



E-ISSN 3032-601X & P-ISSN 3032-7105

Vol. 2, No. 3, 2025

MISTER

**Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science,
Technology and Educational Research**

**Jurnal Penelitian Multidisiplin dalam Ilmu
Pengetahuan, Teknologi dan Pendidikan**

**UNIVERSITAS SERAMBI MEKKAH
KOTA BANDA ACEH**

mister@serambimekkah.ac.id

Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science Technology
and Educational Research

Journal of MISTER

Vol. 2, No. 3, 2025

Pages : 4161-4168

The Illusion of Truth: Hyperreality approach in The Hunt (2020)

Farhan Fauzan Winarno, Todo Sibuea

Universitas Dian Nusantara, Indonesia

Article in Journal of MISTER

Available at : <https://jurnal.serambimekkah.ac.id/index.php/mister/index>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.32672/mister.v2i3.3595>

How to Cite this Article

APA : Winarno, F. F., & Todo Sibuea. (2025). The Illusion of Truth: Hyperreality approach in The Hunt (2020). *Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science, Technology and Educational Research*, 2(3), 4161 - 4168. <https://doi.org/10.32672/mister.v2i3.3595>

Others Visit : <https://jurnal.serambimekkah.ac.id/index.php/mister/index>

MISTER: *Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science, Technology and Educational Research* is a scholarly journal dedicated to the exploration and dissemination of innovative ideas, trends and research on the various topics include, but not limited to functional areas of Science, Technology, Education, Humanities, Economy, Art, Health and Medicine, Environment and Sustainability or Law and Ethics.

MISTER: *Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science, Technology and Educational Research* is an open-access journal, and users are permitted to read, download, copy, search, or link to the full text of articles or use them for other lawful purposes. Articles on Journal of MISTER have been previewed and authenticated by the Authors before sending for publication. The Journal, Chief Editor, and the editorial board are not entitled or liable to either justify or responsible for inaccurate and misleading data if any. It is the sole responsibility of the Author concerned.



ISSN 3032-7105

ISSN 3032-601X



The Illusion of Truth: Hyperreality approach in The Hunt (2020)

Farhan Fauzan Winarno^{1*}, Todo Sibuea²
Universitas Dian Nusantara, Indonesia^{1,2}

Corresponding Author's Email: 3112111073@mahasiswa.undira.ac.id

Received: 07 10, 2025

| Accepted: 07 20, 2025

| Published: 07 22, 2025

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the concept of hyperreality and simulacra as proposed by Jean Baudrillard. Hyperreality is defined as something that appears to be truer than reality itself; it is connected to simulacra, which is the representation or depiction of something or how a copy represents reality. Thus, this study qualitatively investigated the experience of hyperreality and simulacra represented in the movie The Hunt (2020). This study qualitatively examined the different elements of the film, including scenes and dialogue from the film's trailer, intended to demonstrate how the film's construction of hyperreality and simulacra experiences are manifested. The findings reveal the ability of the internet and media to shape awareness about what people might conceive as real, and what is not. Ultimately, this research reveals that films like The Hunt provide more than entertainment value, because they provide insight into hyperreality and simulacra, determining the dynamics between both by demonstrating how the viewer might distinguish what is real, as opposed to representation.

Keywords: Hyperreality approach, four phases of simulacra, The Hunt (2020), film study

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, film has become one of the key factors in our daily lives, films are a form of mass communication which is used by capitalists to entertain the people watching it or known as the audience. In addition to that, films do way more than just entertain us, the filmmakers tend to share and represent their culture, history, personal experiences, and important messages through their stories or plots. According to Alfathoni and Manesa (2020) films are a mass media that is a part of communication which is one of the most important roles to send or receive the ideas that film makers are trying to share. Watching films gives us new knowledge because every film brings a different message and impression. Sometimes, movies can teach us new things, show us different viewpoints, and let us experience events as they actually occurred, like a film based on a French fairy tale, *Cinderella* (2015) which tells us about the tradition and culture of French by showing their Character, setting, event etc.

Therefore, raising questions of representation of reality or real life, some films can be a little exaggerated in doing it, this usually happens due to making the films more entertaining and more imagination to attract audiences who watch them. But lack of realisation, this activity can lead to the blurring of the representation of reality and the reality itself, the term is called hyperreality. Nowadays, hyperreality is spread throughout the world within media, like movies, hoaxes, ads, internet, and social media. These media sources create visual representation that is perceived to be even more real, exciting and believable than real life itself (Wati, 2024).

