

**HANNAH BAKER'S SUICIDE AS  
SEEN IN JAY ASHER'S *THIRTEEN  
REASONS WHY***

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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis focuses on Hannah Baker's suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. The objectives of the study are to find out the proof Hannah Baker's suicide in the novel, the causes of Hannah Baker's suicide, and the effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to their parents and friends as seen in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Thesis writer also applies qualitative approach and the theory used is suicide theory. The finding shows that Hannah Baker commits suicide. She uses pills as the means of her suicide. The causes of Hannah Baker's suicide is caused by three factors as she stated. Those are hurt, anguish, soreness and aching. The effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to her parents and friends are that Hannah makes her parents in a dysfunctional states. They are mourning for her and abandon everything and move back to the old city. Hannah's suicide also causes blaming issues for her friends. It shows that her friends blame each other and Hannah, in addition, one of her friends has self-blame issues. Also, it makes them being perceived more negative by other characters.

**Key words:** Suicide

**ABSTRAK**

skripsi ini fokus kepada kasus bunuh diri yang di alami Hannah Baker dalam novel *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Tujuan dari skripsi adalah untuk menemukan bukti bunuh diri Hannah Baker didalam novel, penyebab bunuh diri Hannah Baker, efek bunuh diri Hannah Baker ke orang tua dan teman- temannya yang ada di novel Jay Asher berjudul *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Penulis skripsi menggunakan metode qualitatif dan teori bunuh diri. Penulis menemukan bahwa Hannah terbukti bunuh diri. Hannah bunuh diri dengan cara menggunakan pil. Penyebab Hannah bunuh diri disebabkan oleh tiga faktor, yaitu, disakiti, anguis, dan derita. Efek bunuh diri Hannah ke orang tuanya dan temannya. Hannah membuat orang tuanya menjadi disfungsional, mereka berduka kepada Hannah dan meninggalkan semuanya dan pindah ke kota mereka yang lama. Hannah juga membuat teman- temannya dan membuat mereka mempunyai perasaan bersalah, hal ini di tunjukkan dengan mereka menyalahkan satu sama lain dan Hannah, dan dirinya sendiri, hal ini juga menyebabkan mereka di pandang negatif oleh tokoh lain.

**Kata kunci:** Bunuh diri

**Background of the study**

Human only has one time to live in this world. During that time, everybody has gone through one long road. Sometimes it is bumpy or maybe smooth as silk. During all of those time, one can feel something positive, for example happiness, excitement, joy, gratitude, etcetera. or something negative, such as envy, anger, regret, hatred, etcetera. and everyone has a way to deal with each. When it comes to positive emotions, everybody tends to celebrate it by having a toast, feast, charity, etcetera. When it comes to negative emotion, everybody tends to distract themselves, from being positive by doing positive activities like doing hobbies to being negative by being self-destructive like self-injure or self-harm. Smith states that people who do self-harm or self-injury, for example, cutting him/herself, abusing alcohol or drug, binge eating, etcetera, have purpose to distract themselves from their feeling or overwhelming situations that is out of control. The worst case of self-destructive behaviour is suicide.

In 2016, WHO claimed that almost 800.000 people died due to suicide, ([https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/)). A person dies in 40 seconds throughout the world, In fact, suicide has become a globally phenomenon that has killed 1.4% of all death worldwide and became 18<sup>th</sup> cause of death in 2016 (WHO 2015-1016). People who experience suicidal thoughts and feelings are suffering with tremendous

emotional pain. People who have died because of suicide typically have overwhelming feelings of hopelessness, despair, and helplessness. People consider suicide because feel as though their pain will never end and that suicide is the only way to stop suffering.

Suicide is not only found in real life, but it can also be found in the literary work because literary work refers to a verbal communication that is an expression of the imagination or the intellect of the artist and that seeks to arouse an aesthetic response through the admixture of its content and form (Albert Hofstadter, *Truth and Art*; 184). It means that literary work is a work of an imagination and intellectual of an author whose goal is to please the reader.

