

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This research aimed to analyze *Saltburn* (2023) using Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, focusing on two main objectives: (1) to examine how Oliver Quick's relationship with the Catton family illustrates the influence of privilege and social inequality, and (2) to analyze how the film highlights social power and class differences through its story. By looking closely at the characters, dialogue, and visual elements in the film, the study found that *Saltburn* represents hegemony not in a direct or political way, but through small, everyday situations and unspoken rules that define who belongs in the elite world and who does not.

The first finding shows that the Catton family represents the dominant or ruling class. They maintain their position not by openly forcing others, but by creating an environment where their way of speaking, dressing, and living becomes the "normal" and "desirable" way. This reflects cultural hegemony, where the values of the ruling class are accepted naturally, even by people from outside their circle. Social class hegemony is also seen in how wealth and family connections give the Cattons and their relatives long-lasting advantages such as access to the best education, protection from mistakes, and strong social networks that others like Oliver cannot easily obtain. The second finding focuses on Oliver's position and actions. At first, Oliver tries to adapt to the Cattons' lifestyle to be accepted. He copies their behavior, follows their traditions, and accepts their rules, showing how the subordinate class can internalize the dominant group's

values in order to “fit in.” Over time, however, Oliver begins to manipulate situations for his own benefit, slowly removing people who stand in his way. This may look like counter-hegemony challenging the power of the elite but the end result is that Oliver replaces them without changing the system itself. He gains power, but the same class-based hierarchy remains in place. This means his actions are more about personal ambition than true social change.

Overall, the study concludes that *Saltburn* portrays hegemony as something that works quietly through habits, customs, and relationships rather than open confrontation. The film shows that privilege is maintained because people including those from lower classes accept and even admire the lifestyle and values of the elite. It also shows how moving between classes is not the same as breaking the system; in Oliver’s case, he ends up becoming part of the same structure he once seemed to resist.

From this research, we can understand that films like *Saltburn* are not only entertainment, but also a mirror that reflects real-life issues of class, privilege, and power. Using Gramsci’s theory helps to explain why these inequalities last for so long, because they are supported by culture and consent, not just by money or laws. This understanding can be useful for film studies, sociology, and cultural studies, because it reminds us that changing society requires changing the values and ideas that make inequality seem normal. Future research could explore how other modern films represent similar issues, or compare how different cultures portray the struggle between the ruling class and those outside it.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the findings of this research, there are several suggestions I would like to share, drawn from both the academic analysis and personal reflection.

First, I believe it is important for audiences to view *Saltburn* not only as a work of fiction, but also as a mirror of situations that can happen in real life. The film shows how social privilege is protected through small, almost invisible actions and how people from less privileged backgrounds might adapt to, or even use, those same systems when given the chance. In reality, we often see how ambition can push people to change their values in order to fit in with those in power, sometimes at the cost of fairness and loyalty.

Second, this research made me reflect on how the journey of someone like Oliver is not entirely rare. In the real world, people who come from modest or even difficult backgrounds often work hard to change their circumstances. However, once they achieve a better position, there is a risk that they may repeat the same exclusive behaviors they once faced. This is not to say that ambition is wrong; ambition can drive positive change, but it becomes dangerous when it turns into greed and the need to secure power at any cost.

Third, I hope that readers and viewers can take from *Saltburn* a reminder to remain self-aware when navigating social mobility. It is important to remember our own principles and not lose them in the process of seeking acceptance or status. Finally, for anyone interested in examining similar themes in the future, I suggest paying attention to how everyday interactions, habits, and spaces reflect power dynamics. In both fiction and reality, privilege is often shown not only through money, but also through who feels comfortable in certain spaces, who sets the rules, and who gets to break them without consequence. Recognizing these patterns in real life can help us better understand inequality and, hopefully, challenge it when we see it.