

# **SOCIAL PREJUDICE AGAINST WEALTHY FAMILY IN SHIRLEY JACKSON'S WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE**

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## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji social prejudice atau prasangka sosial yang tercermin pada novel. Social prejudice atau prasangka sosial diartikan sebagai suatu tindakan atau sikap yang ditujukan kepada individu atau kelompok yang membenarkan suatu hal atas penilaian masyarakat berdasarkan pengalaman masa lalu dari individu atau kelompok tersebut di lingkungan yang sama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa social prejudice atau prasangka sosial yang terdapat pada novel. Untuk menyelidikinya, peneliti menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan teori literasi sosial oleh Alan Swingewood dan Diana Laurenson untuk menganalisis novel yang berjudul *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* karya Shirley Jackson. Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan: 1) terdapat empat indikator yang menunjukkan prasangka sosial dalam novel diantaranya verbal rejection, avoidance, discrimination, and plundered 2) prasangka sosial yang terjadi diilustrasikan dalam novel melalui karakter, setting, event, dan style 3) alasan Shirley Jackson menulis karya tersebut merupakan ekspresi pribadi dari pengalaman yang pernah dialami.

**Kata Kunci:** Shirley Jackson, *Social prejudice*, *Sociology of literature*.

## **Abstract**

This research purpose is to analyze social prejudice reflected in the novel entitled *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson. Social prejudice appears in society and treats another individual or group by mocking, judging, and bullying. In detail, the researcher divided into three for analyzing the formal object, there are 1) To identify the indicators of social prejudice in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, 2) To describe how social prejudice depicted in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, 3) To reveal Shirley Jackson's social prejudice address in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. The type of study in this research is the literary study using Swingewood and Laurenson's sociology of literary theory for analyzing the data. The method of this research using document analysis with copy-paste as the data using e-book of, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. The result of this research is that social prejudice is reflected by verbal rejection, avoidance, and discrimination and plundered by the character's actions and dialogues, setting, events, and the style that shows in the novel.

**Keywords:** Shirley Jackson, *Social prejudice*, *Sociology of literature*.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Society is essential to human life because it produces language, culture, history, and art. The community has a unique mindset in some phenomena which is not affecting their life. In other words, society can judge a person's existence. For instance, humanity can have a negative attitude

toward people who are different than them. The community mocks, judging, until bullying the 'different.' This case is called social prejudice; prejudice appears in society.

According to the circumstance, the social prejudice against the 'different' people happened in society proved in the novel of the 1960s. Shirley Jackson, one of several opuses in that era, created a story containing the social prejudice against the wealthy family who lived in a small town. In *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Shirley Jackson wrote about a family affected by social prejudice by the society in their hometown. Jackson covered the social prejudice in the thriller genre explicitly through the character's actions in the novel.

Thus, to make the readers realize that social phenomena have been hereditary since the old days and proved in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson, the researcher will study Social Prejudice Against Wealthy Family in Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*.

This research answers three research questions; there are 1) What are the indicators of social prejudice in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*? 2) How was the social prejudice depicted in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*? 3) Why did Shirley Jackson address social prejudice in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*? However, the objectives are 1) To identify the indicators of social prejudice in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. 2) To describe how social prejudice is depicted in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. 3) To reveal Shirley Jackson's social prejudice addressed in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*.

### **1.1 Previous Study**

Several studies are concerned with the topic discussed to align with this research. This research is a library study as the formal object being researched is generally classified into ethnic, racial, economic, and social. There have been eleven related kinds of research on ethnicity, five kinds of research on race, three kinds of economics research, and one on social. This research is classified as the time when the researchers did the research.