**Statements of the Problem,** in writing this study, the thesis writer wants to analyze some cases related to the object of the analysis, it is Hannah Baker's suicide as seen in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. There are three questions to be raised of this analysis, they are, first, What is the proof of Hannah Baker's suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*? Second, What are the causes of Hannah Baker's suicide as seen in Jay Asher's

*Thirteen Reasons Why*? Third, What are the effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to her parents and friends as seen in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*?

**The objectives of the Study,** by doing this analysis, the writer wants to achieve some

objective answers to fulfill the question related to the statements of the problem. The objective are, to find out the proof of Hannah Baker's suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. to find out the causes of Hannah Baker's suicide as seen in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. to to find out the effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to her parents and her friends as seen in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*.

**Significance of the study**, Theoretically, the writer hopes that this study gives some knowledge to the fellow students of English Literature program, Faculty of Letters, Dr. Soetomo University who are interested in analyzing suicidal thought in its psychological field, specifically suicide in the Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. It is also possible for other readers to find another problems to discuss in this novel connecting with other fields of study. Practically, the writer hopes that this study will be useful for the readers to understand people with suicidal thought. Thus, it will raise suicide awareness among society, and it will also remove the taboo barrier to discuss suicide.

**Scope and limitation of the study**, In this novel, there are many aspects of literature that can be analyzed, such as character, conflict, plot, etcetera. There are also some problems of life which can be discussed, such as love, struggle, ambition, etcetera. However, the thesis writer only focuses his

discussion on Hannah Baker's suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* in order to specify the study.

### Theoretical background

According to Shneidman, 1985 (cited by Morton M. Silverman). He says that suicide is an act of consciously killing oneself, due to the needing to escape the uneasiness feeling one's has and percieve suicide as the only way to escape that feeling. (2006; 522)

According to Shneidman, 1973 (cited by Antoon A. Leenaars), he stated that he never thinks suicide as an illness or disease but rather as human self-destruction behavior. He; then, states that suicide involves one's tortured logic in state of inner feeling, or intolerable emotion. In addition, this mixture of constricted thinking and unbearable anguish is mixed with their conscious and unconscious psychodynamics for example, hate, dependency, hope, etcetera. By committing suicide, one is playing himself out within a social and cultural context, which force him in a various degrees of restraint on, or facilitations of, the suicidal act. (2010; 8)

Shneidman, 1995 (cited by Antoon A. Leenaars). he states that every case of suicide is due to psychache that refers to hurt, anguish, soreness, aching or psychological pain in one's mind, or the pain due to the excessive feeling of shame, guilt, humiliation, or anything that cause pain to one's mind. Everyone has different time span to endure psychache he has

suffered. If one thinks that they cannot endure the psychache he has suffered, suicide happens. (2010; 7)

**a. Hurt**

According to Shaver, Mikulincer, Lavy, and Cassidy, they say that hurt is one of human emotions, it comes with a mixture of sadness and anger. A person feels hurt when one is wronged that it triggers his anger, for example, forced to agree on something inappropriate or unfair, but in this case, the offender does not bother with what the victim does, furthermore when there is a reasonable objection were to be raised. (2009; 2)

**b. Anguish**

According to a study journal by V Gentil and MLV Gentil Anguish is from latin word ‘angustus’ ‘angustia’, it means narrowness and angere’ or to press tight or to strangle. Anguish is different from anxiety as it was stated by 19th century french authors.

Nonetheless, the concept is gone from the lexicon in 20th century, because of the vagueness translation in German ‘Angst’ for ‘Anxiety’ (2009; 2). According to Marsh, anxiety is the feelings of uneasiness, worried and fear that one experiences. When someone is being worried or nervous on something, their physical and emotion feels some sensation,

usually unpleasant. Anxiety is also being related to ‘fight or flight’ response, it is a reaction when one is being threatened. Like other animals, this ‘fight or flight’ response has protected human from something dangerous or life-threatening situations. Human’s body will release hormones, these hormones are adrenalin and cortisol, when he feels like he is in danger. Those hormones help human physically prepared when he fights the danger or runs away from it. (2015; 4)

**c. Soreness and aching**

According to Shneidman (1985), Soreness or aching refers to psychological pain that one’s experience inside their psyche or mind. Psychological pain refers to excessively felt shame, or guilt, or humiliation, or anything that can cause psychological pain in one’s mind. (cited by Antoon A.

