



**Andrew's Denial towards Reality Caused by Past Trauma
Described in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island***

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ANDREW'S DENIAL TOWARDS REALITY CAUSED BY PAST TRAUMA DESCRIBED IN DENNIS LEHANE'S *SHUTTER ISLAND*

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ABSTRACT

This research entitled Andrew's denial towards reality caused by past trauma described in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island* has aim to describe the personal characteristics and the causes and effect of trauma suffered by the main character in *Shutter Island* novel. Descriptive qualitative method was used in this research. Two approaches were applied in this research. The structural approach was used to analyze the specific descriptions, conflicts and settings. The psychological approach was used to analyze the causes and effect of trauma suffered by the main character. Based on the analysis, the writer found Andrew Laeddis had all features which indicated him as person suffering from trauma. He experienced both internal and external conflicts. Setting was divided into setting of place and time. The causes of Andrew's trauma were his witness on his wife, Dolores, killed their children by drowning them in the lake and his action of killing Dolores upon her personal request. The effect of Andrew's trauma was his action of making some fictitious dense narrative where he became a U.S Marshal named Edward Teddy Daniels. The fictitious dense narrative had three kinds of plot in one line. First, he handled on the missing patient case in Ashecliffe accompanied by his new partner, Chuck Aule. Second, he was looking for a man who killed Dolores named "Andrew Laeddis". Third, he tried to reveal a conspiracy about radical surgery in Shutter Island, home of Ashecliffe. In fact, all his fictitious dense narrative was made by Andrew as his denial response because he cannot live with all the realities.

Keywords: *Causes, Effect, Fictitious, Narrative, Trauma.*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a work that relates to all written forms that have an artistic value. It can be arguments, perspectives, expressions and ideas decorated by some artistic sparks. Klarer state (Klarer, 2004: 1) that, the term "literature" is derived from the word "littera" which means letter. Letter becomes the smallest aspect on writing session.

It means that all of works dealing with literature are called literary works was began by letters. There are four kinds of literary works commonly consumed by the society; fictions (novel, novella, and prose), poetry, drama and film (Klarer, 2004: 9). Nowadays, those literary works are becoming an amusement or even becoming a life style from them. Literature is an-interesting-to-learn thing because a lot of aspects occupy in such are aspects of sociology, psychology, history and a particular culture. Some of them discuss about a reality life problem like trauma.

Life is divided into three periods of times which are past, present and future. These three periods of times have domino effect. Something that happened in the past will affect events happening in the present and will happen in the future. This term is just like some disease called trauma. Trauma is an illness caused by unfortunate incident which happened in the past and can bring changes in the future. It can be a good or bad change. It is a good change when the person can take the result from the unfortunate incident and make it as a lesson. While in another point, it is a bad change when the person cannot accept the result of the reality from unfortunate incident that happened in the past and leaves some wound about it in their mind. According to <http://www.apa.org/topics/trauma/>, trauma is a response composed by emotions which derive from some tragic events that extremely threatened his or her life. Experienced accident, rape, crash, or witnessing some homicide and natural disaster could be the trigger of this disease. The example is when someone had seen or experienced a terrible incident in the past, he or she could not strong enough accept the result from the incident and they behaved differently after that so they had a trauma about it. Usually, person suffers from trauma has to treat in some mental hospital to receive medical treatments. It is said that there is no cure for trauma but its impact can be reduced by the intention of the person who suffers trauma to recover. People believe that if there is no intention to recover or to forget the event that caused trauma it will be hard to be recovered.

Trauma usually deals with emotional and psychological condition of somebody. The emotional and psychological conditions such are fear, hesitation, anxiety, anger, possessiveness, curiosity and suspicion. Some literary works use trauma as topic to develop. One of them is *Shutter Island* novel by Dennis Lehane.

Shutter Island is one of the famous mystery fiction novels written by Dennis Lehane. It was first released in 2003 in Great Britain. *Shutter Island* novel is a best-selling novel set in Boston during 1954's, more precisely after WWII. This 414 pages novel described trauma as the main issue of the main character. Trauma becomes the controller of the story from the novel. Andrew Laeddis as

the main character is suffering trauma because the horrible incident that he experienced in his past. The horrible incident was his witnessed on his beloved wife, Dolores' action of killing their own children. After the incident, Andrew Laeddis knows Dolores had mental disorder and make her always wants to kill her own children without any hesitation. In the end, Dolores killed their own three children by drowning them in the lake back of their house.

