

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background of the research and also the rationale for choosing the issue of multiracial discrimination experienced by the main character in the film series *Ginny and Georgia* by Sarah Lampert. This chapter also explains the research questions and the object of research, the significance of this research, and the definition of key terms needed in this research.

#### 1.1 Research Background

The United States of America is one of the world's leading destinations for people from all over the world because America has a multi-ethnic and multiracial population. People from all over the world come to America for a decent life. They have the belief that their lives improve if they settle in America. Following Shoichet (2023), the United States is home to more immigrants than any other country, more than 45 million people, according to the latest Census estimates. That's 13.6% of the US population, about the same as a century ago. But over the years, we've seen significant shifts in where immigrants to the US come from and where they end up once they get here.

Many Immigrants also have to struggle with their foreign identity against the harsh life in the United States. Often, the prejudiced sentiment of the majority and the unfair treatment of newcomers make the life of newcomers not as easy as they think.

Because many immigrants migrated to the United States, birth growth increased. One of them is driven by the factor of interracial marriage. Interracial marriage is the union of two persons from different races. Because of this gives rise to multi-racial Americans.

Multiracial individuals, also known as biracial or mixed-race individuals, are born to parents of different racial backgrounds. Identifying as multiracial means having two or more races within your genealogy. According to Atkin et al (2022:22) multiracial refers to anyone with biological parents of two or more different racial backgrounds. Whatever the term one uses biracial, multiracial, interracial, mixed, hybrid these identities are real, people live them, and they are a part of the larger picture of race in America. To say otherwise is to deny our history and to deny each other the right to this history (Diviacchi, 2020:68).

At this time, it seems that white Americans are still the dominant race or population in the country. So, Automatically, they feel like the majority group that has the highest social status among other groups. This situation made them think that people who were different from them were beneath them in terms of social status. That fact is a form of racism exhibited by white Americans.

At this time, people who are the biggest target of racism are people who have two races at once because they are the result of the marriage of two different races, which results in multiracial people being less accepted by the two races they have. Therefore, it creates a new racism against multiracial people.

In accordance with Johnson, Jacquelyn & Atkin (2023) being Multiracial is often complicated for people to understand. This is especially true in the United

States, where the dominant White group has fought to establish and maintain a clear color line throughout history to justify the oppression of People of Color. Multiracial people report higher rates being subject of discrimination from White people, and sometimes from minority populations as well; racism may be a crucial element contributing to alienation for Multiracial people (Franco, 2019:3).

Even though the discrimination that Multiracial youths face is ongoing, not only do people have a hard time categorizing Multiracial individuals, but they also try to force categorizations on Multiracial people or deny their belonging to specific groups. Multiracial people may choose to identify in many different ways, but it is ultimately their choice to decide how they racially identify themselves. It is not something for others to impose on them.

The identity of multiracial people is ambiguous because, in one of their races, they are not accepted. In other races, they are also not accepted, so they give birth to a new existence, namely multiracial America. This also influences the flow of popular literature, especially in the United States. Netflix, as one of the leading media entertainment industries most of the time, reveals societal issues to the public. One of the very well-accepted series on Netflix is *Ginny and Georgia* (2021). IMDb.com provided a review of the film, stating that "Netflix's *Ginny & Georgia* has made the topic of racial identity and discrimination a focus in both of its seasons." This review was also supported by another review by TeenVogue.com (2021), which said: "In this op-ed, writer Stitch unpacks Netflix's mother-daughter drama *Ginny & Georgia* and how it

tackles racism and microaggressions against its heroine." Another review that strengthens that the *Ginny & Georgia* film series raises the issue of racism is from screenrant.com (2022), which says, "*Ginny & Georgia* has dramatically improved its approach to representing racial identity and racism."

In this film, multiracial America is represented by the character Ginny. Ginny was born into two different racial marriages, where the mother is a white woman, while the father is a black man who lives in the United States. So, Ginny was born with a different skin colour, but people often perceived Ginny as black. Because of that, Ginny accepted some unfair treatment that Ginny felt, such as at school and in society; even among black people, Ginny felt discriminated against.

The film *Ginny & Georgia* also has won several awards at prestigious film events in the United States, including the Joey Awards Best Recurring Performer Portraying a Male in a Television Show 5-10 Years, IMDbPro Top 200 Most Popular TV Titles 2020-2021, 2021 Nominee MTV Movie + TV Award Breakthrough Performance Antonia Gentry. For that reason, this research examines this problem (racism towards multiracial people) by analyzing it using the intrinsic approach theory level of racism by Camara P Jones (2000).

