



The acceptance towards Asian in American society as reflected in “Driveways” movie

Rinaldi Gazali¹, Muhammad Hafiz Kurniawan², Kasiyarno³

^{1,2,3} English Literature, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta, 55191, Indonesia

¹ rinaldi1800026140@webmail.uad.ac.id *; ² muhammad.kurniawan@enlitera.uad.ac.id

*Correspondent email author: rinaldi1800026140@webmail.uad.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords:
Acceptance
Asian
American
Society
The Driveways

This study aims to find out how the character interactions reflect the acceptance towards Asian American in American society as seen in *the Driveways*. The methodology used in this study is qualitative method using a descriptive approach. The data source of this study is taken from the character interactions in *The Driveways* film. The data from Driveways will be analyzed by watching the film repeatedly. The data were collected in the form of short conversation, long conversation and body gestures between characters. Theory of representation and theory of social interaction are used in this study to analyze data. There are three social interactions reflect the acceptance toward Asian in American society. Those are Intergeneration relation, neighborhood integration, and shared empathy.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



1. Introduction

The term “Asian American” refers to American of Asian ancestry, including naturalized Americans who are immigrants from specific regions in Asia and descendants of such immigrants. The Asian American population is diverse, with people tracing their roots to more than 20 centuries in east and southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, each with unique histories, cultures, languages, and other characteristics. The three largest Asian groups in the United States are those who self-identity as Chinese, Indian, or Filipino ancestry, but no one ethnicity makes up a majority. Some Asian Americans are descendants of immigrants who came to the United States in the nineteenth century but all Asian American risk being perceived as foreigners and alien to their land of birth (Lee, 2015).

The term “Asian” by the United States Census Bureau only includes people with origins or ancestry from far east, southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent and excludes people with ethnic origins in certain parts of Asia, including west Asia, who are now categorized as Middle Eastern Americans. The term “Asian American” is an umbrella term for dozens of ethnic groups of Asian descent and was first used in 1968 by University of California Berkeley graduate students as the name of an organization aimed at uniting Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Filipino Americans, among others, to fight for political and social action.

Asian American is struggling against social phenomenon “Asian Hate” in American society even though their role is really important in America. Even quoted from Washington Post that racism acts towards Asian have already existed since several centuries ago, since the time Asian came to America for better life. As Asian Americans pushed for greater acceptance, they began to get it after World War II, largely because the United States wanted to protect its image as a world power. But this didn’t happen until after more than 120,000 Japanese residents — with the majority being U.S.

citizens were forced into internment camps for four years following the 1941 Pearl Harbor bombing out of fear these individuals were working against the United States (Dudenhoefer, 2021).

Asian is continuously fighting against those kinds of racisms even until today. There are so many medias used by Asian as resistance symbol against racism, like songs, writings, films, etc. This research is focusing on film as the resistance of Asian against racism, and also as media to convey to the society about discrimination faced by Asian in America society, for film is one of medias that effectively to convey this social issue to the society even to the world.

Since the development and popularization of film and cinema industry in the early 20th century, film industry has been giving a profound impact on popular culture and society. When considering films like *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), Marvel Universe films like *Avenger: Endgame* (2019), and many others, it is clear how impactful films have been on their generation's popular culture and even beyond. But filmmakers haven't only just shaped our society's pop-culture. Since its popularization, filmmakers have used cinema as a means to address and change major social, ethical, and political issues in our lives. Cinema is an artistic medium with the capability to communicate social issues by appealing to the emotions of its viewers (Newton, 2022).

To convey the social issues, film is one of the most effective medium. Film is a remarkably effective medium in conveying drama and especially in the evocation of emotion. The art of motion pictures is exceedingly complex, requiring contributions from nearly all the other arts as well as countless technical skills (for example, in sound recording, photography, and optics). Emerging at the end of the 19th century, this new art form became one of the most popular and influential media of the 20th century and beyond (Newton, 2022).

As a commercial venture, offering fictional narratives to large audiences in theatres, film was quickly recognized as perhaps the first truly mass form of entertainment. Without losing its broad appeal, the medium also developed as a means of artistic expression in such areas as acting, directing, screenwriting, cinematography, costume and set design, and music.