Research that related to ethnicity in society is proved in the novel William Faulkner's *The Sound and The Fury*, published in 1929 (Rifa'tin, 2009). Another research was found in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, published in 1960 (Winarni, 2013). Another by Harper Lee entitled *Go Set a Watchman*, published in 1950, shows the ethnic aspect of the novel (Abielah, 2016). James McBride's *The Color of Water* contains ethnic aspects of the novel published in 1995 (Sanopa, Aditiawarman, & Raflis, 2017). Furthermore, in Jamie Ford's *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, published in 2009 (Purwitasari, 2020). The novel *An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones contains the ethnic aspect published in 2018 (Ambarwati & Nasution, 2021). The research back to the old literature, as in Will

Eisner's *Fagin the Jew* Graphic Novel to be analyzed, which contains ethnic issues; the novel was published in 2003 (Asyipa & Kusumoriny, 2021). The ethnic issue is in the novel *How to be an American Housewife* by Margaret Dilloway, published in 2010 (Kilwouw, Moerlier, & Maca, 2021). Amanda Brown's *Legally Blonde* emphasized on the ethnic aspect of the novel, which was published in 2001 (Rina, 2021). The ethnic issue spreads in the novel *The Road to Memphis* by Mildred D. Taylor, published in 1990 (Ramadhan, Lubis, & Utomo, 2021). Then, in the novel entitled *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, published in 2003 (Hakim, 2022).

The racial aspect is found in the novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, published in 2017 (Nurhayati, 2019). Prihatika and Rokhman (2020) also emphasized *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. Another *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas re-researched the racial issue in the novel (Monica, Elfiondri, & Mariati, 2020). Another oeuvre by Angie Thomas also contains the racial issue in the novel *On the Come Up*, published in 2019 (Badriyah, 2021). Asika and Madu (2022) researched the novel containing racial issues entitled *In Americanah* by Adichie, published in 2013.

The economic issue in the novel, was researched by Hanifa (2019), who used Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* to be analyzed. The novel itself was published in 2013. Putra (2021) also emphasized the novel, which shows the economic issue of *Maze Runner; The Death Cure* by James Dashner, published in 2011. Salsabilah (2022), the *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan, is researched as the economic issue in the novel.

Research about the social as in the novel *Elevation* by Stephen King (Wirawan, 2022), published in 2018 with 144 pages of the novel. The novel tells about Scott fighting with the lesbians next door whose dog frequently defecates on Scott's lawn in the small town of Castle Rock, which serves as the backdrop for many of Stephen King's most famous tales. One of the women seems amiable, while the other is icy frigid. Both attempts to open a new restaurant, but Castle Rock residents are against gay marriage; therefore, business is struggling. After fully seeing the prejudices others face, including his own, Scott tries to assist. Unexpected partnerships, the yearly foot race, and the intrigue surrounding Scott's illness brings out the best in people who have previously indulged in their worst tendencies and those of others.

## **2. METHOD**

The type of study in this research using literary study due to the material object is a novel entitled *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson. The object of the research is divided into material and formal objects. The material object is Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, which was published on 21 September 1962 by Viking Press, downloaded free by the online platform [allbookshub.com](http://allbookshub.com), which a total page are 132 pages. Whether the formal object is the topic

topic itself or social prejudice. Martin and Nakayama (2018) stated prejudice is a negative emotion, including assigning labels to groups with insufficient evidence. Allport (1954) prejudice is a hostile attitude against a person who belongs to a group simply because they belong to and are presumed to have unfavourable characteristics attributed to that group. According to him, there are five stages of prejudice in society: verbal rejection, avoidance, discrimination, physical attack, and extermination.

The type of data is the text, and the data source divides into primary data sources, that is, a material object and secondary data sources are some research articles and journals from the internet and also the sociology of literature's e-book theory of Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood. Collecting data will be used for document analysis and copy-paste of the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson. Atkinson and Coffey (1997) in Bowen (2009) mentioned that the text and images were recorded on purpose. The technique of analyzing data using a context-oriented approach is the approach for analyzing data due to the sociology of literature as the theory of the research, which is qualitative, the technique for analyzing data.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher will deliver the data regarding social prejudice found in Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, divided into findings and discussion.

#### **3.1 Findings**

The indicators of social prejudice reflected in the novel are verbal rejection, avoidance, discrimination, and plundered.

##### **a. Verbal rejection**

Verbal rejection is an individual or a group attitude making jokes about another individual or group that consist of hateful opinions, indicates people's attitude toward said rude and inappropriate words in front of and behind the main character, Mary Katherine. People were also gave labeling with "Blackwood girls," as represented by Mary Katherine Blackwood and her sister Constance Blackwood, "one of the Blackwood girls from Blackwood Farm," shouted when Mary Katherine down to the village. They were cursing the huge Blackwood land, which people never saw before, as the Blackwood family locked their door.

