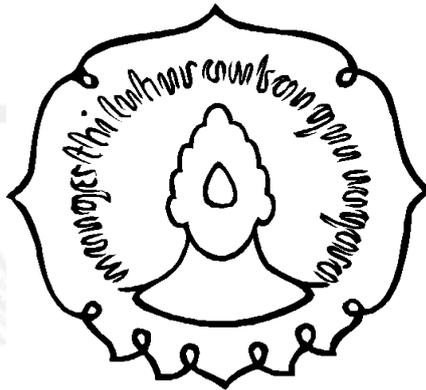


**Internal Conflict of *Citizen Heroes*:  
American Democracy VS Individual Freedom  
Reflected in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's  
*The Fantastic Four* by Tim Story (2005)**



**THESIS**

Submitted as a partial fulfillment  
For Sarjana Sastra Degree at English Department  
Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts  
Sebelas Maret University

By  
**VITA DEWI RARAS ASIANTI**  
C0302011

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FINE ARTS  
UNIVERSITY OF SEBELAS MARET  
SURAKARTA  
2007**

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By  
Vita Dewi Raras Asianti  
NIM. C0302011

Approved by the Thesis Consultant

Fitria Akhmerti Primasita, S.S., M.A.  
NIP. 132 205 442

Head of English Department

Drs. Riyadi Santosa, M.Ed  
NIP. 131 569 264

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NIM. C0302011

Accepted & Approved by the Board of Examiners  
Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Sebelas Maret University  
On

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First Examiner	Fitria Akhmerti Primasita, S.S, M.A. NIP. 132 205 442	( )
Second Examiner	Dra. Susilorini, M.A NIP. 132 000 807	( )

Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts  
Sebelas Maret University  
Dean,

Dr. Maryono Dwiraharjo, S.U.  
NIP. 130 675 167

## PRONOUNCEMENT

Name : Vita Dewi Raras Asianti  
NIM : C0302011

I declared truthfully that this thesis entitled *Internal Conflict of Citizen Heroes: American Democracy VS Individual Freedom Reflected in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's The Fantastic Four by Tim Story (2005)* is not plagiarism or other's piece of work. The terms belonging to the others' works were noted by quotation marks and the bibliography.

If this pronouncement is not true, I will be ready for the academic sanctions comprising the cancellation of the thesis and the academic degree obtained from finishing the thesis and study.

Surakarta, April 2007

Vita Dewi Raras Asianti

*Khawab Sucha Hojaiga*  
(Risma Budiyan)

Life is about taking a risk. Whenever you are afraid of it, just close your eyes and think about your parents, and you will see that the world is in your arm  
(Myself)

Nothing in this life to be feared, it's only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may be fearless  
(Marie Currie)

*Gratefully dedicated to:*

✚ *My beautiful Mother, Mama ENDANG NURUL ASIH, and my great Father, Bapak SUPRPTO for the unconditional LOVE and supports*

✚ *My sparkling stars Vina, Venti, and Dhimas Milo*

✚ *Me, myself for all the tears, the courage, the patience, and the faith*

✚ *My Lost Diamond, I am going to wait for the right moment with you,  
Always*

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## ABSRTACT

**VITA DEWI RARAS ASIANTI. C 0302011. *Internal Conflict of Citizen Heroes: American Democracy VS Individual Freedom Reflected in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's The Fantastic Four by Tim Story (2005)*. Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts Sebelas Maret University.**

This thesis entitled “Internal Conflict of Citizen Heroes: American Democracy VS Individual Freedom Reflected in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox’s *The Fantastic Four* by Tim Story (2005)” is based on a research conducted within the framework of American Studies in understanding the internal conflict aspect of American Democracy VS Individual Freedom beyond the significance of *citizen heroes* as reflected by the movie *The Fantastic Four* (2005).

This study emphasized on two research questions. The research is intended to explain how the conflict between the myth of American Democracy and Individual Freedom is embodied in the *Fantastic Four* characters of citizen heroes in *The Fantastic Four* movie. It is also to give a description of how the conflict is resolved by each of the *Fantastic Four* heroes as reflected in *The Fantastic Four* movie.

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. The main data are the characters, the setting and the dialogue, and all aspects of cinematography of the recording of *The Fantastic Four* directed by Tim Story and distributed by the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. This research was also supported by additional data outside the object. The supporting data were the resume and article, which could support the object of analysis. Internet was the source of the supporting data.

As the study was carried out within the framework of American Studies, it employed interdisciplinary studies which brought the consequence of applying several approaches. The approaches that are used in this thesis are cultural approach, semiotic approach, and socio- psychological approach. These approaches were helpful to conduct the analysis so that the answer to the research questions could be revealed.

After conducting the analysis, the conclusion of the first research question is that the internal conflict is experienced by the character that has already had the characteristics of citizen hero and the characters who experience the lost of personal identities. Ben Grimm and Susan Storm, the characters who loss their personal identities, have greater internal conflict compared to Reed Richard, the character who has the characteristics of citizen hero from the beginning. Meanwhile, the conflict cannot be found in the character of Johnny Storm who has a dominant independent domain. Based on the analysis of the second research question, it can be concluded that the resolving process of the internal conflicts is contributed by the significance of a villain, the significance of a leader, and the close- relationship characteristics among the characters.

This thesis hopefully inspires further researches of *citizen heroes* from different perspectives to improve American Studies as a field of study.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

Studying American society will never be separated from the understanding of its culture, beliefs, and values. Society is a group of interacting persons who live in a specific geographical area, who are organized in a cooperative manner and who share a common heritage. Every shared- aspect of life, such as system of ideas, beliefs and values, knowledges, norms, custom, and technology of a particular society is called culture (Eshleman, Casion and Basirico, 1993: 92).

In the development, a culture is not only a reflection of a particular society. It is spread worldwide and even turns into a new shape which is called popular culture. According to Nachbar and Lause, Popular culture refers to the products of human work and thought which are (or have been) accepted and approved by a large community or population (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 14).

In recent years, many products of popular culture develop rapidly. With the emergence of global market, there is no national boundary in the practice of buying and selling of the products. As a result, people are getting used to consume them. Film, TV programs, rock groups, folk dance, and folk singing, now travel the world, and it is not unusual for any good-sized city to have products of

popular culture performing at the same time (Korzenny, Toomey and Schiff, 1992: 14).

The products of popular culture do not only reflect people's beliefs and values, but also shape people's beliefs and values. Movie or film is one of the most famous products of popular culture. Movies reflect reality of the people in its society. It is also the reflection of an era when the movie is made. Those are presented through many movie genres. One of the common genres is science-fiction that brings about the significance of 'hero'.

Heroes can be defined as archetype figures that characteristically embody key traits valued by its originating culture. In other words, he or she can fulfill the definition of what is considered as good and noble in its culture. They commonly possess superhuman capabilities or idealized character traits which enable them to perform extraordinary and beneficial deeds. Those heroic deeds may lead them to fame (Available at <http://www.answers.com/topic/hero> cited on June 11, 2006 at 9:17 am).

On July 8, 2005, Marvel Inc. and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox launched The Fantastic Four which presented the significance of American heroes. The movie was directed by Tim Story. Originally, the movie was inspired by Marvel's comic book and character of The Fantastic Four (1960's) by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby. Since the comic version was first launched, it was praised worthy in the history of American comic books and begun to be very popular product as it has been adapted in the form of animated television series and motion picture in 2005. In its opening weeks, The Fantastic Four the movie proved as a box office hit with

worldwide 300 million US dollar income. The comic- book series, which famously added the hyperbolic tagline “The World’s Greatest Comic Magazine!” above the title starting with issue #4 (issue #3 declared itself “The Greatest Comic Magazine in the World!”) dropped the “The” from the cover logo with #16, becoming simply Fantastic Four (Available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Fantastic\\_Four](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fantastic_Four), cited on September 11, 2006 at 9:53 pm).

The movie brings science- fiction genre, adventure, and comedy. It tells about four scientists who experience physical transformation because of the cosmic radiation when they do a space expedition. Dr. Reed Richard (Ioan Gruffudd), an investor, an astronaut, and scientist is spearheading a trip to outer space to the center of a cosmic storm. He wants to reveal the secret of human genetic codes for the benefit of all humanity. Extensive government grant cutbacks nearly dash the visionary’s hopes of the historic flight, until Reed accepts a financing deal with his old college rival, Victor Von Doom (Julian McMahon), now billionaire industrialist. Reed’s crew for the mission includes his best friend, astronaut Ben Grimm (Michael Chiklis); Sue Storm (Jessica Alba), Reed’s ex-girlfriend; and Sue’s hot-headed younger brother Johnny Storm (Chris Evans). The mission is uneventful--until Reed discovers a miscalculation of the speed of the approaching storm. The space station is engulfed by turbulent clouds of cosmic radiation which genetically transforms the crew. Their DNA is irrevocably altered--and so is their future. Back on earth, Reed gains the ability to stretch and contort his body into any shape he can imagine and, as leader of the

group, is given the name Mr. Fantastic; Sue is able to render herself invisible and to create and project powerful force fields as Invisible Woman; Johnny becomes known as The Human Torch, as he can engulf his body in flames and take flight at will; and Ben, becomes an orange-colored, rock-like, superhumanly strong creature, The Thing. Then, they use their 'gift' and turn into coalition to thwart the evil plans of Victor von Doom who wants to conquer the world (Available at <http://movies.yahoo.com/shop?d=hv&cf=info&id=1808403968> cited on June 5, 2006 at 10:03 am).

According to David Bordwell and Kristine Thompson in *The Film Art*, "Movie genres are tightly bound to cultural factors" (Bordwell and Thompson, 1997: 55). As an American Popular product, the movie is full of the American ideas. It reflects the American mainstream especially the ideal figure of popular heroes.

Popular hero are those who are *better* than each of American and yet one of them. American heroes are up in the sky for them to point at and admire, but they are also right next-door. They are common men and women who rise to great heights of achievements and thus demonstrate to us both their own abilities and characteristics and their continued ties the masses. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 315)

American popular heroes are characterized by their great heights of achievement. In American society, there is always possibility to anyone to become a 'hero' as long as he can demonstrate his special abilities, talents and characteristics. Besides, he must be able to embody the American value of Individual Freedom and Democracy in a form of achievement and humble origins,

power and humility, and special skills and ordinary problems (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 316).

American society is familiar with two broad categories of heroes, *citizen heroes* and *rogue heroes*. *Citizen heroes* are those men or women who represent myths associated with the mainstream America- the traditional values of the community and the nation. They are identified by three main conditions. The first is that the person must be exceptionally gifted in some way, such as trained-abilities and natural talents. Then, they must set qualities of the culture's values because they are the representative of the society. The last is that the *citizen heroes* have a duty to defend the community. Meanwhile, the figure of *rogue heroes* brings about the spirit of Individual Freedom.

The main characters of *The Fantastic Four* are significantly categorized as American *citizen heroes*. They obviously perform all the qualities of defending community and representing the society. In fact, they must face a quite dilemmatic condition, which is performing ideal figure of heroes and at the same time pursuing high values of individual freedom. It does not look easy to put them in balance because it deals with two opposed- 'ideal' figure in the society.

Analyzing this internal conflict of the characters presents a different perspective to understand another aspect beyond the significance of *citizen heroes*. This issue is reflected by many hidden meanings shown in the whole movie. The researcher used the meanings to reveal how the conflict happens and how it influences the characters.

## B. Scope of Study

In order to limit the study, the researcher focused the research on the analysis of the characters' internal conflict as *citizen heroes* in the movie of *The Fantastic Four*. The conflict involved the values of individual freedom and American democracy as the center of interest. Besides, this research presented a further analysis on how the *citizen heroes* resolve the conflict. This research was conducted as a descriptive research since it presented a description of the finding result.

## C. Research Questions

The research questions of this research are:

1. How is the internal conflict between the myth of American Democracy and Individual Freedom embodied by the *Fantastic Four* citizen heroes in *The Fantastic Four* movie?
2. How is the conflict resolved by each of the *Fantastic Four* heroes as reflected in *The Fantastic Four* movie?

## **D. Objective of the Study**

The objective of this research is to find out the answer to the research questions. It is to describe and to explain how the conflict between the myth of American Democracy and Individual Freedom is embodied by the *Fantastic Four* citizen heroes in *The Fantastic Four* movie. It is also to give explanation of how the conflict is resolved by each of the *Fantastic Four* heroes as reflected in *The Fantastic Four* movie.

## **E. Benefit of the Study**

This research gives a deeper understanding about the American popular hero. It presents a psychological aspect of heroes when they are admitted to a double – standard in its society. It might influence their behavior towards their surroundings. This research is also presented as a guidance to value the American society and all aspects that shape the society.

## **F. Research Methodology**

### **1. Type of Research**

The research belongs to Descriptive Qualitative Research. Descriptive Qualitative Research is a research that is collecting descriptive data. In qualitative

research, data are presented in a group of systematic information in which it is led to a process of concluding (Miles, 1984: 25). The data cannot be analyzed numerically. The research consisted of the process of collecting, classifying, analyzing and interpreting the data (Surakhmad, 1994: 139). Descriptive data of this research were taken from the characters and all aspects of cinematography of the movie. In collecting the data, the researcher conducted a repetitive watching.

## **2. Theoretical Approach**

*The Fantastic Four* is a product of popular culture. This research used Cultural Approach. John Storey stated that in the Cultural Studies, 'culture' is understood as texts and practices of everyday life. One fundamental way in Cultural Studies is to understand the meanings of a cultural text or practice. The study of popular culture is included in it. In other words, it is certainly the case that the study of popular culture is the cultural object of Cultural Studies (Storey, 1996: 2).

The use of this approach is to determine the popularity of 'heroes'. Popularity simply refers to that which is (or has been) accepted and approved of by large number of people (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 10). People appreciate anything that is suitable for them. It means that they find their identity and spirit on it. In this case, figures of Heroes with their values are the representatives of the American society. Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause in their book *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* has mentioned in detail how 'heroes' give a significant contribution over the society that has been shaped for hundreds years. By using this approach, the analysis presented a correlation of figure, values, and

popularity. The theories of popular culture of John Storey and Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause were applied in the research.

Having a chance and capability to support the community brings internal conflict over individuals. The heroes in this movie must perform their best action as defenders of the community in a dilemmatic situation of keeping their original identity as ordinary persons. This situation leads to the analysis of how individual's personality deals with the internal conflict. Hilgard (1962b: 447) in Irwin G. Sarason's *Personality: An Objective Approach* stated that:

The term personality is used to mean the configuration of individual characteristics and ways of behaving which determines an individual's unique adjustments to his environment. We stress particularly those personal traits that affect the individual's getting along with other people and with himself. Hence, personality includes any characteristics that are important in the individual's personal adjustments, in his maintenance of self- respect. (Sarason, 1966: 14)

The internal conflict of 'citizen heroes' reflected by the characters of *The Fantastic Four* and its effects were properly analyzed by the approach and theory of Social- Psychology. "Social psychology is the study of how an individual influences his or her social interactions with others individuals or groups; and how social behavior influences the individual" (Eshleman, Casion and Basirico, 1993: 6). Social psychologists realize that individuals do not exist in isolation from social and cultural influences- far from it. Socio-psychologists focus on the factors that cause specific persons to engage in such behavior (Baron and Byrne, 2000: 9).

