## Esther's Psychopathic Behaviours in the Orphan Movie

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## ABSTRACT

A psychopathic condition is a psychological behavior regarded as destructive and bad for society. This study aims to identify the characteristics of Ester's psychopathic problems and the reasons that cause Ester to become a psychopath. The data analysis derives from The Orphan film, the script, and the cinematography. Using psychopath theory, the evidence is interpreted. To answer the research problem, the writer employed psychological theory from Wellek and Warren (1956), and psychoanalysis theory from Sigmund Freud and James D. Page, to answer the research problem. The qualitative descriptive approach is used in this study. The research findings reveal two issues: Esther's psychopathic disorders and the factors are the cause of Esther to become a psychopath.First, there are five psychopath behaviors: liar, lack of feeling guilty, lack of empathy, manipulative, and aggressive. Second, Esther becomes a psychopath due to biological and environmental factors.

Keywords: mental health disorder, movie, psychopathic

## **INTRODUCTION**

The film has become an exciting sector for those who desire to show their creative mind and abilities in the modern era. It is a manifestation of someone's creativity and invention and a source of pleasure for others (Boggs, 1991). The film is also a fusion of science and theater, sound art, painting art, and music (Terms., 2010). Special effects based on animation methods literature, or anything written that represents culture, is also an art form. The film begins with a scenario and reflects culture. Therefore, the film is a reflection of literature. Therefore, the film is a reflection of literature. It is one of the literary masterpieces that has recently grown in popularity.

Esther's Psychopathic Behaviours in the... M. Irsyad Rasyid Rusyidi, Mamik Tri Wedawati DOI: https://doi.org/10.26714/lensa.11.2.2022.33-45 Because it is a modern drama, the film is a literary work. As a work of art, the cinema is frequently viewed as the outcome of copyrighted works of art that have the fullness of some components of art to suit the needs of a spiritual nature. Literary works that are displayed through language have two functions, to entertain and educate; as stated by (Wellek & Warren, 1956), the literary theory says that the function of literature must be beautiful, meaningful, and entertaining and must also teach the reader something good. For example, studying literature helps us understand the emotional aspects of human interaction, history, geography, culture, and social trends over time (influences in culture), understand stories (and the importance of human experience), give friends peer criticism and accept peer criticism, build writing, critical thinking, and communication skills(Pullman et al., 2021).

There are many aspects of character in literary works that can be used as objects of research; one of them is a psychopath. As stated by (Verstappen, 2011), A psychopath is someone who has an egotistical and unpleasant attitude, as well as a lack of responsibility for the deeds he has committed against him. As social entities, humans will require each other to engage if they lack respect for others (Hintjens, 2015). Many stories are born by human interactions and socialization processes, which motivate everyone to channel thoughts or inspirations that develop. Literature is a creative activity that becomes a tool in the socialization process to send messages, experiences, and humans to other people or spectators, and the shape of writings into numerous forms, such as poetry, novels, music, paintings, drawings, and others (Robinson, 1979).

Before being designated by a number of French psychoanalysis and art critics as one of the approaches methodologies most appropriate to the cinematographic world, psychoanalysis had a special relationship with cinema. Aside from a film discussion based on psychoanalysis theory is good, the texts in the film will be the focus of the psychoanalysis argument. For example, the director, the characters in the film, the filming process, the genre of the film, the audience, and gender. (Gilmer, 1970). In most cases, film analysis treats the character as an item that may be regarded as three people. In this situation, the text of the character can be studied to identify an implicit text in the character's unconsciousness (Robert, 1999).

The movie describes a woman with two children who is melancholy and has frequently got nightmares. It was part of her memory about her third kid who had died. When he adopted Esther, a strange 9-year-old girl, Kate and John headed to the gym the following day. Saint Mariana's Girl's Orphanage Kate and John decided to adopt a child. Esther is a talented painter and singer who is also a bright young lady. (Yadriha & Mariana, 2019).

This movie became a trending subject on Twitter and was nominated for a Teen Choice Award in 2009. It also won the Golden Reven International Feature Long Competition at the Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival in 2010. This also requires that any film production not only have a strong plot but also be visually appealing. A good visualization will help focus the viewer's attention on the message that the filmmaker wants to express via the many shootings depicted in the film (Rizqi, 2017). Making a film is not easy, and it does not take as little time as we think it does when we see it. Because it requires logic and if the technique, it takes time and a lengthy procedure (Hendriawan, 2010). The thinking process consists of looking for ideas, concepts, and tales to work on. Meanwhile, the technical process, in the form of creative abilities, is shooting to generate good visualization so that the film may be seen. Getting a good shot is intimately tied to the film's cinematographic aspects. Cinematography is a method of taking images and organizing them in such a way that they form a sequence of images capable of conveying thoughts (Biran, 2010).

