

Symbolic Meaning of “Fight Club” in Fight Club Novel by Chuck Palahniuk

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| KEYWORDS | ABSTRACT |
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| Chuck Palahniuk, Fight Club, Symbolism | This research discuss about Symbolic Meaning of “Fight Club” in Fight Club Novel by Chuck Palahniuk. Aim of this research is about to find out symbolic meaning of “Fight Club” that Chuck Palahniuk write in the Fight Club novel. Writer also found another symbolism used in Fight Club novel. There are five symbolisms beside “Fight Club” that writer found in this novel. Five symbolism that writer found in Fight Club novel is Soap, Scar, Space Monkey, and Project Mayhem, and Sofa. The source of data is Fight Club novel by Chuck Palahniuk and it was published on August 17, 1996. The writer used qualitative descriptive method and semiotic theory. Symbols is described as a representation which does no longer aim at being a reproduction (Symons: 1919). The word is full of symbols even many things called as symbol. Fight Club novel is a form of insinuate to the government at the time which is 1990-1999, proven when the character Tyler Durden works project mayhem on which project is a protest against the local government. The United States uses capitalists as its economic system in 1990s. |

INTRODUCTION

In the book of *Tifa Penyair dan Daerahnya* (1985) by H.B. Jassin, he revealed that the novel is an extraordinary event of people's lives because it was born of a conflict, a strife that shifted their course of fate. When life around someone come new problems, the conscience of a novelist is called upon to quickly create a story. As a literary work, they are ideally suited to elevate important events in human life on a critical, defining context. Novels as literary works may also present something free, presents something more detailed and involved complex problems (Nurgiyantoro, 1995:10 11).

The novel or research object that researcher will study is Chuck Palahniuk's "Fight Club." "Fight Club" was a 1996 novel and was first published on August 17, 1996. The novel Fight Club was adapted to film in 1999 and directed by David fincher. The film also starring Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, and Helena Bonham.

For some people it may be known as "Fight Club" is a movie, but the fact is "Fight Club" is a literary works of the novel written by Chuck Palahniuk in 1996. On this occasion, researcher will study Chuck Palahniuk's "Fight Club" novel by analyzing the meaning of the symbol behind the word "Fight Club" and the other symbols contained in the book. Researcher prefer to study the novel released in 1996 because it wants to focus on a sentence or words uttered by characters or events that indicate a symbol that may have implied meaning in everyday life. Researcher also insists that if the object of his study of novels, then it would seem that more information was in the book than in the movies when discussing symbolism.

Chuck Palahniuk is an American novelist and freelance journalist, who describe his work as transgressional fiction. He was born on February 21 1962 and he was born in Pasco, Washington. Chuck Palahniuk grew up living in a mobile home in Burbank, Washington. His parents separated when he was 14 and subsequently divorced, often leaving him and his three siblings to live with their maternal grandparents at their cattle ranch in eastern Washington.

Fight Club is a novel about the narrator who was an employee in the car company. With the demands of the work brought him into acute insomnia. He tried to pamper himself by filling the apartment in which he lived with fancy new things. He also has an abnormally unique habits for clear his mind by attending a counseling group in which the group shares his own ailments, while the narrator has none of the diseases, and he attends only the counseling that is available to not feeling alone. On the way home in a plane, narrator met a man named Tyler Durden, Tyler Durden was a soap salesman. When the narrator went home to his apartment, he saw that it had burned down. He then remembered that Tyler Durden, the man he met on the plane, gave him a card of his name, stoked to call Tyler Durden and then Tyler said that he was ready and ready to meet him at a bar. After Tyler Durden set up a "Fight Club" with the narrator, Tyler Durden continually recruited new members for the Fight Club.

The symbols are used to persuade and to attract readers to study a novel or the other forms of literary works, in order that symbol may additionally seem in work of literature in number of various methods. Most usually, a symbol exists itself in the shape of phrase, figure of speech, an occasion, an action, and also a character. The using of image is to create that means which include sign or phrase that shows an concept, object, or relationship between an item and any other object. Symbols are universal, it way while the languages spoken differently but the symbol can constitute a comparable meanings.

