.
13. My 'driver' and my loyal friend, Cahyo, for the times you've spent for me.. I appreciate it so much. I'm glad to know that I always have you when ever I need a place to talk..
14. Mas Budi for helping me dealing with my computer...thank you so much brothers....I'm longing for us to spend time in C-1000, hehehe..
15. Mbak Santi for her motivation and maturity. don't give up sis, you can do it!!
16. Caesar 'Mlento' for keeping me smile all the time. You really make my day..
17. My friends in Extension English Program, for coloring my days for the last two years.
18. Queen, White Lion and all the slow rock troops for accompany me with their lovely songs in accomplishing this thesis
19. To all people that I couldn't mention here one by one

Above all, I would like to dedicate my greatest thank to Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, who never get bored to give me strength and for His incredible love to me.

Surakarta, April 2006

Umi Kadarsih

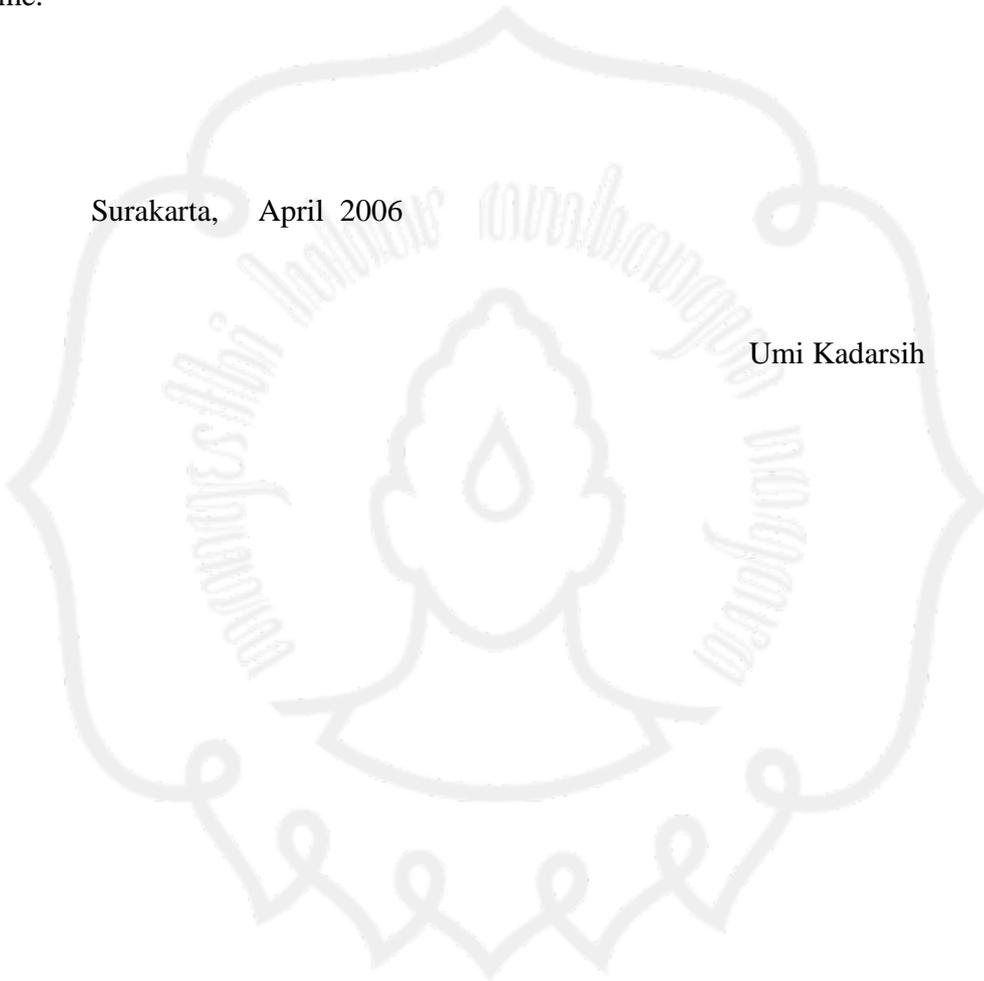


TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE.....	i
THE APPROVAL OFADVISORS.....	ii
APPROVAL OF BOARD EXAMINERS.....	iii
PRONOUNCEMENT.....	iv
MOTTO.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Background of Choosing the Subject	1
B. Scope of Study	3
C. Problem Statement	3
D. Objectives of the Study.....	4
E. Benefits of the Study	4
F.Theoretical Approach	4
G. Research Methodology	7
H. Thesis Organization	7
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9

A. Semiotics Film Theory.....	9
B. Sociological Approach	11
C. American Myths	13
D. American and Greek Family Values	23
1. American Family Values	23
2. Greek Family Values	24
E. Basic Terminology in Cinematography	27
CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS.....	39
A. What myths can be found in the movie and how does the movie reflect them?	39
1. Myth of Beauty.....	39
2. Myth of Romantic Love.....	51
3. Myth of Nuclear Family.....	63
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	70
A. CONCLUSION	70
B. RECOMMENDATION.....	74
BIBLIOGRAPHY	75
APPENDICES	
CHAPTER I	

INTRODUCTION

Background of Choosing the Subject

America is one of developed nations in the world. In many fields, for instance in technology, America has become the center and even the pioneer. Once when Soviet Union existed, America and the Soviet Union were competing in creating the image of technology leader. But soon after its fall, America becomes the superpower country in the world.

In its development process in becoming the developed nation, America has been through many happenings and producing many things. One of the results is the American culture that is already widely known. Jazz, jeans, fast food, and all made-in America products are three examples of American culture result. Another example is film. American film has produced a special place of the cinematic things, Hollywood. As many other things, Hollywood as the American product also becomes the orientation of other countries' film production. The film launched by Hollywood is not only launched in America but also all over the world. And most of them got a great respect from moviegoers. Hollywood has produced many qualified films since it was born. And the film genre is varied. From the science fiction, mystery, fantasy, to romantic film have been made in Hollywood.

Film is one of popular products that is used to convey messages to its moviegoers. The messages are expressed in an interesting story in order to attract

moviegoers' attention. Film reflects the reality of society and it cannot be separated from the values and ideologies that want to be spread by the moviemakers to the moviegoers. It means that a film can be used as a means of propaganda and entertainment at once.

American film is a form of entertainment media that reflects American behaviors, American thoughts and American ways of life. By using this media, the messages that want to be conveyed to the moviegoers are expressed and packed in an interesting and entertaining story that will be distributed to countries in the world.

One of movies made by Hollywood is *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is a film with romantic comedy as its genre. This thing is reflected through the struggle of a couple with a different cultural background in maintaining their relationship. Many funny scenes are inserted to make this movie worth watching. The equality for woman in education is one of cultural differences between American and the Greek. For American, kids--male and female—have the same chance to get highest education. But for Greeks, women have opportunity to go to school but not as much as the men do. The American have been accustomed to go out from their home and make their own living. They consider it as a way to learn about responsibility and independence as well. But for Greek, kids remain kids until they are 30 years old (<http://members.aol.com/Donnnclass/Greeklife.html>.)

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is directed by Joel Zwick and it was produced in 2002 by Warner Brothers. The film script was written by Nia Vardalos and casted Nia Vardalos as Toula Portokalos, John Corbett as Ian Miller, Michael Constantine as

Gus Portokalos, and Lainie Kazan as Maria Portokalos. It is a story about Toula Portokalos, a 30-year-old Greek girl, and she has not been married yet. As a good Greek girl, she had failed. All her cousins did the right thing—married and having children. And it made everybody worry. One day she met her charming prince and she realized that the only way to make up her life is letting her self off of her big Greek family. She stopped from her family restaurant, changed her physical appearance that fit to the American standard of beauty and continued her college, convinced her aunt to give her a new job, and started to use contact lens instead of glasses. All those things were done in order to attract the prince of charming back to her.

Scope of Study

To achieve the goal, it is important to limit this study in order to avoid deviation and rambling analysis. This research will be focused on the dialogues, character's facial expression, character' attitudes and camera angles of this film that are related to the problem statement of this research.

Problem Statement

1. What myths can be found in the movie and how does the movie reflect them?

Objectives of the Study

Since this research is done under the scope of American studies, the major purpose of this research is to see and to understand the American society. The research has some purposes as follows:

1. To mention what myths that can be found in the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*.
2. To explain how *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* reflects those myths.

Benefits of the Study

In accordance with the explanation above, the purpose of the study is to describe the myths that exist in America based on the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. The researcher hopes, it will give many benefits in understanding American culture. Some benefits that are expected by the researcher are:

1. To give contribution in understanding American society and culture.
2. To give additional information that can be used by other researchers especially American studies researchers of Sebelas Maret University.

Theoretical Approach

This research is conducted within the boundaries of American Studies. It means that interdisciplinary approach is applied in this research. The approaches that

are applied in this research are semiotic, sociological, historical and cultural approaches.

1. Semiotic Approach

One of the approaches that is used in this research is semiotic related to film theory. Semiotic film theory is applied because this film, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, contains many messages reflecting the myths and life values. It means that *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* researcher is demanded more than just merely watching the movie. The researcher of the movie is also demanded to see *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* in deeper meaning, in order to understand the hidden meanings and messages in this film.

2. Sociological approach

Sociological approach is an approach that always considers social aspects. It is critical approach that uses a sociological perspective in analyzing an object of study. Sociological approach is applied because a film has inseparable relation to the social life and phenomena that happen in a society.

3. Historical approach

Historical approach is an approach that is used to learn and to understand the background and growth of a certain field study or profession.

Historical approach is applied in this research because the research involved the myth of beauty and the myth of material success that have been through changes up till now.

4. Cultural approach

In cultural approach, the researcher uses popular culture theory. Popular culture theory as Nachbar and Lause wrote talks about something that is commercial, imitative and becomes the product of the mass. The researcher uses the cultural approach related to popular culture theory because film as the researcher's object of research is one of the popular culture products. The study of popular culture is guided by the Popular Culture Formula. It stated that a popularity of a given cultural element (object, person or event) is directly proportional to the degree to which that element is reflective of audience beliefs and values. The formula assumes that audiences choose a specific cultural element over other alternatives because they find it attractive in its reassuring reflection of their beliefs values and desires. The greater the popularity of cultural element—in an era and /or over time, the more reflective of the zeitgeist (spirit of an era) is likely to be. (Nachbar & Lause :.5). Cultural approach, in this case related to the popular theory is used in this research because the object of the research is about myth. Nachbar & Lause wrote that myth is a cultural mindset lies on the basement of the house of popular culture. It also termed as the bedrock belief. Myth is put in deep down of the house of popular culture because it is most stable, longstanding, significant ones characteristic of broad components of the total population (Nachbar & Lause :.23).

Research Methodology

This research is a library research for most of the activities are done by library orientation. The form of this research is analytic qualitative. As a form of library research, this research uses books and articles that support the subject matter of this research.

The main source of data is the *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* VCD directed by Joel Zwick that was produced by Warner Brothers Studio in 2002 and it is distributed by PT Vision Interprima Pictures. It casted Nia Vardalos as Toula Portokalos, John Corbett as Ian Miller, Michael Constantine as Gus Portokalos, and Lainie Kazan as Maria Portokalos. The script was written by Nia Vardalos. Main data of this research are the dialogues, characters' facial expression, characters' attitudes and the elements of the movie in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* that are related to the problem statements. The supporting data of this research are articles about myths that exist in America and also reviews about *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* that are related to the problem statements.