Social Psychology indirectly underlines the importance and the correlation of individuals and society. This study helps us to understand both “figures”. Robert S Feldman in *Social Psychology 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (1998) explains it into *Self Concept* and *Prosocial Behavior*. It is about potential condition in which attention is focused on the self and defining the self in a social condition. Self concept comprises our sense of identity, the set of beliefs we hold about what we are like individuals (Feldman, 1998: 118). Meanwhile, Prosocial Behaviors is helping behavior that benefits others (Feldman, 1998: 265).

Since the internal conflict involved two ideal-standard values, Individual Freedom vs. American Democracy, this research provided a chronological explanation of both values. It was to trace back the existence of both values that have shaped the American society today. The report showed chronological facts of the values which were presented by a cause and effect relationship. In addition, the explanation helped to dig up the contrasting idea of both values twisted for long time as mentioned by Nachbar and Lause in *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* that “Freedom usually in opposite to the mainstream and its forces of authority and conformity “(Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 320).

This research also involved the Semiological Approach in the analysis because the source of main data deals with many signs. Semiotics focuses on the human capacity to conceptualize and articulate the world through a variety of media: verbal language, gesture, sounds, stories, clothes, and pictorial representation, among others (Allen and Gomery, 1985: 77). Ferdinand De’ Saussure and Charles Sanders Pierce started a new point of view of analyzing

language which is known as Semiotics. Semiotics is a science that studies the life of signs within the society; it would be part of socio psychology.

Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914) states that signs closely related to the objects that presented them because they have a cause and effect relationship. The essence of the signs is determined by the objects, for example the picture of a President. This is what is called *icon*. When the reality and the existence of the signs are related to the individual object Pierce defined it as *Index*, for example smokes with fire. *Symbol* defines the denotative objects (Sobur, 2003: 34-35).

According to Saussure, language is human expression. It consists of concepts which have interrelation with the speaker's expression. Then, he defines it into a unity of *signifier* and *signified* (Kurniawan, 2001: 12-13). The combination between *signifier* and *signified* is called *sign*. In the development, semiotic is also used to reveal the hidden meaning of a non- linguistic object. Film is one of the concerns of this study.

Christian Metz is a language expert who firstly applied semiotic into cinematography with a more detail understanding. His theory is known as Semiotic Film theory. If *sign* in language has an arbitrary relationship, *sign* in cinematography is more logical. He added that *signified* in cinematography have symbolical meanings (Masinambow and Hidayat, 2001: 164- 165). He is famous of The Grand Syntagmatic to define cinematic narratives. Christian Metz's film theory was applied in the analysis.

Cinematography term supported the process of signification. Cinematography literally means "writing in movement". Any product of

cinematography presents the variety of social behaviors, attitudes, ideology, and the way of thinking of a particular society. Cinematographic qualities involve three factors: the photographic aspects of the shot, the framing of the shot, and the duration of the shot (Bordwell and Thompson, 1997: 210).

Camera, lighting, and editing techniques are fundamental to the moving image. The craft of each area produces work of impressive artistic merit in its own right. The analysis of those techniques is applied for purposes of interpretation (Douglas and Harnden 1996: 150).

According to John S. Douglas and Glenn P. Harnden there are some important aspects in film production like lighting, texture, angles, framing, editing, sound etc. To support the analysis under the semiological approach, those cinematography terms were practically used.

### **3. Data and Source of data**

The researcher used two kinds of data in conducting this research. They were Main Data and Supporting Data. Since this research used movie as the source of data of the research, the main data were the characters, the setting and the dialogue and all aspects of cinematography of the recording of *The Fantastic Four* directed by Tim Story and distributed by the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. This research was also supported by additional data outside the object. The supporting data were the resume and article, which could support the object. Internet was the source of the supporting data.

#### **4. Technique of Collecting Data**

This research was started by watching the recording repeatedly in order to find out and understand the messages from all elements of cinematography of the movie. According to Mathew B. Miles, we pass three steps in qualitative research. The first is Data Reduction in which rough data are being chosen, simplified, classified and transformed into organized data (Miles and Huberman, 1992: 16). In this step, we are about to collect the data to be analyzed. The researcher collected the main data that were appropriate for each research questions from the recording.

#### **5. Technique of Analyzing Data**

According to Mathew B. Miles, the second step in doing an analysis of a qualitative research is Data Serving. The organized data are ready to be analyzed. In this process, the researcher applied all theories to describe and to interpret the meanings of data that had been collected in the previous step. Later on, the steps were completed by the process of Concluding (Miles and Huberman, 1992: 17-18). Since the supporting data were taken from many written sources, this research also used library study.

## G. Thesis Organization

The thesis consists of four chapters and each of them is subdivided into subsequent divisions. The thesis is arranged as follows: Chapter I presents an INTRODUCTION, which consists of research background, problem statement, scope of study, objectives, benefits, research method, approach and theory, and thesis organization.

Chapter II presents a LITERATURE REVIEW that discusses about the approaches and theories that are applied in this thesis. There are explanations about the popularity's figure of 'Heroes' from cultural perspective, the myth of American Individual Freedom and American Democracy, the Christian Metz's semiotic film theory and basic terminology in cinematography, and the theory of Socio-Psychology.

Chapter III presents an ANALYSIS that consists of the analysis of how the internal conflict of American democracy and individual freedom is embodied by *The Fantastic Four* citizen heroes and how each of the citizen heroes resolves the conflict.

Chapter IV presents a CONCLUSION that consists of conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter covers the discussion of all related study to support the analysis of this research. It consists of four sub chapters. The first sub chapter presents a brief explanation of the emergence of heroes in relation to the Cultural approach. It is to demonstrate the popularity of the figure. The second sub chapter briefly covers the historical background of American Individual Freedom and American Democracy to show how they have been shaping the American society. Then, the third sub chapter presents Semiotic Film Theory and the basic terminology of cinematography. The last sub chapter gives details of the Socio-psychological theory.

#### **A. The Popularity's Figure of 'Heroes'**

##### **From Cultural Perspective**

Popular culture is a product of culture which reflects what people believe. According to Nachbar and Lause, popular culture is the product of human work and thought which are (or have been) accepted or approved of a large community or population. Besides, it is also a visible expression of people's thoughts and feelings. It is presented in a form of artifacts and events (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 14-15).

This type of culture is commonly mass produced since it is focused on commercial field. In other words, the products of popular culture do not only reflect people's beliefs and values, but also shape beliefs and values of people.

The "reflective" study of popular culture is guided by the *Popular Culture Formula*. This "equation" states that the 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. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 5)

The terminology of popularity refers to what is or has been accepted or approved of by large number of people. Based on the term, popular culture contains several aspects which are presented and reflected in its nature. The nature of popular culture is identified by the several characteristics of popular culture itself; they are reflecting and shaping people's beliefs and values, commercial, mass-produced, and imitative.

The first is *popular culture reflects and shapes people's beliefs and values*. Among other characteristics of popular culture, it is considered as the core of popular culture. In order to touch all segments of population, the producers must concern about what people are interested in because the interest indicates people's 'personality', the identity. 'The more producers 'support' the people the more revenue they can get'; it is all about taste which becomes a measurement of people's acceptance toward a product. Popular culture is not always a reflection of the people of a society. In some cases, it is found that a new culture can turn into a popular product in a different society. This phenomenon is closely related to the aspect of business scope. The second is *popular culture is usually commercial*. Commercial is directly related to profit. The producers must be able

to see the market opportunity, the characteristics of their target consumers. The last is *popular culture is mass-produced. Popular culture is imitative*. When a certain product is well-accepted by a large number of people, it means that the product is popular. The producers might see this as a chance to get more revenue from the product popularity.

The movie of *The Fantastic Four* is one of the popular culture products which gained success in the American society. Its genre values the American popular heroes as reflected by the characters.

Popular hero are those who are *better* than each of American and yet one of them. American heroes are up in the sky for them to point at and admire, but they are also right next-door. They are common men and women who rise to great heights of achievements and thus demonstrate to us both their own abilities and characteristics and their continued ties the masses. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 315)

American heroes are the member of American society, typically Americans. They must be able to show a great achievement and at the same time express the high values of the American mainstream, the spirit of individual freedom. American heroes are concrete images of what we all to become and also present perfected number of a culture, the spirit of American democracy. It is because the culture contributes to the born of such perfectionist (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 315). For a long time, the society is familiar with the conflict between both values. Here, the American heroes come as ideal figures who can embody and assist the existence of both values. In conclusion, the American heroes are those who have this attributes: from common place origins, show humility where at the same time play the rule as ordinary people. Those characteristics are what make

American heroes different from other type of heroes. As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, there are two broad categories of popular hero, *citizen heroes* and *rogue heroes*. Both categories bring its own details based on what they are waiting to support, American democracy and individual freedom.

*Citizen heroes* are those men or women who represent myths associated with mainstream America- the traditional values of the community and the nation. They are identified by three main conditions. The first is that the person must be exceptionally gifted in some way, such as trained- abilities and natural talents. Then, they must set qualities of the culture's values because they are the representatives of the society. The last is that the *citizen heroes* have a duty to defend the community. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson are the figures of citizen heroes.

Nachbar and Lause in *Popular Culture: An introductory Text*, gives example of citizen hero that guide us to understand the terminology. George Washington, America's first president and one of the Founding Fathers were known as influential figure of the American society. He was gifted as military and political strategist. He contributed a lot for the born of the nation. Many legend spoke about his extraordinary deeds. One of them is the story of telling the truth. American society praises honesty as one of the virtues. The story mentioned that George ever chopped down his father's cherry then he asked for forgiveness by telling the truth of what he had done. It symbolizes the dignity of individual (Nachbar and Lause, 2000: 316).

As a citizen hero, Washington's individualism demonstrated authority (the right to chop down the cherry tree as a form of protest) and responsibility (a confession of wrongful action). Here, we are shown the very essential meaning of citizens heroes; they are "being good citizen" including honesty, integrity, understanding of those who less fortunate, participation in the community activities; and striving achievement of community goals (Nachbar and Lause, 2000: 317).

In contrast to *citizen heroes*, *rogue heroes* are representatives of the beliefs and values associated with individual freedom. They are usually the envoy of a subgroup within a culture in a larger community.

A rogue hero—real or imaginary—is one of whose primary characteristics are an *exceptional vitality* and an assertion of a radical individual freedom over the communal democratic values associated with the cultural mainstream. Rogue hero do live fast, die young, and (sometimes) leave a beautiful corpse, and in the course of doing so they act out the fundamental American fantasy of absolute personal freedom. (Nachbar and Lause, 2000: 320)

One of the most well-known figures is Malcolm X (1925-1965). He was the 'hero' for Black community who fought for equality and acknowledgement as part of American society (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 316). Malcolm Little spent much of his childhood in the foster homes and state institutions. At the age of 21, he was arrested and given a 10-year sentence. While in jail, he was interested in the nation of Islam, the Black Muslim sect led by Elijah Muhammad. In 1952, he adopted the name of Malcolm X, and became the leader of the Black Moslem movement. He was known for his thought to manage the possibilities of working with people from diverse ethnic background. He was assassinated in 1965 during

his speech in New York City. His thought influenced many Blacks to fight for their rights (Puckrein, 1993: 11).

The discussion of this sub chapter is mostly based on Nachbar and Lause's theory of Popular Culture. They applied the Roland Barthes's theory of mythology to get their findings. For that reason, a concise explanation of the Barthes's theory is needed in this chapter.

Myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. It cannot possibly be an object, a concept or an idea; it is a mode of signification. It is also not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message: there are a formal limits to myth, there are no 'substantial' ones. (Barthes, 1999: 109)

Mythology theory cannot be separated from semiology. According to Roland Barthes, Semiotic theory of Ferdinand De Saussure is the first order of semiotic system, the 'language'. It is because Barthes finds another aspect in the system.

Myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a *second-order semiological system*, the 'metalanguage', which is a sign of in the first system, becomes a mere signifier of the second. (Barthes, 1999:114)

Barthes theory of mythologies describes that myth shifts the formal system of the first significations sideways (Barthes, 1999: 115). Barthes uses Saussure's linguistics signification, signifier and signified. Saussure put signifier in the expression side and signified in the content side.

<b>1. Signifier</b> <i>Expression side</i>	<b>1. Signified</b> <i>Content side</i>
<b>2. (Denotative) Sign</b> <b>I. SIGNIFIER (Form)</b>	<b>II. SIGNIFIED (Content)</b>
<b>III. SIGN (Connotative)</b>	

Based on the table above, the first level (presented by 1, 2, and 3) is the application of Saussure's theory. Barthes identifies it as the first order of semiology in which denotative meaning is signified. The first order interrelates to the second ones by constituting expression side of the second. Barthes calls it the metalanguage, the second order of semiology or the mythology. The second order represents the connotative meaning of a sign. It represents Barthes theory that the expression side (signifier) of the connotative meaning is built up from the signs of the denotative system (Kurniawan, 2001: 68).

We can take an example taken from Nachbar and Lause's to demonstrate the Saussure's theory and Barthes's theory of Mythology. In the House of Romantic Love, Nachbar and Lause identify flowers as icons. Icons are three-dimensional objects or two-dimensional images which are visible, concrete embodiments of the myths, beliefs, and values which form a culture's mindset (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 170). Based on Saussure's theory, the mental expression of 'flowers' which are stated in people's mind makes the flowers play as *signifier*. The *signifier* leads us to identify many possible characteristics that

might be suitable to express what flowers are. We are going to make a list of the characteristics. For example, flowers are characterized by color of red in their crown, color of green in a part called leaves, good smells, a long straight stick called stalk, being plant in the ground and indicates beauty. This process of identifying is known as *signified*. The final combination of both aspects results in *sign*. The outcome is things which have the characteristics as mentioned above are called 'flowers'.

Roland Barthes gives a deeper point of view in giving meaning over something. He puts the *sign* of the first order of semiology as *signifier* (form) of his metalanguage theory. Then, he presents the *signifier* in a different condition and atmosphere. When the flowers are given on Valentine's Day (*signified/ content*), the flowers indicate love, care, and passion. If we have perceived 'flowers in Valentine's Day symbolizing love, care, and passion, it means that the process has completed by *signification*.

## **B. Tracing Back**

### **The American Individual Freedom and American Democracy**

Tim Story, the movie director, had successfully presented the figure of American citizen heroes of The Fantastic Four. According to Avi Arad, the President of Marvel Studio, Tim presents what the comic is all about The Fantastic Four is about superhero, action/comedy adventure of a dis functional family, good heart, and accepting our destiny, moreover loving the destiny

(Available at [www.blackfilm.com/20050701/features/fantastic4interviews.html](http://www.blackfilm.com/20050701/features/fantastic4interviews.html), cited on April 28, 2007 at 11:29 am). In one of an interview, Story said that “The universe of villains is vast, and now that everyone’s been introduces, you can just get right to it”. This is the significance of the hero, facing the any kind of villains that can threaten people. “My (Tim’s) true gauge was, knowing about the comic book, and growing up on it...” (Available on <http://movie.about.com/od/moviesproduction/a/fantastic421205.htm>, cited on April 28, 2007 at 11:12 am). He presents the figure of American citizen heroes who must able to embody the traditional values of the community but at the same time he must also performs his individual. An American hero. “Freedom usually in opposite to the mainstream and its forces of authority and conformity “(Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 320). Next part of this chapter covers the origin of the values, American Democracy and Individual freedom chronologically from the historical background by the cause and effect relationship. It also presents the contradicted idea of both values.

