

# AMY'S PSYCHOPATHY IN GILLIAN FLYNN'S *GONE GIRL*

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**Abstract.** This study discusses the psychopathic behavior of Amy the main character in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* Novel. This study aims to describe the psychopathic behavior, the impacts on the people closest to the psychopathic character, and how the husband of the main character as the closest person deals with the psychopathic behaviors of the main character. The research data are taken from the novel *Gone Girl*. The data were clarified using psychopathy theory. This study uses descriptive qualitative method. The research findings show that there are five psychopathic behaviors shown in the main character, namely: manipulating, lack of remorse, low anxiety levels, lack of empathy, and cheating and lying. The second is the impacts of psychopathic behavior on those closest to them, namely: Hilary Handi's distress, character assassination of Tommy, the murder of Desi, Jacqueline separation from Desi, public deception, imprisonment of Nick Dunne, Amy's cheating on Nick Dunne, Nick Dunne's regret, Rand Elliot's losing Amy, Margo's Distrust on Nick Dunne, Amy's parent's disappointment. Third, the study also reveals that the husband of the psychopathic character deals with her psychopathic behaviors by admitting to the public about his betrayal and apologizing for all his bad treatment to Amy so that Amy forgives and comes back.

Keywords : *Psychopath, psychopathic behavior, impacts of psychopathic behavior.*

## INTRODUCTION

Psychopathy is a personality disorder. These individuals will feel satisfied and have no guilt if they hurt other people or even animals. Individuals who experience this disorder look like normal people in general because they are manipulative psychopaths that make many people unaware that their attitudes and behavior in front of people are inversely proportional to their real self. Psychopaths are also often found in many films and novels, a psychopath is usually synonymous with sadistic impressions, lack of empathy, and likes to commit crimes to fulfill his satisfaction. One of the novels that discuss a psychopath is *Gone Girl*. This novel, written by Gillian Flynn depicts a psychopathic woman who wants

to trap her husband into prison. This woman is named Amy and her husband Nick Dunne. The actions that were done by Amy to Nick Dunne made Nick Dunne finally hated by many people. Therefore, the writer is interested in discussing every move and trap that Amy makes. According to Wellek and Warren (1977:139) psychology can be used in literary works by studying author's psychology, character's psychology, and also reader's psychology. According to Wellek and Warren (1977:139) psychology can be used in literary works by studying author's psychology, character's psychology, and also reader's psychology. This study the writer discusses how Amy's psychopathic behavior is described in the novel *Gone*

*Girl*, besides that the researcher also discusses the impact of Amy's psychopathy. Then about how Nick Dunne confronted Amy. this study purposes to flourish the literary study in psychopath the topic. Practically, this research is expected to be able to invite people to care more about mental health and personality.

The studies of psychopathic in literature was discussed by Aulia Dhian Rakhmadhani with the title Psychopathy in Thomas Harris' *Hannibal Rising*. The writer uses psychological criticism design to analysis. This study examines the symptoms of Hannibal's psychopathy and factors that cause psychopathic behavior by the character Hannibal in the novel *Hannibal Rising* by Thomas Harris. Based on the research results, there are six symptoms of Hannibal's psychopath, those are adolescent antisocial behavior, impulsive behavior and poor behavior control, lack of empathy and poor behavior and poor of judgment, lack of remorse and guilty feeling, compulsive lying and manipulative, and lacking goals. The factors that cause Hannibal's character to behave psychopathically are genetic factors and environment factors. Based on the research above, the researchers found similarities and differences with previous researchers. The similarity of the current research with previous research is that it discusses literary works that analyze novels and focus on a psychopath. If previous

researchers discussed the causes of psychopathic behavior. The current study discusses how to deal with a psychopath. Previous research only analyzed the symptoms, while the current research analyzes also how to deal with psychopaths.