Thesis Organization

The thesis consists of 4 chapters and each of them is divided into subchapters. The thesis arrangement is as follows:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION consists of background of the study, scope of study, problem statement, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, theoretical approach that consists of semiotic film theory and sociological approach, and research methodology.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW consists of semiotic film theory, sociological approach, American myths, American and Greek family values.

CHAPTER III ANALYSIS consists of myths that are reflected in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* and how the movie reflects them.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION consists of conclusion and recommendation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Semiotic Film Theory

Semiotics is a term that comes from the Greek *semeion* 'sign'. It is a science that studies the life of signs within the society. This term was used for the first time by an American pragmatic philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. Semiotics is often called semiology. Both are the sciences that study the life within society. Semiotics can be said as the continuation of Saussure's Structuralism. Ferdinand de Saussure is a Swiss linguist that introduced Course in General Linguistics, the study of language that gives much contribution to the contemporary film theory. Saussure divided the study of language into diachronic and synchronic. He also introduced the distinctions between *langue* and *parole*, between signifier and signified. *Signifier* is the sensible, material, acoustic or visual signal, which triggers a mental concept, *signified*. The combination of signified and signifier is *sign*. And the process when signified of a sign is understood called signification. What people meant by *parole* is what people utter whether in writing or in speech. While *langue* is the term which stands for the system of a particular language allowing someone to generate a meaningful sentence according to rules of word formation and sentence structure.

A film consists of thousand images that are recorded on celluloid tape. A film consists of thousand images in order to create “movement illusion”; illusions that cause the images of film that are projected onto a screen seem to move. It happens since films need 1440 images. These images, images that are a little bit different from each other, are arranged according to the plot of the film. The arranged images are projected onto a screen by projector. The combination between the light of projector that produces images and the photoelectric cells of projector that produce sounds cause ‘persistence of vision’, the cooperation between human being’s eye and brain that see film images as moving images. Therefore, film images seem to move as real images. The better one reads an image, the more one understands it. People who are highly experienced in film see more and hear more than people who seldom go the movies (Monaco, 2000:152)

A film consists of many signs and codes which covertly revealed meanings and polisemic. Therefore semiotic film theory is used to interpret not only the words or sentences but also the social meaning beneath those signs and codes in connection with the problem statement.

Semiotic film theory has sought to explain how meaning is embodied in a film and how that meaning is communicated to an audience. Semiotic film theory is used to analyze signs in a film and discover the meaning of signs in a film deeply.

Semiotic film theory was first introduced in the mid of 1960’s by Christian Metz, a French scholar whose semiotic film theory is significant in cinematography.

Metz stated that in film, the relation between celluloid strip projected onto a screen, the shaped and patterned visual image and what the image may represent is the relation between signifier and signified. In film, the relation between signifier and signified is iconic as well as indexical. Iconic, because the image resembles what it represents and indexical because the image as effect of a photochemical process is caused by what it represents. What we watch in the film is never the real itself but always a reproduction or representation of the real.

Christian Metz's semiotic film theory places a film as a text. A film is difficult to explain because it is easy to understand. Metz pointed out: We understand a film not because we have knowledge of its system; rather we achieve an understanding of its system because we understand the film (Monaco, 2000:157). Metz distinguished images in film into cinematic image and filmic image. Cinematic images are elements or images potentially common to all films such as lighting, stage, the articulation of sounds and camera movements. Filmic images are images that consist of costumes, gestures, dialogues, characterization, and facial expression (Monaco & James, 2000 : 165)

Sociological approach

The term sociology credited to Auguste Comte (1798 – 1857) is derived from two root words. *Socio* means associate and *logos*, which means word. Then it means the word about association or society (Eshleman, Cashion, Basirico, 1993: 6) According to American Sociological Association in a booklet called "Careers in Sociology", sociology is the study of social life and the social causes and

consequences of human behavior. Sociology is also described as a kind of people watching. It concerns with every aspect of the self in relationships with others and every aspect of the social world that affects a person's thought or actions (Eshleman, Cashion, Basirico, 1993, : 6). Sociological approach is an approach that catches the reality of life through its entire problem including the writer. Sociological approach is also an approach that always considers social aspects. It is a critical approach that uses sociological perspectives in analyzing an object of study.



American Myths

The term '*myth*' is frequently used to describe a mistake or error, which has somehow come to be accepted as true (Nachbar & Lause, 1992 : 84). For example the Javanese believe that someone should not eat in front of the door since it will make them have difficulty in finding their soul mate. Or a pregnant woman that should not sew since it is believed that her future baby will be born with imperfect fingers. Those myths above cannot be proved to be true but still many Javanese hold it for generations. Myth in the study of popular culture says nothing about truth or falsity but it says that the belief / value is significant and long lasting, vital to the mindset of the culture which holds it and that is widely accepted as being true. Myths also exist in America. There are many myths believed by the Americans. Myth of material success, myth of romantic love, myth of beauty, and myth of nuclear family are several of them. As the researcher has stated above, that myth says nothing about truth or falsity. *Myth of material success* for example. This myth says that some people if they do work hard, get a little bit fortune, and thereby achieve wealth, fame and power. However, in many cases, it may be false. People can do the same thing and end up homeless (Nachbar & Lause : 84)

In short, the point is that the myth is believed and that people make choices and take actions upon the belief in the myth. The origin of the myth of material success can be traced back to the days of the American first settlers,

the Puritans. For the Puritans, success was a spiritual matter. Material success was only an accident of much larger goal, and the pursuit of virtue was much more important than the pursuit of the dollar. Benjamin Franklin believed that the most acceptable service of God was the doing the good to man. As the consequences of this belief, he devoted himself to improve the early life in everyway that he could. Industry was one of the moral virtues that Franklin most prized and he resolved to force himself to 'lose no time, be always employed in something useful, and cut off all necessary actions. Franklin's life is a testimonial to the American success myth for by his self-discipline he proved that a 15-year-old child of a poor candle maker was no obstacle to become a wealthy printer, writer and respected diplomat. In 1800's, Horatio Alger Jr contributed his writings to the American myth of success. Each of Alger's novel differs in its specifics, but the pattern of all is the same. A poor boy (who is usually orphan) is struggling to have a better life. Alger's heroes are frequently fatherless and consequently must shift for themselves at an early age. Because of this, they have a mature sense of responsibility and a devotion to work as the means of preserving the family units. For Alger, success was definitely a combination of Puritan luck and Ben Franklin's pluck. Alger had implied that for some, success was well deserved and that the business world was really a testing ground for the development and encouragement of an individual's personal character. In lectures and articles,

they emphasize that success was earned only by aggression and constant work and that one could rise only by starting very low (Nachbar & Lause : 139)

Another myth believed by the Americans is the *myth of romantic love*. Romantic love was invented 800 years ago by the French troubadours. Before the Middle Ages some people experienced exaggerated, fantasy feeling that is now called 'romantic love'. However, such a feeling did not become the passion of masses until the French troubadours refined and spread the emotional game of love. The French troubadours were traveling entertainers who put on plays, recited poetry and sang popular songs of the day. Their audiences especially liked romantic stories and songs. The tradition they started has continued into the popular culture of today. Myth of romantic love in American culture decrees that one only becomes fully 'self actualized' –achieves a full, mature identity and psychic completeness—through choosing a love partner and remaining true to that partner until forces beyond one's control intervene (Harrington & Bielby in Nachbar & Lause, 1992 : 151). The Americans believes that the search for 'true love' is the most important thing in life, for the 'true love' relationship promises lifelong companionship, passion, and support. The belief in the Holy Grail of the perfect partner is the subject matter of majority of American songs and central storyline of most American movies and television shows. One example is the film *Ghost* (1992) directed by Jerry Zucker that amazed the movie goers with its assertion that romantic love is indeed eternal, not just 'till death do us a part'.

Romantic love is a complex cultural phenomenon (Nachbar & Lause, 1992 : 151). When people speak of cultural myths, they usually conceptualize 'myth' as a cultural belief complex based on the fusion that determines our attitudes towards and response to present and future situation. The myth of romantic love in western tradition is based on the liberation of emotion, and it is probably the most common and universal myth of American popular culture. The socialization of romantic love has started when people still in their kiddy age. In little girls, this socialization begins in the form of Barbie and Cinderella, and other romantic fairy tales. In Barbie, there has been produced the bride and the groom, Barbie and Ken. While in Cinderella, there always is a part of the story that stated. *...and they live happily ever after.*

The next myth can be found in American society is the *myth of rural simplicity*. This kind of myth posits that true happiness and virtue are to be found by living close to the cultivated land. Many types of popular culture have arisen from this myth. The contemporary ritual of leaving work and camping for a vacation is based on the idea of rural simplicity and virtue.

Americans also believe in the *myth of endless abundance*. The myth of endless abundance is a myth that believes that America is a land of such overwhelming natural resources and productive potential that they will never run out of anything essential to comfort and well-being. The concept was already in the minds of the earliest settlers such as John Smith who wrote that the new land was blessed with much abundance that a man had to work only hours a day to make his prosper. At recent times, the myth still lives among the Americans society about

depleted energy resources. The rise of disposable items such as diapers, lighters, plates, razors, even dresses reflect that America cannot ever run out of anything. Prosperity is also expressed through the purchase of a computer with more memory even though it is not needed.

Another important myth that exists in America is the *myth of technology as protector and savior*. The American believes that nearly all problems in the present world are solvable with new inventions. The concrete example of the myth is the American space program. Billions of dollars were spent during on the 1960's on the space program. Most people assumed that the technological triumph of the first moon landing was a result of that worth huge investment. Another present example of this myth is the faith of most people that technology will solve the world's environmental problems. The invention of solar-cell car becomes an alternative for the world when it is warned with the decreasing oil supply.

The next myth believed by the Americans is *the myth of beauty*. Here is a description about it:

A young girl stands on a scale, complaining to herself about the one pound she has gained in the previous week. She critically gazes at her body in the mirror in front of her, poking and prodding at the little lump of flesh on her thighs, or the small fold on her stomach. She looks at herself in hateful disgust, "How can you let yourself look like this? You're an ugly, disgusting cow!!"