Leenaars, 2010; 7)

Suicide has been described as death like no other. Death by suicide is a soul-crushing surprise to families and friends. Not only leaving them to confusion and loss. In a research journal by Cerel, Jordan, and Duberstein. They says that when someone commits suicide, he leaves family and friends behind to sadden. They will try as hard as they can to understand the reason behind the death, while learning to carry on

with their life. (2008; 38)

in 2002, Lohan and Murphy (cited by Cerel, Jordan, and Duberstein). They stated that a family whose child committed suicide could not function as they were before. The dysfunctional involves the decreasing cohesion or the difficulty emotional relationship toward other family members, and adaptation or their response to the current situation and their stress development, for example, the changing in power structure, relationship's role, and the relationship in the family. (2008; 39)

Beside the family, suicide also has effects on social relation. Social relation are extended family, friends at school, workplace and church. Each individual bears mourn when ones commits suicide. Range, 1998, and Stillion, 1996 (cited by Cerel, Jordan, and Duberstein). Not only the family members who are mourning. The people inside the social network are also mourning. Their mourning is not the only problems that survivors of the suicide victim had, it shows that the social network is suffering from blame issues because suicide is really confusing and sudden, therefore, they may be feeling partially blame or blaming others for the victim's death. In addition, they will be perceived more negatively by society than any survivors from other types of loss. (2008; 39)

## **Research approach,**

To answer the statements of the

problem, the research approach of this thesis is Qualitative research. According to Bodgan and Biklen states that Qualitative research does not use number to analyze the data but rather from words and picture. (2007; 5)

## **Source of data**

The data are all the information from the words, phrases, sentence, and paragraph uttered in novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* written by Jay Asher.

## **Technique of collecting data**

The thesis writer collects the data by reading the novel in order to understand the story. After reading the novel, the writer collects the data related to the statements of the problem. Then, he separates and classifies the data related to the topic.

## **Technique of data analysis**

The thesis writer analyses the data by applying deductive and inductive techniques. According to Little, deductive is a technique that uses quotation to support the statements. Meanwhile, inductive method is the technique which presents the quotation first. Then, it is followed by statements as the explanation.

## **Findings**

Since there are three problems, the thesis writer will divide this section into sub- chapter.

## **1. The proof of Hannah Baker's suicide**

the thesis writer found that Hannah Baker commits suicide. It can be shown by quotation bellow;

No, I can't believe it. Hannah Baker killed herself. (Asher, 2007;7)

You took pills. That, we all know. Some say you passed out and drowned in a bathtub full of water. (Asher, 2007;254)

I don't know. I'm not sure.

So I've decided on the least painful way possible. Pills. (Asher, 2007;255)

From the quotations, it shows that Hannah Self-annihilates or kills herself. Some say that she kills herself by drowning herself in the bathtub and taking a pills. But she, herself states that she decides to commit suicide by taking pills because by taking pills, she will not feel the pain as much as any other suicide attemp, for example, taking poison, shooting herself, hanging, etcetera. From those it can be deduced that Hannah self-annihilates or kills herself.

## **2. The causes of Hannah Baker's suicide**

There are three causes of her suicide, those are hurt, aguish, soreness and aching. The quotation can be seen bellow;

That tiny scar you've all seen above my eyebrow, that's the shape of Jessica's fingernail...which I plucked out myself.

Or maybe you've never seen it. But I see it every morning when I get ready for school.

"Good morning, Hannah,"<sup>8</sup> it says. And every night when I get ready for bed. "Sleep tight." (Asher, 2007;67-68)

From the quotation above, it can be shown that Hannah gets hurt. For Hannah, getting hit by Jessica is the most heart-breaking moment. It can be shown as there is a mark on her forehead. In the quotation, the mark is a bad reminder for Hannah, it haunts her every time she looks at the mirrors. She describes the wound as if it can talk to her, haunting her with a good morning and sleep tight. It means that she is traumatized by the event. For Hannah, the wound is the remembrance to Jessica, it feels like Jessica talks her through the wound. From Hannah's reaction also shows that Jessica is really close to her. It can be concluded that getting hit by Jessica, who is close to Hannah, hurt her psyhically and mentally.