There have been relevant previous researchers who investigated psychopath, and their research support this research paper. First, it is based on a thesis from (Maulanie, 2016); the title is "An Analysis Of Esther's Psychopath Problem In Orphan Film Viewed From Psycho-Analysis Theory By Sigmund Freud." Using Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the research explores the main character, Esther, in the film Orphan, as well as all of her problems. The study's goal is to use Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory to reduce the scope of the examination to the psychological condition of the key character in the film Orphan. The study selected to conduct this issue utilizing a qualitative approach relating to the research and objectives.

Second, it is based on a thesis from Milawaty(Milawaty, 2015); the title is "A Major Character Analysis of Orphan Movie." The major characters of Esther in the film Orphan, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra. The issue that may arise in this inquiry is "How is Esther portrayed in the Orphan Movie?" The goal of this study is to learn about Esther's characteristics as an Orphan.

Third, it is based on the thesis from Rohman (Rohman, 2019); the title is "*An Analysis of Psychopatism in Orphan Film*." The author used Sigmund Freud's theory to evaluate the key characters in the film who had psychiatric illnesses in this research. In this study, a qualitative descriptive approach is used to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of Orphan films, such as conversation and situations, which are evaluated using Sigmund Freud's theory.

Fourth, it is based on thesis from Arimawati (Arimawati, 2020); the title is '*Psychopath Behaviour In The Orphan Film By Jaume Collet Serra*''. The goal of this research is to learn about the behavior, traits, and effects of psychopathic in everyday situations. The research data are based on the film and plot of The Orphan. To address the problem's wording, the author adopts two theories: Stefan's H. Verstappen theory and Robert's Hare theory. According to study findings, there are four basic types of psychopaths: the victim, the artist, the nasty psychopath, and the expert psychopath, with the nasty psychopath being the most prominent.

Fifth, it is based on the article from Pujimahanani (Pujimahanani, 2019);the title is *'Esther's Psychopathy In David Leslie Johnson's Orphan Movie Script'*. The author of the study focuses on Esther's psychotic symptoms in

David Leslie Johnson's Orphan film script, the explanations for Esther's psychopathy, and the repercussions of Esther's psychopathy on herself, Max, and Kate. The thesis writer investigates the causes of Esther's psychopathy in David Leslie Johnson's Orphan film script. Physical assault, sex abuse, and emotional and mental trauma all contribute to Esther's psychopathy.

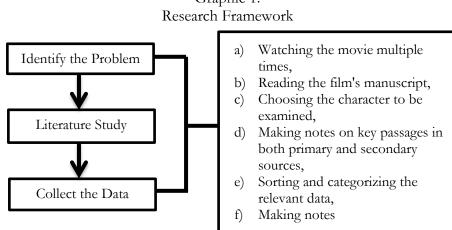
In previous comparable studies, all studies discussed psychopaths. Meanwhile, the differences from each previous studies lies in the theory used and what is being researched. The first, second, and third studies used the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud. The fourth theory uses a combination of Stefan's H. Verstappen theory and Robert's Hare theory to find the types of psychopaths. The last studies use David Leslie's theory to find out the symptoms of Esther through scripts. The researchers also analyse the psychopath represented in the main character of the film The Orphan and its impact on this study (Andi, 2011). The bulk of investigations used psychoanalysis theory, which is similar to the research discussed above. They are theoretically equivalent, and another thing they have in common is that they all used the descriptive qualitative research technique. Next, this study utilized the differences lay on the theory of psychopaths based on Wellek and Warren (Wellek & Warren, 1956) and combined it between psychological and Literature(Milawaty, 2011). The reason for using this theory is because this theory is suitable for showing the influence between literature and psychology. The research data used to support the hypothesis in this study. These are the differences between the linked studies and this study which brings the issue of psychology. The character in the movie shows a psychopath condition since he has no empathy or grief for others. The author feels that psychological research is important since it can aid in the treatment of psychic diseases, according to the detail above. The research focuses on two problems as follows: 1) How did the characteristics of Ester's psychopathic portray in The Orphan movie? 2) What are the factors that make Ester as a main character of The Orphan movie become a psychopath?