(Meehan, on <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/jarvisci/jargonline/mythofbeauty.html>)

The description above is describing a young girl that feels unsatisfied with her physical appearance. She cursed on herself for gaining a pound on her body. The word *ugly* she used reflects how much she 'regrets' her body and implies if only she had a greater body and face. The unsatisfied feeling that is felt by the girl is a reflection on American people in relation to the myth of beauty existing in the country. For the girl looks regretting her stomach and thighs, of course there must be comparison that is considered to be better than hers. The description above shows how the American girls want to be slim as the new super-skinny model appearing on their favorite fashion magazines everyday. It is then being understood if it influences their self-image and the self-worth of these girls to be the impressionable one. The advertising they see everyday that are exposing the physical body 'perfection' more or less had influencing their perspective about 'beauty'. Film, music and the world of fashion are the ways that are effective in spreading the image that beauty is slim and slim is beauty. The *Bay watch* television series for example. *Bay watch* is one of television series that reached a high rate in America, besides *Miami Vice* and *Sex In The City*. In the world of music, the image of slim is nice created by the women singers. Women singers, most of them are sexy and slim, often appear sexy, exposing their body slimness in their video clips. The good and popular songs they sing are served with the sexy image of them. The beauty myth exists in America has been deeply rooted in its society since their child age. Barbie is the example. Barbie is a very famous doll, and it is every little girl's

best friend. Barbie is beautiful, she has many jobs—she has been a flight attendant, a doctor, a lawyer, nurse, a lifeguard, and even a rock star. She has a great boy friend, Ken, amazing clothes, countless numbers of luxurious cars, a beautiful dream house and even a fun-loving sister, Skipper. Not only that, she 7'2" tall, but also because she has an impressive 40" bust line, a tiny 22" waist and 36" hips. In fact, it is impossible to be achieved for many women in real life because they set an impossible standard of beauty.

The desire to be a slim girl created by the myth of beauty often leads girls to have an abnormal way of eating. The National Eating Disorder Association noted that 1-2% of American women are women with anorexia problem. It means that 1.5-3 million people have this disease since their teenage. The National Eating Disorder Association also noted that anorexia is the first killer of young Americans. The hope of getting slim rooted in their mind so they are willing to restrain their hunger or to throw up their food they have eaten.

Naomi Wolf in *Mitos Kecantikan, Kala Kecantikan Menindas Perempuan*

translated by Alia Swastika wrote that

‘Yang dianggap ideal pada saat itu –sosok yang kurus, keturunan kaukasia dengan payudara yang penuh, yang tidak sering ditemui sebagai sesuatu yang alami—diasumsikan oleh media massa dan juga oleh para pembaca majalah perempuan atau penonton film, sebagai sesuatu yang sifatnya abadi dan transenden (Wolf translated by Swastika, 2002 : 7)

Woman, whose skin is dark, bright or brown realizes and considers that those criteria above are the ideal criteria for ideal woman. Because of the influence of

fashion, million of women start to see the 'perfect breast' everywhere. This thing made them worry about their own breasts, the 'imperfect one'. They started to make a change on their breasts by registering themselves on breast surgery. Though it then finally revealed that breast surgery has negative side effects.

The media also has a great role in spreading the myth of beauty in America. Television series, magazines, Internet and films mostly choose a person with 'ideal' body, beautiful and preferably blonde and blue-eyed. Most female artist, which is blonde, has big breasts, tall, and has impressive hips, can be sure to be famous. Companies also often use artist with those categories to promote their products in order to increase their selling number. Talking about standard of beauty in America, it means that the beauty itself needs to be understood. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. That is the thing that people usually heard. And myth of beauty not only talks about perfect body, but it also demands a woman to appear young. When Sarah Jessica Parker has been out from the jeans company *GAP* that hires her, it was mentioned that because she is getting old and can no longer represent the image of the product, as the *GAP* side wants. The same thing also happened to Elizabeth Hurley, the spokesperson for *Estee Lauder*, a famous cosmetic company. It is also mentioned that she was cut from her contract because she is getting to age 36, and it is too old for the company.

Myth of beauty starts to be analyzed at early 1990, and it has an ideal concept as has been stated above, pretty, slim, young and preferably blonde and blue-

eyed. Old faces hardly appear in magazines. And if they do, they have been 'changed' so they will look younger. Ten years ago, the cosmetic companies competed to promote their products that are said to be able to re-structure the face skin up to the cell level. Instead of being supported, those products are forbidden by the Food and Drug Administration since their products offers an impossible thing and their anti-aging cream that is said can renew the skin layer is no more than just a sentence. The will to appear young that is spread by the myth of beauty has made many women take various ways to prevent the aging process. Besides creams, American women are also taking the Botox solution to solve their problem. It is seen from the Humane Society of the United States' statistic that nearly 2,3 million cosmetic Botox procedures were performed in 2003, a 37 % increase from 2002, and the sales are projected to increase by 17%-24% in 2004. Botox or Botulinum Toxin Type A is toxin that comes from the waste of bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*. Botox works by blocking nerve signal between the brain and muscles, effectively paralyzing the muscles that cause wrinkles and certain medical disorders. Whenever used to treat wrinkles, Botox lasts only three to six months, which means that the users must repeat the injections process at least twice a year to maintain their wrinkle-free face. The myth of beauty that demand women to look young has rose many cases, including cases in working field. In 1972 beauty is arranged to be something that can be reached legally or makes woman lose her job. The Government of New York City for

the Application of Human Rights determines that in *St Cross vs Playboy Club* of New York, in observable profession, 'beauty' of a woman becomes a qualification that is **bona fide** to get a job.

Margarita St Cross is a waitress in *Playboy Club* that is fired because she had lost her bunny image. The job standard in the club makes rank of waitress with scale as follows:

1. Prominent and perfect beauty (face, figure and cleanness)
2. Pretty girl is an exception
3. Marginal (aged or having problem with appearance that can be handled)
4. Lose the 'bunny' image (including getting old and having appearance problem that can not be solved any longer)

Margarita begged the City Council to decide that she is still beautiful enough so that she could continue working. Furthermore she stated that she was having 'a psychological transformation from a young, fresh-looking teenager to a mature woman'.

The next myth that exists in America is the *myth of nuclear family*. The nuclear family is generally defined as a family group made up of only a father, mother and children (http://www.medem.com/medlb/article_detailb.cfm?article_ID=ZZZSVB8F79C&sub-cat=106)

The nuclear family is relatively recent phenomenon, becoming common only within the last century. Before then, the 'traditional family' was

multigenerational, with grandparents often living with their children on farms as well as in urban environments, typically with other relatives nearby. The nuclear family has evolved in response to a number of factors: better health and longer lives, economic development, industrialization, urbanization, geographic mobility and migration to the suburbs. These changes have resulted in physical separation of extended family members and in progressive fragmentation of the family. The myth of nuclear family is often similarized to the perfection of a family. A family that fits this myth is a family with parents and one or more children, with a father worked outside the home and a mother who stayed at home and took care of the children and the household. This kind of myth does not tolerate any failure, in this case divorce.

American and Greek Family Values

1. American Family Values

Acculturation that begins at birth is the process of teaching new generations of children the custom and values of the parents' culture (Sumampouw, 1986, p.23). The way people treat the newborns for example can be indicative of cultural values. In America, it is common for parents to put the baby in a separate room that belongs only to the child. The parents can have their privacy and the baby can get used to

have his/her own room, which is seen a step toward personal independence. Americans traditionally have held independence and a closely related value, individualism in high esteem. Many children are taught at a very early age to make decisions and be responsible for their activity. Often children work for money outside the home as a first step to establish autonomy, preparing them to budget their money, and preparing them for a future financial independence. Many people believe that managing money helps children learn to be responsible as well as appreciate the value of money.

For the young adulthood usually between 18 and 21 years, children are encouraged but not forced to leave their 'nest' and begin an independent life. Parents do not arrange their marriage for their children. The children do not ask permission from their parents to get married. In many families, parents feel that children should make decisions by themselves. Parents try to influence their children to follow a profession but the child is free to choose another career. This kind of indication indicates that parents and children do not underestimate each other. Strong love between parents and child is universal and this is no exception in American family.

For the elderly, societal and familial treatment of the elderly reflects this independence and individualism. There are problems for the elderly in America glorification of the youth and indifference to the aged have made many older people alone and alienated. Some families send their older relatives to move homes rather than keep them in the home of child and grandchild. This separation makes these

people feel isolated. Other old people prefer living in retirement communities where they have companionship of other older people.

2. Greek Family Values

Early Greek immigrants came to the United States during the second phase of US immigration and industrial capitalism (1865-1920) especially at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. Late Greek immigrants came to the United States at the mid-twentieth century especially between the 1950 and the mid 1970s. It has been reported that early Greek immigrants as a rule, were poor, had limited education and skills. Despite their working-class and rural origins, the early Greek immigrants had a lower –middle class work ethic. They were industrious, independent and thrifty. They had what is commonly known as the ‘Protestant work ethic’ along with a sense of determination, cultural pride, ethnic consciousness and a sense of community. In America, both early and late immigrants are running Greek restaurants as their occupation. It is a phenomenon for the Greeks immigrants both early and late generations. Besides becoming a Greek restaurant owner, Greek people pursued service-oriented and ‘middlemen’ occupation such as tavern operators, groceries, ice cream and candy store operators, realtors and rentiers.

The Greek brought with them a lifestyle that was folk oriented, ethnocentric, familistic and traditional. There are two types of Greek people, the traditionalist and the environmentalist. In general, the first generation is faced with major difficulties in carrying out their intent to socialize their children (the second generation) in the

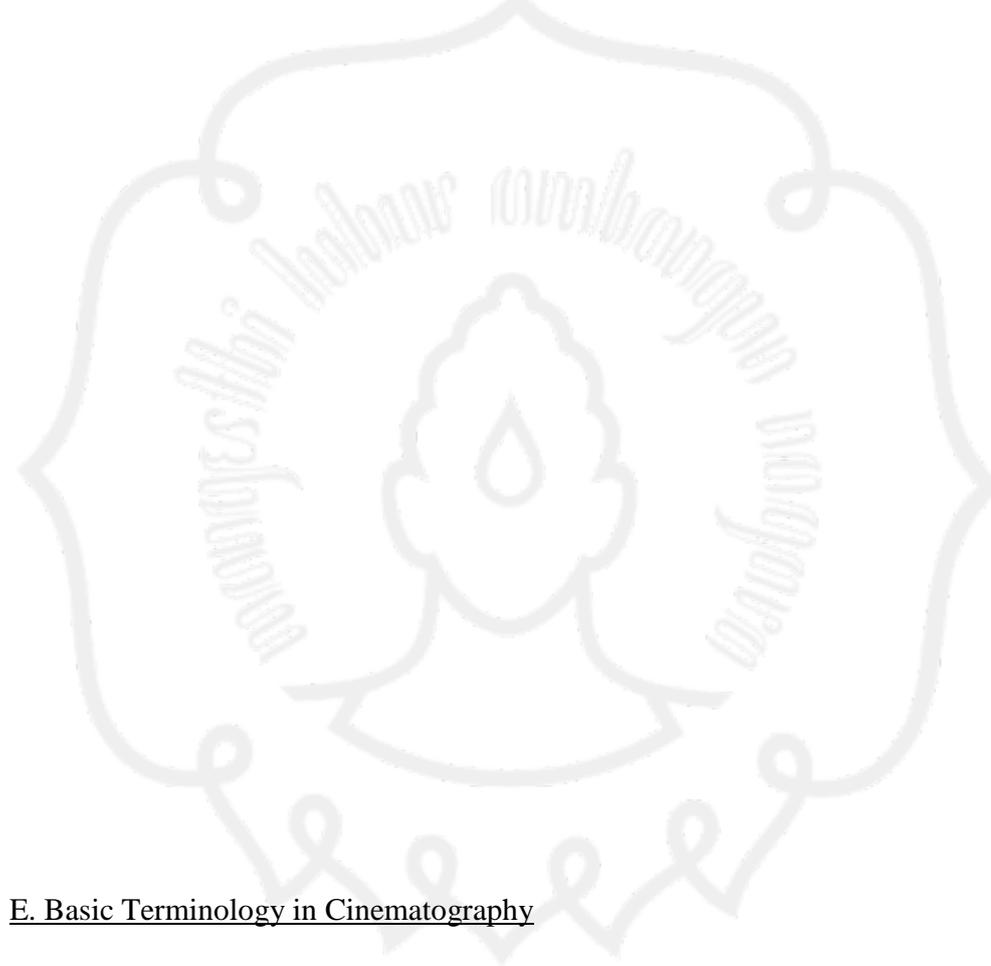
Greek way of life. This difficulty goes along with their fear of losing control over their children. Especially when the children come into contact with the larger American society, particularly when their children attain school age, begin working and come to the marital age. These traditionalists are usually found in cities with large Greek immigrants communities. They insist upon preserving their ethnic institutions, particularly those pertaining religion, language, endogamous marriage, and family. In many ways, they try to socialize their children in traditional Greek folkways and tradition.