Sejarah tidak hanya mencatat kejadian yang telah merupakan fakta warisan masa lalu, tapi juga menguraikan hubungan antara rentetan peristiwa yang telah terjadi. Lukisan sejarah merupakan gambaran lengkap yang terdiri dari fakta- fakta kejadian yang telah berlalu, dijalin dengan tafsiran dan penjelasan atau ulasan dari kenyataan-kenyataan itu yang diceritakan saling berhubungan dan kausalitas antara fakta sehingga membentuk gambaran yang dapat dipahami. (Gazalba, 1981: 13)

America is one of the nations which give a significant influence to the world. It is known as a role model of democracy. The nation was established under the spirit of freedom and equality. “America is a nation of immigrants whose institutions aim to make the circumstances of birth a mere starting point

rather than a predictor of our fate, our capacity to invent ourselves is as limitless as our imagination” (Available at <http://www.greatbooks.org/typ/index.php?id=231>, cited on May 20, 2006 at 9:54 am).

America was born out of a rebellion against all those who would place restrictions upon the inherent right of individuals to determine their own destinies through their own choice and actions. The earliest settlers sought a new world without the economic and religious restrictions of the old, and the American colonists gave the British their marching papers when the Crown tried to put a crimp in the colonists free-spirited ways (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 47).

Historically, the first Americans of European origins were those who sought for a new life. Most of them experienced the same situation. Their rights were being cast off by the government of their homeland. The right to practice religion was the most notable reason of the immigration to the New Found land, America. Being threatened by unfair treatments, the colonies were getting stronger with their faith to separate from the homeland. On January 1776, Thomas Paine, a political theorist and writer, published *Common Sense*. It attacked the idea of hereditary monarchy, declaring that one honest man was worth more to society than “all the crowned ruffians that ever lived”. Indirectly, the pamphlets burnt the spirit of the colonists. On June 7 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduced a resolution declaring that every colony was independent and had the right for freedom. Then, a committee of five, headed by Thomas Jefferson of Virginia prepared the formal declaration (An Outline of American

History, 1994: 73). At last, the Declaration of Independence was announced as the birth of a new nation. Along the history, America recorded two influential values in which later on shaped the American mainstream, the values of Puritanism and Enlightenment. Those values were the basic point of the birth even the heart of American identity.

Puritanism was a religious movement in the middle of 16<sup>th</sup> century. This movement was born in England to oppose Henry VIII who created “Church of England”, Anglican. The terminology of Puritanism comes from the word ‘to purify’. It was related to the aim of the movement itself, purifying the practice of Christian values that were broken by the Anglican Church. Since the conflict between the Puritan followers and the government was getting worst, in 1620 a group of the followers decided to move to America. The immigration continued after that. Pre-destination is one of the concepts of Puritanism theology. Pre-destination is a thought in which there is a belief that God must have pre-destined all matters in the world without any exception including the concept determination of ‘the elect’. ‘The elect’ is those who deserve to be in haven. To become ‘the elect’, people must do hard work for God, do virtuous deeds to other people, and fulfill their social obligation (Available at [http://dedysanusi.blogspot.com/2005\\_08\\_01\\_dedysanusi\\_archieve.html](http://dedysanusi.blogspot.com/2005_08_01_dedysanusi_archieve.html), cited on November 24, 2006 11:18 am). Hardworking is the well-known characteristic of Puritan value. It is a ‘warrantable calling’, the reflection of their faith to God. This value will guide people to the success of life (Available at [http://www.amazon.com/phrase/warrantable-calling/ref=sip\\_top\\_1/022-4881429-](http://www.amazon.com/phrase/warrantable-calling/ref=sip_top_1/022-4881429-)

[4696068](#), cited on November 24, 2006 at 11:30 am). In short, hardworking means practicing religious and gaining success in life.

Puritan ethics have shaped American thought for about hundreds of years. In the development, it brought a bad concept in defining human being. People were fully controlled by God. They seemed like toys of God. Later on, the Puritanism was replaced by a new thought.

At the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century, Americans tended to be more secular. It was because of the emergence of sciences. Many intellectuals were born. They put ratio over all aspects of life. This is known as the Enlightenment era in which science and logic dominated the American thought. Enlightenment put people as 'the subjects' of life. They have a right to control their life based on their interests to reach their happiness. Here we can see that individual freedom and human rights are respected (Available at <http://teachers.edenpr.org/~ArcadiaWeb/E&R/Enlightment.html>, cited on November 24, 2006 at 11:25 am).

In this era, John Locke, the Father of Modern Democracy, and his thought about a good government had influenced the running of democracy in America. He is considered as one of the well-known figures in the era of Enlightenment, 17-18 century. His book *Two Treaties of Government* (1690) gave enlightenment about good government. According to Locke, a legal government is a representative of 'consent from the governed'. He added that the Natural Law deals with God and the guaranty of the natural rights of every people. Government stands as a protector of the rights based on the covenant between the 'people' and

the 'government'. Government has a right to make constitutions. The constitutions are used to secure the rights and the people; and creating public welfare. The people have their right to ask the government's authority if it miss-uses the power (Prayitno, 1991: 15).

Later on, Thomas Jefferson, one of Founding Fathers, adopted Lock's idea in the Declaration of Independence (28 August 1789).

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, which among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure this right, Government is instituted among Men, deriving their just power from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government, laying its foundation on such principle, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness .*

There are two fundamental values of the Declaration of Independence, the acknowledgement of the Human Rights and Democracy. The human rights are Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness. Later on, the acknowledgement of Human Rights becomes the basic of Individual Freedom.

The strength of American society lies in the values upheld by its individual members – not just values embodied in its laws, or even in documents like the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. Many of the poorest and most oppressive societies of the world have constitutions which are nearly identical with ours. The difference is one more heritage. Contrary to the grim caricature of the capitalist society as ridden with selfishness, callousness, and graft, our moral heritage includes a common respect and concern for our fellowmen, an unselfish consideration for the rights and welfare of others (Available at <http://www.self->

[gov.org/freeman/8909beer.html](http://www.freeman.gov.org/freeman/8909beer.html), cited on October 9 2006 at 9:56 am)

The spirit of individual freedom was being reflected by the Americans since their first struggle from the feudalism of their homeland. This spirit continued to strengthen in the decades of Enlightenment especially when the Declaration of Independence was announced. Individual Freedom respects human as the master of their own life. God had given an innate right to all people in the world without exception. The innate right is about the rights to choose their destinies, pursue their dream, and act in anyway they see fit short of harming others or interfering with others' freedom. The right to choose implied the beliefs and values that whenever you want something, just go for it; in pursuing your dream don't ever become other person just be yourself; get government get our backs ( Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 94).

The terminology of democracy has shaped many countries in the world in running their government. Democracy is a government of people who are given the highest authority. The government is chosen by a free election system (Prayitno, 1991: 8). F. Isjwara stated that the essence of democracy is an effort to put 'the people's authority in determining their leaders (Isjwara, 1982: 28). The basic points of democracy are the people sovereignty, the acknowledgement of human rights, and the running of government based on constitution. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded how significant the people are. According to Budi Prayitno human rights are basic rights given by God which can not be disturbed by anyone with any reasons (Prayitno, 1991: 8). The core of democracy as mentioned above is very reflective in American Democracy.

Declaration of Independence's broad purpose was to set forth the rights of nation to form their own government. But it was more to the document. It provides a political philosophy for a revolutionary time inspired a love for free government, and expressed the fundamental principle of democracy—that government must rest on the consent of the governed (Keefe, et.al, 1983: 3).

Rob Bartley underlined some characteristics which differentiate American Democracy from other democracy. Historically, democracy in America was firstly applied in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, the colonists had acknowledged the private property. Even in 1830's white men's rights were approved. In conclusion, the American Democracy is considered as the oldest modern political system in the world. Individualism and natural rights are dominant ideas of the Democracy. It means that people are at the heart of democracy. Since American Democracy was born as the reflection of hostility over the Autocracy domination which monopolized all aspects of life of the colonists, freedom and equality of each individual answered the need of a new political system. Later, we have known it as the system of, for, and by the people. However, to banish domination and monopoly over the people, America holds the system of Check and Balance in running the government (Bartley et.al, 1994: 32-36).

American political system is divided into three basic institutions: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branch. The Executive branch is headed by President having a duty to run the constitutions. The constitutions are the product of the Congress as Legislative branch. Meanwhile, the Judicial branch watches over others two branches whether or not their laws and acts are in accordance to

the constitution. The Supreme Court is the main instrument of this branch. Each of the branches runs its responsibility under the Check and Balance system in order to keep each branch gaining too much power or misusing its power (Stevenson, 1996: 38-41).

The government has position as the protectors of the people's rights. The government is not an end of itself but a means to an end. In the American design, that end is the security of each citizen's right to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness". This is the full circle of American Democracy (Keefe, et.al, 1983: 3). This is what Nachbar and Lause state in the Popular Culture theory that community/ nation/ people are above all and defending the community and its rights is the myth of American mainstream, democracy (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 316-317). In the next section, we are about to see the relationship of both values.

Declaration of Independence gives a clear position where the people and the government stand. Government gets its power to rule from the authority of the people. According to Gene Sharp Authority is the perception among the governed that the leader has the right to give them directives (Available at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/Power>, cited on October 9, 2006 at 9:28 am). In other words, the people delegate their rights to the government. It means that, the government has given a mandate to run "the society's moral duty". Lyndon Johnson, America's 36<sup>th</sup> President stated that the government was to guarantee "not just equality as a right and theory but equality as a fact and

equality as a result” in all aspects of life (Available at <http://www.self-gov.org/freeman/8909beer.html>, cited on October 9, 2006 at 9:56 am).

However, equality in all aspects of life among the people is not easy to gain. It is because; in the progress American society develops into a free society in which moral degradation cannot be avoided. David Beers gives example. In the 1960’s America brought a new condition under capitalism system. It was called inequalities of income. It was clearly a violation over the right to property because the system had successfully created prosperity for many, but failed to create moral duty of others. Later, luck, inheritance, physical or mental impairment, impersonal economic factors may determine individual’s welfare.

As a result, the federal government is about to run policies to enforce public to be aware of others’ misfortune. One of them is the tax- paying policy. This policy seems to be the answer to overcome inequality of income matter. On the other hand, it can be considered as immoral invasion of the individual’s right to hold property. The society’s moral duty is not purely the government’s duty. (Available at <http://www.self-gov.org/freeman/8909beer.html>, cited on October 9, 2006 at 9:56 am).

The case above is one of the examples of conflict between Individual Freedom and American Democracy. Individual freedom is the main spirit of American society in which the rule of American Democracy must be secured. Besides the good sides, the Democracy also brings a double standard where practically the people, indirectly, ‘sacrifice’ their rights to be managed by an institution called government.

## **C. Christian Metz's Semiotic Film Theory And Basic Terminology in Cinematography**

### **a. Christian Metz's Semiotic Film Theory**

Semiology comes from Greece terminology '*semeion*' which means sign. Semiology is a study of sign in the context of communication. Ferdinand De Saussure is the most well-known Semiologist. He was the one who introduced *signifier* and *signified* in order to reveal meaning or *sign* of an object. Barthes in *Semiotica Roland Barthes* states that Signifier is meaningful sound or written text (the material aspect) meanwhile signified is a thought or a concept (the mental aspect) of a language (Kurniawan, 2001: 14).

*Signifier* and *signified* have an equivalent relationship in defining a sign. According to Saussure, sign itself not only consists of *signifier* and *signified*, but also a join of signs of other language. This type of sign has two basic principles, arbitrary and linear. Arbitrary means that there is no exact relationship between signifier and signified. It is because language is a social system which always experiences changes in the attitude of the users. The changes of language give impact to the relationship of signifier and signified (Kurniawan, 2001: 31).

Semiology of Saussure studies the meaning of linguistics objects. In fact, Semiology can be applied for many non-linguistics objects such as social life. Roland Barthes, a linguist, found out this phenomenon. According to Barthes in the *Semiotica Roland Barthes*, semiology studies how humanity signifies things

(Kurniawan, 2001: 53). Film, television programs, posters, etc., can be the objects of signification. Barthes treats non-linguistics objects like language. Roland Barthes applied Saussure's theory of *sign*, but then he developed it into the theory of myth called Mythology. The application of mythology had already performed in the previous subchapter.

As mentioned before, the theory of semiology actually can be applied for non- linguistic objects. Film is one of the objects that are relevant to the theory. Film is not a language, but it is like language, and since it is like language, some of the methods that are used to study language might profitably be applied to a study of film (Monaco, 2000: 157). Afterward we are about to know one of the using of semiological theory which is called film theory.

Ricciotto Canudo (1879-1923) was the pioneer who developed film theory. Even, theoretician like Louis Delluc, Jean Epstein, Germain Dulac, Einstein, Koulechov, and Poudovkin followed Canudo's project. However, Christian Metz was the most influential figure who applied the film basic terminology. It combined structural linguistics with the classic film theory (Masinambouw and Hidayat, 2001: 161).

Ferdinand de Saussure is famous of his distinction about language, *langue* and *langage*. *Langue* is human language, for example English, French etc. In the interim, *langage* is language in common level, such as traffic lights, animal language etc. In his research, Metz concluded that film or cinema was categorized as *langage*. It is because film did not have double articulation, *morpheme* and *phoneme*. (Masinambouw and Hidayat, 2001: 161-162). For example the word

'cat' consists of three phoneme /c/ + /a/ + /t/. It will form morpheme /cat/. On the other hand, cinematography can be presented by "shot" through sounds and images which are close to sentences and words. Metz argues that cinema must be manipulated as human language in order to find the hidden meaning. Film manages to communicate meaning (Monaco, 2000: 161).

Robert Stam, a structuralist, in his book *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics* summarizes Metz's point of view there is no "langue" of the cinema: nothing in film is purely distinctive in the same way as the phoneme; cinema lack of arbitrary sign; it lacks minimal unit; lack of double articulation; and it is a language and not a langue (Available at <http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~ipederse/Stam.htm>, cited on October 12, 2006 at 9:45 am).

Metz introduces cinematographic signs which differentiate film from language.

Metz ultimately discards a theoretical model for film based on verbal language, although he still believes that cinesemiotics can learn much from linguistics. His primary reason for rejecting rigid analogies to language is based on his claim that the image, unlike the word, is not a discrete unit that can be reduced into smaller basic units and analyzed. In a spate of neo-Bazinism, Metz says, "... the image discourse is an open system, and it is not easily codified, with its non-discrete basic units (the images), its intelligibility (which is too natural), its lack of distance between the significate and the signifier." (Available at <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC05folder/FilmLangMetz.html>, cited on November 11, 2006 at 10:32 am).

