

**VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF GRIEF STAGES IN THE LOVELY
BONES: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS ROLAND BARTHES**



A THESIS

**Submitted to Fulfill the Requirements for Obtaining a Bachelor Degree in
Department of Communication at the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural
Sciences, Islamic University of Indonesia**

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YOGYAKARTA**

2024

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It has been approved by the thesis supervisor to be tested and defended before the thesis examiner team.

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It has been defended and approved by the thesis examiner board of the
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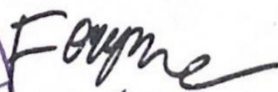
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Sincerely,



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MOTTO

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Then surely with difficulty there is ease

(QS. Al-Inshirah:5)

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Indeed, with difficulty there is ease

(QS. Al-Inshirah:6)

“What grows together, goes together”

—Tina, The Bear

DEDICATION

With gratitude and love, I dedicate this thesis to my beloved family. For Mom and Dad, thank you for all your endless prayers, support, and sacrifices. You are the pillars that support every step of my journey. To my brothers and sisters, thank you for your encouragement and happiness. Without the love and support from all of you, this achievement would not have been possible. This thesis is the result of our hard work and prayers together.

FOREWORD

بسم هلل الرحمن الرحيم.

Assalamu 'alaikum Warrahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

Alhamdulillahirabbil Alamin, all praise and gratitude to the author to Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala who has given us all the blessings of faith and knowledge. Shalawat and salam are always poured out to our lord the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who has become a role model for mankind. In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, all praise belongs only to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions, and his followers until the end of time. Once again, all praise and gratitude go to the presence of Allah SWT for His abundance of grace and grace, so that I can complete this thesis well, a thesis entitled “Visual Representation of Sadness Stage in The Lovely Bones Film: A Roland Barhe Semiotics Analysis)” was prepared as one of the requirements to obtain a Bachelor's degree in the Communication Science Program, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia. Writing this thesis is an important moment in my academic journey, which not only tests my academic abilities, but also trains my patience, perseverance, and integrity.

The process of preparing this thesis is thanks to the grace of Allah SWT which has guided me to complete this journey, inseparable from the help, guidance, and support of various parties who sincerely made their contributions. Therefore, with all humility, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to:

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love and guidance. Hopefully through this simple work, I can make you proud and happy, and become a tangible manifestation of my infinite gratitude.

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6. With gratitude and respect, I dedicate this thesis to Pak De Nano, Bulek Menuk, and Mas Ujik, my second family in Klaten. Thank you for all the support, love, and togetherness that you have given so far. You not only provide shelter and comfort, but also endless enthusiasm and encouragement.

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The author realizes that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, the author really hopes that input and suggestions that can build for better results in the future and with this thesis can provide benefits for many people. Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

Yogyakarta,



Arwika Hanif

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ABSTRACT

Arwika Hanif, 20321276 Visual Representation of Grief Stages In The Lovely Bones: A Semiothic Analysis Roland Barthes Department of Communication, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Studies, Universitas Islam Indonesia. 2024.

This research examines the visual representation of the stages of grief in the film *The Lovely Bones* through the lens of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Through an analysis of Barthes' concepts of denotation, connotation and myth, the research reveals the complex ways in which visual symbols are used to illustrate the stages of grief described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. The research findings show that the movie uses visual elements to illustrate the stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, reflecting the characters' emotional journeys and the universal experience of loss. Beautiful suburban landscapes and bright colors depict denial, while contrasting color palettes and framing techniques represent anger. Nostalgic flashbacks indicate the bargaining stage, unsaturated colors and barren landscapes depict depression, and soft lighting and gentle imagery signify acceptance. These visual elements illustrate the characters' emotional journeys and reflect cultural attitudes toward both loss and healing. This research highlights the power of visual narrative in conveying profound truths about the human condition and the transformative journey of grief. It also emphasizes the importance of mental health support and trauma understanding in the healing process. Overall, this analysis shows that *The Lovely Bones* offers an in-depth visual exploration of the stages of grief, providing insight into the characters' emotional journeys and the broader human experience of resilience in the face of loss.

Keywords: Semiotic Analysis, Stages of Grief, The Lovely Bones, Roland Barthes, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Visual Representation

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Film is a valuable resource for a variety of research endeavors, providing a diverse range of themes, narratives, and visual elements that can be examined through different academic perspectives. Researchers have explored the use of movies in research in areas such as linguistics, computer science, psychology, and economics. For example, research has investigated the analysis of movie dialog and body language to understand directive speech acts (Muhartoyo & Kristani, 2013), assessed the influence of movie reviews on movie success (Singh, 2022), and used machine learning methods to forecast movie performance (Kim et al., 2020). In addition, films have been analyzed based on the use of figurative language (Al-Faruq, 2024), the representation of social issues such as mental health and social inequality (Marsena & Angjaya, 2022), and the portrayal of gender roles (Wijaya & Firmanto, 2021). These analyses offer insights into how films reflect and shape societal norms, values, and perceptions. In addition, researchers have applied semiotic frameworks, such as Roland Barthes' semiotics, to interpret visual and textual components in films, revealing layers of meaning and symbolism (Fitriani, 2023).

Movies are used in research not only for content analysis but also for predictive modeling, sentiment analysis, and profitability forecasting. Several studies have used deep learning techniques for sentiment analysis of movie reviews (Utami et al., 2023), investigated factors affecting movie revenue using regression models (Eklund & Kim, 2022), and predicted box-office performance based on online consumer reviews (Hu et al., 2018). These methodologies demonstrate the variety of approaches used to extract valuable insights from movie data and guide decision-making processes across industries. Film research also extends to the field of sustainability science, where films are used as a tool to disseminate research findings and engage wider audiences (Andersson & Åkerman, 2017). By harnessing the visual and narrative power of film, researchers can increase the reach and impact of their work, driving increased public understanding and awareness of complex sustainability challenges.

Visual representation in movies is a multifaceted and essential aspect that encompasses multiple dimensions such as cultural values, communication, emotion prediction, brain activity, and peacebuilding. Movies serve as a powerful medium for intercultural communication, enabling the dissemination of different cultures and promoting cross-cultural

understanding ("Intercultural Communication and Collision in the Film Industry," 2024). In addition, the visual nature of movies plays a vital role in predicting effects and understanding emotions through multimodal fusion techniques (Thao et al., 2021). This highlights the importance of visual cues in eliciting emotional responses from viewers. Moreover, the representation of cultural values through visual narratives, as seen in the works of filmmakers such as P. Ramlee, exemplifies the application of auteur theory in conveying cultural messages (Zaki & Zainodin, 2020). Analyzing the visual presentation in movie posters shows the importance of photography and illustration in capturing the essence of a movie (Li, 2023). These visual elements not only attract the audience's attention but also convey essential information about the content and style of the movie.

The Lovely Bones (2009), directed by Peter Jackson and based on the novel by Alice Sebold, tells the complicated and emotional journey of a young girl named Susie Salmon who is murdered and observes from the afterlife as her family faces death and the aftermath of the tragedy. The representation of the stages of grief in this movie is in line with the stages of grief proposed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, which include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Throughout the movie, the audience witnesses the characters experiencing these stages in different ways, reflecting the complexity and individuality of the grieving process (Hoyle, 2023). The visual representation of the stages of grief in "*The Lovely Bones*" is a central and poignant theme that is intricately woven into the narrative. The use of visual elements such as color, lighting, and symbolism plays an important role in conveying the emotional depth of the characters' experiences. The film uses a blend of realistic and fantastical visuals to depict the different stages of grief experienced by the characters, thus creating an engaging and visually and emotionally resonant depiction of loss and healing (Dawson et al., 2021). In the context of representing the stages of grief, the film industry has evolved over the years in its depiction of loss and mourning. While earlier films often glossed over or sensationalized grief, contemporary cinema has made progress in presenting more nuanced and realistic depictions of the grieving process. Modern films more openly acknowledge death and explore different aspects of the stages of grief, allowing for a deeper and more authentic exploration of this universal human experience (Sedney, 2002).

In the film "*The Lovely Bones*," directed by Peter Jackson, the themes of grief and loss are sharply explored through the characters' experiences following the murder of Susie Salmon. The psychological framework provided by Komaruddin Hidayat's concept of death and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief provide valuable insights into the emotional journey depicted in the movie.

In understanding the psychology of death, Komaruddin Hidayat's thoughts and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory provide valuable perspectives. Hidayat, in his works, emphasizes the importance of spiritual and psychological understanding in dealing with death. He argues that death is not only the end of life, but also part of the journey towards “Insan Kamil,” a higher spiritual achievement (Nurdin, 2022). Hidayat invites readers to reflect on the meaning of life and death, and how these experiences can shape one's character and spirituality.

Komaruddin Hidayat's work on the psychology of death emphasizes the transformative nature of death and its implications for understanding life. He argues that death is not an endpoint, but rather a transition that can lead individuals to a deeper understanding of existence and spirituality (Nurdin, 2022). This perspective resonates with Susie's character, who, while navigating her afterlife, observes the profound impact of her death on her family and friends. Hidayat's notion of “Insan Kamil” (perfect human) suggests that facing death can lead to personal growth and a deeper appreciation of life, which resonates with the character of Susie's family as they grapple with loss and ultimately seek healing (Rahayu, 2022).

Hidayat's insights on the psychological implications of death align with Kübler-Ross' findings, as both emphasize the importance of facing and understanding one's feelings about death. Hidayat argues that acknowledging death can lead to personal growth and a deeper appreciation of life, which complements the acceptance stage in the Kübler-Ross model (Rahayu, 2022; Herdina, 2013). The interaction between these theories suggests that a holistic approach to grief-which incorporates psychological, emotional and spiritual dimensions-can facilitate healthier coping mechanisms and foster resilience in the face of loss.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stages of grief-denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance-serve as a framework to analyze the emotional responses of the characters in “The Lovely Bones.” Each character embodies different stages of grief throughout the narrative. For example, Susie's father Jack initially experiences denial and anger as he struggles to accept the reality of his daughter's death. His fixation on finding Susie's killer illustrates the anger stage, where he grapples with feelings of helplessness and rage (Pass, 2006). Similarly, Susie's mother Abigail shows signs of depression as she becomes increasingly separated from her family, reflecting the profound impact of her grief (Zeligman & Wood, 2017).

The movie also highlights the non-linear nature of grief, as suggested by recent critiques of the Kübler-Ross model. Research suggests that individuals can oscillate between different stages rather than going through them in a linear fashion (Avis et al., 2021). This is apparent in the movie, where characters frequently revisit previous emotional responses as they deal

with the ongoing reality of their loss. For example, Abigail's journey through grief is characterized by moments of bargaining, where she attempts to regain control of her life and circumstances, only to then be pulled back into despair (Peña-Vargas et al., 2021).

The incorporation of hope as a dynamic aspect of grief, as discussed in research such as that conducted by Chien and Wang, suggests that characters can find meaning and resilience even in the midst of their suffering (Chien & Wang, 2020). The film ultimately depicts a journey towards acceptance, where the characters begin to honor Susie's memory and find ways to live with their grief, reflecting Hidayat's assertion that understanding death can lead to a more meaningful life (Rahayu, 2022).

The use of symbolism in visual storytelling, as seen in "The Lovely Bones," adds layers of meaning to the representation of stages of grief. Symbolism, such as the recurring motif of photographs in the movie, can be a powerful visual metaphor for memory, loss, and the passage of time. These symbolic elements enhance the audience's emotional connection to the characters and their journey through the stages of grief, making the viewing experience more profound and impactful (Bliss, 2008). The concept of hyper-reality, as discussed in Sebold's novel "The Lovely Bones", also influences the visual representation of the stages of grief in the film adaptation. Hyper-reality blurs the boundaries between reality and fantasy, allowing for a heightened emotional experience that transcends the boundaries of traditional storytelling. This blurring of boundaries reflects the complex and often unreal nature of the stages of grief, where the real and the imagined are intertwined in the minds of those who are grieving (Kiaei & Safdari, 2014). In addition, the role of music in enhancing the emotional resonance of representations of the stages of grief cannot be ignored. As is the case in other art forms, music in films such as "The Lovely Bones" serves as a powerful tool to evoke and amplify emotions. The use of music can intensify the audience's connection to the characters' stages of grief, creating a more immersive and emotionally impactful viewing experience. Through carefully chosen soundtracks and musical cues, filmmakers can effectively convey the depth and complexity of the stages of grief on a visceral level (Rietveld, 2016).

Semiotics, as a field of study, involves the analysis of signs and symbols and their interpretation in various contexts. Roland Barthes, an important figure in semiotic analysis, has contributed to understanding how meaning is constructed and conveyed through signs. In the context of visual representation, particularly in analyzing the stages of grief depicted in "The Lovely Bones," applying Barthes' semiotic framework can provide valuable insights into the layers of meaning embedded in visual texts. Barthes' approach to semiotics includes three main perspectives: denotation, connotation, and myth (Lestari et al., 2022). Denotation refers to the

literal or surface-level meaning of the sign, while connotation delves into the deeper symbolic interpretation associated with the sign. The concept of myth, as described by Barthes, goes beyond individual interpretations to encompass broader cultural ideologies and narratives embedded in the sign (Lestari et al., 2022). Using these lenses, researchers can unravel the complexity of visual representations and understand how they communicate ideas and emotions related to the stages of grief in "The Lovely Bones."

Barthes' semiotic analysis is rooted in the idea that signs extend to various forms of communication, including images, gestures, and objects (Nurindra et al., 2020). This broad view allows the researcher to explore how visual elements in the film convey the stages of grief through a nuanced interplay of symbols and meanings. By considering the visual cues, colors, compositions, and expressions used in the film, researchers can decode the semiotics used to represent grief and its progression. Furthermore, Barthes' semiotic framework emphasizes the importance of the analysis of signifiers and signs in uncovering the denotative and connotative meanings of signs (Plalamattom, 2024). This dual approach allows researchers to dissect the explicit representations of the stages of grief in "The Lovely Bones" while exploring the underlying connotations and emotional resonances evoked by these representations. Through this process of analysis, a richer understanding of how visual elements contribute to the depiction of grief can be achieved.

Barthes' semiotic analysis is not limited to the surface level meaning of signs, but also extends to the realm of cultural myths and narratives (Lestari et al., 2022). In the context of analyzing visual representations of the stages of grief, researchers can explore how societal norms, beliefs and values around grief are perpetuated and challenged through visual storytelling. By uncovering the mythic dimensions of grief representations in "The Lovely Bones," researchers can shed light on the broader cultural discourses that shape our understanding of loss and grief. In addition, Barthes' semiotic approach underscores the dynamic nature of meaning-making through signs and symbols. Semiosis, the process of interpreting signs and deriving meaning from them, is the central tenet of semiotic analysis. By conducting a semiotic reading of the visual elements in "The Lovely Bones," researchers can trace the intricate web of meaning constructed through the interaction between the sign, the viewer, and the cultural context. This process explains how visual representations of stages of grief are not fixed, but open to multiple interpretations and readings. By applying Barthes' semiotic framework to the analysis of the visual representation of the stages of grief in the film "The Lovely Bones," the researcher can uncover the layers of meaning embedded in the film's imagery. By examining the denotations, connotations and myths associated with the visual

elements, the researcher was able to decipher how grief is represented and symbolically communicated to the audience. Through nuanced semiotic analysis, a deeper understanding of how visual storytelling conveys complex emotional experiences such as grief can be achieved.