While we were standing there, our backs against the doorframe, drinks in hand, we couldn't stop laughing.

And yet the loneliness I entered the party with came rushing back.

But I wasn't alone. I knew that. For the first time in a long time, I was connecting—connected—with another person from school. How in the world was I alone? (Asher, 2007;212)

From those quotation above, Hannah is in anguish, it is shown by how lonely she feels, despite of she is having fun. Those loneliness happens because Hannah's mind at the time is being occupied with Clay,

someone who does not have bad rumors around him. Hannah goes to the party because he does. At the party, Hannah looks like enjoying her time with Clay, holding a drink, talking, laughing, but even so, she cannot help herself that she feels awfully lonely. It seems like she does not know anyone in the party, despite of her talking with Clay, it also shows for the longest time she enjoys doing something with another person from her school. Therefore, her loneliness is caused by her worry, she worries because there is a chance that behind the perfect attitude, Clay may cause her to suffer. She is being defensive against Clay because she does not really know him that well and she does not want anything bad to happen again. It can be concluded that her anguish happens because Hannah is being defensive, she simply does not want anything bad to happen, therefore, it makes her feel so lonely despite of whatever she does in the party.

But she cut me off. She told me to calm down. And that's when I realized how hard I had been crying. How much I was struggling to catch one good breath. (Asher, 2007;251)

It can be seen from the quotation that Hannah is in soreness and Aching. What Hannah feels is guilty because she partially causes an accident that kills her senior. she calls the police office with a payphone. When she does, she realizes how hard she cries, it happens because she feels responsible for it, she should have

convinced Jenny to stop and call the police the soon they break the stop sign. She cannot even catches a breathing to compose a words because of the guilt that lingers inside her mind. From those, it can be conclude that her soreness and aching come from the self-blame she experience because of the accident.

### **3. The effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to her parents and friends**

The effect of Hannah Baker's suicide to her parents and friends can be seen with the quotation bellow;

The day after her suicide was the first time I found myself at their store, standing outside the front door. The lights were out. A single sheet of paper taped to the front window said, WELL BE OPEN SOON in thick black marker. (Asher, 2007;72)

They'll be back soon, I thought. They must have taken her home for the burial. Back to her old town. Unlike old age or cancer, no one anticipates a suicide. They simply left without a chance to get things in order. (Asher, 2007;73)

From the quotation above, it can be shown that Hannah's family is suffering from dysfunctional, that is their stress development. The day after Hannah commits suicide, they close their store. It shows that her parents are care for Hannah and they are mourning for her death. But several days later, clay finds out that they leave the town and burry Hannah on the old town they live. From those, it shows how hard it is for her parents to keep staying in

the town because it is giving them a bad memory. This town is a place where Hannah dies, it traumatizes them so they cannot live in this area anymore, and if they were to keep living in that town, they will not be able to recover and carry on with their life. Unlike old age or cancer, no one anticipates suicide, like her parents do. When it happens, they are being left behind and it is hurt for her parents, so that they decide to leave the town. From those, it can be concluded that in order to recover and live, Hannah's parents need to move back to the old town. It happens because this town is where Hannah dies, therefore, it is a bad reminder for them.

Or maybe I'll take the tapes somewhere else. Somewhere private. Because I can't listen here. Not that Mom or Dad will recognize the voice in the speakers, but I need room. Room to breathe. (Asher, 2007;22)

If I had been smart, if I had been honest with my survey, I would have described Hannah. And maybe we would have talked. Seriously talked. Not just joking around like last summer at the movie theater.

But I didn't do that. I wasn't thinking that way. (Asher, 2007;125)

And that's why, right at this moment, I feel so much hate. Toward myself. I deserve to be on this list. Because if I hadn't been so afraid of everyone else, I might have told Hannah that someone cared. And Hannah might still be alive. (Asher, 2007;181)

Just hearing my name, the pain in my head doubles. I feel

an agonizing twist in my<sup>10</sup> heart. (Asher, 2007;198)

From the quotations above, Clay several times blame himself for Hannah's death. Clay's self-blaming can be showed by how he feels sudden sick, for example when he feels a sudden headache he gets when Hannah says his name. From those it shows that Clay feels that he is responsible for her death. Not only a sudden sickness he feels, his self-blame also makes clay becomes a loner, because he knows that he causes Hannah commits suicide, he wants to know at which tape he is in. From those it shows that Clay needs a private time to listen to her suicide notes. In addition, their self-blame makes him regret some things in the past, he thinks that he should have done something different. For example, he should have taken the quiz more seriously and being more confident to himself because in doing so, he can save Hannah. It can be conclude that Clay is having a self-blame issue because of Hannah's suicide.