If the sign in language has an arbitrary relationship with its signifier and signified, cinema shows logical relationship of its signifier and signified. This kind of relationship can be seen in its denotative and connotative levels. For example, a physical picture of a ribbon represents the ribbon itself (denotative level). Masinambow and Hidayat give an example of a logic relationship from the title of Indonesian movie *Cinta Dalam Sepotong Roti*. Roti or bread (English) symbolizes

love (connotative level). At beginning of the movie, we are going to see a piece of sandwich (denotative level). Connotatively it signifies the character of Mayang who is stuck in the middle of Haris, her husband, and Topan, her lover (Masinambow and Hidayat, 2001: 165). It is clear that Metz has developed his cinema semiology which involves psychology/psychoanalysis in giving understanding of film language. In other words, film or cinema is “an illusion of a reality” or “an impression of a reality” (Masinambow and Hidayat, 2001: 166).

Another Metz’s contribution in film theory is *la grande syntagmatic*. There are eight criteria in this classical syntagmatics:

1. The first is “*shot autonom*” (*plans autonomes*). This category might occur in the form of *sequence shot*, a sequence that is formed by a long “*shot*”. He also categorizes the syntagma (*shot order*) based on chronological relationship into 4 categories:
  - a. “Insert non-diegetic”, shows something out of the action for example a *close up shot*.
  - b. “Insert subjective”, shows a character’s dreams, hallucination etc.
  - c. “Displaced diegetic insert”, shows a relative shot that has connection to the main action. For example: a shot about someone who is being chased by a criminal. This shot belongs to the chasing scene.
  - d. “Explanatory insert”, shows a detail of an event in the film.
2. *Syntagme ahronological* consisting *syntagme parallele* shows a chronological shot.

3. The third is *bracketing syntagma*. It consists of chronological shots that present reality. For example, the shots that show a rich and a poor man. The shots might present the financial and property aspect of both condition. Basically its function is almost the same with the bracket in a language.
  4. *Syntagme descriptive* shows a straight display of objects that give special coexistence, for example, a shot of a natural view.
  5. The next is *syntagme alterne* which consists of chronological, consecutive, and non linear shots, for instance a chasing shot. It implies a consecutive idea of A character chasing B.
  6. *Scene* (shots that implies temporal continuity),
  7. *Episodic sequences* (discontinuity of time that are not arranged),
  8. *Ordinary sequence* (the opposite of *episodic sequences*)
- (Masinambow and Hidayat, 2001: 170).

#### **b. The Basic Terminology in Cinematography**

Since the object of study in this research is in the form of film, it is important to know and understand all cinematography elements in the process of film production. Those elements that construct the film are helpful to explore the whole parts of the object. In combination with Metz's film theory, the finding of the analysis is expected to be in more detail. The basic terminology of John S. Douglas and Glenn P. Harnden in combination of Prof. Michael Goldberg' term is applied in this research.

Mood is the magic of cinema which lies in its evocative power (Douglass and Harnden, 1996: 71). A good film must be able to arouse the audience's emotional aspect through its evocative power. In this case, the treatment of mood in a scene contributes to the creation of "memorable moments" (Douglass and Harnden, 1996: 85). Here are some aspects of cinematography that are applied to present the mood.

- a. **Location and setting:** the sense of time and place where the scene is created.
- b. **Color, texture, and design:** those three elements support the choice of location.
- c. **Lighting:**
  - ✓ **Low-key lighting design:** it is dominated by deep shadow. Generally, it is used to build up the sense of mystery or horror.
  - ✓ **High-key lighting design:** it is brighter than medium grey. Film genre like comedy, adventure, and drama usually use it.
- d. **Camera angles** are the angle where the camera is pointed to the subject. They produce different effects according to degree: a *low-angle shot* which slightly below eye level causes the subject to appear somewhat dominant but not necessarily threatening. In addition, a more *extreme low-angle shot* makes the subject appear to loom and very threatening. The next is a *high-angle shot*. It shots above eye level that can make the subject seem yielding but not endangered, subjugated, and forlorn. Prof. Michael Goldberg also mentioned that a high-angle shot can also make the subject seem diminished (Available

at <http://faculty.uwb.edu/mgoldberg/students/readafilm.htm>, cited on November 3, 2006 at 9:07 am).

e. **Camera framing** consists of:

- ✓ **A medium shot (MS):** it shows action and body gesture, while allowing the audience to see both facial expression and environmental context. The shot shows a part of a person from about the waist up.
- ✓ **A close-up (CU):** it emphasizes on all details of actions, objects, and facial expression. If it is a close up of a person's head, perhaps a bit of the neck and shoulders included.
- ✓ **A wide shot (WS):** it is used for an "establishing shot" which is emphasizing on the location environment. It presents the full human figure. Those first three types of shot distance are commonly known as "the basic framing of the shot".
- ✓ **Long shot (LS) or full shot (FS):** it is a shot from the top of the people's head to at least their feet. It makes the subject loom, large, and dominant. This shot requires a lens with a long focal length which alters distance and height.
- ✓ **An extreme close-up (ECU):** it is used to specify the part of the subject, for example the shot of just the eyes, the mouth, and the hands of the person.
- ✓ **A medium close-up (MCU):** it is the head and shoulder shots. It serves a subtle facial expression.

- ✓ **An extreme wide shot (EWS):** it is the shot that can arouse a sense of distance, and the surrounding engulfs the human figure.
- f. Camera movement** (Tracking, Panning, and Tilting): it is all about the camera movement. Tracking shot moves camera sideways. Panning rotates the camera horizontally while tilting rotates it vertically.
- g. Sound:**
- ✓ **Sound effect:** it contributes the realism of the motion picture, such as hits, crashes, thumps, rips, swishes, door slam etc.
  - ✓ **Voice over:** a selected male and female voice that can affect the interpretation of the scene covered.
  - ✓ **Sync sound:** it helps us to hear the dialogue.
- h. Editing:** it is a process of cutting which constructs discontinuity, continuity, juxtaposition and narrative structure. **Cuts** are instantaneous changes between two scenes.
- a. Discontinuity editing**
- ✓ **Montage:** Montage, the most purely evocative of editing styles, is the juxtaposition of non-continuous shot that are coherent and form sequences (Douglass and Harnden, 1996: 218). This kind of editing expresses impression and ideas through the composition of images and sound.
  - ✓ **Jump-cut:** it is a discontinuity cut that separates two shots without changing the frame or moving the camera. It creates discontinuity of time and space.

- ✓ **Cross- cutting:** cutting back between the actions in one scene to the action in another scene in order to give the impression of two simultaneous events. Sometimes, it shows an action happening elsewhere in the same time.

#### **b. Continuous editing**

- ✓ **On screen:** the subject enters the shot at the beginning of the take.  
**Off screen:** an editing when the subject leaves the frame at the end of the shot. Both are usually used in transition of a scene to another. In the transition, some blank frame will occur.
  - ✓ **Cut-ways:** are shots that cut away from principle action. The audience is about to see some other parts of action or scene.
  - ✓ **Cut-ins or insert:** a cutting that gives a small portion of a subject in a larger scene. The subject is presented in close-up shot.
  - ✓ **Match- cut:** it conveys illusion, although the camera position may have changed. There are no physical changes from the previous action.
- i. Focus:** “shallow focus” uses sharp focus on the characters or things in one area of the shot and soft (blurred) focus in the rest; “deep focus” brings out the detail in all areas of the shot; “focus in” gradually zoom in on the subject, “focus out” gradually zoom out the subject; “rack focus“is an extremely fast focus pull that changes from one image/character to another by exchanging focus on background and foreground.

- j. Frame:** the border that contains images. It can be 'open' characterized by the moving in and out of the characters; 'moving' using focus, tracking, and panning; 'canted' at odd angles, unbalanced shot position.
- k. Focal Length:** the focal length of a lens influences the way an image is translated to the screen. It can alter apparent distances and heights. *Short Focal Length* exaggerates distance in front of the camera. Objects seem farther away than they actually are. *Normal Focal Length*, it renders perspective the way our eyes see height, speed, changes in apparent size of objects and people at different distances from the camera, and facial features all look natural. *Long focal length* makes distance objects seem closer and filling the frame with the detail of a scene.

#### **D. Socio- Psychology**

Social psychology is a scientific discipline of how people's thoughts, feelings, and actions are affected by others. It focuses on people in order to identify the broad, universal principles that underline all social behavior, but they do not ignore the consequences of memberships in particular cultures and ethnic groups. Feelings like people's likes and dislikes and emotions that people experience are a central part of this study. Those varieties of means are used to measure people's feelings about social stimuli. At last, people's actions will give understanding about how the social world in which we live affects our behavior (Feldman, 1998: 4-5). There are three main points of social- psychology theory

that is going to be discussed in this subchapter, *self- concept, prosocial behaviors* and *close relationship*.

### **A. The Self- Concept**

Breakwell, Hattie, and Stevens in *Social Psychology, second edition* state that, “Our self- concept comprises our sense of identity, the set of beliefs we hold about what we are like as individuals. When we think of ourselves as sociable, energetic, outgoing, a little chubby, and temperamental, we are describing aspects of our self- concept” (Feldman, 1998: 118).

Each person has each own self- concept based on varieties of attributes. Those attributes are hold by glue called self-schema. “Self-schema is the organized body of information that relates to a person’s self” (Feldman, 1998: 118). The self-schema determines a particular personality dimension based on prior experiences of a person. For example, some people give concern to domain independence, they must well-develop their sense of independence compared to other domain. As a result, they will put respect on those who can counter their domain and vice versa.

Such particular self-schema gives the person some functions and benefits. It helps people to notice, sift, filter, remember, and give respond toward much information that are relevant to the scheme. Besides, the self-scheme also helps people to determine what might happen to them in the future. Those functions can make the position of the person as individual stronger.

In the process of defining ourselves, we cannot forget the existence of other people to clarify where we stand. Other people give significant contribution to measure how significant we are. Social Comparison is the need to evaluate one's opinions and abilities by comparing them to those of other people. In many cases, the answers come easily; objective, physical evidence provides the answer. To compare someone's skills, we usually apply *social reality* which refers to understanding that is derived from considering how other people act, think, feel, and view the world (Feldman, 1998: 123).

People tend to determine their abilities by comparing themselves to others who have the same domain. However, we cannot get an objective result from it. Thus, people will start to compare themselves using the *downward* or *upward social comparison*. The benefit of both comparisons is different. Those who want to make them good will use *downward social comparison* since it involves those who are inferior to them. In contrast to it, the *upward social comparison* will help people who want to improve their ability (Feldman, 1998: 123).

Defining ourselves through our behavior is one way to know our inner selves. To apply this process, we are going to use *overjustification* as the parameter. "Over justification is a phenomenon that occurs when incentives are used to bring about behavior that would have been done voluntarily, without any incentives" (Feldman, 1998: 126). When people are rewarded for what they have done, two explanations of their behaviors are possible- their own interest in the task (intrinsic motivation) and the external reward (extrinsic motivation). If their reinforcement is clear and unambiguous, then external reward becomes the cause

of behavior. Meanwhile, if no external reinforcement is present, the person's own interests, dispositions, or motivations are the most reasonable explanation of the behaviors.

*Self-awareness* is a state which attention is focused on the self. It helps people more conscious of them. However, it also has a particular consequence that they will start to focus on how their actual self compared to the ideal standard they hold for themselves. People who are placed in a self-awareness state tend to be more helpful to others, to be more resistant to change in personally important attitudes, to work harder, to be more honest than those who are not self-aware (Feldman, 1998: 132).

Personality is not a neutral shape. It has positive and negative dimensions in which individual tries to protect. Individual might protect his identity from any external reactions that can bring changes to his view about himself. Baumeister in *Social Psychology* mentioned that *Self-esteem* is the affective component of self, a person's general and specific positive and negative self-evaluation (Feldman, 1998: 128).

*Self-esteem* varies over time. It depends on the situation, sometimes we feel quite good about ourselves, and vice versa. For instance, transitions between different schools often result in lower self-esteem. It is because the individual is facing a quite different thing than he usually has. If he cannot deal with the situation, he will face physical illness, psychological disturbance, and a general inability to cope with stress (Feldman, 1998: 129).

To deal with bad effect of lower self-esteem, socio-psychologist suggests the individual to increase his *self-efficacy*. It refers to learned expectation that one is capable of carrying out a behavior or producing a desired outcome in a particular situation (Feldman, 1998: 130). People who want to be successful will put their best effort on their tasks. However, direct reinforcement from others can also bring sense of self-efficacy.

### **B. The Pro-social Behavior**

Pro-social behavior is helpful actions that benefit others but have no obvious benefits for the person who carries out the action and sometimes even involve risk for the one who helps. (Baron and Byrne, 2000: 395)

Helping others who is in the emergency situation is influenced by someone's psychological condition. It determines the decision making to help others or to become bystanders. Latan and Darley in *Social Psychology (ninth edition)* mentioned that an emergency situation might lead someone to help others because psychologically he has passed five essential steps in the decision process; five choice point that can either lead to a pro-social act or toward doing nothing (Baron and Byrne, 2000: 399).

Step1 is noticing the emergency event. As emergency situation happens unexpectedly and suddenly, most people tend to be more focused on what they are doing at that time. They will not notice any problems around whenever they are too busy, and finally decide to ignore the victim.

The second is interpreting an emergency as Emergency. The tendency of people to hesitate and do nothing is based on what is known as Pluralistic

Ignorance. Pluralistic Ignorance is a tendency of bystanders in an emergency to rely on what other bystanders do and say even though no one is sure about what is happening or what to do about it; very often, all of the bystanders hold back and behave as if there is no problem, and use all this situation as “information” to justify their failure to act.

The third step is assuming that helpfulness is our responsibility. After knowing and interpreting a certain condition as an emergency correctly, a person will do a pro-social act as he takes responsibility to give help. A lone bystander will perform his responsibility mostly because of the awareness that he is the only person who can do the act (Baron and Byrne, 2000: 404).

Building up the awareness of responsibility means that the person “knowing what to do next”. The person must have enough knowledge about what kind of treatment he must give based on the emergencies requirement. The last is a decision to help. The decision to act will become the final step before someone takes risk to help. But it does not mean that this is the easiest step of all. Bystanders might face a quite hard situation. It deals with fear about negative consequences (Baron and Byrne, 2000: 406). Practically, helping others can be disturbed by negative emotions, such as sense of power, focus on one’s own needs and concerns, feeling of being personally not responsible for negative mood etc.

In the pro-social behavior discussion, there is a term of *pro-social principilism*. It is a motivation to help or do the social act with the goal of upholding some moral principle. It has an abstract goal: the support of some moral principle, such as justice and equality. Norms of social responsibility more or less

contribute to this act. The norms suggest that people should respond to the reasonable needs of others, and that all people have a societal obligation to aid those in need. The norm is particularly influential when those requiring for help are seen too dependent or lacking the capacity to help (Feldman, 1998: 279). Sometimes, the decision to help is influenced by personal norms. Personal norms are someone's personal sense of obligation to help a specific person in a specific situation (Feldman, 1998: 280). A close relationship is one factor to why people want to help others.

