

PUBLICATION ARTICLE

OBSESSION FOR THE RETURN OF THE LOST DAUGHTER

IN DAVID AUBURN'S *THE GIRL IN THE PARK* MOVIE:

A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH



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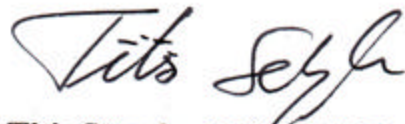
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**OBSESSION FOR THE RETURN OF THE LOST DAUGHTER
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A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**

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SUMMARY

The study focuses on Julia's Obsession to return her lost daughter. It is reflected in the major character of *The Girl in the Park* viewed from psychoanalytic approach. Object of this study is to explore the obsession of Julia to return her lost daughter into her life.

In conducting this study, the researcher uses qualitative research, in which the primary data are taken from *The Girl in the Park* movie and the secondary data are taken from any literature related with the study. The technique of data analysis in this study is descriptive method.

This study comes to the following conclusions. First, based on the structural analysis of the movie, it is evident that in this movie David Auburn is delivering a message that it is usually hard for people to accept reality of losing one that they love. Second, based on Psychoanalytic Approach analysis, it is apparent that in this movie, David Auburn illustrates a psychological phenomenon in which an individual experiences obsession to bring her lost child back to her.

Key Words: Psychoanalysis, Obsession, and Personality.

1. Introduction

The Girl in the Park movie is a drama movie which is directed and written by David Auburn. This movie was released on November 13, 2006 in USA, and produced by Sean Furst, Bryan Furst, and Dale Rosenbloom with Furst Films as the company with total runtime around 109 minutes (1 hour 49 minutes), and distributed by Unanimous Pictures and Tiberius Film Gmbh & co. Kg Qed International. . The movie stars are Sigourney Weaver, Kate Bosworth, Elias Koteas, Alessandro Nivola, Keri Russel, and David Rasche.

David Auburn is the director and the writer of the movie entitled *The Girl in the Park*. He was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 30, 1969. He had made a lot of

plays such as *Are You Ready?* (1998), *Damage Control* (1998), *Fifth Planet* (1998), *Miss You* (1998), *Three Monologues* (1998), *We Had a Very Good Time* (1998), *What Do You Believe About The Future?* (1998), *The Journals of Mihail Sebastian* (2004), and *An Upset* (2008). He is also as the co-writer of the screen play for *Skyscraper* (1998) and *Proof* (2005). Recently, he wrote the screen play of *Lake House* (2006).

The Girl in the Park movie had been produced as the television show in first and twice for the cinema, CD and DVD version: first was distributed by Furst films and second by Weinstein Company. The movie gives an income about US \$ 1.254.140, because this movie was popular whether in the review of viewer, movie market, and film industry.

The Girl in the Park had been third: in United States on November 13, 2006, in Toronto International Film Festival on Sunday, September 9, 2007 and in United Kingdom on December 5, 2008. This movie got a lot awards from some film industries and film appreciation. It won the award from Pulitzer to playwright. Besides that, *The Girl in the Park* movie is also nominated in Academy Awards (2007) and Toronto International Film Festival as the film presented (2007).

The Girl in the Park is a movie about obsession of Julia to return her lost daughter into her life. The story begins when Julia (Sigourney Weaver) invites her daughter (Maggie) to play in the park, she has just waited and looked her daughter to play. When the park is quiet and everyone has gone home, Julia takes her things. After she finishes tidying her things up, she looks for her child. She looks for in the whole of the park, but she cannot find her. Since she lost her 3 years old daughter, sometimes her emotion is out of control. It made her divorce with her husband (David Rasche). Then, she decides to live alone and her first child is taken care by her husband.