On the other hand, the environmentalists believe that the children should be raised as Americans but want them to retain membership in the Greek Orthodox Church, keep their names and be able to communicate in the Greek language. They are more cognizant of the fact that powerful social and cultural forces operate in American society that have exerted and unprecedented influence upon their offspring and compelled them toward and Anglo-American conformity.

The most important Greek ethnic institution is the Greek Orthodox Church. It is the dominant religion in Greece and receives state funding. The Greek Orthodox Church preserves the Greek language and cultural identity and it was an important rallying point in the struggle of independence.

Dancing is another important thing for the Greek. They believe that dance improve both physical and emotional health. Dance is accompanied with lyres, flutes and a wide variety of percussion instruments such as tambourines, cymbals, and castanets.

For household business, the Greek women are in charge in running the house and bearing children. For ancient Greek women, they did not do their household jobs by themselves. Most of them had slaves. The Greek consider their children as 'youths' until they reach age 30. For girls, they stay at home until they get married.



E. Basic Terminology in Cinematography

Because a film is constructed of visual, aural and linguistic components that are manipulated in particular ways, it is a challenge to take a part the totality of the film experience and to interpret how that experience was assembled.

Monaco & James give a brief explanation of ways to analyze the language of film:

Meaning

Themes/tropes: the broad ideas and allusions (themes) that are established by repetition of technical and linguistic means (tropes) throughout the film (such as alienation, power and control)

Intent/ message: sometimes, the message in the film is obvious.

Although the message is obvious, it does not mean that the film is simple or that there is not contradictory subtext.

Sometimes, however, the filmmakers are not sure of their message or the intended message becomes clouded along the way, or the filmmakers intend one message and many in the audience interpret the film differently.

Metaphor / symbolism: it is similar to literary interpretation, only it considers all aspects of the film's linguistic, visual and aural. Metaphors and symbolism only gain relevance if they are repeated in significant ways or connected with the larger meaning of the film.

Basic element

Title/ opening credit: titles are chosen carefully. The opening credits establish a tone, and often are used to foreshadow events, themes or metaphors.

Story/plot/narrative: the story is all of the information conveyed by the film (either directly or by inference) in chronological order to communicate the overall sense of what occurred in the film. The plot is the basic building blocks of story, conveying specific events. The narrative or narration is the process in which story information is conveyed to the audience through all of the cinematic means. While dialogue provides a good deal of information, all the other audio and visual clues also give information about the narrative.

Motivation: it is the character's personal motivation as a reason for his/her action

Characterization: consists of central characters and minor characters, which represent values that sometimes change during the film. They might thinly or fully drawn.

POV (point of view): screenplays will sometimes note that a shot will be seen from the point of view of a particular character. The term subjective shot indicates that audience (camera) will see what the character sees. Often it indicates a handheld camera shot that moves in walking or running motion while

following a character. Subjective camera shots can add drama and frenzy to chase scenes.

Mise-en-scene

Mise-en-scene is everything going on within the frame outside of editing and sound.

Setting and sets: the scene shot can be in a studio, stage or in a location. EXT and INT are commonly listed in film scripts to indicate exterior and interior settings. Setting is used in composing the shot (verticals and horizontals, windows and doors, the slats of shades, mirror, etc). Particular setting (vast mountain ranges, cluttered urban setting) function as signs in order to convey narrative and ideological information.

Acting style: particular actors have their own recognizable style or type, and the filmmakers use the audience's expectations, either by reaffirming or by challenging these expectations.

Costumes: this also includes physiques, hairstyles, contrasts between characters, changes along the film, use of colors, etc.

Lighting

Lighting is one of the key means in creating shadows, which is an important element when conveying meaning.

Key light: main lighting, which is usually placed at 45-degree angle between camera and subject.

Fill light: an auxiliary light, usually from the side of the subject, that softens shadows and illuminates areas that are not covered by the key light.

Highlighting / spotlighting: pencil-thin beams of light used to illuminate certain parts of a subject, often eyes or other facial features.

Backlighting: placing the main source of light behind the subject, silhouetting it and directing the light toward the camera.

Top lighting: lighting from above

Diffuser/filter: a gelatine plate that is placed in front of light to change the effect (whether to cast a shadow or soften the light, for instance)

Shot composition

Each shot represents many choices made by the filmmakers to convey meaning

Tone: bright, blur, sharp color, etc.

Film speed film speed reverses filmmaker's particular intention whether in fast or slow motion.

Angle of views/ lens: the angle of the shot created by the lens

1. Wide angle lenses: present broad views of subjects
2. Telephoto lenses: it has very narrow angles of views which acts like a telescope to focus far away subjects and flatten the view.

Camera angle: the angle at which the camera is pointed at the subject: low (shot from below), high (shot from above or eye level (includes extreme low and high angle shots)). This creates the angle vision (the point of view) for the audience and is often used to establish character's level of power and control (high angle shot can make character seems diminish), but there are many uses as well. Camera angles are also sometimes indicated on scripts. Included are bird's eye view, high angle (photo on left), eye-level, and low angle shots.

Tracking, panning and tilt: tracking shot moves the camera either sideways or in and out. Panning is swinging the camera horizontally, while tilt is swinging it vertically. These effects are often used simultaneously.

1. Focus: shallow focus uses sharp focus on the characters or things in one area of the shot and soft (blurred) focus in the rest.
2. Deep focus: brings out the detail in all areas of the shot.
3. Focus in: gradually zooms in on the subject whole focus gradually zooms out (these are known as 'focus pulls')
4. Rack focus: is an extremely fast focus pull that changes focus from one image/character to another (usually exchanging focus on background and foreground)

Shot distance includes full shot, three-quarters shot, mid or half-shot shot, close up and extreme close up for shot and bodies: (extreme) long shot, mid shot, (extreme) close up to describe more general. Shot distance can be used to create sense of isolation (extreme long shot of character in a desert) or great pain, anger or joy (extreme close up of character's face). Choice of lens can create strange effects. Wide angle close up extend and distorts image at the edges, like a funhouse mirror, telephoto lens used in long shots flatten distances and

putting background out of focus. Shot designation for films include:

1. Long shot or full shot: with people, this is a shot from the top of their heads to at least their feet.
2. A medium shots normally a shot from the waist up.
3. A medium close up 'a close up: is a shot cropped between shoulders and belt line.
4. a close up: is the most desirable to catch changing facial expressions which are important to follow a conversation.
5. Extreme close ups: are reserved for dramatic impact. This kind of shot may show just the eyes of an individual.
6. An establishing shot is a wide shot or a long shot: this type of shot gives an audience a basic orientation to the geography of a scene (who is where) after which there should be cuts to closer shots. Thereafter, establishing shots can be momentarily used as reminder or updates on scene changes, where people have moved in relation to each other, etc. in this context, they are called re-establishing shots.

7. A master shot: is similar to an establishing shot but this term is generally reserved for the special needs of the film. Once the master shot action is filmed, the scene is generally shot over again from different camera positions so that there are shots (especially close up) of each actor. Dialogue and actor reactions are repeated each time the camera is repositioned.

Frame: the border that contains the image. Can be 'open' (with characters moving in and out); 'moving' (using focus, tracking and panning); 'canted' (at odd angles, unbalanced shot composition). Small frames used with close-ups can create sense of claustrophobia, often enhanced by the set (low ceilings, numerous props and furnishing) and lighting. The set can also be used to frame the shot in other ways (lamps, flags, etc on either side; a bed-out-focus at the bottom of the frame) as characters (as sign of marginality, intimidation, support, etc).

Montage

Editing 'cuts' within scenes and in the film in general, creating continuities and discontinuities, juxtapositions and narrative structure.

Editing pace: within a sequence, from a long takes to 'accelerated montage'. Within the film in general to establish overall tone. Long takes coupled with a still camera can be used to increase intensity of a shot.

Establishing shot: initial shot in a scene that establishes location, characters and the purpose of the scene.

Shot/counter shot: standard device used during dialogue between two characters, often starts with a 'two-shot' of the two characters, then moves back and forth combined with camera angle, shot distance, pace to establish point of view. Note when this standard device is not in used and for what purpose. Note when the person speaking is not viewed or only back is viewed.

Cuts: instantaneous changes from one scene to the next.

Reaction shot: quick cut to pick up character's reaction to an event.

Jump cut: a cut that occurs within a scene (rather than between scenes) to condense the action of a scene (such as crossing a desert)

Freeze frame: a freeze shot which is achieved by printing a single frame many times in succession to give the illusion of a still photograph.

Cutaway: a shot inserted in a scene to show happening elsewhere

Match cut: a cut in which two shots are linked by visual, aural, or metaphorical parallelism.

Scenes: an end of a scene is usually marked by a number of possible devices including:

1. Fade-ins and fade-outs: fade-outs consist of a two or three second transition from a picture to black and silence and of course, a fade-in is the opposite. Both may include a quick cut or a fade to black, which often implies significance of preceding scene or else a long passage of time.
2. Wipe: a line moves across the screen, usually used in older films.
3. Lap dissolves, also called dissolves: where two scenes momentarily overlap during a transition from one to the other.

Sequence: a series of scenes that fit together narratively.

Sound

Sometimes non-dialogue sound is the hardest element to pick out and analyze, yet is often extremely important and subject to just as much of

the filmmakers focus as other elements. Sound is often used to underscore emotions, to alert the audience to an upcoming event, as an ironic counterpoint, etc. carefully created and edited sounds (including the use of silences) creates a rich aural images the same way that mise-en-scene, shot composition, and montage create visual images.

Dialogue: whether the dialogue between or among characters is overlapping, mumbled, very soft or loud also create an aural image.

Sound effects: both the effects themselves (a doorbell ringing) and the manipulation of the sound (stereo effects which move sound across the sound spectrum, or balance sound on one side or other; filtering and manipulating sounds).

Score: the background music used throughout the film. The score often maintains and manipulates a similar theme at various times (especially in older films) and is often used in relation to the narrative structure: particular motifs or themes may be used in relation to particular characters.

Sound bridge: connects scenes or sequences by a sound that continues through the visual transition.