Film can be a powerful medium to convey social conditions and issues. They can entertain, educate, or explore critical social issues. A film also can be really powerful in term of social impact. Films can have a significant impact on society, particularly in conveying social issues. Here are some ways in which films can influence and shape public opinion on social issues;

Identification with characters: Films are the only art form that allows us to identify with the characters on an emotional level. We see them as people struggling with real problems and facing real challenges. We live vicariously through them and find our fears, desires, hopes, and aspirations. Consequently, films can influence public opinion on social issues and change how we perceive ourselves – and sometimes even how we feel about ourselves.

Reaching a wide audience: Films can be used to reach a wide audience, to inform and inspire change through engaging audiences and reflecting society. They can highlight social issues from economic and environmental justice, women's health, and violence against women, worker rights, homelessness, discrimination and poverty to all forms of human rights abuses. Good films can raise awareness and be a start to addressing local and global issues. They can educate about cultures, and give a broader political, religious, or social context.

Creating empathy: Films can result in their viewers extending empathy and compassion to strangers simply by focusing on impactful moments of the human experience that bring us all together. Filmmaking that spotlights a social issue is most effective when viewers are allowed into the inner worlds of the people behind the organizations leading social movements. Behind every movement and social issue are people fighting and being impacted daily by this social struggle. After watching a film that focuses on the real human beings impacted by social issues, audience members will hopefully call upon this knowledge in future.

Reflecting society: Cinema is a reflection of society, and it helps us come face to face with the reality of what's happening in our society. It portrays things as they are and helps in opening our eyes to problems, we may have well unnoticed in the past. Similarly, it helps individuals socialize better. It connects people and helps break the ice.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Stuart Hall Representation Theory

According to Hall, “Representation links meaning and language to culture (Hall, 1997: 15)”. Hall also stated that “Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully to other people (Hall, 1997)”. Moreover, “representation is an important aspect of the process by which meaning is ~~produced~~created and exchanged between members of a culture. Representation does involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things (Hall, 1997: 15)”. Furthermore, Hall also cited from the shorter Oxford English Dictionary about the meaning of representation. The first, to represent something ~~is to mean~~to depict or to describe ~~or to depict~~ it, to ~~call~~bring it ~~up in~~to the mind by ~~description or imagination~~, portrayal or ~~imagination~~description; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind or in the senses; as, for example, in the sentence, ‘this picture represents the murder of Abel by Cain’. The second, to represent also means to stand for, to symbolize, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for; as in the sentence, ‘in Christianity, the cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ’.

Hall also elaborated; “If you put down a glass you are holding and walk out of the room, you can still think about the glass, even though it is no longer physically there. Actually, you can not think with a glass. You can only think with the concept of the glass. As the linguists are fond of saying, ‘Dogs bark. But the concept of “dog” can not bark or bite.’ You can not speak with the actual glass, either. You can only speak with the word of glass, “glass” which is the linguistic sign which we use in English to refer to object which you drink water out of. This is where representation comes in. Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our mind through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the real-world objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events (Hall, 1997: 17). Representation implies utilising language to meaningfully express something about, or to represent, the world to other people (Hall, 1997)”. Furthermore, Hall stated that the concept of representation connects meaning and language to culture. As a result, language is used to represent the world.

According to Hall, there are two processes, two systems of representation. The first one is Mental representation. Mental representation is the system by which all sorts of objects, events and people are correlated with a set of concepts which we carry around in our heads. Without them, we could not interpret the world meaningfully at all. Then, meaning depends on the system of concepts and images formed in our thoughts which can stand for or ‘represent’ the world, enabling us to refer to things both inside and outside our heads (Hall, 1997: 17-18).

The second system of representation is language. Language played an important role in the overall process of meaning construction. Our shared conceptual map must be translated into a common language, so that we are able to correlate our concepts and ideas with some specific written words, spoken sounds or visual images. The universal term we use for sounds, images or words which carry meaning is sign. These signs stand for or represent the concepts and conceptual relations between them which we carry about in our thoughts and together they make up the meaning-systems of our culture (Hall, 1997: 18).

