Guilt and Public Confession in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The Scarlet Letter”

A Thesis
In Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Teaching

By:

Lia Wahyuni 1213005084

Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya
Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan
Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni
Program Studi Bahasa Inggris
June 2009
APPROVAL SHEET (1)

This thesis entitled *Guilt and Public Confession in Nathaniel Hawthorne's in The Scarlet Letter*, prepared and submitted by Lia Wahyuni has been approved and accepted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Language Teaching Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya by the following advisors and with grade of...

By:

Drs. Antonius Gurito  
(First Advisor)

Drs. B. Himawan Setyo, M. Hum  
(Second Advisor)
APPROVAL SHEET (2)

This thesis has been examined by the committee on the oral examination with the grade of ______ on June 13, 2009.

Prof. Dr. Agustinus Ngadiman
Chairperson

Johanes Leonard Taloko, M.Sc.
Member

Mateus Yohannoto, M.Hum.
Member

Drs. B. Himawan S., M.Hum.
Member

Approved by:

Dra. Agnes Santi Widjati, M.Pd.
Dean of Teaching Training Faculty

Hady Sutris Winartiono, M.Sc.
Head of English Department
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This thesis is written as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Language Teaching Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya.

First, the writer would like to express her grateful thanks to God, Allah SWT. She realizes her thesis was finally finished due to God’s blessing and guidance.

Furthermore, the writer had received many valuable helps from several persons in conducting this thesis. Then, the writer would like to give her deepest gratitude to:

1. Drs. Antonius Gurito, her first advisor who has given his precious time by advising and encouraging the writer to finish her thesis. He has been so patient in directing the writer in order to conduct her thesis very well.

2. Drs. B. Himawan Setyo, M. Hum, her second advisor who has contributed his valuable knowledge and suggestions for the writer. He has been so patient in directing the writer in order to conduct her thesis very well.

3. All the lecturers of the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya. They have taught and enriched the writer with valuable knowledge during her study.

4. All the librarians of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya for their helps and patience when the writer was collecting her data.
5. Reading and Writing laboratory at Widya Mandala Catholic University and the crew for their helps and patience when the writer was collecting and printing her data.

6. Her beloved parents; Mr. R. Pringgo Sentono Witono and Mrs. Miharti and her relative; Denny Iswanto. They have given their support and encouragement to finish her thesis.

7. Her incredible friends; students at English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya 2005: Aci, Mewi, Fianti, Grache, Vivi, Muzoh, Steven etc., and her high school’s friends: Nica and Yanti for their spirits, amusements and supports when the writer felt so desperate in finishing her thesis.

LW
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL SHEET (1)</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL SHEET (2)</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER I  INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research Problems ............................... 1
1.2 Statements of the Problem ........................................ 6
1.3 Research Objectives ................................................ 6
1.4 Theoretical Framework ............................................. 6
1.5 Significance of the Study ......................................... 7
1.6 Scope and Limitation ............................................... 7
1.7 Definition/Clarification of the Key Terms ....................... 7
1.8 Organization of the Thesis ....................................... 9

## CHAPTER II  REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Elements of Novel

2.1.1 Character .................................................................. 10
2.1.2 Plot ....................................................................... 14
CHAPTER III  RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design......................................................... 27

3.2 Source of Data.......................................................... 28

3.3 Instrument............................................................... 28

3.4 Procedure of Data Collection....................................... 29

3.5 Data Analysis Technique............................................. 29

CHAPTER IV  ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analysis of Guilt and Public Confession in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s
“The Scarlet Letter” ...................................................... 31

4.2 Findings and Discussion............................................... 50

CHAPTER V  CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion............................................................. 55

5.2 Suggestion............................................................. 58

BIBLIOGRAPHY............................................................... 59
APPENDIX

1. Appendix 1: The Biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne ............ 62
2. Appendix 2: Synopsis........................................... 65
ABSTRACT


Key words : Novel, Guilt, Public Confession

The writer is interested in literature as she enrolled Contemporary Literature class. She likes reading a story, which is about values and morality. Therefore, she encounters Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel, The Scarlet Letter. A character of the novel, Arthur Dimmesdale interests the writer to do more research. The writer is going to study the character of Arthur Dimmesdale. Dimmesdale knows he is guilty and agonized. He wants God’s forgiveness and he realizes that only public confession can save him. This is not easy for him being the spiritual leader of a congregation. It would be very ironical. This increases his agony or spiritual suffering.

Thus, the writer is going to emphasize the study on the Arthur Dimmesdale’s guilt and public confession. They are formulated in the following questions: (1) How does Arthur Dimmesdale’s guilt torture him physically and mentally? And (2) How does Arthur Dimmesdale’s guilt leads him to revealing his secret through public confession?

In conducting this study, the writer uses content analysis and literary analysis (physical traits, dialogue, actions, and opinions analysis). As the writer gets the specific data about Dimmesdale’s guilt and public confession, she arranges the conversations made by the character and the events in the novel that she has already collected in a chronological way. Then, she analyzes them to find out guilt and public confession in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The Scarlet Letter”.

After analyzing the data the writer finally comes to some interesting findings as follows:

a. Guilt gnaws someone physically and mentally
b. Guilt leads someone to repayment as punishment of his wrongdoing, which can be formed as public confession.

Based on conclusion and discussion the writer would like to put forward some suggestions. The writer suggests that:

1. the students read more of Nathaniel Hawthorne writings which contains valuable lesson related to values and morality.
2. the students read more some similar novels which have vast vocabulary and specific terms related to certain religion, tradition, and culture.