Direct sound: refers to sound that is recorded at the time the scene is shot (usually dialogue, although audio inserts are possible. All audio inserts would be post-synchronous sound).

Post-synchronous sound: refers to sound that is recorded and placed at the film radio track after the scene is shot (virtually all scores)

Diagetic sound: is heard within the film's diegesis (dialogue, a shot from a gun on screen)

Off-screen sound: appears within the film's diegesis but not within the frame (extending off-screen space)

Non- diagetic sound: is heard outside of the film 's diegesis (such as film scores and voice-overs. A pop song that seems to be part of a soundtrack but is found to be coming from, say, a car radio, is a diagetic sound)

Synchronous or simultaneous sound: is heard at the same time the action happens on screen.

Non- synchronous or non-simultaneous sound: is heard before or after the action happens on screen.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the writer wants to analyze the problem statement that is written in the first chapter. The problem statement, which is 'What myths can be found in the movie and how does the movie reflect them?' will be analyzed using the semiotic film theory and the sociological approach. By using semiotic film theory, the researcher wants to find out hidden messages and information in the movie. The sociological approach is also applied in this analysis as a way to find out the myths

that are reflected in the movie. There are three myths that the researcher can find, those are the myth of beauty, myth of romantic love and the myth of nuclear family.

A. Myth of Beauty

As the writer has written in the first chapter, that *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is a romantic comedy. The core of the movie is about a 30 year-old Greek girl named Toula Portokalos that tried to defend her relationship with an American man, Ian Miller across their cultural difference.

As a Greek girl, to be 30 and still single is not a common thing. For girls on that age, she should have been married and have children, just like her older sister, Athena. The quotation below shows how her father encouraged her to get married soon:



Toula was yawning on her way to her family restaurant, *Dancing Zorba's*

Toula: (yawning)

Father: (staring at her) ' you should get married soon. You started to look old'

The scene above was taken when Toula and her father, Gus Portokalos were in a car, on their way to their restaurant, *Dancing Zorba's*. The camera uses the medium shot in capturing Toula's image. It shows how simple Toula was, wearing glasses, simple haircut, and no make up. The statement stated by her father reflects his sadness as well as his hope seeing his daughter's condition. Toula's father's facial expression strengthens his feeling upon Toula. His hope of Toula's changing fate can be seen when he saw Toula yawning.



Toula, when she was thinking about her life

The image of Toula as seen in picture above is an image of a simple woman. This picture is the picture of Toula when she was busy with her thoughts, thinking her life. The camera close up shot really makes this image clear, and makes the audiences get their impression upon Toula's character. She was an ordinary girl who was clearly different from the girls in common who always pay attention to their body and appearance.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a film, which mainly talks about the transformation of a girl, Toula Portokalos. The transformation covers her psychological condition and also her physical appearance.

Toula as the main character of the movie realized the situation. How her family wanted her to get married soon, with Greek man as the other Greek women did. But deep inside her heart, Toula kept hopes for herself. Hopes that if these truly happened can be things that she believed would be able to change her life forever.

Toula: 'When I was growing up, I knew I was different. The other girls were blonde and delicate. And I was a swarthy six years old with side burns. I so badly wanted to be a popular girl. All sitting together, talking, eating their wonder bread sandwiches'.

The statement above was telling her wish to be a blonde girl and to be a popular girl. In the nation where she lived, America, a blonde girl was considered to be a prettier one compared to other girls who had different hair color. From this statement also, a myth can be found in the movie: myth of beauty. Myth of beauty is changing from time to time. In 19th century, the society considered the chubby, fat, Caucasian girl to be the beautiful one. For the society at that age, fat or chubbiness reflects prosperity. Girls who were chubby and fat meant they were beautiful because they were rich. But in 1950's the standard of beauty changed. In this era, American people considered Marilyn Monroe as the beauty icon, blonde hair, shocking-red lipstick, and big breasts. The figure of Marilyn Monroe was so famous that the girls at that time tried so hard to imitate Marilyn Monroe in details, including her small

mole. Entering the 1960's, the myth of beauty changed again. In this time, American people considered the skinny woman as the beautiful one. Twiggy was the name of the model that was popular at that time. She had a body that considered to fit in the American standard of beauty, and became the beauty icon. In contrast to the 19th century myth (that considered a fat, chubby woman as the pretty figure), this era preferred a twiggy woman as its symbol of beauty. Tall, thin without a butt and breast curve. In 1980's up till now, American people considered another figure as its icon. The myth of beauty at this era preferred a tall, blue-eyed, slim Caucasian girl with big butt and full breasts. This kind of figure tolerates no fat on a woman's body. The whole body must be 'fat free'. The beauty icons for this era are famous people like Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears and Shakira. All of them are famous for their perfect body besides their achievement in entertainment business.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a film that took the year of 2000's as its setting of time. Toula who lived in that era was accustomed to the last myth of beauty that the researcher had stated above. She was raised in American society, which believes to the myth of beauty that considered a blonde girl as the ideal figure.

The statement above reflects Toula's feeling, how Toula saw a more beautiful and more perfect figure than she was. Blonde is a hair color where most of Caucasian people have in their gen. They can be born with this kind of hair color without having their hair bleached. For American people, blonde hair is one of aspects from American standard of beauty. Girl with blonde hair is always considered to be more beautiful when she is compared to other girls with different hair colors. In

America, standard of beauty has been ‘introduced’ since their kiddy age. But for Greek, blonde is rare (<http://members.aol.com/Donnclass.Greeklife.html>). For Toula having a blonde hair was her wish, her dream. She believed that if only she had blonde hair, she must have a better life, starting from her child age. The monolog stated by Toula reflects how she as an ordinary Greek girl was considered to be different among her friends:



Toula (the turning head girl) who was talking to her blonde friends

Toula's friend : 'What's that? '

Toula : 'It's *moussaka*

Toula's friend : ' moose ka-ka?'

Toula's friends: (Laughing at Toula)

The picture and the dialogue above show when her friends, whose hair were blonde and had a sandwich as their lunch, were laughing at Toula. The dialogue shows when Toula was having *moussaka* for her lunch and it was considered to be a

'weird' food for them. Americans are familiar with sandwich as their food. Sandwich is a food contains bread, vegetables, cheese, onion and a slice of meat and they usually have it for their lunch. For them, sandwich is a common food and consumed by most people in America. On the contrary, the Americans are not familiar with *moussaka*. They hardly see it in their daily life. The Americans that are represented by the blonde girls above considered Toula uncommon. They regarded Toula to be 'weird' and not American. The position of the girls who were sitting, forming a separate group from their community reflects the exclusivity of the blonde Americans among their environment.

The picture above (showing Toula ate her lunch separately from her blonde friends) was taken with the medium shot. The camera captured Toula's image while she was turning her head, had a special meaning. The camera intentionally shot the picture from the back of Toula's head to show the audience that Toula had a different hair color. She had a black hair, and it meant that she did not fit the American myth of beauty. The table where Toula put her lunch that was separated from her blonde friends also symbolizes a person (in this case was Toula) who did not fit the American standard of beauty will usually be alienated from her environment (in the picture represented by Toula's blonde friends).

Toula's hope to be a prettier girl was kept in her mind since she was a little girl. The lunchtime when she was often mocked by her friends was carried to her adult age.



Toula's figure from the back when she was opening the window, showing her fat body

The next picture shows when Toula just arrived at her family's restaurant *Dancing Zorba's*. In this scene, the camera uses the long shots technique. From this camera point of view, it shows how Toula dressed. She used a loose sweater and a simple black trouser and a white shirt. This scene also informs the audience about Toula's shape of body, which was not slim. She had a fatty body, which surely did not fit the American standard of beauty.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a film, which describes a transformation of a girl named Toula. The transformation covers her mental and her physical appearance. The change of her physical appearance began when she decided to go to a college to have a computer course. In this new environment, Toula learned to make 'a change' for herself. If she used to appear simple, with no make up and a big glasses, then in this situation she learned how to put make up. She started to put blush on on her cheeks, and changed her glasses for a pair of contact lens. She also started to curl her hair and put some lipstick on her lips.



Toula learned to use contact lens



Toula learned to put make up for the first time

This physical change was not an easy thing to do. Toula had to learn from the beginning and had to adapt herself with it. The next picture shows Toula was closing her eyes when she was learning to wear contact lens. The gesture of Toula's above symbolizes that the process of change was not easy. She had to adapt herself with it.



Toula was closing her eyes when she was learning using her first contact lens

For her physical change, not only on her face she put some make up, but she also changed the way she dressed. The scene when Toula stood behind cashier desk, talking with her sister Athena, shows the way she dressed previously. Toula wore simple clothes, loose trouser or a simple blouse and a jacket. As the change happened in her life, she began to wear new clothes, which were more fashionable, more colorful and up to date. From a jacket to cardigan, from trousers to a knee-length skirt.



Toula's appearance before and after she changed her appearance

Myth of beauty is reflected in this film not only from Toula's character but also from her cousin, Nikki. The scene when Nikki met Toula and Ian at the travel agent was one of them. Nikki was pumping up her breast when she was introduced to Ian. Her gesture was a sign that she wanted to show Ian that she was beautiful because she had big, beautiful breasts. Nikki intentionally did that because she lived in America where the men regarded the beautiful women were the women with full breasts. Another scene telling the same core is when Gus Portokalos, Toula's father,

was telling Ian that Nikki was going to be his Godmother. After Gus Portokalos said this thing to Ian, both of them were looking at Nikki that coincidentally was straightening up her breast position. Those two scenes showing Nikki with everything she did with her breasts; reflect that she was one of the women that were already accustomed to the American standard of beauty. American standard of beauty in the 1990 up till now, considers beautiful woman is a woman with big, full breasts.



Nikki's costume that exposed her breasts, a sign of the myth of beauty

Other scenes are also showing this myth of beauty. When Toula was telling about her cousins, Nikki and Angelo, it shows that both of her cousins were arguing while they were entering *Dancing Zorba's*.

Angelo: 'You always at the beauty salon, your nail, your hair, and everything.'

Nikki : 'Don't talk about my hair'. You're so lazy. You and you're big ass girlfriend, do nothing!'

Angelo: 'Did somebody sit on your hair? It looks a little flat there'

The dialogue between the two siblings was firstly about their duty to open the travel agent and the dry cleaning store. But the conversation was spread to Nikki's hair and her hobby-visiting salon. According to Angelo, Nikki was worried too much about her hair appearance. From the statement, Nikki was considered as a woman who always wanted her hair to look perfect, instead of flat. Her mother, Voula who was also Toula's aunt was likely the same. When Nikki and her brother were arguing, she asked her why she did not come to curl her hair that morning. For Voula also, hair appearance was important. Age was not an obstacle for her to look pretty.

