

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter will cover introduction to the research that is conducted. This consists of background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, research methodology, clarification of key terms, and general outline of the following chapters.

### 1.1. Background of Research

Power is a topic that has been discussed on various platforms, whether it is novels, literature, and reality. Power often appears and discussed in many novels, which are usually about the power of a certain race, gender, or a higher figure. According to Mills (2003), power is often defined as the capacity of powerful agents to realize their will over the will of powerless people and force them to do things which they do not wish to do. Power has also been categorized based on the types that they exert, as seen from French & Raven's (1959) social bases of power. Power, according to French and Raven's bases, include legitimate, reward, referent, coercive, informational, expert, and in Raven's recent addition; informational power. Foucault (1982), on the other hand, argued power is not something that can be owned, but rather something that acts and manifests itself in a certain way; it is more a strategy than a possession. Instead of focusing on how it goes hand in hand with oppression, Foucault's focus is more on the resistance of those the power is exerted upon (Foucault, cited through Bălan).

Throughout the years, literary works, recently young adult, often discuss the use of power, whether it is between the government and society or a person with a higher social standing the other. Dystopian novels are perhaps the most popular medium that discusses power relations, as it often discusses the interplay of power between the government and society. Novels such as *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, and *Legend* are among the stories that discuss the power of the government and the oppression of the people who live under the government's power. The societies that live under the government's power are often

represented in these stories as the oppressed, caught under the power that the government holds against them. However, the oppressed citizens eventually find a way to rebel against the government. Literary works throughout the years such as *The Hunger Games* show that power does not only come from the people that exert it to others, but from the people that also resist the power. Aligning with Foucault's (1982) theory, they too, exert a form of power.

Several studies have analyzed the use of power. In social context, Olsson and Heizmann (2015) analyzed the importance of Foucault's power theory in academics, professional, and artistic context, meaning workplaces where superiors use information as a form of power in their research article. Olsson and Heizmaan (2015) conclude that using "Foucauldian lens" is certainly beneficial and adds more in-depth understanding of how power can be used by those that have information and are able to convey the information in the workplace. In literary context, Tahir's (2017) research analyzed of Suzanne Collins' novel *The Hunger Games* using Kalberg's (2005) characteristics of power and the types of power from Lakey (2009), concluding that several of Karlberg's characteristics of power and Lakey's power categorization are evident throughout the novel, whether it is a type of power exerted from the government or from the citizens of Panem. Noerlaely (2016), on the other hand, uses Raven's (2008) bases social power to analyze Sara Shepard's novel *Pretty Little Liars*, in the conclusion that five of Raven's (2008) social power can be seen between the characters: legitimate, referent, coercive, informational, and expert power

Foucault's theory has been used in several social researches over the years, but it is rarely used as a framework for literary analysis. Furthermore, despite its popularity among general readers and critics throughout the years after its release as well as themes of power that are evident in the novel, *Six of Crows* has not been analyzed in academic research papers. Hence, this gap will be filled by using Foucault's (1982) theory of power as the main framework in analyzing Leigh Bardugo's bestselling novel *Six of Crows*. Leigh Bardugo's novel, first published in 2015, is about six outcasts with different motivations who are sent on a suicide mission to break into Fjerda's most secured prison and retrieve a valuable asset.

Since most studies analyzing the use of power have young adult characters with good motives and a clear intention to help in the benefit of other people, Leigh Bardugo's group of enigmatic characters in her novel *Six of Crows* are morally gray and bear minimal heroic qualities that most young adult protagonists have. Bardugo's novel consists of characters whose motivations are not to serve or save the society, rather for their own personal gain. Hence, this study will analyze the power dynamics that are exercised between characters with gray motives as opposed to the usual heroic young adult characters in most novels. As the interplay of power is evident between the six main characters as well as the people who once exert power against them, this research will analyze how power dynamic is portrayed in the novel.

## **1.2. Research questions**

This study aims to answer the following research question:

- How is power dynamic portrayed in the novel?

## **1.3. Aims of research**

The aim of this research is to analyze the portrayal of power dynamics in the novel *Six of Crows*.

## **1.4. Scope of research**

This research is limited to analyzing power dynamics that occurs in Leigh Bardugo's novel *Six of Crows* (2015) as well as how it affects the characters of the novel. This research uses Foucault's (1982) theory of power as its framework in analyzing the power dynamics present in the novel.

## **1.5. Significance of research**

The research has provided more insight into the use of power in Leigh Bardugo's novel, analyzing its utilization through the character's actions and reactions. Furthermore, the findings

of this research may help readers in understanding Foucault's power theory and how it can be used to analyze the theme of power in novels.

### **1.6. Research methodology**

The data was collected from excerpts of Leigh Bardugo's novel *Six of Crows* such as narration, characterization, and dialogue; which will serve as textual evidence. These excerpts were collected based on context of conflict in the form of events that consist of fights and arguments. The research analyzed the novel's theme of power dynamic through setting and plot. These have been collected and analyzed to indicate how the power dynamic is portrayed in the novel.

### **1.7. Clarification of Key Terms**

In order to avoid misunderstandings and confusions, these are the explanations of the terms that will be used in this study

#### **1. Power**

"Power is the capacity of an agent to impose his will over the will of the powerless, or the ability to force them to do things they do not wish to do" (Mills, 2013).

#### **2. Character**

"Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it (the dialogue) and from what they do (the action)" (Abrams, 2009).

#### **3. Young Adult Literature:**

"Young Adult Literature are texts that are aimed for teenage audience, usually in the age span of 11-18" (Bucher and Hinton, 2013).

### **1.8. Organization of Paper**

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## **Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation**

This chapter discusses the theories related and used in this research. It will discuss the following theories such as young adult literature and theory of power. This chapter will also cover previous studies that are related to the current research.

## **Chapter III: Research Method**

This chapter will discuss the research methodology of the paper. It will cover the research design, data collection, data analysis, data presentation, and the research subjects or characters of the novel that are used in the study.

## **Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion**

This chapter discusses the findings of the novel. Using the main theoretical framework from Foucault, the findings are divided into the four notable pairings in which power is exercised. The findings will be further discussed in this chapter.

## **Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions**

This chapter concludes the findings and discussion of the research, as well as suggestions for further research regarding power dynamics,