The writer uses novel as the object because novel is included as a literary work that is always interested to be analyzed. Since a long time ago, novel became an entertainment or even became such a lifestyle from some society. Literature aspects are aspects that build this stack of inscribed papers become a beautifully book to read. The writer chooses *Shutter Island* novel as the object because it is one of some famous novels that has place in the societies' heart. It means the story of the novel is understandable. Because of the enthusiasm from the readers, this novel has been filmed with the same title as "*Shutter Island*" released in 2010 to answer all the imaginations of the readers about the novel. Directed by Martin Scorsese and Starring by actors and actresses, *Shutter Island* movie is worth-to-watch movie.

RESEARCH METHOD

Data and subject

The data of this study were Dennis Lehane's novel entitled *Shutter Island*. The novel first was published in Great Britain by Bantam Press in 2003. This mystery suspense novel had 414 pages. It had been filmed with the same title *Shutter Island* directed by Martin Scorsese in 2010.

Unit of Analysis

Units of analysis were divided into two terms. Those were intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The intrinsic element described the specific descriptions of the main character, conflicts experienced by the main character, and settings which pictured in novel *Shutter Island* by Dennis Lehane. Moreover, the extrinsic element described the causes and effect of trauma which suffered by the main character.

Technique of Data Collection and Analysis

The first step of data collection was close reading the novel and sorting the data dealing with the units of analysis. Second was identifying the specific descriptions, conflicts, settings and the causes and effect of trauma suffered by the main character. Third was tabulating the data consisting of quotation, classification, context and pages. Forth was searching any references from

textbooks and websites which related to the object of the research. The last was presenting the data analysis.

The writer used two approaches on technique of data analysis. First, the structural approach was used for identified the characters, conflicts such are internal and external conflict and settings. Second, the psychological approach was used to described the causes and effect of trauma that suffered by the main character.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

According to the finding, the discussion shows the characteristics of the main character in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*. It was divided into 4 ; specific descriptions of the main character, conflicts experienced by the main characters, settings in the novel, and causes and effect of trauma suffered by the main character.

Specific descriptions of the main character

Andrew was described as person suffered from trauma. It was shown in his specific descriptions. One of them was person who often got nightmare. In this time, his nightmare about his hometown, the man who killed Dolores named "Andrew Laeddis", his partner for missing patient named Chuck Aule, Dr. Cawley, the missing patient named Rachel Solando and her three children. It became his worst nightmare because in this dream he was shown how sadistic Rachel Solando killed her own three children, two boys and one little girl.

Excerpt 1

They were the worst dreams he'd ever had. They began with Teddy walking through the streets of Hull, streets he had walked countless times from childhood to manhood. He passed his old schoolhouse. He passed the small variety store where he'd bought gum and cream sodas. He passed the Dickerson, the Boyds, the Vernons, the Constantines. But no one was home. No one was anywhere. It was empty, the entire town. And dead quiet. He couldn't ... her mouth still smeared with peanut butter and jelly. (Shutter Island, 209-216)

Conflicts experienced by the main character

His first internal conflicts appeared when he had conversation with Chuck in the ferry. Chuck asked about his wife, Dolores, and it made him suddenly remembered of her. Andrew saw his wife in the mind. He was picturing Dolores in the brain so he saw her face again. How could the woman he loved so much gone before him? Actually, he preferred not to discuss about his wife at all because when he saw her in the mind, all he got just the pains.

Excerpt 2

Teddy saw her again, her back to him as she walked down the apartment hallway, wearing one of his old uniform shirts, humming as she turned into the kitchen, and a familiar weariness invaded his bones. He would prefer just to do about anything – swim in that water even – rather than speak of Dolores, of the facts of her being on this earth for thirty-one years and then ceasing to be. Just like that. (Shutter Island, 35)

Settings

In the night, Andrew as Teddy searched his missing partner, Chuck in the promontory's area of the shore. Furthermore, His memory about Dolores always haunted him when the night came. This triggered his internal conflicts and his specific descriptions.

Excerpt 3

He looked up the cliff, thankful for the moon, which was near full, and the stars, which were bright and countless. And then he saw a color that didn't make any more sense than the island that hadn't been there two days ago. (Shutter Island, 299)

The causes of trauma

The causes of trauma from Andrew Laeddis were his action of knowing his three children killed by his insane wife, Dolores, and his action of killing Dolores upon her personal request because she want to free from her insanity. The author of the novel shows all the causes in the back of the story since Andrew met Cawley at Lighthouse. Andrew told by Cawley about his reason why he played his entire fictitious complex narrative. It was because he did not believed Dolores was insane and killed their three children by drowning them in the lake back of the house. All the realities were covered by Andrew's love toward Dolores so he ignored all the signs.

Excerpt 4

'Your wife was clinically depressed. She was diagnosed as manic-depressive. She was—'

'She was not,' Teddy said.