## METHOD

This research was conducted qualitatively. They were utilizing data from words and other written materials as sources (Hubermen, 1984). The focus of the study is the film *The Orphan* by Jaume Collet Serra. In qualitative research, Wellek and Warren investigate the problems using a psychological approach that is adapted to the individual. The analysis data are derived from the film The Orphan, the script, and the cinematography. To answer the research problem, the writer employs psychological theory from Wellek and Warren (1956), which is combined with psychoanalysis theory from Sigmund Freud and James D.

The data source for the study is the film *The Orphan* by Jaume Collet Serra. Conversations and images data from the film would be maintained in several stages; they are called technique's realization: a) Watching the movie

multiple times, b) Reading the film's manuscript, c) Choosing the character to be examined, d) Making notes on key passages in both primary and secondary sources, e) Sorting and categorizing the relevant data, f) Making notes from the material as well as additional resources relevant to the film and analysis.



Graphic 1:

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher addresses the traits of Ester's psychopathic presented in The Orphan movie and the circumstances that cause Ester, the main character of The Orphan movie, to become a psychopath in this chapter. The study examines Esther's feature of being stuck in her little body through the lens of Wellek and Warren's Psychological Literature and Freud's Psychoanalysis theory.

By combining literary psychology theory from Wellek and Warren and Sigmund Freud, the researcher has numerous options for evaluating Esther's behaviour, such as temperament, habits, or characteristics that may also tell the reader about the leading character in a story. It was also evident in Esther's reactions to various events and environments. According to Wellek and Warren's view, Esther lacked a conscience and felt no shame for what she did, was selfish and emotionally unstable, antisocial, cold, ruthless, harsh, and unpredictable, and had sadistic goals and objectives. This is in line with the findings using the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud which states that Esther has 5 characters, liar, lack of guilty feeling, aggressive, lack of empathy, and manipulative. This is evidenced by the behavior described by Esther, dialogue, and cinematography. In addition, there are 2 factors that cause Esther to become a psychopath, namely biological and environmental factors.

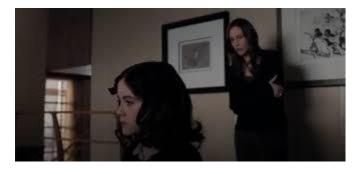
The lead character in this film is named Esther. She is a nine-year-old orphan at an orphanage. Her life as an orphan ends when Kate and John

Coleman decide to adopt her. Esther, a 9-year-old girl, has many excellent qualities that others admire. She is extroverted, brilliant, friendly, and intelligent. She realized they were all great folks when she met the Coleman couple for the first time. She has a terrible character among her many amazing characteristics that she keeps buried till no one knows or observes it save her stepmother, Kate. The viewer may notice various anomalies in her around the middle of the film that were not noticeable at the start. The viewer may notice various anomalies in her around the beginning of the play that were not noticeable at the start. Esther is hiding a secret from her adopted family, and a negative character who appears in the middle of the film explains who Esther is and what is wrong with her.

## The character of Ester in The Orphan Movie

## a) The Liar

Esther is not honest with her family about the accident that occurred after she pushed Brenda till she fell. Esther lies about the piano in addition to Brenda. When Esther meets the Colemans for the first time, she is shocked to find Kate has a piano. Kate offers to teach her to play the piano, which she gladly accepts. Kate, who had no idea Esther could play the piano, is shocked when she realizes Esther can do so perfectly. Kate chastises her and accuses Esther of lying to her, but Esther simply dodges the topic, insisting that she does not lie and also reveals shocking information to Kate. Esther has no regrets since she does not tell the truth. The picture below shows that Esther has liar behaviour.



Picture 1: Kate caught Esther playing piano

In the dialogue between Kate and Esther in scene 00:48:30 ---00:51:45, Kate was suspicious about the sound and wondered who was playing piano in the middle of the room. Kate was caught secretly in Esther playing the piano and asked if Esther can play piano as stated in Kate's dialogue "You told me you did not know how to play". Previously, Ester stated that she was unable to play the piano and requested that Kate teach her. Then, Esther denied it by saying "You offered to teach me playing a piano, and I agree with *that*". It also added with the cinematography aspect that the angel shot image of Esther playing the piano indicates the focus and the intended object. Like the pattern of using the camera from behind the object with the focus on the main player. The focus of the object with a close-up of the face is a marker of the figure or the main character in the film; in other words, it can be said that Ester has an important role in *The Orphan* movie.

