

**“TRAUMA” THAT BROUGHT DAVE TO FREEDOM  
IN NOVEL A CHILD CALLED ‘IT’ BY DAVE PELZER  
THROUGH THE PSYCHOLOGY ABNORMAL APPROACH**

**Thesis**

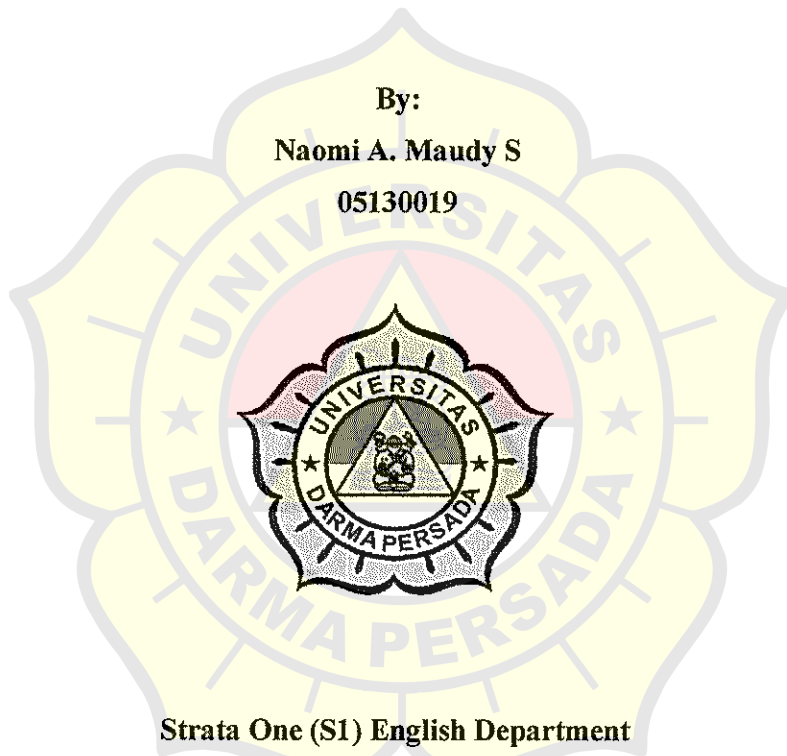
**Submitted to the faculty of letters**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirement for undergraduate program**

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**Strata One (S1) English Department**

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**Darma Persada University**

**2009**

The thesis entitled:

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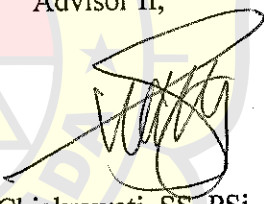
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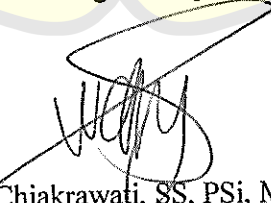
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APPROACH**

Has been examined and accepted by the committee as examination, Faculty of Letters, on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009.


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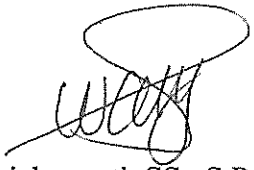
  
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Is a scientific research I conducted under the guidance of Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, MA. The thesis is truly original and not a half or total plagiarisms of another work, the contents have become my responsibility. With all sincerity, I made this statement on February 2009. Jakarta.

The writer,

Naomi A. Maudy S.

## PREFACE

I would like to thank you for my almighty God, Jesus Christ, son of the living God for giving me Your amazing grace so I could finish my thesis.

This thesis is to be my final test to get the Degree from Darma Persada University.

As a human being I am not perfect and also a weak person, so I realized that this thesis is not perfect at all. But, hopefully this thesis could be the benefits of people who read it.