In general terms, hyperreality is a condition in which a representation or simulation of reality is more real than reality itself. Hyperreality occurs within simulacra which means the simulations, copies, or representations that imitate reality to an extent that they become more real than real. It is a philosophical notion that defines the confusion of the actual-real and the simulated-real (Baudrillard, 1981). Hyperreality can confuse people's perception of the real versus simulated reality. An example of this would be the picture of a guy on social media that is edited by filters and effects that hides the reality or real face of a guy himself. Hyperreality is not just shaped by the stories the media tells, but the media depicts reality, but not in a way that is not fully or actually real, which will affect us on how we see things in the real world around us (Cubitt, 2000).

While many films have distorted reality through CGI, special effects and green screen technology to make visual fantasies appear believable. CGI technology certainly helps create hyperreality and make the plot activities in the film appear that the extreme reality exists, such as *Avengers: Endgame* (2019) where it has almost all super powers represented, numerous planets and a time-machine (Budianto et al, 2022). However, *The Hunt* (2020) depicts hyperreality differently, it is not done by a producer or director for the audience's interpretation, but rather from the view point of the characters within the story itself. In the story of this film, a group of wealthy people (the elite) create a complex simulation world based on false theory conspiracies and kidnap twelve strangers called the deplorables (low, controversial people) that believe the theory, which makes a great example of hyperreality and simulacra both occurring within the story and shows how the hyperreality affects the people within the story and the audience.

There are various studies that have explored the concept of hyperreality in films. Although these studies may focus on different films compared to this one, they are still valuable for providing insights to the researcher, including a better understanding of the definition and instances of hyperreality in cinema. One such study by Dewi and Umaroh (2022) investigates the portrayal of hyperreality in the film *Aquaman*

(2018). Their analysis reveals how Aquaman exemplifies hyperreality through the four stages of simulacra and hyperreality. This serves as a helpful reference and contribution to this research, which aims to apply similar concepts to *The Hunt* (2020).

This study examines how the ideas of hyperreality and simulacra proposed by Jean Baudrillard are presented in the movie *The Hunt*, a controversial film made in 2020 that engages with social and political wars and fake illusion such as conspiracy theories. The study will then analyze selected scenes in detail, to illustrate the ways in which illusions, particularly hoaxes and false realities, have an impact on the characters portrayed in the film, but also on the audience who watch the film. Overall, we hope this study contributes meaningful insights about hyperreality's potential perils, and encourages more cautioning and thoughtful interaction with the world wide web.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design. In qualitative research, a descriptive design involves collecting information by examining the film: looking at the characters, observing their behaviors, and interpreting that behavior (Creswell, 2017). Descriptive designs are best when exploring the relative issues of simulacra and hyperreality that the researcher is interested in examining in *The Hunt* (2020). Furthermore, this research is using the qualitative method in order to aim at interpreting the experiences of the characters being studied. Qualitative research is useful for learning and understanding people's thoughts, point of view and personal experiences (Rahmawati and Budi, 2023).

The source of data that this research uses is mostly from the film itself entitled "*The Hunt*", this is a thriller based genre film that was released in 2020. It was directed by Craig Zobel and distributed by Universal Picture. The researcher collected the primary data by: first, watching the movie to understand what is really it about, what is the context and what is the moral of the story. Secondly, focusing on dialogue, scenes and characters that show any relevant connection to the topic which is hyperreality. Then, the researcher divides the scenes into categories and examines which of the four phases of simulacra each scene belongs to. Lastly, the researcher makes a conclusion of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher will examine the hyperreality and four phases of simulacra as it presents in the scenes and dialogue from *The Hunt* (2020), dialogues and scenes can represent the relevant issue and show how the characters within the story react to it (Nabilah and Dinanti, 2024). In order to experience hyperreality, simulacra must exist as simulacra are replicas of reality or representations of reality that appear real and eventually replace real reality. When one begins to trust the image over actual reality, that is when hyperreality occurs. Simulacra have four phases as described by Baudrillard (1981), 1. Reflection of reality: the image is a true representation of the real world. 2. Masking of reality: the representation distorts, exaggerates or destroys the truth. 3. Masking the absence of reality: the

representation hides the fact there is no real link to reality. 4. Pure simulacrum: the representation has no connection to the real; it creates its own reality altogether.

1. Phase one: Reflection of Reality

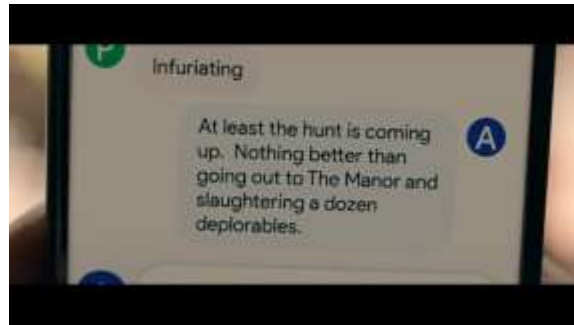


Fig. 1 - Class dynamic

A group text chat where people are joking about things that are not appropriate.

