

**THE DOMINATION OF PLEASURE PRINCIPLE LEADING TO
DEATH INSTINCT CAUSED BY DESPERATION WHICH
RESULTS TRAGEDY IN THE NOVEL *SISTER CARRIE* BY
THEODORE DREISER**

**A Project Submitted to the Faculty of Letters in Part-Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* in English and Letters**

YENI AZHARANI

05130040



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Composed by:

Yeni Azharani

05130040

Approved to be examined in the session of Strata-1 thesis by:

Head of English Department

Counselor I


(Agustinus Hariyana, S. S., M. Si.)


(Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, M. A.)

Counselor II


(Agustinus Hariyana, S. S., M. Si.)

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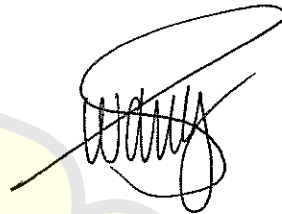
Examined and accepted well (passed) on August 11th 2009 before the committee
of the session of Strata-1 faculty of letter.

Counselor I/ Examiner I

Head of Committee of the Examiner



(Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, M. A.)



(Swany Chiakrawati, S. S., S. Pi., M. A)

Counselor II/ Examiner II

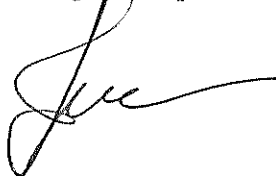


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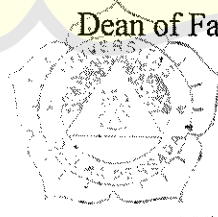
Approved by:

Head of English Department

Dean of Faculty of Letters



(Agustinus Hariyana, S. S., M. Si)

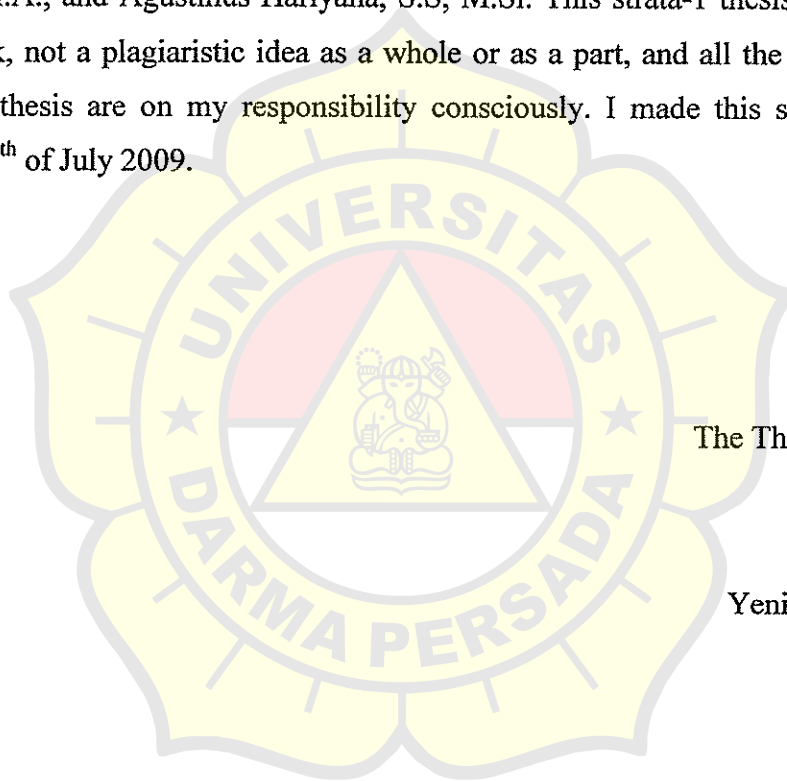


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Is a scientific research conducted under the supervision of Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, M.A., and Agustinus Hariyana, S.S, M.Si. This strata-1 thesis is truly an original work, not a plagiaristic idea as a whole or as a part, and all the contents of this strata-1 thesis are on my responsibility consciously. I made this statement in Jakarta on 27th of July 2009.



The Thesis Writer,

YeniAzharani

PREFACE

I thank God the Almighty that I have finished conducting my strata-1 thesis entitled “The Domination of Pleasure Leading to Death Instinct Caused by Desperation which Results Tragedy in the Novel *Sister Carrie*.” For that reason, I praise my prayer to God.

This research is submitted to the fulfillment to the Faculty of Letters in part-fulfillment of the requirement to acquire strata-1 degree from the University of Darma Persada, Jakarta and is conducted under qualitative research methodology based on written data and supported with various relevant written data.