### C. Close Relationship

A relationship is characterized by at least one of three factors: emotional attachment, need fulfillment, and interdependence. Emotional attachment relates to typically positive (although sometime negative) feelings for another person. Need fulfillment suggests that partners' help fulfill significant psychological or physical needs. The interdependence criterion presumes that people involved in a close relationship have an impact on each other. (Feldman, 1998: 226)

According to George Levinger in *Social Psychology (second edition)*, relationship of individuals is determined by level of relatedness. There are three basic levels in building a relationship. *Unilateral awareness* is the level where individuals only pay attention to the outward characteristics of others. *Surface contact* is the level where two people are aware of each other. The last is *mutuality*. Individuals share knowledge of each other, experience a sense of responsibility of each other, and develop a set of personal norms that informally regulate their relationship. In this level, individuals also pass three stages. They are *minor intersection* (people are hesitant to disclose information about

themselves), *moderate intersection* (the increasing of degree of self-disclosure), *major intersection* (a strong-binding relationship). Partners with *major intersection* increasingly reveal and open up more and more about their important attitudes, feelings or characteristics. As result, each of them learn to know the source of other's happiness, sadness, and satisfaction; and begin to behave in ways to support the relationship by rewarding his partner (Feldman, 1998: 227-228).

Burgess and Huston state that a close relationship might emerge in some general patterns. Individuals share both negative and positive feelings and open to offer criticism as well as praise. Their goal for the relationship becomes compatible and it will be shown in their great similarity in responding or reacting to certain situation. At last, their individual psychological satisfaction is tied to the success of the relationship. It is because they are no longer two separate individuals but a couple (Feldman, 1998: 232).

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the analysis of the study. The analysis is conducted based on the research questions stated in the first chapter. This chapter discusses how the internal conflict of American democracy and individual freedom is embodied by *The Fantastic Four* citizen heroes and how each of the citizen heroes resolves the conflict.

In the reserach, all relevant theories and information were collected to support the process of analysis. Those theories were used to find a final result of this research. The popular culture theory was used to show the popularity of the citizen heroes and how their characteristics are approved and adored by the American society. Theory of Socio-psychology within the approach was applied in order to reveal the conflict that occurs in each character of citizen heroes. It helped to focus on the observation toward the heroes as individuals and members of society. Since the conflict involves the two values in the American society, historical approach contributed to the analysis. The theory strengthened the result that had been found from the others applicative- perspectives of this research. The last was Semiological approach with its semiotic film theory that played as a guidance to analyze the object based on the cinematographic elements.

To begin the analysis, it is appropriate to describe the significance of citizen heroes as reflected in *The Fantastic Four* movie. All movies bring on the basic elements to arouse meaning and one of them is motif. One noticeable motif

in this movie is the term of “fantastic” that is used as the title and the specific attribute of the characters. There are some definitions of the word that can embody the real meaning of the movie. The word ‘fantastic’ means exceedingly or unbelievably great, and extravagantly fanciful and unrealistic (Available at <http://www.wordwebonline.com/en/FANTASTIC>, cited on 24 November 2006 at 10:07 am).

It reflects the character’s ‘extra’ qualification, power, and special abilities as heroes in order to differ them from other ordinary people. In contrast, fantastic also means ludicrously odd. Both contrasting definitions bring double standard over the heroes since they are the most adorable and the strangest figure with all consequences. In short, the movie portrays how power puts them into the highest position in society, but also takes them away from their true happiness as normal people.

In general, the characters of The Fantastic Four are categorized as the reflection of citizen heroes. We are not only being shown with the heroic values of the characters, but also their nature as human beings. It is very relevant to the characteristic of hero that heroes are those who are ‘better’ than us and still ‘one of us’. Besides, we also find the way the heroes tie to the masses.

**“Heroes are those who are ‘better’ than us”** indicates the basic characteristic of ‘special abilities’ that a person must have to become a hero. Special abilities take someone into a certain position in which he can do anything better than ordinary people even he can do what most people impossibly do.

Those abilities will open many chances for someone to help those who are less fortunate.

The changes of the four scientists; Reed Richard, Susan Storm, Johnny Storm, and Ben Grimm, are caused by Reed's miscalculation over the storm.

**INT. SPACE STATION - NEARBY CORRIDOR - SAME TIME**

Reed checks data on a work station, set on a wall. The results of his calculations are not what he expected... He sees WIND VELOCITY digits rise. He does a double-take when he sees the readout: EVENT THRESHOLD, T-MINUS 10:00.

**(The script: 14)**

*The panning movement* of the camera shows how Reed's facial expression moves horizontally to the close up shot of the *Mission Analysis*. It gives tension mood since the shot shows Reed's surprised expression when he sees that the storm is accelerating quicker than he thought. The mission analysis result is presented by the close up shot. The shot shows the data in detail to create frightening reality that the characters must face.

The radiation affects the whole body of the characters including their DNA. *Explanatory insert* gives detail of each member when the cosmic radiation rays their body. The shots are presented in slow motion. Everyone is frozen in position as Johnny is hit with sparks of flame from a control panel; Reed reaches out for Ben and the airlock door; vapor stream pours down on Sue from a blown gasket; the space dust burns into Ben's skin (Available at <http://home.online.no/~bhundlan/scripts/fantasticfour.htm>, cited on 11 November 2006 at 11:29 am).

The combination of *explanatory insert* and slow motion builds a mood that the radiation is spreading and infecting their body. It is a radiation process that reaches every part of their body. The audience is guided to think that there must be “something happening” with their body, or even it dramatically changes because of the storm. It leads the audience to view that the characters are not completely ordinary people any longer.

The changes gradually appear. The physical mutation results in ‘**special abilities**’. Reed is able to stretch his body like plastic. Sue Storm is able to make herself invisible. Johnny can engulf his body in inferno. Ben, a rock-like creature, has a strong power to pull, hold, and push, and even to break anything.

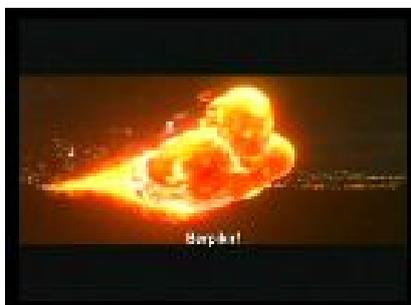
### ***The Fantastic Four***



Reed Richard (**Mr. Fantastic**)



Susan Storm (**Invisible Girl**)



Johnny Storm (**Human Torch**)



Ben Grimm (**The Thing**)

**(Figure 1)**

Having such kinds of abilities make them different from others. In a deadly accident in the Brooklyn bridge of New York City, they are the only ones who can save the people there. Each of The Fantastic Four members uses their extraordinary power to help people in danger. Those are presented in *medium shot* which shows the facial expression of the characters and the environmental context. It presents how the story works by the unity of both elements. Johnny covers a young girl from an explosion. Sue turns off fire before it can harm any people. Reed by using his elastic hand can help a fire troop from falling down to a river while Ben is pulling up a fire truck from the edge of a bridge. All shots are taken in a form of *explanatory insert* in order to give a detail of each heroic deed of the characters. As a result, we are about to see the qualities of good citizens performed by the characters in a form of understanding those who are less fortunate clearly.

The admired qualities of citizen heroes are essentially those we associate with being 'good citizen', including honesty, integrity, understanding of those who less fortunate, participation in community activities and striving for achievement of community goals. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 317)

**Heroes are also ordinary people; one of us.** It indicates the existence of the heroes as a part of the society/masses in which they also have the quality as ordinary people. They do daily activities and experience many problems. Johnny is an attractive-young temperamental figure. He likes to do many extreme sports like skiing and riding motorcycle; and also likes to be at the center of attention. Reed is a Mr. Smart. However, he has lack of awareness about love. He and Sue find a difficult situation in their love story. Their relationship is bothered by their

past as ex- couples. Meanwhile, Sue tends to be more open in expressing her feeling toward Reed. One of the dialogues shows Reed's feeling over Sue. The dialogue is taken from the scene in Von Doom Compound Hospital where Sue is under treatment after the accident.

**REED**

She's allergic to orchids. Put that *Amaryllis Apapathos* by her bed. The African lilies? They're her favorites.

**(The script: 21)**

The statement indicates how Reed knows Sue very well by knowing what she is allergic to and what her favorite is. It shows that they ever have a close unforgettable relationship. It is special since he can remember a tiny thing about her. The word unforgettable is very suitable to express the relationship since the willingness to 'remember' will be only caused by special feeling, such as love.

As **the defender of the community**, social responsibility takes them to the belief that each person has to perform his or her best to help those in need. It can be seen in the hero's effort to defeat their villain, Victor Von Doom. It is an open battle of the two characters in the center of the New York City. Many people are in danger of being killed because of Von Doom's attack. The Fantastic Four show their maximum power to face the villain. Even, they are willing to die in the battle. This heroic deed is performed because the community's life and freedom are in danger. The hidden meaning of this is that in fighting for justice, truth and humanity over evil and terror, we must be able to unite ourselves. No evil will be defeated if we face it alone. Thus, at the same time the characters also present the myth of unity.

After viewing the significance of *citizen heroes* of the characters, now we are about to point at the popularity from the spirit of the era. A product of cinematography is actually a reflection of the society. It means that they present the real condition of the society itself. That is what we call as the spirit of the era; the *zeitgeist*. We must necessarily include the discussion of the *zeitgeist* in order to link the meaning in the movie with the reality.

The movie of *The Fantastic Four* (2005) can be considered as the reflection of the American mainstream. The culture expects the heroes to have qualification as figures who can protect the weak, defend the truth and justice. If we connect it with the time setting of the movie, we are going to see the relation between the significance of heroes and the *zeitgeist*.

The year of 2005 were considered as the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it means that there were still the remaining of 20<sup>th</sup> century characteristics. The twentieth century saw a remarkable shift in the way that vast numbers of people lived, as a result of technological, medical, social, ideological, and political innovation. The most notable characteristics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are technology, death rates, infant mortality, infectious diseases, life expectancy, maternal death rates and battles (Available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/20th\\_century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/20th_century), cited on September 11, 2006 at 9:53 pm).

Perubahan yang terpenting dalam abad ke-21 yang akan datang, adalah menurunnya daya tarik terhadap materi-fisik. Di dalam perkembangan Teknologi, Ekonomi dan Politik Nasional bangsa-bangsa, kekayaan yang berasal dari benda-benda materi, terasa menurunnya arti dan daya tariknya. Kekuasaan/kekayaan yang berasal dari pemikiran dan budaya manusia, jauh lebih tinggi dihargai dari produk benda-benda materi. Tantangan lebih besar apalagi dikaitkan dengan isu terorisme. (Available at

<http://www.elektroindonesia.com/elektro/utama6.html>, cited on 15 June 2006 at 9:51 am).

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is identified by some important aspects of human life. People tend to highly appreciate “power” that comes from human thought. It means that the society put knowledge and science as the point of interest. It is more respectable when the products are useful for human kind. Space expedition done by Reed and his partners are purposed to test Reed’s experiment that can help human beings. It can be seen in Reed’s presentation of his project as presented in the first scene.

#### **REED**

In six weeks another cloud with the same elemental profile will pass Earth's orbit. A study in space could advance our knowledge about the structure of the human genome, and help cure countless diseases, extend human life –

**(The script: 2)**

Based on Reed’s statement above, we can underline four noticeable issues of the century. They are knowledge, diseases, and extending human life (dealing with life expectancy). His ability as a scientist opens up his view about helping others by applying his knowledge.

Another factor that reflects the social condition is the issue of terrorism. America was threatened by terrorism 2001. World Trade Centre building in the middle of New York City and Pentagon were attacked by disastrous planes crash pirated by terrorists. Many people died. It was a national issue which threatened all American. They were living in fear. Since then, the American government under the leadership of George W. Bush announced the war toward terrorism.

America needed a figure of hero that could save them from any terror that might come and threaten the community, especially in the decade where the villains or criminals are vast. Tim Story reflected this phenomenon in the movie like what he presented in the frame at figure 2. People can easily be threatened by any external terrors. The external terror is dangerous because it threatens all elements of the society; individuals, mainstream values, surrounding, and etc. The character of Victor Von Doom as a villain is mostly presented using *low- key lighting design* as is shown in the picture below.



**(Figure 2)**

The setting of place is dominated by a deep shadow which arouses the mood of unpleasant, insecure, and threatening from a mysterious evil figure. The figure symbolizes fear and danger that can harm anyone in society. In a deeper sense, evil will not only bring disaster to human life but also the civilization and its high values. More or less, the figure of citizen heroes, the defender of the community, of this movie is the reflection of what is actually needed by the American society.

**A. The Internal Conflict of American Democracy and Individual Freedom,  
Embodied in *The Fantastic Four* Citizen Heroes**

Being citizen heroes brings many consequences to all the members of *The Fantastic Four*. They are captured in the familiar conflict of Individual Freedom versus American Democracy.

Myth of Individual Freedom: Americans have an innate right to personal freedom- the right to choose their own destinies, pursue their dreams, act in anyway see fit short of harming other or interfering with other's freedom. Beliefs and values: Do your own thing- GO FOR IT; be yourself; and get government off our backs. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 94)

The myth of Individual Freedom supports their innate personal rights as free human beings for years. Then, they must cope with the myth that put society and its interests above all including the personal interests. Both myths stand as two different formula that all Americans respect. They are no longer common people who have the rights to do anything and express their individual qualities freely. At the same time, a role as new figures with 'given-abilities' gives them a big responsibility to defend the society. This situation results in internal conflict.

The analysis of internal conflict is started with the character of Reed Richard. Reed is a smart scientist who is approved as one of the most promising scientists. In the age of fifteen he was awarded a winner of Physic competition. It continues to his college life. He always gets a good rank in his class. As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, the space expedition is one of his experiments which emphasizes on humanity. Reed applies of his knowledge to study the space could in the earth's orbit in order to find its benefits to the

structure of the human genome, help cure countless diseases, and extend human life. It reflects the myth of American democracy reflected in of his personality.

Reed's heroic deed as a defender of the community shown in the Brooklyn Bridge has strengthened his quality as a citizen hero. However, everything changes when he knows that the deed and the transformation give a crucial meaning to him and especially to his best friends. Moreover, he realizes that the accident happened because of his fault; his individual inaccuracy. Then, it results in his willingness to cure his friends, especially Ben who gets a great impact of the transformation. The next part of this analysis is going to discuss Ben's internal conflict.

In this case, Reed indirectly presents his value as a leader. His leadership in the expedition has brought the team into disaster. A good leader must be able to protect his people and put off his private business for the sake of his people's needs. This is the time to be responsible for his team's life. He plans to build a machine for remaking the storm. He speculates that the machine will change their DNA back to normal again.

Reed needs more time to identify every single thing dealing with the machine. He analyzes and calculates everything over and over again to prepare himself for any possibilities that can put them in danger again. In this case, he finds himself in a conflict. He wants to cure Ben and his friends, but he does not seem to focus on his work purpose. It seems like he does an 'interesting' experiment rather than a 'treatment'. He shows his individuality by deciding that

doing more experiments will give more benefits than just healing. Even though, by doing so, it gives an unsure progress to the healing process.

**SUE (CONT'D)**

Reed. How close are we to a cure?

**REED**

No way to know. *Without more tests, experiments.*

**SUE**

We're not specimens, we're patients. This isn't just another science project to you, is it...?

**REED**

I am looking. That's why I can't make a mistake! I've got to get it right, and it's not right yet! We need to test this.