Figure 1 depicts a scene of the elites (rich people, wealthy liberals) within a group text chat making inappropriate jokes about killing or hunting down deplorables (lower class people, those who are controversial) at a place called The Manor (a big house). This scenario is representative of phase one of simulacra, because this shows that there is no apparent incorrectness and nothing that is changing in how reality is represented: it was neither inverted, blurred, or replaced. In this phase the representation of reality is made to maintain clarity and faith in reality (Freund, 2023). This phase is illustrated by the scene of demonstrating the social class conflict of the elites and the deplorables as a group text chat. This is like what could trigger in real-life, where people make dark or unfunny jokes about social politics, and it comes from a private group chat that gets photo-shopped and leaked.

2. Phase 2: Masking reality



Fig. 2 - hoaxes

The elites picking deplorables to be hunted

Dialogue:

Oliver : Okay, this is gary4USA. He's got a podcast called The Confederate Files. He's a P score of 8.5.
Ma : What does that "P" stand for again?
Mike : Piece of shit, I vote in.
Oliver : BigGameShane. Trigger warning. I'm sorry. He's an 8.8.
Mike : In.
All : In.
Athena : Next slide.
Oliver : Okay. Justice4Yall. She's a 6.5. This is what she says. "fuck this bitch. Athena Stone murders innocent men and..."
Athena : I don't need to hear more. That's our Snowball.

The scene above is a flashback scene where some of the elites are gathered in a living room and picking the people they want to hunt, they select who want they hunt based on the online comments they (deplorables) made online, such as lies or social media postings where they are saying mean things about the elites, and making theories about Manorgate (an imagined conspiracy, manor: big house, and gate: scandal. It is where the elites go hunting). This scene can be included in the second phase of simulacra in which reality gets obscured, inverted, or distorted. This second phase happens when the simulation is trying to twist the reality, it makes the representation not real or true from the original (Tramboo and Antony, 2021) This scene depicts how hoaxes and conspiracy theories have been spread through online, the deplorables creating false information and thinking that the elites hunt people for fun, when in reality, it is just a joke, it is not real .But this scene shows that even though something is not real, people treat it as if it is, making it seem more serious and ruining the elites. Furthermore, if we look deeper, we can see that the elites appear to be victims in this scene (victims of hoax), but it all began with an inappropriate joke about murder that they made in a group chat, which later got leaked, spread online and people believe it. This shows that the elites also distort reality by acting like victims when they are actually the ones who started it first, a group chat filled with elite, wealthy people talking about killing and hunting poor, low class deplorables.

3. Phase 3: Masking the absence of reality



Fig. 3 - The reality
Athena and the truth

Dialogue:

- Athena : We were joking, but you ignorami took it literally. You actually believed we were hunting human beings for sport.
- Crystal : But you are.
- Athena : What?
- Crystal : Hunting human beings for sport.
- Athena : No, It wasn't true.
- Crystal : This is your manor, isn't it?
- Athena : It's not a fucking manor. It's a house I rented in Croatia and had decorated.
- Crystal : Okay, right, but it's yours, and you're hunting people, so it's...
- Athena : I mean, it's true. Now. Now it's true because you made it true. You people, you take anything you want, and you twist it around until it fits into your backwards q fucking worldview. You wanted it to be true, so you decided it was. This was your idea.

In the scene above, we see two characters: Crystal, the girl on the left who is the main character, and Athena, the girl on the right who is one of the elites and the main villain. Athena is explaining to Crystal that Manorgate is not real. At first, the elites do not hunt people just for fun or sport; it was only a joke but they make it real because the 'deplorables' think it is real. They spread this idea online and created a huge fake conspiracy theory that damages the elites' reputation. The elites get really mad and want to get revenge on the deplorables, so they make Manorgate as real as the deplorables believe it to be and decide who they want to hunt. This scene shows the third phase of simulacra, where the fake representation covers up reality, pretending to be real even though it is not. In the third phase of simulacra we are no longer just looking at a copy of something real. We are looking at a copy of something that never existed in the first place (Wardani, 2019). The elites take these hoaxes and conspiracy theories about Manorgate and turn them into a real place to hunt the deplorables because people believe in it. The simulation becomes real even though it has no originality.