Signs are organized into languages and it is the existence of common languages which enable us to translate our thoughts (concepts) into words, sounds or intonages, and then to use these, operating as a language, to express meanings and communicate thoughts to other people. Remember that the term ‘language’ is being used here in a very broad and inclusive way. The writing system of a particular language are both obviously languages, but so are visual images, whether produced by hand, mechanical, electronic, digital or some other means, when they are used to express meaning. And so are other things which are not ‘linguistic’ in any ordinary sense: the face or of gesture, for example, or the language of fashion, of clothes, or of traffic lights. Even music is a language (Hall, 1997: 18). With complex relation between different sounds and chords, though it is a very special case since it can not easily be used to reference actual things or objects in the world. Any sound, word, image or object which functions as a sign, and is organized with other signs into a system which is capable of carrying and expressing meaning is, from this point of view, ‘a language’.

Based on the previously explanation about the theory of representation by Stuart Hall, accordingly this theory applied to analyze how the representation of Asian as seen on Asian characters in the 'Driveways' movie.

2.1. Herbert Blumer Social Interaction Theory

According to Blumer, Group life necessarily presupposes interaction between the group members; or, put otherwise, a society consists of individuals interacting with one another (Blumer, 1969: 7). Social interaction is a process that forms human conduct instead of being merely a means or a setting for the expression or release of human conduct. Put simply, human beings in interacting with one another have to take account of what each other is doing or is about to do; they are forced to direct their own conduct or handle their situation in terms of what they take into account. Thus, the activities of others enter as positive factors in the formation of their own conduct; in the face of the actions of others one may abandon an intention or purpose, revise it, check or suspend it, intensify it, or replace it. The actions of others enter to set what one plans to do, may oppose or prevent such plans, may require a revision of such plans, and may demand a very different set of such plans. One has to fit one's own line of activity in some manner to the actions of others. The actions of others have to be taken into account and cannot be regarded as merely an arena for the expression of what one is disposed to do or sets out to do (Blumer, 1998: 8). There are two forms or levels of social interaction in human society. He refers to them respectively as "the conversation of gestures" and the use of significant symbols". It is called "non-symbolic interaction" and "symbolic interaction". Non-symbolic interaction takes place when one responds directly to the action of another without interpreting that action. Non-symbolic is most readily apparent in reflex responses. Whereas, symbolic interaction involves interpretation of the action (Blumer, 1998: 8).

Symbolic interaction is a presentation of gestures and a response to the meaning of those gestures. A gesture is any part of aspect of ongoing action that signifies the larger act of which it is a part-for example, the shaking of a fist as an indication of a possible attack, or declaration of war by a nation as an indication of a posture and line of action of that nation. Such things as requests, orders, commands, cues, and declarations are gestures that convey to the person who recognizes them an idea of the intention and plan of forthcoming action of the individual who presents them. The person who responds organizes his response on the basis of what the gestures mean to him; the person who prevents the gestures advances them as indications or signs of what he is planning to do as well as of what he wants the respondent to do or understand. Thus, gesture has meaning for both the person who makes it and for the person to whom it is directed. When the gesture has the same meaning for both, the two parties understand each other. From this brief account it can be seen that the meaning of the gesture flows out along three lines: it signifies what the person to whom it is directed is to do; it signifies what the person who is making the gesture plans to do; and it signifies the joint action that is to arise by the articulation of the acts of both (Blumer, 1998: 9). As the explanation of social interaction theory by Herbert Blumer matches the topic of this research, as a result this theory is used to analyze how the character interactions reflect the acceptance towards Asian in American society as reflected in 'Driveways' movie.

3. Method

Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2018).

According to Helen Kara, "Data can also be described as primary data, which you collect specifically for your research project". In this study, the researcher uses "Driveways" film as the primary data. Furthermore, the researcher needs any supporting data as a cornerstone of the metadata. "The secondary data for research project is collected by someone else for another purpose and then made available for re-use" (Kara, 2013). The supporting data also can help the researcher analyzing the main issue. Furthermore, the researcher gathers the secondary data from the articles related to the

main topic of the research. The secondary data will be collected from Books, Journals, and articles related to the discussion of this research.