This study will analyze the representation of stages of grief in the film "The Lovely Bones" through Roland Barthes' semiotic framework with a focus on visual denotation and connotation, the use of symbolism, narrative and visual structure, hyper-reality and fantasy, music and soundtrack, myth and cultural narrative, and audience response. By exploring essential visual elements such as color, lighting, setting, and costumes, as well as the deeper symbolic meanings of these elements, this research will identify and interpret recurring symbols in the film, such as motifs of photographs, mirrors, or ships in bottles, that depict stages of grief. The narrative and visual structure of the film will be analyzed to see how elements such as shots, camera angles, and transitions between scenes reinforce the representation of grief. Additionally, this research will explore the use of visual effects and production design in creating a hyper-realistic world that reflects the emotional state of the characters, as well as how music and soundscape support the representation of the stages of grief. The research will also discuss how the film utilizes or challenges existing ideologies and myths associated with grief in society and how audiences respond to and interpret the visual and emotional representations of grief, creating diverse emotional experiences.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

The Lovely Bones presents a visually rich exploration of grief, making it an ideal subject for semiotic analysis using Roland Barthes' framework. Although not a recent movie, its timeless themes of loss and healing continue to resonate with audiences. The film's unique blend of realism and fantasy provides fertile ground for examining how hyperreality and symbolism are used to portray complex emotional experiences. Apart from existing studies on *The Lovely Bones*, this research aims to contribute new insights by focusing on visual storytelling and cultural representations of grief. By analyzing elements such as color, lighting, setting, and recurring symbols, this research seeks to deepen our understanding of how films not only reflect but also influence society's perception of grief. This approach highlights the continued relevance of film and underscores its potential to contribute to a nuanced discourse on the visual representation of grief. Therefore, the research question is:

1. How are stages of grief visually represented in *The Lovely Bones* through Roland Barthes' semiotic theory?

2. How does *The Lovely Bones* engage with or challenge cultural myths and ideologies surrounding grief, and how can the author interpret these visual and emotional representations?

C. RESEARCH PURPOSE

This research aims to analyze the visual representation of the stages of grief in *The Lovely Bones* through Roland Barthes' semiotic theory approach. By examining the signs and symbols interwoven in the narrative, this research seeks to uncover a deeper meaning of the emotional journey in the grieving process. The analysis will utilize Barthes' concepts, such as denotation, connotation, and myth, to understand how visual elements collaborate with the written narrative in shaping the audience's perception of the characters' grief experience. Ultimately, this research will explore how the movie reflects cultural views on loss and the healing process.

D. RESEARCH BENEFITS

1. Academic Benefits

This study has significant academic benefits in expanding the understanding of visual representations in literature and the grief process. By applying Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, this research can not only provides insights into the complexity of emotions and stages of grief depicted in the novel "The Lovely Bones" but also provide a deep understanding of how visual symbols describe the experience. This semiotic analysis can also contribute to literary research by exploring the relationship between verbal texts and visual representations and offering a new perspective in understanding the interaction between different media in conveying the same message.

2. Practical Benefits

This research has practical benefits that can be applied in various contexts. By conducting a semiotic analysis of the visual representations in the film "The Lovely Bones," this research can provide valuable insights for professionals in the fields of Communication, Psychology, counseling, and psychotherapy, aiding their understanding of the stages of grief and the healing journey that grieving individuals may experience. In addition, this research can also be a source of inspiration for visual arts practitioners and filmmakers, assisting them in creating more immersive and empathic visual narratives

about the experience of loss and grief. Thus, this research has academic value and provides practical benefits that can be applied in various professional fields.

E. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Previous Research

- a. Psychopath and the Role of Grief of Losing in The Lovely Bones Novel by Alice Sebold (2002)

Conducted by Rahcmawati from Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, this research explores a psychoanalytic approach grounded in Carl Gustav Jung's theoretical framework. It focuses mainly on concepts such as ego, collective unconscious, persona, and shadow to analyze the mental health of Harvey's character in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*. This research identifies Harvey as a psychopath characterized by a lack of empathy, remorse, and violent tendencies, which are influenced by his childhood experiences and significant figures in his life, especially his mother. In addition, this study explores the stages of grief in the novel using Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' theory, highlighting the various expressions of grief among different characters. While some characters, such as Jack Salmon and Lindsey, express their grief in conventional ways, others, such as Susie's mother, exhibit unconventional behavior. The most profound stages of grief are observed in Jack and Lindsey, with Jack going into a deep depression and Lindsey showing strong determination in seeking justice for her sister.

- b. Jack Salmon's Stages of Grief in Accepting Susie's Death as Seen in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*

Several previous studies have been conducted to analyze the representations of changes in the behavior of the Salmon family in the film "The Lovely Bones" using Roland Barthes's semiotic approach and Dr. Kübler-Ross's theory of the five stages of grief. One relevant study is by Oksa Hidayat, conducted in 2018, titled "Jack Salmon's Stages of Grief in Accepting Susie's Death as Seen in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*". This study aims to analyze the stages of grief experienced by Jack Salmon in accepting the death of his daughter Susie using Dr. Kübler-Ross's theory of the five stages of grief. The research employs qualitative descriptive analysis methods to

analyze data from the novel. The results showed that Jack Salmon experienced different stages of grief in accepting his daughter's death. At first, he experienced denial and could not accept the fact that his daughter had died. Subsequently, he experienced anger and the desire to search for his daughter's murderer.

The next stage is bargaining, during which Jack tries to figure out how to repair his relationship with his wife and surviving daughter. After that, he experienced deep depression and sadness, and finally accepted the fact that his daughter had passed away. The study also showed that outside factors such as the support of family and friends, as well as the drive to solve his daughter's murder case, had an effect on the stages of grief experienced by Jack. Researchers concluded that the representation of Jack Salmon's stages of grief in the novel "The Lovely Bones" reflects Dr. Kübler-Ross's concept of five stages of grief. Although everyone experiences the stages of grief in different ways, they eventually make it through the grief process and begin the recovery process. This research contributes to understanding the stages of one's grief in accepting the death of a loved one, as well as the factors that can influence the grief process.

c. Representation of the 5 Stages of Grief of the Character Kusunoki in the Manga *Jumyou wo Kaitotte Moratta Ichinen ni Tsuki, Ichimanen de* by Miaki Suguru

A study conducted by Febriansya Aji Laksana in 2019, titled 'Representation of the 5 Stages of Grief in the Character Kusunoki in the Manga *Jumyou wo Kaitotte Moratta Ichinen ni Tsuki, Ichimanen de* by Miaki Suguru,' aims to analyze the depiction of grief stages experienced by the character Kusunoki. This study aims to analyze the representation of the 5 stages of grief experienced by the character Kusunoki in the manga using the theory of the 5 stages of grief of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. This research uses a descriptive method of qualitative analysis with documentation techniques. The data used are excerpts from dialogues spoken by Kusunoki's character in the manga. The results showed that Kusunoki experienced 5 stages of grief, namely denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The stages of denial are shown when Kusunoki is unable to accept the fact that his girlfriend, Senri, has passed away. Kusunoki tends to ignore the facts that show that Senri no longer exists.

The stage of anger is shown when Kusunoki feels very angry and disappointed over the incident that happened to Senri. He resents the situation and perceives his life as unjust. The bargaining stage is shown when Kusunoki attempts to bid with God to return Senri. Kusunoki felt that God should have given Senri the opportunity to live longer. The stage of depression is shown when Kusunoki feels very sad and depressed due to the loss of Senri. He felt that he had lost his way in life and didn't know what to do. The stage of acceptance is shown when Kusunoki is finally able to accept the fact that Senri has passed away. He realizes that he must continue his life without Senri present, but still keeps memories of Senri in his heart. The study concluded that the representation of the 5 stages of grief in the manga "Jumyou wo Kaitotte Moratta. Ichinen ni Tsuki, Ichimanen de" reflects the concept of the 5 stages of grief of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Researchers also point out that factors such as social support and belief in God influence the stages of grief experienced by Kusunoki.

d. The Portrayal of Women in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*

The research, written by Muzliya Pertiwi from the State Islamic University of Malang, discusses how Sebold portrays female characters in her novels and how this affects how readers perceive women in society. An in-depth analysis was done on the main character, Susie Salmon, and her mother, Abigail Salmon. Susie is described as a passionate girl with big dreams for her future. However, her life was cut short by a tragic death. In the afterlife, Susie tries to understand the feelings of those around her and how they react to death and loss. Abigail, Susie's mother, also experienced a significant change in her life after losing her son. She is forced to move on with her life and take care of her family, even though she is in deep grief. She showed strength and determination in the face of difficult obstacles.

The author points out that the female characters in the novel are very complex and have a significant role in the story. They are described as strong and resilient individuals who can persevere in the face of adversity and trauma. However, they also show fragility and uncertainty under challenging circumstances. In its conclusion, this journal illustrates that Sebold portrays women as passionate, intense, and challenging characters with a fragile side. This strong characterization illustrates the importance of

women's role in society and how they can overcome difficulties in their lives. The study demonstrates, the author shows that Sebold gave a positive picture of women and their strength through these female characters.

e. Jack Salmon's Grief on Susie's Death in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*

In previous research written by Shofi Zayyana Ashari Indrarti, it is discussed that the death of a loved one is a traumatic event that can cause significant emotional pain and grief. In Alice Sebold's novel *"The Lovely Bones,"* the protagonist's father, Jack Salmon, experiences deep grief after the murder of his daughter, Susie. This sadness is the novel's central theme and has been the focus of much literary analysis. Some scholars have explored the portrayal of sadness in *"The Lovely Bones,"* especially with the character Jack Salmon. In her article *"Grief in Alice Sebold's 'The Lovely Bones,'"* Sue Norton argues that Sebold's portrayal of grief is "realistic, raw and powerful" and that Jack's character serves as "representative for all parents who have lost a child." Norton also noted that Jack's grief was compounded by the fact that Susie's murder went unsolved for an extended time, adding to his sense of powerlessness and despair.

Similarly, in his article *"The Art of Grief: Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones,"* Michael Levenson discusses how Sebold uses language and imagery to convey Jack's grief in a "raw and unsentimental." Levenson noted that Sebold's portrayal of grief is not limited to Jack but is also evident in other characters, such as Susie's mother, Abigail, and her best friend, Ruth. Levenson argues that Sebold's portrayal of grief is an exploration of the emotional impact of death and a commentary on how society deals with grief and loss. In addition to literary analysis, there is psychological research on grief's nature and its effect on individuals. In her article *"Grief: Understanding Its Anatomy, Effects, and Treatment,"* Margaret Stroebe argues that grief is a complex process involving many emotions, including sadness, anger, guilt, and distrust. Stroebe noted that sadness can have long-term effects on individuals, including physical symptoms such as fatigue and insomnia, and it can also affect social relationships and work performance. Overall, Jack Salmon's portrayal of grief in *"The Lovely Bones"* has been a significant literary analysis and psychological research focus. By exploring the characters' experiences, Sebold provides a powerful and moving picture of the emotional impact of loss and the complex nature of grief. Insight into the nature of this

grief can help individuals who have experienced loss to understand better and navigate the grieving process.

No	Title of Previous Research	Findings	Similarities
1.	Psychopath and the Role of Grief of Losing in The Lovely Bones Novel by Alice Sebold (2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research identifies Harvey as a psychopath influenced by childhood experiences, as well as analyzes the characters' expressions of grief, especially Jack and Lindsey, who show profound reactions to loss. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both studies focus on the representation of grief in "The Lovely Bones," exploring symbols and signs that reflect the characters' stages of grief, and highlighting behavioral differences and visual elements that deepen the meaning of grief.
2.	Jack Salmon's Stages of Grief in Accepting Susie's Death as Seen in Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This study analyzes Jack Salmon's stages of grief in accepting Susie's death using Dr. Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory. The results show that Jack experiences denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance, influenced by family support and attempts to solve the murder case. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both studies focus on the representation of grief in "The Lovely Bones," exploring how visual and symbolic elements reflect Jack's stages of grief. Both emphasize the variation of individual experiences in the grief process and the role of external factors that influence the journey.
3.	Representation of the 5 Stages of Grief of the Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This study analyzes Kusunoki's stages of grief in the manga "Jumyou wo Kaitotte Moratta Ichinen ni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both studies focus on the representation of grief, exploring visual and symbolic elements that

	Kusunoki in the Manga Jumyou wo Kaitotte Moratta Ichinen ni Tsuki, Ichimanen de by Miaki Suguru.	Tsuki, Ichimanen de” based on Dr. Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory. The results show that Kusunoki experiences denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, influenced by social support and belief in God.	reflect the stages of grief. They also emphasize the variation of individual experiences in the grief process and the influence of external factors on a character's emotional journey.
4.	The Portrayal of Women in Alice Sebold’s The Lovely Bones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This research analyzes the portrayal of Susie and Abigail Salmon in “The Lovely Bones,” highlighting their strength and resilience in the face of grief. The female characters are portrayed as complex, strong and resilient, with a fragile side that reflects the important role of women in society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both studies focus on the representation of emotions, exploring visual and symbolic elements that reflect the experiences of female characters in the context of grief. Both emphasize the complexity and resilience of female characters and their influence on readers' perceptions of women's roles.
5.	Jack Salmon's Grief on Susie's Death in Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This research analyzes Jack Salmon's grief after the death of his daughter, Susie, in “The Lovely Bones.” The results show that Jack's grief is a major theme, portrayed realistically and deeply, with the impact of the uncertainty of the murder and the long-term effects of grief on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both studies focus on the representation of grief, exploring the visual and symbolic elements that reflect a character's emotional experience. Both emphasize the complexity of emotions in the grieving process and

		psychological and social health.	their impact on individuals and social interactions.
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Table 1.1 The Findings and Differences from Previous Research Literature Review

2. Theoretical Framework

a. Film as a Visual Representation

Concept Representation of the five stages of grief describes how something can be shown or represented in a particular medium, such as a movie. The use of symbols, visual imagery, narrative, and other aspects to describe concepts or realities is referred to as representation (Hall, 1997). Representation allows the audience to comprehend the characters and the issues emphasized in the story. A cinematic work, "The Lovely Bones," provides various representations that can be explored.

As a visual art form, movies can effectively depict narratives, characters, and significant social issues. In film, representation refers to how the real or imagined world is shown through characters, setting, plot, visual language, and cultural values. The value of representation in film lies in its ability to portray human variations accurately. Films can honor their experiences and broaden viewers' perspectives by showing appropriate and diverse depictions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other minority groups.