4 Phase 4: Pure Simulacrum



Fig. 4 and 5 Pure Simulation
Gas station and an old couple

Dialogue:

Mollie : What was that?
Moses : That's another one of us getting blown the fuck up.
Mollie : Fuck.
Moses : We got to find shelter. Come on!
Moses : Where the fuck are we?
MA : Well, Route 31, right outside of Elaine.
Moses : Elaine, where? Which state?
Ma : Arkansas.
Mollie : What? We're in Arkansas?
Mr. Whymper : Wha... Man, Jesus.
Moses : fucking Arkansas.

The scenes above occur when three of the twelve deplorables who were chosen to be hunted by the elites try to leave the dangerous area (gun-shooting area), and then they find a place that looks like a gas station and meet an old couple who seems harmless. Later, when they are inside the gas station, one of them gets poisoned after eating the snack on the shelf, here it unfolds the truth, the gas station and the old couple are not real, they are simulations pretending as reality. The old couple are one of the elites who pretend to be nice old American couples. The gas station is designed as realistic as what the gas station looks like in America, especially the state of Arkansas. This scene aligns with the fourth phase of simulacra where there is no reality at all, but only pure made-up simulacra or simulation. In the fourth phase, people no longer try to copy reality, they create their own copy that looks like it is real instead (Christanti et al., 2021). Here is a scene of a gas station and a fake couple. The elites form a new reality, where they are really in Croatia, yet they make the surroundings as real as they are in Arkansas. They are not real actually, one is a simulation of Arkansas and the other one is two of the elites pretending to be nice and sweet, but they are only the simulation of it, everything is artificial and it has no relation with reality at all. The purpose of this fake Arkansas and an old couple is to make the deplorables think that they are still in the USA and they get what they think is real, the Manorgate. The purpose of this fake Arkansas and an old couple is to make sure the deplorables are thinking that they are still in the USA and they get what they think is real, the Manorgate.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the study has explored *The Hunt* (2020) through the interpretation of hyperreality by Jean Baudrillard. It demonstrates how fake news, conspiracies and simulations can influence people's beliefs on what is real and what is not. The film depicts how the simulation can seem more real than the reality itself, especially when it is disseminated and venerated as real (such as the gas station scene). Nowadays when our reality often sees the world through media, the Internet, and social media, where it's hard to tell what is real and what is not. This research intends to remind us, as human beings, to take time and think critically about what we believe and see

before we pass a judgement, especially when the information comes from the internet and social media.

REFERENCE

- Dani Manesah, M. A. M. Alfathoni. (2020). Pengantar Teori Film. Deepublish.
- Wati, L. I. (2024). Hiperrealitas Simulakra Pengguna Instagram Mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi Universitas Medan Area.
- Baudrillard, J. (2019). Simulacra and simulations (1981). In *Crime and Media* (pp. 69-85). Routledge.
- Cubitt, S. (2000). Simulation and social theory.
- Dewi, M. P., & Umaroh, L. (2022). Analisis Hiperrealitas pada Film Aquaman sebagai Komoditas Kekuatan Kapitalis. *AVAN GARDE: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 112-130.
- Budianto, L., Setiawan, S., Retnaningdyah, P., Barus, P. K., Ningsih, B. A. W., & Amelia, D. R. (2022). The power of the computer-generated imagery (CGI) in avengers endgame movie: Hyperreality perspective. *Ethical Lingua: Journal of Language Teaching and Literature*, 9(1), 184-189.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Freund, L. (2023). Beyond the Physical Self: Understanding the Perversion of Reality and the Desire for Digital Transcendence via Digital Avatars in the Context of Baudrillard's Theory. *Qeios*.
- Antony, S., & Tramboo, I. A. (2021). Hyperreality in Media and Literature: An Overview of Jean Baudrillard's Simulacra and Simulation. *European Journal of Translational and Clinical Medicine*.
- Wardani, L. D. K. (2023). Simulacra and Hyperreality in Lorcan Finnegan's Vivarium (2019). *LITERA KULTURA: Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*, 11(2), 75-82.
- Christanti, M. F., Mardani, P. B., Cahyani, I. P., & Sembada, W. Y. (2021). "Instagramable": Simulation, simulacra and hyperreality on Instagram post. *Journal of Communication Studies*.
- Rahmawati, I. ., & Budi, W. . (2023). Making Meaning of the Pandemic Through Symbols in Literary Work. *KnE Social Sciences*, 8(12), 829–836. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v8i12.13728>
- Dinanti, P. D. & Nabillah, D. A. (2024). Animation in social transformation: Representation of environmental destruction and humanistic solution for solar technology in Scarygirl (2023). *Dinasti International Journal of Education Management and Social Sciences* 6(1): 399 -408. <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijemss.v6i>