With all my modesty I would like a lot of thanks to the people who help me to finish my thesis:

1. Dr. Hj. Albertine Minderop, MA. I would like to say a lot of thanks to you ma'am. Thank you for being a good lecturer.
2. Swany Chiakrawati SS, PSi, MA, you are the best ma'am.
3. My lovely mother, my brother Hendrik, and my lovely one Roland. Thanks for supporting me and giving me the strength to face all the problems by your prayers and to be my power when I am down. I love you always. God Bless.
4. All The Salvation Army people (Salvaters). Thanks for all your pray for me. Supporting me by your spirit makes me feel so blessed. Thanks for always remembering me that God will never leave me and He always be my shelter and be my refuge of pain.
5. All my best friends. I could tell your names one by one but you are always on my mind. Thanks for your existence when I need and your pray for me. Having you in my life is my happiness and be the best part of my life. Thanks friends.
6. JPMorgan staffs. Your understanding and kindness make me so easy to finish my college. I would like to say sorry for the inconvenience I have made. You are all the best colleagues I ever had. Thanks a lot fellow.
7. Bamby and Blessy. You are such my nice and sweet dogs. Thank for become my 'clown' when I feel bored and depressed.

8. All my friends in Darma Persada University. Thanks for being good pals for me. Sharing my experience with you all is the best memory I could never forget.
9. Darma Persada Staffs. Thanks for helping me.

Jakarta, January 2009

Writer

Naomi A. Maudy S.



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of The Problem

Novel *A Child Called 'It'* is written by Dave Pelzer. David James Pelzer was born at December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1960. Dave is the second son of six brothers from Catherine Rierva Pelzer and Stephen Pelzer. Dave was grown up at the suburb of San Francisco. Dave explained that as a child, he was the victim of physically abuse from his mother<sup>1</sup>. For many years, Dave received the physically abuse which finally made him could get the freedom. At his twelve years old, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Dave was placed at the social institution. At 1979, Dave joined in the Air Force and later became a writer.<sup>2</sup>

This novel telling us about the real life of a four-year-boy, named Dave, the writer itself, who survived for his life of being abused by his mother. Dave was a boy of the middle-economy class family. Dave was a victim of child abuse in the family. These all began from Dave's mischief, and then his mother started to punish him as a little warn. At the first, his mother punished him to stand up at the corner of the room. Seeing Dave seemed like didn't care about her warn, so his mother started to punish him by striking Dave's face at the mirror. All his mother's warned become wilder and more brutal days by days.

Father, was the only hope for Dave. Dave believed that only his father could save him from his mother's crime. However, it was changed when ever his father at work. Mother changed differently when father was at home and she almost never abused Dave. When father was at home, he always delivered Dave some food to eat and gave him a promise that someday father would bring Dave out of their house.

Dave no longer considered as a son, but a slave, no longer a boy but an 'it'. Every day Dave was being abused by his mother such as smacked him on his face,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.Dave Pelzer's Life Story.htm](http://www.DavePelzer'sLifeStory.htm)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

kicking him, forced him to eat ammonia and his brother's feces. Beside that, Dave was forced to eat the dog's food, letting him to sleep in the dark dirty and cold basement. His clothes were torn and smelly. These all sadisms made Dave trauma that he did not deserve to be loved and cared.

Dave dreamt of finding a family to love him and call him their son. It took years of struggle, deprivation and despair to find his dream and make something of him self in the world. Dave could reach freedom when his father apart from his mother. This time was used by Dave to run away.

### **B. The Identification of The Problem**

Based on background of the problem, I identify the problem in the novel A Child Called 'It' is a trauma of sadism that did by Dave's mother made Dave tried hard to get freedom. So, my assumption of theme is "trauma" that brought Dave to freedom in the novel A Child Called 'It'.

### **C. The Limitation of The Problem**

Based on the identification of the problem, I would limit the problem to the Dave's mother brutality through actions and words which made Dave trauma and tried to get his dream. Was Dave really trauma of his mother's sadism? What was the effect of his trauma?