In this study, there are several methods and techniques in collecting data using pictures, dialogues, and actions are used as objects to be analyzed. This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods to arrange this paper, moreover the researcher's perspective will be used in analyzing the data. There several steps to collect the data of this research. Watching the *Driveways* (2019) film as the main data Selecting the data coming from scenes in the *Driveways* (2019) film that relates to the main issue about the acceptance towards Asian in American society. Classifying and analyzing the data according to the theory used by researcher.

In analyzing the data, the researcher watches the "*Driveways*" (2019) film several times and take some notes related to the main discussion in this research about the acceptance towards Asians in American society based on character interactions as seen in *Driveways* movie. Then, the researcher analyzes those data using some relevant theories. Representation theory by Stuart Hall and social interaction theory by Herbert Blumer will be employed in this research. *Driveways* is an American drama film produced in 2019 by Maven Pictures, and directed by Andrew Ahn who is a Korean-American director. *Driveways* was starred by Hong Chau, Lucas Jaye, and Brian Dennehy. The film was set in USA to describe how Asian American lives their life among the society in which racism is still matter.

The film is the adaptation from an original screenplay by playwrights Hannah Bos and Paul Thureen. The film was showed for the first time in world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival on February 10, and its American Premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival on April 30, 2020. The film tells a story about a lonesome boy accompanies his mother on a trip to clean out his late aunt's house, and ends up forming an unexpected friendship with the retiree who lives next door named Del, a Korean War Veteran. The boy, who is eight years old boy named Cody. The story takes place over a still summer in a small New York town.

The film has been praised for its understated yet powerful character study, anchored in fundamental decency and serving as poignant farewell to Brian Dennehy, who delivers a warm and weary performance in one of his final roles. *Driveways* explores themes of decline, loss, regret, and letting go, without resorting to obvious political points, and instead focuses on the gentle rhythms of everyday life and the small acts of kindness that can bring people together. The film's runtime is 83 minutes, and it has received critical acclaim, holding a 99% approval rating on rotten tomatoes and a weighted average score of 83 out of 100 on metacritic, indicating "universal acclaim". The story begins with a car pulls up to a dark house in residential neighborhood of upstate New York at late one summer night. Kathy and her son Cody come to the house with their sleeping bags. They find the house empty and no electricity, so that they leave for a nearby hotel. Del, an elderly widower of Korean war veteran next door, watches them from his upstairs window of his house.

Kathy contacts the electric company the next morning to get electricity restored to her recently deceased older sister April's house, Kathy has come to pact it up and sell it. April owes the power company \$900; she discovers. When they return to the house, they discover that April is a hoarder.

Cody goes outside and attempts to sip water from a hose. Del notices him from his porch and order him to turn the tap the other way, which Cody does, drenching his clothing. Kathy notices this and suspects Cody has bothered Del. She explains her precense and informs Del that she does not allow her kid to speak to strangers. However, when Kathy discovers that Del's ride to a local veterans' event has not arrived, she drives him to the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) lodge while whinnying about the power bill. When Kathy and Cody return to April's house the next day, they discover that Del has stretched an extension line from his house to theirs across the driveway. Kathy and Cody then go to Charlene, a local realtor, to list the house. Kathy is hesitant to take Charlene on a walk-through, but after Charlene informs her that the house does not need to be presentable, Kathy agrees. Charlene understands why Kathy has reservations after seeing the inside.

That night at the motel, Cody inquires about April, whom she had not met in person because April was 12 years older. Cody meets two other neighbourhood kids the next day while cleaning some furniture in the driveway. Cody also notices Brandon and Reese impersonating professional wrestlers.

Linda, the boys' grandma, approaches Kathy outside. Linda describes April as a sweet woman who didn't want anyone in the house.

Kathy and Cody leave the motel and begin sleeping in their house. Del assists Cody in burying a deceased pet and accompanies him to bingo at the VFW. Linda volunteers to keep Cody one day while Kathy runs some errands, but he does not share Brandon and Reese's enthusiasm of wrestling and vomits instead of wrestling them. He bolts from Linda's residence. Del notices him and recalls how he, too, vomited as a young man aboard a troop ship bound for the Korean War. Cody then spends more time with the calmer Del. Kathy eventually cleans up her house enough to live in it and holds a yard sale. She offers to Cody that instead of selling the house, they move into it, which he agrees with. At the same time, Del's daughter, a judge in Seattle, informs him that a nursing home near her has space available.