Several previous studies related to the issues in this study include; the first is Guerrero (2023) "Mixedness Comes of Age: Learning from Multiracial Portrayals in Young Adult TV Series." In this study, highlighting multiracial representation on television has received little attention in research and scholarship. Therefore, this journal examines how multiracial characters are

portrayed in the adult and young adult storylines of four TV Series (All American, Charmed, Trinkets, and Dear White Peoples). The data was taken through a close reading of dialogue within the context of larger story act, this study identify and critique common tropes in order to further multiracial literacy and inform pedagogical practice in the classroom. The results of this study highlight the need for more deliberate considerations when constructing multiracial characters on TV so that their representation achieves the full potential of multi-racial representation.

The second is Teresa Maria Diviacchi (2020) *New people: 21st century multiracial characters challenge the black/white binary*. The study explores the representation of multiracial characters in literature, focusing specifically on the works of Danzy Senna (*new people*) and Heidi K. Durrow (*The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*). In this study argues that these characters challenge the Black/White binary and offer a new perspective on racial identities. The author emphasizes the importance of words and labels in shaping social and political relations, and highlights the need to reevaluate cultural values and let go of labels in order to create a more inclusive society. The result of this study reveal concept of "unhomeliness" referring to the idea that Blackness can be seen as a home for Black/White characters who are navigating geographical, cultural, and familial displacement.

The third works Vincent, H. (2019) *Seeing Me in the Story: Representation of Multiracial Characters in Multimedia*. In this study, the author finds three multiracial characters in various forms of media set in the United States: Lincoln

Clay from the videogame Mafia III, Lara Jean Covey from the film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, and Miles Morales from *Ultimate Comics: Spider-Man*. The author as a student affairs professional and multiracial individual, the author uses current literature on the multiracial experience in the United States and theories of multiracial identity development from his field as a lens to analyze these characters and how the author see aspects of the author's identity in them in a story. The result is Clay, Covey, and Morales represent three narratives of multiracial experience. One theme among these stories is the disregard for multiracial identities. Clay's situation makes sense given the historical setting of *Mafia III*, but the decision not to elevate Covey's multiracial identity and downplay the importance and generality of Morales' multiracial identity feels odd.

The difference between this research and previous research is that some of the previous research only focuses on the representation of multiracial identities in the characters in literary works. In contrast, this research tries to reveal forms of unfair treatment and discrimination and the impact caused by discrimination experienced by the main character as a multiracial person. In addition, the research object is also different from several previous studies; this research uses the object of research of the Netflix series *Ginny & Georgia* by Sarah Lampert.

Based on the explanation, this study raised the title "**The Existence of Multiracial Americans as Reflected Through Ginny's Character in Sarah Lampert's *Ginny and Georgia* Netflix Series (2021)**". This study analyzes the

forms of racial discrimination received by a multiracial Ginny's character in the film *Ginny and Georgia Netflix Series*.

## 1.2 Statement of Problems

The film is a work of imaginative fiction; however, it is a depiction of real life. So, films can reveal the reality of issues or phenomena that occur in social life. It is like what happened in the *Netflix Series Ginny and Georgia*, which might be a reflection of real life because it reveals the issue of discrimination that leads to multiracial people. This study focuses on finding out the following questions related to the problem of multiracial discrimination experienced by the main character in the film *Ginny and Georgia*:

1. What kind of racism is undergone by Ginny's character in *Ginny and Georgia*, directed by Sarah Lampert, related to the multiracial issue?
2. How is the impact of discrimination revealed on Ginny's character in the film *Ginny and Georgia*, directed by Sarah Lampert?

## 1.3 Research Objective

This study set out several goals to help readers of this research; the research objectives based on the problem formulation are:

1. To find out what kind of racism is undergone by Ginny's character in *Ginny and Georgia*, directed by Sarah Lampert, related to the multiracial issue.
2. To identify the impact of discrimination revealed on Ginny's character in the film *Ginny and Georgia*, directed by Sarah Lampert.

## 1.4 Research Significances

The purpose of this study is to provide knowledge about racial discrimination.

Furthermore, there are some expected benefits from this research:

### 1. Theoretical Significance

- a) The significance of this research is to add insight into the impact of racial discrimination and is intended for readers, critics, and especially English literature Students. The reader gains awareness of "racial discrimination" as well as prejudice against those who are racial minorities who are discriminated against as a result of this issue.
- b) This research is helpful for English Literature Students. It can give more knowledge and understanding of character analysis and the methods used to examine the object.

### 2. Practice Significance

In particular, this research can be used as a reference for individuals interested in research in the same field but with different components.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Term

- **Film:** Film refers to one of the mass communication media that displays a series of moving images with a storyline played by the actors produced to convey a message to the audience.
- **Multiracial:** Multiracial are people born to parents of different racial backgrounds.



- **Racism:** racism refers to the system of belief or doctrine states that biological differences attached to the human race, where a certain race is superior and have the right to set that other so human always consider class, group, religion, or race right, the most powerful, and the others are considered low.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination refers to prejudice or behavior that differentiates someone simply because he or she comes from a social identity (religion, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation).