These tapes shouldn't  
be here. Not with me. It  
has to be a mistake. Or  
a terrible joke.

I pull the trash can across the floor. Although I checked it once already, I check the wrapping again. A return address has got to be here somewhere. Maybe I'm just overlooking it. (Asher, 2007;10)

"Nothing. It's ridiculous," he says. "I don't belong on those tapes. Hannah just wanted an

excuse to kill herself.”  
(Asher, 2007;110)

I shove my hands in my pockets, balled into fists. I want to slam them into a wall or punch them through a store window. I've never hit anything or anyone before, and already, just tonight, I've wanted to hit Marcus with that rock. (Asher, 2007;142)

Who else, Hannah? Your parents? Me?  
You were not very clear with me.

But I didn't know  
what you were  
going through,  
Hannah. (Asher,  
2007;280)

From the quotations above, it can be shown that some characters blames someone elses, those happen because they do not want to be someone who makes Hannah commits suicide or simply blames the person because he causes Hannah's suicide. Clay, when he finds out that he receive Hannah's tapes, he thinks that the tapes do not belong to him, it shows by his words that it is a mistake, and a joke, he blames someone else that is the post- man may be sending it in the wrong address. He also blames Marcus for making Hannah for her death, it shows by how furious she is to Marcus when he finds out the truth about him. In addition, some characters also blame Hannah, it shows when Marcus says that he does not belong to the tape and the tapes is her to get an excuse to commit suicide, from those it shows that Marcus blames Hannah for his situation. Not only Marcus but Clay also blame Hannah, he blames Hannah because she should have been more open towards her parents and

him, he believes that he can change Hannah's situation. From those, it can be deduced that several characters is having blame issues, especially toward one another.

I caught Alex to keep him from falling. I asked if he was okay, but he just ignored me, picked up his backpack, and hurried down the hall. Did I do something to piss him off, I wondered. I couldn't think of anything. (Asher, 2007;46)

Courtney does come off as genuinely sweet. Hearing her story here, on these tapes, must have killed her.

A shiver crawls up my back.  
“Killed her.” A phrase I will now drop from my vocabulary. (Asher, 2007;95)

With each house I walk by, trying not to stare too long, I look for those shutters.

Maybe I'll get lucky. Maybe there will be a sign posted in his yard. PEEPING TOM—COME INSIDE. (Asher, 2007;106)

My voice shakes from both rage and an attempt to hold back tears. “What makes us so different from him?”

“He's a Peeping Tom,” Marcus says. “He's a freak. He looked in Hannah's window, so why not break his?” (Asher, 2007;109)

From those quotation it can be seen that some characters are being judged negatively. For example, when Clay helps Alex, but he responses by getting angry, from those, it shows that Alex knows that Clay does something to Hannah. Clay also

uses Harsh word which he never uses before, for example, kills her, it means that he judges her more negatively than just a simple a sweet person. Tyler is also being judged more negatively, Clay and Marcus only sees Tyler as a peeping tom not just a simply photographer, but Maarcus is more violent, he breaks Tyler's window because he thinks that he deserves it and he also calls him a freak

### Conclusion

It can be concluded that The proof of Hannah Baker's suicide is that she commits suicide by swallowing bunch of pills. The causes of her suicide is first, getting hurt; second, anguish; third, soreness and aching. Hannah Baker's suicide gives effects to her parents and her friends. The effects of Hannah Baker's suicide To her family is her parents's dysfunctional that Her parents move back to the old town. The effects of Hannah Baker's suicide to her friends are that their friends blame each other because of Hannah Baker's suicide. Another effects of Hannah Baker's suicide is the self-blame by one of her friend, in addition some of her friends being perceived more negatively by other characters.

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