

**Esther's Problems of Personality as an Impact of Her  
Failure in Accomplishing Self-Identity:  
A Psychosocial Analysis to Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar***

**A Thesis**

**Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Attainment  
of the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* in English Literature**



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APPROVAL

ESTHER'S PROBLEMS OF PERSONALITY AS AN IMPACT OF HER  
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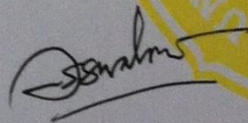
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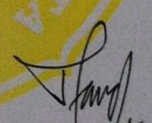
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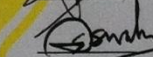
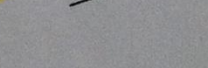
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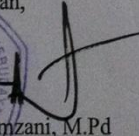
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## PERNYATAAN

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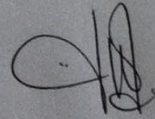
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Menyatakan bahwa skripsi ini adalah hasil karya sendiri dan sepanjang pengetahuan saya tidak berisi materi yang ditulis oleh orang lain sebagai persyaratan penyelesaian studi di UNY atau perguruan tinggi lain kecuali pada bagian-bagian tertentu yang saya ambil sebagai acuan dengan mengikuti tata cara etika penulisan karya ilmiah yang lazim.

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Yogyakarta, 20 Oktober 2014

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Tri Nurlianingsih

## DEDICATION

With my deepest gratitude and warmest affection, I dedicate this thesis to  
my parents, *Bapak* Hardi Sarjono and *Ibu* Sarijah  
and  
for everyone who waits for my graduation

## MOTTOS

“It always seems impossible until it’s done” – Nelson Mandela

*"Kemenangan yang seindah-indahnya dan sesukar-sukarnya yang boleh direbut oleh manusia ialah menundukan diri sendiri."* – Ibu Kartini

“Verify, Allah will not change the (good) condition of people as long as they do not change the state of (goodness) themselves” – Ar-Rad: 11

“I am who I am today because of the choices I made yesterday” – Eleanor Roosevelt

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Finally, I realize that this thesis is far from being perfect. Therefore, comments and suggestions are kindly accepted. Thus, I also hope that this thesis can bring some contributions in literature study.

Yogyakarta, 20 Oktober 2014

Tri Nurlianingsih



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**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to identify which stage of the psychosocial development is unsuccessfully handled by the main character of *The Bell Jar*, and also to explain the impact of this failure to her personality. To answer the objectives, this research used the psychosocial theory by Erikson.

This research used a qualitative research with the content analysis method. The main source of this research was a novel entitled *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. The data were some phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and expressions used to convey the psychosocial development of the main character and the impact of it to her personality. The researcher became the primary instrument of this research, while the secondary instrument was the data sheets. The data analysis was conducted through three steps: reading and re-reading, classifying and categorizing, analyzing and making the interrelation between the description of the data and the theory.

The researcher finds a psychosocial crisis which occur in the main character's life based on Erikson's psychosocial development theory i.e. Identity vs. Role Confusion. In this stage, the researcher also finds that the main character experiences two major problems of identity diffusion in her adolescence period: identity diffusion and negative identity. The failure makes her suffers from the identity diffusion that later on brings impact to her personality. It can be seen through the main character's malignancies in adulthood stage: intimacy crisis and isolation. Because of the failure to resolve the problems in identity diffusion, at the end it affects her personality. She becomes careless, impulsive, hopeless, depression, rebellious and difficult to make decision.

Keywords: psychosocial development, Erikson, personality, psychosocial crisis, *The Bell Jar*

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of Study**

Human beings are social beings. They live in groups with others and rely on each other. This situation allows them to form societies for their survival and creates environments where they can share knowledge. As a way to survive and also share knowledge, people have to interact with each other. In this interaction, they will find many kinds of social experience by attending someone's wedding, funeral and gather with other people in the society. Furthermore, within society they can express their human emotions, such as love, affection, hatred, jealousy, etc. In the society, someone will also experience the phase of transformation from a kid, into a teenager and then become an adult.

This kind of transformation is very much influenced by values and culture of the society where he or she lives. As a result, this person will reflect the values and the culture of the society in his or her behavior. Thus, it will affect his or her personality.

According to Larsen and Buss (in Mayer, 2007: 1) "Personality is the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring and that influence his or her interactions with, and adaptations to, the intrapsychic, physical, and social environments". Personality is the uniqueness side of a person which can differentiate one person from another. Saying that someone is easy going is to mention one way in which he or

she is different from others who are shy. Besides, personality can also show people's similarity. Shy people are similar to each other in that they are anxious in social situations, particularly situations in which there is an audience focusing attention on them. Therefore, since personality is something that a person carries with himself or herself over time and from one situation to the next, it will influence his or her action, feeling, thought, interaction and reaction to his or her circumstance. In other words, it can be said that personality affects someone's feeling, perception and behavior.

People's psychological development and personality attract so many experts to study and do research. There are so many references of theory related to human personality and psychological development, one of them is Erikson's theory. He proposes psychosocial theory. It is a theory about the impact of social experience across the whole lifespan. He declares that people will experience crisis in every stage of their psychosocial development which significantly affect their psychological development and personality. Some people will find a way to solve the crisis, but some others will not. Those who cannot successfully pass the crisis of his or her psychosocial development will face a personality problem. By using this theory, the researchers will have an opportunity to have a different way in analyzing personality of a certain character in literary works. Moreover, by understanding the personality of the character, the researcher believes that readers will not only achieve the meaning of the story, but also understand the human psychosocial development.

Speaking of literary works and personality, there are so many works discussing about psychosocial development that influence personality, one of them is the novel written by Sylvia Plath entitled *The Bell Jar*. As an American poet, novelist and short story writer, she is able to describe vividly her psychosocial's problem in her one and only autobiographical novel. This novel tells about her experience when she suffers from depression in the age of 20 and even her several attempts to commit suicide.

The story narrates the experience of the main character named Esther Greenwood who fails to complete one of the psychosocial development stage in her life. She is a college girl from Massachusetts. She wins a prize to travel to New York and works as a guest editor in a famous magazine. In New York, she and eleven other college girls get many kind of gifts and invited to a lot of parties. However, she does not feel happy and she cannot enjoy her 'new' life. Moreover, she has to face various problems which then make her suddenly unable to eat, bath, read, write and even sleep. Her mother who worries very much about her condition decides to take her to a psychiatrist named Dr. Gordon. He is the one who recommends electric shock therapy for Esther. However, the therapy worsened her condition. It makes her unstable and decides to commit suicide.

In fact, *The Bell Jar* is a story of someone who has to face psychosocial development crisis in which this person cannot successfully completing the particular stage of her psychosocial development. As the consequence, she cannot pass through the next stage of her psychosocial development. This case may happen to any people in this world and it can lead them to commit suicide in order



to escape from their problems. In *The Bell Jar*, the main character experiences psychosocial development crisis that leads to her personality problem. Those are the factors that make the researcher wants to conduct a study to identify and analyze in which stage of psychosocial development the main character of the novel is unable to handle. Moreover, the researcher also tries to analyze the effect of it to her personality.

## **B. Research Focus**

*The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath is an example of literary work that in particular deals with psychosocial development and the impact of it towards someone's personality that can be analyzed by using psychosocial theory. In this research, the researcher uses psychosocial theory developed by Erikson (1950). This theory focuses on psychosocial development of a person. Erikson's theory basically asserts that people experience crisis in the eight stages of psychosocial development which significantly affect their psychological development and personality.

The researcher analyzes the main character in *The Bell Jar* named Esther Greenwood, who fails to handle crisis in a particular stage of the psychosocial development in her life. As a result, she cannot pass through the next stage of psychosocial development and it affects her personality. Her personality problems are noticeable when she suddenly has no ability to read, write or sleep. She even stops bathing. She then continues to attempt suicide at least three times before receiving proper help. Therefore, the researcher decides to examine her

psychosocial development because the researcher is interested to reveal in which stage of psychological development Esther unsuccessfully handles the crisis. Moreover, the researcher also analyzes the impact of psychosocial development toward Esther's personality.

In this research, the researcher uses Erikson's psychosocial theory (1950) in order to reveal in which stage of psychosocial development Esther is unable to handle the crisis and to find out the impact of it to her personality. This research is limited and all related to the main character of *The Bell Jar*.

### **C. Research Question**

The main two questions to be answered in the research related to the issue of problem of personality in *The Bell Jar* are:

1. In which stage of psychosocial development does Esther unsuccessfully handle the crisis?
2. What impact does the failure has on Esther's personality?

### **D. Objectives of the Research**

Based on the background of study and the research questions mentioned above, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. to identify in which stage of the psychosocial development Esther is unsuccessfully handled the crisis.
2. to explain the impact of the failure in accomplishing the stage of psychosocial development toward Esther's personality.

### **E. Significance of the Research**

This research is expected to give some contributions to the following elements:

1. Academically, this research can be a reference upon Erikson's psychosocial literary criticism in dealing with humans beings' psychological development through literary works. By giving relevant information about the psychological development in someone's life, this research is hoped to be useful and beneficial to gain the understanding of applying psychosocial theories, especially for the students of English Literature in Yogyakarta State University.
2. Practically, the readers may also understand more about personality problems. Thus, the readers will be able to take some lessons to avoid the emergence of any personality problems case in their life.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. Psychosocial and Literature**

Literature is actually a reflection of the real world. The issues depicted in literary work also happen in real life. According to Siswanto (1993:19), a literary work is a result of human's conscious contemplation and imagination of things that he or she knows, avoids, feels, responds and imagines. It is delivered to public through language as the medium. That is why the problems or issues in a certain literary work have similarities to the circumstances outside of the literary work. Siswanto explains further that literary work is a mirror of the real world. It is either purely a mirror of the real world or the mirror of the real world mixed with the imagination and contemplation of the author (1993: 19). To be able to appreciate literature, approach is one of the basic principles to be used as an instrument; one of them is determined by the purpose and what will be revealed on the literary work. There are several approaches that can be used to understand literary works; one of them is social psychology approach.

Social psychology approach or psychosocial is a branch of psychology which discusses about individual's behavior in a social context. According to Baron, Byrne & Suls (in Brown, 2005: 5) psychosocial is "the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior in social situations". Therefore, it looks at human behavior as influenced by other people and the context in which this behavior occurs. Social psychologists are mostly

interested in identifying the factors that shape individuals' thought and behavior. It is primarily, relating to the actions, feelings, beliefs and thoughts about others.

Siswanto (2005: 29-30) states that literature and psychology are different in category. Literature is related to drama, fiction, poetry and essay and it is classified as work of art. In the other hand, psychology refers to the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. Although they are different, both of those subjects have some similarities, i.e. both depart from human and life as sources of study. Furthermore, psychology studies about human behavior and human behavior cannot be separated from the aspects of life that are wrapped and coloring his or her behavior. Siswanto (2005: 29-30) explains further that psychology literary emerges as a bridge to connect psychology to literary study. To be more specific, it studies about psychological phenomenon experienced by a certain character in a literary work and his or her responds or reaction toward himself or herself and the environment around him or her. Thus, the symptoms of psychological crisis can be revealed through the behavior of the character in a literary work.

Freud as the founder of psychoanalysis also has several reasons why he is interested in using psychoanalysis to analyze literary works. According to Iswalono (2008: 3) in his research entitled "Blance Dan dan Stanley, Dua Alter-Ego Tennessee Williams dalam A Streetcar Named Desire: Sebuah Tinjauan Psikoanalisis", Freud's interest in the use of psychoanalysis to analyze literary works rooted in two aspects. First, psychoanalysis is a method of interrogation of the human psyche that is entirely based on the actions of listening to the patient.

Therefore, it is clear that Freud realizes that language can be seen as an area that he should observe closely and in the same time he also can use it as a healing tool for his psychoanalysis patient. Thus, as an art of language, literature is closely related to the discussion of psychoanalysis since it also has a correlation with the unconscious mind.

The second reason is based on the existences of dreams, fantasies and myths as fundamental materials. "Dream" is a manifestation of someone's desire. All of human's desires are under the control of the id, if those desires are repressed, their manifestation will appear unconsciously in forms of fantasy, day dream, dream or slip of the tongue.

## **B. Psychosocial Development**

Erikson shows his agreement toward many of Freud's theory such as psychological structures, the early stages of childhood development, and the unconscious. However, he rejects Freud's effort to explain personality only on the basis of sexuality. He believes that childhood is very important in developing personality and the personality will continue to expand further than five years of age. In addition, Erikson develops Freud's work by describing stages of development. It includes all of the human lifespan, from infancy through old age (in Fleming, 2004: 3). Erikson introduces an eight stages model of psychosocial development which focuses on the influences of the surrounding social environment to individual's personality and behavior.

According to Fleming (2004: 3), Erikson can be called as an ego psychologist. It is because “he thought of the ego as something more than a check on the demands of the id and a moderator between the id and the superego”. Furthermore, the ego has its own life and though partly conscious and partly unconscious, the ego more obviously represents the whole personality than does the id. As stated in an article entitled “Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development” (2007, p.2), ego identity is one of the major elements of Erikson’s psychosocial stage theory. Ego identity itself is “the conscious sense of self that develop through social interaction”. Erikson explains that someone’s ego identity will constantly change as a result of new experience and information that he or she gains in daily interaction with other people. “Erikson stressed the importance of social interactions in development, as opposed to Freud’s emphasis on development as a psychosexual process” (Fleming, 2004: 3).