When Julia is in a supermarket, she sees the girl again. She sees the girl taking sunglasses but she does not want to pay it and says that it is her own sunglasses. The shopkeeper does not believe her, Julia comes through the shopkeeper and tells him that it is really Louise's sunglasses. Then, the shopkeeper believes it. Louise thanks to Julia for saving her from the shopkeeper. She introduces herself to Julia and tells about her life and also her pregnant. Then, they become friend

Julia knows that Louise is a liar. Julia does not know that Louise is following her to her apartment. Louise knocks Julia's room and asks forgiveness to Julia. Julia does

not want to hear what Louise says. Then, she closes the door and suddenly Louise's hand is hemmed and scraped. Louise just wants to return some money which is given by Julia at their first meeting and says to Julia that the rest of the money as her debt and she promises to Julia to pay her debt one day. It makes Julia feel pity to her and asks Louise to live with her in her apartment. Louise agrees to live with Julia. Their relationship becomes closer after they live together. Julia's emotion gets better.

There are four reasons why the writer chooses *The Girl in the Park*. The first is this movie is interesting. The characters that mostly appear in this movie are Julia and Louise. They individually have different characterization. The second in this movie is The plot in this movie is the internal conflict of Julia in her condition after her daughter lost in the park then she meets Louise. Her emotion is out of control and it affects to her family. The third is the casting which gets the best player to act like characters that are needed. The last is on the theme. The theme of this movie is how hard to accept the reality of losing someone that people love so much. The main character is an independent women and she is able to solve her psychological problem.

Problem Statement in this research is "How Julia's obsession can return her lost daughter into her life?"

Limitation of the Study in this research, the writer focused on Julia's obsession to return her lost daughter reflected in *The Girl in the Park* movie.

Objectives of the Study based on the problem that has been stated above, the objectives of the study are as follows: (1) to analyze the movie based on its structural elements of the movie and (2) to analyze obsession of Julia's to return her lost daughter based on psychoanalytic approach.

Literature Review in this research, *The Girl in the Park* movie presents a drama movie about family's problem. It is interesting to be analyzed. As the writer knows, there is no other previous researchers who used the same movie for their research. The writer had visited to some universities in Indonesia such as the universities in Surakarta, Yogyakarta, and also in UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Ciputat. The writer is interested in analyzing this movie by using Psychoanalytic approach.

Research Method in this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using literary data. It purposes to analyze the movie using psychoanalytic approach. The steps to conduct this research are (1) type of

the study, (2) object of the study, (3) type of the data and the data source, (4) technique of the data collection, and (5) technique of the data analysis. The object of the study is *The Girl in the Park* movie directed by David Auburn released on November 13, 2006 (USA). This movie consists of two discs, the duration is 109 minutes (1 hour 49 minutes).

There are two data sources that are needed to do this research (1) Primary Data Source, the primary data source is *The Girl in the Park* movie which is directed by David Auburn. The main data involve the ideas, way of thinking, attitudes, the whole narration in the movie and the dialogues among the character that are relevant to the subject matter in this study, the secondary data sources are some references and material such as biography of the author's, essay, comment, historical information, the script of the movie, and other

The data collection technique is library research, note taking from dialogues of the character, and images in scenes from the movie. These techniques are as follows: watching the movie and learning the script, taking note of the important parts in both primary and secondary data, identifying the topic of the movie, determining the major character, classifying and determining the relevant data, arranging, researching and developing the selected materials into a good unity toward the topic of the study. The technique of data analysis is descriptive. It describes the structural elements of the movie and also analyzes it by using psychoanalytic approach.

2. Psychoanalysis Theory

a. Notion of Psychoanalysis

The term of Psychoanalysis has three meanings: (1) a theory of personality psychopathology, (2) a method of therapy for personality disturbances, and (3) technique for investigating an individual's unconscious thoughts and feelings (Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992: 86).