I like to thank parties that have given their helps and supports in my strata-1 thesis research. Here, my wholehearted thanks go to:

1. Dr. Albertine Minderop, M. A., as Dean of Faculty of Letters of University of Darma Persada, and as my first supervisor in this thesis.
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5. Syarifah Puspa, S.S., my wonderfully supportive colleague.
6. Susilo Djati Utama, the person who has accompanied me for the last one year.

The thesis is, of course, not so perfect yet that any critics and suggestion for the improvement of this thesis will be accepted.

After all, I expect it will be beneficial for the readers.

Jakarta, 27th of July 2009

Yeni Azharani
Thesis Writer

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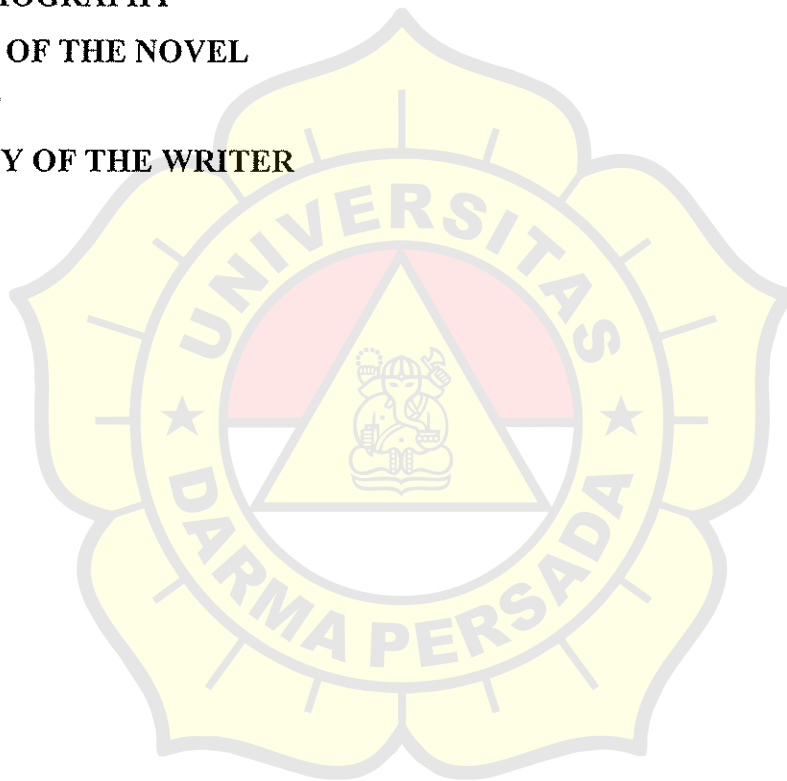
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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

People living in the world must seek pleasure. There is no person wanting something unpleasant, because pleasure gives us happiness. Moreover, people who are born with the spoon in their mouth. They have much money and much time to spend, because most of them are white collars that have light jobs but earn much money. So, they think that there's no problem if they spend it. Well, it's natural as human being we want anything pleasing us, but we have to remember that everything becomes bad when it's dominant. People like to eat, because it is healthy, besides, it's pleasing us. And it's permitted when they do it balance. But when they do it dominantly, it isn't permitted because it can cause obese. The same goes for the novel *Sister Carrie*, in the novel it's told that there's a character named Hurstwood. He had a family with two children and had a good living. But when he's introduced with a young woman, he fell in love and finally married her and left his family.

I am interested to analyze the novel because it's really related to the real life. Pleasure principle exists in every people, but how to handle it, depends on each person. Whether they want to let it dominate their selves, or they dominate the pleasure principle with the reality principle. One thing for sure, it will be harmful if they prefer the first choice, as in the novel *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser.