The superhero movie "Black Panther" (2018), starring a black lead with an African cultural background, is an important example of positive portrayal. The movie presents a powerful story of racial identity and resistance to injustice while celebrating African cultural heritage. Similarly, the 2017 movie "Wonder Woman" exemplifies a good representation of a strong and independent female superhero. To learn more about how race and gender are portrayed in the US movie business, read Nancy Wang Yuen's book "Reel Inequality: Hollywood Actors and Racism". We can raise social awareness to make the world fairer for everyone and develop

greater knowledge of human diversity through honest and inclusive portrayals in movies.

Representation of Trauma and Emotion The depiction of emotion and trauma in the film's main character is a significant example of representation. Director Peter Jackson captured a sense of calm and tranquility after death by visualizing a heavenly world (Ebert, 2009). This gives a spiritual dimension to the narrative while illustrating the difficulty of recovering from trauma. Symbols such as a deserted house or reminders of daily life left behind by the victims are also used to convey a sense of loss or sadness (Pușcășu & Pușcășu, 2016). These depictions support the audience's understanding of the psychological effects of the tragedy. Family dynamics are a crucial component of the family and other features shown in the movie. We can observe the psychological difficulties caused by the five stages of grief and longing for their lost son through the relationships among Salmon's family members (Kövecses, 2020). This portrayal illustrates the complexity of the family's emotions and their struggle to cope with grief.

The emotions of depression, anger, denial, regret, and acceptance are represented. Understanding the complex emotional process known as the five stages of grief can be challenging. In "The Lovely Bones," filmmaker Peter Jackson effectively conveys feelings of sadness through various cinematic devices (Neff & Karney, 2017). The audience can feel a sense of emptiness and sadness through images such as gloomy colors, dark locations, or the contrast between earthly and heavenly. In addition, the choice of depressing background music supports how sadness is portrayed in this movie (Garrido et al., 2019). The ideal mood for the main character's despair is created through sad songs or complete silence.

"In 'The Lovely Bones,' characters experiencing grief display noticeable behavioral changes. For example, after her sad death, Susie Salmon gradually isolates herself and avoids social situations (Rottenberg & Johnson, 2004). This can be seen from how she communicates with her family in heaven and how little she interacts with her friends in the real world. The portrayal of the characters in the movie can also be used to examine changes in sleep habits, hunger, or interest in routine activities (Neff & Karney, 2017). These illustrations provide an overview

of the symptoms of grief often experienced by those with the condition.

The efforts of the main characters in 'The Lovely Bones' to address grief are also examined. Through the story, we can observe how each character faces and copes with this challenging situation (Rottenberg & Johnson, 2004). This shows how important social support and recovery are for those who are grieving.

b. Representation in Visual Communication

Visual communication is essential for conveying messages and meanings through images, symbols, and visual elements. Semiotic analysis offers a structured approach to understanding how these visual representations communicate and construct meaning. Semiotic analysis helps uncover the underlying messages and cultural values portrayed in various forms of visual communication by examining the signs, symbols, and codes in visual content. An essential aspect of visual semiotic analysis is its ability to show how visual representations perpetuate and reconstruct national themes, acting as a counter-discourse to attempts to distort history (Assaiqeli, 2021). This emphasizes the power of visual communication in shaping collective memory and challenging dominant narratives. In addition, visual semiotic analysis in examining multicultural values in educational materials illustrates how images effectively convey cultural information and values (Isnaini et al., 2019).

Representation in visual communication involves using visual signs to convey information, ideas, and concepts (Raaphorst et al., 2016). Visual representations mediate sender intent and receiver understanding (Wlazlak et al., 2019). Visual representations can attract attention and help explain complex systems more directly than verbal explanations (Bobek & Tversky, 2016). Visual communication is not limited to static images but can also involve animation accompanied by narration to enhance understanding (Mayer & Anderson, 1991). The effectiveness of visual representation lies in its ability to facilitate learning and understanding. Research has shown that self-explanation with the support of visual representations can result in more efficient learning outcomes, especially in subjects such as algebra (Nagashima et al., 2021). In addition, visual representations can help share research results more effectively across different disciplines, reaching a wider audience (Zallio, 2021).

Moreover, applying a semiotic approach to analyze visual elements in textbooks and other forms of communication provides a comprehensive method to interpret the relationships between individuals, places, and objects depicted in images (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). This analytical framework enables a deeper understanding of the cultural and social meanings embedded in visual content, highlighting the importance of visual literacy in interpreting visual messages. Social semiotics of visual communication serve as a valuable tool for analyzing visual elements' cultural and social implications, contributing to a better understanding of how visual representations shape perceptions and meanings (Martikainen, 2019). Through methodologies such as visual discourse analysis and social semiotic analysis, researchers can explore the multiple layers of meaning embedded in visual representations (Raaphorst et al., 2016). In architecture and art, semiotic analysis is essential to decipher the symbolic and aesthetic values in visual elements, such as signs and connotations, which contribute to the identity and cultural significance of architectural designs (FAHMAWEE, 2022). This shows how semiotics can reveal complex meanings and narratives conveyed through visual components in various forms of artistic expression.

Moreover, visual representations are limited to educational contexts and various fields, such as architecture, where computer-generated photorealistic representations effectively communicate architectural designs (Bates-Brkljac, 2012). Visual representations in music videos can be supplemented with verbal explanations to enhance audience understanding and engagement (Keitel et al., 2020). In conclusion, visual communication through representation is a powerful tool that transcends disciplines and domains. By combining visual cues with appropriate explanations, individuals can enhance learning, convey complex information more effectively, and engage audiences in various fields.

c. Five Stages of Grief

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross introduced the theory of the five stages of grief in 1969, which has significantly impacted psychology and health. The theory outlines the emotional journey individuals experience when faced with death or significant loss. The theory outlines the emotional journey individuals experience

when faced with death or significant loss. Kubler-Ross' theory offers profound insight into how people react to traumatic events through five primary stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. It also explains how the mourning process can aid people in adjusting to loss and deriving meaning from the experience. The Kubler-Ross theory, described in the book "On Death and Dying," has become the leading theory about emotional processing and grieving. The theory was initially developed based on its application to terminally ill patients, and it has since been used in a variety of traumatic and iatrogenic situations.

omit this sentence, as they are repetitions of sentences in the beginning of this section. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' Five Stages of Grief, although primarily focused on death and the mourning process, can also be applied to other forms of loss, such as divorce, job loss, or a significant sickness diagnosis. It comprises five stages:

1) Stage One: Denial

In the denial stage, people struggle to comprehend the reality of the loss or pain that has just happened. They frequently contest or refute the veracity of the incident. Denial is a natural type of self-protection that shields people from unpleasant emotions and lets them cope gradually.

2) Stage Two: Anger

People go through a denial phase before feeling intense anger and loss. One may feel angry towards themselves, other people, or even a higher force. This occurs due to the person's unjustified anger and frustration.

3) Stage Three: Bargaining

In the bargaining stage, people look for proposals or agreements that could be unfeasible to find a way out of their grief and suffering. They want to go back in time or agree to get what they lost back.

4) Fourth Stage: Depression

When a person has a loss or tragedy and feels depressed and hopeless, they are said to be in the depression stage. Since this is the most severe stage of sorrow, family and friends may need to provide powerful emotional support. People who are depressed can more deeply consider and digest their emotions.

5) Stage Five: Acceptance

Acceptance is the last stage, where people start to accept the truth of the

trauma or loss. Although they cannot forget what happened, they can develop better adaptations to help them go on with their lives.

d. Roland Barthes and the Study of Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and sign systems used in different forms of human communication (De Saussure, F. 2011). We can comprehend how signs influence language, symbols, and representations that have significance in our culture through the study of semiotics. This essay explores semiotics as a powerful analytical tool for comprehending culture and human communication, drawing on relevant sources to support the analysis. The term 'semiotics' originates from the Greek word 'semeion,' meaning 'sign.' It is a field of study established by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce in the late 19th century. Peirce's semiotics encompasses anything that functions as a sign representing something else. On the other hand, Saussure emphasized the connection between sign and meaning and the significance of sign structure and relationships. A well-known semiotic thinker named Roland Barthes once stated, "Semiotics is the science of the mechanisms of sign production, reception, and consumption." This highlights that semiotics investigates how society produces, comprehends, and interprets signs.

Semiotic analysis examines cultural signs, including language, pictures, ads, movies, and symbols. Semiotic study reveals how these cues influence societal ideas, norms, and values. Famous semiotician Umberto Eco once said, "Semiotics provides a foundation for analyzing how the real world is interpreted as text." In this sense, culture is viewed as a text that can be analyzed semiotically to be understood. Cultural studies can significantly benefit from semiotics. By deciphering the hidden meanings in cultural signs, we may expose messages that are not being said out loud, and we can comprehend how signs influence social identities and representations. According to Stuart Hall, a theorist of culture and communication, semiotic analysis is crucial for comprehending how ethnicity and cultural identity are constructed in the mass media. Hall (1997) discovered how the media's use of various signs affects how people view particular ethnic groups in his research.

According to Barthes, language is a sophisticated system of signs. He talks about the "signifier" and the "signified," which are the two primary

components of a sign. Signified refers to the idea or concept attached to a sign, whereas signifier refers to a sign's physical form or external representation, such as words or images.

Barthes' theory highlights numerous vital components in the semiotic process. The physical manifestation of a sign, such as words, images, or particular actions, is known as the "signifier" in the first place. This signifier contributes to the recipient receiving the message. The "signified" is the idea or underlying meaning connected to the signifier and comes next. In light of its experiences and the cultural environment, the signified lends meaning to external symbols.

F. Research Method

1. Research Paradigm

The constructivism paradigm fits this study's qualitative methodologies and Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The constructivism paradigm strongly emphasizes how people's subjective interpretations of social reality and meaning are shaped by their experiences. The portrayal of alterations in the Salmon family's conduct in the movie *The Lovely Bones* can be viewed in this study as the outcome of the process of meaning creation by both the filmmakers and the viewer. Roland Barthes' semiotic method will be utilized to examine the signs and symbols in the movie to comprehend how the behavioral alterations of the Salmon family are portrayed. We can comprehend how messages are communicated through visual or audiovisual signs in works of art, such as movies, by using semiotic analysis (Chandler, Daniel, 2017). The constructivism paradigm is significant because it acknowledges that representations depend on the viewpoints of the people involved as both message senders and receivers and are not universal or objective (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2. Type of Method

A qualitative technique with a semiotic analysis focus is the best approach for this research, employing Roland Barthe's semiotic analysis. This approach enables a thorough examination of the movie's signs and symbols and their message. Data for this study will be gathered directly from the screening of *The Lovely Bones*. During the screening, we will meticulously observe visual cues, dialogue, musical elements, and other indicators of behavioral changes in the Salmon family. The next stage is to undertake a semiotic analysis

of the data when data gathering is finished. In order to understand how the behavior of the Salmon family has changed over time, this research will identify signs (signifier), concepts or ideas that are referred to (signified), and actual items that are referred to (referent).

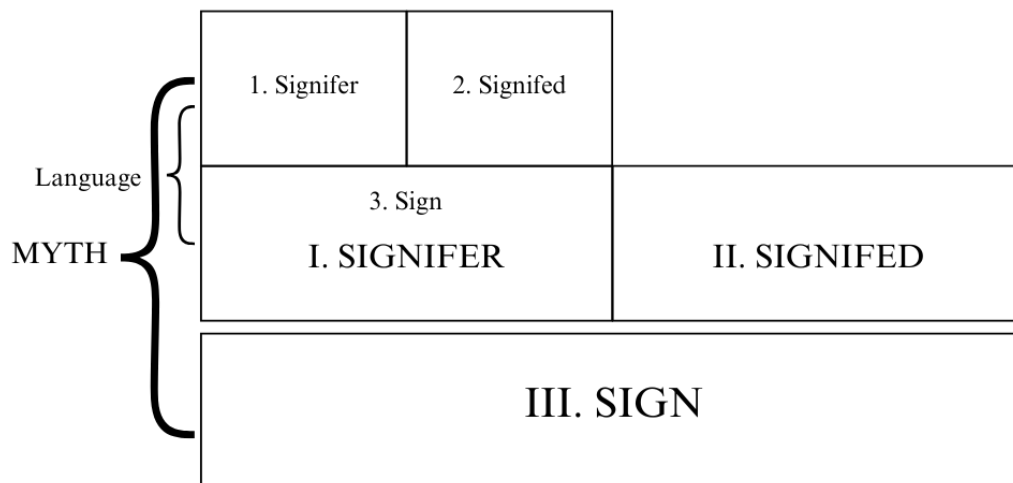


Figure 1.1 The semiological scheme of myth in Barthes's Mythologies

Additionally, it describes each sign's denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (extra meaning). This makes it easier to comprehend how specific messages are expressed in the story through verbal or visual cues. Finding the cultural myths or ideologies in the Salmon family's shifting behavior is crucial for Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis (Barthes, R. 1964). Understanding how various perspectives of family or interpersonal relationships might be reflected or depicted by the signs is necessary.

3. Research Object

The main focus of this research is how the visual representation of the stages of grief is depicted in the movie through signs and symbols. Using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis approach, this research aims to contribute to a greater understanding of how the Salmon family's behavioral changes are depicted within the narrative framework of *The Lovely Bones*.

4. Data Collection Technique

The data collection techniques used in this research are **visual observation and semiotic analysis** of the movie *The Lovely Bones*. This method will focus on in-depth observation of visual and auditory elements that appear throughout the film, such as

symbols, lighting, colors, music, as well as the characters' behavior as they go through the stages of grief according to Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory. Each scene will be analyzed in detail, with special attention to how cinematography, setting, costumes, and character expressions depict the grieving process.

The researcher will conduct a **semiotic analysis** using Roland Barthes' approach, to identify the signs (signifier) and associated meanings (signified), such as how certain colors or symbols (e.g. photos or use of light) represent the stages of grief. During the observation, the researcher will take detailed notes of each visual element encountered and how it contributes to the representation of grief. In addition, **visual documentation** in the form of snippets of scenes deemed important will be used as supporting data in the analysis.

To support the accuracy of the observation, the researcher will use an **observation guide** that has been designed with categories such as color symbolism, use of lighting, image composition, as well as certain characters' reactions to events in the film. In addition, the researcher will also note how the background music and sound effects support the depiction of the emotions of sadness experienced by the characters. The results of these observations will then be compiled in a semiotic analysis table, which contains denotation (literal meaning), connotation (implicit meaning), and myth associated with the visual elements in the film. Through this approach, the research is expected to reveal the in-depth representation of the grieving process depicted in *The Lovely Bones*.

5. Research Stage

In the initial stage, an in-depth literature review was conducted to understand the basic concepts of semiotics and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory. Relevant literature on semiotic analysis in film, especially works using the Roland Barthes approach, as well as research on the representation of grief in visual media, will be thoroughly reviewed. Understanding this theory is important as a foundation to support the symbolic interpretation that will be conducted in the research. In addition, the selection of the movie *The Lovely Bones* as the main object of study is also carried out, ensuring that the movie version used has good image and sound quality so that visual and auditory analysis can be carried out in detail.