The myth of beauty was also reflected from the sequences before and after Toula changed her appearance. What the researcher wants to say here is a different feeling can be found in Ian's. When he met Toula for the first time, at Dancing Zorba's, Toula was an ordinary girl with all her simplicities. When he saw Toula for the first time, she regarded Toula as the waitress with nice sense of humor, not more. Ian had never thought that he would take Toula out for a date. But when he saw Toula at the travel agency (in this time, Toula had changed her appearance), he saw a beautiful girl that attracted his heart. He was so amazed with Toula that he smiled and waved his hand to Toula. Not only that, few days later, he passed the travel agent where Toula was working. When he found out that Toula was there, he tried everything to attract Toula's attention. What Ian did above was a sign of his love to Toula. He did not pay attention to Toula when she was still an 'ugly' girl. But the situation changed when he met Toula in her new appearance. Ian's character on *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* represents the common American men, who usually do not

pay attention to a not attractive girl. They are usually interested in girls who are fashionable and good-looking. Toula's image after she changed her appearance represents the American girls who believe in the myth of beauty. The attractiveness of Ian on the beautiful Toula reflects that girls 'should' make themselves beautiful to get men's attention.

B. Myth of Romantic Love

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a film that is inserted with myths that are believed by American people. And the next myth can be found in the movie is the myth of romantic love. From the beginning of the movie, there was a monolog by Toula about her and her family life. The first scene when Toula and her father, Gus Portokalos were inside their car already gave the audiences a clue about what the movie is about. As the writer has stated at previous paragraph, that the first scene of the movie is not only telling about Toula's physical appearance but also her marital status:

Toula : (yawning)

Gus : 'you better get married soon. You started to look old'.

The scene continued with Toula's monolog:

'Here I am, day after day, year after year. 30 and way pass of my expiration day'

The scene and the monologue are telling about Toula's feeling upon her family's encouragement to get married soon. For a Greek girl like her, 30 years is an age where she should have been married and have children.

The Greek believe that a marriage was a final destination in their life. It was the very important thing that must happen to every Greek. This thing had been introduced to their descendants since they were kids. In the beginning of the movie, Toula's monologue also stated the same thing:

'My dad been saying that to me since I was 15. 'Cause a nice Greek girl supposed to do three things in life, marry Greek man, make Greek babies and feed everyone, until the day we die'.

The dialogue between Toula and her mother also reflects the same thing. That Greek people should marry and their kids thought about it at their early age:

Toula : 'Ma?'

Mother: 'Yes?'

Toula : 'Why do I have to go to the Greek school?'

Mother: 'If you're married, don't you want to write your mama in law a letter?'

The burden of little Toula hearing her mother answer was clearly shown when she directly put her head on the dining table. Toula's gesture putting her head on the dining table represents her disappointment towards her parents' way of thinking. Her parents wanted her to go to a Greek school to make Toula able to write her future mama in law in Greek language. Toula's gesture above also a sign of a fading hope to go to the Brownies. Brownies is a type of school where the Americans send their

children to study, where most of popular girls were there. And that hope would never be fulfilled now.

Marriage is an important thing to Greek people. If a girl in age 30 like Toula had not married yet, they would try anything they could so the girl could get married soon, with a Greek man of course.



Gus, Voula and Taki were talking about Toula

Gus : 'So, I tell her, I would send her to Greece to find somebody'
 Taki : 'She's not too old'
 Gus : 'She's Ok'
 Taki : 'In Greece? Just don't tell anyone how old is she'
 Gus : 'She won't go!!'
 Taki and Voula: 'She won't go???' (Put their spoon and make cross sign)

The cross sign done by Gus, Voula and Taki besides reflecting a funny comedy, it also symbolizes their belief in marriage. As Greek people, getting married is a must. Every Greek man and woman should marry another Greek. Deciding not to

get married (as Gus' prediction upon Toula's rejection to go to Greece) was a disaster that should not happen to any Greek people. By making the cross sign, three of them reflect the hope they felt upon Toula's fate. They prayed so the disaster would not happen to Toula.

Toula, she also realized the condition. How her family wanted her to get married. But she thought there was a bigger thing for her to do, which was changing her life.

Maria: 'Toula, you closed last night and you open this morning?'

Toula: 'I have no life'

Toula's statement reflects her life. For her, life was monotonous and no changes. Even when she asked her father's permission to go to a college, instead of agreeing he considered that Toula was going to leave him:

Toula: 'Dad, I've going through our inventory. And I noticed that we've been doing a lot of necessary ordering. And so I've been thinking that maybe we should update our system, like we can get a computer. I don't know if you're remember, but I got A's in computer. But there are a lot of new stuffs to learn, so if you want to, I can go to a college and take few courses

Gus : 'Why,...why you want to leave me?'

Toula : 'I'm not leaving you. Don't you want me to do something with my life?'

Gus : 'Yes, get married, make babies!'

For her father and the rest of the family, the only change that must happen in their family was being married. A change started when her Mom, Maria helped her to get a computer course. In the time of her study, Toula also learned to change her

physical appearance. If she felt inferior to her blonde friends and chose to separate herself at lunch, then this time, she encouraged herself to sit with them at lunch. She even did more than that, she also ate sandwich instead of *moussaka*.

Toula was smiling when she was biting her sandwich. Her smile represents her happy feeling because she was no longer considered to be the 'different' anymore. The camera uses the medium shot to capture the scene. The camera angle was taken from the backside of the blonde girls in order to show the audience that Toula now, was different. She could happily eat her sandwich as her lunch among her blonde friends. It was a dream came true. She could enjoy her lunch in the same table as her blonde friends. Toula now was considered the beautiful one because she could blend with her blonde friends. She was considered to be a beautiful girl now since she succeeded in being accepted in her beautiful blonde friends' society.



Toula among her blonde friends, her smile is a sign of her success to be accepted in American society who believe in the myth of beauty

Toula's life of journey continued after she finished her computer and tourism courses. After her graduation she convinced her aunt Voula to run her travel agency

business. But another obstacles arose, when Toula, Voula and her mother Maria realized that Toula would never run the travel agency business without Gus' permission. With a little trick, three of them were succeeded in getting Gus' permission. Toula ran her aunt's travel agency business perfectly. In this travel agent, when she was taking a drink, she saw Ian Miller, a handsome American teacher that was starring at her and smiled.



Toula who was making her telephone call and the picture of Ian who smiled at Toula

Ian saw Toula from the outside when she was making her telephone call. He was so amazed that he kept starring at her. The way she rolled her body on her chair, the way she made her telephone call, all of these scenes were taken with the medium shot camera angle. From this camera point of view, it shows how Toula enjoyed her work very much. The energy was reflected from her gesture when she did all the things above. The romantic atmosphere could be felt here because a romantic music was chosen as its back sound. Moreover, when Toula and Ian finally found their eyes starring at each other. Toula was surprised when she realized that Ian had watched her

from the outside. However, what Ian did was just smiling and waving his hand. Ian's gesture, which were smiling and waving his hands to Toula reflects his gentle and warm personality.

Ian Miller was a man that amazed Toula when he came to have lunch at her restaurant, *Dancing Zorba's* few months ago.



Toula was so amazed with Ian that she stared at him directly

When Toula met Ian, she was so amazed that she did not realize she was starring at him directly. Short conversation happened between them at that moment, but she never thought that she would meet this man again. First time she saw Ian, Toula was a girl with her unchanging life and appearance. She was still Toula with her simplicity. Things were different now. Both of them were interested in each other.

Toula's feeling of love to Ian was already seen when she met him for the first time. And this feeling was getting stronger after they had a conversation at the travel agent. Toula directly said 'yes' when Ian asked her out for dinner.

Toula and Ian were two persons with two different cultural backgrounds, Greece and America. Realizing this situation, Toula was lying to her family that she was taking a pottery class when she went dating. Toula felt that she had to do that because she knew that her family would not allow her to go dating with Ian. There were two scenes when Toula had to lie to her parents. The first was when her father asked her where she wanted to go:

Gus : 'Where are you going?
Toula : ' Me?.....I'm taking a pottery class'
Gus : (sprayed his Windex) 'the Greek invented pottery'

The scene was taken when Toula was dressing up in front of her mirror. The camera uses the medium shot to capture Toula's activity of dressing. When her father asked her, her hands suddenly stopped moving fitting her dress. This gesture represents Toula's worry upon the lie she was telling her father. Her facial expression was changing into the serious one that reflects her shock on her father's question. Another scene telling Toula's lie was when her mother, Maria, asked about her happiness. The scene took the setting in their kitchen when Toula was singing while she was watering the flowers in the vase:

Toula: (singing)
Maria: 'Well, happy again these days Toula?'
Toula: (surprised on her Mom's statement)
Maria: 'Class?? How is your class?'

Toula: 'My class?
Maria: 'Your pottery class how is it?'
Toula: 'My pottery class? It's good'

Toula's facial expression when her mother asked her was just the same as that when her father asked her. Toula's facial expression in both scenes shows Toula's anxiety since she was lying to her family. But when her family finally knew it, they did not agree with Toula's decision.

Gus: 'Didn't I say, it is wrong to educate women. But nobody is listen to me. Now, we got a boy friend I the house. Is he a nice Greek boy? Oh no, no,no. No Greek, *excenno*, *excenno* with a big long hair in the top of his head!!

Gus was described to be very angry after he found out that Toula was secretly dating Ian, a non-Greek man. The dialogue above reflects Gus' anger upon Toula and also Toula's mom, Maria. The scene when Gus was angry was taken in their kitchen. Toula and her mom, Maria were sitting while Gus was standing when he expressed his anger. Gus's position, which was standing, represents his power over the house. His position describes his superiority as the head of the family over the entire family members.

What her family wanted was she was married to a nice Greek man, not a stranger. To make this thing come true, her parents invited several Greek men to have dinner. Her parents intentionally did this to make Toula stop meeting Ian. The camera close up shot captures Toula's dislike on her parents' choices of men. On the other

hand, Toula kept meeting Ian and also his parents. Ian's love to Toula was so big that he did not care about Toula's unique family:

Ian : 'OK, Christmas, what you do for Christmas?'
 Toula : 'My mom makes roast lamb'
 Ian : ' With mint jelly?'
 Toula : 'No...'
 Ian : ' ...and..??'
 Toula : '(quite for a while)...'I'm a Greek right?' so, what happen is my Dad and my uncles they fight over who gets the lamb's brain, and then my aunt Voula forks the eyes ball and chases me with it, try to get me eat it 'cause it gonna make me smart. You have two cousins, I have 27 first cousins, 27 seven, just first cousins alone. And my big family is big and loud and everybody is in each other's life and business all the time, like you just haven't a minute alone just to think 'cause we're always together, just eating, eating, eating. The only other people we know are Greek. 'Cause Greeks marry Greeks, to breed more Greek, to be allowed breeding Greek eaters'.

What Ian felt upon Toula was also proved through his action. As a Greek man, Gus Portokalos demanded his future son in law to marry his daughter at the Greek Orthodox Church. For Gus, it was a thing that could not be bargained.

Maria : 'Kosta, they love each other. It happens'
 Gus : ' How can she do this to me?'
 Maria : ' She didn't do this to you or to me. They fell in love. It's done'
 Gus : ' Is he a good boy, I don't know. Is he come from a good family I don't know. Is he a respectful boy, I don't know, I don't know, I don't know. Because no body talking to me about nothing no more. My daughter engages with *excenno*. I always think she gonna be married in the Greek Orthodox Church'

Toula was in her house terrace when Gus reacted over Toula's engagement. She heard every single word that Gus said. There was a big burden for Toula hearing

her parents' statement. The way Toula held her breath and rested her head on her house's props, reflect the burden she carried and her sadness.