### **C. The Stages of Development**

Erikson states that every stage of development has its own unique challenges. He calls these challenges as *crises*. Erikson believes that “these crises of the ego presented challenges to one’s individual identity” (in Fleming, 2004: 3-4). According to Erikson (in Brown and Lewis, 2003: 416-17) if someone succeeds to complete each of the psychosocial stages, he or she will have a healthy personality and successful interaction with others. Failure to successfully complete a stage can result in a reduced ability to complete further stages and therefore he or she will have a more unhealthy personality and sense of self. The

balance outcome is necessary to have a healthy personality development. This balance outcome is called as 'basic virtue or basic strength'. Someone will extend a tendency of mental problems if he or she fails to go through a psychological crisis stage. The following are the eight stages of Erikson's psychosocial development:

### **1. Trust vs. Mistrust**

The first stage of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development occurs between birth and one year of age. This stage is the most fundamental stage in life. In this stage, Erikson's theory centers on the infant's essential needs. This essential needs is being met by the parents. The newborn depends on the parents, especially the mother, for food, sustenance, and comfort. The parents and interaction with the other child will bring understanding and perceptiveness of world and civilization to the child. If the parents expose the child to warmth, regularity, and dependable affection, the infant's vision of the world will be one of trust. If the parents fail to provide a safe environment and to meet the child's essential need it will lead to a sense of mistrust.

According to Erik Erikson in an article entitled "Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development" (2007, p.4), learning other people especially the caregivers who will frequently satisfy the basic needs is the main developmental chore in infancy. If those caregivers become consistent sources of food, comfort, and affection, an infant learns trust- that others are dependable and reliable. If they are neglectful or abusive, the infant will learn mistrust. It will give an infant a



perspective that the world is in an undependable, unpredictable, and possibly dangerous place.

Erikson believes that the child's development of trust depends on mother figure. It means that the mother plays an important role in this stage and it is not only by meeting the child's basic comfort and nurturance needs, but by having confidence in herself. Erikson believes that "an anxious mother transmitted this anxiety to the child, which he saw as unhealthy: a mother's tension causes a corresponding state of tension in her baby, resulting in a feeling of insecurity and lack of trust" (Fleming, 2004: 8).

## **2. Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt**

The second stage of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development takes place during early childhood. This stage focuses on children developing a greater sense of personal control. The child will start to explore his or her surrounding as he or she gains control over his or her own body and motor abilities. The parents' persistence and support will help foster autonomy in the child. The parents who are very restrictive will cause the child to have a sense of doubt and unwillingness to try new challenges. At the same time as the child gains muscular coordination and mobility, toddlers become able of fulfilling some of their own needs. He or she starts to feed himself or herself, wash and dress himself or herself, and use the bathroom. "If caregivers encourage self-sufficient behavior, toddler develops a sense of autonomy- a sense of being able to handle many problems on their own. But if caregivers demand too much too soon, refuse to let children perform tasks

of which they are capable, or ridicule early attempts at self-sufficiency; children may instead develop shame and doubt about their ability to handle problems” (Erikson, 2007: 6).

### **3. Initiative vs. Guilt**

Around age three and continuing to age five, children initiate to declare their power and control over the world through directing play and other social interaction. They start to arrange activities, make up games, and start activities with others. Thus, they can commence motor activities of various sorts on their own and no longer merely responds to or copy the actions of other children. They learn that they can do many things. They also discover that, though they can do things, it is not necessarily a good idea to do some things. Thus, they will feel a new emotion; guilt. They find out that some behaviors may make them feel less than happy about themselves. Children who are successful at this stage feel capable and able to lead others. Those who fail to acquire these skills are left with a sense of guilt, self-doubt and lack of initiative.

### **4. Industry vs. Inferiority**

This stage covers the early school years from approximately age six to twelve. In this point, children commence to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments. They also work hard at being responsible and being good. In this stage, they are more capable to share and cooperate and also they will gain a better understanding of cause and effect. The children are excited to learn and

complete more complex skills such as reading, writing, and telling time. Besides complex skills, the children also form moral values, recognize cultural and individual differences. The children are also capable to handle most of their personal needs. The children may express their freedom by being disobedient, using back talk and being rebellious in this stage.

Erikson states that in this stage, the elementary school years are serious for the development of self-confidence. In an ideal world, elementary school offers many opportunities for children to achieve the recognition of teachers, parents and peers completing projects, solving addition problems, writing sentences, and so on. The children will express the sense of industry by being diligent and they will preserve their tasks until it is completed if the children are encouraged to make or do things and then they are praised for their accomplishments. However, the children will develop the feelings of inferiority if they are unable to fulfill their teachers' or parents' expectations and they will be ridiculed or punished for that.

## **5. Identity vs. Role Confusion**

During adolescence, the transition from childhood to adulthood becomes the most important stage. The adolescents are becoming more independent. They will start to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. As they transform from childhood to adulthood, adolescents consider the roles they will play in the adult world. In this stage, they are exploring their freedom and developing a sense of self. Initially, they are appropriate to experience some role confusion in which they will face the mixed ideas and feelings about the

particular ways in which they will fit into society. They may experiment with a diversity of behaviors and activities. Eventually, Erikson proposes, where the adolescents live influence most of adolescents to get a sense of identity.

According to Erikson, identity formation is the step that is impossible to be avoided in developing identity. Adolescents need to establish an initial identity through a complete psychosocial moratorium in order to form a true sense of self. Otherwise, they will face series of psychosocial conflicts which add the complexity of identity crisis. If they can solve this conflict successfully, they will come out of this stage with a strong identity, and be ready to set their own plan for the future. If they cannot solve the conflict, they will sink into confusion, unable to make decisions and choices, especially the one which is related to several activities such as vocation, sexual orientation, and his role in life in general.

## **6. Intimacy vs. Isolation**

It is the stage of early adulthood when people are discovering their personal relationships. For Erikson, however, the previous achievement of a sense of personal identity and the engagement in productive work that marks this period will create a new interpersonal dimension of intimacy at the one extreme and isolation at the other.

Erikson interprets intimacy as the ability to share with and care about other people without fear of losing oneself in the process. In the case of intimacy, the parents will no longer contribute to their success or failure at the earlier stages. Social conditions may help or restrain the establishment of a sense of intimacy as

well as in the case of identity. Intimacy does not involve sexuality but it includes the relationship between friends. Someone will develop a sense of isolation, sense of being alone without anyone to share with or care for if he or she cannot establish a sense of intimacy with friends or in a bond of marriage. In the other hand, the sense of comfortable relationships and a sense of commitment, safety, and care within a relationship will occur if someone is successful to complete a sense of intimacy. In sum, avoiding intimacy, fearing commitment and relationships can lead to isolation, loneliness, and sometimes depression.

#### **7. Generativity vs. Stagnation**

People will continue to build their lives during their adulthood. In this stage, they will focus on their career and family. The people will feel that they are contributing to the world by being active in their home and community if they are successful through this phase. However, for those who fail to attain this skill will feel unproductive and uninvolved in the world.

#### **8. Integrity vs. Despair**

This stage happens in old age and it focuses on reflecting back on life. Integrity in the later years of life implies acceptance of a life that was well-lived. However, it does not mean that life is over instead for these can often be very productive years. In this point, a person will start to take a reflection and evaluation and look back at his or her life. The questions that he or she may ask for example, “Was my life fulfilling?” or “What was I able to accomplish?”.

Everyone makes mistakes in his or her life and he or she does not have to lead a perfect life to fulfill it. A positive sense of integrity will develop if someone can manage his or her life reasonably well. Besides, he or she has to accept someone else's shortcomings, practiced meaningful self-forgiveness, and consider the positive and negative aspects of someone's past. Nevertheless, despair implies a lack of further hope. The unfulfilled potential or a feeling that someone has wasted someone's life, without hope for personal rescue will result in despair. Despair is often disguised by an outward attitude of contempt toward others. Erikson states that wisdom is the basic strength associated with later years after a lifetime of living and learning; based on the well-lived life.

**Figure 1. The Psychosocial Development Stages**

Stage	Psychological Crises	Radius of Significant Relations	Description
1 (birth – year)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Maternal person	Development of trusting relationships with caregivers and of self trust (hope)
2 (2-3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame and doubt	Parental person	Development of control over bodily functions and activities (will)

3 (3-5 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Basic family	Testing limits of self assertion and purposefulness (purpose)
4 (6- 2 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Neighborhood /school	Focus on mastery, competence, and productivity (competence)
5 12-19 years)	Identity vs. role confusion	Peer groups	Focus on formation of identity and coherent self concept (fidelity)
6 (early 20's)	Intimacy vs. isolation	Partners in friendship, sex, competition, cooperation	Focus on achievement of an intimate relationship and career direction (love)
7 (late 20's- 50's)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Divided labour and shared household	Focus on fulfillment through creative, productive activity that contributes to future generations (care)

8  (after 50)	Integrity vs. despair	“Mankind”	Focus on belief in integrity of life, including successes and failures (wisdom)
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#### D. The Bell Jar

*The Bell Jar* is the only novel written by Sylvia Plath an American poet. It was a semi-autobiographical of her life and was first published in 1963 under the pseudonym of Victoria Lucas to protect herself and the characters based on real people. A month after she published her book, she committed suicide.

*The Bell Jar* itself is a story about twenty years old girl named Esther Greenwood who fails to complete one of the psychosocial development stages in her life. She is a smart student from Boston. She gets many scholarships and becomes a guest editor in New York. She finds many difficulties in New York, especially related to the social life. It is difficult for her to get along with the people over there. She slowly loses interest in fighting for goals and in gaining objectives, in other words she loses hopes and dreams.

When she returns to Boston, her mother tells her that she is not accepted to a writing class that she wants to take. This news disappoints and saddens Esther very much. In Boston, she is living listlessly at home. She becomes so much aware of the different values of living in Boston to living in New York, which at



the end is so disturbing for her. As a result, she suddenly cannot read, write, bath or sleep. Esther's mother decides to take her to a psychiatrist where she receives shock therapy. Unfortunately, the treatment influences Esther into a more unstable condition. She finally decides to commit suicide.

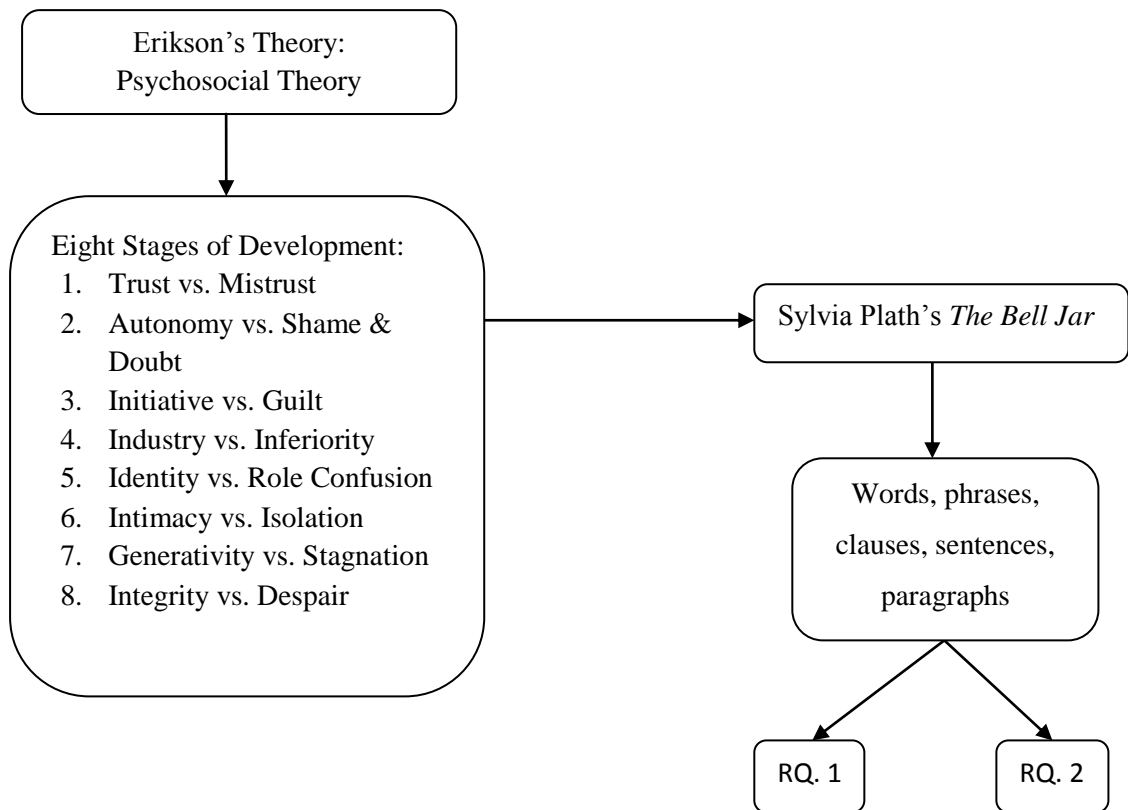
Esther comes to her new psychiatrist, a woman named Dr. Nolan, and begins to trust her. Esther starts to get better day by day. She also makes friend with Joan, a woman who has to struggle from mental illness. She falls in love and tries to seduce Esther. However, Esther rejects her. When Joan leaves the hospital she commits suicide. After being hospitalized, Esther starts to show improvement. Therefore, the hospital officials grant her permission to leave the hospital. Following her freedom, she tries to have relation with a man named Irwin who makes her loses her virginity. Esther goes back to emergency room as she is bleeding after having sex with Irwin. As she gets better, she leaves the hospital and decides to go to college. She tries to control her life once again. However, she knows that the dangerous illness that put her life at risk could strike again at any time.