Data collection was done through visual observation of the movie *The Lovely Bones*. The film was watched repeatedly to capture various visual and auditive elements relevant to the representation of sadness, such as the use of color, lighting, music, and

character behavior. During the observation, the researcher notes any visual symbols or signs that appear in the movie, which will then be coded based on denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (implied meaning). A breakdown of the movie into key scenes was conducted, where each scene showing the progression of the stages of grief was recorded in detail, including how cinematography, setting, costumes, and character expressions illustrate the grief process according to Kübler-Ross theory. After data collection, a semiotic analysis was conducted using Roland Barthes' framework. At this stage, the signs (signifier) and associated meanings (signified) that have been collected during observation will be analyzed to understand how the visual and symbolic elements in the film illustrate the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The researcher will also analyze recurring visual structures and symbolism, such as photo motifs or lighting games, that reinforce the emotional narrative of the film. In addition, aspects of hyperreality in the film will be explored to understand how the merging of fantasy and reality plays a role in amplifying the audience's emotional experience of grief.

The results of the semiotic analysis are then compared with Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief theory to see how *The Lovely Bones* visually depicts the emotional journey of grief. The researcher will evaluate the extent to which each stage of grief is represented in visual elements, such as the use of color and lighting in the film. At this stage, we will also explore the cultural myths related to grief that the film may display or challenge, using Barthes' concept of myth to interpret the wider social implications of these visual representations.

The results of visual observation and semiotic analysis will be documented in the form of a structured research report. Key images from the movie will be used as supporting data to illustrate how visual signs and symbols play a role in conveying messages about grief. The final report will include the theoretical background, methods used, in-depth visual analysis, as well as conclusions drawn from this research.

In the final stage, conclusions from the research will be formulated, highlighting how the film *The Lovely Bones* visually represents the emotional journey of grief through Barthes' semiotic theory approach. Discussion will include how these visual representations align or contradict cultural perceptions of grief in society. In addition, the academic and practical implications of this study will be discussed, including suggestions for further research related to semiotic analysis of films or emotional representations in visual media.

6. Data Analysis Unit

The semiotic analysis of *The Lovely Bones* delves into the intricate visual representation of grief using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework. By focusing on key cinematic elements such as denotation, connotation, and myth, the study explores how specific visual cues in the film depict Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stages of grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The literal representations, or denotations, manifest in scenes that explicitly show these stages through character behavior and interactions. For instance, the film uses dark, subdued lighting and close-up shots to underscore the emotional isolation of characters during the denial and depression stages. These visual choices effectively reflect the inner turmoil and struggle faced by the characters as they process loss.

The symbolic meanings, or connotations, extend beyond these literal representations. They are conveyed through elements such as colors, settings, and visual metaphors, with recurring motifs like photographs symbolizing memory and the permanence of loss. These symbols deepen the narrative's emotional impact, illustrating how internal grief manifests externally through visual storytelling. The use of photographs in particular serves as a poignant reminder of the characters' longing for the past and the emotional weight of their memories. Such symbols not only ground the film's depiction of grief in tangible visuals but also evoke a sense of nostalgia and unresolved sorrow, resonating with the audience on an emotional level.

Through these techniques, the film also engages with broader cultural myths surrounding grief, reflecting societal expectations of mourning and healing. It presents grief not just as a personal experience but as a universal process shaped by cultural norms. The symbolic interplay between memory, loss, and healing in *The Lovely Bones* challenges traditional portrayals of grief by highlighting its non-linear and unpredictable nature. This is especially evident in how the characters oscillate between different emotional stages, underscoring the complexity and individuality of the grieving process. Moreover, the film blurs the boundaries between realism and fantasy, particularly in the afterlife scenes of the protagonist, Susie Salmon. These hyper-real and fantastical sequences represent a departure from conventional grief depictions, offering a more abstract, layered portrayal of loss. Susie's afterlife is depicted as a dreamlike space, where the fantastical visuals mirror the emotional turbulence of those she left behind. This fusion of fantasy and reality allows the audience to experience grief in a more nuanced and multifaceted way, reinforcing the emotional complexity of loss. The hyper-reality in these scenes captures the essence of grief, where reality and memory often intermingle, blurring the lines between what is real and imagined in the minds of the grieving.

The semiotic analysis thus reveals how these visual elements not only represent the stages of grief but also evoke profound emotional responses from the audience. The film's careful use of cinematography, symbolic motifs, and sound design bridges the gap between visual storytelling

and the emotional intricacies of grief. These artistic choices engage viewers deeply, inviting them to empathize with the characters' journeys through loss, denial, and ultimately, healing.

Chapter I of this research provides a broader academic context for analyzing films, emphasizing their utility across disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, economics, and sustainability science. Films serve as a rich medium for exploring themes like mental health, social inequality, gender roles, and cultural values, making them fertile ground for diverse research. Techniques like machine learning, sentiment analysis, and semiotic frameworks are applied to films to extract insights into their content and societal influence. *The Lovely Bones*, directed by Peter Jackson, is particularly suited for this type of semiotic analysis due to its nuanced portrayal of grief, making it an ideal subject for exploring the intersection of visual storytelling and emotional experience.

The research delves into how the stages of grief are visually represented, decoding the signs and symbols that pervade the film's narrative structure. Key elements such as color, lighting, and recurring motifs like mirrors and photographs are crucial in conveying the characters' emotional states as they navigate the grieving process. The interplay of realism and fantasy throughout the film further enhances its emotional depth, portraying the non-linear and fluctuating nature of grief. By doing so, *The Lovely Bones* not only reflects personal emotional journeys but also engages with broader societal and cultural narratives about loss and healing.

The research seeks to answer two central questions: how *The Lovely Bones* visually represents the stages of grief through Barthes' semiotic theory, and how the film engages with or challenges cultural myths and ideologies surrounding grief. The goal is to contribute new insights into the visual storytelling of grief, particularly how it influences societal perceptions of loss. Using a qualitative methodology grounded in semiotic analysis, the study focuses on detailed visual observations, examining cinematographic choices, character expressions, and symbolic elements. This approach uncovers both the denotative (literal) and connotative (symbolic) meanings of visual elements, exploring the cultural and emotional dimensions intertwined with the depiction of grief. By building on existing literature and previous studies that have analyzed psychological and behavioral changes in characters coping with grief, the research highlights the complexity of the grieving process. It emphasizes that grief is experienced differently by individuals and is often influenced by external factors such as family support and societal expectations. Ultimately, the research aims to deepen the understanding of how *The Lovely Bones* uses visual and symbolic storytelling to represent grief, employing Barthes' semiotic framework to explore the cultural, emotional, and universal aspects of this profound human experience.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH OBJECT

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

1. The Lovely Bones Film Profile

“The Lovely Bones” is a poignant narrative that intertwines themes of loss, grief, and the afterlife, originally conceived as a novel by Alice Sebold. The novel, published in 2002, is a semi-autobiographical work based on Sebold's own experiences as a rape survivor, which greatly influenced the emotional depth and character development of the narrative. The protagonist, Susie Salmon, is a young girl who is murdered, and her story unfolds from her personal haven as she observes her family and friends cope with her absence. This narrative structure allows Sebold to explore complex themes such as trauma and healing, as well as the interplay between reality and fantasy, which have been analyzed through various critical lenses, including hyper-reality as conceptualized by Jean Baudrillard (Kiaei & Safdari, 2014).

The film adaptation of “The Lovely Bones,” directed by Peter Jackson, was released in 2009. Jackson, known for his work on the “Lord of the Rings” trilogy, approached the film with a vision that sought to balance the emotional weight of the novel with a visually stunning representation of the afterlife. The adaptation has been criticized for its divergence from the source material, particularly in the depiction of Susie's journey and the pace of the film, which some argue detracts from the deep emotional resonance of the novel (Anam & Istiani, 2021). Jackson's cinematic techniques, including the use of special effects to create Susie's ethereal paradise landscape, have been both praised and criticized for their ability to evoke a sense of wonder while addressing the darker themes of the story (Janicke & Oliver, 2017).

Peter Jackson, best known for his trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Jackson provides an imaginative visual touch, especially in portraying the spiritual world where Susie resides after her death. The screenplay was written by Jackson alongside two of his longtime collaborators, Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens. Although Sebold's novel received much acclaim, the movie received mixed reviews due to some differences in interpretation in the style of the movie. mixed reviews due to some differences in interpretation in the style of

storytelling. The movie starred Saoirse Ronan as Susie Salmon, Mark Wahlberg as Susie's father, Jack Salmon, Rachel Weisz as her mother, Abigail Salmon, and Stanley Tucci as George Harvey, Susie's killer. The *Lovely Bones* features a blend of family drama, mystery, and fantasy elements that explore themes of grief, bereavement, and love. fantasy elements that explore themes of grief, forgiveness, and the emotional journey after loss. loss.

Overall, “The *Lovely Bones*” as a movie is a collaboration between the creative visions of Alice Sebold and Peter Jackson, who each bring their unique perspectives to the work. Sebold's novel provides a solid foundation for the exploration of heavy themes, while Jackson adds rich visual layers to amplify the audience's experience. This adaptation, while not perfect, remains an example of how literature can be interpreted in film form, creating a dialog between two different mediums (Anam & Istiani, 2021; Gurnos-Davies, 2021).

In a broader context, “The *Lovely Bones*” also reflects a trend in modern cinema that focuses on social and psychological issues, inviting viewers to reflect on realities that are often overlooked. The film is part of a larger discussion on violence against women, trauma, and the healing process, which is relevant in the current social context (Wehling-Giorgi, 2021; Nisrina & Hadiyanto, 2021; Dianika, 2019). Thus, “The *Lovely Bones*” is not only a work of art, but also a tool to raise awareness and understanding of important issues in society. in society.

2. Synopsis of the film The Lovely Bones

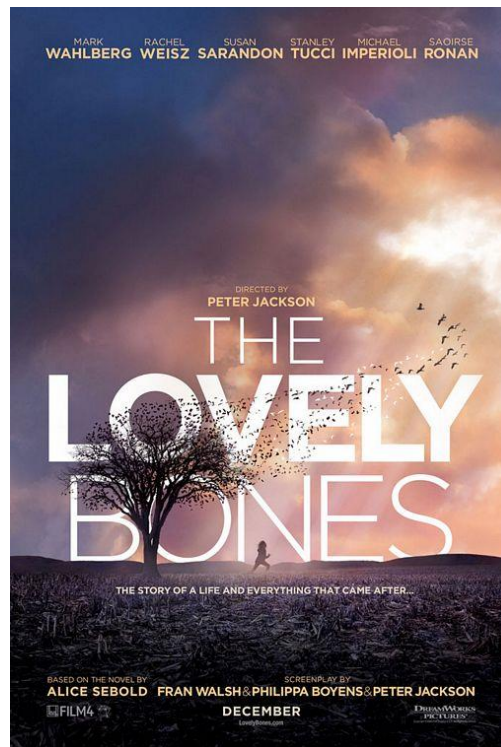


Figure 2.1 The Lovely Bones Movie Poster

The Lovely Bones is a supernatural drama film released in 2009, directed by Peter Jackson. The movie is based on the best-selling novel by Alice Sebold. The Lovely Bones tells the story of the spiritual journey of a teenage girl named Susie Salmon (played by Saoirse Ronan) after she is brutally murdered. Susie is in the realm between the real world and heaven, observing the life she left behind and trying to understand the purpose of her tragic death. On the other hand, her family, especially her mother (played by Rachel Weisz) and father (played by Mark Wahlberg), struggle to overcome their profound grief and seek justice for Susie. On this journey, Susie tries to communicate with people still alive, including her friends and a suspicious neighbor, George Harvey (played by Stanley Tucci). The movie depicts the family's struggles and Susie's spiritual growth as they attempt to obtain justice and move on.

The Lovely Bones features beautiful visual imagery and a dark atmosphere, which amplifies feelings of loss and the desire to seek justice. The film combines supernatural elements with deep family drama, exploring themes of trauma, hope, and the connection between the living world and the afterlife. With solid

performances from the cast and sensitive direction from Peter Jackson, *The Lovely Bones* is an emotionally moving story that invites viewers to reflect on the meaning of life, love, and the importance of accepting brutal realities.

3. Main Character in *The Lovely Bones*



Figure 2.2 Susie Salmon

a. Susie Salmon

Susie Salmon is a spirited and talented teenage girl living with her family in a small town in the United States. Her everyday life takes a tragic turn when she becomes the victim of a gruesome murder by their ostensibly kind neighbor, George Harvey. After his death, Susie enters the afterlife, becoming a narrator who witnesses her family's struggle to overcome grief and seek justice. Though no longer alive, Susie's spirit seeks to provide guidance and comfort to her family, particularly her father, Jack Salmon, who is adamant about uncovering the truth behind the crime. With courage and sincerity, Susie Salmon becomes the movie's story's deep emotional and spiritual core.



Figure 2.3 Jack Salmon

b. Jack Salmon

Jack Salmon was a loving and dedicated father to his family. A man with a passion for miniature shipbuilding, his life was shattered when his daughter, Susie, was tragically murdered by their neighbor. Obsessed with seeking justice, Jack Salmon becomes a man of determination and resilience, stretching his emotional journey from profound grief to determination to uncover the truth behind his daughter's murder. In his quest to find the killer, Jack leads his family's journey through challenging twists and turns while maintaining a deep love for his remaining children. As the central figure in their journey to healing, Jack Salmon illustrates the strength of a tireless father who protects his family, even in the face of unfathomable darkness.



Figure 2.4 George Harvey

c. George Harvey

George Harvey was a seemingly quiet, low-key neighbor. Behind the unassuming facade, Harvey was a cruel and vicious killer who took the life of Susie Salmon. Known as an intelligent yet dark individual, Harvey hid his cruel side from the surrounding community. A cold and organized killer, he brought fear to the Salmon family, especially after managing to lose track of his crimes. With a sinister personality, George Harvey becomes the chilling antagonist of the story, creating tension and fear that permeates the narrative.



Figure 2.5 Abigail Salmon

d. Abigail Salmon

Abigail Salmon is a complex and conflicted mother. Abigail was originally a caring mother who loved her family, but after the tragic death of her daughter, Susie, she was swept up in waves of grief and guilt. Burdened by unimaginable loss, Abigail seeks escape from reality by leaving her family. Her loss creates an emotional chasm among the remaining family members and leaves unanswered questions about the reasons behind her departure. Abigail Salmon becomes a complex figure in the journey of family life, reflecting the profound impact of loss and the difficulty of understanding and forgiving oneself.



e. Lindsey Salmon

Lindsey Salmon is Susie's tough and determined sister. Lindsey is a

bright and robust girl, eager to understand the truth behind her sister's tragic death. Although affected by the profound loss, Lindsey shows excellent fortitude and resilience when facing a complex reality. She becomes the backbone of the family after her mother leaves, and her determination to help her father, Jack, seek justice for Susie gives a solid dimension to her character. With courage and determination, Lindsey Salmon represents the spirit of resistance and resilience during a tragedy that haunts her family.