Cody invites Del and the other neighbourhood kids to his birthday party at a nearby roller rink; when Del is the only one who shows up, the party is moved to the VFW lodge and celebrated with Del's buddies. Cody informs Del that he and his mother are preparing to relocate, and Del informs Cody that he will relocate to be closer to his daughter and her wife. Del and Cody have a final talk on his porch on the day he moves out. Kathy, according to Cody, informed him they may still make the long drive to see Del. Del makes a joke about Cody hitchhiking across the country, which prompts Del to reminisce a similar hitchhiking trip he had with a friend after leaving the Army, and dwell on how many years have passed so quickly, but how he would not alter much of it (Wilkinson, 2020).

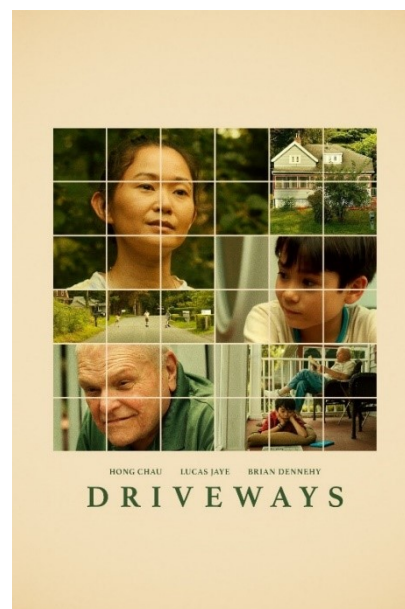


Figure 1. Driveways Movie Poster

Source: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9318280/>

4. Result and Discussion

Towards the end of the 19th century, the United States was being 'aggressively' incorporated by many racial minorities into its national life. Most of them came from Southeast Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Latin America and Africa. Although the Chinese Exclusion Acts were officially repealed in 1943, discriminatory behavior and hate crimes are still often committed especially against those from racial minorities, especially those from Asia. This behavior then became an act of propaganda carried out by white people known as "Xenophobia". Xenophobia is a term that explains the fear of foreigners, where they consider that their nation is superior. Xenophobia is a term that explains the fear of foreigners, where they consider that their nation is superior, which results in the desire to reject the presence of immigrants from their community because they are considered to be detrimental (Lee, 2019).

Driveways did not rely on stereotypes to define Asian American characters. In the Driveways 2019 film, Asian Americans are presented just like other people that they faced some problems and also found their happiness. Kathy and her son Cody as Asian American based on the film, they are portrayed as an ordinary family struggling with universal themes such as loneliness, grief, and the search for belonging. The film also portrayed Asian American as multifaceted individuals.

Kathy is central to the story of the 2019 film “Driveways”. She is a single mother to her eight-year-old son Cody, with all her own complexities life. Throughout the film, Kathy is depicted as a hardworking and caring mother. She is a compassionate mother, yet sometimes she is reserved woman who is burdened by her conditions. She is the representation of a strong and positive women of Asian American. Eventhough so many problems she faced,

Kathy as a single Asian American parent was represented as a resilient character. She reflects the struggles many single parents face, such as balancing act between work and parenting, financial pressure, and emotional burden. The film shows that Kathy can manage all the challenges with strength and patient, without over-dramatizing her situation that she experienced with her son Cody.

Cody is depicted as a quiet, introverted, and highly sensitive child. He prefers isolation to large social settings and is uncomfortable among other youngsters, as seen by his refusal to socialize at a neighbouring birthday celebration. This calm, introspective personality is uncommon in media depictions of adolescent Asian American guys, who are frequently characterized as academically focused or socially awkward. Instead, Cody’s persona is compassionate and intellectual, and his introversion is viewed as a virtue rather than a weakness.

Cody’s quiet character is a way for him to digest the world around him. The film does not rush Cody’s character development or force him to follow a narrative of social improvement. His interactions demonstrate how an introverted child can form deep and meaningful relationships on their own way, especially the interaction with his elderly neighbor Del. Cody’s growing friendship with Del shows his empathy and understanding, portraying a rich emotional world beneath his shy demeanor.