### **E. Conceptual Framework**

Having a good and stable personality is important to an individual. It becomes one of many factors which can influence someone's behavior and how he or she will interact with society. Researcher believes that someone will have a good personality as long as he or she can pass the particular stage of psychosocial development in his or her life. However, failure to complete stage of the

psychosocial development in someone's life can lead to unhealthy personality. *The Bell Jar* narrates the story of Esther Greenwood, who fails to complete one of the psychosocial stages in her life. As the consequence, she is not able to pass through the next stage of her psychosocial development smoothly. Furthermore, this failure brings many impacts to her personality. The researcher believes that this novel is one of the representations of humans' psychosocial development.

To analyze Esther's psychosocial development and her personality, the following objectives are proposed: 1) to identify in which stage of the psychosocial development does Esther unsuccessfully handle the crisis, 2) to explain the impact of the stage psychosocial development toward Esther's personality. The researcher applies Erikson's psychosocial theory to answer the question of the research. The theory believes that someone will experience each stages of psychosocial crisis which will help someone to describe his or her personality growth. If he or she is able to complete each of the stage, he or she will have a healthy personality and the other way around. The conceptual framework of the research can be seen below.

**Figure 2. Conceptual Framework**

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **A. Subject of the Study**

The subject of this study is Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. This novel was published under the pseudonym, Victoria Lucas in 1963. Plath was an American poet, novelist and short-story writer. She was one of the most dynamic and admired poets of the twentieth century.

*The Bell Jar* is the only novel ever written by Plath. The book is semi-autobiographical of her own life who struggles from mental illness. The novel describes about the story of Esther Greenwood, who fails to pass a particular stage of psychosocial development. Furthermore, this failure brings impact to her personality.

#### **B. Data and Sources of the Data**

The source of the data for this research was taken from Plath's *The Bell Jar*. The novel was a pdf document, consisting of 20 chapters and 135 pages. The researcher read the novel and scrutinized the content comprehensively. The data taken from the novel were the words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs which reflected the stages of psychosocial development and the impact of it to the personality of the main character named Esther Greenwood.

The researcher objectives were (1) to identify in which stage of the psychosocial development does Esther unsuccessfully handle the crisis, (2) to

explain the impact of the stage of psychosocial development toward Esther's personality.

### **C. Research Instruments**

This research is a qualitative research. According to Jacob (in James, 1997: p.1), is a generic term for investigative methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological, field, or participant observer research. In this qualitative research, the key instrument of the research was the researcher herself. During this research, the researcher acted as the planner, main data collector, and data interpreter or reporter of the research result. In addition, the researcher also used her own interpretation in analyzing the work based on her knowledge that was primarily supported by the psychosocial theory by Erikson as the main guideline.

The researcher used table list as the secondary instrument to ease the work during the data processing. The data were then identified by giving them certain label and transformed them into table lists. The table lists were designed in order to put the quotations of the data based on page, category and meaning.

### **D. The Technique of Data Collections**

In collecting the data, the researcher took four steps. First, the researcher read the novel which was *The Bell Jar*. In order to get full understanding of the content of the novel, the researcher read the work several times carefully and comprehensively. Second, the researcher collected the data by taking simple notes

of the important words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs related to the topic. The notes that the researcher took were arranged as documentation for further analysis. Third, the researcher re- checked the data to find out whether there were mistakes or irrelevant data to support the analysis or not. The last step was categorizing the data.

The data were categorized in order to answer the objectives of the research. To answer the first objective research, i.e. to identify in which stage of the psychosocial development Esther is unsuccessfully handle the crisis in *The Bell Jar*, the researcher used Erikson psychosocial theory focused on the stages of psychosocial development. To answer second objective research, i.e. to explain the impact of the stage of psychosocial development toward Esther's personality, the researcher also used uses psychosocial theory.

During the process of the data collection, the researcher used a particular form of data sheet to make it easy to see the progress of her research. The form of the data sheets were presented below.

**Table 1: The Table list of The Data for The Stage of Psychosocial Development Esther is Unsuccessfully Handle The Crisis**

No	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
1.	It was so dark in the bar I could hardly make out anything except Doreen. With her white hair and white dress she was so white she looked silver. I think she must have reflected the neons over the bar. <b>I felt myself melting into the shadows like the negative of a person I'd never seen before in my life.</b>	8	Identity Diffusion	When Esther says "...I'd never seen before in my life", it seems she feels really upset. This line likely intends to show that it is difficult to develop a true sense of self if the individual does not recognized by other people around him or her. Esther is being trapped as an outsider or shadow in the place where there are so many people around her who

				never bother of her existence
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**Table 2: The Table List of The Data for The Impact of The Stage of Psychosocial Development toward Esther's Personality**

No	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
1.	I said to myself: "Doreen is dissolving, Lenny Shepherd is dissolving, Frankie is dissolving, New York is dissolving, they are all dissolving away and <b>none of them matter any more. I don't know them</b> , I have never known them and I am very pure. All that liquor and those sticky kisses I saw and the dirt that settled on my skin on the way back is turning into something pure."	11	Isolation	Instead of having this kind of feeling, Esther keeps a distance from Doreen. She isolates herself as a result of her intimacy crisis. The line "...none of them matter anymore. I don't know them" can be interpreted as the state of isolating herself from her surroundings. By separating herself from Doreen, she traps in her own world.

### E. Data Analysis

The processes of data analysis are listed below:

1. All collected data were re-read to sort out the significant data from the insignificant ones. The insignificant data will be reduced. The significant data should contain enough information to explain the finding. Those data, which were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, are the raw data. It functions as the evidence for the finding.
2. The significant data were put into units. Those data in each unit were classified into some categories. There were two categories of the data. They were the data of the particular stage of psychosocial development Esther is unsuccessfully to handle the crisis and the impact of it towards

her personality. These categories were needed to answer the focuses of this study.

3. To make the inference, the data were examined according to its context and related theory. In this part, the raw data was changed into the information that already possesses the meaning. To produce the finding and the researcher gave description to the raw data that has been analyzed with the related theory.
4. The trustworthiness of data was checked.

#### **F. Data Trustworthiness**

Validity and reliability consider trustworthiness. In order to achieve the validity of the study, the researcher applied triangulation technique by using other observers to verify the data. To apply triangulation, the researcher consulted the data to her thesis advisors to find the correct interpretation. The researcher considered that the experts' capability in analyzing literature was in accordance with the research. Besides her advisors, the researcher also asked some of her friends from English Language and Literature program especially those who help the researcher to triangulate the data.

Meanwhile, the reliability of the research was gained by *intra-rater* technique, which means that in this study the researcher did a technique of reading and re-reading the data until she got a certainty of the data with valid interpretation. The purpose of doing this technique is to keep the consistency of the data.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In this research, the researcher presents the discussion of the findings of the study. This chapter consists of two sub chapters; (1) Esther's psychosocial crisis, and (2) the impact of the psychosocial crisis in Esther's personality. The first sub chapter focuses on identifying in which stage of psychosocial development Esther is unable to handle the crisis; i.e. identity vs. role confusion. The second chapter focuses on the impact of the failure has to Esther's personality: (1) intimacy crisis, and (2) isolation.

#### **A. The Stage of Psychosocial Development Esther Fails to Handle: Identity vs. Role Confusion**

In Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, there is a stage named identity vs. role confusion. In this stage, someone is becoming more independent and start to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. Erikson uses term versus to describe if someone can pass this stage completely, she or he will come out with strong identity. However, if he or she will face role confusion. Thus, in adolescence period, someone is exploring independence and developing a sense of self or in Erikson's term it is called as psychosocial moratorium. The virtue is fidelity. Fidelity is an ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of inevitable contradiction of value systems (Erikson, 1964:125). Fidelity is the foundation upon which a continuous sense of

identity is formed. The situation when the adolescent is in environment that does not provide the necessary space and opportunities to do psychosocial moratorium results in problems which mark the arising of the identity crisis. The psychosocial problems in identity crisis are identity diffusion, identity foreclosure and negative identity. In Esther's case, the researcher finds the identity diffusion and negative identity.

### 1. Identity Diffusion

The first conflict that occurs during the search of sense of self in adolescence period is identity diffusion. Identity diffusion is one step in the process of finding a sense of self. It is characterized by an incoherent, disjointed, incomplete sense of self. When a young person suffers from role confusion, he or she will experience disruptions in his or her sense of time, excessive self-consciousness, difficult to make decision, difficult to concentrate on required or suggested task. Those difficulties will create problem in work or school, in form relationship and an acute upset.

As a young girl who never goes out from Boston, Esther feels so excited to explore something new in New York; include the "night life". However, she has to face a disappointment because nobody gives her a second look. It is vividly depicted below.

It was so dark in the bar I could hardly make out anything except Doreen. With her white hair and white dress she was so white she looked silver. I think she must have reflected the neons over the bar. **I felt myself melting into the shadows like the negative of a person I'd never seen before in my life.**

(Plath, 1971 : 8)

When Esther says "...I'd never seen before in my life", it seems she feels really upset. This line likely intends to show that it is difficult to develop a true sense of self if the individual does not recognized by other people around him or her. Esther is being trapped as an outsider or shadow in the place where there are so many people around her who never bother of her existence. She cannot fir herself to the new environment and it makes her experiencing the feeling of disjointed. When Esther gets along with Doreen in a party, Esther introduces herself as someone else to a young man in the party. "My name's Elly Higginbottom," I said. "I come from Chicago." After that I felt safer (Plath, 1971: 9). Name is one of the basic symbols of identity. It is very important since it will help an individual to define his or her personal identity as a member of a certain group of society. Erikson (1968:50) explains that the choice of personal identity is based on the perception of the selfsameness and continuity of one's existence in certain time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity. In this case, Esther does not want to declare her true identity to a stranger or a new acquaintance in New York. She prefers to invent a different name as well as a false origin.

Esther's disjointed and incomplete sense of self also leads her to an inability to take a decision on certain things such as what she wants to be in the future as seen clearly below.

"Of course, you have another year at college yet," Jay Cee went on a little more mildly. "What do you have in mind after you graduate?"  
What I always thought I had in mind was getting some big scholarship to graduate school or a grant to study all over Europe, and then I thought I'd

be a professor and write books of poems or write books of poems and be an editor of some sort. Usually I had these plans on the tip of my tongue. "I don't really know," I heard myself say. I felt a deep shock, hearing myself say that, because the minute I said it, I knew it was true.

(Plath, 1971: 17)

The above quotation clarifies that Esther is, indeed, confused to take a decision when Jay Cee asks her about the plan after she graduates from university. She has many plans in her mind but she does not have courage to make it come true because she is not so sure about what she wants to be. It continues when Esther and her eleven friends take pictures for a magazine cover. Each girl has to use property as a reflection of their dream in the future. When it comes to Esther's turn, she does not know what she has to wear or use to describe herself in the future. It is seen in the quotation below.

Betsy held an ear of corn to show she wanted to be a farmer's wife, and Hilda held the bald, faceless head of a hatmaker's dummy to show she wanted to design hats, and Doreen held a gold-embroidered sari to show she wanted to be a social worker in India (she didn't really, she told me, she only wanted to get her hands on a sari).

**When they asked me what I wanted to be I said I didn't know.**

(Plath, 1971: 54)

The line "...I wanted to be I didn't know" can be interpreted as Esther's uncertainty to take a choice for herself in the upcoming time. Esther's difficulty to make a decision also happens when she tries to write a novel and figure out what kind of job will suit her. It is clearly stated in the following quotation.

At any rate, I'd be lucky if I wrote a page a day.

Then I knew what the trouble was.

I needed experience.

How could I write about life when I'd never had a love affair or a baby or even seen anybody die? A girl I knew had just won a prize for a short story about her adventures among the pygmies in Africa. How could I compete with that sort of thing? ...

At first I felt hopeful.

I thought I might learn shorthand in no time, and when the freckled lady in the Scholarships Office asked me why I hadn't worked to earn money in July and August, the way you were supposed to if you were a scholarship girl, I could tell her I had taken a free shorthand course instead, so I could support myself right after college.

The only thing was, when I tried to picture myself in some job, briskly jotting down line after line of shorthand, my mind went blank. There wasn't one job I felt like doing where you used shorthand. And, as I sat there and watched, the white chalk curlicues blurred into senselessness.

(Plath, 1971: 65)

Identity diffusion also can be traced from Esther's excessive self consciousness. Esther's excessive self consciousness toward her future grows into point that she feels insecure and not confident about herself. This particular feeling exists especially when she is in a situation where she feels difficult to write a novel and find a job for herself. Thus, it can be said that Esther's feeling toward her personal identity is influenced by her own background. She is lack of experiences. From some points above, it can be concluded that Esther experiences identity diffusion characterized by some main aspects, i.e. disjointed sense of self, excessive self consciousness and difficulties to make decision.