Figure 2.7 Grandma Lynn

f. Grandma Lynn

Grandma Lynn is a character who brings a touch of warmth and humor to the grief-stricken Salmon family. Despite her limitations and oddities, Grandma Lynn becomes a pillar of emotional support for the family reeling from Susie's tragic death. With her eccentric personality and genuine concern for her grandchildren, Grandma Lynn sheds light on the darkness that engulfs the family. A strong and loving figure, Grandma Lynn brings warmth and cheer to the Salmon family's journey, providing a sanctuary amid their emotional storm.



Figure 2.8 Len Fenerman

g. Len Fenerman

Len Fenerman is described as a determined and dedicated detective. He has extensive knowledge in the field of criminal investigation and shows intelligence and acumen in handling complicated cases. Len Fenerman is also portrayed as a figure who empathizes with the victimized family, especially the Salmon family, whose daughter has mysteriously disappeared. Although he looks serious and professional in carrying out his duties, Len also shows tenderness and patience in understanding the emotional situation experienced by the family. In addition, Len Fenerman's character is dedicated to solving the case of searching for Susie Salmon, which is the main focus of the movie's plot. With his strong personality and extensive knowledge, Len Fenerman is crucial in developing the story in "The Lovely Bones."

4. “The Lovely Bones” Movie Award

Year	Winning Award	Category
2010	Academy Award, USA	Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films, USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Fantasy Film • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Supporting Actress (Susan Sarandon) • Best Performance By a Younger Actor (Saoirse Ronan)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Music (Brian Eno)
2010	BAFTA Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Leading Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Critics Choice Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Young Actor/Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Cinematography (Andrew Lesnie) • Best Art Direction
2010	Chicago Film Critics Association Award	Best Supporting Actor
2010	Dallas-Fort Worth Film Critics Association Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Cinematography (Andrew Lesnie) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Golden Globe, USA	Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role in a Motion Picture (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Irish Film and Television Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actress in a Lead Role in a Film (Saoirse Ronan) • Best International Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2009	Las Vegas Film Critics Society Award	Youth in Film (Saoirse Ronan)
2010	London Critics Circle Film Award	Young British Performer of the Year (Saoirse Ronan)
2009	San Diego Film Critics Society Award	Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Santa Barbara International Film Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 Winner Virtuoso Award (Saoirse Ronan) • 2010 Winner Cinema Vanguard Award (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Screen Actors Guild Award	Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Supporting Role (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Art Directors Guild	2010 Nominee Excellence in Production Design Award Contemporary Film
2010	Young Artist Award	Best Performance in a Feature Film - Leading Young Actress (Saoirse Ronan)

2010	Vancouver Film Critics Circle	Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2009	Phoenix Film Critics Society Award	Best Performance by a Youth – Female (Stanley Tucci)
2009	Washington DC Area Film Critics Association Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Art Direction (Naomi Shohan)
2009	St. Louis Film Critics Association, US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Visual Effects • Most Original, Innovative or Creative Film
2009	Detroit Film Critics Society Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2009	Indiana Film Journalists Association, US	Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2010	Scream Award	Best Fantasy Actress (Saoirse Ronan)
2010	Denver Film Critics Society	Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2011	CinEuphoria Award	Best Art Direction - International Competition
2009	Houston Film Critics Society Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actress (Saoirse Ronan) • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Cinematography (Andrew Lesnie)
2010	Online Film & Television Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci) • Best Youth Performance (Saoirse Ronan)
2009	Award Circuit Community Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Stanley Tucci) • Honorable Mentions
2010	Italian Online Movie Award	Best Supporting Actor (Miglior attore non protagonista) (Stanley Tucci)
2009	Golden Schmoes Awards	Best Supporting Actor of the Year (Stanley Tucci)

2010	International Online Cinema Awards	Best Visual Effects
2009	Rondo Hatton Classic Horror Awards	Best Film (Peter Jackson)
2010	Gold Derby Award	Supporting Actor (Stanley Tucci)
2010	AARP Movies for Grownups Award	Best Supporting Actress (Susan Sarandon)

Table 2.1 Source: The Lovely Bones Rating IMDb

(<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0380510/awards/>)

B. Analysis Unit

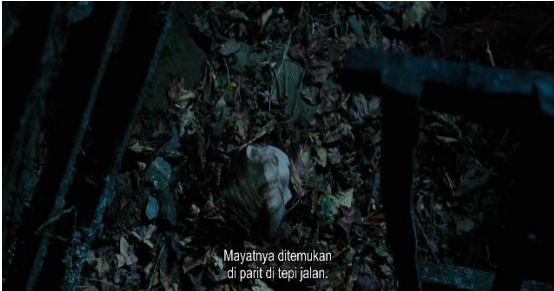
The following are 5 scenes related to the visual representation of grief stage in the lovely bones.

Table 2.2 Data Unit Analysis

No	Visual	Background	Timeline
1.	 <p>Perjalanan itu lebih bagus, bukan?</p> <p>- Bagaimana? - Aku akan menjagamu.</p>	Susie's House	00.38.59 - 00.39.43

	 <p>In this scene, the rejection of Susie's disappearance makes the father vow to find Susie.</p>		
2.	   	<p>Mini Boat Workspace Abigail</p>	53.54 – 55.09

	  <p>In this scene, Jack's depression after losing his son is intense. He vented his anger by destroying a miniature ship in a bottle that became one of his memories with his son. This action reflects his loss and pain over Susie's departure.</p>		
3.	 	the spirit world	1:33:21 – 1:38:12

	 <p>Sophie Cichetti, Pennsylvania: 1960.</p>  <p>Mayatnya ditemukan di pant di tepi jalan.</p>  <p>Leah Fox, Delaware. 1969.</p>  <p>Harvey hanya ingin menyentuhnya. Tapi dia menjerit.</p> 		
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	  <p>Susie Salmon. 14. Norristown, Pennsylvania. 1973.</p> <p>In this harrowing scene, Susie Salmon is confronted with the chilling reality of George Harvey's other victims. In the eerie, liminal space between life and death, she encounters the spectral figures of Harvey's previous victims—girls who, like her, had their lives brutally cut short. Each apparition reveals the horrifying truth of their demise and the desolate places where their bodies were discarded. These haunting visions intensify Susie's fear and sadness, reinforcing the horror of Harvey's actions and deepening her resolve to find peace and justice for herself and the other lost souls.</p>		
4.		Police Station - Susie's kitchen - Susie's yard - Santa Rosa orchard	1.09.52 – 1.11.51





In this poignant scene, Abigail is overwhelmed by the devastating loss of her child, plunging her into a profound state of depression. Her sorrow becomes

	<p>uncontrollable when she encounters a child who bears a striking resemblance to Susie, causing a flood of tears as painful memories of her departed daughter resurface. This moment marks the beginning of a rift within the Salmon household. The grandmother advises Abigail to let Susie go. However, the grief-stricken mother, unable to cope with her anguish, decides to take a job on a plantation abroad, seeking solace and escape from her unbearable pain.</p>		
5.	   <p>In this scene, the mother's return from abroad makes her willing to give up her first child by entering Susie's room, which she</p>	Susie's room	02.00.22 – 02.01.03

	has never opened since losing Susie.		
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Peter Jackson's "The Lovely Bones" is a compelling blend of family drama, fantasy, and psychological thriller. The movie uses unique narrative techniques to guide the audience through Susie Salmon's journey in the afterlife, creating layers of deep emotion. According to the academic journal "Cinematic Narratives of Grief and Loss" by Smith et al. (2010), the movie successfully captures the complex nuances of depicting the Salmon family's grieving process and coping with the loss of a child. Notably, the non-linear narrative technique used by Jackson opens up opportunities for deep emotional exploration.

The outstanding acting performances by Saoirse Ronan, Mark Wahlberg, and Stanley Tucci gave dramatic power to the story. In the journal "The Efficacy of Emotional Performances in Film" by Davis (2012), it was highlighted that the rich emotional expressions of the actors played a crucial role in communicating the pain and loss experienced by the main characters. For example, an excerpt from this study states, "Emotional performances in 'The Lovely Bones' are pivotal in conveying the intricate layers of grief and loss, providing a compelling connection between the characters and the audience."

Visually, Peter Jackson creates a stunning afterlife through sophisticated special effects. In the study "Visual Storytelling in Fantasy Films" by Lee (2013), it is emphasized that the use of special effects in "The Lovely Bones" is not just a decorative element but a tool that immerses the audience's experience and depicts fantasy concepts with impressive visual beauty.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter, the research findings section entitled “VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE STAGES OF GRIEF IN THE LOVELY BONES FILM: A ROLAND BARTHES SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS” will delve deeper into how the movie depicts the stages of grief through various symbols, metaphors, and narrative techniques. The research has applied Barthes’ semiotic framework to understand and interpret the visual and verbal signs used in the movie, revealing the layers of meaning hidden behind the visual representations of the stages of grief. The findings provide insight into how the visual stages of grief are represented in ‘The Lovely Bones’ and a new understanding of how semiotics works in film analysis. Through careful and detailed analysis, this research successfully identifies and analyzes various semiotic elements that contribute to the formation and communication of the theme of visual representation of stages of grief in this film. Furthermore, key findings from this analytical process will be presented, illustrating how the complexity of emotions and psychological conditions are perceived and displayed in cinema.

This research will describe the results of the analysis of the visual representation of the stages of grief constructed in the Lovely Bones film, revealing the layers of meaning hidden behind it. This research analysis uses Roland Barthes' theory to analyze signs, denotations, connotations, and myths. The movie will reveal the layers of meaning hidden behind the visual representation of grief. The findings of this research are obtained through analyzing eight scenes in the movie.

1. Semiotics Analysis of The Lovely Bones

Table 3.1 Scene 1 Denial in the Salmon family of the movie The Lovely Bones

Visual	
 <p style="text-align: center;">(A)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">(C)</p>

 <p style="text-align: center;">(B)</p>	
Sign	Denial, Sadness, Dialogue, Hopelessness, Facial Expressions,
Settings	Susie's House
Timeline	00.38.59 – 00.39.43
Dialogue	<p>FENERMAN: “We didn’t find her, Mrs.Salmon”.</p> <p>JACK SALMON: “Well, that’s good - isn’t it? I mean you found Susie’s hat - but you didn’t find her. Which means we really don’t know if she was there at all? I mean it’s preferable - right?”</p> <p>FENERMAN: “We also found blood”.</p> <p>FENERMAN: “I’m very sorry”.</p> <p>JACK SALMON: “We’ll get through this ..”</p> <p>ABIGAIL SALMON: “How?”</p> <p>JACK SALMON: “I’m gonna take care of you, I’m gonna take care of all of us. I’ll make it right”</p> <p>ABIGAIL SALMON: “You can’t. You can’t make this right, Jack”.</p> <p>Jack Salmon: “We’re going to find her. I promise. We’ll bring her home.”</p>

a. Meaning of Denotation

In this part of the scene, a policeman named Len Fenerman found some evidence in the form of clothes used by Susie. Fenerman also explained the information he concluded as best he could to

Jack and Abigail, namely Susie, who allegedly died because she was murdered while traveling home. Fetterman also explained that much blood was found around where Benny was found, but Susie's body was still in the process of being temporarily searched; then, the scene moved to the bed where Abigail felt there was no hope anymore. Jack still believed that his daughter was alive and would find her soon.

b. Meaning of Connotations

In this scene, a connotation meaning emerges from the five signs that have been identified, and some markers illustrate various deep connotations. Denial emerges through the dialog and interaction between Len Fenerman, Jack, and Abigail. When Fenerman explains that Susie is presumed dead, Abigail feels connotations of deep despair and sadness. At the same time, Jack remains convinced that his daughter is alive, creating a denial of the harsh reality. The facial expressions of these characters are also robust markers of emotion, showing Abigail's sadness and despair and Jack's firm belief. As for the dialog spoken by Fenerman, the marker of blood around the place where the evidence was found is an illustration of the tragic conditions that faced Susie. While Susie's body is still being searched for, it creates a strong marker of uncertainty, presenting the connotation of hope that still exists in Jack and Abigail's hearts despite the grim situation.

Furthermore, in the scene that moves to the bed, Abigail, who feels that there is no hope, shows connotations of despair and deep sadness, while Jack, who still believes that his daughter is alive, creates a marker of contrast with connotations of hope and faith. By using these signifiers, the scene illustrates the complex emotional conflicts and feelings of denial experienced by the characters in the story. In the context of the entire movie, using such signifiers helps portray the experience of deep sadness and complex inner conflicts.

c. Meaning of Myth

In the movie "The Lovely Bones," adapted from Alice Sebold's novel, the myth of parents losing their child to kidnapping can be identified through various semiotic elements while reflecting the often heartbreaking reality of society.

The kidnapping of Susie Salmon by the killer creates a profoundly tragic symbol in the movie. The discovery of evidence, such as Susie's clothes, and signs of the missing child's presence, such as her notebook or ring, become visual signifiers that create a powerful myth of

loss, illustrating the universal fear of parents towards losing their children. Uncertainty is present through the depiction of time passing without certainty regarding Susie's fate, creating deep emotional conflict and uncertainty for the parents, especially the mother, Abigail, who feels lost in time and loss. The conflict between gripping uncertainty and unflagging hope creates complex layers of emotion in the story.

In the period 2019 - 2023 in Indonesia, child abduction cases, according to data from the Pusiknas Bareskrim Polri website, reached 1,018 people who were victims of abduction throughout Indonesia, and most of the 52.26% of victims were female. However, men can become victims of kidnapping. Sadly, of this number, 97 people, or approximately 9.5% of the victims, are still children. Meanwhile, data was collected from a program manager branch chief of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) named Dr. Tyrone S. Cooper SR. The number of missing children in the period 2019 - 2023 is around 8 million children reported missing worldwide every year.

The news often shows tragic cases of child abduction in various parts of the world. Such cases underscore that child abduction is not just a myth but a reality that can affect many families around the world. Public awareness and concern for child safety is crucial in the face of this reality. In addition, the news often reports on the social support and solidarity that comes with supporting families who have experienced similar tragedies. This links to the myth of community solidarity and support in Roland Barthes' semiotics, where communities come together in the face of challenges and inspire hope in situations of uncertainty.

Thus, the movie "The Lovely Bones" and recent news about child abduction cases help us understand how the myth of child abduction loss is reflected in various aspects of real life and the media. These myths create complex narratives and illustrate the feelings, emotional conflicts, and uncertainties experienced by parents in challenging situations.