## b) Lack of Feeling Guilty

Esther realizes how precious the flower may be to Kate when she attempts to surprise her by presenting her a flower that Kate planted for her deceased child, Jessica. She chooses the flower on purpose and surprises Kate with it. Finally, Kate becomes enraged, and when she tries to steal Esther's flower, Esther refuses, forcing Kate to pull her arm. The images below demonstrate Esther's lack of feeling guilty behavior.

Picture 2: Esther tries to ruin Kate's favourite flower



From the dialogue between Kate and Esther in scene 01:09:57 ---01:13:46, Esther took advantage of the incident to gain John's attention and convince him to side with her. Esther causes self-harm by breaking her arm, and John blames Kate as a punishment. Esther says, "My arm" while Kate tried to stop Esther to hurt her own arm. Kate was confused about what Esther did by saying "Esther, what are you doing?" We can tell that Esther feels no sorrow or guilt over cutting Kate's exquisite bloom. The cinematography is also added in this scene in which Esther and Kate's facial expressions indicate anger and emotion in the fight that took place in their home, and these can be considered facial expressions and vocals in describing the situation. The focus of the shoot is used to describe an important conversation or conversation that focuses on the topic at hand. The colours used also add to the dramatic impression with slightly dark nuances and the soundtrack that supports the scene.

## c) Lack of Empathy

The act occurs when the main character, Esther, discovers that Mary's nun wants to tell John and Kate the facts about Esther if there is something wrong with Esther. Mary informs children that if any criminal activity occurs, such as a female fight, theft, a boy stable with scissors, or a home burning, they should contact the police. Those things have happened in places where Esther is present. Those heinous crimes that occurred there were committed by Esther, and only Ether was able to save her. Esther urges Max to play a game with Mary in order to maintain the secret. The picture below shows that Esther has lack of empathy behaviour.

## Picture 3: Esther hits Sister Abigail



According to the dialogue between Esther and Max, in scene 00:29:50 --- 00:45:32, Esther planned to hurt Mary because she came to the Kate's house and discussed about her. She was mad at Mary and wanted to kill her. They debated stopping Mary by the side of the road. Esther used Max as a bribe to get Mary to stop her car. Esther pulls Max onto the road, causing Mary's car to stop suddenly. Esther said that it is going to be fine and asked Max to scare Mary so she would never come back to Kate's house. Esther Mary stopped the car. Mary get out of the car and said to the Max "You all alright? Max? Max? Are you okay?" Unfortunately, Esther hit Mary using hummer so hard. Esther got mad to Max because she cried a lot. Esther asked Max to stop crying and grab Mary's foot to get her beside the road. It is also included with cinematography aspect as a medium shot which presents Mary's car and added with Mary's car sound while on the road home. The musical instrument appears in the backdrop of this sequence to help the audience understand the atmosphere of the sequence. The angle used in this sequence emphasizes the expressions of Max, Mary, and Esther by using eye level. Esther asks Max to hide Mary's body in the woodland when she sees John's car on the road.

## d) Manipulative

Sister Abigail says it is not an easy decision to adopt an older kid, but Kate thinks they are ready. Sister Abigail inquires as to Jon's whereabouts, and Kate responds that he is in the restroom. Esther meets with Jon and Kate, and the

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pair quickly decides that Esther is the one they want to adopt. They visit Sister Abigail in her office, and she characterizes Esther as a pretty mature nineyear-old who is also extremely educated and nice.

Picture 4: Sister Abigail meets Kate's family at her home to know more about Esther



The Evidence in scene 00:36:05 --- 00:45:13, Sister Abigail gave the information to the Kate and John by saying "Actually, she is from Russia, it is amazing how good her English Language is, even she has only been in here in a several years. She bought to the American because her family is dead in a house fire". She manipulates her facts about herself in addition to her face expression. She does not reveal the truth about her prior life to her family or even her orphanage nurse. It is evident when Sister Abigail tells Coleman information about Esther that is diametrically opposed to the truth. The cinematography added in this scene is shot frame objects which are used when Esther's adoptive parents talk to Sister Abigail; they are facing each other and talk by taking pictures one by one from the camera side, becoming the object of strengthening the story in the picture as the story of the picture frame itself. Long shots are also used where the picture shows them overlapping each other face to face telling the topic being discussed.