Minderop (2010: 3) stated that, psychology comes from the Greek psyche, meaning soul and logos which means science. Psychopaths may be interpreted as mental disorders. According to Dirgagunarsa (1998: 145) psychopaths are psychological disorders that cause sufferers to have difficulty adjusting to social norms that exist in their environment. Similarly to Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow in *Readings in Abnormal Psychology* (1983: 87) said that psychopath is one kind of mental disorder which can be considered one of the prototypical disorders associated with empathic dysfunction. The characteristics possessed by a psychopath are antisocial personality, manipulative, lack of empathy, cheating and lying. American Psychiatric Association (in Hare & Neumann, 2009) explains that psychopathy is another term for antisocial personality disorder, namely a personality disorder that usually continues to carry out antisocial behavior, not continuously and violates the rights of others (Castillo, 1997). According to Perri & Lichtenwald (2010: 54) psychopaths have feelings of lack of conscience and empathy for others. They can be anybody (Davis-

Barron, 1995: 1315). Psychopaths lack empathy, however this is often in association with 'emotional empathy'. Some with psychopathy can 'read' you, however cannot 'feel' you (Goleman, 2006). The attachment theory proposed by Bowlby (in Smith, 2011) emphasizes the importance of the quality of the relationship between children and parents in early life. Attachment is a strong affective bond. From Marshall and Cooke's research (in Farrington, 2005) it was found that psychopathic prisoners had a more severe history of parental neglect, broken families, lack of parental supervision, and lack of parental discipline. Sigmund Freud divided the personality structure into three components, namely Id (biological aspect), Ego (psychological aspect), and Superego (sociological aspect) (Freud, 1927).

#### **METHOD**

The psychological approach in literary research is based on the psychology of personality. That is, the application of to literary works is often applied based on the character, behavior, and actions of the character (Sangidu, 2004: 30). Likewise, literature is the study of changes in human life. Literature is also often used as a reflection of a person's personality. So that literature is often associated with analytic psychology. Literary psychology as a branch of literature that approaches literature from a psychological point of view, its attention can be directed to the

reader or the text itself. The term literary psychology has four possibilities, namely: (1) the psychology study of the author as a type or differentiator; (2) the creative process; (3) types and psychological laws applied to literary works; (4) literature on readers or psychology of readers Wellek and Warren (1977:81). This thesis uses types and psychological laws applied to literary works. The writer uses descriptive qualitative research design. The writer research design to collect various data describing the form of behavior based on the traits and factors that cause psychopathic behavior by the characters in the novel Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*. The data used in this study are words, sentences and discourses in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* novel. In this study, the theory used is literary psychology theory, in particular Sigmund Freud's theory of personality disorders. The main source of the study is a novel entitled *Gone Girl* written by Gillian Flynn. It was published in 2012. *Gone Girl* novel consists of 407 pages. The writer analyzed the causes, characteristics and impact of Amy's psychopathy in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*. Furthermore, drawing and evaluating the conclusion according to the theory of psychopathy disorder using psychological analysis approach.

#### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

##### **Amy's Psychopathy in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl***

The conflict that occurs in this novel is about the marriage of Nick Dunne and Amy. They were married for about five years, and on their 5th wedding anniversary Amy disappeared. Nick Dunne who wants to celebrate his wedding anniversary suddenly has to find his wife. Nick Dunne looked panicked when he saw his whole house shattered as if there had been a fight. Nick Dunne immediately went to look for Amy's whereabouts. Until the evening Amy did not come home and Nick Dunne decided to report to the police for Amy's disappearance. The beginning of this conflict occurred because Amy disappeared and there was no trace of Amy's disappearance. Police and local residents suspect Nick Dunne of Amy's killer. It turns out that behind the events of Amy's disappearance, Amy is the mastermind who planned this so that Nick Dunne became a suspect in the murder case against him. Next, the writer will discuss Amy's psychopathic behavior in *Gone Girl's* novel.

#### 1. Amy's Antisocial in *Gone Girl*

Since sitting in school, Amy doesn't have many friends. Amy is always alone wherever she goes. Amy thinks friends are not important, that's why Amy doesn't want to be friends or socialize with anyone. This makes it difficult for the police to get information about Amy because of the lack of information from

the surrounding environment. It is shown in the following quotation.

... Did – does Amy have a lot a friends in town?' A number of women – friends of my mom's, friends of Go's – had invited Amy to book clubs and Amyway parties and girls' nights at Chili's. Amy had predictably declined all but a few ... (Flynn, 2012: 94)

#### 2. Amy's Manipulative in *Gone Girl*

Noelle tells the police that in Amy and Nick Dunne's marriage, Amy is not happy, and Nick Dunne marries Amy only for money. Amy wants the public to know Nick Dunne as a cheating man who marries his wife just for money. Amy deliberately makes all the evidence so that the police suspects Nick Dunne as Amy's killer.