To analyze the problem, theory and concepts that I used are – through literature approach; theme, characterization, plot, and setting – and through the psychology abnormal approach; trauma and sadism (child abuse).

### **D. The Formulation of The Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem above, I would try to formulate the problem; is my assumption of theme of this novel 'Trauma that Brought Dave to Freedom'? To answer this question, I would formulate the problem as follows:

1. Can the multiple viewpoints be used to analyze the characterization?
2. Can the concept of trauma and child abuse be used to analyze this novel?

3. Can the analysis of theme be built through the result of analysis: characterization, plot, and setting if combine with the trauma and child abuse?

#### **E. The Objective of The Research**

Based on the formulation of the problem, I intend to prove that the theme of this novel is "'Trauma that' Brought Dave to Freedom'. To get the objective I do these steps:

1. Multiple viewpoints can be used to analyze the characterization.
2. The concept of trauma and child abuse can be used to analyze this novel.
3. To built the theme through the result of analysis: characterization, plot, and setting which combine with trauma and child abuse.

#### **F. Theoretical Framework**

Based on the objective of the research above I will use the literature and psychology theories and concepts. The literary theoretical that I used are: theme, characterization, plot, and setting. I will use multiple viewpoints in characterization analysis. In the psychology abnormal approach, I will use trauma and sadism (child abuse).

##### **1. Intrinsic Elements**

###### **a. Characterization**

Characterization means actor and portray of personage. Characterization method in a literary work is the method which portrays the character of personage in a fiction. To determine the character (personage)-in this case is the imaginative character-and determine the character of personage. To analyze this novel, I use the multiple viewpoints.

Multiple viewpoints exist in the novel if the writer uses more than one narrator<sup>3</sup>. Multiple viewpoints used by turns. For example, at the beginning the writer uses the “I” and then turns into the “He/She” and back to the “I”.

In this novel, the writer uses “first-person participant” and “third-person omniscient”.

#### 1) First-person Participant

First-person participant tells all incidents and actions which appear physically and spiritually and connected to everything inside himself<sup>4</sup>. In first-person participant, “I” be the focus, central of consciousness and central of the story<sup>5</sup>. In this case, “I” be the protagonist and the readers give not only the empathy but also identify himself as “I”.

#### 2) Third-person Omniscient

Third-person omniscient is the teller which out of the story and report the incidents being faced by the characters from “he/she” viewpoints<sup>6</sup>. In third-person omniscient, the writer called ‘an all-knowing presence’ because he could tell freely-dramatization, interpretation, sum up, speculation, philosophy the story, and value morally or judge what he tells about<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Minderop, Albertine. *Metode Karakterisasi Telaah Fiksi*, Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2005:112

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 109.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 109-110.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 99.

<sup>7</sup> Pickering, James H. and Hoepfer Jeffrey D. *Concise Companion to Literature*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981:45

## b. Plot

We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence. Plot is a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality.<sup>8</sup>

Plot divides into five elements:

### 1) Exposition

The exposition is the beginning section in which the author provides the necessary background information, sets the scene, establishes the situation, and dates the action<sup>9</sup>.

### 2) Complication

The complication, which is sometimes referred to as the rising action, breaks the existing equilibrium and introduces the characters and the underlying or inciting conflict<sup>10</sup>.

### 3) Crisis

The crisis (also referred to as the climax) is that moment at which the plot reaches its point of greatest emotional intensity<sup>11</sup>.

### 4) Falling Action

Once the crisis, or turning point, has been reached, the tension subsides and the plot moves toward its appointed conclusion<sup>12</sup>.

### 5) Resolution

Resolution is the final section of the plot. The resolution is also referred to as the conclusion<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*.

### c. Setting

Setting of the story divides into the place, time or situation and condition and also the social.

Elements of setting that used in the novel *A Child Called 'It'* are:

#### 1) Setting as Background for Action

In the form of costume, manners, events, and institutions, all peculiar to certain time and place-is rendered in minute detail to give a sense of life as it was<sup>14</sup>.