**(The Script: 83)**

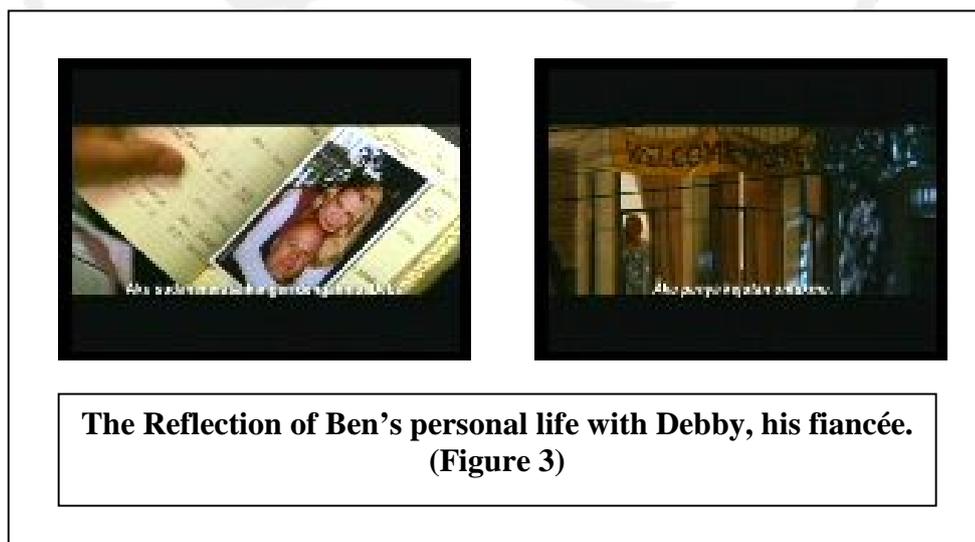
As mentioned above, Sue tries to remind him about the machine and also the people's expectation toward *The Fantastic Four*. It is indirectly shown that the transformation is a big problem to deal with. However, it is also a 'gift' for the society. In fact, both of them, especially Reed, tend to focus on the cure. It means that they are not aware of the bigger responsibility that they actually must deal with; defending the society.

Reed is a theoretical person. He believes that more experiments and tests will give a good result to the cure. Psychologically, he gets *low self-esteem* where he feels worse about himself after realizing that he is the one who causes the transformation. In other words, nobody wants to do the same mistake. His point of view belongs to the idea of *self-efficacy*. This is what he does not understand yet; sometimes the leader must make an accurate and fast decision since the team really counts on him.

The accident caused by Reed's miscalculation gives bad impact to Ben and Sue. Both of them lose their personal identity. If Ben has a conflict because

nobody cares about him, Sue must deal with a conflict caused by her popularity as an 'idol'. Ben becomes a lonely man who has an empty world. It happens when everything in his life suddenly vanishes because of the transformation. He loses his identity since nobody acknowledges his existence. Psychologically, an individual really needs other people to define himself. Meanwhile, Sue, a low-profile independent woman, finds her life in a small space. She does not have enough space to move and to express her personality because it has been taken by the public who adores her. They really count on Reed, but Reed's decision to take more time in analyzing the machine really influences them. The next part of this chapter will give a discussion of both characters.

The most noticeable internal conflict is reflected in the character of Ben Grimm. He is a humble person who becomes Reed's assistant and best friend for years. He has a happy personal life with his fiancée, Debby. It shows in the two frames of the figure 3 below.



*A close up shot with a high key lighting design of Ben and Debby's picture in Ben's agenda book presents the closeness of the couple and how special their relationship is. The book is an important stuff for someone to be taken anywhere. It is because it records all schedules and important information. The frame reflects two important things in Ben's life, his fiancée and his job.*

The second frame is a picture of Ben and Debby's apartment taken by *long shot with normal focal length* since it gives sense of distance from the audience's and Ben's perspective. One interesting thing of this frame is the welcoming banner. Debby puts it outside the apartment to welcome his lover after doing his flight mission. "*Welcome home*", reflects how Ben has a complete life; having someone to love and the final place to go to. He has chosen his reason to live.



**The shots showing Ben's ironic situation in the middle of the applause  
(Figure 4)**

The internal conflict starts to work when Ben gets his new identity. The storm affects Ben's entire body and turns it into a solid rock-like shape. The shape does not look special but his rocky body makes him powerful. He can pull a fire truck from falling to the river under the Brooklyn Bridge.

In performing their quality as heroes, Ben and other members of *Fantastic Four* embody the myth of American Democracy. They perform it by fulfilling the five steps of *pro-social behavior*. All the people applaud for Ben's heroic deed. However, at the same time, it changes into an irony when Debbie takes off her engagement ring and puts it on the ground. The scene in the figure 4 shows how the irony worked. A *high-angle shot* can make a subject seem diminished. This is what is used in the first frame. The engagement ring actually implies love and sacred bond of two lovers. Nevertheless, when it is put on the ground and is captured by a *high-angle shot*, the distance creates meaning that the ring does not look special. It builds an objective point of view in order to give a general understanding that the ring is now just an ordinary thing. In other words, Debbie and Ben's love is not worthy anymore. Ben loses his love, the most important aspect of his life. It also means he loses his freedom, especially freedom to pursue his own happiness.

Then, the *tracking shot* moves sideways into the second frame. The shot links the first and the second frame to produce an irony. The using of *low-angle shot* presents Ben as a dominant and victorious figure. It is very contrastive since the previous frame has shown us how poor his condition is. The third and the fourth frame apply *explanatory insert* in order to deepen the irony since the *tilting shot*

shows Ben's movement and facial expression. In the forth frame, Ben is presented in a *close-up shot* with a shallow focus of the background. It shows Ben's upset expression in detail. However, Ben gets a little hope on what Reed has promised after seeing his dramatic situation. What has happened to Ben influences Reed to do something to fix the transformation.

**REED**

I swear to you, I will do everything in my power until there is not a breath left in me: you are going to be Ben again.

**(The Script: 40)**

Being something that he never imagines before seems very hard for Ben.

Even though, he has an extraordinary power, he must face hard consequences: losing his fiancé and being ridiculed as a monster. What a hard life.

**INT. O'DONNEL'S PUB – NIGHT**

A big photo of Ben Grimm in his astronaut heyday occupies a place over the bar. Ben enters, and the bar goes SILENT. He moves through the crowd. People clear out of the way. Ben reaches the bar. He sits on a stool, and CRUNCH! SMASH! The stool SNAPS like a toothpick. He hits the ground hard. Glasses shake. A few PATRONS smile, laugh softly.

**BEN**

That's not funny!

(They go silent. They drop bills onto tables, filing out, scared of this monster. ERNIE works the bar)

**ERNIE**

Hey, that's Ben Grimm there, *the first mook from Brooklyn to go to outer space, so pay him some respect!*

(But the patrons keep filing out. Ben looks down, weary)

**BEN**

Ernie. Sorry for killing your business. I'll take the usual, then I'm out... Better make it a double.

(Ernie heads for the booze. Ben gives a sad shake of his head. Then he notices...one lone patron at the end of the bar. A beautiful young woman nursing a drink. Meet ALICIA MASTERS).

**BEN**

If there's a God, she hates me.

(He grabs a bar-rag to dry off).

**(The Script: 60)**

The sequence above shows that Ben realizes that the change has placed him as a stranger in his own hometown. When the patrons show their ignorance to his existence, he feels “odd man out”. He even judges GOD for being unfair to him.

Based on the Socio-psychological theory, in this level, Ben has experienced a low self-esteem. He does not feel better of himself after passing transition from an ordinary people to a monster. As a result, he never thinks positively of himself and his surrounding (psychological disturbance). In this level, destiny leads Ben to meet Alicia Masters.

Alicia is a blind black woman. She has a strong characteristic as an optimistic woman with high self confidence. She always supports Ben to see everything positively. Compared to him, she has more difficult condition. The blind eyes limit her movement. As a woman, it is very dangerous for her.

(She puts a hand on his face -- something in her tone and gentle touch allows Ben to let her. She smiles softly).

**ALICIA (CONT'D)**

Such a sad face... *You know, sometimes being different isn't a bad thing.*  
**(The Script: 61)**

Alicia knows for sure the pain that Ben has. It is because she has the same problem with him; physical weakness. However, she has succeeded to counter her weakness by seeing it as a special gift from God. She can even ‘feel’ someone’s pain from her touch. The first meeting with Alicia gives meaning to Ben. Slowly but sure she helps him to open up his vision step by step. It is the vision that beyond someone’s weaknesses there must be ‘special quality’. Furthermore, we can still live normally and do anything that we really want to do. In short, she helps him to build up his *self-esteem*.

In the process, however, Ben's inability to cope with his stress makes him easily persuaded by bad ideas dealing with his condition. The conflict starts when Johnny prefers to do his hobby by ignoring Reed's project and have fun of the team in the racing. Ben is very disappointed, especially when it seems like none of his friends cares about him.

**EXT. STREET/ALLEY - DAY**

Sue wades through the throng of New Yorkers. Tries to catch up with Ben...whose presence parts the crowd like Moses.

**SUE**

Ben! Slow down...

(Ben glances sideways at her, doesn't stop. She catches up).

**SUE (CONT'D)**

He didn't mean it. You know Johnny.

He's always been a hothead --

**BEN**

It's not him. *It's them (pointing to crowd) I can't live like this.*

**SUE**

Just give Reed a little more time.

You know how he works – analyzing every little step before he takes one -

**BEN**

*It's easy for you to be patient.*

**SUE**

No, it's not. I thought I was done waiting for Reed... We're all in this together now, Ben.

(He slows down, gets closer, intense)

**BEN**

*Together? Look at me, Susie. You got no idea what I'd give...to be invisible. Your nightmare...is my dream.*

(The Script: 70)

In the sequence above, Ben compares his condition with Sue's. What is considered as Sue's nightmare is his dream. His low self-esteem has put him to think negatively based on his own point of view. We can assume that the 'gift' is a nightmare since nothing in this world can be compared to the "freedom" as an ordinary people.



(Figure 5)

The sequence dialogue above is strengthened by the position of camera angle when the dialogue is said by Ben. This shot applies an *over-the-shoulder shot*. This type of shot makes use of the back head and shoulder of other characters as foreground framing. It provides the sense of ‘very important person’ over the character that is being favored in the shot. Sometimes, this shot is used to emphasize the character who is dominating the conversation. In this case, Ben is the favored character. Over the audience’s and the other characters’ point of view, this shot demonstrates Ben as the main figure to point at. It means that Ben and his problems are serious and nothing is more important than him. The sequence dialogue above shows how Ben feels so frustrated with his condition. The word ‘them’ when he is pointing the crowd explains his great pain when people see him as a monster. He feels lonely.

Alicia comes like an angel for Ben. In this hard situation, she is always there to cure his ‘rocky heart’. When he walks down the street, he finds a gallery which its window gives a clear vision of his ‘body’. Suddenly, there is a woman’s voice.

**VOICE (O.S.)**

I figured the only way to get you here was to stick that in the window.

(He turns to see...ALICIA in the doorway).

**BEN**

How'd you know it was me?

**ALICIA**

*I'm blind, not deaf.*

**THE THING**

You don't know what it's like out there. Walking around like some kind of circus freak. People staring, whispering --

**ALICIA**

I wouldn't know anything about that.

**THE THING**

I mean...

**ALICIA**

Tell me. When you grew up in Brooklyn, how many astronauts did you know? (a beat). *You went your own way then. You didn't listen to people. So why start now...?*

**(The Script: 76-77)**

This time, Alicia helps Ben to understand and realize two important things. The first is about focusing on the other endowments that someone has. Alicia is a blind woman but she is not deaf. It suggests him to see some other abilities that can be useful maximally. If someone has one weakness, it does not mean that he has nothing to be proud of. The second is about the 'real' Ben. As mentioned before, Ben is the first astronaut from his hometown, Brooklyn. Many people are doubtful about his ability. Nevertheless, he can prove it. Even though the mission is not successful, he still becomes the first man from Brooklyn who reaches the outer space. That is the 'real' Ben; a man who can make everything possible to be done through high courage and dedication.

**VICTOR**

I'm worried about you.

**BEN**

About me? How sweet.

**INT. DINER - LATER**

(Victor and Ben sit in a window booth. A waitress sets a foot high stack of pancakes in front of Ben, removes huge plates he's just cleared.

Victor's aware of the other customers in the diner staring at Ben. Ben burps: it rattles the plates).

**THE THING**

'Scuse me.

**VICTOR**

*I know it can't be easy. Life hasn't changed that much for Reed, Sue and Johnny. At least they can go out in public. But for you? People staring. Whispering behind your back...*

**THE THING**

If you're trying to cheer me up you're doing a helluva job --

**VICTOR**

*I'm just saying, I know what it's like to lose something you love. To see it slip away, and know it's never coming back.*

(The Thing shoves a huge piece of pie in his mouth).

**THE THING**

*Reed's gonna fix me up --*

**VICTOR**

*For your sake I hope you're right.* I'm sorry if that sounds a little *skeptical*.

**THE THING**

Skeptical...?

(Ben doesn't trust him. But Victor is hitting pressure points)

**VICTOR**

*Look, he's a brilliant man; we should trust he's working as hard as he can. You're his best friend. So what possible reason could he have for taking his time?*

(A beat)

*I mean, other than getting close to Sue?*

(Off The Thing: a seed of doubt has been planted. He can't help but find truth in the words. And we CUT TO --)

**(The Script: 81)**

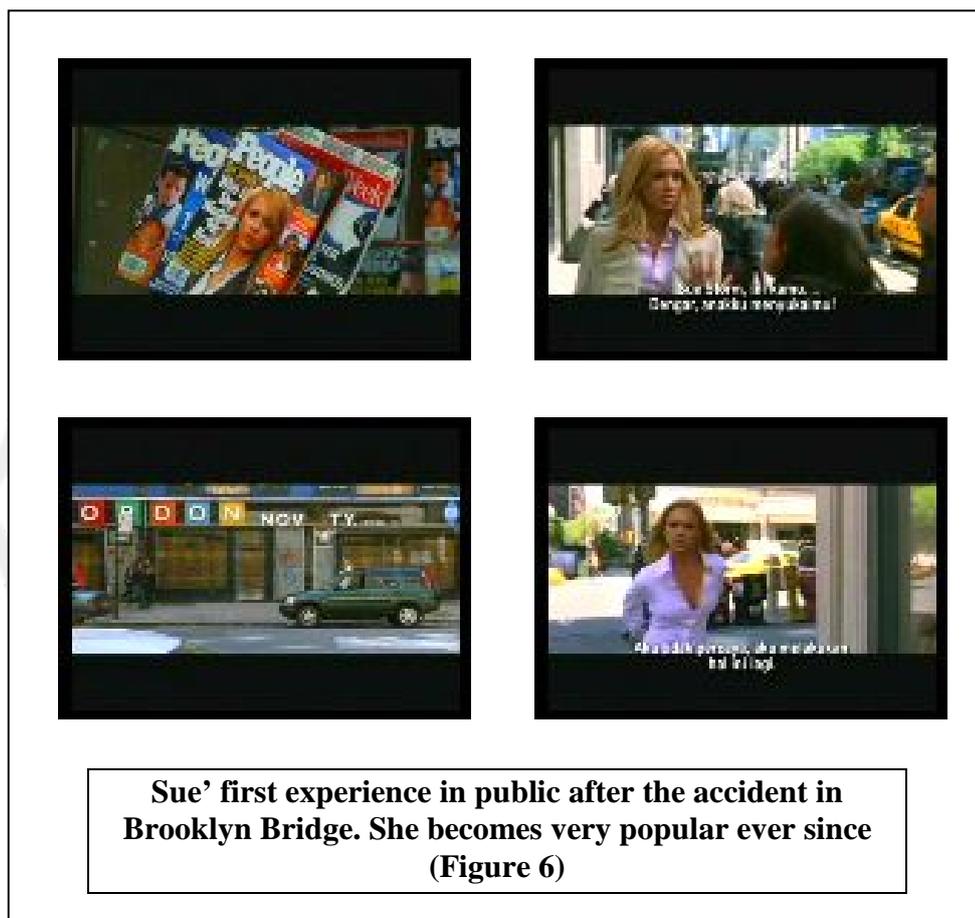
Victor takes advantage of Ben's pain in order to beat Reed, his rival on everything. He exploits Ben's psychological disturbance to break Reed's and Ben's trust as best friends. Firstly, he talks about Ben's appearance and its disadvantage, for example the public refusal. This is the first time that someone directly approves the 'truth' of Ben's transformation. It is like an acknowledgement that he is a monster. Victor does it very well especially when he touches Ben's biggest pain, the story of Debbie. Ben seems giving up to the

reality. He is doing nothing to defend his pride because what Victor is saying is definitely true. In conclusion, Ben knows that nobody cares for him. This is the best time for Victor to set a skeptical thought about Reed toward Ben. As mentioned above, Victor persuades Ben that what Reed has planned to do is nothing more than a way to be close to Sue. Victor is successful. Ben cannot control himself and he doubts Reed.