Psychoanalysis is a theory by Sigmund Freud. It is the part of psychoanalysis study that has some of fundamental assumptions. "The fundamental assumptions of psychoanalysis are that mental life is divided into two levels, the unconscious proper and the conscious (Feist, 1985: 21). According to Freud (Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992: 87), unconscious is the deepest and major stratum of the human mind. And conscious is everything about human feelings, sensations and experiences in awareness. Freud (Feist, 1985: 24) also divided the mind into three provinces: the "it," almost always translated into English as id; the "I," translated as ego; and the "above-I," which is

rendered into English as superego. According to Hjelle (1992:88), these divisions of the mind into id, ego, and superego are known as the *structural model* of the fundamental assumption of mental life.

b. Structures of the Personality

1. The *Id*

The *id* operates on the pleasure principle. Like a spoiled child, it continually presses for the immediate fulfillment of its drives. Its motto seems to be, "I want what I want when I want it. To reduce tensions, the *id* uses primary process thinking. It forms an image of a desired object, one previously associated with the satisfaction of a drive. Freud considered primary process thinking an infantile type of mental activity that cannot distinguish between images and reality. Dreaming during sleep and hallucinations (sensory experiences without a basis in fact) are clearer examples of primary process thinking (Davidoff, 1987: 445).

2. The *Ego*

The *ego* or word "I" into English is the region of the mind in contact with reality and governed by reality principle, which tries to substitute for the pleasure principle of the id. It is the only one of the three provinces of the mind that has direct contact with reality (Feist, 1985: 25).

The *ego* is authorized by reality principles. *Ego* connects with real world. The reality principle enables the individual to inhibit, redirect, or gradually release the id's raw energy within the bounds of social restrictions and the individual's conscience. The *ego* that regulates between these two psychic forces (the *id* and the *superego*), acting as the rational governing agency of the mind. The *ego* more frequently than not succeeds in redirecting the strong and potentially dangerous urges housed in the unconscious mind into non-destructive activities.

3. The *Superego*

The *superego* is the internal representative of the rules and restrictions of family and society, originating based on the authority of the father. In addition, the *superego* presents with an ego ideal, which is an image of what we would like to be, our internal standards. Because the *superego* develops at a young age, it

represents an immature and rigid form of morality. In Psychoanalytic jargon, the *superego* is “archaic” and largely unconscious (Cloninger, 2009: 40).

c. Obsessions

Obsessions are considered unbearable of anxiety that some individuals feel and it must do something to get rid of or reduce its occurrence (Davis and Palladino, 1997: 562).

Obsessions vary widely but usually fit one of six categories (Akhtar et al., 1975):

1. Obsessive Doubts

An inclination not to believe that a completed task has been accomplished satisfactorily.

2. Obsessive Thinking

Obsessive thinking is an emotional defense that, like all of the various manifestations of codependency, is dysfunctional.

3. Obsessive Impulses

Experiencing urges to perform actions ranging from washing to murder. Violence and cleanliness are common themes.

4. Obsessive Fears

A fear of losing self control and thus apprehension of a socially embarrassing act.

5. Obsessive Images

Persistently visualizing images of a recently seen or imagined event. Images of violent, sexual or disgusting nature that repeatedly come into mind.

6. Obsessive Thoughts

These can be words, ideas, images, or doubts that intrude into a person’s mind, try as they might to exclude them.

d. Research Finding

a. Id

The biggest *id* occurs after she finds Louise' brother, Stuart in her apartment. She asks Louise to leave her apartment because she never tells Julia that she has a brother. Louise is also angry because Julia never asks her about her brother, but Julia does not care about it. Then, Stuart meets Julia and tells her that his sister is a good girl. His family calls his sister Maggie. His family found Maggie when she was a child then they adopted Maggie. This explanation surprises Julia and makes her feel so sure that Louise is her lost daughter. Julia tries to follow Louise at the bus station. She wants to forgive Louise and asks her to live with her in her apartment.

Louise : "I look your open album photos having fantasies about your family especially little girl. She had picture everywhere." (D2, 00: 29': 32")

Julia : "I always invited her daughter to the park."

Louise : "She needs me now more than ever. She has many problems in her life. You know we care one another. Julia makes me calm. And when I touch her, she gives warmth like a mother to her daughter.

b. Ego

The *ego* of Julia in *The Girl in the Park* movie occurs when she wants Louise to be her daughter. She tries to dominate and regulates Louise' life. She wants to know Louise true identity and her personality. She is afraid if Louise leaves her and never comes back. She has more authorities in Louise life. She wants a love from a man. She feels so lonely without love and affection. She needs attention from somebody and then she finds Raymond at the office. He always gives her attention and it successfully makes her fall in love with him.

c. Super ego

The super ego of Julia begins when she loses her daughter in the park. She feels so guilty. She thinks that she is the one who causes her daughter lost and kidnapped. She also thinks that she is so careless in looking after her daughter. This bad situation makes her ignore her family. She doesn't care about her husband and her son anymore. She just thinks about her lost daughter. Her husband and her family have tried to help her to get out of this bad situation, but it doesn't work well. Julia is still in the same condition. She doesn't want to change her thought. After seven years, her husband divorces her and takes care of their son.

After she meets Louise, her condition is getting better. She can forget her trauma because she thinks that Louise is her lost daughter. She asks Louise to live with her in her apartment and deserves Louise as her real daughter. When she finds Louise has lied to her, she feels so sorry for trusting Louise. She asks Louise to leave her apartment. However, being with Louise makes her realize that she has made a big mistake to her family. She has ignored her family especially her son. She wants to fix her guilty by being good to her son, her daughter in law and also her ex-husband.

Finally, she knows her son bone fracture and being treated at the hospital, and then she visits her son at the hospital. Her son's condition successfully opens Julia's mind. She tries to forget all of her mistakes and begins a new life with her son, daughter in law, and grandchild.

d. Obsession

The obsession of Julia Sandburg in the movie can be seen when she meets Louise at the restaurant. She sees Louise with a man and it makes Julia realize that Louise has lied to her. Louise tells to Julia that she is pregnant and has left her boyfriend. Finally, Louise apologizes with Julia in her apartment and Julia forgives all of her mistakes. She permits Louise to stay at her apartment. When Louise is going out to buy a drink, Julia comes home. Julia does not see Louise at her apartment. She tries to look for her in everywhere, but she cannot find her. She is afraid of losing Louise. She does not know that Louise just goes out to buy a drink. She becomes out of control. She cannot control her emotion.

Julia tries to find Louise. She is afraid that she is going to lose her daughter for the second time. She does not want to make the same mistake. She finds Louise at a bus station. She apologizes to Louise and asks Louise to come back to her apartment and live with her. She also asks Louise not to leave her. She deserves Louise as her real daughter. Louise also asks forgiveness to Julia because she always makes Julia angry. After that, they come back to Julia's apartment.

Julia's biggest obsession occurs when she attends her son's wedding party. She tells to her family that she wants to forget about her lost daughter introduces Louise as Maggie, her daughter. Julia's family is surprised. They know that Maggie has passed away. Julia's son, Chris, tries to explain to Julia that her daughter has been kidnapped and killed in Philadelphia. Julia knows about it, but she is afraid to accept the reality. Louise's presence gives a new spirit for Julia to have a new and better life.

In this movie, the obsession of Julia can be seen from her attitude to bring her lost daughter back into her life. This obsession makes her lose her self control. She is afraid and becomes so stubborn. She does not want to accept the reality that her daughter had passed away. Then, she tries to replace her lost daughter with a girl that she does not know before and deserves her like her real daughter.

4. Conclusion

After analyzing the structural elements of the memoir *The Girl in the Park* by David Auburn using a psychoanalytic and obsession theory, the researcher draws conclusion as follows:

Firstly, based on the structural analysis, it is evident that in this movie David Auburn is delivering a message that it is usually hard for people to accept reality of losing one that they love. In doing so, the director adopted a real event where Julia, the major character, lost her daughter and she could not accept the reality that she had lost her beloved child.

Secondly, based on psychoanalytic analysis, it is apparent that in this movie, David Auburn illustrates a psychological phenomenon in which an individual experiences obsession to have her lost child return to her. In this movie, he illustrates that an obsessed individual sometimes cannot distinguish hallucination from reality.

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