#### 2) Setting as Antagonist

Setting in the form of nature can function as a kind of causal agent or antagonist, helping to establish plot conflict and determine the outcome of events<sup>15</sup>.

#### 3) Setting as a Means of Revealing Character

Very often the way in which a character perceives the setting, and the way he or she reacts to it, will tell the reader more about the character and his state of mind than it will about the actual physical setting itself<sup>16</sup>.

#### 4) Setting as a Means of Reinforcing Theme

Setting can also be used as a means of reinforcing and clarifying the theme of a novel or short story<sup>17</sup>.

### d. Theme

Theme is one of those critical terms that mean very different things to different people. Theme is also used sometimes to refer to the basic issue, problem, or subject with which the work is concerned.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 39.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 42.

## 2. Extrinsic Elements

### a. Trauma

Trauma comes from the Greek means ill (Cerney, in Pickett, 1998). Trauma used to explain the situation or incident that received by the victims. Incidents or the traumatic experience will be responded differently by every person. Traumatic experience is an incident that received or seen by person, which threatening the safety of himself (Lonergan, 1999). It's a usually thing when someone gets shock physically or mentally as a stressful or traumatic incident. Sometimes the aftershock effect appears after one hour, days, or months. Individual's responds commonly are the fear, the weakness, or horrify. The symptoms which appear depend on how bad the incident it is. Likewise every person faces the crisis will depend on their experience and past.<sup>19</sup>

Psychological trauma may accompany physical trauma or exist independently of it. Typical causes of psychological trauma are sexual abuse, violence, the threat of either, or the witnessing of either, particularly in childhood. Catastrophic events such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, war or other mass violence can also cause psychological trauma. Long-term exposure to situations such as extreme poverty or milder forms of abuse, such as verbal abuse, can be traumatic (though verbal abuse can also potentially be traumatic as a single event). However, different people will react differently to similar events. One person may experience an event as traumatic while another person would not suffer trauma as a result of the same event. In other words, not all people who experience a potentially traumatic event will actually become psychologically traumatized.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 61.

<sup>19</sup> <http://rumahbelajarpsikologi.com/index.php/trauma.html>

<sup>20</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological\\_trauma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_trauma)

There are two extremes that caused by trauma. The first one is still remembering the trauma for a long time. The sufferer fetter with the trauma. The second one is the opposite of the first one, the sufferer pretends press the memory to the subconscious. The sufferer acts as if nothing occur to his life. Which extremes pursue the recovery of trauma. Trauma is the hidden injury which could undermine ourselves. Our energy of body and soul are sucked with the injure. Our life become so messy and crushed. On the other hand, trauma could be the power for the sufferer if he/she could handle the trauma as good as possible.<sup>21</sup>

#### **b. Sadism**

Psychology comes from the Greek: *psyche* means soul and *logos* means knowledge. So psychology is a knowledge that investigates and learns the human's action<sup>22</sup>. Psychology abnormal is a branch of psychology that investigates every term of mental interference and the soul abnormality (Atkinson, 1996:16). According to Kartono, Psychology abnormal is a knowledge that investigates and classifies the cause of personal interference and terms of deviate actions also trying to find out the recovery<sup>23</sup>.

Psychology abnormal divides into many terms of interferences; one of them is the sadism. Sadism comes from the last name of Frenchman, Marquis de Sade (1710-1814), who was satisfied by hurt his partner. The term of sadism is growing widely be the physically or mentally abuses. The actions are so various; such as pinch and whip, slap or tear out hair with bow the head into the wall, or hurt himself with razor blade until kill someone<sup>24</sup>. Character logy, sadism could be defined as the enjoyment by hurting someone else, insulting, and deriving pleasure from cruelty upon others. The sufferers of sadism usually want to show their powers to

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.bahana-magazine.com/?p=productsMore&iProduct=149&sName=Luka-Trauma>

<sup>22</sup> Minderop, Albertine. *Buku Ajar Sastra dan Psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud*. Jakarta, 2000:3

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>24</sup> [http://Konsultasi Sexual Sadisme, Apa Itu – KOMPAS CYBER MEDIA.htm](http://Konsultasi%20Sexual%20Sadisme,%20Apa%20Itu%20-%20KOMPAS%20CYBER%20MEDIA.htm)

control and scare the others<sup>25</sup>. Besides that, the imagination from restrain and total power mostly become so important for the sufferers, and they could bound and obstruct their partners complicatedly.