## **2. Negative Identity**

Negative identity is one of the results when adolescents loss their sense of identity. According to Erikson (in Fleming, 2004: 13), negative role identity refers to the rebellious denial of the expectations of parents or society. The people who do this action will choose the opposite thing or decision of the expectations. For example, the son of a police officer decides to join a gang of drug users and thieves. Esther's rebellions is shown when she is on her way to a party with

Doreen, their cab is stuck in traffic and at that time they encounter two men who invite them to a bar. It can be vividly seen below.

When the man in the blue lumber shirt and black chinos and tooled leather cowboy boots started to stroll over to us from under the striped awning of the bar where he'd been eyeing our cab, I couldn't have any illusions. I knew perfectly well he'd come for Doreen. He threaded his way out between the stopped cars and leaned engagingly on the sill of our open window. "And what, may I ask, are two nice girls like you doing all alone in a cab on a nice night like this?" He had a big, wide, white toothpaste-ad smile. "We're on our way to a party," I blurted, since Doreen had gone suddenly dumb as a post and was fiddling in a blasé way with her white lace pocketbook cover. "That sounds boring," the man said. "Whyn't you both join me for a couple of drinks in that bar over there? I've some friends waiting as well." He nodded in the direction of several informally dressed men slouching around under the awning. They had been following him with their eyes, and when he glanced back at them, they burst out laughing. The laughter should have warned me. It was a kind of low, know-it-all snicker, but the traffic showed signs of moving again, and I knew that if I sat tight, in two seconds I'd be wishing I'd taken this gift of a chance to see something of New York besides what the people on the magazine had planned out for us so carefully. "How about it, Doreen?" I said. "How about it, Doreen?" the man said, smiling his big smile. To this day I can't remember what he looked like when he wasn't smiling. I think he must have been smiling the whole time. It must have been natural for him, smiling like that. **"Well, all right," Doreen said to me. I opened the door, and we stepped out of the cab just as it was edging ahead again and started to walk over to the bar.**

(Plath, 1971: 7)

As a guest editor in New York, Esther and the other girls have schedule that they have to follow. One of them is attending party. However, the last three lines shows that Esther and Doreen can easily decide to skip the party and go to the bar with those strange men instead. Esther in this situation can be seen as a girl who is not sure about her self-identity, trapped in diffusion status and do a rebellion as the result. It is coherent with Erikson's statement (in Shaffer, 2008: 191) that individuals without a clear identity would eventually become depressed and lack in self-confidence as they drift aimlessly, trapped in the "diffusion"

status or alternatively they might heartily embrace “negative identity” becoming a “black sheep”, a “delinquent”, a “rebellion” or a “loser”.

Esther’s relationships with many different men in her life are also examples of her rebellion towards cultural norms. First is Esther’s relation with her physics and chemistry professor, Mr. Manzi. She considers Mr. Manzi as a dominant male figure. Since he is a professor, he has right to control the class. However, she does not want Mr. him to control her and her action can be seen below.

That's what gave me the idea of escaping the next semester of chemistry. I may have made a straight A in physics, but I was panic-struck. Physics made me sick the whole time I learned it....

So I went to my Class Dean with a clever plan.

My plan was that I needed the time to take a course in Shakespeare, since I was, after all, an English major. She knew and I knew perfectly well I would get a straight A again in the chemistry course, so what was the point of my taking the exams; why couldn't I just go to the classes and look on and take it all in and forget about marks or credits? It was a case of honor among honorable people, and the content meant more than the form, and marks were really a bit silly anyway, weren't they, when you knew you'd always get an A? My plan was strengthened by the fact that the college had just dropped the second year of required science for the classes after me anyway, so my class was the last to suffer under the old ruling.

Mr. Manzi was in perfect agreement with my plan. I think it flattered him that I enjoyed his classes so much I take them for no materialistic reason like credit and an A, but for the sheer beauty of chemistry itself.

(Plath, 1971: 21)

The passage indicates that Esther hates Mr. Manzi’s subjects. However, she still manages to get an A in his class. This condition helps her to find a plan where she will not have to take exams in his chemistry course. He allows her not to take exams with consideration that she is a perfect student and will pay attention in his class. However, she is very deceitful as seen clearly below.

I went to the chemistry class five times a week and didn't miss a single one. Mr. Manzi stood at the bottom of the big, rickety old amphitheater, making blue flames and red flares and clouds of yellow stuff by pouring the contents of one test tube into another, and I shut his voice out of my ears by pretending it was only a mosquito in the distance and sat back enjoying the bright lights and the colored fires and wrote page after page of villanelles and sonnets.

Mr. Manzi would glance at me now and then and see me writing, and send up a sweet little appreciative smile. I guess he thought I was writing down all those formulas not for exam time, like the other girls, but because his presentation fascinated me so much I couldn't help it.

(Plath, 1971: 21)

Those lines illustrate how Esther pretends that she pays attention to Mr. Manzi class while actually she considers his voice as a mosquito from the distance. Her attitudes in his class show that she has successfully tricked her male professor. She clearly rebels against cultural norms by defeating the particular male figure. Another passage, which describes the rebellion of Esther towards cultural norms, can be seen below.

Ever since Buddy Willard had told me about that waitress I had been thinking I ought to go out and sleep with somebody myself. Sleeping with Buddy wouldn't count, though, because he would still be one person ahead of me, it would have to be with somebody else.

(Plath, 1971: 42)

When Esther was nineteen, pureness was the great issue and she still holds that belief. However, after knowing that Buddy Willard, the man she loves, has lost his virginity, she determines to do the same. It clearly breaks the cultural norms that women should keep their virginity until marriage. Nevertheless, Esther feels that it is fair for women to be expected to be pure but it is acceptable for a man to "have a double life". Esther's objection about the idea of virginity can be seen below.



It might be nice to be pure and then to marry a pure man, but what if he suddenly confessed he wasn't pure after we were married, the way Buddy Willard had? I couldn't stand the idea of a woman having to have a single pure life and a man being able to have a double life, one pure and one not.  
(Plath, 1963: 44)

The identity crisis is marked by the rising of three psychosocial conflicts during psychosocial moratorium in adolescence, they are identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, and negative identity. However, in Esther's case there are only two psychosocial conflicts i.e identity diffusion and negative identity. From the various problems in Esther's psychosocial moratorium, it can be said that she suffers from identity crisis. Adolescents who successfully handle the conflict identity emerge with a strong new sense of self, while those who cannot successfully pass the identity crisis will suffer from what Erikson calls as identity diffusion. Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that Esther is unable to handle her problems and she suffers from identity diffusion, whereas identity is very important to develop a personality and relationships with others in the next stage; intimacy vs. isolation.

#### **B. The Impact of Psychosocial Development: Intimacy vs. Isolation**

Erikson (1959 : 134) states that the Intimacy vs. Isolation is the core conflict which follows Identity vs. Role Confusion. Based on the previous findings, Esther fails to complete the crisis in one of psychosocial stages called role confusion. Since role confusion deals with identity, Esther experiences an identity crisis that makes her has no strong sense of identity when she enters adulthood. Furthermore, it does give impact to her personality. Erikson believes

that a strong sense of personal identity is important to developing intimate relationships. Avoiding intimacy, fearing commitment and relationships can lead to isolation, loneliness, and sometimes depression.

### **1. Intimacy Crisis**

Erikson (1977: 237) describes intimacy as “the capacity to commit himself to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises”. Thus, the significant relation in this stage is partners and friends. In the case of intimacy, as in the case of identity, success or failure no longer depends on the parents but only indirectly as they contributed to individual’s success or failure at the earlier stages. Erikson (1968) states that where a youth cannot resolve such tension, he or she will enter intimacy crisis which is marked by some careless acts such as throw away into acts of intimacy which are immoral without true fusion or real self abandon. During her adolescence, Esther builds intimacy with some people. To understand the pattern of her personality, it is important to scrutinize her behavior toward her relationship with each person.

The first intimacy happens with Doreen, a beautiful woman from South. She is very sophisticated and does not want to do boring activities with others. Doreen is a problem for Esther because she often puts Esther in difficult situations. However, in this relationship, Esther uses Doreen to cover her anxiety

and to learn something rather than to really feel the friendship itself. It can be seen in the following quotation,

The city had faded my tan, though. I looked yellow as a Chinaman. Ordinarily, I would have been nervous about my dress and my odd color, but being with Doreen made me forget my worries. I felt wise and cynical as all hell.

(Plath, 1971: 5)

Esther's failure in the adolescence stage does give impact to her personality. In this case, the way she behaves, feels, and thinks. Because she does not have strong sense of self. In fact, her confidence is low. She feels so worry about her performance and is afraid if it does not suit her. Though finally, she can overcome her anxiousness by being with Doreen. Knowing Doreen's background is as a member of a higher society class makes her feel safe to get along with a lot of people. It can be said that Esther is having friendship with Doreen without a true fusion. Esther uses this relationship to learn something new from Doreen.

"Sure I'll come," I said. Frankie had wilted away into the night, so I thought I'd string along with Doreen. I wanted to see as much as I could.... I certainly learned a lot of things I never would have learned otherwise this way, and even when they surprised me or made me sick I never let on, but pretended that's the way I knew things were all the time."

(Plath, 1971: 8).

A friendship between two people is supposed to occur because of a sincere and real connection of feeling. Esther puts her friendship with Doreen as a medium for her to get along with society and learn about something new for her life. From the beginning, she does not really want to be Doreen's friend because she considers her as a problem. This is why later, she wants to end her relationship with Doreen as seen below.

I decided the only thing to do was to dump her on the carpet and shut and lock my door and go back to bed.....I made a decision about Doreen that night. I decided I would watch her and listen to what she said, but deep down I would have nothing at all to do with her.

(Plath, 1971: 12)

Esther 's second intimacy happens with Constantine. He is a simultaneous interpreter. He gets her number from Mrs. Willard. In this second relation, Constantine pulls her into his life and she falls into that. It is depicted vividly in the quotation below.

Gradually I realized that Constantin was trying to arrange a meeting for us later in the day. "Would you like to see the UN this afternoon?" "I can already see the UN," I told him, with a little hysterical giggle.... There was a silence. Then he said, "Maybe you would like a bite to eat afterward."

(Plath, 1971: 26-27)

The meeting and lunch invitation given by Constantine leads Esther to throw away herself to Constantin's possession effortlessly. This can be interpreted as an act of throwing away into intimacy without true fusion or real self abandon. Since she has no strong sense of identity, it is hard for her to handle her own life. Instead, she throws herself into an intimacy which she only wants to fulfill her desire as seen below.

The more I thought about it the better I liked the idea of being seduced by a simultaneous interpreter in New York City. Constantin seemed mature and considerate in every way. There were no people I knew he would want to brag to about it, the way college boys bragged about sleeping with girls in the backs of cars to their roommates or their friends on the basketball team. And there would be a pleasant irony in sleeping with a man Mrs. Willard had introduced me to, as if she were, in a roundabout way, to blame for it.

(Plath, 1971: 41)

Esther's failure in the adolescence stage does give impact to his personality, in this case, the way she behaves, feels, and thinks. Since she does not

have a strong sense of self, her confidence is low. She has a low power to decide or refuse something in her life. It happens when she is with Mr. Willard, Buddy's father. Mr. Willard asks her to accompany him to visit Buddy's sanatorium. She does not feel like going as she avoids Buddy Willard, but she cannot say it to Mr. Willard. It is shown in the following quotation:

I was tempted to tell Mr. Willard to go ahead alone, I would hitchhike home. But one glance at Mr. Willard's face -- the silver hair in its boyish crew cut, the clear blue eyes, the pink cheeks, all frosted like a sweet wedding cake with the innocent, trusting expression -- and I knew I couldn't do it. I'd have to see the visit through to the end.

(Plath, 1971: 45)

According to Erikson (1959: 134), if an individual does not have a strong sense of self or in Erikson's term called as identity diffusion, that individual will suffer from intimacy crisis. The identity confusion as a result of Esther's failure to handle identity crisis in adolescence stage makes her fail to understand of her true sense of self and her direction toward her life in adulthood stage. In the end, it does give impact to her personality. Her personality shown in the way she behaves, feels and thinks. Esther's attempt to seek intimacy with Doreen and some men, underlines her personality, i.e. careless, impulsive, discouraged and unable to make decision.

## **2. Isolation**

Erikson (2005: 136) uses term *distantiation* as the counterpart of intimacy. It is the readiness to repudiate, isolate, and destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to one's own. In addition, Erikson (2005: 135-136) says that if a person cannot complete such intimate relationship with others in late

adolescence or early adulthood, he or she may settle for highly stereotyped interpersonal relations and come to retain a deep sense of isolation that later will make him or her unable to feel himself. In the previous findings, it has been described that Esther suffers from intimacy crisis. She throws away herself into doubtful relationships without true fusion. Finally, that intimacy crisis brings loneliness to Esther as seen below.

There is something demoralizing about watching two people get more and more crazy about each other, especially when you are the only extra person in the room. It's like watching Paris from an express caboose heading in the opposite direction -- every second the city gets smaller and smaller, **only you feel it's really you getting smaller and smaller and lonelier and lonelier**, rushing away from all those lights and that excitement at about a million miles an hour.

(Plath, 1971: 9)

Esther decides to follow Doreen to Lenny's apartment. However, in the apartment both of Doreen and Lenny are enjoying their time together. Esther as an extra person in that room feels isolated as she is unable to build up an intimate relationship in the party. The line "...only you feel it's really you getting smaller and smaller and lonelier and lonelier..." indicates Esther's feeling of loneliness.