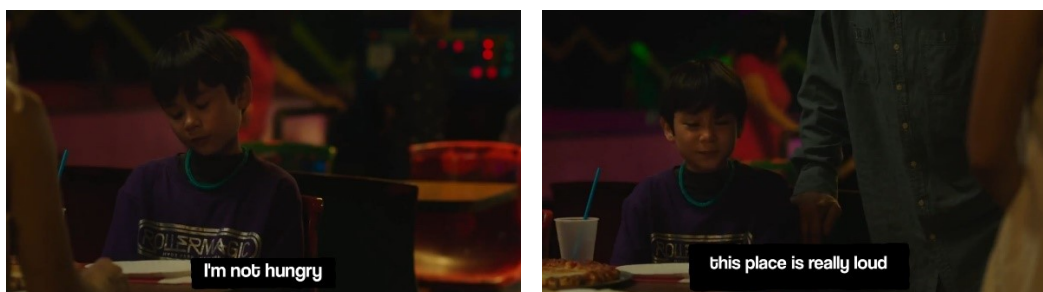


Figure 2. Scenes when cody is feeling uncomfortable because the place is really loud

Source: *Screenshot Driveways film*

In the scenes from both pictures in Fig. 2 Cody is uncomfortable to be in that busy and loud place. He tells his mother and dell about his feeling; accordingly, Kathy and Dell take him to other places that Cody is not bothered. Based on the scenes, Cody is depicted as an introverted boy who likes to be in a calm and quiet place rather than loud place. Cody is clearly the representation of an intorverted Asian American boy.

The acceptance towards Asian on Driveways reflected in some character interactions as below: **Intergeneration relation**, As what is described in the Driveways that Kathy and Cody truly beware in interacting with others and they tend to keep themselves from strangers. However, certain people are able to build good relationship with Kathy and Cody as Asian. The reflection of acceptance is described on how Kathy and Cody as Asians are accepted by Dell and his friends as American with all their good interactions. In the Driveways 2019 movie, Dell with his fellow Korean War veterans has a good relation with Kathy and Cody as Asian American.

One of the central interactions in the film is the friendship between Cody and Dell. Cody, a young Asian American boy, and Dell, an elderly American veteran from Korean War. Cody and Dell

friendship in the Driveways is the reflection of the acceptance of Asian American. their relationship represents a breaking down of generational and cultural barrier. Del's initial curiosity and eventual warmth toward Cody and his mother, Kathy, is the representation of acceptance and embrace of difference. Their interaction challenges prejudices and demonstrates how personal connection can bridge cultural boundaries.



Figure 3. The scenes when Del interacts with Cody for the first time, that Del tells Cody the right way to use the water faucet.

Source: Screenshoot Driveways film

Based on the movie, Dell is the one who interacts with cody for the first time. When Dell is sitting on his house's porch waiting for his fellow korean war veteran to pick him up, he sees Cody that is turning the water faucet in wrong direction, for that reason Dell tells cody the right way to turn the water faucet. Dell makes a good first impression to Cody. Consequently, on other scenes Cody starts to open interaction with Dell.

As Dell and Cody friendship isn getting closer, on the other occasion Cody invites Dell to come to his birthday. Dell comes to congratulate Cody and give him a gift.



Figure 4. The scene when Del is invited to come to celebrate Cody's birthday

Source: Screenshoot Driveways film

- | | |
|-------|--|
| Kathy | : "Hey" |
| Cody | : "Del" |
| Del | : "Hey, it's the birthday boy, here you go" (Del gifts Cody a present) |
| Cody | : (Cody gets his present and happy about it, then he shows it to Kathy) |
| Kathy | : "I am so glad to see you, Del" |
| Kathy | : "wow, it's so nice" (the reaction after looking at Del's present for Cody) |
| Cody | : "Thanks, Del" |
| Del | : "Happy birthday, though" |

Based on the scene appeared on Fig 4, Del comes to celebrate Cody's birthday with Cody and Kathy, moreover Del comes with a gift for Cody, and Cody is pretty happy about it that he instantly shows the gift to Kathy and say thanks to Del. Based on the scene, Del relation to Kathy and Cody

trully depicts familiarity and frienship that reflects the acceptance towards Kathy and Cody as Asian among the American society. Moreover, Dell friendship with Cody as an intergeneration relation breaks cultural barrier and reflect the acceptance towards Asian as Kathy and Cody as the representation of Asian among American society. Even on another scene, Del introduces Kathy and Cody to his fellow Korean veteran war, and Kathy and Cody are welcomed by Del's fellow veteran.