'She was suicidal. She hurt the children. You refused to see it. You thought she was weak. You told yourself sanity was a choice, and all she had to do was remember her *responsibilities*. To you. To the children. You drank, and your drinking got worse. You floated into your own shell. You stayed away from home. You ignored all the signs. You ignored what the teachers told you, the parish priest, her own family.'

'My wife was not insane!' (Shutter Island, 375)

The effect of trauma

The Effect of Andrew's trauma was his action of making a fictitious dense narrative. This was became his denial response of the truth. All the staff of Ashecliffe had given a role play to help him staged the story. His fictitious dense narrative had three different kinds of plot in one line. The first, he became a U.S. Marshal under named "Teddy Daniel" alongside with his partner named "Chuck Aule" who took in hand a case about missing patient named "Rachel Solando" in Shutter Island. In fact, "Chuck Aule" was his primary psychiatrist in Ashecliffe named Dr. Lester Sheehan.

Excerpt 5

'And this woman who escaped?'

Teddy said, 'Don't know much about that. She slipped out last night. I got her name in my notebook. I figure they'll tell us everything else.'

Chuck looked around at the water. 'Where's she going to go? She's going to swim home?'

Teddy shrugged 'The patients here, apparently, suffer a variety of delusions.'

'Schizophrenics?'

'I guess, yeah. You won't find your everyday mongoloids in here in any case. Or some guy who's afraid of sidewalk cracks, sleeps too much. Far as I could tell from the file, everyone here is, you know, *really* crazy.' (Shutter Island, 39)

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous discussion on chapter 4, it can be concluded as follows :

The main character from Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island* is Andrew Laeddis. He is described as a patient from mental institution named Ashecliffe in Shutter Island who has some of own identifying features. Those are the specific descriptions. All his traits are the traits which indicate him suffered from trauma. All his traits are being person who suffered from rebound headache, who often got nightmare, who often got flashback, who had grieving reaction, who was prone to be angry, who scared of water, who got sleeping trouble and also who was bad in concentrating.

Andrew Laeddis also experiences both kind of internal and external conflict. All his internal conflicts are remembering his deceased wife, being confused on two realities about the existence of his partner, being shocked by the coming back of missing patient and being betrayed by his partner's real identity. Moreover, Andrew also has several external conflicts. Those are Andrew against Dr. Cawley, Andrew against Dr. Jeremiah Naehring, Andrew against guards, Andrew against George Noyce and Andrew against Chuck Aule.

Settings are divided into setting of place and setting of time. The setting of place is dominant than the others. The setting of place is in Shutter Island's area but mostly in the Ashecliffe itself. Those are ferry, Shutter Island's dock, Rachel Solando's room, Dr. Cawley's house, Men's dormitory, Cafeteria, Breezeway, Cemetery, Mausoleum, Basement of the staff dormitory, Boardroom, Dr. Cawley's office, Dr. Cawley secret room, Ward C and Cave. In another hand, the settings of time are afternoon, evening, night but mostly in the morning.

The trauma of Andrew Laeddis has causes and effect. The causes of his trauma are his action of knowing his wife, Dolores, was insane until she was able to killed their own three children by drowned them in the lake without regrets and his action of killing Dolores upon her personal request because she wanted to free from her insanity. As the result, he was send to Ashecliffe. After that, Andrew could not live with the reality so he made a complex fictitious narrative as a denial response of the truth in Ashecliffe and it became the effect of his trauma. By the helps of Ashecliffe's staff, he staged his fictitious narrative since two years before. Like a wheel, his fictitious narrative always played repeatedly and the lighthouse always became the place where Andrew got all the truths. His fictitious complex narrative had three kinds of plot in one line. The first, he became a U.S. Marshall named "Edward Teddy Daniels" who handled a missing patient named Rachel Solando. He ran the case with his new partner named "Chuck Aule". In fact, "Chuck Aule" was his primary psychiatrist for two years in Ashecliffe named Dr. Lester Sheehan.

The second plot, still as a U.S Marshal named Teddy Daniels, he was looking for a man named "Andrew Laeddis". Andrew believed the one killed Dolores was a man named "Andrew Laeddis". According to him, that man killed Dolores by burning their apartment. In fact, the guy named "Andrew Laeddis" was himself. The one who killed Dolores was himself. He could not believe that

reality so he made such a story to convince him that he was not a Dolores' killer. The third plot was his trial to reveal some conspiracy about radical surgery in Shutter Island. According to his fictitious narrative, Andrew met a guy named Senator Hurly, the man who was funding Ashecliffe. Senator Hurly knew that his money did not used well in there and he thought there was something wrong with Ashecliffe. So he asked Andrew to gather some information and revealed the conspiracy in Ashecliffe. The truth, Senator Hurly was just a fictitious character which made by Andrew who did not existed.

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