The silence depressed me. It wasn't the silence of silence. It was my own silence. I knew perfectly well the cars were making noise, and the people in them and behind the lit windows of the buildings were making a noise, and the river was making a noise, but I couldn't hear a thing. The city hung in my window, flat as a poster, glittering and blinking, but it might just as well not have been there at all, for all the good it did me.

(Plath, 1971: 10)

The quotation above gives a sense of loneliness and depression. It describes how the weak sense of identity and intimacy crisis depresses Esther. As Erikson (2007: p.2) states that someone with a poor sense of self tends to have less committed relationships and is more likely to suffer from emotional isolation,

loneliness, and depression. These feelings are the impact of Esther's failure to attract the attention of the people in the party, as a result she is unable to develop intimate relationship with them. Esther decides to sneak out from Lenny's apartment and goes back to the hotel. When she stands beside the window and look down to the city's view, she thinks that New York should bring happiness to her but her depression arises again when she remembers how difficult for her to speak and express herself like the other girls do in this big country. It depresses her then she describes it as the "silence" that makes her feel sad all the time. Another passage which describes the isolation of Esther because of intimacy crisis, can be seen below.

I said to myself: "Doreen is dissolving, Lenny Shepherd is dissolving, Frankie is dissolving, New York is dissolving, they are all dissolving away and **none of them matter any more. I don't know them**, I have never known them and I am very pure. All that liquor and those sticky kisses I saw and the dirt that settled on my skin on the way back is turning into something pure."

(Plath, 1971: 11)

Friendship should be a bond between two people or more who understand each other and share the same connection. Instead of having this kind of feeling, Esther keeps a distance from Doreen. She isolates herself as a result of her intimacy crisis. The line "...none of them matter anymore. I don't know them" can be interpreted as the state of isolating herself from her surroundings. By separating herself from Doreen, she traps in her own world. After parting her relation from Doreen, she starts to retreat from the enticements of life. This situation makes Esther become jealous and depressed as seen below.

I told Doreen I would not go to the show or the luncheon or the film première, but that I would not go to Coney Island either, I would stay in

bed. After Doreen left, I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I should any more. This made me sad and tired. Then I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I shouldn't, the way Doreen did, and this made me even sadder and more tired.

(Plath, 1971: 16)

Esther's separation from Doreen does not only make her feel jealous and depressed, but also brings loneliness to her life. She thinks about her relationship with Buddy Williard as she lies on the bed feeling lonely. However, after she finds out that Buddy betrays her love with a waitress; Esther knows that her dream to marry him will not come true. It is in the following passage.

As I lay there in my white hotel bed feeling lonely and weak, I thought I was up in that sanatorium in the Adirondacks, and I felt like a heel of the worst sort. In his letters Buddy kept telling me how he was reading poems by a poet who was also a doctor and how he'd found out about some famous dead Russian short-story writer who had been a doctor too, so maybe doctors and writers could get along fine after all. Now this was a very different tune from what Buddy Willard had been singing all the two years we were getting to know each other. I remember the day he smiled at me and said, "Do you know what a poem is, Esther?"

(Plath, 1971: 29)

As previously mentioned, Erikson (2007: p.2) states that a person with a poor sense of self tends to have less committed relationships and is more likely to suffer emotional isolation, loneliness, and depression. In this case, Esther's depression is getting worse when she realizes that suddenly she cannot read letters she gets. The words become so hard to interpret. She explains that the words tinkle up and down in a silly way. Esther feels the words turn into Arabic or Chinese words which then make her unable to read them. The quotation can be seen below.

I squinted at the page.



The letters grew barbs and rams' horns. I watched them separate, each from the other, and jiggle up and down in a silly way. Then they associated themselves in fantastic, untranslatable shapes, like Arabic or Chinese.

(Plath, 1971: 65)

Not only that she cannot read, but she also stops to take bath. "I hadn't washed my hair for three weeks, either" (Plath, 1971: 66). Esther thinks the idea of washing her body is silly because today she has to wash and does it again later. It is worsen when her depression is heightened by her inability to sleep. "I hadn't slept for seven nights" (Plath, 1971: 66). She cannot sleep for seven days without feeling exhausted. She has tried sleeping pills but it does not work on her.

One morning, Esther writes a letter to Doreen who lives in West Virginia about whether or not she is welcomed to be her house mate there. Surprisingly, she finds out that she is no longer able to write well, her writing is a mess that eventually she does not send the letter to Doreen.

But when I took up my pen, my hand made big, jerky letters like those of a child, and the lines sloped down the page from left to right almost diagonally, as if they were loops of string lying on the paper, and someone had come along and blown them askew.

(Plath, 1971: 68)

Another uncommon conduct influenced by her depression is Esther's attempt to commit suicide. It is coherent with Erikson's statement that indeed, many adolescents who are stuck in the diffusion status are highly apathetic and do express a sense of hopelessness about the future, sometimes even becoming suicidal. Esther's first attempt to kill herself is taking place in the bathroom. She uses a razor and then she cuts her wrist yet it fails. It is depicted vividly below.

That morning I had made a start.

I had locked myself in the bathroom, and run a tub full of warm water, and taken out a Gillette blade. When they asked some old Roman philosopher

or other how he wanted to die, he said he would open his veins in a warm bath. I thought it would be easy, lying in the tub and seeing the redness flower from my wrists, flush after flush through the clear water, till I sank to sleep under a surf gaudy as poppies. But when it came right down to it, the skin of my wrist looked so white and defenseless that I couldn't do it. It was as if what I wanted to kill wasn't in that skin or the thin blue pulse that jumped under my thumb, but somewhere else, deeper, more secret, a whole lot harder to get at. It would take two motions. One wrist, then the other wrist. Three motions, if you counted changing the razor from hand to hand. Then I would step into the tub and lie down. I moved in front of the medicine cabinet. If I looked in the mirror while I did it, it would be like watching somebody else, in a book or a play. But the person in the mirror was paralyzed and too stupid to do a thing. Then I thought maybe I ought to spill a little blood for practice, so I sat on the edge of the tub and crossed my right ankle over my left knee. Then I lifted my right hand with the razor and let it drop of its own weight, like a guillotine, onto the calf of my leg. I felt nothing. Then I felt a small, deep thrill, and a bright seam of red welled up at the lip of the slash. **The blood gathered darkly, like fruit, and rolled down my ankle into the cup of my black patent leather shoe. I thought of getting into the tub then, but I realized my dallying had used up the better part of the morning, and that my mother would probably come home and find me before I was done.** So I bandaged the cut, packed up my Gillette blades and caught the eleven-thirty bus to Boston.

(Plath, 1971: 77)

The line “The blood gathered darkly, like fruit, and rolled down my ankle into the cup of my black patent leather shoe. I thought of getting into the tub then, but I realized my dallying had used up the better part of the morning, and that my mother would probably come home and find me before I was done” shows that Esther is not successfully in her first attempt to commit suicide as she is afraid if her mother will catch her red-handed trying to kill herself. However, she does not stop there. She repeats her intention of committing suicide in a different occasion. On a picnic at the beach with friends Esther means to drown herself in the ocean. It does not happen as her friends are around, swimming with her too which in a way prevent her from conducting her action. This scene can be clearly seen below.

I thought drowning must be the kindest way to die, and burning the worst. Some of those babies in the jars that Buddy Willard showed me had gills, he said. They went through a stage where they were just like fish. A little, rubbishy wavelet, full of candy wrappers and orange peel and seaweed, folded over my foot.

I heard the sand thud behind me, and Cal came up.

"Let's swim to that rock out there." I pointed at it

"Are you crazy? That's a mile out."

"What are you?" I said. "Chicken?"

Cal took me by the elbow and jostled me into the water. When we were waist high, he pushed me under. I surfaced, splashing, my eyes seared with salt. Underneath, the water was green and semi-opaque as a hunk of quartz. I started to swim, a modified dogpaddle, keeping my face toward the rock. Cal did a slow crawl. After a while he put his head up and treaded water.

"Can't make it." He was panting heavily.

"Okay. You go back."

I thought I would swim out until I was too tired to swim back. As I paddled on, my heartbeat boomed like a dull motor in my ears.

(Plath, 1971: 82)

Esther's second attempt fails after Cal follows her. She cannot drown herself when there is a company with her. Nevertheless, those two unsuccessful attempts do not stop her from making another attempt to commit suicide. Her third attempt is by hanging herself in her house which unfortunately has low ceilings. Of course she remains alive and this is another futile effort. It is depicted vividly below.

That morning I had tried to hang myself.

I had taken the silk cord of my mother's yellow bathrobe as soon as she left for work, and, in the amber shade of the bedroom, fashioned it into a knot that slipped up and down on itself. It took me a long time to do this, because I was poor at knots and had no idea how to make a proper one. Then I hunted around for a place to attach the rope. The trouble was, our house had the wrong kind of ceilings. The ceilings were low, white and smoothly plastered, without a light fixture or a wood beam in sight.

(Plath, 1971: 82)

One day, Esther runs away from the hospital to visit her father's graveyard. When she knows that the graveyard is behind a church, Esther goes to

the church to ask for help. She knows that Catholic forbid the action of suicide because it is a dreadful sin. She wishes the church to help her particularly in getting rid of the idea about committing suicide. The quotation can be seen below:

Lately I had considered going into the Catholic Church myself. I knew the Catholics thought killing yourself was an awful sin. But perhaps, if this was so, **they might have a good way to persuade me out of it.**

(Plath, 1971: 86)

The line “ ... they might have a good way to persuade me out of it” shows her hopelessness. As Erikson says (in Shaffer, 2008 : 192) that many adolescents who are stuck in the diffusion status are highly apathetic and do express a sense of hopelessness about future. Esther tries to kill herself for three times but always fail because she knows that commit suicide is an awful sin. That is why she goes to the church and hopes that she will get help there. Furthermore, Esther assumes her depression as the bell jar. She explains that wherever she goes, she will be trapped in her own mind and inside herself. There is nothing can ameliorate her condition, no matter how new and exciting the condition around her, as stated in the quotation below:

I knew I should be grateful to Mrs. Guinea, only I couldn't feel a thing. If Mrs. Guinea had given me a ticket to Europe, or a round-the-world cruise, it wouldn't have made one scrap of difference to me, because wherever I sat -- on the deck of a ship or at a street café in Paris or Bangkok -- I would be sitting under the same glass bell jar, stewing in my own sour air.

(Plath, 1971: 97)

When Esther stays in the hospital to get treatment for her depression, she has many visitors. However, Esther hates to be visited. She wants to be alone. It can be interpreted that Esther wants to isolate herself from the people she knows and get some peace by being alone as can be seen below.

I hated these visits, because I kept feeling the visitors measuring my fat and stringy hair against what I had been and what they wanted me to be, and I knew they went away utterly confounded. I thought if they left me alone I might have some peace.

(Plath, 1971: 106)

In Esther's birthday, her mother comes to visit Esther in the hospital with a bouquet of roses. However, Esther does not remember about her birthday. In this scene, Esther's sense of hopelessness again occurs. She asks her mother to save the flowers for her funeral. It is in the following quotation.

That afternoon my mother had brought me the roses.  
**"Save them for my funeral,"** I'd said.  
 My mother's face puckered, and she looked ready to cry.  
 "But Esther, don't you remember what day it is today?"  
 "No."  
 I thought it might be Saint Valentine's day. "It's your *birthday*."  
 And that was when I had dumped the roses in the waste-basket.

(Plath, 1971: 106)

The line "Save them for my funeral," describes how Esther is longing for death. Esther's death urges comes from her helpless feeling. She feels trap in her own mind and herself so nobody and nothing can help her but death. As stated by Erikson (1959: 134) that when a young individual has no strong sense of identity or suffers from identity confusion in the late adolescence, he or she will have interpersonal fusion which cause some acute malignancies in adulthood stage and give impact to personality. He also emphasizes that an individual who develops a healthy identity is flexible and adaptive, open to changes in society, relationships and careers.

In this finding, Esther is unsuccessful to develop a healthy identity thus she has some malignancies which is in accordance to Erikson's theory. He named them as intimacy crisis and isolation. At the end, Esther grows into someone who

is not adaptive and flexible. She also has difficulty to open to changes in society. She does not only suffers from identity confusion in adolescence stage but also suffers from intimacy crisis in adulthood. She becomes a careless and impulsive woman. Therefore, she turns out to be a depressive lonely person.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing Plath's *The Bell Jar*, especially the psychosocial development of Esther Greenwood, the researcher drew conclusion related to the research focus and objectives of the research. The conclusions are formulated into the following points:

1. In relation to the healthy balanced outcomes of Erikson's psychosocial theory of Esther as an individual, the researcher finds a particular stage which Esther is unsuccessful to handle the crisis. It is Identity vs. Role Confusion. The psychosocial crisis that she has to deal with in this stage is related to the sense of self and the social relationships. Based on the findings, it is clearly seen that she cannot achieve the healthy balanced outcome of identity vs. role confusion stage which then cause the identity crisis. Thus, she has to face some problems in this identity crisis. They are identity diffusion and negative identity. Esther experiences identity diffusion which characterized by some main aspects, i.e. disjointed sense of self, excessive self consciousness and difficulties to make decision. Meanwhile, her negative identity can be seen in her rebellious behavior.
2. *The Bell Jar* narrates about Esther Greenwood's personal life. The novel puts highlight during her adolescence and adulthood. It is clearly seen in the findings that Esther's failure of passing the particular stage of psychosocial development, identity vs. role confusion gives impact to her personality.