The story was started from Hurstwood's introduction with Carrie in Drouet's apartment. On that day, he was invited by his friend, Drouet, to come to his house and introduced to Carrie. Day after day, Hurstwood who was married and had two children fell in love with Carrie. He didn't think about his family. He wrote a letter to Carrie, a girl from country and came to the city to find a better living, everyday. At first, she lived with her sister in the new city, but then she lived with Drouet, a man she had met on the train, without marriage. Hurstwood, who was Drouet's

friend, was introduced to her. Then, they loved each other, till someday Hurstwood lied to Carrie, took her to New York, and married her there and promised to get divorce with her wife. Before he moved to New York with Carrie, he stole some money from his work place. Then, he returned the money back but of course, his image became bad because of his bad attitude. In New York, he lived with Carrie and run a business by investing some thousand dollars. Hurstwood's business increased somewhat at first, but in the third year of his work, the business became ruin and he lost much money, moreover he used it for gambling as well. He tried to find a new job, but he didn't get. While the money he had became less every day, Hurstwood and Carrie had to move frequently to other cheap apartments. Realizing that their life became worse without money, Carrie looked for a job. She was soon promoted to lead the chorus line and later to an even better paying dancing position, but she refused to tell Hurstwood about her success because she needed the extra money to purchase clothes for herself. Hurstwood then applied for a position and became a scab, however, an angry mob soon managed to stop his car and after being shot at, he decided to give up and headed home. As soon as he reached home, Carrie left him alone. Then, he became a homeless beggar who stayed in cheap hotels in the Bowery part of town. At the end, Hurstwood committed suicide by gassing himself with methane in his hotel room one night.

Theodore Dreiser, the writer of the novel, who is one of America's greatest writers (August 27, 1871-December 28, 1945) was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, and baptized as Herman Theodore Dreiser.¹ He was the ninth of ten surviving children (three others died as infants) of Sarah Schanab and Johann Dreiser. His father became a moderately successful wool dealer and prospered enough to be able to strike out on his own and become the proprietor of a wool mill in Sullivan, Indiana. In 1869 their fortunes changed for the worse when a fire destroyed the mill, leaving Johann with a debilitating injury. Consequently, Theodore's earliest

¹ Thomas P. Riggio, "Biography of Theodore Dreiser." 08 Aug. 2008 (<http://www.library.upenn.edu/collections/rbm/dreiser/tdbio.html>)

memories included the joblessness of his father and older siblings, as well as the constant search for economic stability. In 1898 Dreiser married Sara Osborne White, a schoolteacher from Missouri, whom he had met when he covered the 1893 Columbian Exposition as a reporter for the *St. Louis Republic*. With her encouragement and that of his friend Arthur Henry, a novelist and former editor of the *Toledo Blade*, Dreiser began writing his historic first novel, *Sister Carrie*. Among other sources for the novel was the story of his sister Emma's affair with L. A. Hopkins, a married man who had run off with funds embezzled from his Chicago employer. In the pages of what is now considered the first great urban novel in America, Dreiser at the age of twenty-nine had created in George Hurstwood one of the most memorable characters in American literature. By 1919, he was at a low point financially and mentally. His strength clearly ebbing, Dreiser died of heart failure on December 28, 1945, Dreiser was buried in Hollywood's Forest Lawn Cemetery on January 3, 1946.

The player of Hurstwood was showed as a rich man who always looked for pleasure such as going to the nice places on weekend. The place was full of high-class men. He was also married and had two children, but when he was introduced to Carrie, he forgot and abandoned his family. He left his family to marry with Carrie, a beautiful girl coming from the country, Chicago. The player of Drouet was showed as a playboy who met with Carrie, asked her to live in one apartment without marriage, and he was a person who introduced Hurstwood to Carrie.

The most dominant problem in this novel is the plot where there was a rich married man who always looked for pleasure. He always did something pleasure, and even he had married but he fell in love with a beautiful girl introduced by his friend, married her, and left his family. Till someday he had no job and left by his new wife, he got stressed and committed to suicide.

1.2. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem, I identify the problem in the novel of *Sister Carrie* is the domination of pleasure principle in Hurstwood's character led him to do suicide. So, my assumption is the domination of pleasure principle leading to death instinct caused by desperation which results tragedy in the novel *Sister Carrie*.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

Based on identification of the problem, I limit the problem in this research to the domination of pleasure principle leading to death instinct caused by desperation which results tragedy in the novel *Sister Carrie*.

The theory and concepts that I use is approach of psychology of literature by characterization, settings, and plot. Then approach of psychology of literature by pleasure principle concept and death instinct concept.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Based on limitation of the problem, I formulate the problem: Is it true that the theme is "The Domination of Pleasure Principle Leading to Death Instinct Caused by Desperation which Results Tragedy in the Novel *Sister Carrie*".

To answer this question I formulate that problem as follows:

1. Can the intrinsic elements of literary work through the analysis of characterization, settings, and plot be used to analyze this novel?
2. Can the death instinct concept be used to analyze this novel?
3. Can the analyzing of theme be built through the analysis of characterization, settings, and plot which are combined with pleasure principle and death instinct concept?