Figure 5. The moment when Del introduces Kathy and Cody to his fellow veterans
Source: Screenshoot Driveways film

Neighborhood Integration, The neighbors of Kathy's sister are very welcoming to Kathy. Namely Linda and Dell, there are some scenes that show how they welcome Kathy and Cody. They show no signs limiting interactions with kathy and Cody, even the opposite, they open up interaction. Accordingly, Kathy and Cody feeling accepted in their environment. As seen on the scenes below that how friendly Linda is as a neighbor, and she tries to interact with Kathy and Cody with good gestures.



Figure 6. Linda addresses Kathy and Cody
Source: Screenshoot Driveways film

The scenes when Cody sits alone playing his tab, and then Linda comes to say hi to him, but Cody calls his mom because he is afraid of Linda. Yet Linda addresses Kathy and Cody to say hi

Linda : *"Hi, ya. What are you playing?"*

Cody : (respons by showing his tab)

Linda : *"Cool, how are you?"*

Cody : *"mom"*, (Cody scares and calls his mom Kathy)

Linda : *"No, no, no, don't be scared. I've got two grandkids, 11 and 12 years old. You'll love them"*

Kathy : *"Can I help you?"*

Linda : *"Hi, I'm Linda from next door. I just saw a car out in front, and I just thought I'd come over and say hi"*

Linda : *"I'm sorry to hear about April's passing. I mean I didn't know her know her, but you know, I always tried to be friendly and say hi. And no offense, but she really kept to herself"*

Linda : *"Anyway, are you selling or moving, or what? I just, I assumed you're family"*

- Kathy : *"I'm her sister"*
- Linda : *"Oh, it'd be nice to have young people here. Well, there's a lot of Mexican families that live on the other side of the alley and they've got a lot of big parties"*
- Linda : *"I mean, I'm not being racist or anything, but they have a lot of babies, and right out of high school. So, where are you from?"*
- Kathy : *"Michigan"*
- Linda : *"Michigan? Really?"*
- Kathy : *"I grew up near Grand Rapids, but now Kalamazoo"*
- Linda : *"Get out of the town, we used to live in South Haven. But then we had to sell the house when my husband lost his job in '08s, you know, when everything went to hell, the whole economy"*
- Linda : *"Are you married?"*
- Kathy : *"No"*
- Linda : *"You know, my daughter's a single mom, so I get it. Her husband left her, alcoholic, left her with nothing"*
- Linda : *"Um, can I take a peek inside? after all these years, I never got a chance to look. I mean, April didn't want, you know"*
- Kathy : *"I'm kind of in the middle of stuff"*
- Linda : *"A quick peek?"*
- Kathy : *"Maybe another time."*
- Linda : *"Oh, great, terrific. Well, if you guys need anything, just let me know. All right?"*
- Kathy : *"Thank you, Linda"*
- Linda : *"Tell me your names again?"*
- Kathy : *"Kathy and Cody"*
- Linda : *"Kathy, Cody, right. All right, see ya"*

Symbolic interaction is to interpret each other's gestures and act on the basis of the meaning yielded by the interpretation (Blumer, 1967: 66).

On the scenes based on picture, Linda as a neighbor comes to say hi to Cody, even though Cody is afraid with her at first by calling his mom Kathy, however Linda is able to convince Kathy and Cody that she is not a cruel person, Linda also tell Kathy and Cody that she is a neighbor from the next door, she only wants to be kind and makes some good interactions.

Linda is trying to start interaction with Kathy and Cody in a good manner by addressing them to say hi. She shows good gestures that reflect the acceptance toward Kathy and Cody. Linda also expresses her condolences for the passed of April, Kathy's sister. Moreover, she even introduces her grandson to play with Cody to make them feel more comfortable there.

Shared Empathy, Del's empathy toward Cody, particularly given Del's own experiences with loneliness and loss, creates a space for mutual understanding. This connection is not based on race but on shared human experiences. Symbolically, this interaction highlights how acceptance can stem from recognizing shared vulnerabilities and emotions rather than focusing on differences. Del as a lonely old guy and Cody as an introverted boy, trully gives them shared empathy to care each other. Cody's first impression to Del when he saw Del sits on his porch, makes their relation closer tighter.



Figure 7. Both scenes show that Dell addresses Cody to make sure that Cody is okay

On the scene Cody throws up after playing with Linda's grandchild because he is tired as he is an introverted boy. Del feels empathy and worry to Cody after seeing Cody runs from Linda house. Del comes to make sure that Cody is fine and then Del tells Kathy about the situation happened to Cody. That moment reflect how the acceptance by shared values and empathy.

5. Conclusion

Character interactions that reflect the acceptance of Asian American based on the film, the writer devides the discussion into four parts. The first is neighborhood integration. The neighbors of Kathy's sister are very welcoming to Kathy. Namely Linda and Dell, there are some scenes that show how they welcome Kathy and Cody. They show no signs limiting interactions with kathy and Cody, even the opposite, they open up interaction. Accordingly, Kathy and Cody feeling accepted in their environment. As seen on the scenes below that how friendly Linda is as a neighbor, and she tries to interact with Kathy and Cody with good gestures.

The second is Intergeneration Friendship. One of the central interactions in the film is the friendship between Cody and Dell. Cody, a young Asian American boy, and Dell, an elderly American veteran from Korean War. Cody and Dell frienship in the Driveways is the reflection of the acceptance of Asian American. their relationship represents a breaking down of generational and cultural barrier. Del's initial curiosity and eventual warmth toward Cody and his mother, Kathy, is the representation of acceptance and embrace of difference. Their interaction challenges prejudices and demonstrates how personal connection can bridge cultural boundaries. And the last is shared empathy. Del's empathy toward Cody, particularly given Del's own experiences with loneliness and loss, creates a space for mutual understanding. This connection is not based on race but on shared human experiences. Symbolically, this interaction highlights how acceptance can stem from recognizing shared vulnerabilities and emotions rather than focusing on differences.

6. Acknowledgement

This research is supported by Department of English Literature, Ahmad Dahlan University.

7. References

- Asian American Milestone: Timeline. (2021). History.com Editors. History. <https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/asian-american-timeline>
- Creswell, John W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches*. California: Sage Publication Inc.
- Creswell, John W. (2018). *Research Design*. Fifth, Sage Publications.
- Dudenhoefer, N. (2021, April 29). *A Brief History of Asian American Racism*. University of Central Florida. <https://www.ucf.edu/news/a-brief-history-of-asian-american-racism/>
- Han, Meekyung and Helen Pong. (2015). "Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviors Among Asian American Community College Students: The Effect of Stigma, Cultural Barriers, and Acculturation." *Johns Hopkins University*, vol. 56. no. 1.

- Hall, Stuart. (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publication.
- Herbert Blumer. (1998). *Symbolic Interactionism: perspective and method*. University of California Press.
- Lee, S. M. (2015). Asian immigration and American race-relations: From exclusion to acceptance? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 12(3), 368–390.
- Rizki, Khairur, Ayu Putri Khairunnisa, and Mahmuluddin. (2022). Gerakan stop Asian Hate: sebuah respons rasisme terhadap keturunan Asia di Amerika Serikat. *Indonesian Journal of International Relation*. Universitas Mataram.
- Newton, Lyntoria. (2022). Using Cinema as a Powerful Means of Communication for Social Issues. San Fransisco Film School. <https://www.sanfranciscofilmschool.edu/using-cinema-as-a-powerful-means-of-communication-for-social-issues/>
- Wilkinson, Alissa. (2020). Driveways is a gentle masterpiece. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/culture/2020/5/7/21246669/driveways-review-streaming-dennehy>