There are two problems that she has to encounter with, they are intimacy crisis and isolation. Those problems make her develops grows into someone who is not adaptive and flexible. She becomes a careless and impulsive woman. Furthermore, she turns out to be a depressive lonely person.



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## APPENDIX

### THE STAGE and IMPACT of ESTHER'S PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

#### A. The Stage of Psychosocial Development That Esther is Unsuccessfully Handled The Crisis

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
1.	<p>When the man in the blue lumber shirt and black chinos and tooled leather cowboy boots started to stroll over to us from under the striped awning of the bar where he'd been eyeing our cab, I couldn't have any illusions. I knew perfectly well he'd come for Doreen. He threaded his way out between the stopped cars and leaned engagingly on the sill of our open window. "And what, may I ask, are two nice girls like you doing all alone in a cab on a nice night like this?" He had a big, wide, white toothpaste-ad smile. "We're on our way to a party," I blurted, since Doreen had gone suddenly dumb as a post and was fiddling in a blasé way with her white lace pocketbook cover. "That sounds boring," the man said. "Whyn't you both join me for a couple of drinks in that bar over</p>	5	Negative Identity	<p>Esther's rebellions is shown when she is on her way to a party with Doreen, their cab is stuck in traffic and at that time they encounter two men who invite them to a bar. Esther and Doreen are easily decide to skip the party and go to the bar with those strange men instead. Esther in this situation can be seen as a girl who is not sure about her self-identity, trapped in diffusion status and as the result she does a rebellion.</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>there? I've some friends waiting as well." He nodded in the direction of several informally dressed men slouching around under the awning. They had been following him with their eyes, and when he glanced back at them, they burst out laughing. The laughter should have warned me. It was a kind of low, know-it-all snicker, but the traffic showed signs of moving again, and I knew that if I sat tight, in two seconds I'd be wishing I'd taken this gift of a chance to see something of New York besides what the people on the magazine had planned out for us so carefully. "How about it, Doreen?" I said. "How about it, Doreen?" the man said, smiling his big smile. To this day I can't remember what he looked like when he wasn't smiling. I think he must have been smiling the whole time. It must have been natural for him, smiling like that. "Well, all right," Doreen said to me. I opened the door, and we stepped out of the cab just as it was edging ahead again</p>			

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	and started to walk over to the bar.			
2.	For a minute I had a wild hope we might pair off according to size, which would line me up with the man who had spoken to us in the first place, and he cleared a good six feet, but he went ahead with Doreen and didn't give me a second look. I tried to pretend I didn't see Frankie dogging along at my elbow and sat close by Doreen at the table.	6	Identity Diffusion	Esther hopes to talk with someone in the party. However, the one she wants to talk to goes to Doreen without recognize her existence. It is difficult for Esther to develop a true sense of self if she does not recognized by other people around her. It makes her experiencing the feeling of disjointed though in the end she tries to hide it.
3.	It was so dark in the bar I could hardly make out anything except Doreen. With her white hair and white dress she was so white she looked silver. I think she must have reflected the neons over the bar. I felt myself melting into the shadows like the negative of a person I'd never seen before in my life.	6	Identity Diffusion	Esther's quote likely intends to say that it is difficult to develop a true sense of self if the individual does not recognized by other person around him or her. Esther is being trapped as an outsider or shadow in the place where there are so many people over there who never bother that she is exist. It makes her experiencing the feeling of disjointed.
4.	"My name's Elly Higginbottom," I said. "I come from Chicago." After that I felt safer	7	Identity Diffusion	Esther does not want to declare her true identity to a stranger or a new acquaintance in New York. She prefers to invent a different name as well as a false origin.
5.	I slid into the self-service elevator and pushed the button for my floor. The doors folded shut like a	10	Identity Diffusion	Esther is confused to identify herself. She even thought herself as someone else at the first time.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	noiseless accordion. Then my ears went funny, and I noticed a big, smudgy-eyed Chinese woman staring idiotically into my face. It was only me, of course. I was appalled to see how wrinkled and used up I looked			
6.	All my life I'd told myself studying and reading and writing and working like mad was what I wanted to do, and it actually seemed to be true, I did everything well enough and got all A's, and by the time I made it to college nobody could stop me. I was college correspondent for the town Gazette and editor of the literary magazine and secretary of Honor Board, which deals with academic and social offenses and punishments - - a popular office -- and I had a well known woman poet and professor on the faculty championing me for graduate school at the biggest universities in the east, and promises of full scholarships all the way, and now I was apprenticed to the best editor on an intellectual fashion	17	Identity Diffusion	Esther is the best student in her college but when she is in New York she feels like all of her achievements are nothing since she is confused about what she has to do there.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	magazine, and what did I do but balk and balk like a dull cart horse?			
7.	<p>"Of course, you have another year at college yet," Jay Cee went on a little more mildly. "What do you have in mind after you graduate?"</p> <p>What I always thought I had in mind was getting some big scholarship to graduate school or a grant to study all over Europe, and then I thought I'd be a professor and write books of poems or write books of poems and be an editor of some sort. Usually I had these plans on the tip of my tongue.</p> <p>"I don't really know," I heard myself say. I felt a deep shock, hearing myself say that, because the minute I said it, I knew it was true.</p>	17	Identity Diffusion	Esther is confused to take a decision when Jay Cee asks her about the plan after she graduates from university. She has many plans in her mind but she does not have courage to make it comes true because actually she does not know yet what she wants to be.
8.	<p>That's what gave me the idea of escaping the next semester of chemistry. I may have made a straight A in physics, but I was panic-struck. Physics made me sick the whole time I learned it....</p> <p>So I went to my Class Dean with a clever plan.</p>	19	Negative Identity	Esther hates Mr. Manzi's subjects. However, she still manages to get A in his class. This condition helps her to find a plan where she will not have to take exams in Mr. Manzi's chemistry course. Mr. Manzi allows Esther not to take exams with consideration that she is a perfect student and will always pay attention in his class.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>My plan was that I needed the time to take a course in Shakespeare, since I was, after all, an English major. She knew and I knew perfectly well I would get a straight A again in the chemistry course, so what was the point of my taking the exams; why couldn't I just go to the classes and look on and take it all in and forget about marks or credits? It was a case of honor among honorable people, and the content meant more than the form, and marks were really a bit silly anyway, weren't they, when you knew you'd always get an A? My plan was strengthened by the fact that the college had just dropped the second year of required science for the classes after me anyway, so my class was the last to suffer under the old ruling.</p> <p>Mr. Manzi was in perfect agreement with my plan. I think it flattered him that I enjoyed his classes so much I take them for no materialistic reason like credit and an A, but for the sheer beauty of chemistry itself.</p>			



No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
9.	<p>I went to the chemistry class five times a week and didn't miss a single one. Mr. Manzi stood at the bottom of the big, rickety old amphitheater, making blue flames and red flares and clouds of yellow stuff by pouring the contents of one test tube into another, and I shut his voice out of my ears by pretending it was only a mosquito in the distance and sat back enjoying the bright lights and the colored fires and wrote page after page of villanelles and sonnets.</p> <p>Mr. Manzi would glance at me now and then and see me writing, and send up a sweet little appreciative smile. I guess he thought I was writing down all those formulas not for exam time, like the other girls, but because his presentation fascinated me so much I couldn't help it</p>	19	Negative Identity	Those lines illustrate how Esther pretends that she pays attention to Mr. Manzi class while actually she considers Mr. Manzi's voice as a mosquito in the distance. Esther's attitudes in Mr. Ramzi class show that she has successfully tricked her male professor. She clearly rebels against cultural norms by defeating the particular male figure.
10.	<p>My own mother wasn't much help. My mother had taught shorthand and typing to support us ever since my father died, and secretly she hated it and hated him for dying and</p>	20	Identity Diffusion	Esther shows her disappointment toward her mother by blaming her that she does not help and support her.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>leaving no money because he didn't trust life insurance salesmen. She was always on to me to learn shorthand after college, so I'd have a practical skill as well as a college degree. "Even the apostles were tentmakers," she'd say. "They had to live, just the way we do."</p>			
11.	<p>I was surprised to hear this, because of all the blind dates I'd had that year not one called me up again for a second date. I just didn't have any luck. I hated coming downstairs sweaty-handed and curious every Saturday night and having some senior introduce me to her aunt's best friend's son and finding some pale, mushroomy fellow with protruding ears or buck teeth or a bad leg. I didn't think I deserved it. After all, I wasn't crippled in any way, I just studied too hard, I didn't know when to stop.</p>	30	Identity Diffusion	<p>Esther's excessive self consciousness toward her socialization with others grows into point that she feels insecure and not confident about herself. This particular feeling exist especially when she is in a situation where she has to meet new people and has to introduce herself. she does not know much about how to socialize with others when all she knows is only about study.</p>
12.	<p>The trouble was, I hated the idea of serving men in any way. I wanted to dictate my own thrilling letters. Besides, those little shorthand symbols in the book my mother</p>	39	Negative Identity	<p>Esther hates the idea that her life has to be controlled by male figure and she does not want to serve them. She clearly rebels against cultural norms by refusing to serve the male figure.</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	showed me seemed just as bad as let <i>t</i> equal time and let <i>s</i> equal the total distance.			
13.	I was a terrible dancer. I couldn't carry a tune. I had no sense of balance, and when we had to walk down a narrow board with our hands out and a book on our heads in gym class I always fell over. I couldn't ride a horse or ski, the two things I wanted to do most, because they cost too much money. I couldn't speak German or read Hebrew or write Chinese. I didn't even know where most of the old out-of-the way countries the UN men in front of me represented fitted in on the map. For the first time in my life, sitting there in the soundproof heart of the UN building between Constantin who could play tennis as well as simultaneously interpret and the Russian girl who knew so many idioms, I felt dreadfully inadequate. The trouble was, I had been inadequate all along, I simply hadn't thought about it.	39	Identity Diffusion	Esther's excessive self consciousness toward herself grows into point that she feels insecure and not confident about herself. This feeling exist when she is in the situation when she has to go with Constantine and she has to gather with people. She knows that she has no ability in any ways. It makes her worry about her performance.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
14.	Ever since Buddy Willard had told me about that waitress I had been thinking I ought to go out and sleep with somebody myself. Sleeping with Buddy wouldn't count, though, because he would still be one person ahead of me, it would have to be with somebody else.	40	Negative Identity	After knowing that Buddy Willard, the man she loves, has lost his virginity, she determines to do the same. It clearly breaks the cultural norms that women in that era should keep their virginity until marriage.
15.	It might be nice to be pure and then to marry a pure man, but what if he suddenly confessed he wasn't pure after we were married, the way Buddy Willard had? I couldn't stand the idea of a woman having to have a single pure life and a man being able to have a double life, one pure and one not.	42	Negative Identity	Esther feels that is it fair for women to be expected to be pure but it is acceptable for a man to “have a double life”.
16.	I would catch sight of some flawless man off in the distance, but as soon as he moved closer I immediately saw he wouldn't do at all. That's one of the reasons I never wanted to get married. The last thing I wanted was infinite security and to be the place an arrow shoots off from. I wanted change and excitement and to shoot	43	Negative Identity	Esther wants to live unmarried. Her desire is clearly rebels against cultural norms in the society.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	off in all directions myself, like the colored arrows from a Fourth of July rocket.			
17.	<p>"I think I should tell you something, Buddy."</p> <p>"I know," Buddy said stiffly. "You've met someone."</p> <p>"No, it's not that."</p> <p>"What is it, then?"</p> <p>"I'm never going to get married."</p> <p>"You're crazy." Buddy brightened.</p> <p>"You'll change your mind."</p> <p>"No. My mind's made up."</p>	48	Negative Identity	Esther decides not to get married.
18.	<p>"Well, you were right. I am <i>neurotic</i>. I could never settle down in either the country or the city."</p> <p>"You could live between them," Buddy suggested helpfully. "Then you could go to the city sometimes and to the country sometimes."</p>	48	Identity Diffusion	Esther cannot decide where she wants to live. it is hard for her to take decision.
19.	Betsy held an ear of corn to show she wanted to be a farmer's wife, and Hilda held the bald, faceless head of a hatmaker's dummy to show she wanted to design hats, and Doreen held a gold-embroidered sari to show she wanted to be a social worker in	52	Identity Diffusion	Esther's uncertainty to take a choice for herself in the upcoming time.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>India (she didn't really, she told me, she only wanted to get her hands on a sari). When they asked me what I wanted to be I said I didn't know.</p>			
20.	<p>It was becoming more and more difficult for me to decide to do anything in those last days. And when I eventually did decide to do something, such as packing a suitcase, I only dragged all my grubby, expensive clothes out of the bureau and the closet and spread them on the chairs and the bed and the floor and then sat and stared at them, utterly perplexed. They seemed to have a separate, mulish identity of their own that refused to be washed and folded and stowed.</p>	54	Identity Diffusion	<p>Esther feels difficult to make a decision about what she has to do. She cannot concentrate in the last days she is in New York.</p>
21.	<p>At any rate, I'd be lucky if I wrote a page a day. Then I knew what the trouble was. I needed experience. How could I write about life when I'd never had a love affair or a baby or even seen anybody die? A girl I knew had just won a prize for a short story</p>	63	Identity Diffusion	<p>Esther's difficulty to make a decision also happen when she tries to write a novel and figure out what kind of job will suit for her. Esther's excessive self consciousness toward her future grows into point that she feels insecure and not confident about herself. This particular feeling exist especially when she is in a situation where she feels difficult to write a novel and find a job. Thus, it can be said that Esther's feeling toward her personal identity is</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>about her adventures among the pygmies in Africa. How could I compete with that sort of thing? ...</p> <p>At first I felt hopeful.</p> <p>I thought I might learn shorthand in no time, and when the freckled lady in the Scholarships Office asked me why I hadn't worked to earn money in July and August, the way you were supposed to if you were a scholarship girl, I could tell her I had taken a free shorthand course instead, so I could support myself right after college.</p> <p>The only thing was, when I tried to picture myself in some job, briskly jotting down line after line of shorthand, my mind went blank. There wasn't one job I felt like doing where you used shorthand. And, as I sat there and watched, the white chalk curlicues blurred into senselessness.</p>			<p>influenced by the lack of experiences.</p>