One day, Sue takes Reed to a theatre to relax their mind after working on the machine. Ben considers it as a betrayal over Reed's oath because it seems like Reed is not serious with his work. They have a serious fight. The idea of the defender of community is too hard for Ben since he must loosen his attributes as an individual and pay it with his life, and sometimes put or even force people whom he loves in danger. The significance of this phase will be discussed in the next subchapter in relation to the second research question.

The third character who copes with internal conflict is Susan Storm. In comparison to Ben, she has a less severe psychological conflict caused by the transformation. It is because she does not experience a complex-dilemmatic situation like what Ben does. Sue is a beautiful smart-talented woman. She has a good position in her office. For years, she works for Von Doom Industries, one of the big enterprises dealing with science and technology. The myth of individual freedom leads her to do anything based on her own willingness. The way she expresses her feeling to Reed shows one of her quality as an independent woman. Nevertheless, it changes when she gets the gift.

People have known Sue as the Invisible Woman. They adore her as a figure of citizen hero, especially when she performs her ability coincidentally in the Brooklyn Bridge. She is forced to do something in contrast to her private willingness.



*Syntagme achronological* (chronological shots) is applied in the figure 5 above. The first frame applies close up shot in giving detail about the cover of People magazine. It is an American prestigious magazine which focuses its news about important figure: its story and great achievement. Richard Stolley, People's managing editor, mentions that the magazine is characterized by its capability to

get back to the people who are causing the news and who are caught up in it, or deserve to be in it. The magazine focuses its news on people, not issues (Available at [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com), cited on September 11, 2006 at 9:53 pm).

Sue's picture is positioned in the middle of the cover in order to show that she is the headline of the day. It indicates that she is a popular figure, a citizen hero, whose story is special and essential for all readers. The next frames show how Sue becomes famous and she has to deal with it. The second frame presents Sue and a young mother telling about her daughter who adores Sue. This frame also applies an *over-the-shoulder shot*. This type of shot makes use of the back head and shoulder of other character as foreground framing. Sue is placed as an idol/ a famous figure for the young mother. A *jump-cut* links the second to the next scene, the third frame and the fourth, the chasing scene. The third frame uses an *extreme wide shot* to give sense of distance. The shot manipulates space or surrounding to engulf the character. It also puts a distance over the audiences so that they cannot see the character's facial expression. It means that the character is locked by the space. Sue is presented as a figure that faces the chasing alone. Nobody helps her. In other words, she is in a trouble. The situation forces her to take off her clothes. A *medium shot* demonstrates her annoyed expression while doing it. Her expression shows her unwillingness to do something that represses her mind and movement.

(Sue stands alone, sifting through piles of mail. She focuses on one piece of mail that she's holding. Her hand begins to disappear and then the envelope slowly begins to disappear as well. Sue smiles at the success. Intrigued) Quiet:

**SUE**

That's new...

(Reed enters -- overworked, unshaved. He keeps his head down, preoccupied. Sue shifts focus).

**SUE (CONT'D)**

*Have you read these...? From all over. People want us to fight crimes... save their kids...solve their problems... (no response from Reed) ...when we can't even solve our own.*

(She puts the letters down, steps closer to Reed).

**(The Script: 83)**

Figure 6 and the dialogues above imply how the popularity does not work for Sue. Firstly, she is forced by the situation to do something that is really in contrast to her personality. She is typically a low-profile serious woman. She does not feel comfortable in the middle of her fans because the gift is something that makes her abnormal. She always has to take off her clothes when doing her action. She does it again when trying to escape from the crowd. For her, it is really embarrassing since she pays too much for just hanging around in the city. A bad feeling like insecurity indicates that psychological freedom is being violated.

Then, when people know everything about someone and put him in a highest position, they indirectly force the idol to do and to behave as what the people expect. What is written in the newspaper is the public expectation toward the heroes. In fact, the heroes have not had the awareness of it yet. The news implies the heroes' internal conflict. It is because they still focus on themselves as individual, the identity that they have been holding on for their entire life.

Johnny is the youngest member of the group. He presents his quality as a youth who is really close to the idea of individual freedom. Psychologically, he has a good *self-schema*. In contrast to the other members, he has no internal conflict. The youth spirit influences him to be self-oriented, especially when it

deals with his own interest. Moreover, he tends to be rebellious over what is contrast to his domain.

Johnny is the only character who is not frustrated by the gift. He even enjoys it very much. The power of the gift strengthens his domain of independence. It is because he can fulfill his desire in gaining what he wants easily by the power. Most importantly, he does not have any drastic changes in his body. The heroic deed helps him much to gain popularity, the thing that he is trying to gain in his life.

People living in an independent culture see themselves as a self-contained and autonomous person; behave to express his uniqueness; consider achievement in terms of personal gain, view themselves as better or worse in achievement than others; apt to experience emotion that are related to their view of themselves, such as jealousy and anger; and seek and receive individual rewards for good performance. Besides, *self concepts* of people in independent cultures, then, are based on personal, individual successes, and failures (Feldman, 1998: 123).

When other members have to work out with the gift; Johnny feels being trapped by the laboratory tests. He ignores it because he does not like someone giving order to him, mainly when he feels that nothing is wrong with him. That is why he prefers to do anything to support his domain. Based on socio psychological theory, Johnny is influenced by *intrinsic motivation*, motivation that causes people to participate in activities for their own enjoyment (Feldman, 1998: 126). He attends NYC where an extreme motorcycle game takes place and

many hot girls are available. In order to seek for individual reward, he performs his ability added by his ‘uniqueness’ as a human torch; he tries to fly.



By applying *Syntagme achronological* of Johnny’s action, the first and the second frame (flying scene) apply *short focal length* to exaggerate expanse of space especially distance and height with *low angle shot* to create perspective that the point of view over the object seems higher. Both frames present chronological shots linked by a *montage*. The scene creates a sense of amazing, great, and unbelievable performance.

The result of the performance is presented by the next frames. Johnny receives a reward form his ‘community’ as shown in the third frame. All the audiences give applause toward the action. A *medium shot* has shown a relation of

the character with the physical setting. It arouses a unity of both aspects that they are an inseparable unit. *Over-the-shoulder shot* puts the audiences as the main focus in this shot. A *close up shot* gives detail of Johnny's facial expression in the forth frame. That is the smile of victory. Satisfaction, pride, and acceptance make him comfortable. This is an emotional expression for those who gather within his community. He really enjoys the show.

Johnny's action on the show gets a bad response from Reed, Sue, and especially Ben. They are really upset because the action shows his selfishness that can disturb the recovery project. He put himself in an external conflict with the other members. He directly shows his rebellion over the essence of American Democracy.

**REED**

This isn't permanent, Johnny. We need to be careful until we're normal again.

**JOHNNY**

What if some of us don't want to be "normal" again? We didn't all turn into monsters like –

(Sue looks at Johnny, more disappointed than angry).

**SUE**

Damn it, Johnny.

(She goes after Ben, leaving Reed and Johnny on the sidewalk).

**REED**

You need to control yourself and think before you –

**JOHNNY**

*Act.* Here we go again. Reed, what if we got these gifts for a reason?

What if we have some, you know...like, calling?

**REED**

A higher calling like getting girls and making money?

(Johnny nods, totally missing the sarcasm).

**JOHNNY**

Is there any higher?

(Reed looks at him, disgusted. Johnny waves to the crowd, hand flaming.

People SHRIEK, snap pictures. Johnny smiles at Reed).

**JOHNNY (CONT'D)**

This is who we are Reed. Accept it. Or better yet: enjoy it.

(Johnny steps into the sea of fans. Reed stands alone).

**(The Script: 68-70)**

The sequence above shows that Johnny is in contrast to the other members. He does not have a mature way of thinking. “Think before you act” is a characteristic of maturity. He only knows what is best for him. It is because he realizes that the power strengthens his existence as a man. Popularity and money are the most important things in this world that he wants to achieve. Then, those come forward to him as he owns the power. Therefore, there is no excuse for him to throw the power away. He feels ‘normal’ within the transformation and even gets benefits from it. In conclusion, Johnny accepts the transformation open- handedly.



**(Figure 8)**

In figure 8, the director applies *over-the- shoulder shot* to emphasize Johnny and his fans as point of interest in this frame in comparing to Reed as a minor figure. Reed is in the middle of those who belong to the domain of independence. Showing up his power to the public for his own pleasure, Johnny shows the strong characteristic of independent domain. On the other hand, it reflects that he does not have the quality of the defender of the community. It means that he has failed to wear and to define his new identity.

## **B. The Way the Internal Conflict Resolved by Each of the *Fantastic Four***

### **Heroes as Reflected in *The Fantastic Four* Movie**

Uniquely American hero has two identities, one is based on where he comes from in life's journey; the other one on where he is going to. That is why it is necessary to do a process of assimilation (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 342).

In America, physical dislocation serves as a symbol of social and psychological movement. The wisdom is that people do not, cannot, must not end up where they begin. Thus the American identity is ordered around the psychological experiences of forsaking or losing the past for the opportunity of reinventing oneself in the future. (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 337)

American heroes are characterized as a figure with a dilemma of two identities. In this case, they are positioned in the middle of the spirit of Individual Freedom and American Democracy. However, the virtue of moving for a better future leads every American to do changes. Many factors determine how the heroes must deal or even resolve the internal conflict. This subchapter covers the analysis on the way each character of *The Fantastic Four* resolves the internal conflict and the problem.

There are two significant points in this subchapter. The first is the significance of villain and, most importantly, the explanation of how Reed once again presents his quality as a hero and also a leader. In this part, we find the cause and effect relationship of the villains, Reed as the leader, and the rest of the team. As a result, each of them contributes to the resolving process of the heroes' internal conflict.

The existence of villain contributes to the meaning of the heroes. He supports the heroes' significance. It is true that a view of individuals cannot be separated from other people. Victor Von Doom is the absolute rival of Reed. He is a selfish person who adores power. He is full of hate since Reed always becomes the best of all since in the college. At the end, he demonstrates how power can lead someone to violate the community than to perceive the public. He becomes the archenemy of the *Fantastic Four* heroes.

Reed's failure over the mission has made Victor's business bankrupt. He blames Reed for it and starts to find a way to knock him down. Since Reed declares observing the symptoms and finding how to deal with it, Victor keeps his eyes on Reed's experiment with the machine. The purpose is to find what he can get from the machine. Of course, he wants to take benefits from it. Since Reed does too much calculation and consideration over the machine, he plans to force Reed to test it. One strategy to know the result of the test is by manipulating Ben's emotion.



An *extreme wide shot* in the first frame leads to an interpretation that the surrounding and the machine are about to engulf Reed's body. A contrast of dark lighting of the background and bright lighting of the interior of the machine implies a transition from the uncertainty to the truth about how the machine works. This is what Reed is about to find out in order to re-construct the DNA.

However, the result is not what Reed has expected. The machine melts him down worst than before. The next scene (frame 2-4) shows how it happens and the relation of this incident with Victor Von Doom.

(Sue struggles to lift Reed -- half of his body is stretched out, devoid of any semblance of bone structure. One side of his face looks like it's melting off).

**REED**

I can...make it work.

**SUE**

Reed, stop, you need to rest your --

**REED**

The power...I need...more power...to control...the storm --

**SUE**

You need a doctor.

Reed loses consciousness. Sue carries him out.

**(The Script: 86)**

By applying *high angle* and *over the shoulder shot* over the back of Sue's head, the second frame shows Sue's and the audience's point of view which seems higher than Reed, who lies on the ground. Besides, a *close up-shot* over Reed's head and a bit of neck and shoulder gives a clear view about his facial expression, especially his 'deformed-face', after testing the machine. He tells Sue about the power in a hoarse voice; it is a sound of pain. Thus, the frame implies that Reed is in a powerless condition.

A *cross-cutting* relates the second frame with the third one. We are about to see that Sue tries to carry Reed out. It is presented in *short focal length* which exaggerates distance in front of the camera. It also applies *high angle shot* in which Reed and Sue seem diminished. They are seen in a monitor in Victor's house. Then a *cut-ways* moves camera to the forth frame. This frame is dominated with a deep shadow (*low- key lighting design*). *Low- key lighting design* has high lighting ratio (Douglass and Harnden, 1996: 232). We can see it in Victor's left eye seeing the monitor. It is used to present look of Victor's narrow eye. It presents evil, mystery, and danger. Then, Victor picks up his phone and asks Leonard, his assistant to take Ben to the lab.

Ben psychological disturbance affects Reed to act turning everything into normal again. He knows that the test is too risky. However, it does not stop him from doing it. Their emotional bond as best friends makes him able to feel the pain that Ben has. Moreover, he realizes that his missed-calculation indirectly caused the changes. He has to be responsible for it.

The idea of helping others cannot be separated with norms, standards, or expectations regarding appropriate behaviors. The decision to help is influenced by personal norms. A *major intersection of mutuality relationship* is one factor why Reed helps Ben by sacrificing his life. As mentioned in the previous chapter, his individual psychological satisfaction is no longer the focus of his life but to the success of the relationship among him and his best friends. He never regrets his decision to test the machine even though he knows that it takes all of his energy. He indirectly supports the other members to deal with their conflict and problem.

Furthermore, he helps them to build the awareness as the defender of community by putting aside their individuality for the sake of other people.

Ben Grimm passes the process of resolving which is indirectly influenced by Reed action. Then, Victor finally identifies the weakness of Reed's machine. He starts to carry out his second plan. He invites Ben to try the machine. To complete the power capacity, he transfers the electricity of New York City from his powered arm into the machine. As he wishes, the machine successfully reforms Ben's body. It turns to normal again. Surprisingly, he can absorb the energy of the storm and turns to be more powerful than before. One enemy is defeated. It means that Reed has lost one of his bodyguards. Ben realizes that he is just a lab mouse for Victor.