*Merricat, said Connie, would you like a cup of tea?*

*Oh no, said Merricat, you'll poison me.*

*Merricat, said Connie, would you like to go to sleep?*

*Down in the boneyard ten feet deep!*

(1962: 25 & 26)

b. Avoidance

Avoidance is action that give to avoiding individual or a member of a group of the dislike in group. The avoidance always addressed to Mary Katherine when she walked in the village by staring and silencing. It continued with people treated Blackwood sister like a ghost as they sent meals and apologizing by dropped in front of Blackwood's door.

*...perhaps they came in darkness not to be recognized, as though each of them wanted to hide from the others, and bringing us food was somehow a shameful thing to do in public.*

(1962: 125)

c. Discrimination

Discrimination is action or attitude that show unequal treatment due to the individual or group actual race by another individual or group who addressed the discrimination. In the novel, discrimination showed by Mary Katherine's monologue that people act like stirring, coughing, rolling their eyes, and act like Mary did not exist.

*Behind me the little stirrings and coughings began. they were getting ready to talk again, and across the width of the store the Elberts were probably rolling their eyes at each other in relief.*

(1962: 20)

d. Plundered

Plundered is the action against a group that dislike, which have purpose to hijack and attack their assets or ownership to release the hateful condition and make the disliked one more suffer. This happens when Blackwood house burning by Mary Katherine accidentally did. The chief who should extinguished the fire turned to first man who started after someone provoked. The plundered follow as people destroys the house and take stuffs with mocking song addressed to Blackwood sister.

*...or someone in the crowd called out. "Why not let it burn?" a woman's voice came loudly, laughing.*

(1962: 96)

Social prejudice depicted in the novel includes character, setting, event, and diction.

a. Character

Saini and Sumarjo (1988, p.44) in Nurhayati (2019) stated that character is an individual who perform and contain in the story as described in plot. That divided into prejudice and unprejudiced.

- Prejudice characters are Jim and Mrs. Donell, Mr. and Mrs. Elbert, Joe Dunham, Stella, Charles Blackwood and all of people in the village.
- Unprejudiced characters are Mary Katherine Blackwood, Constance Blackwood, Julian Blackwood, Helen and Jim Clarke, and Dr. Levy.

b. Setting

Klarer (1999: 25) mentioned that setting is substance of time, place, and environment which relate of event. In setting, social prejudice addressed in three places, there were at Elbert's grocery store, Stella's café, and in the village.

*The people of the village have always hated us.*

(1962: 16)

c. Event

According to Dictionary Cambridge, event is everything happen which indicate special thing. The event identified in destruction event, that is a part of plundered in the moment of the burning Blackwood house tragedy. The social prejudice was happening before the burning house tragedy with the village people who always giving prejudice in verbal rejection, discrimination, and avoidance. Meanwhile, the event as part of plundered most shows how social prejudice addressed against Blackwood family who is wealthy.

*A wall of laughter rose and grew behind him and then, first the boys on the steps and then the other men and at last the women and the smaller children, they moved like a wave at our house.*

(1962: 98)

d. Style

Kennedy (1955) style is writing's characteristics to write in specific method to manage the words. In this research, style which found is in diction. Weafer (1957: 233) define diction as writer's decision of words. In diction, special expression depicted as social prejudice addressed by people in the village to Blackwood family. The special expression in the novel seen from their perspective who sing a mocking song for the Blackwood's.

*Then, through the laughter, someone began, "Merricat, said Constance, would you like a cup of tea?" It was rhythmic and insistent.*

(1962: 98)

Social prejudice depicted in the Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* is a message toward society condition, especially based on her own experience. In her novel, Jackson wanted to express her feeling who have psychology problem that is agoraphobic as the effect of her abusive mother. Jackson wanted to remember the reader about how prejudice affected someone's life by their failure in the past. Shirley Jackson as in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* illustrated Mary Katherine as an 18-year-old girl who hates everyone except her older sister, Constance. This aspect, Mary Katherine was a sociopathic and misanthrope, whoever Constance as agoraphobic girl who feared to go out from Blackwood's mansion. Implicitly, Jackson showed how she feel of the effect people's prejudice.