**B. The Impact of The Stage of Psychosocial Development toward Esther's Personality**

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
1.	It was a QUEER, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York.	1	Isolation	Esther's isolation feeling is shown in the first line of the story. She feels like she is misplaced, sad, and removed from reality. The society expects her to cheer up and enjoy her time in New York but she lacks of it.
2.	I was supposed to be the envy of thousands of other college girls just like me all over America who wanted nothing more than to be tripping about in those same sizeseven patent leather shoes I'd bought in Bloomingdale's one lunch hour with a black patent leather belt and black patent leather pocketbook to match. And when my picture came out in the magazine the twelve of us were working on – drinking martinis in a skimpy, imitation silver-lamé bodice stuck on to a big, fat cloud of white tulle, on some Starlight Roof, in the company of several anonymous young men with all-American bone structures hired or loaned for the occasion – everybody would think I must be having a real	2	Isolation	Esther lacks of sense of self and the impact of it is depression and loneliness. She supposed to be happy with her situation where most girls want to be in her shoes; get a scholarship to college, win prizes and end up in New York. However, instead of making her happy, that situations depress her very much. Esther does not know how to enjoy those things. She cannot react as her other friends do. In fact, she cannot understand her own lack of enthusiasm and end up with the feeling of loneliness and emptiness.



No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>whirl. Look what can happen in this country, they'd say. A girl lives in some out-of-the-way town for nineteen years, so poor she can't afford a magazine, and then she gets a scholarship to college and wins a prize here and a prize there and ends up steering New York like her own private car.</p> <p>Only I wasn't steering anything, not even myself. I just bumped from my hotel to work and to parties and from parties to my hotel and back to work like a numb trolleybus. I guess I should have been excited the way most of the other girls were, but I couldn't get myself to react. I felt very still and very empty, the way the eye of a tornado must feel, moving dully along in the middle of the surrounding hullabaloo.</p>			
3.	Girls like that make me sick. I'm so jealous I can't speak. Nineteen years, and I hadn't been out of New England except for this trip to New York. It was my first big chance, but here I was, sitting back and letting it	3	Isolation	Esther becomes so envious with her other friends. The reality that all this time she never been nowhere but England makes her lack of experience. This situation that she has nothing to share like the others do makes her feel depressed.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	run through my fingers like so much water.			
4.	The city had faded my tan, though. I looked yellow as a Chinaman. Ordinarily, I would have been nervous about my dress and my odd color, but being with Doreen made me forget my worries. I felt wise and cynical as all hell.	5	Intimacy Crisis	She feels so worry about her performance and is afraid if it does not suit her. Though finally, she can overcome her anxiousness by being with Doreen. Knowing Doreen's background is from society class makes her feel safe to get along with the people.
5.	"Sure I'll come," I said. Frankie had wilted away into the night, so I thought I'd string along with Doreen. I wanted to see as much as I could.... I certainly learned a lot of things I never would have learned otherwise this way, and even when they surprised me or made me sick I never let on, but pretended that's the way I knew things were all the time."	8	Intimacy Crisis	Esther is having friendship with Doreen without a true fusion. Esther uses this relationship to learn something new from Doreen. Esther puts her friendship with Doreen as a media for her to get along with society and learn about something new for her life, not a sincere or real connection.
6.	There is something demoralizing about watching two people get more and more crazy about each other, especially when you are the only extra person in the room. It's like watching Paris from an express caboose heading in the opposite	9	Isolation	Esther decides to follow Doreen to Lenny's apartment. However, in apartment both of Doreen and Lenny are enjoying their time together. Esther as an extra person in that room feels isolated as she is unable to build up an intimate relationship in the party.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	direction -- every second the city gets smaller and smaller, only you feel it's really you getting smaller and smaller and lonelier and lonelier, rushing away from all those lights and that excitement at about a million miles an hour.			
7.	The silence depressed me. It wasn't the silence of silence. It was my own silence. I knew perfectly well the cars were making noise, and the people in them and behind the lit windows of the buildings were making a noise, and the river was making a noise, but I couldn't hear a thing. The city hung in my window, flat as a poster, glittering and blinking, but it might just as well not have been there at all, for all the good it did me.	10	Isolation	Esther feels lonely as the impact of Esther's failure to attract the attention of the people in the party, as a result she is unable to develop intimate relationship with them. Esther decides to sneak out from Lenny's apartment and goes back to the hotel. When she stands beside the window and look down to the city's few, she thinks that New York should bring happiness to her but her depression arises again when she remembers how she cannot speak and express herself like other girls do in this big country. It depresses her then she describes it as silence that sadden her all the time.
8.	There must be quite a few things a hot bath won't cure, but I don't know many of them. Whenever I'm sad I'm going to die, or so nervous I can't sleep, or in love with somebody I won't be seeing for a week, I slump down just so far and then I say: "I'll	11	Isolation	Esther tries to describe how she uses hot water as her medication when she feels stress and depressed. She isolated herself in the bath tub with the hot water to release her stress.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	go take a hot bath." I meditate in the bath. The water needs to be very hot, so hot you can barely stand putting your foot in it. Then you lower yourself, inch by inch, till the water's up to your neck.			
9.	I said to myself: "Doreen is dissolving, Lenny Shepherd is dissolving, Frankie is dissolving, New York is dissolving, they are all dissolving away and none of them matter any more. I don't know them, I have never known them and I am very pure. All that liquor and those sticky kisses I saw and the dirt that settled on my skin on the way back is turning into something pure."	11	Isolation	Esther keeps a distance from Doreen. She isolates herself as a result of her intimacy crisis. She is isolating herself from her surroundings. By separating herself from Doreen, she traps in her own world.
10.	Seeing Doreen supported in my arms and silent except for a few wet hiccups, the woman strode away down the hall to her cubicle with its ancient Singer sewing machine and white ironing board. I wanted to run after her and tell her I had nothing to do with Doreen, because she looked stern and hardworking and moral as an old-style European immigrant and	12	Intimacy Crisis	Esther wants to pretend as she does not know Doreen.

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11.	reminded me of my Austrian grandmother. I decided the only thing to do was to dump her on the carpet and shut and lock my door and go back to bed.....I made a decision about Doreen that night. I decided I would watch her and listen to what she said, but deep down I would have nothing at all to do with her.	12	Intimacy Crisis	Esther wants to end her relation with Doreen because she considers her as a problem.
12.	I told Doreen I would not go to the show or the luncheon or the film première, but that I would not go to Coney Island either, I would stay in bed. After Doreen left, I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I should any more. This made me sad and tired. Then I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I shouldn't, the way Doreen did, and this made me even sadder and more tired.	16	Isolation	After parting her relation from Doreen, Esther starts to retreat from the enticements of life. This situation makes Esther becomes jealous and depressed
13.	"You ought to read French and German," Jay Cee said mercilessly, "and probably several other languages as well, Spanish and Italian -- better still, Russian,	18	Intimacy Crisis	Since Esther does not have a strong sense of self, her confidence is low. She has a low power to decide or refuse something in her life. It happens when she is with Jay Cee. Jay Cee asks her to study some languages. She has no time to study languages in her schedule but she cannot say it to

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>Hundreds of girls flood into New York every June thinking they'll be editors. You need to offer something more than the run-of-the-mill person. You better learn some languages." I hadn't the heart to tell Jay Cee there wasn't one scrap of space on my senior year schedule to learn languages in. I was taking one of those honors programs that teach you to think independently, and except for a course in Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and a seminar in advanced poetry composition I would spend my whole time writing on some obscure theme in the works of James Joyce. I hadn't picked out my theme yet, because I hadn't got round to reading Finnegans Wake, but my professor was very excited about my thesis and had promised to give me some leads on images about twins. "I'll see what I can do," I told Jay Cee. "I probably might just fit in one of those double-barreled accelerated courses in elementary German they've rigged up." I</p>			her.

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	thought at the time I might actually do this. I had a way of persuading my Class Dean to let me do irregular things. She regarded me as a sort of interesting experiment.			
14.	My secret hope of spending the afternoon alone in Central Park died in the glass eggbeater of <i>Ladies' Day's</i> revolving doors. I found myself spewed out through the warm rain and into the dim, throbbing cave of a cab, together with Betsy and Hilda and Emily Ann Offenbach, a prim little girl with a bun of red hair and a husband and three children in Teaneck, New Jersey.	21	Isolation	She wants to isolate herself from her friends, but she cannot reach her desire.
15.	Gradually I realized that Constantin was trying to arrange a meeting for us later in the day. "Would you like to see the UN this afternoon?" "I can already see the UN," I told him, with a little hysterical giggle.... There was a silence. Then he said, "Maybe you would like a bite to eat afterward."	26	Intimacy Crisis	The meeting and lunch invitation given by Constantine leads Esther to throw away herself to Constantin's possession effortlessly.
16.	Of course, I didn't know he was a hypocrite at first. I thought he was	27	Intimacy Crisis	Esther has no strong sense of self that is why she has a low power to decide or refuse something in her life. It happens

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>the most wonderful boy I'd ever seen. I'd adored him from a distance for five years before he even looked at me, and then there was a beautiful time when I still adored him and he started looking at me, and then just as he was looking at me more and more I discovered quite by accident what an awful hypocrite he was, and now he wanted me to marry him and I hated his guts. The worst part of it was I couldn't come straight out and tell him what I thought of him, because he caught TB before I could do that, and now I had to humor him along till he got well again and could take the unvarnished truth.</p>			<p>when she is with Buddy Willard. He wants her to marry him but after she finds out that he betrays her, she does not want to do that. However, the problem is Esther has no heart to tell him the truth.</p>
17.	<p>As I lay there in my white hotel bed feeling lonely and weak, I thought I was up in that sanatorium in the Adirondacks, and I felt like a heel of the worst sort. In his letters Buddy kept telling me how he was reading poems by a poet who was also a doctor and how he'd found out about some famous dead Russian short-story writer who had been a doctor</p>	29	Isolation	<p>Esther separation with Doreen does not only make her feels jealous and depressed. It also brings loneliness. Esther thinks about her relationship with Buddy Williard as she lies on the bed feeling lonely. However, after she finds out that Buddy betrays her love with a waitress; Esther knows that her dream to marry him will not come true.</p>



No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	too, so maybe doctors and writers could get along fine after all. Now this was a very different tune from what Buddy Willard had been singing all the two years we were getting to know each other. I remember the day he smiled at me and said, "Do you know what a poem is, Esther?"			
18.	I went cold with envy. I had never been to Yale, and Yale was the place all the seniors in my house liked to go best on weekends. I decided to expect nothing from Buddy Willard. If you expect nothing from somebody you are never disappointed	31	Isolation	Esther becomes so envious with her seniors. The reality that she never been to Yale makes her lack of experience. This makes her feel disappointed and isolated from the society. She then decides not to expect something from somebody.
19.	Well, I had just decided to ditch Buddy Willard for once and for all, not because he'd slept with that waitress but because he didn't have the honest guts to admit it straight off to everybody and face up to it as part of his character, when the phone in the hall rang and somebody said in a little knowing singsong, "It's for you, Esther, it's from Boston."	37	Intimacy Crisis	A relationship between two people is supposed to occur because of sincere and connection of feeling. Esther's relationship with Buddy occurs because Esther used to admire him because of his perfection. Now her relationship with him is just because he is sick and she has to cheer him up. However, in the end she decides to ditch him after she finds out that he lies about his virginity