#### 3. Amy's Lack of Empathy in *Gone Girl*

Amy can not get out of Desi's house because Amy does not know the fence code. Amy begins to make plans to get out of Desi's house. That night Amy asks Desi to make love. Amy pretends to cry in front of Desi to remind Desi of the first time they make love. After making love to Amy, Desi falls asleep and finally is fast asleep. When Desi is already asleep, Amy begins to carry out his actions to trap Desi. Amy makes blisters on her wrists because of the rope that binds her hands, making it look as if her vagina is injured because Desi has raped her. After that Amy kills Desi, goes with the fence key and Desi's car to go to Nick's house. She also immediately calls the police to come to

Desi's house. It is shown in the following quotation.

I still have Desi's semen inside me from the last time he raped me, so the medical examination goes fine. My rope-wreathed wrists, my damaged vagina, my bruises – the body I present them is textbook. ( Flynn, 2012: 362)

#### 4. Amy's Cheating And Lying

In Nick Dunne's opinion, Amy does not want to have children, so Nick Dunne dismisses the news about Amy's pregnancy. The police rushes to retrieve his medical records at the hospital. The next day the police calls Nick Dunne and confirms Amy's pregnancy. Amy's goal in faking this pregnancy is to make Nick Dunne even more hated. Amy uses Noelle to fake her pregnancy, and she also tells about Nick Dunne's bad behavior towards Amy. At that time Amy invites Noelle to drink lemonade at her house, the goal is to get Amy to get Noelle's urine for a pregnancy test. When Amy gets a pregnancy certificate from the doctor, Amy immediately goes to Noelle's house to give the news that she is pregnant.

When Amy disappears, she is hiding in Hide-A-Way Cabins. Amy changes her entire appearance so that no one would recognize her. She also changes her name to Lydia. The money Amy uses to survive is given by her two friends, Grizzly Adams and Jeff.

#### **The Impacts of Amy's Psychopathy in Gillian Flynn's Gone Girl**

As a father, of course, Rand Elliot feels lost when he gets the news that his daughter is missing. The news of Amy's disappearance certainly makes Rand devastated. Rand loves his only child so much. Amy's disappearance worries Rand. Rand expresses his sense of loss as a father towards his daughter during an interview with reporters. Rand is very proud of his daughter. Rand shows his pride in having a daughter like Amy. Rand Elliot is so sad that Amy has not been found. Rand pleads everyone to help find Amy. Rand really wants Amy back home with her family. Rand feels deep sadness as the father of his missing daughter.

Marybeth blames Nick Dunne for Amy's disappearance. Marybeth also expresses her regret to Nick Dunne. Marybeth regrets having trusted Nick as someone who is able to protect and look after Amy, it turns out that Marybeth's trust in Nick Dunne is not carried out properly. Then Marybeth leaves with great disappointment and anger.

Margo is the person who has accompanied Nick Dunne in his search for Amy. Although many people accuse Nick Dunne of being the one who kills Amy, Margo still believes that it is not Nick Dunne who kills Amy. When the police confirm Amy's pregnancy, Margo looks angry at Nick Dunne. Margo thinks Nick Dunne has tricked her about Amy's pregnancy, credit card bills and his relationship with Andie. Margo expresses her disappointment to Nick Dunne. Margo

begins to distrust Nick Dunne. Margo begins to accuse Nick Dunne of being the one who kills Amy. Margo's trust in Nick Dunne begins to fade. Margo begins to suspect Nick Dunne. It is shown in the following quotation.

.... So you tell Amy's parents she didn't want kids. You swear the credit cards in your your name aren't yours, you swear you were hanging out at a beach when you hate the beach, you swear your marriage was happy. I just don't know what to believe right now.' (Flynn, 2012: 195)

All evidence points to Nick Dunne being the one who kills Amy, starting from the bloodstains in the kitchen to Nick Dunne's fingerprints on the goods in the warehouse. Nick Dunne could not deny the slightest bit about the accusations, even about Amy's pregnancy that Nick Dunne himself does not know about. In the novel Nick Dunne is described as a husband who does not pay attention to his wife at all, a husband who likes to commit acts of violence to his wife, until finally Nick Dunne does not get the trust of anyone. Everyone sides with Amy and hates Nick Dunne. On the day of Amy's disappearance, Nick Dunne looks confused and really misses Amy.

Desi dies because Amy has killed her. Amy deliberately kills Desi because she wants to resume her household with Nick Dunne. Amy has been planning the murders ever since watching Nick Dunne in the broadcast on TV. In the broadcast,

Nick Dunne seems to regret what he has done to Amy. Nick Dunne admits that what he has done to Amy so far is wrong. Amy has no other choice to get out of Desi's house except by killing her. Unmitigated the way Amy kills Desi is by slitting Desi's throat with a kitchen knife. After that, Amy runs away from Desi's house by using Desi's car to go to Nick Dunne's house.