1.5 Objective of the Research

Based on formulation of the problem, I do this research to prove my assumption that the theme of this novel is “The Domination of Pleasure Principle Leading to Death Instinct Caused by Desperation which Results Tragedy in the Novel *Sister Carrie*.”

To achieve the objective, I do stages as follows:

1. Through the analysis of characterization, settings, and plot I analyze this novel
2. Through the pleasure principle concept and death instinct concept I analyze this novel
3. Analyzing the theme through the analysis of characterization, settings, and plot which are combined with pleasure principle and death instinct concept.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

To analyze the novel of *Sister Carrie* I use literature concepts and psychology of literature concepts.

1.6.1 Intrinsic Elements

Characterization is the action or process of characterizing, especially the description of human character in novels, plays, etc². There are some ways to analyze the characterization, such as telling method, showing method, and others. Besides as I've mentioned, the point of view from the story teller can also be used by the writer to analyze the characterization.

1.6.1.1 Third Person Omniscient Point of View

Third person omniscient point of view is a way of telling the story of which speaker stands out of the story. The speaker knows everything about the character, the story, and what the characters do.

² A S. Hornby *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 186

The speaker is free to move from one character to the other characters. Furthermore, the speaker is able to reveal the thought, the feeling, and the motivation of the character clearly like in the real world.³

1.6.1.2 Plot

Plot is a narrative of events which is timely sequenced and used for emphasizing falling out causality.

We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling out causality.⁴

1.6.1.2.1 Exposition

Exposition is the beginning section in which the author provides the necessity background information set the scene, establishes the situation and dates the action.⁵ It may also introduce the characters and conflict. The exposition may be accomplished in a single paragraph, or, in the case of some novels, occupy an entire chapter or more.

1.6.1.2.2 Complication

Complication, which is sometimes referred to as the raising action, breaks the existing equilibrium and introduces the characters and the underlying or inciting conflict (if they haven't already been introduced by the exposition). The conflict is then developed gradually and intensified.⁶

³ James. H. Pickering and Jeffrey. D. Hoepfer, *Concise Companion to Literature* (New York: Macmillan Publishing. Co. Inc., 1981), p. 27

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 16

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 17

1.6.1.2.3 Crisis

Crisis is that moment at which the plot reaches its point of greatest emotional intensity. It is the turning point of the plot, directly precipitating its resolution.⁷

1.6.1.2.4 Falling Action

Once the crisis or turning point has been reached the tension subsides and the plot move towards its appointed conclusion.⁸

1.6.1.2.5 Resolution

The final section of the plot is its resolution. It records the outcome of the conflict and establishes some new equilibrium or stability (however tentative and momentary). The resolution is also referred to as the conclusion or the *denouement*, a French work meaning unknotting or untying.⁹

1.6.1.3 Setting

Setting, a term that, in its broadest sense, encompasses both the physical locale that frame the action and the time of day or year, the climatic conditions, and the historical period during which the action takes place. Setting helps the reader visualize the action of the work, and thus adds credibility and an air of authenticity to the character as two of its functions which are as a means of revealing character and as a means of reinforcing theme.¹⁰ The other functions of the setting are to provide background for the action, as an antagonist, and a means of

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 17

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37-38

creating appropriate atmosphere. I will only use two of the functions; they are:

1.6.1.3.1 Setting as a means of creating appropriate atmosphere

Many authors manipulate their settings as a means of arousing the readers' expectations and establishing an appropriate state of mind for events to come.¹¹

1.6.1.3.2 Setting as a means of reinforcing the theme

Setting can also be used as a means of reinforcing the theme and clarifying the theme of a novel, or short story.¹²

1.6.1.4 Themes

Theme is one of those critical terms that mean very different things to different people. To some, who think of literature mainly as vehicle for teaching, preaching, propagating a favorite idea, or encouraging some form of correct conduct, theme may mean the moral or lesson that can be extrapolated from the work. Theme is also used sometimes to refer to the basic issue, problem, or subject with which the work is concerned. Theme is fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.¹³

1.6.2 Extrinsic Element

1.6.2.1 Pleasure Principle

Pleasure is commonly conceptualized as a positive experience related to happiness, entertainment, and

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 40

¹² *Ibid*, p. 42

¹³ *Ibid*. p. 61

enjoyment.¹⁴ The father of Hedonism, Aristippus of Cyrene, defines pleasure as something that is not only limited to sensual gratification but also the higher forms of enjoyment, mental pleasures, domestic love, friendship, and moral contentment. People commonly experience this phenomenon through eating, exercise, sexuality, music, usage of drugs, writing, accomplishment, recognition, service, indeed through any imaginable activity, even receiving pain (the medical term for deriving pleasure from receiving being masochism) and inflicting pain (sadism). It also refers to "enjoyment" related to certain physical, sensual, emotional or mental experiences.