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
20.	<p>I didn't know shorthand either. This meant I couldn't get a good job after college. My mother kept telling me nobody wanted a plain English major. But an English major who knew shorthand was something else again. Everybody would want her. She would be in demand among all the up-and-coming young men and she would transcribe letter after thrilling letter.</p>	39	Isolation	<p>Esther shows her sense of hopeless about her future. She does not know about shorthand and it makes her worry about her job in the future. She feels like she will not get a good job for her after college.</p>
21.	<p>The more I thought about it the better I liked the idea of being seduced by a simultaneous interpreter in New York City. Constantin seemed mature and considerate in every way. There were no people I knew he would want to brag to about it, the way college boys bragged about sleeping with girls in the backs of cars to their roommates or their friends on the basketball team. And there would be a pleasant irony in sleeping with a man Mrs. Willard had introduced me to, as if she were, in a roundabout way, to blame for it.</p>	41	Intimacy Crisis	<p>Esther throws herself into an intimacy which she only wants to fulfill her desire.</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
22.	I was tempted to tell Mr. Willard to go ahead alone, I would hitchhike home. But one glance at Mr. Willard's face -- the silver hair in its boyish crew cut, the clear blue eyes, the pink cheeks, all frosted like a sweet wedding cake with the innocent, trusting expression -- and I knew I couldn't do it. I'd have to see the visit through to the end.	45	Intimacy Crisis	She has a low power to decide or refuse anything in her life. It happens when she is with Mr. Willard, Buddy's father, asks her to accompany him to visit Buddy's sanatorium. She does not feel like going as she avoids Buddy Willard, but she cannot say it to Mr. Willard.
23.	I slunk down on the middle of my spine, my nose level with the rim of the window, and watched the houses of outer Boston glide by. As the houses grew more familiar I slunk still lower. I felt it was very important not to be recognized. The gray, padded car roof closed over my head like the roof of a prison van, and the white, shining, identical clapboard houses with their interstices of well-groomed green proceeded past, one bar after another in a large but escape-proof cage. I had never spent a summer in the suburbs before.	59	Isolation	When Esther knows that she has failed to enroll in writing class, she feels so sad and wants to isolated herself from the society.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
24.	I crawled back into bed and pulled the sheet over my head. But even that didn't shut out the light, so I buried my head under the darkness of the pillow and pretended it was night. I couldn't see the point of getting up. I had nothing to look forward to.	61	Isolation	Esther feels so hopeless about her future. She feels like she does not want to get up as she does not know about what she is going to do in the future.
25.	I feigned sleep until my mother left for school, but even my eyelids didn't shut out the light. They hung the raw, red screen of their tiny vessels in front of me like a wound. I crawled between the mattress and the padded bedstead and let the mattress fall across me like a tombstone. It felt dark and safe under there, but the mattress was not heavy enough. It needed about a ton more weight to make me sleep.	64	Isolation	Esther starts to cannot sleep. It is her symptom of depression. After the reality that she has to face, she starts to experience sense of depression
26.	I squinted at the page. The letters grew barbs and rams' horns. I watched them separate, each from the other, and jiggle up and down in a silly way. Then they associated themselves in fantastic, untranslatable shapes, like Arabic or	65	Isolation	Esther's depression is getting worse when she realizes that suddenly she cannot read letters she gets. The words become so hard to interpret. She explains that the words tinkle up and down in a silly way. Esther feels the words turn into Arabic or Chinese words; difficult to read.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	Chinese.			
27.	"I can't sleep. I can't read." I tried to speak in a cool, calm way, but the zombie rose up in my throat and choked me off. I turned my hands palm up.	66	Isolation	The depression is getting worse when she is unable to sleep and read.
28.	"I hadn't washed my hair for three weeks, either"	66	Isolation	Esther's depression is marked by stopping to take bath. Esther thinks the idea of washing her body is silly because today she has to wash and does it again later.
29.	"I hadn't slept for seven nights"	66	Isolation	Esther's depression is getting worst when her depression is heightened by her inability to sleep. She cannot sleep for seven days without feeling exhausted. She has tried sleeping pills but it does not work on her.
30.	But when I took up my pen, my hand made big, jerky letters like those of a child, and the lines sloped down the page from left to right almost diagonally, as if they were loops of string lying on the paper, and someone had come along and blown them askew.	68	Isolation	Esther finds out that she is no longer able to write well. Her writing is a mess that eventually she does not send the letter to Doreen.
31.	I thought if I ever did get to Chicago, I might change my name to Elly Higginbottom for good. Then nobody would know I had thrown up a scholarship at a big eastern women's college and mucked up a	69	Isolation	Esther wants to isolate herself by wanting to go to Chicago and change her name as Elly Higginbottom so that nobody will recognize her.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	month in New York and refused a perfectly solid medical student for a husband who would one day be a member of the AMA and earn pots of money. In Chicago, people would take me for what I was. I would be simple Elly Higgenbottom, the orphan. People would love me for my sweet, quiet nature. They wouldn't be after me to read books and write long papers on the twins in James Joyce. And one day I might just marry a virile, but tender, garage mechanic and have a big cowy family, like Dodo Conway.			
32.	So I told him again, in the same dull, flat voice, only it was angrier this time, because he seemed so slow to understand, how I hadn't slept for fourteen nights and how I couldn't read or write or swallow very well.	70	Isolation	Esther's depression is getting worse when she cannot sleep for fourteen nights and cannot read or write or eat.
33.	I didn't know why I had never bought any of these papers before. They were the only things I could read. The little paragraphs between the pictures ended before the letters had a chance to get cocky and	71	Isolation	It shows how Esther only can read the articles about crime. It is one of Esther's symptom of depression.

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	wobble about. At home, all I ever saw was the <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> , which appeared on the doorstep at five o'clock every day but Sunday and treated suicides and sex crimes and airplane crashes as if they didn't happen.			
34.	I hadn't slept for twenty-one nights.	76	Isolation	Esther's problem of sleeping rise from fourteen nights to twenty-one nights
35.	I thought the most beautiful thing in the world must be shadow, the million moving shapes and cul-de sacs of shadow. There was shadow in bureau drawers and closets and suitcases, and shadow under houses and trees and stones, and shadow at the back of people's eyes and smiles, and shadow, miles and miles and miles of it, on the night side of the earth.	76	Isolation	Esther wants to isolate herself from the society. She refers the shadow as the her desire to be unrecognized by others.
36.	That morning I had made a start. I had locked myself in the bathroom, and run a tub full of warm water, and taken out a Gillette blade. When they asked some old Roman philosopher or other how he wanted to die, he said he would open his	77	Isolation	Esther's first attempt to kill herself is taking place in the bathroom. She uses a razor and then she cuts her wrist yet it fails. Esther's first attempt to commit suicide is not succeed as she afraid if her mother will catch her red-handed trying to kill herself.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>veins in a warm bath. I thought it would be easy, lying in the tub and seeing the redness flower from my wrists, flush after flush through the clear water, till I sank to sleep under a surf gaudy as poppies. But when it came right down to it, the skin of my wrist looked so white and defenseless that I couldn't do it. It was as if what I wanted to kill wasn't in that skin or the thin blue pulse that jumped under my thumb, but somewhere else, deeper, more secret, a whole lot harder to get at. It would take two motions. One wrist, then the other wrist. Three motions, if you counted changing the razor from hand to hand. Then I would step into the tub and lie down. I moved in front of the medicine cabinet. If I looked in the mirror while I did it, it would be like watching somebody else, in a book or a play. But the person in the mirror was paralyzed and too stupid to do a thing. Then I thought maybe I ought to spill a little blood for</p>			



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	<p>practice, so I sat on the edge of the tub and crossed my right ankle over my left knee. Then I lifted my right hand with the razor and let it drop of its own weight, like a guillotine, onto the calf of my leg. I felt nothing. Then I felt a small, deep thrill, and a bright seam of red welled up at the lip of the slash. The blood gathered darkly, like fruit, and rolled down my ankle into the cup of my black patent leather shoe. I thought of getting into the tub then, but I realized my dallying had used up the better part of the morning, and that my mother would probably come home and find me before I was done. So I bandaged the cut, packed up my Gillette blades and caught the eleven-thirty bus to Boston.</p>			
37.	<p>I thought drowning must be the kindest way to die, and burning the worst. Some of those babies in the jars that Buddy Willard showed me had gills, he said. They went through a stage where they were just like fish. A little, rubbishy wavelet, full</p>	82	Isolation	<p>She repeats her intention of committing suicide in a different occasion. On a picnic at the beach with friends Esther means to drown herself in the ocean. It does not happen as her friends are around, swimming with her too which in a way prevent her from conducting her action.</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>of candy wrappers and orange peel and seaweed, folded over my foot. I heard the sand thud behind me, and Cal came up.</p> <p>"Let's swim to that rock out there." I pointed at it</p> <p>"Are you crazy? That's a mile out."</p> <p>"What are you?" I said. "Chicken?"</p> <p>Cal took me by the elbow and jostled me into the water. When we were waist high, he pushed me under. I surfaced, splashing, my eyes seared with salt. Underneath, the water was green and semi-opaque as a hunk of quartz. I started to swim, a modified dogpaddle, keeping my face toward the rock. Cal did a slow crawl. After a while he put his head up and treaded water.</p> <p>"Can't make it." He was panting heavily.</p> <p>"Okay. You go back."</p> <p>I thought I would swim out until I was too tired to swim back. As I paddled on, my heartbeat boomed like a dull motor in my ears.</p>			

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
38.	<p>That morning I had tried to hang myself.</p> <p>I had taken the silk cord of my mother's yellow bathrobe as soon as she left for work, and, in the amber shade of the bedroom, fashioned it into a knot that slipped up and down on itself. It took me a long time to do this, because I was poor at knots and had no idea how to make a proper one. Then I hunted around for a place to attach the rope. The trouble was, our house had the wrong kind of ceilings. The ceilings were low, white and smoothly plastered, without a light fixture or a wood beam in sight.</p>	82	Isolation	Esther's third attempt is by hanging herself in her house which unfortunately has low ceilings. Of course she remains alive and this is another futile effort.
39.	<p>I had bought a few paperbacks on abnormal psychology at the drugstore and compared my symptoms with the symptoms in the books, and sure enough, my symptoms tallied with the most hopeless cases. The only thing I could read, besides the scandal sheets, were those abnormal psychology books. It was as if some</p>	83	Isolation	Esther's psychology condition pushes her to find an answer about her depression. She wants to analyze herself by buying books to know about her psychology condition. She also explains that she can only read papers about scandal and abnormal psychology.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	slim opening had been left, so I could learn all I needed to know about my case to end it in the proper way.			
40.	The only trouble was, Church, even the Catholic Church, didn't take up the whole of your life. No matter how much you knelt and prayed, you still had to eat three meals a day and have a job and live in the world.	86	Isolation	Esther goes to the Church to find a help but in the end she finds herself feels hopeless because in the end she still has to do everything by herself.
41.	Lately I had considered going into the Catholic Church myself. I knew the Catholics thought killing yourself was an awful sin. But perhaps, if this was so, they might have a good way to persuade me out of it.	86	Isolation	One day, Esther runs away from the hospital to visit her father's graveyard. When she knows that the graveyard is behind the church, Esther goes to the church to ask for help. She knows that Catholic forbid the action of suicide because it is a dreadful sin. She wishes the church to help her, particularly in getting rid of the idea about committing suicide.
42.	Then I unlocked the strongbox and took out the bottle of new pills. There were more than I had hoped. There were at least fifty. If I had waited until my mother doled them out to me, night by night, it would have taken me fifty nights to save up enough. And in fifty nights, college would have opened, and my brother would have come back from	88	Isolation	Esther's depression leads her to commit suicide by overdosing sleeping pills.

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	<p>Germany, and it would be too late....Then I went downstairs and into the kitchen. I turned on the tap and poured myself a tall glass of water. Then I took the glass of water and the bottle of pills and went down into the cellar....Cobwebs touched my face with the softness of moths. Wrapping my black coat round me like my own sweet shadow, I unscrewed the bottle of pills and started taking them swiftly, between gulps of water, one by one by one. At first nothing happened, but as I approached the bottom of the bottle, red and blue lights began to flash before my eyes. The bottle slid from my fingers and I lay down. The silence drew off, baring the pebbles and shells and all the tatty wreckage of my life. Then, at the rim of vision, it gathered itself, and in one sweeping tide, rushed me to sleep.</p>			
43.	<p>I knew I should be grateful to Mrs. Guinea, only I couldn't feel a thing. If Mrs. Guinea had given me a ticket to Europe, or a round-the-world</p>	97	Isolation	<p>Esther assumes her depression as the bell jar. She explains that wherever she goes, she will be trapped in her own mind and inside herself. There is nothing can ameliorate her condition, no matter how new and exciting the</p>

No.	Quotation	Page	Category	Meaning
	cruise, it wouldn't have made one scrap of difference to me, because wherever I sat -- on the deck of a ship or at a street café in Paris or Bangkok -- I would be sitting under the same glass bell jar, stewing in my own sour air.			condition around her
44.	I hated these visits, because I kept feeling the visitors measuring my fat and stringy hair against what I had been and what they wanted me to be, and I knew they went away utterly confounded. I thought if they left me alone I might have some peace.	106	Isolation	When Esther stays in the hospital to get treatment for her depression, she has many visitors. However, Esther hates to be visited. She wants to be alone. It can be interpreted that Esther wants to isolate herself from the people she knows and get some peace by being alone.
45.	That afternoon my mother had brought me the roses. "Save them for my funeral," I'd said. My mother's face puckered, and she looked ready to cry. "But Esther, don't you remember what day it is today?" "No." I thought it might be Saint Valentine's day. "It's your <i>birthday</i> ." And that was when I had dumped the roses in the waste-basket.	106	Isolation	In Esther's birthday, her mother comes to visit Esther in the hospital with a bouquet of roses. However, Esther does not remember about that. In this scene, Esther's sense of hopelessness again occurs. She asks her mother to save the flowers for her funeral. Esther is longing for death. Esther's death urges comes from her helpless feeling. She feels trap in her own mind and herself so nobody and nothing can help her but death.

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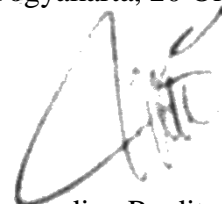
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