## e) Aggressive

Of course, as an adult and mature female, her sex need has risen uncontrollably, and she wishes to fill it as quickly as possible. She did whatever she thought was the right thing to do. Esther tries to convey her feelings while living at John's house throughout the night, when Kate is in the hospital and Max is asleep. That reflects her forceful attitude as an adult, a time when a woman needs a man to protect, love, and guide her through life, as opposed to John, who is becoming drunk as a result of the negative Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesusastraan, dan Budaya Vol. 12 No. 1, January-June 2022, Page 33-45 http://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/lensa

events in his family life. The picture below shows that Esther has manipulative behaviour.



Picture 5: Esther shows her love to John

In the dialog between Esther and John in scene 01:38:34 --- 01:56:12, it is shown that Esther and John had a love connection one to another. Esther with her female attraction confessed her attention toward John by saying, "... I love you, Daddy" with a nickname 'Daddy' it could be said as an aggressive. On the other hand, John also have the same attention toward Esther by calling her 'honey' as in the dialog, "You too, honey". At the same time, Esther tried to convince John from her words, "I really love you. ... John, let me take care of you". Esther big affection actually was bigger than how was John to Esther. All John's words about love were actually his big love toward Kate, "You are so confused. Do you know that? I do not love you like that. That is the way Kate and I love each other. Do you understand?". The aggressiveness of Esther was still there while they were sitting and talking on the comfort sofa and Esther still confirms John in her words, "You are a good person, John. You are a great father and Handsome Man." Based on the dialogue between Esther and John, Esther is an aggressive young lady, as seen by the image and dialogue above. She claims that she adored him in the same manner that he adored Kate. Esther wants to be recognized as a wife, just like Kate. But John has never loved her since he regards her as an adoptive kid. Esther became angry as a response to his feelings and words, and she immediately revealed her identity, as it is well known that Ether is not the young girl who emerged recently, but rather a woman who has been living in secret for a long time, and she attempts to kill him. The cinematography depicted in this scene is a special effect where Esther begins to show her aggressive side and becomes a question mark by creating a cinema effect that indicates that circumstances or doubts can be things that make people ask who she is. In addition, a peaceful shot at the beginning, then suddenly the sound blares, and something rushes past the camera. The lighting is dimmed to add an intimate feel.

# 1. The Factors that Make Esther Become Psychopath a) Biological Factors

Esther is not a 9-year-old girl, but she is a 33-year-old woman who suffers from hypopituitary disease, where her body growth stops at the age of 9. Due to the disease, Esther-- whose real name is Leena-- suffers from depression and disorders. To be honest, she really wanted an intimate relationship with a man, but because her body condition did not allow it, she finally went crazy and became a psychopath.

## b) Environmental Factors

Esther's mind and brain worked like a 33-year-old. In the family home that adopted him for the first time, he felt uncomfortable. He could not adapt to his environment, so Esther began to turn violent, even though she could not see it from her face. He began to take revenge on the people around him by killing them one by one. It has been counted that he has killed seven people who are also the family who adopted him. Esther had been admitted to a mental hospital because of this disorder, but she managed to escape from the hospital and went to the city and into the midst of a society that did not recognize her at all. While in the hospital, Esther used to scream a lot, banging her hands against the wall, injuring her wrists and neck with a razor blade, leaving scars. For this reason, doctors and psychiatrists claim him to be the most dangerous patient. In the house of the family that had adopted him for the first time, he killed all the members of the family one by one, even burning down the house of the adopter.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher examines the characteristics of Ester's psychopathic portrayed in The Orphan film and the factors that cause Ester, the main character in "The Orphan," to become a psychopath. The research applied a combination of two theories, psychological Literature by Wellek and Warren and psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud, to learn about and understand the causes of Esther's characteristic problem. As a result of analyzing the movie, the researcher concludes that Esther's characteristic issue is the result of an imperfection in her phallic stage. It may be observed in how she constantly attempts to win her stepfather's attention while ignoring the rest of his family as a competition in possessing her father. Another effect of Esther's imperfect phallic stage is that her super-ego does not function well when she commits a horrible act such as murder. Esther develops bad characteristics such as liar, aggressive, manipulative, and lack of feeling guilty and empathy. Furthermore, environmental and biological factors contribute to Ester's transformation into a psychopath in the film "The Orphan." Regarding this issue, Researchers hope that there will be further research related to explaining the psychopath effect of movies in real life so that people can clearly know the impact of psychopathic disease.

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