When Toula desperately told Ian about this, he was willing to do this thing if it was one of the ways to win Toula. He was willing to be baptized at the Greek Orthodox Church.

Toula : ' I don't think we can't get marry. Not like this. It's just,...when I'm with you, I'm so happy, but my family is so unhappy. And the wedding should be a joyous thing but it won't be for them cause we can't marry at our church. Let's just go..just go ...

Ian : Hey...I love you'

Toula : 'Why do you love me?'

Ian : 'Because I came a live when I met you'

Toula : 'But my family...'

Ian : 'You're part of your family, and I'll do anything, whatever it takes to get them accept me.

The first person that Ian had to face after he decided to be baptized at the Greek Orthodox Church was Gus Portokalos. At *Dancing Zorba's*, where Maria, Nikki, and Toula's brother and sister were gathered, Gus was asking Ian about his commitment to be baptized. The position of the two persons represents an important thing. Gus who talked to Ian that was sitting reflects his power as the head of the family. And the power was also for Ian because he would be the member of the family soon.

The thing that Ian did for Toula was based on his love to her. He felt that Toula was an amazing, attractive and a beautiful woman. His love to Toula was greater than the obstacles he had to face. Ian did not care about Toula's family

uniqueness, that for Toula, the uniqueness was embarrassing. Even, he convinced Toula that every family had an 'embarrassing side' from their family. But it did not mean that they could surrender on it. Ian convinced Toula that their relationship was worth defending.

Toula : 'I'm serious. No one of my family ever gone out with a non-Greek before, no one. And you're so...wonderful. But I don't see how this relations gonna work out'

Ian : 'Work out? What needs to work out? We're not come from the different species. Yes we come from the different backgrounds, and hey..here's the news about my life till this point, and it's boring. Then I met you. You're interesting, you're beautiful, you're fun. We got weird family, who doesn't?'

For Ian, to love Toula meant to love her family as well. Though Toula considered her family as a 'different' one, Ian did not feel the same way. He accepted Toula completely, including her unique family. Ian often felt the cultural difference when he was preparing his wedding. Ian learned not to say 'no' if someone offered him a meal. He also learned that spitting on kids was not a disgusting thing to do for Greek. But indeed, it was a good luck, to keep the devil away. For American, spitting is impolite when it is done in front of public (Tarjana, 1986,p.15). From those happenings, Ian learned about Toula's culture, about Toula that had 27 first cousins alone, while he only had two cousins that lived in Wisconsin.

The love that Ian felt for Toula made him eager to do anything. He was not afraid facing Gus' anger, he was willing to be baptized at the Greek Orthodox

Church, and he accepted the Greek culture happily. Ian's love to Toula was an unconditional love.

Ian : 'Would you like to have a Greek foods?' I know this really great place, you probably know it. Zorba's..I guess. Anyway, I will take you there if you want to go.'

Toula : 'I don't wanna go to that place'.

Ian: ' Why not?'

Toula : 'That place..Dancing Zorba's...my family own that restaurant'.

Ian : 'Really? (staring at Toula). I remember you. You're that waitress'.

Toula : 'Sitting hostess...actually'.

Ian : ' I remember you'.

Toula : ' I was a kind of through a phase..up till now..and...I was a from girl'.

Ian : ' I don't remember from girl. I remember you'

Toula : (smiling)

From the dialogue above, Toula was trying to cover her shame after she confessed to Ian that she was the girl that he met few months ago. The expression change was shown in the scene when the camera shows Toula's face in a medium shot.



Toula's expression was change when she confessed to Ian that she was the unattractive girl that once he met

Toula realized that she was not as pretty as she was now. She used the word 'through a phase' to inform Ian that she was a different and a better girl now, and also a confession that she was a less attractive girl. And Ian replied, ' I don't remember from girl. I remember you'. From the statement, that Ian never made a woman's beauty as his prime priority in looking for a soul mate. But he did better than that. He saw more valuable things inside Toula than merely a physical beauty. What Ian had done to win Toula was a reflection of his love to Toula, and also the reflection of myth of romantic love since myth of romantic love believes that the search for 'true love' is the most important thing in life.

C. Myth of Nuclear Family

The difference between Toula and Ian not only happened at cultural side but also from their different family type. Besides reflecting the myth of beauty and myth of romantic love, the film also reflects the myth of nuclear family. As the researcher wrote in the previous chapter that American myth of nuclear family is a myth that believes that a happy family is a small family, consists of father, mother with one or two children. As an American, Ian owned that kind of family. He lived only with his mother and father and he had no other siblings. It was a thing that differently happens to Toula. She was raised in a Greek extended family where she had more family

members than Ian did. From the beginning of the story, it shows when Toula and her family brought her Grandma from Greece to live with them in America. For Greek people, it was a common thing for them to live with other family members (like grandpa and grandma) besides the main family members (parents and children). The extended family that Toula had was connected to each other. Her aunt, her uncle, cousins, nieces and nephews still met each other regularly. Toula's big family was shown when they welcome Ian's parents. Many people were involved at the occasion, because Toula's family regarded that 'quite' dinner meant a dinner with entire family including their nieces and nephews. If Toula's family always involved all the family members, the different thing happened to Ian's family. Ian was an only son, and he had only two cousins that live in Wisconsin. The dinner that was held by Ian's parents was a quite dinner in its real meaning. There were only Ian's parents, Ian and Toula. There was nobody else that came to the dinner. The difference between Toula and Ian's family could be felt with the music that was chosen for the back sound. When Ian and his parents came to Toula's house for dinner, the music was cheerful, signing that the condition was crowded and full of people.



Gus was introducing each of his family members, showing that Greek people have a different type of family compared to American.

The same situation could also be found when Toula's family gathered at *Dancing Zorba's*. They gathered there to celebrate Toula's engagement. Here at *Dancing Zorba's*, the music that was chosen was a Greek traditional song that reflects happiness.



Toula and Ian's family after they had their dinner

The scene when Toula came to dinner with Ian's parents shows a different situation. Four of them sat around the dinner table and there was no music at all as the back sound. The quiet situation was more obvious by the conversation they had which was only few words. The picture above is a scene when Toula and Ian had just had their dinner with Ian's parents. The quiet atmosphere was felt here because the lighting was vague instead of bright. The position of the table is also signaling that there was a distance extends out among them. The table implicitly signs a separation line between Toula and Ian, with Ian's parents.

American wedding celebration was commonly held not with large amount of guesses. They only invited their close relatives and close friends. But for Greek, thing was different. They could invite everybody they know if they had a wedding celebration.

Father: 'If we invite the Makapolouses, we have to invite the Adamopolouses, their cousins'.

Toula: 'Dad, the thing is we just want to keep it small. It looks like you rather go bankrupt than insult anybody in the church'.

From the dialogue above, Toula was trying to stop her father inviting everyone. Besides she did not know them, in Toula's opinion it would cost lots of money. But for her father and for her sister Athena, it was necessary. They should invite everybody they knew to join the celebration.

Toula and Ian came from two different backgrounds. Ian was raised in a democratic family, while Toula was raised in a strict, traditional family. The scene when Ian was facing Gus' when he was busted dating with Toula was one of them:

Gus : 'You stick around, all over Chicago, but you didn't come here to ask for my permission, can you date my daughter?'

Ian : 'Can I date your daughter? Sir, she's 30 years old'

Gus : 'I'm the head of the family!!'

Ian : 'OK, may I please, date with your daughter?'

Gus : 'No!!!'

Ian argued that he did not have to ask Gus' permission, because he considered that a 30-year-old girl like Toula could make her own decision. Ian's way of thinking had shaped him, rooted from his family that appreciate independence and democracy. On the other hands, Toula was raised in a different family. Toula's family considered that everything in the family should be discussed with their father as the head of the family. The Greek family was not familiar with the independent way of life just like Ian's did. The democracy of Ian's family as the American family was reflected when Ian told Toula that his father and his grandpa were lawyers. But he chose to be a teacher. Ian freely did that, and his parents respected his decision:

Ian : 'My father is a lawyer, my grandfather is a lawyer. It wasn't for me, so I took the new major'

Toula : 'I think, it took a pretty strong personality to do that'.

When Toula was trying to say to her father that she wanted to take a computer course, her father did not allow her to go. Toula's conversation with her father was asking permission, because she was already used to the tradition that everybody in her family should discuss everything with her father. The father of the family was rooted on her Greek family. The head of the family for Greek family meant father's decision was everybody's decision.

This is reflected through the scene when Niko, Toula's brother was showing his drawings for their new menu for their restaurant. When Niko showed his drawing to Gus, Gus only asked who drew that. And when Niko replied that it was him who did the drawing, Gus showed no comment. He did not even give any comment upon his son's drawing. Niko tried to offer his pictures to his dad, but still he got no answer. Though Niko got a cold reaction, he did not feel angry or something. He just took his drawing back and left. Once again, through the scene, the superiority and authority of Gus as the head of the family was reflected here.

Besides containing American myths, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* also tells the audience about a change that has been made by Toula. As a Greek girl, to change a thing in her traditional family was not easy. She was raised in a traditional family, which believed that a change could only happen if someone was being married. On the contrary, she did beyond that. She made a path for herself and also for her other family members. It was a revolutionary act that was done by Toula, because her Greek family hardly saw a change in their life. They were accustomed to the things their ancestor used to teach them. A different thing happened to Ian. When he decided

to take a new major that did not fit his parent's hope, he found no obstacles. His parents regarded that as his own right to do something in his life. His parents could only be a guide, but not the decision maker for their son. Democracy was reflected through Ian's family. This kind of democracy could not be found in Toula's Greek family. But it started to exist when Toula had the courage to make a path to democracy in her family.

The life of Toula as the main character of the story tells the audience that there is a change happen in her Greek family. When her Greek family considered a marriage as the answer to her unchanging life, Toula did the reverse thing. She saw another way to change her life, not by marrying a Greek man, but by taking courses and broadening her knowledge and optimizing her potentials in computer. When her family considered that she had to marry a Greek man, once again she did contradictory act. She chose to build her love life to an American man, named Ian.

The things Toula did above were revolutionary acts that happened for the first time in her Greek traditional family. She opened a new way leading to a more American modern way of thinking. Her acts, which reflect her confidence, her decisions became an example for other family members, in this case was started by her younger brother, Niko.

Niko : 'I went by to a college and pick this up. Look (handing Toula a brochure). I'm gonna start slowly and you know, to take night courses. I just want to learn more about paintings and art stuffs so....'

Toula : 'This is so great'

Niko : ‘You started it. You want to do something else and you did it. Hey Toula, don’t let your pass dictate who you are, but let it be part who you will be become’
Toula : ‘ Nick, that is so beautiful’

Toula’s bravery in making a change in her life became a pioneer for her Greek family. From the things she did, other family members realized that they could do something by themselves to change their life.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher divided it into two subchapters, conclusion and recommendation. Conclusion contains the result of analysis and recommendation contains suggestion to the readers who have interest in American Study framework.

The conclusion is the answer to the problem statement: what myths can be found in the movie and how does the movie reflect them? From the analysis, the

researcher concludes that there are three myths can be found in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* movie. Those myths are myth of beauty, myth of romantic love, and myth of nuclear family.

