

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Society is essential to human life because it produces language, culture, history, and art. Society 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, society can have a negative attitude toward people who are different than them. Society mocks, judging, until bullying the 'different.' This case is called social prejudice; prejudice appears in the community.

According to the circumstance, the social prejudice against the 'different' people happened in society proved in the novel of the 1960s. Shirley Jackson, as one of several opuses in that era, created a book containing phenomena of social prejudice against the wealthy family who lived in a 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 bias in the thriller explicitly through the action of the characters in the novel. The reader might need to realize the social prejudice issue as they are focused directly on the story to find the riddle in the book. Like the other thriller, Jackson completed the novel with a mystery that makes the readers curious about the other part.

Shirley Jackson made the novel dedicated to her director, Pascal Covici, but unfortunately, the book was published after she passed away. Jackson contained social prejudice as her voice of the experience in her life and several traumas that happened in the past. But Jackson, covered in a thriller, made the novel have misleading impressions as the murdered case, rejection, isolation, and hatred. So, social prejudice seems implicit.

In the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Jackson illustrates the main character as an 18-year-old girl named Mary Katherine Blackwood, a member of the Blackwood family. The Blackwood lived in a town in Vermont near the small village. Society had prejudice issues against the wealthy family and became stronger after the murder case of the Blackwood family, who almost killed entire family members in arsenic poison. Just only Mary Katherine with her elder sister Constance Blackwood and her uncle Julian Blackwood who left. From then on, they never appeared and socialized with people for six years. But Mary Katherine only forced herself to buy groceries and bring some books for her sister, Constance. However, the murder case who Constance being judged as the criminal has never been proven, but society still spreads hatred and prejudice that the family is the killer.

In the beginning, they lived as usual in isolation, but it got worse after their distant cousin came out of nowhere. Charles, the distant cousin, came to seize Blackwood's treasure. He tried to manipulate Constance, help her escape their isolated life, and make a new journey. Mary Katherine realized Charles's plan and tried to screw up with ridiculous pranks. The problem becomes more prominent when Mary Katherine accidentally burns her father's room used for Charles. They are shocked as Charles see for help. But there were better ways to ask for help. People who came from the village suddenly changed into the destroyer. They were like demons who wanted revenge; they were laughed at, mocked, and yelled at by Mary, Katherine, and Constance. Julian, their uncle, passed away from a heart attack; meanwhile, those Blackwood sisters ran away from the crowd to the garden, Mary Katherine's secret hiding place.

After the tragedy in the burning Blackwood house, people realized their act. They sent meals and tea in front of the house with a card filled with apology words. Unfortunately, the Blackwood sisters never appeared and decided to stay isolated so no one could reach them. They just lived in the leftover part of the house; they happily just in two of them.

Several public responses to the opus of the famous writer, as Goodreads mentioned the answer since 2013. They had different assumptions and comments about the novel. But most of them conical to one central point that the book had sadly outsiders family who affected their life such having agoraphobic and misanthrope, greed, evil, and bullying, which those factors by society.

Booth (2021) reviewed the Blackwood sisters based on Jackson's background, which contained several ideas such as being shunned by the villagers, sympathetic magic, the affection between the Blackwood sisters with unique relations, and Charles's deceitfulness.

Respond from Peck (2015) assumed that the novel is subjective with ominous turgid family drama, wealthy landowners in poor residents, weird family with an odd murdering issue, hardly a mystery novel, justified less to win society's sympathy and used nursery rhyme in some acts to relieve the drama of the story. Both Blackwood sisters were ironic and suffered from society's judgment. Jackson had dark side imagination and an antidote for the novel.

Shirley Jackson made the story feel accurate with a unique style of writing that made the researcher use the novel as the principal object of the research. As the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* mentioned, this research will see from another perspective. The researcher will study which relates to social phenomena that still relate to the novel, which was published in the 1960s as the first publication.

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*.

B. Knowledge Gap and Problem Statement

To make the readers realized that the social phenomena hereditary since the old days and proved in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the researcher then studies about Social Prejudice Against Wealthy Family in Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. However, here are the problem statements that the researcher will conclude in the research:

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*?

C. Objectives

1. To identify the indicators of social prejudice in *We Have Always Lived in The Castle* by Shirley Jackson.
2. To describe how social prejudice depicted in *We Have Always Lived in The Castle* by Shirley Jackson.
3. To reveal Shirley Jackson's social prejudice address in the novel *We Have Always Lived in The Castle*.

D. Significance

The researcher hope that this research give contribution to the English literature works. Thus, in practical significance the researcher hopes that:

- a. For the university

The result of this study can be used as additional information and research collection in literary works.

- b. For other researchers

The result of this study gives additional information for other researcher to accomplish further research with same relation.

- c. For the public

To give another information of social prejudice in society that can be understand and realize to them.