Ragland (1980) in *Gale Literature* mentioned that "During the writing of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Jackson suffered from a number of health problems, including arthritis, colitis, asthma, and anxiety". Ragland (1980) in *Gale Literature*, "Above all Jackson is a storyteller; her stories aim to entertain. Yet the entertainment value of her fiction masks a pessimistic view of human nature; social criticism, overt or implicit, is central to every one of her works". "According to Franklin's book, Jackson told her older daughter, Joanne, that Constance and Merricat were loosely modeled on Joanne and her sister, Sarah. Sarah, who was 12 years old when Jackson began revising, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, read the manuscript while her mom worked on it, sometimes offering suggestions that Jackson incorporated" (Snellings; 2021). "Constance and Merricat as the yin and yang of Shirley's own inner self" (Snellings; 2021).

### **3.2 Discussion**

Prejudice is a condition when an individual or a group got prejudgment by others which usually has characteristic to supports, causes, or justifies discrimination over categorize. The prejudgment always happens in society when the individual or group different than them. Then it called social prejudice, the prejudice which always happens in society, caused and effect in society.

The social prejudice sometimes cannot be spoken up by the victim, but there will always way to find out how social prejudice reflected in society such like in literature. Shirley Jackson's, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* is one of those oeuvres that lifted up about ironical social condition in gothic mystery genre. In that oeuvre, social prejudice against wealthy family reflected as identify by characters, setting, event, and style. The social prejudice against wealthy family which reflected illustrates in dialogues, situations, and actions of each character in the novel. However, Shirley Jackson wrote *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* as part of her self-expression about her life condition in society implicitly.

The researcher using theory of sociology of literature by Diana Laurensen and Alan Swingewood. According to them (1972: 11) sociology is the study to answer how society is conceivable, how it works, and why it endures scientifically. The writer's social condition and creation is important on literary work (p.17). Literary and social take's important role for the writer in literary study. In the term of social framework, literary study is reflection of sociological approach (p. 21). The assembly reader, publication, markets, and writer's social status are the provision analyze by sociology of literature (p. 169). In case to support human about understanding under the rules and morals in society are part of literature result (p.170).

This research position adds information from the previous research. The social prejudice itself need to be more lift up in the research due to still have less information. The novel has deepest and intimate expression of what happened in life, also people can realize and learn on how what is life through the novel. Especially, Shirley Jackson was the greatest writer in 20th century who remembering us with another writer with close genre, Agatha Christie. Shirley Jacksons only famous with hers The Lottery short story, but in We Have Always Lived in the Castle we will know on how society prejudgment's very dangerous of life.

Furthermore, for add the information to the next research, this research related to previous about prejudice which took the point of the prejudice itself. The previous research which deliberated how prejudice depicted in the novel is the support data for analysing this research. In case, those previous research divided into ethnicity, racial, economic, and social. Specifically, for the social took from the last aspect in previous research-social-which research about the novel entitled Elevation by Stephen King (Wirawan, 2022) that is the novel about the prejudices address to the main character of the people around.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The researcher presents the conclusion as the final chapter of this research. The researcher contains some points that answer the research questions and suggestions for another researcher interested in analyzing the same novel from a different perspective.

First, there are four indicators of social prejudice found in this novel. Those are verbal rejection (an individual or a group attitude making jokes about another individual or group that consist of hateful opinions), avoidance (avoiding individual or a member of a group of the dislike in group), discrimination (unequal treatment due to the individual or group actual race by another individual or group), and plundered (to hijack and attack their assets or ownership to release the hateful condition and make the disliked one more suffer).

Second, four aspects support how social prejudice is depicted against wealthy family in this novel, such as characters, setting, events, and style. Character is an individual who perform and contain in the

story as described in plot (prejudice and unprejudiced), setting that is substance of time, place, and environment which relate of event, events that is everything happen which indicate special thing (part of plundered), and style (special expression).

Third, the reason for the writer addressing social prejudice in this novel. Social prejudice is depicted in the novel by the writer's experience with self-condition, mentally and physically. Shirley Jackson wanted to express her feelings and the effect of social prejudice that she ever had through the novel. Jackson wanted to remind the reader about how prejudice affected someone's life of their failure in the past.

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