Nick Dunne already knows that Amy set him up all along. Nick Dunne has no ideas that Amy could do such a heinous thing. By the time Amy returns, Nick Dunne harbors hatred for Amy, Nick Dunne's emotions are out of control. Nick Dunne has a burning feeling that he wants to kill Amy. Nick Dunne wants to vent his frustration all this time on Amy. By the time Amy is right in front of Nick Dunne's eyes, he drops Amy. Nick Dunne realizes that it is not a good idea to follow a moment's emotions.

### **How Nick Dunne Deals with Amy's Psychopathy in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl***

In dealing with Amy's psychopathic behavior, of course Nick Dunne has his own way of dealing with it. Ever since Nick Dunne finds out that Amy has set him up, Nick Dunne starts planning to do an interview with Sharon Schieber. Tanner says that Sharon Schieber's broadcast would be good for Nick Dunne, because according to Tanner Sharon Schieber served as a defense against oppressed people, especially women. Nick Dunne really prepares the words to do an

interview with Sharon Schieber, Nick Dunne wants this show to run perfectly as desired. In the interview, Nick Dunne will give a frankly honest statement. Nick Dunne will admit all the wrongs that have been done to Amy, including the affair with Andie. Nick Dunne does not care that people would hate him. Then Nick Dunne would apologize for all the wrongs that has been done to Amy. This is Nick Dunne's way of dealing with Amy's psychopathic behavior. Nick Dunne deliberately regrets and admits all his mistakes to get Amy back. Amy feels happy to see people who are wrong receive punishment and the way that Nick Dunne does is a punishment for admitting guilt and humiliating himself in public. It is shown in the following quotation.

... And it works for us, ultimately, I think. It 's the only way Amy might come back,' I said. 'She wants me to be publicly humiliated'. 'Chastened', Tanner interrupted. 'Humiliated makes it sound like you feel sorry for yourself'. (Flynn, 2012: 302)

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research there are several psychopathic behaviors in Gillian Flynn's novel *Gone Girl*. The psychopathic behavior of Amy the main character in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* Novel provides deep insight into the behavior of a psychopath. In general, this novel describes a missing wife. This conflict begins with the disappearance of Amy,

and Nick Dunne becomes the person accused of being the one who kills Amy. There are five behaviors of Amy that indicate psychopathy. The first behavior is Amy's manipulative habits, this is shown when Amy is missing. The second is Amy doesn't feel guilty and sorry at all. It is proven when she kills Desi. The third is a lack of empathy. Amy deliberately puts Nick Dunne in jail because she wants to punish Nick Dunne because he has an affair with another woman. The fourth is self-harm: to convince the police that Nick Dunne is the killer, Amy has to slash her own hand to bleed. The last one is the habits of Amy who likes to lie; so many lies are done by Amy. One of the lies that Amy does is to fake her pregnancy, making it look like she was kidnapped and raped by Desi. The impacts of Amy's psychopathic in the novel are also found in the novel. The first impact is Nick Dunne is hated by people and gets punished of a murder case he never does. The second impact is on Desi's family. Desi's name is now bad, because of the kidnapping and rape case against Amy. Jacqueline cries when she finds out that her son is killed by Amy. The third impact is Tommy, Amy's ex who is accused of raping Amy in the apartment and is eventually imprisoned, then released from prison because Amy has withdrawn her charge. Amy would never feel guilty for what she has done. Amy gets happier when she sees people being humiliated. It is a matter of pride for Amy to see people destroyed and miserable

because of her actions. In responding to Amy's psychopathic behavior, Nick Dunne looks for gaps in Amy's short comings. Nick Dunne tries to understand Amy's character, which is actually difficult to predict. When Amy goes missing, Nick Dunne tries to get Amy back by admitting all the mistakes that Nick Dunne has done. Nick Dunne also apologizes to Amy with regret. All of Nick Dunne's plans to get Amy back finally comes true. Now Nick Dunne continues his marriage relationship with Amy.

After Amy returns to Nick Dunne's house, Nick Dunne wants to give Amy a deterrent effect. Nick Dunne begins to devise a plan to have Amy imprisoned. It turns out that Nick Dunne's plan fails because he finds out Amy is pregnant. Nick decides to forget the past and start a new life with Amy.

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