The pleasure principle is a psychoanalytic concept originated by Sigmund Freud that continuously drives one to seek pleasure and to avoid pain.¹⁵ Its counterpart is the reality principle which defers that gratification when necessary. The *id* follows the pleasure principle and rules early life, but as one matures, one begins to learn the need sometimes to endure pain and to defer gratification because of the exigencies and obstacles of reality. In Freud's words, "an *ego* thus educated has become reasonable; it no longer lets itself be governed by the pleasure principle, but obeys the reality principle, which also at bottom seeks to obtain pleasure, but pleasure which is assured through taking account of reality, even though it is pleasure postponed and diminished".

¹⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hedonism>, 09/10/08, 09:45:15 pm

¹⁵ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pleasure_principle_\(psychology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pleasure_principle_(psychology)), 09/10/08, 10:15:20 pm

1.6.2.2 Death Instinct

Instinct is the psychology representation from the excitation. Instinct will collect physic energy if the need comes, then the instinct will emphasize the one to do to make the one satisfied.¹⁶

Death Instinct or Thanatos is an instinct to damage what exist (organism or the individual itself). There are 2 kinds of death instinct, named death instinct inside, which makes someone commit suicide and death instinct outside, which makes someone commit homicide.¹⁷

These are facts about suicide¹⁸:

1. Based on statistic, every twenty minutes people in America committed to suicide. If the rate is calculated, it will be 31.000 acts of suicide in a year.
2. Men have bigger for times possibilities than women in committing the suicide.
3. To end the marriage or being a widow/widower increases the risk of committing suicide four until five times.
4. Suicide happens in all social and economy levels.
5. Suicide is in the 9th position of the causes in adults' death in America.
6. The highest rate of committing suicide in America is in white men up to 50 years old.

¹⁶ E. Koeswara, *Teori-Teori Kepribadian*, (Bandung: PT. Eresco, 1991), p. 35

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 36

¹⁸ Nevid S, *Psikologi Abnormal* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2003), p. 423

The death instinct or also known as drive was defined by Sigmund Freud in *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* (Beyond the Pleasure Principle) (1920; English translation 1922) as "an urge inherent in all organic life to restore an earlier state of things".

In psychoanalytic theory, the death drive opposes Eros. Here Eros is characterized as the tendency towards cohesion and unity, whereas the death drive is the tendency towards destruction. The death drive is sometimes referred to as Thanatos in post-Freudian thought, but this Classical term has no basis in Freud's own work.¹⁹

1.7 The Method of the Research

I use qualitative method in this research; it means I take from the text in the novel *Sister Carrie* and it is supported by other relevant written data. A kind of research that I use is literature and interpretative research interpreting text. A method of collecting data through research of literature and pattern research theory is inductive (general to specific).

1.8 The Benefits of the Research

This analysis is very useful for the readers for deciding what to do with their life, whether they want to be dominated by pleasure principle, or face the truth by trying to do the best in every work, pray to God, and thank to Him of what we've had.

¹⁹ <http://www.deathreference.com/Da-Em/Death-Instinct.html>, 10/ 09/ 08, 09: 30: 10 pm

1.9 Systematical Presentation

The systematical presentation is started from content and continued with four chapters.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I explain the basic things, such as: background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, objective of the research, theoretical framework, the method of the research, and systematical presentation.

CHAPTER II ANALYSIS INTRINSIC ELEMENTS THROUGH CHARACTERIZATION, SETTINGS AND PLOT

In this chapter I analyze the characterization of the player, settings, and plot.

CHAPTER III THE DOMINATION OF PLEASURE PRINCIPLE LEADING TO DEATH INSTINCT CAUSED BY DESPERATION WHICH RESULTS TRAGEDY IN THE NOVEL *SISTER CARRIE* BY THEODORE DREISER

In this chapter I will analyze the intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements, and then elaborate the domination of pleasure principle leading to death instinct caused by desperation which results tragedy in the novel *Sister Carrie* with extrinsic element so it can form the theme of this thesis.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will give the conclusion about the novel on the whole.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SCHEME OF THE RESEARCH

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

ABSTRACT

BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITER

