CANCER IN JOHN GREEN'S *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS* NOVEL 
(2012):
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.

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by
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APPROVAL

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CANCER IN JOHN GREEN’S THE FAULT IN OUR STARS NOVEL (2012): A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The major problem of this study is cancer. Someone who suddenly gets a cancer, they have to experience a big change in their life. The objective of this study is to analyze this novel based on the Sociological Approach. The writer employs qualitative method. The writer uses two data sources: primary and secondary. The primary data source of the study is The Fault in Our Stars novel by John Green. The secondary data of the study are taken from any information related to the novel. The method of data collection is the descriptive qualitative research. Based on the analysis, the researcher gets some conclusions. The study shows that the problem faced by the major and minor characters about cancer. It is proven by their life that they have been dealing with cancer. But, cancer doesn’t block them to reach their dream. They want to meet Peter Van Houten in Amsterdam, the author of “An Imperial Affliction”. The Hazel and Augustus’s favourite novel.

Keywords: The Fault in Our Stars, cancer, An Imperial Affliction, sociological approach.

ABSTRAK


Kata kunci: The Fault in Our Stars, Kanker, An Imperial Affliction, Pendekatan sosiologis.
1. INTRODUCTION
According to Laurenson and Swingewood (1972: 11) states that “Sociology is essentially the scientific, objective study of man in society, the study of man in society, the study of social institutions and social processes”. Beside that, sociology is the systemic study of social behavior and human group.

Cancer is a complex genetic disease that is caused primarily by environmental factors. The cancer-causing agents (carcinogens) can be present in food and water, in the air, and in chemicals and sunlight that people are exposed to (Alison, 2001: 1).

_The Fault in Our Stars_ novel was written by John Green published in January 2012. The story is narrated by Hazel Grace Lancaster. Hazel Grace is sixteen years old and she has been dealing with a thyroid cancer that spreads to her lungs. She is forced by her mother to attend a Support Group in Episcopal Church. She meets and falls in love with Augustus Waters. He is seventeen years old and he has been dealing with an osteosarcoma that causes one of his legs amputated. He uses a prosthetic leg (Green, 2012).

Augustus Waters and Hazel Grace like reading very much. They like to talk about their favorite novels. Augustus gives Hazel _The Price of Dawn_ novel and Hazel recommends _An Imperial Affliction_. _An Imperial Affliction_ is a novel about a girl named Anna who has cancer, and it is the only account she's read of living with cancer that matches with her life. She speculates about the novel's mysterious author, Peter Van Houten who fled to Amsterdam after the novel was published and hasn't been heard until now. They are very curious about the ending of _An Imperial Affliction_ (Green, 2012).

This research focus on the study to describe _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel (2012) based on structural elements of the novel, sociological aspects and also to analyze cancer reflected in _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel (2012) based on socioogical approach.

2. RESEARCH METHOD
In analyzing _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel (2012) by John Green the researcher uses qualitative research. The research doesn’t use calculation. The researcher classifies her research into qualitative research because the research doesn’t need a statistic data to analyze and explore the facts. Type of data in this research is textual data. It consists of words, phrases and sentences. The data sources consist of two category, they are primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novel itself. The secondary data source is about behaviorist and all relevant materials in the novel. The techniques of data collection that the writer used are reading and understanding _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel as well as the secondary data source from the other books, identifying data that can be analyzed, classifying data into some category, determining the theory of literature which is relevant for analyzing the data, and searching the other reference that can be used to analyze the data. The object of the study is to analyze cancer reflected in _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel (2012) on a sociological approach. The analysis is begun from the structural analysis of the work and finally the sociological analysis of the literary of literary works. The steps analyzing the data are as follows: first is analyzing the data based on its structural elements and second is analyzing the data based on sociological analysis.

3. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION
In resulting of the research, the researcher would draw some result as follows. They are in the six major aspects about sociology. They are social aspect, economic aspect, political aspect, scientific and technological aspect, cultural aspect and religious aspects.

3.1 Social Aspect
John Green's _The Fault in Our Stars_ novel is one of the literary works written in twentieth century. It was one of the notable periods of American history for a number of great discoveries. The social structures also contribute the setting of place in this novel. The setting of this novel takes
Indianapolis is the capital of the U.S. state of Indiana. The characters lived in Indianapolis and did all of their daily activities in Indianapolis. The social structures in the twentieth century can be seen from the social class of Americans. In this novel, John Green creates the characters based on American social class. This category is based on American’s job status. There are working class such as Hazel’s family. Hazel’s father works in Morris Property. Hazel’s mother is a housewife. Hazel is a college girl in MCC. This is a community college in Indianapolis. Hazel’s mother asked Hazel to attend a weekly Support Group. Because, her mother thinks that Hazel has to continue her life and Hazel also has to socialize with other people in her society. In Support Group, she can meet with other cancer sufferers. It is a meeting of cancer sufferers. It is held every Wednesday in the basement of a stone-walled Episcopal church. In Support Group meeting, cancer sufferers can talk everything about fighting, battling, winning, shrinking, scanning and also talk about dying. Patrick is the leader in Support Group. In *The Fault in Our Stars* tells about Hazel's life after she has been dealing with thyroid cancer. She felt depressed and she didn't like to socialize with other people. She only stayed at home every time. She thought that she is a grenade that can make her beloved people felt sad with her death. Until, her mother asked her to attend Support Group. And she met Augustus Water. He changed Hazel’s life. Finally, Hazel likes to share with other people in her society. The story is inspired by Hazel’s life that brings something good for her society. Green describes Hazel as a person that presents a strong girl. Kaitlyn is Hazel’s friend in MCC. Kaitlyn is from middle class. It is proven that she is a sophisticated British socialite. She likes shopping very much. She keeps in touch with boy and shopping obsessed.

Because I already got my GED. So I’m taking classes at MCC, which was out community college. (Green, 2012: 26)

They walked to me for a bit about how the enchiladas were Famous Waters Enchiladas and Not to Be Missed and about how Gus’s curfew was also ten, and how they were inherently distrustful of anyone who gave their kids curfews other than ten, and was I in school—she’s a college student. (Green, 2012: 28-29)

The next morning, I had Twentieth-Century American Poetry at MCC. This old woman gave a lecture wherein she managed to talk for ninety minutes about Sylvia Plath without ever once quoting a single word of Sylvia Plath (Green, 2012: 52)

### 3.2 Economic Aspect

Indianapolis is the capital of the U.S. state of Indiana. United States is an advanced country. It also relates to the story of *The Fault in Our Stars* novel John Green describes that in the twentieth century there are many important places in Indianapolis that influence the progress of American society. First is a Memorial. Memorial is a hospital research in Indianapolis. Second is North Central. North Central is a public high school in Indianapolis, Indiana, United States. It is a part of the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township. Augustus joint the basketball team when high school. He is a good player. Augustus Waters studied in North Central school before he had an osteosarcoma. He followed a basketball team in North Central. Third is Castleton theater. It shows a 3-D movie. Hazel and her mother ever went there to see the talking gerbils movie. A younger girl walked past us. “How’s it going, Alisa?” he asked. She smiled and mumbled, “Hi, Augustus.” “Memorial people,” he explained. Memorial was the big research hospital. “Where do you go?” (Green, 2012: 17)

“That’s exactly what we found with families at Memorial when we were in the thick of it with Gus’s treatment,” his dad said. “everybody was so kind. Strong, too. In the darkest days, the Lord puts the best people into your life.” (Green, 2012: 28)
Thousands of people—literally thousands—had left condolence messages for her. It was an endless scroll of people who missed her, so many that it took me an hour of clicking to get past the I’m sorry you’re dead wall posts to the I’m praying for you wall posts. She’d died a year ago of brain cancer. I was able to click through to some of her pictures. Augustus was in a bunch of the earlier ones: pointing with a thumbs-up to the jagged scar across her bald skull; arm in arm at Memorial Hospital’s playground, with their backs facing the camera; kissing while Caroline held the camera out, so you could only see their noses and closed eyes. (Green, 2012: 96)

3.3 Political Aspect

In The Fault in Our Stars novel, John Green doesn’t draw any political condition that seems to affect the story. There are no political acts or regulations issued by the government during the twentieth century that influence the flow of the story. Neither domestic nor foreign political policies which influence any events in the story can be found since it doesn’t depict any political process. In this novel, Green doesn’t explain any roles of the society in political process or the role of society in decision making and public policy too. It just discussed about another aspect and sector such as technology, religion, social, economic and culture.

3.4 Scientific and Technological Aspect

Many people in America have high technology in their life. As a modern country during the century, the development of technology in America has been increasing. Mass media such as radio, television, DVDs film, video games, email allowed the communication political message and entertainment with unprecedented impact. Science and technology aspect contributes the property used by the characters. In some parts, the characters use telephone or mobile phone to communicate with their relation. Some of characters also use car when they are going to some place. And have television to know everything. It shows the development of science and technology in America in the twentieth century in communication and transportation. Hazel, Augustus and her mother used a plane to go to Amsterdam. In The Fault in Our Stars, it happens in twentieth century. It can be seen from advanced chemical and high-technology that is used by the characters in the story. For example, Hazel Grace is a cancer sufferer. She has been dealing with a thyroid cancer that spread to her lungs. And her doctor asks Hazel to consume a Phalanxifor. This molecule designed to attach itself to cancer cells and slow their growth. Hazel has to drink this medicine every day. It is a progress in the chemical area. Augustus Water has been dealing with an osteosarcoma that causes one of his legs amputated. He uses a prosthetic leg to help him in walking and doing his life. It is not an easy condition for him, but he always tries to make his life easy. It is very difficult for him to drive a car when he used a prosthetic leg. It is a good innovation in scientific and technological aspect. Hazel ever had been experienced a surgery called radical neck dissection and also a radiation when she was thirteen years old. It is an innovation in scientific sector.

The living room TV is yours for the watching, his dad said happily. (Green, 2012: 29)

He walked toward the TV, where a huge pile of DVDs and video games were arranged into a vague pyramid shape. He bent at the waist and snatched up V for Vendetta. (Green, 2102: 30)

Finally I finished and said, Can i be excused? and they hardly even paused from their conversation about the strengths and weaknesses of Guinean infrastructure. I grabbed my phone from my purse on the kitchen counter and checked my recent calls. Augustus Waters. (Green, 2012: 65)

He has an assistant, Augustus said. Lidewij Vligenthart. I found her. I emailed her. She gave him the email. He responded via her email account. (Green, 2012: 67)
And they stayed shrunk. Huzzah, Phalanxifor! In the past eighteen months, my mets have hardly grown, leaving me with lungs that suck at being lungs but could, conceivably, struggle along indefinitely with the assistance of drizzled oxygen and daily Phalanxifor. (Green, 2012: 25-26)

3.5 Cultural Aspect

The Fault in Our Stars novel defines America has expresses itself through sports and arts. Cultural aspect contributes the plot. Sports in American culture are complex. Some kinds of sports represent social status. It can be seen in the Augustus Waters’s lifestyle. He studied in North Central High School before he got an osteosarcoma. North Central is a public high school in Indianapolis, Indiana, United States. It is part of the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township. He joined the basketball team when high school. He is a good player. Arts is demonstrated in John Green’s The Fault in Our Stars. It can be seen from the habits of society in this novel. In this novel, Hazel likes reading very much. She always fills her spare time with reading a book or novel. She has a favorite novel entitled An Imperial Affliction. This novel is told about Anna that has a rare blood cancer. And the story of An Imperial Affliction is almost same with Hazel because Anna and Hazel are the cancer sufferers. In The Fault in Our Stars novel, Hazel and Augustus as the major characters have a habit to attend a weekly Support Groups every Wednesday. Hazel Grace has to consume a Phalanxifor. This molecule designed to attach itself to cancer cells and slow their growth. Hazel has to drink this medicine every day. She has consumed Phalanxifor since eighteen months ago. Hazel is used an oxygen portable to help her in breathing because her lung can’t breathe maximally. She always brings that oxygen portable everywhere because it is very important thing that she has to be brought. Augustus Waters has a bad habit. He likes smoking. But, Hazel hates if she looks Augustus is smoking.

“Yeah,” he said. “I’m at North Central. A year behind, though: I’m a sophomore. You?” (Green, 2012: 24)

I was all about resurrecting the lost art of the midrange jumper, but then one day I was shooting free throws—just standing at the foul line at the North Central gym shooting from a rack of balls. All at once, I couldn’t figure out why I was methodically tossing a spherical object through a toroidal object. It seemed like the stupidest thing I could possibly be doing. (Green, 2012: 30)

And then I started reading An Imperial Affliction for the millionth time. AIA is about this girl named Anna (who narrates the story) and her one-eyed mom, who is a professional gardener obsessed with tulips, and they they have a normal lower-middle-class life in a little central California town until Anna gets this rare blood cancer. But it’s not a cancer book, because cancer books suck. like, in cancer books, the cancer person starts a charity that raises money to fight cancer, right? And this commitment to charity reminds the cancer person of the essential goodness of humanity and makes him/her feel loved and encouraged because s/he will leave a cancer-curing legacy. But in AIA, Anna decides that being a person with cancer who starts a cancer charity is a bit narcissistic, so she starts a charity called The Anna Foundation for People with Cancer Who Want to Cure Cholera. (Green, 2012: 48-49)

3.6 Religious Aspect

John Green’s The Fault in Our Stars reflects the condition of United States religion in its plot through the characters. In this novel he describes that major character, Hazel Grace is a Christianity girl. She comes to Episcopal church to pray together with another Support Group’s member because the Support Group meeting every Wednesday is held in the basement of a stone-walled Episcopal church. It can be concluded that the main religion which is told in The Fault in Our Stars is Christian. In this novel, the Episcopal church is like a heart of Jesus.
The Support Group, off course, was depressing as hell. It met every Wednesday in the basement of a stone-walled Episcopal church shaped like a cross. We all sat in a circle right in the middle of the cross, where the heart of Jesus would have been. I noticed this because Patrick, the Support Group Leader and only person over eighteen in the room, talked about the heart of Jesus every freaking meeting, all about how we, as young cancer survivors, were sitting right in Christ's very sacred heart and whatever. (Green, 2012: 4)

4. Conclusion
After analyzing the story of John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars*, the researcher will conclude the sociological aspects that influence the major characters. The aspects consist of social aspect, economic aspect, political aspect, scientific and technological aspect, cultural aspect and religious aspect.

In the *The Fault in Our Stars* novel, it is found a very inspiring figure and vigorously named Hazel Grace. The novel told about Hazel’s life journey. Green tells about major and minor characters that suffer a cancer in their body. Hazel Grace Lancaster has a thyroid cancer that spread her lungs, Augustus Waters has an osteosarcoma that causes one of his legs is amputated and Issac has a cancer in his eyes that cause him to be blind. On the other hand, Hazel has a hobby that is reading. She likes *An Imperial Affliction* by Peter Van Houten, an author from Amsterdam. Hazel Grace is curious about the ending of this novel and she hopes to meet Peter Van Houten in Amsterdam. She wants to know what happens to the character named Anna and her life because the author doesn't explain about the ending of the story clearly. Although Hazel believed that love is the only true experience of freedom, she thinks that she is a grenade. When she dies, she will make Augustus and her parents sad. But, she doesn't lie about her feeling that she loves Augustus very much. And Hazel thinks that Augustus is different with other man. She is always with Augustus Waters until he died.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that desire, effort and supporting of the people in the environment affect the main characters to achieve her dreams. So, the theme of *The Fault in Our Stars* novel is effort. It explains Hazel’s effort to against her thyroid cancer and reach her big dream to meet Peter Van Houten in Amsterdam.

5. References