Table 3.2 Scene 2 Frustration that leads to anger of Jack Salmon from The Lovely Bones

<p>Visual</p>  <p>(A)</p>  <p>(B)</p>  <p>(C)</p>	 <p>(D)</p>  <p>(E)</p>  <p>(F)</p>
Sign	Anger, Depression, Despair.
Settings	Mini Boat Workspace Jack
Timeline	53.54 – 55.09
Dialogue	-

a. Meaning of Denotation

In this scene, Susie, who still has not accepted his death, chooses to walk back and hopes to go home. On the run, he witnessed several miniatures of his father's brutal ship; the miniatures collided with each other and were destroyed along with Jack, who was depressed by slamming his collection of items.

b. Meaning of Connotations

In this scene, the connotational meaning of the three signs that have been identified emerges; the destruction of Susie's father's miniature ship of bolts symbolically reflects the

emotional devastation of Jack, who is caught in a deep wave of depression and anger. When the miniatures collide and shatter, it is a physical representation of his overflowing anger and the feelings of despair running rampant within him. In a state swayed by grief and regret, Jack allows himself to be carried away by his anger, slamming his collectibles as a way of expressing his inability to deal with painful reality. Behind Jack's actions of breaking and damaging his collectibles lies a deep emptiness and suffering. It is an outward form of the inner battle he is going through. When his heart is filled with darkness, he feels helpless in the face of such significant loss. In that moment, his anger becomes a substitute for his deep despair, giving rise to an external expression of his relentless inner struggle.

c. Meaning of Myth

The link between the scene and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' stages of grief theory can be found in the character's emotional journey, especially Jack. In theory, individuals who experience loss often go through a series of emotional stages that include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. In the scene, the destruction of Susie's father's miniature ship of bolts and Jack's expression of anger can be associated with the anger stage. Jack shows intense anger in response to a profound loss, and this scene reflects the emotional struggle experienced by someone in this stage. This anger comes as an expression of Jack's hopelessness and unspoken grief.

Furthermore, Jack's depressive and angry reaction to the destruction of his collectibles reflects the stages of grief in Kübler-Ross' theory. Depression and anger are natural responses to significant loss, and Jack's act of slamming his collectibles is an external manifestation of a deep inner struggle. This reflects the stage at which the individual begins to feel deep sadness and despair over the loss experienced. Thus, through this scene, we can see how the stages of grief theory can be used to understand the characters' emotional journeys in the face of profound loss and how they express their emotions externally in an attempt to cope with the pain they feel.

Table 3.3 Scene 3 of The Lovely Bones, Susie Salmon confronts the fact that she is not the only victim

Visual



(A)



(B)



(C)



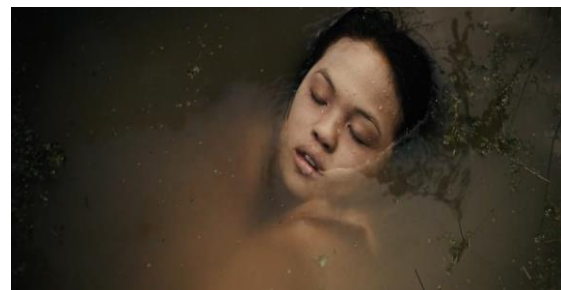
(D)



(F)



(G)



(H)



(I)

 <p>(E)</p>	 <p>(J)</p>
Sign	Bargain, Corpse, Murder, Victim. Visual Communication
Settings	Susie's room
Timeline	1:33:21 – 1:38:12
Dialogue	<p>SUSIE (V.O.) <i>Sophie Cichetti. Pennsylvania. 1960. She had been his land-lady.</i></p> <p>SUSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) <i>Jackie Meyer. Delaware. 1967. She had just turned thirteen. Her body was found in a drainage ditch, by the side of the road.</i></p> <p>SUSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) <i>Leah Fox. Delaware. 1969. She was twelve. She was already dead when he dumped her body in the river.</i></p> <p>SUSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) <i>Lana Johnson. 1960. Fox County, Pennsylvania. She was lured into a shack he had built out of old doors. She was youngest. She was six.</i></p> <p>USIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) <i>Flora Hernandez. Delaware. 1963. He'd only wanted to touch her...but she screamed. He left her in the crawl space of an old apartment house.</i></p> <p>SUSIE (CONT'D) <i>Denise Lee Eng. Connecticut. 1971. Thirteen. She was waiting for her father to close up their shop when she vanished. Denise Lee Eng...</i></p> <p>SUSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) <i>... who sometimes liked to be called "Holly"</i></p>

	<p>SUSIE (V.O.) <i>Susie Salmon. Fourteen. Norristown, Pennsylvania. 1973. Murdered in a room he had built under the earth.</i></p>
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a. Meaning of Denotation

The scene begins with Susie Salmon, who has died and is in the interworld, entering George Harvey's house at night. The house is dark, except for a beam of light illuminating the wall upstairs. Susie walked up the stairs and turned a corner, where she was suddenly blinded by a bright light that shot towards her. Then, Susie found herself standing in the middle of a busy highway with speeding cars. She stumbled backward from the busy road and saw the half-buried body of a middle-aged woman in the gravel, later identified as Sophie Cichetti. Susie ran down the stairs but tripped and fell into a ditch, where she found the body of a young girl named Jackie Meyer. Susie retreats again and finds herself in a surreal underwater landscape, where she sees the body of another girl, Leah Fox, floating in the water.

Susie continues to backtrack, and suddenly, the furniture in Harvey's living room turns into concrete pillars, taking Susie under a low overpass. There, she sees a makeshift shack made of old doors and discovers the body of a young child named Lana Johnson. Susie then finds herself in Harvey's kitchen, where she sees Flora Hernandez's body in the crawl space. Susie made her way down the stairs to the garage but found herself wading through the dark water of the lake, where she saw the body of Denise Lee Eng, sometimes called "Holly." Finally, Susie is in Harvey's basement, where she sees Harvey sitting in front of a safe containing his own body. Flashes show how Harvey killed her and hid her body inside the safe. Susie's voice mentions herself as the victim, "Susie Salmon. Fourteen years old. Norristown, Pennsylvania. 1973. Murdered in a room he built underground." The scene ends with a candle flickering and going out the window.

b. Meaning of Connotation

In this scene, connotative meanings emerge from the four signs that have been identified. This scene contains deep connotative meanings, which can be deciphered through several primary markers: Bargain, Corpse, Murder, Victim, and Visual Communication. Bargaining occurs when the audience has to face the horrifying reality of George Harvey as a

serial killer. The audience tries to understand and accept the truth revealed by Susie, who is now in the in-between world while trying to overcome the fear and discomfort caused by the visualization of Harvey's atrocities. The corpses that Susie finds in various situations, such as h in a ditch, underwater, in a makeshift shack, and in a crawl space-symbolize the loss of life and injustice experienced by the victims. Each corpse carries connotations of Harvey's cruelty and brutality, reinforcing the audience's hatred for him and their empathy for the victims.

The murders in this scene are not only depicted as criminal acts but also as symbols of brutality and profound injustice, reminding the audience of the fragility of life. The victims in this scene, including Susie, Sophie Cichetti, Jackie Meyer, Leah Fox, Lana Johnson, Flora Hernandez, and Denise Lee Eng, symbolize helplessness and suffering. The audience is invited to feel empathy, deep sadness for their tragic fate, and anger towards the perpetrators of the crime. Visual solid communication conveys connotative messages, such as the light illuminating the walls, the busy highway, and the furniture transformation into concrete pillars, all creating a tense and chilling atmosphere. The visualization of the dead bodies reinforces the sense of horror and tragedy, helping the audience feel the fear and discomfort experienced by Susie, as well as understand the horror of Harvey's crime.

c. Meaning of Myth

Myth refers to how signs and codes in a text convey ideology and deep cultural meaning. The myth analysis of the scene described above can begin by looking at the connotative meanings of the key signifiers that have been identified: Bargain, Corpse, Murder, Victim, and Visual Communication. The bargain in this scene is not simply a negotiation. However, it reflects the internal conflict the audience faces when having to accept the horrific reality of George Harvey as a serial killer, illustrating the struggle between truth and emotional discomfort that is part of the human experience. The bodies Susie finds in various places symbolize the loss of life and injustice experienced by the victims, reinforcing the myth of human fragility and helplessness in the face of evil forces. Murder is not only portrayed as a criminal act but also as a symbol of the brutality and injustice that exists in society, warning the audience about the fragility of life and the importance of resisting evil. The victims, including Susie and others, symbolize helplessness and suffering, inviting empathy and deep sadness from the audience and emphasizing the need for justice and protection for the vulnerable. Strong visual communication, such as the light illuminating the walls and the transformation of furniture into concrete pillars, creates a tense and chilling atmosphere, reinforcing the narrative of fear, horror, and the psychological impact of Harvey's atrocities.

As such, this mythic analysis reveals how each element in the scene contributes to a complex narrative of truth, injustice, fear, and empathy, demonstrating how visuals and symbols are used to manipulate the emotions and perceptions of the audience.

Table 3.4 Scene 4 of The Lovely Bones, The mounting depression of the Salmon family after the death of Susie Salmon

Visual	
 <p>(A)</p>	 <p>(G)</p>
 <p>(B)</p>	 <p>(H)</p>
 <p>(C)</p>	 <p>(I)</p>
	

<p style="text-align: center;">(D)</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(E)</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(F)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">(J)</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(K)</p>
Sign	Depression, Dialogue, Facial Expressions, conflict, Camera Shoot.
Settings	Police Station - Susie's kitchen - Susie's yard - Santa Rosa orchard
Timeline	1.09.52 – 1.11.51
Dialogue	<p>INT. LINDSEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT</p> <p>ANGLE ON: LINDSEY lying curled up in BED ... the sound of angry voices drift up from below ...</p> <p>ABIGAIL: I'm living with this every day!</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN: What about your marriage!</p> <p>ABIGAIL: What marriage!? Jack is sleeping in the study!</p> <p>INT. SALMON KITCHEN - NIGHT</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN is ransacking the cupboards, looking for more alcohol.</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN: You have to find a</p>

	<p>way to keep going. You don't have a choice in the matter.</p> <p>ABIGAIL: Mother, I am coping.</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN: You can't give up, you have to ... ah Bingo!</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN has found what she was looking for.</p> <p>ABIGAIL: Mother, that is cooking sherry! Please! Please</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN has hit a nerve.</p> <p>ABIGAIL: Live with it! I am living with it! I'm dealing with it - I'm coping!</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN: No, you are not! You won't go into Susie's room. You don't let anyone touch her things. You have a tomb in the middle of your house!</p> <p>(gently)</p> <p>Oh, sweetheart. Do you really think if you seal it up - that the pain's going to go away</p> <p>INT. JACK'S STUDY - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>ANGLE ON: JACK waking up to the sound of the TAXICAB horn tooting outside.</p> <p>CONFUSED, JACK gets up and looks out the WINDOW.</p> <p>POV: The CAB DRIVER slams SUITCASES in to the TRUNK</p> <p>JACK looks towards the DESK ...</p> <p>CLOSE ON: a FOLDED PIECE of SIMPLE WHITE PAPER with JACK'S NAME on it</p>
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	<p>...</p> <p>EXT. SALMON HOUSE - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN watches from the DOORSTEP as ... ABIGAIL climbs in to the CAB.</p> <p>INT. JACK'S STUDY - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>ANGLE ON: JACK starts to read ABIGAIL'S note.</p> <p>EXT. SALMON HOUSE - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>ABIGAIL staring through the rain spattered window of the CAB.</p> <p>INT. JACK'S STUDY - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>ANGLE ON: It dawns on JACK that ABIGAIL is leaving.</p> <p>EXT. SALMON HOUSE - EARLY MORNING</p> <p>GRANDMA LYNN watches the CAB drive away.</p> <p>EXT. CALIFORNIA VINEYARD - DAY</p> <p>HIGH ANGLE: ... in the distance, through a haze of heat, rise dry.</p> <p>brown hills ...</p> <p>PANNING DOWN on too long rows of APPLES TREES ...</p> <p>SUSIE (V.O.)</p> <p><i>My mother went as far away as she could.</i></p> <p><i>She found a job at a small orchard.</i></p>
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	<p><i>outside of Santa Rosa. The work was hard. ... but she didn't mind.</i></p> <p>ANGLE ON: ABIGAIL sitting on a CRATE ... she takes out a small pencil. and begins writing on a POSTCARD ... <i>"Dear Lindsey ..."</i></p> <p>SUSIE (v.o.) (CONT'D) <i>If anyone asked, she said she had two children.</i></p>
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a. Meaning of Denotation

In this scene, the dialog between Fenerman and Abigail highlights the relaxed and light atmosphere. Fenerman humorously notes his physical changes while Abigail smiles at him. They talk about their miniature house, which seems to be Buckley's toy. To Fenerman's surprise, Abigail explains which part represents Fenerman as the Chief of Police. However, Abigail freely connects Fenerman's appearance to his job, making a humorous comment about the weight change.

However, the mood changes when Abigail spots a young girl through the glass that connects the rooms. The girl, with similar features to Susie, faces the opposite direction from Abigail. The author creates tension and anticipation by describing the girl's potential resemblance to Susie. Fenerman politely offers Abigail to sit down while Abigail's gaze remains fixed on the girl. When the girl begins to turn around, Abigail's gaze is filled with hope, but this is followed by deep disappointment as she realizes that the girl is not Susie. At this moment, Abigail looks devastated and demoralized. Her facial expression reflects a deep disappointment and despair as she realizes that her hopes of seeing Susie again have been dashed. The previously light atmosphere turns tense and filled with emotional tension.

The next scene shows an intense argument between Abigail Salmon and Grandma Lynn. Abigail is immersed in deep grief after losing her daughter, Susie, and struggles to deal with the reality. On the other hand, Grandma Lynn encourages Abigail to take a step forward and care for the remaining family. This scene illustrates the conflict between two generations in dealing with loss, with Grandma Lynn being more pragmatic and action-oriented, in contrast to Abigail's more emotional and introspective approach.

b. Meaning of Connotations

In this scene, the connotations of the five signs that have been identified emerge. The dialogue between Fenerman and Abigail reflects a relaxed atmosphere, colored with light jokes about Fenerman's physical changes and the miniature house game that Buckley highlights. With a smile, Abigail teases Fenerman about his role in the miniatures, suggesting a moment of familiarity that momentarily makes one forget the sadness that hangs over them. However, Abigail's facial expression changes drastically when she sees a girl resembling Susie through the glass, where the hope on her face quickly turns to deep disappointment when she realizes it is not Susie she is looking at. Her despairing facial expression reflects a feeling of irreplaceable loss, signaling a moment of denial that Susie will not return.

The change in atmosphere from lighthearted to tense occurs when Abigail and Grandma Lynn engage in an intense argument. Their dialogue shows the conflict in dealing with the loss of Susie, where Grandma Lynn, with a pragmatic approach, tries to encourage Abigail to move on. At the same time, Abigail is immersed in deep sadness, unable to see a way out of the grief that engulfs her. This argument reveals the different ways the two of them deal with reality. It exposes Abigail's despair, where each conversation further emphasizes the unspeakable loss and the difficulty of moving forward.

c. Meaning of Myth

In semiotics, myth refers to the deeper cultural or ideological meanings attached to seemingly simple signs. In the warm scene at the beginning, Fenerman and Abigail's dialogue reflects a relaxed atmosphere and contains myths about how humans use humor and familiarity to overcome trauma and grief. The jokes about Fenerman's physical changes and the miniature house game that Buckley highlights illustrate the human attempt to find small moments of happiness during grief, suggesting the myth that even in the worst situations, humans will always find ways to feel normal and connected to others as if familiarity and humor are natural defense mechanisms against suffering.