**BEN**

Oh my God... Th-thank you. THANK YOU...VIC?!

(Ben sees a SPARK in shadows. That spark is... VICTOR'S ARM. Victor steps forward, and reveals himself to Ben: ELECTRICITY PUMPS THROUGH HIS BODY. His skin is part flesh, part metal. Cheekbone exposed, steel tissue.

HE IS DOOM).

**BEN (CONT'D)**

Vic... What the...?

**DOOM**

Everyone thought I was safe behind those shields...

**BEN**

Victor, the machine worked for me. It can work for you --

**DOOM**

It did, Ben. It worked perfectly.

(Ben starts to realize...)

**BEN**

You planned this...?

(Doom smiles, reaches out his hand -- ELECTRICITY builds from his shoulders, coursing down his arms to his fingertips).

**DOOM**

I've always wanted power. Now I've got an unlimited supply...

**BEN**

And no Thing to stand in your way.

(DOOM smiles, nods, stronger than Ben now).

**DOOM**

Take a good look, Ben. This is what a man looks like who embraces his destiny.

Doom clenches his fist and BLASTS Ben, sending him flying backwards across the room -- knocked unconscious.

**(The Script: 91)**

Reed enters his laboratory and finds Victor there. It is the best time for Victor to take revenge. Reed who is powerless cannot escape from Victor's great power. Victor kidnaps Reed. Tim presents the heart side of the movie in this plot.

This is the turning point of the transition for Johnny, Ben, and Susan. By demonstrating *cross cutting* over *episodic sequences* the director presents the process of how each character resolves their internal conflict. Firstly, Victor sends a military missile to destroy the Baxter building where Sue, Johnny, and Ben stay. Johnny realizes that the missile can kill them, and above all Susan, his sister. He directly decides to take the focus of the missile by jumping from the building and creating a flying maneuver.

**SUE**

What are you doing --

**JOHNNY**

Sis. Let me take care of you for once.

**(The Script: 94)**

By applying *syntagme alterne* the director presents how the missile keeps on chasing Johnny. He jets over the water with the missile behind him. He finally gets one object, a garbage barge floating in the water. Thinking fast, he flies by and hurls a fireball at the barge. The flames ignite and spread quickly. He loops back toward the flaming barge as the missile closes in on him. He flames off and

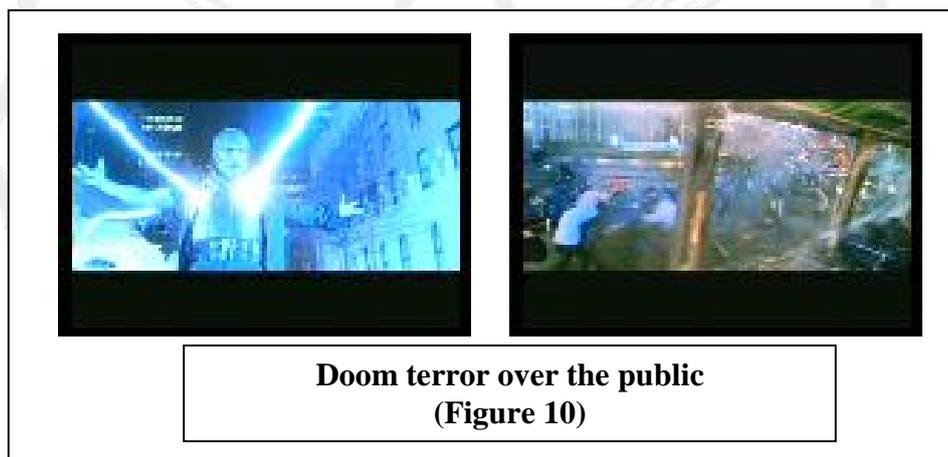
falls to the water. This is his first action indicating maturity, using his “brain” to make a decision.

On the other hand, Sue tries to help Reed by using her power. As a lover, she will do anything to save her love. A couple who is bond by *mutuality relationship* will have awareness of his partner’s sadness and happiness. She comes to Victor’s office by making herself invisible and tries to help Reed who sits in a chair with tubes injected into his skin that freezes him solid. An ultra-cold vapor coats him. She successfully takes off the tube from Reed even though Victor has realized her existence. Then, she has a great fight with Victor. She fights very hard to defeat Doom but the evil is much stronger than she thinks. He almost knocks her down.

Conversely, Ben cannot do anything because he loses his ‘power’. He wants to do something to help Reed. Moreover, Ben realizes that everything happens because of his fault. Ben uses *social reality* to make decision of what he must do. At last, the situation guides him to get into the machine and turn back into “The Thing” again. Ben’s reaction is compatible with Reed’s. Being influenced by *personal norms*, Ben decides to rescue Reed and Sue because of their close relationship as best friends. Most importantly, Ben has successfully applied *downward social comparison* by putting Alicia as an inferior subject. He compares his condition with Alicia who has poorer condition than him. Even though he turns into monster, he is able to use all part of his body normally and even protect the world by his extra gift. He has learned that his extra abilities can give contribution to others in need even though he must change into a monster.

Then, it is proven as he can protect Sue and Reed from Doom who almost kills them. In this stage, Sue and Ben have seen the essence of having ‘the gift’.

This situation is the most significant turning point for the heroes to resolve their internal conflict. Doom gets crueler ever since. His fighting against *The Fantastic Four* creates a dangerous situation for the public. The heroes are indirectly positioned in an emergency situation where they must perform the quality of citizen heroes. One thing for sure, each of the heroes is aware that Doom not only threatens them but also the bigger institution, the public and the city, as presented by the scene below (figure 10).



As reflected in the figure 10, Doom absorbs the electricity power of the city. A *medium shot* presents the relation between the character and the surrounding. *High-key lighting* gives a clearer idea that he controls and owns the electricity power. A *cut-ways* links both frames. Then, a *short focal length* arouses the distance that makes people (the object) looks small and shallow. This frame builds a sense to the audience’s point of view that the people are helpless and terrified. The combination of the people’s *voice over* and Doom power’s *sound effect*

arouses the tension of this scene. The tension indirectly plays as a 'sign' for the heroes that they are the only ones who can face or even solve it.



Being motivated by *pro-social principilism*, *The Fantastic Four* led by Reed perform each of their power to defeat Doom who starts to ruin everything. Psychologically, each of the heroes is about to fulfill the third level of *pro-social behavior*, considering that helpfulness is their responsibility. The scene above applies *syntagme alterne* which each of the frame is linked by *cut-ways*. A *wide shot* with a *short focal length* in the first frame gives a view of how Reed stretches. It was done to wrap Doom so his power would not destroy and harm people around him. Reed indirectly leads and influences the team to perform *pro-social act*. In the second frame, an *extreme wide shot* with *short focal length*, presents sense of distance and height over the fire that Johnny makes. Johnny,

who is positioned in front of the fire, looks small and shallow. This frame wants to exaggerate how powerful the fire is. The frame tells that Johnny directly burns the villain after Reed loses his tights.

The last two frames apply *medium shot* in order to combine physical setting, action, and the facial expression of the characters (Ben and Susan). Susan is about to hold the fire to make a fire jail for Doom. By this shot, we are presented with an enough view of Sue's facial expression of anger and frustration. That is how she produces the power. For a couple of time, Doom is trapped in the middle of fire. However, Johnny and Sue are getting weaker. Doom is so powerful. He even can not be harmed by the shield. He is saved by a metal shield in his entire body. Knowing this, Reed thinks fast to finish everything.

**DOOM**

Is that the best you can do...? A little heat...?  
(Reed stays perfectly calm. He shakes his head).

**REED**

Time for your lesson, Vic. Chem. 101: what happens when you super cool hot metal...?

(To Ben)

Ben...

**BEN**

Got it, teach.

**(The Script: 102)**

Ben kicks down a Fire Hydrant. Then, the water sprays to Doom and turns him into a metal statue. Finally, the collaboration of the heroes can defeat him.

A good cooperation shown by *The Fantastic Four* in the last scene reflects the real America and its American Democracy. The difference of each character presents the individuality uniqueness which creates the pluralism. A body called team unites them. It accommodates the difference under one leadership to gain one goal, defending the community. Even though, each of them must loosen their

individual attribute by delegating it to the leader. On the other hand, a good leader must also present his quality as a decision- maker who can manage the team based on trust.

There is a motivation transition on the willingness to help that the heroes have performed. Firstly, each of them is positioned to help their relatives based on the close relationship. It is because they are bonded by *a major intersection of mutuality relationship*. Then, they are situated to face the same burden, Doom. When the villain gets stronger and starts to threaten not only them but also the public, the heroes cannot refuse their existence as ‘the savior of the world’. In other words, they finally use the power that used to be a curse to do *pro- social behaviors*.

**JOHNNY**

Damn, I love this job.

(Reed and Sue slowly lock eyes, thinking the same thing).

**BEN**

Job, huh...?

Will they accept their mantle?

**REED**

Well, we do have the suits...

**(The Script: 102)**

According to Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary, ‘Job’ means a regular duty. It takes dedication and responsibility for the doers. They must put their best effort and energy since it is about fulfilling a special purpose. In this case, the purpose is defending the community. The dialogues above show that the transition has reached its climax. Each of the heroes knows what the ‘gift’ is for, the heart of

the power. The ‘gift’ has saved their life and their relatives; furthermore it is a means to defend the community.

**REED**

Ben, I've been crunching the numbers on the machine. I think if we can rework the power settings...

**BEN**

Forget it, egghead. **I'm good as is.**

**ALICIA (O.S.)**

That's my Benny.

**(The Script: 103)**

Doom has been defeated and the heroes can deal with their new identity. However, Reed feels that he owes something to Ben, turning him back to normal. He still wants to fulfill his oath. As mentioned before, Ben is the one who gets the worst internal conflict. Surprisingly, Ben does not take it seriously anymore. He finally accepts his ‘new look’ and sees the positive side of the changes. His mature thought is indirectly influenced by Alicia. At last, Ben can wisely accept his changes.



**(Figure 12)**

The frame above presents the acknowledgement the significance of *The Fantastic Four*. The frame applies a *wide shot* with *long focal length* and *the foreground in focus* on the Liberty statue and the logo. Then, the frame is back grounded by a diffused of New York City. It presents the idea that the existence of

*The Fantastic Four* is supporting the liberty of the people (symbolized by the diffused background of the city). Liberty is freedom from evil and fear, in order to give open space to the people to accomplish their dreams. That is what the heroes are for. Liberty also reflects the citizen heroes who finally conquer the obstacle of being 'different'. Moreover they accept and love their destiny as American citizen heroes.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This final chapter describes the conclusion of the analysis. It also provides the recommendation for those who are interested in American Studies, and especially for those who want to analyze the figure of citizen heroes as subject matter.

#### A. Conclusion

After conducting the analysis of the main data of this thesis, the recording of the movie entitled *Fantastic Four* (2005) produced by Twentieth Century Fox and directed by Tim Story, there are conclusions of how the research questions are being answered in the previous chapter. The readers are facilitated to find the description about “how the internal conflict between the myth of American Democracy and Individual Freedom is embodied by the *Fantastic Four* citizen heroes in *The Fantastic Four* movie”, and “how the conflict is resolved by each of the *Fantastic Four* heroes as reflected in *The Fantastic Four* movie”. To answer the research questions, some dialogues and cinematography elements of the movie were picked out to analyze.

Based on the analysis, the first research question comes out with three main ideas dealing with the internal conflict. The first idea is embodied by the central character, Reed Richard. He is familiar with the dilemma of “individual

freedom vs. democracy”. From the beginning, he is the reflection of an ‘ideal’ citizen hero. The space expedition reflects his willingness to dedicate his knowledge as a scientist to support humanity. This is the first evidence of his quality as a defender of the community. It is strengthened by his strong characteristic as a good leader. The space expedition resulted in the transformation of his and his friend’s DNA is his individual mistake in calculating the cloud accelerating period. Realizing that he is the one who causes the accident, he immediately makes a move to find the way to cure his friends; the team. In the healing process, he is disturbed by his individual interest to make everything perfect so he spends too much time in doing the process. Therefore, it gives impact to the other members of the team, especially Ben and Sue, who want to be normal again as soon as possible. They think that Reed is not serious with the healing process which means that he does not care about their suffering. In this case, Reed’s internal conflict is resulted from Ben and Sue’s pressure. He must compete with the limitation of time while he must also cope with his individual interest.

The second, the internal conflict occurs in those who experience a transition from a free individual to a hero. It is obviously reflected by the character of Ben Grimm and Susan Storm. Both characters used to have independent domain for a long time until they get the transformation. The transformation changes their life. They experience the loss of identity. Ben, because of his monster-like appearance, must loose his fiancée. He feels a deep loneliness because the public ignores him. Meanwhile, Sue finds herself in a

'crowded' world since the public adores her like an idol. She can not go anywhere freely. Another similarity of them is the lack of awareness of a bigger responsibility that they must face, defending the community.

Compared to Reed, Ben and Sue have greater internal conflicts. Their characteristics as individuals with a strong independence domain give them the attributes of focusing the 'self' above all. When it is taken away from them, there is nothing left anymore. Meanwhile, Reed has presented his quality as a citizen hero since he is still a free individual. It means that from the beginning, he has the awareness of loosening some part of his domain for the sake of other people. Thus, he is getting used to face such condition which explains why he has less internal conflict than Ben and Sue.

A quite different finding was found in the last character, Johnny Storm. He has no internal conflict in him. It is because the transformation directly supports his independent domain. The domain is getting stronger ever since. It results in his enjoyment of being a new figure. He uses his power for his own pleasure. This shows that he is not an ideal figure of citizen hero.

The analysis also leads to the finding of the second research question. The resolving process is indirectly influenced by the villain and supported by Reed's decision as the leader. The process is also contributed by their psychological bond as close friends, lover, and brother-sister relationship. Victor Von Doom manipulates Ben's feeling to push Reed to test the deformation machine. It really works. Reed finally tests the machine that makes him powerless. Doom plans to beat The Thing (Ben) and absorb its power using the machine that brings Ben

back to normal again. Having an extra power, he kidnaps Reed. Sue uses her power to rescue her lover. Johnny tries to protect his sister from Doom's missile by making a flying maneuver. Ben finally realizes that he is needed and decides to be The Thing again. They finally realize what the power is for. At last, they unite themselves as a group of citizen hero who defend the public of New York from the evil.

## **B. Recommendation**

It is challenging and interesting to study further about American myth, beliefs, and values as reflected in the figures of citizen heroes. Therefore, it is recommended for any other sphere of society to take advantages from this research. This study proposes the following recommendations:

1. Conducting an interdisciplinary research involves many different perspectives and theories. A more comprehensive knowledge and information in the lecture of Research Methodology about theories commonly used in the research will be very helpful.
2. The readers are recommended to interpret movie with heroism genre as a means of pleasure and also of finding social beliefs and values over a social phenomenon.
3. For other researchers, it is suggested to conduct a research on heroism movie genre from different perspectives, so this study will inspire further studies on this subject matter.

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**A. Moment when each of the characters was irradiated by the cosmic storm**



Ben Grim



Reed Richard



Johnny Storm



Susan Storm

**B. The first action of the *Fantastic Four* as defender of the community**





**C. The experiments of healing process**





**D. How Victor persuaded Ben and its impact (Reed and Ben had a great fight)**