The sadism that I used for my thesis is about the child abuse. Physically child abuse is an adult's physical act of aggression directed at a child that causes injury, even if the adult didn't intend to injure the child.<sup>1</sup> Such acts of aggression include striking a child with the hand, fist, or foot or with an object; burning the child with a hot object; shaking, pushing, or throwing a child; pinching or biting the child; pulling a child by the hair; cutting off a child's air. Many physically abusive parents and caregivers insist that their actions are simply forms of discipline, ways to make children learn to behave. But there's a big difference between giving an unmanageable child a swat on the backside and twisting the child's arm until it breaks. Physically abusive parents have issues of anger, excessive need for control, or immaturity that make them unable or unwilling to see their level of aggression as inappropriate.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are some reasons why a person abuses a child:

- 1) Stress, including the stress of caring for children, or the stress of caring for a child with a disability, special needs, or difficult behaviors
- 2) Lack of nurturing qualities necessary for child care
- 3) Immaturity: a disproportionate number of parents who abuse their children are teenagers
- 4) Difficulty controlling anger
- 5) Personal history of being abused
- 6) Isolation from the family or community
- 7) Physical or mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety
- 8) Alcohol or drug abuse
- 9) Personal problems such as marital conflict, unemployment, or financial difficulties.

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<sup>25</sup> [http://unisosdem.org/kliping\\_detail.php?aid=2423&coid=1&caid=45](http://unisosdem.org/kliping_detail.php?aid=2423&coid=1&caid=45)

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.Child abuse - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.htm>

No one has been able to predict which of these factors will cause someone to abuse a child. A significant factor is that abuse tends to be intergenerational – those who were abused as children are more likely to repeat the act when they become parents or caretakers.<sup>27</sup>

#### **G. The Method of the Research**

Method or technique that would be explained in this thesis is qualitative with the written data source (text), a novel A Child Called 'It' and supported with the relevant data sources such as articles from the internet. This kind of literature research and kind of interpretative research is interpreting the text. Mechanism of collecting the data through the literal research and the term of investigate the text inductively is from general to the specific.

#### **H. The Benefits of the Research**

In this novel, I hope the reader will know more about child abuse and trauma. Beside that hopefully the readers can more understanding the novel A Child Called 'It'.

#### **I. Systematical of Presentation**

##### **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

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

##### **CHAPTER II: THE ANALYSIS OF A NOVEL A CHILD CALLED 'IT' BY DAVE PELZER THROUGH THE INTRINSIC APPROACH**

In this chapter I analyze the novel through the intrinsic elements such as: characterization, plot and settings. For the analysis of characterization I use

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

the multiple viewpoints; first-person participant and third-person omniscient. And for the analysis of settings I use Pickering's theory; setting as background for action, setting as antagonist, and setting as a means of revealing character.

### CHAPTER III: TRAUMA THAT BROUGHT DAVE TO FREEDOM

In this chapter I would analyze the novel through the extrinsic elements; trauma and sadism that refer to the child abuse. After I finish analysis through the extrinsic elements, I would analyze the novel with the final step; analysis through the combination of intrinsic and extrinsic elements.

### CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would write the summary of all my previous chapters.

#### **J. Summary**

In this chapter, I have explained the basic elements to be used as my concept of analysis and as my reference to analyze the novel I used. For the theory I used the intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. Beside that I also explained the other references to guide you into the next chapter.