However, when Abigail sees a girl who resembles Susie, another myth is revealed- the myth of hope and rejection. Abigail's face changes from hope to deep disappointment, reflecting the human struggle to accept loss. It shows that although we may try to move on, the shadow of the lost continues to haunt us, reminding us of our inability to let go entirely. The

argument between Abigail and Grandma Lynn deepens this myth, revealing the conflict between a pragmatic approach to moving on and drowning in deep grief. This myth highlights that the grieving process is a complex and personalized journey, where there is no right or wrong way to deal with it, and each individual must find a way to come to terms with loss.

Table 3.5 Scene 5 of The Lovely Bones, a moment of acceptance from Abigail Salmon who has lost her daughter

<p>Visual</p>  <p>(A)</p>  <p>(B)</p>	 <p>(C)</p>
Sign	Acceptance, Stillness, Calmness, Letting go,
Settings	Susie's room
Timeline	02.00.22 – 02.01.03
Dialogue	-

a. Meaning of Denotation

In this scene at the end of the story, as Abigail enters Susie's room, the air is tense with heartbreaking silence. Every step she took toward her daughter's bed was like treading through a shard of pain-filled memories. Her eyes were glued to the heart-shaped pillow Susie was still hugging tightly as if she did not want to let go. Trembling, she stepped closer to the window

that had always cast a shadow of hope. A ceiling of stars greeted her while the night breeze gently brushed her hair.

Abigail felt a deep emptiness in her chest, yet warmth flowed from the memories etched so profoundly. With trembling hands, she hugged Susie's favorite doll, lying in the corner of the room, feeling the warm embrace of her long-gone child. With a heavy heart but filled with serenity, Abigail closed her eyes for a moment, letting the tears fall freely. However, when her eyes opened again, a new strength radiated. The strength to face the days ahead with hope and courage. With steady steps, Abigail said goodbye to the room, bringing within herself a new chance to heal her wounds and rebuild her life with love and hope.

b. Meaning of Connotations

In this final scene, Abigail enters Susie's room with a mixed feeling of stillness, calmness, and warmth enveloping the room. The stillness reflects the profound sadness Abigail feels at the loss of Susie, while the calmness symbolizes peace and acceptance of what has happened. These signifiers depict Abigail's emotional journey through letting go of her daughter. Her trembling steps towards Susie's bed show how she treads the shards of memories filled with pain but also with the courage to face a complicated reality. Her eyes are fixated on the heart-shaped pillow that Susie still hugs tightly, creating an image of warmth and affection that is still felt even though Susie is gone. As Abigail feels the emptiness in her chest, but also the warmth of the memories engraved in her mind, this reflects the mixed feelings of sadness and warmth that occur in the process of dealing with loss. When she hugs Susie's favorite doll, it is also symbolic of how Abigail portrays the enduring love and memories that will always be cherished.

When Abigail closes her eyes for a moment, letting the tears fall freely, it is a moment where she permits herself to feel the grief and loss fully but also shows strength and fortitude in the face of reality. When her eyes reopened, she revealed a new strength, signaling that she had found peace and strength to move forward. With steady steps, Abigail bid farewell to the room, bringing within herself a new opportunity to heal wounds and rebuild her life with love and hope. This shows how Abigail has reached a point where she is ready to accept reality and move on with her life with courage and optimism.

c. Meaning of Myth

In the myths of human civilization, mothers have been regarded as the embodiment of love, tenderness, and resilience. However, in the semiotic myth of life, a mother's sincerity in letting go of her child acquires profound meaning. As the cornerstone of an enduring story, it plays a vital role in embracing the transformative power of loss. First of all, in semiotic myth, maternal sincerity symbolizes a spiritual journey that transcends the boundaries of humanity. Mothers who can let go of their children demonstrate a depth of faith and acceptance of inevitable fate. Here, the mother's spiritual strength symbolizes the wisdom that transforms grief into enlightenment.

Secondly, the mother's sincerity shows the harmony between pain and strength. In the semiotic myth, the departure of a child is the toughest test for a mother. However, when letting go, the mother finds new strength. She finds a glimmer of light in a moment of darkness that leads her to peace. Thirdly, motherhood is the purest expression of unconditional love. In the semiotic myth, a mother's love never ends, even when her child is gone. Through this sincerity, the mother gives the greatest gift: the freedom for the child to pass on while she embraces her eternal love. Fourth, maternal sincerity marks the journey toward acceptance and transformation. In the semiotic myth, the mother who can let go of her child demonstrates the ability to accept unexpected change. From deep sorrow, she generates the courage to move forward and face the future with determination.

Finally, the mother's sincerity creates a story that sticks to the collective human consciousness. In semiotic myth, the story of the mother's loss and courage becomes part of an enduring cultural heritage. Through this story, future generations are prepared to face the trials of life with courage and wisdom. In closing, a mother's willingness to let her child go shows an indescribable glory in the semiotic myth of human life. As a reflection of love, wisdom, and courage, the mother's willingness becomes a solid foundation for the human soul's journey toward the eternal light of truth.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This chapter describes how the exploration of the stages of grief through visual representations in cinema serves as an exciting avenue for understanding the complexity of human emotions. In Peter Jackson's film adaptation, "The Lovely Bones," the journey of grief experienced by the characters is depicted visually, providing insight into the stages of grief outlined by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. This research explores Roland Barthes-style semiotic analysis to dissect how visual symbols in the film represent the stages of grief, utilizing contemporary theories and references. Semiotic analysis allows for unpacking layers of meaning in visual representations, revealing how these symbols shape our understanding of the world around us and the human experience (Sami et al., 2019). In "The Lovely Bones," Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation prove particularly relevant in deciphering the visual cues that represent stages of grief. Denotation refers to visual elements' literal, surface-level meaning, while connotation delves into more profound, cultural, and symbolic associations.

Visual analysis in a cinematic context can reveal layers of meaning not previously thought of when representing human emotions, such as grief. By interpreting visual symbols, we can understand the characters' inner journeys in the movie more deeply (Jones, A., & Smith, B. 2020). The denial stage of grief is visually represented through the juxtaposition of beautiful images with the grim reality of Susie Salmon's death. This denial is symbolized by the beautiful suburban setting and bright colors, which mask the underlying tragedy. Barthes' myth theory further enriches this analysis by revealing how the beautiful imagery functions as a myth to hide the harsh reality of Susie's death. Anger emerges as a prominent stage of grief, manifested visually through contrasting color palettes and framing techniques. Scenes depicting family turmoil are often bathed in sharp reds and blues, which symbolize the intensity of their emotions. Barthes' concept of anchor and relay explains how these color choices anchor the audience's interpretation of the character's anger while conveying the underlying psychological turmoil. The denial stage of grief is visually represented through the juxtaposition of beautiful images with the grim reality of Susie Salmon's death. This denial is symbolized by the beautiful suburban setting and vibrant colors, which mask the underlying tragedy.

Barthes' myth theory further enriches this analysis by revealing how the beautiful imagery functions as a myth to hide the harsh reality of Susie's death. The bargaining stage of

grief is subtly conveyed through visual motifs of nostalgia and longing. Flashbacks to happy times with Susie evoke a sense of longing and a desperate attempt to negotiate with the past. Barthes' notion of intertextuality further enriches this analysis by highlighting how these nostalgic visuals interact with the characters' internal negotiations and fantasies. Depression pervades the visual landscape of "The Lovely Bones" through unsaturated colors and somber imagery. Subtle visual details, such as empty spaces and desolate landscapes, evoke a deep sense of loss and despair. Barthes' concept of the punctum explains how these visual cues pierce the viewer's consciousness, inviting empathy toward the characters' overwhelming sadness. Finally, acceptance emerges as a poignant visual motif in the movie's finale. The soft lighting and subtle images symbolize the characters' gradual acceptance of Susie's death and their journey toward healing. Barthes' concepts of studium and punctum underscore how these quiet visuals engage the viewer emotionally, inviting reflection on the complexities of grief and resilience.

In conclusion, "The Lovely Bones" offers an in-depth visual exploration of the stages of grief through the lens of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. Viewers gain insight into the characters' emotional journeys and the universal human experience of loss and resilience by dissecting visual symbols and motifs. This essay underscores the power of visual storytelling to convey profound truths about the human condition and the transformative journey of grief.

A. Denial

Of the five scenes featuring stages of grief, 1 scene features a scene of denial. In scene 1 from 00.38.59 - 00.39.43, the scene depicted involves a police officer named Len Fenerman, who finds evidence in the form of Susie's clothes and explains his findings to Jack and Abigail, indicating that Susie was likely murdered. Len Fenerman also mentions that he found a large amount of blood around where Benny was found, indicating a violent incident. Despite this, Susie's body is still missing, which leads to a search operation. The scene then moves to the bedroom where Abigail, who feels hopeless, contrasts with Jack, who maintains hope that their daughter is alive and will be found soon. In the context of grief theory, specifically grief stage theory, Jack and Abigail's reactions can be analyzed. Jack's refusal to accept Susie's death and his persistent belief that Susie is alive despite the evidence presented by Fenerman corresponds to the concept of denial, which is a typical stage in the grieving process.

(Holland & Neimeyer, 2010). Denial is characterized by a refusal to accept the reality of a situation, often as a defense mechanism to protect oneself from the overwhelming emotions associated with loss. Jack's insistence on keeping Susie alive reflects his struggle to accept the harsh reality of her potential death.

On the other hand, Abigail represents a different stage in the grieving process. Her feelings of hopelessness and resignation could be indicative of the depressive stage in the grief model. Depression in grieving is characterized by feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a sense of emptiness as individuals grapple with the magnitude of their loss (Holland & Neimeyer, 2010). Abigail's emotional state reflects the profound sadness and despair that can accompany the realization of the death of a loved one. The scene's dynamic between Jack and Abigail illustrates the complexity of grief and the diverse ways individuals navigate the stages of mourning. Jack's denial and unwavering hope juxtaposed with Abigail's sad acceptance highlights the different paths individuals may take in processing and coping with loss. This portrayal aligns with the idea that grief is a multifaceted experience that unfolds uniquely for each person, encompassing a range of emotions and responses as individuals navigate their way through the stages of mourning (Costa et al., 2007).

At its core, the scene captures a poignant moment in the characters' grief journey, displaying the interplay between denial and acceptance, hope and despair, as they grapple with the uncertainty and pain of Susie's disappearance and presumed death. Through the lens of grief theory, the characters' reactions can be understood as part of a complex and evolving process of coming to terms with loss and finding ways to cope with the profound emotional upheaval that accompanies it.

B. Anger

In scenes 53.54 - 55.09 depicted, Susie, still struggling to come to terms with his death, chooses to revisit her past and hopes to find her way back. During her escape, she witnesses several miniature ships, which remind her of her father's creations, collide and shatter, reflecting Jack's depressive state as he vents his frustration by destroying his collectibles. This depiction is in line with Kübler-Ross' theory of anger in the stages of bereavement, where individuals experiencing bereavement will experience predictable stages of shock and denial, anger, depression, and acceptance

(Ian J. Hamilton, 2017). Susie's actions and the destruction of the miniature symbolize the anger stage of grief, reflecting the emotional turmoil and frustration that can accompany the grieving process. In addition, the visual elements in this scene play an important role in conveying the emotions and inner struggles of the characters. According to Hullman, narrative visualization combines the conventions of communicative and exploratory information visualization to tell a particular story (Hullman & Diakopoulos, 2011). In this context, Susie's encounter with the miniature ship and Jack's destructive behavior visually communicate their emotional states and the intensity of their grief and anger. Visual cues, such as the crash of the ship and the act of destroying collectible objects, serve as powerful symbols of the characters' emotional turmoil and psychological distress. Visual communication theory can provide additional insight into the impact of scenes and the role of visual elements in conveying complex emotions. Visual communication relies on a combination of appearance, manner, activity, props, and setting to effectively communicate a message (Amara et al., 2022). In the scene depicted, the appearance of the miniature ships, the way they collide, and the activity of Jack destroying his collectibles all contribute to the visual narrative that conveys the emotional state of the characters. These visual cues enhance the audience's understanding of the characters' sadness, anger and internal conflict.

The combination of sadness and anger in this scene resonates with research exploring the relationship between these emotions, especially in response to injustice and traumatic experiences. Research has shown that individuals experiencing complicated grief can exhibit explosive combinations of sadness and anger, especially in the context of unresolved injustice and traumatic loss (Tay et al., 2015; Rees et al., 2017). Susie's unresolved feelings about her death and Jack's depressive behavior reflect a complex interplay between grief and anger, which highlights the multifaceted nature of emotional responses to loss and trauma. In terms of visual communication design, this scene exemplifies how visual elements can evoke emotional responses and convey nuanced themes. Visual communication design, characterized by innovation and unique visual experiences, is crucial in shaping narratives and capturing audience attention (Cai & Su, 2022). The visual composition of the scene, including the miniature depiction of the ship and Jack's actions, demonstrates how visual storytelling can evoke empathy, provoke introspection, and deepen the audience's connection to

the characters' experiences.

The depiction of grief and anger in this scene aligns with the stages of grief theory, which emphasizes the non-linear and individualized nature of the grieving process. Contrary to the traditional linear model of the stages of grief, which suggests a fixed progression from denial to acceptance, contemporary perspectives recognize the complexity and variability of the grief experience (Corr, 2015). Susie's shifts between looking back on her past and seeking serenity, along with Jack's angry outbursts, challenge the idea of linear stages of grief and underscore the unique and diverse nature of the grief response. In conclusion, the scene featuring Susie's return and Jack's destructive behavior encapsulates an exploration of grief, anger, and unresolved emotions. The scene effectively conveys the characters' internal struggles and emotional complexity by referencing the stages of grief theory, visual communication, and the interplay between grief and anger. Through visual cues, narrative elements, and thematic depth, the scene leads the audience to explore loss, trauma, and the complicated dynamics of human emotions.

C. Bargaining

The scene where Susie Salmon enters George Harvey's house and discovers the bodies of various victims, including herself, gradually revealing their tragic deaths, can be linked to the bargaining stage in grief theory. In this context, Susie's journey through the house, discovering the bodies of the women and children killed by Harvey, reflects a negotiation with the reality of death and loss, which is a crucial aspect of the bargaining stage in the grieving process (Blesinki et al., 2022). This stage involves making sense of the loss and coming to terms with a new reality, which goes hand in hand with Susie's gradual realization of the fate that befell her and other victims in the narrative. In addition, visual communication theory can explain the impact of the visual elements in this scene, especially in creating a tense atmosphere. Visual communication theory emphasizes the importance of visuals in conveying concepts and meanings (Febimaesuri & Pratama, 2021). In the depicted scene, the flickering and extinguished candles can ultimately symbolize the ephemeral nature of life and the ominous presence of death, increasing the overall tension and creating a gripping atmosphere for the audience. The visual cues in this scene play an important role in evoking emotions and

enhancing the impact of the narrative on viewers, aligning with the principles of visual communication theory.