Myth of beauty is reflected in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* through the physical change that happens to Toula Portokalos and also from Toula's monologue, as well as from Nikki's gestures. It was shown how Toula changed her physical appearance in order to adjust herself in the American myth of beauty. She did some changes on her physical appearance as American society's demand. Toula started to put some make up and changed the way she dressed because these are the 'conditions' in myth of beauty. This myth gives no tolerance for those who wear no make up and has a fat body. In short, this myth demands a perfect physical appearance: blonde hair, blue-eyed, tall, and slim. The willing to adjust herself in this myth is clearly shown from Toula's monologue that expressed her wishes to be a prettier, blonde girl. The myth of beauty that appreciates big breasts as one of its standards is shown from Nikki's character and gestures. It was told that she spent much time in a beauty salon everyday just to keep her performance perfect. Nikki's gestures are also show that this myth is reflected in the movie. Nikki always straightening up her breast position so it would look good and perfect all the time. Her costumes that expose her breasts are proving that this film reflects the myth of beauty.

On the other side, this film also reflects the myth of romantic love. This thing is shown from Toula's Greek family that wanted her to get married soon. The myth of

romantic love can be found from the beginning of the movie up to its end. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is a film that mainly tells about a girl finding her soul mate and defends her relationship across their cultural difference. The American society believes that there is always a soul mate, a true love for everyone. They believe that a couple should defend their true love. This myth is reflected through the struggle of Ian Miller, Toula's boyfriend. He was willing to do anything to get Toula as his wife. He sacrificed so much for this relation: facing Toula's father, being baptized in the Greek Orthodox Church, and adapting himself to Toula's unique Greek family. All the things that Ian had done for Toula were a proof of his love.

Another myth can be found in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is the myth of nuclear family. The Americans believe that a happy family is a nuclear family. A father, a mother and one or two children. This is also the family that is owned by Ian as an American. He was raised in a small family where there was not anybody else except his father and mother. To build a love relationship with Ian, Toula felt that their cultural background was too complicated because of their different cultural background. As a Greek woman, Toula was raised in a big, extended family, where there was also her grandma lived with them. The relation among her families were kept, they always met regularly, in every family occasion. In the movie, Toula is described to be a little embarrassed upon her Greek family. She regarded her family to be the weird one, because the American type of family is totally different from what she had. She considered that the American type of family is better than hers; small, happy, democratic, and of course not noisy. Toula that was raised in America

considered that a small family is worth-having instead of big, extended family. She regarded that nuclear family is a happy though she finally found it wrong.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a movie that is not only tells about myths in America. The myths as the researcher wrote in the second chapter are not talking about falsity. But it talks about a thing that lives in a society, believed and accepted as being true.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding contains three myths that Americans people believed. However the movie also shows that those myths are not always right. The movie does not talk about the right or wrong but it conveys message that there are myths living in America up till now.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a movie directed by Joel Zwick, an American director. Through the movie, he conveyed messages that myths still exist in his society. At the entire movie and also at the end of the story including the capturing of its scenes, reflect that the director wants to rise the American values. He shows the audience that a change and democracy are good. He also shows that American society regarded the blonde and the big-breasted girl as the beautiful figure. He wants to convey messages to the audiences the values that he is already accustomed with since his kiddy age. It might become a different ending of the movie if the director was not an American.

B. RECOMMENDATION

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is one of American films that convey myths as its core. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is also a film that packed myths in a funny entertaining story.

The researcher realized that this thesis is not perfect. Therefore, the researcher recommends other researchers and students of English Department of Sebelas Maret University to find more information about American society including their myths, beliefs and values. The researcher also recommends other researchers and the readers in American Study framework to explore more things about American movies and the

hidden message lies beneath it. Finally, the researcher hopes that this thesis can give additional information to other researchers who want to take movies as their object of research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

C. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher divided it into two subchapters, conclusion and recommendation. Conclusion contains the result of analysis and recommendation contains suggestion to the readers who have interest in American Study framework.

The conclusion is the answer to the problem statement: what myths can be found in the movie and how does the movie reflect them? From the analysis, the

researcher concludes that there are three myths can be found in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* movie. Those myths are myth of beauty, myth of romantic love, and myth of nuclear family.

Myth of beauty is reflected in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* through the physical change that happens to Toula Portokalos and also from Toula's monologue, as well as from Nikki's gestures. It was shown how Toula changed her physical appearance in order to adjust herself in the American myth of beauty. She did some changes on her physical appearance as American society's demand. Toula started to put some make up and changed the way she dressed because these are the 'conditions' in myth of beauty. This myth gives no tolerance for those who wear no make up and has a fat body. In short, this myth demands a perfect physical appearance: blonde hair, blue-eyed, tall, and slim. The willing to adjust herself in this myth is clearly shown from Toula's monologue that expressed her wishes to be a prettier, blonde girl. The myth of beauty that appreciates big breasts as one of its standards is shown from Nikki's character and gestures. It was told that she spent much time in a beauty salon everyday just to keep her performance perfect. Nikki's gestures are also show that this myth is reflected in the movie. Nikki always straightening up her breast position so it would look good and perfect all the time. Her costumes that expose her breasts are proving that this film reflects the myth of beauty.

On the other side, this film also reflects the myth of romantic love. This thing is shown from Toula's Greek family that wanted her to get married soon. The myth of

romantic love can be found from the beginning of the movie up to its end. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is a film that mainly tells about a girl finding her soul mate and defends her relationship across their cultural difference. The American society believes that there is always a soul mate, a true love for everyone. They believe that a couple should defend their true love. This myth is reflected through the struggle of Ian Miller, Toula's boyfriend. He was willing to do anything to get Toula as his wife. He sacrificed so much for this relation: facing Toula's father, being baptized in the Greek Orthodox Church, and adapting himself to Toula's unique Greek family. All the things that Ian had done for Toula were a proof of his love.

Another myth can be found in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is the myth of nuclear family. The Americans believe that a happy family is a nuclear family. A father, a mother and one or two children. This is also the family that is owned by Ian as an American. He was raised in a small family where there was not anybody else except his father and mother. To build a love relationship with Ian, Toula felt that their cultural background was too complicated because of their different cultural background. As a Greek woman, Toula was raised in a big, extended family, where there was also her grandma lived with them. The relation among her families were kept, they always met regularly, in every family occasion. In the movie, Toula is described to be a little embarrassed upon her Greek family. She regarded her family to be the weird one, because the American type of family is totally different from what she had. She considered that the American type of family is better than hers; small, happy, democratic, and of course not noisy. Toula that was raised in America

considered that a small family is worth-having instead of big, extended family. She regarded that nuclear family is a happy though she finally found it wrong.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a movie that is not only tells about myths in America. The myths as the researcher wrote in the second chapter are not talking about falsity. But it talks about a thing that lives in a society, believed and accepted as being true.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding contains three myths that Americans people believed. However the movie also shows that those myths are not always right. The movie does not talk about the right or wrong but it conveys message that there are myths living in America up till now.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is a movie directed by Joel Zwick, an American director. Through the movie, he conveyed messages that myths still exist in his society. At the entire movie and also at the end of the story including the capturing of its scenes, reflect that the director wants to rise the American values. He shows the audience that a change and democracy are good. He also shows that American society regarded the blonde and the big-breasted girl as the beautiful figure. He wants to convey messages to the audiences the values that he is already accustomed with since his kiddy age. It might become a different ending of the movie if the director was not an American.

D. RECOMMENDATION

My Big Fat Greek Wedding is one of American films that convey myths as its core. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* is also a film that packed myths in a funny entertaining story.

The researcher realized that this thesis is not perfect. Therefore, the researcher recommends other researchers and students of English Department of Sebelas Maret University to find more information about American society including their myths, beliefs and values. The researcher also recommends other researchers and the readers in American Study framework to explore more things about American movies and the

hidden message lies beneath it. Finally, the researcher hopes that this thesis can give additional information to other researchers who want to take movies as their object of research.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Eshleman, J. Ross, Barbara G. Cashion, Basirico, Laurence A. 1993. *Sociology : An Introduction*. New York: New York Harper Collins College Publishers Inc.
- Kusalena, Wabi Metta. 2004. *Alienated Working Class In America Post Industrial Capitalist Society Presented In ' American Beauty' Directed By Sam Mendes*. Unpublished Thesis. Surakarta: Universitas Sebelas Maret.
- Monaco, James. 2000. *How To Read a Film*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Nachbar, Jack and Kevin Laue. 1992. *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University.
- Sarinadi, I Gusti Ayu Sudadi. 2005. *The Superiority on Technology of The United States Of America As Reflected in Michael Bay's Movie, Armageddon*. Unpublished Thesis. Surakarta: Universitas Sebelas Maret.
- Stam, Burgoyne and Lewis. 1992. *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post Structuralism and Beyond*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Tarjana, Heribertus. 1990. *Cross Cultural Understanding*. Surakarta: FKIP Universitas Sebelas Maret.
- Tomasouw, Pauline. 1986. *Cross Cultural Understanding Handout for Cross Cultural Understanding Subject 3-6*. Jakarta: Karunika Jakarta.
- Wolf, Naomi. 2002. *Kala Kecantikan Menindas Perempuan* translated by Alia Swastika. Yogyakarta: Niagra Yogyakarta.
- Zwick, Joel. 2002. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* with Nia Vardalos and John Corbett. United States. Warner Brother Production Inc. VCD distributed by PT Vision

Interprima Pictures.2003.

<http://www.arwhead.com/Greeks> accessed on September 18, 2005 at 17.32.

http://www.bookslut.com/21st_century_fox/2004-12_003784.php accessed on September 18, 2005 at 17.26.

http://www.careofthesoul.net/articles/temple_body.htm accessed on August 2nd, 2005 at 08.54.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/aww/2001/cb01-69.html> accessed on November 1st, 2005 at 11.00.

<http://www.crystalinks.com/greekculture.html> accessed on November 1st, 2005 at 11.12.

<http://www.deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,615153404,00.html> accessed on November 1st, 2005 at 12.03.

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_release/2005-07/bu-rdm072805.php accessed on November 7, 2005 at 13.46.

http://www.iso.org.nz/resources/talks/beauty_myth.htm accessed on November 7, 2005 at 13.56.

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsi=18285> accessed on August 3rd, 2005 at 15.43.

http://www.medem.com/medlb/article_detailb.cfm?article_ID=ZZZSUB8-T79C&sub_cat=106 accessed on November 7, 2005 at 14.34.

<http://www.natural-law.org/platform/familyvalues.html> accessed on January 5, 2006 at 19.07.

<http://www.schools.tdsb.on.ca/jarvisci/jargonline/mythofbeuty.html> accessed on August 3rd, 2005 at 16.50.

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~parkx032/HOAX.html> accessed on January 6, 2006 at 10.12.



When Ian is facing Gus' anger after he busted dating with Toula



One of men that Toula's father choose for her



Dinner situation when Toula met Ian's parents



Ian is being baptized in Greek Orthodox Church, a proof of his love for Toula



Maria is spitting on her grandchild, for good luck, to keep the devil away.



Toula's wedding in Greek Orthodox Church



Toula (the black hair girl) finally made herself accepted in her blonde friends community



Toula in front of a mirror, trying her new dress