The negotiation and bargaining depicted in Susie's confrontation with Harvey and disclosure of the truth about her fate aligns with the negotiation process in grief theory, where individuals attempt to find meaning and acceptance in the face of loss (Blesinki et al., 2022). Susie's testimony of seeing Harvey sitting in front of the safe containing his body symbolizes a moment of reckoning and acceptance of his death, reflecting the negotiation with the harsh reality of his death. This negotiation phase is crucial in the grieving process as individuals attempt to reconcile their emotions and thoughts regarding the loss, which is evident in Susie's journey through the house and her eventual confrontation with the truth.

Furthermore, the use of visual semiotics in analyzing this scene can provide insights into the symbolic representations and meanings embedded in the visual elements of the narrative. Semiotic analysis focuses on interpreting signs and symbols to uncover underlying messages and connotations (Akbar & Pratishara, 2023). In the scene described, visual cues such as the dark setting, the discovery of the corpse, and the flickering candles can be interpreted as symbols of death, tragedy, and impending revelation. By applying semiotic analysis, one can deconstruct the visual components of the scene to reveal deeper layers of meaning and symbolism intended to evoke specific responses from the audience. In conclusion, the scene depicting Susie Salmon's exploration of George Harvey's house, the discovery of the victim's bodies, and finally, the confrontation with the truth about her fate encapsulates the elements of negotiation and bargaining in the grieving process. Susie's gradual realization and acceptance of her death reflects the negotiation phase, where individuals come to terms with their loss and search for meaning after tragedy. In addition, visual communication and semiotic analysis enhance the understanding of how visual elements contribute to a scene's emotional impact and narrative depth, underscoring the intricate interplay between storytelling, visual cues, and audience interpretation in the cinematic experience.

D. Depression

The interaction between Fenerman and Abigail in the narrative transitions from a lighthearted atmosphere to one filled with tension and emotional turmoil. Initially, Fenerman engages in lighthearted banter about his physical changes, to which Abigail responds with a smile, displaying a relaxed interaction. The mention of their miniature house, specifically the part that represents Fenerman as the Chief of Police, adds a playful element to their conversation, with Abigail humorously relating Fenerman's appearance to his job, commenting on his weight change. This exchange sets a tone of familiarity and comfort between the characters (Zhang et al., 2022).

However, the mood changes dramatically when Abigail sees a young girl who resembles Susie, with her back to her through the connecting window. The author builds tension by hinting at the potential resemblance between the girl and Susie, creating anticipation. Fenerman, in a polite manner, offers Abigail to sit down while he remains fixated on the girl. As the girl begins to turn around, Abigail's expression shifts from hope to deep disappointment as she realizes that the girl is not Susie. This moment plunged Abigail into deep despair and loss, as her facial expression conveyed deep disappointment and despair at the dashed hopes of seeing Susie again. The once-lighthearted atmosphere is filled with tension and emotional strain (Newson et al., 2011).

The heated debate between Abigail Salmon and Grandma Lynn delves into the depths of grief and loss following the loss of Susie. Abigail grapples with the profound grief of losing her daughter, struggling to come to terms with this reality. On the other hand, Grandma Lynn encourages Abigail to take proactive steps in caring for the remaining family members. This scene illustrates the intergenerational conflict in dealing with loss, with Grandma Lynn adopting a pragmatic and action-oriented approach that contrasts with Abigail's more emotional and introspective stance (Meuser & Marwit, 2001).

Connecting the themes depicted in the narrative to theories of grief, specifically the stages of grief theory, we can observe how the characters navigate through different stages of mourning and emotional processing. The stages of grief theory states that individuals experience various emotional stages after a loss, including denial, anger,

bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Abigail's journey through hope, disappointment, and deep despair reflects elements of these stages, demonstrating the complexity of grief reactions. Additionally, Grandma Lynn's pragmatic approach aligns with the theory that each person may go through the stages of grief differently based on their coping mechanisms and support systems (Holland & Neimeyer, 2010). In addition, visual communication theory can be applied to analyze the impact of visual storytelling elements in conveying emotion and narrative. Visual storytelling involves using images, colors, and visual cues to communicate messages and evoke specific responses from the audience. In the scene depicted, the visual cues of Abigail's changing facial expressions, the miniature setting of the house, and the young girl's appearance all contribute to the emotional depth of the narrative. These visual elements enhance the audience's understanding of the character's internal struggles and the dynamics between them. By incorporating visual storytelling techniques, the author effectively conveys the complexities of grief, loss, and interpersonal relationships visually appealingly (Zhang et al., 2022).

In short, the narrative intricately weaves together elements of grief, loss, and family dynamics, nuancedly depicting the characters' emotional journeys. Through lighthearted moments, deep despair, and generational conflict, the scene captures the multifaceted nature of human emotions in the face of tragedy. By utilizing visual storytelling techniques and theories of grief, the narrative not only engages the audience but also provides a profound exploration of how one navigates through loss and emotional turmoil.

E. Acceptance

In the poignant scene depicted, when Abigail enters Susie's room for the last time, the atmosphere is full of tension and haunting silence. Every step she takes toward her daughter's bed feels like stepping on a shard of pain-filled memories. Her eyes were glued to the heart-shaped pillow Susie was still clutching tightly as if she did not want to let go. Trembling, she approached the window that had always given her hope, greeted by the starry sky and the night breeze gently brushing her hair. Abigail felt a deep emptiness in her chest, but there was also a warmth flowing from the deeply engraved memories. With trembling hands, she hugged Susie's favorite doll, lying in the corner of the room, feeling the warm embrace of her long-gone child. With a heavy

yet calm heart, Abigail closed her eyes momentarily, letting her tears fall freely. However, when she opened her eyes again, a new strength radiated from her - the strength to face the days ahead with hope and courage. With a firm step, Abigail bid farewell to the room, bringing a new chance to heal her wounds and rebuild her life with love and hope.

The emotional journey experienced by Abigail in this scene can be linked to acceptance theory, specifically in the context of the five stages of grief. As described by Kübler-Ross and Kessler, the five stages of grief include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Abigail's initial denial of the reality of her daughter's absence, followed by the anger and pain she feels as she goes through Susie's room, reflects the denial and anger stages. The moment when she hugs Susie's belongings and allows herself to cry signifies a form of bargaining and depression before finally reaching a state of acceptance as she prepares to move forward with renewed strength and determination.

Additionally, within visual communication theory, the scene depicted with Abigail in Susie's room can be analyzed through communication dynamics and visual storytelling. As explored by Messaris, visual communication studies how individuals mentally process and transform arguments in communication (Rihhadatul'aisyi et al., 2021). In this scene, visual elements such as Abigail's trembling hands, the heart-shaped pillow, and the starlit sky through the window serve as visual cues that communicate Abigail's emotional journey and inner turmoil without the need for explicit dialog. These visual elements enhance the storytelling by conveying Abigail's feelings and the mood of the room, creating a strong emotional impact on the audience.

Abigail's scene in Susie's room encapsulates a profound narrative of grief, healing, and resilience by relating the themes of acceptance and visual communication theory. Abigail's journey from pain and grief to acceptance and newfound strength is a personal transformation and a visual and emotional narrative that resonates with the audience, showcasing the power of storytelling through visual elements and emotional depth.

F. Comparison with International Research

Audra L. Rygh's (2018) research, "Visualizing Grief: An Exploration of the Stages of Grief through Image and Design," explores the deeply emotional journey of grief using visual art and design as expressive tools. The research systematically explores the stages of grief, conceptualized by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, which include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Rygh's innovative approach aims to translate these complex emotional experiences into visual representations that resonate with viewers on a deeper emotional level. Through this process, the research seeks not only to validate the personal and often isolating experience of grief but also to create a universal language that various audiences can understand and feel. Central to Rygh's methodology is integrating various artistic mediums and design principles to capture the essence of each stage of grief. The research highlights how color, shape, and composition can evoke specific emotions and reflect the nuanced transitions between the various stages. As such, visualization serves as a reflective mirror and a therapeutic tool, offering individuals a way to externalize and process their grief. Rygh's work emphasizes the importance of visual storytelling in acknowledging and honoring the multifaceted nature of grief, providing a cathartic space for creators and viewers to engage with their emotions.

In conclusion, Rygh's "Visualizing Grief" underscores the transformative power of art and design in understanding and navigating the grieving process. The research provides valuable insight into how visual representations can bridge the gap between internal experience and external expression, fostering empathy and connection among those who encounter the work. By bringing the stages of grief to life through visual means, Rygh contributes to the academic discourse on grief and bereavement and offers a meaningful resource for individuals seeking comfort and understanding in their journey of loss.

The second research, entitled "GOOD GRIEF: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF TONYA IN AUGUST WILSON'S *KING HEDLEY II* THROUGH THE LENS OF "THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF" by Kala Ross (2017). Both analyses, "King Hedley II" and "The Lovely Bones," offer an in-depth look at the representation of grief, albeit through different approaches. The

analysis of “King Hedley II” focuses on Tonya’s character development using the lens of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s “five stages of grief.” Stanislavski’s methodology is used to emphasize Tonya’s character development. Stanislavski’s methodology emphasizes the importance of imagination and role justification through personal experience, observation, and the spontaneous creativity of the actress. Personal experiences and observations, such as observations of mothers who lost their children, were used to bring the characters to life and assist the actress in understanding the stages of grief.

In contrast, the analysis of “The Lovely Bones” uses Roland Barthes’ semiotic approach to explore the visual representation of the stages of grief in the movie, highlighting the emotional impact of sudden loss on individuals and families. While not explicitly addressing creativity, this analysis reflects how the film’s production team portrayed deep emotional themes. Both analyses emphasize the importance of a deep understanding of grief through direct experience in acting or through visual representation in film. In addition, they highlight the importance of mental health support and understanding of trauma in the healing process. However, limitations in both analyses are also recognized, including potential interpretive biases and limitations in the scope of the analysis that may not fully reflect the intentions of the filmmakers or other cultural contexts.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

A. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data presentation and analysis, the research on the visual representation of the stages of grief in the film *The Lovely Bones*, using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, provides a deep understanding of how cinema can effectively portray the complex emotion of grief. By analyzing the film through Barthes' concepts of denotation, connotation, and myth, this research reveals the complex ways in which visual symbols depict the stages of grief described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. The findings reveal that the movie uses visual elements to illustrate the stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, depicting the characters' emotional journey and the universal loss experience. Beautiful suburban landscapes and bright colors represent denial while contrasting color palettes and framing techniques represent anger. Nostalgic flashbacks convey bargaining, unsaturated colors, barren landscapes depict depression, and soft lighting and gentle imagery signify acceptance. These visual elements illustrate the characters' emotional journeys and reflect cultural attitudes toward loss and healing. This research highlights the power of visual storytelling in conveying profound truths about the human condition and the transformative journey of grief, emphasizing the importance of mental health support and understanding trauma in the healing process. Overall, the analysis shows that *The Lovely Bones* offers a profound visual exploration of the stages of grief, providing insight into the characters' emotional journeys and the broader human experience of resilience in the face of loss. In this research that explores the visual representation of sadness in *The Lovely Bones* film adaptation by Peter Jackson through the lens of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. **Visual Representation of Grief:** The film uses visual elements to represent the stages of grief as outlined by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. These stages—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—are portrayed through various cinematic techniques such as color schemes, setting, and symbolic imagery.
2. **Denotation and Connotation:** Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation help to unpack the film's visual elements, showing how the literal (denotative) and symbolic (connotative) aspects contribute to a deeper understanding of grief. For example, bright

suburban settings mask underlying tragedy (denial), while contrasting colors express the intensity of anger.

3. **Stages of Grief through Cinematic Symbols:** The stages of grief are explored visually:
 - a. **Denial:** Shown through the contrast between beautiful, vibrant imagery and the grim reality of Susie's death.
 - b. **Anger:** Depicted using sharp color contrasts and destructive behavior, such as Jack's breaking of his collectibles.
 - c. **Bargaining:** Symbolized through nostalgic flashbacks and the negotiation of past memories.
 - d. **Depression:** Reflected in unsaturated colors and desolate settings, representing loss and despair.
 - e. **Acceptance:** Captured in soft lighting and peaceful imagery toward the film's conclusion.
4. **Semiotic and Visual Communication Analysis:** Barthes' semiotics offers a robust framework for interpreting these cinematic choices, revealing how visual storytelling can convey complex emotional journeys. Additionally, theories of visual communication enhance the audience's emotional engagement with the characters' grief.
5. **Comparison with Other Research:** Similar to Audra L. Rygh's research, which visualizes the stages of grief through art and design, *The Lovely Bones* utilizes visual storytelling to convey the multifaceted nature of loss. Both works highlight the importance of visual mediums in expressing the complexities of human emotions.

B. LIMITATION

This study has some limitations that need to be considered. First, the subjective nature of visual interpretation in semiotic analysis may introduce biases that affect audience understanding. Second, this study only focuses on visual representations in one film, "The Lovely Bones," so the generalizability of the findings to other films or other visual media may be limited. Third, this analysis only illustrates a portion of the filmmakers' initial intentions, as there are no direct interviews or data from the filmmakers that can provide deeper context regarding the visual decisions made. Fourth, the limited literature may affect the richness of perspectives provided in the analysis, especially in applying Barthes' theory. Lastly, despite

addressing some contemporary theories, this study does not fully consider cultural variations in response to grief, which may limit the relevance of the findings in other cultural contexts. Therefore, further research with a wider scope and more diverse methods is needed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the visual representation of the stages of grief across different media and cultures.

This study shows that the visual representation of grief in *The Lovely Bones* is heavily influenced by American culture, which tends to emphasize individualism. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, this research highlights how the grieving process is portrayed as a deeply personal journey, with strong visual symbols to express individual emotions. However, the focus on this approach may be less reflective of collective or community-based mourning practices that are more common in other cultures. Additionally, the use of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five-stage model of grief, popular in Western psychology, limits the interpretation within an American cultural framework, without considering the variations in how other societies understand and respond to loss.

Another limitation is the use of typically American cinematic conventions, such as strong emotional narratives and striking visual symbolism, which may not be relevant in other cultural contexts that tend to hide emotional expression more. Furthermore, by assuming that the visual techniques and emotional journeys in this film are universal, this study may fail to capture the diversity of ways of mourning in non-Western cultures. Representations of mourning in more collectivist or spiritually oriented cultures may require a more diverse analytical approach to understand visual meaning more broadly.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, several suggestions can be made for further research and practical application:

1. In-depth research on the visual representation of stages of grief in film can be extended by analyzing other films to enrich our understanding of how cinema can reflect and communicate complex emotions such as grief.
2. Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, used in this study, proved effective in unraveling hidden meanings in visuals, so it is recommended that it be applied in other visual analyses in the context of cinema and other visual media.
3. The results of this research can serve as reference material for filmmakers in creating strong visual narratives that evoke the audience's emotions, especially in depicting deep

emotional processes such as sadness and grief.

4. For practical applications, the results of this study can be used in art therapy and visual design as a tool to help individuals express and understand their emotions, as well as in education to teach the importance of visual representation in the communication of emotions.

Thus, this research makes theoretical contributions and has vast practical applications in various fields.

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