In this study, researcher employed the semiotic theory used to analyze the various symbols found in the novel "Fight Club." Semiotic in the practice of literary research became one approach, which was often used in a wide variety of literary studies. Excavations of value and meaning through signs found in literature will naturally be closely associated with semiotic that focus on the sign system. Associated with the action of a semiotic analysis of literature, at the focus of the book's talk, literary (semiotic) research would involve a language viewed as a language medium containing many sign systems.

The study of semiotic leads to an assumption that the study is applied to literature which is also a sign system, serving as an aesthetic means of communication. Tools that would connect literature with the embodied meaning and values to be understood through the process of synthesizing and paradigm of a literary work. A performance of literary research using a semiotic approach could be said to be a development and application of structuralism as a school of learning at an earlier time, as previously stated. Since literary works are a meaningful mark structure, neither can understanding them be removed from the building structure of literature. In general, literature is awakened by elements, either visible or explicit, or implicitly. To be able to comprehend all elements of literature optimally means having to understand, the system of signs, signs, the convention of meaning, and the convention of signs.

Researcher connect the study of the symbolism of "Fight Club" and the other symbols on the novel Fight Club to semiotic because researcher feel that studying symbols and their meaning makes it easier for a researcher to use semiotic. Semiotic is a theory that deals with symbols, signs, and meaning. Through a semiotic approach we can study in greater detail both the behaviors and expressions of the character that exists and also the events that occur within the literary work. Through semiotic, researcher can examine the symbol of "fight club" and other symbols that may be related to everyday life.

The researcher wanted to do this study because researcher wanted to understand the meaning of the symbol that researcher found "fight club" and also wanted to examine other symbols that might relate to human

personal life. Researcher would also like to prove that one symbolism contains the deepest personal meaning or significance of a specific event. Additionally, researcher are trying to show that Chuck Palahniuk's novel, "Fight Club", was not just another novel about character conflict, but rather one that addressed a particular topic and made use of certain symbols to convey it's meaning.

METHOD

This study's research method was qualitative descriptive method. As stated by Margarete Sandelowski (2000), "when straight descriptions of occurrences are required, the qualitative descriptive method is the approach of choice. This type of research is extremely valuable for the researcher is extremely valuable for the researcher who want to know the who, what, and where of occurrences." Qualitative descriptive research is frequently used to evaluate social events, phenomena, or situations in which the data results are presented as they are without any manipulation or other treatment. The researcher in this study will describes about symbolism of "Fight Club" and another symbolism used in Fight Club novel is related to everyday life.

The sample of this study is the novel "Fight Club," and the data in this study are symbolism of Fight Club and also another symbolism that used. Semiotic theory was used to analyze data in this study. The researcher used a computer, a website, and previous research to support this research and took five steps to analyze the data. The first step is a close reading researcher with a Fight Club novel, the second step researcher are collecting data related to the problem under which symbolic meaning of "Fight Club" and also another symbolism used in Fight Club novel, third step is researcher identified the data and classified the data, fourth step is researcher got the results from the existing data, and the last step, researcher drew conclusions about the results of the data that already being discussed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher has concluded this research of the novel "Fight Club" and researcher found 8 symbolic meaning of "Fight Club" based on the rules that had been set by Tyler Durden in the novel Fight Club. Researcher also found another 5 symbolism that used in Fight Club Novel

Table 1 Symbolism of "Fight Club" and another symbolism used in Fight Club Novel

| No | Symbolism | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Fight Club | 8 | 61% |
| 2 | Sofa | 1 | 7% |
| 3 | Soap | 1 | 8% |
| 4 | Scar | 1 | 8% |
| 5 | Project Mayhem | 1 | 8% |
| 6 | Space Monkeys | 1 | 8% |
| TOTAL | | 13 | 100% |

The above table depicts the symbolism of Fight Club and also another symbolism used in Novel "Fight Club." A through explanation of each the symbolism of Fight Club and another symbolism used in Novel "Fight Club" with examples will be presented as follows:

1. Fight Club

Excerpt 1

The first rule about fight club is you don't talk about Fight Club. (Fight Club Chapter 5 Page 36)

In the first rule, Tyler Durden told the people who had joined the Fight Club not to say anything about Fight Club to the people they met. The symbol that the writer can get here is Tyler knowing that basically everyone likes to break the rules, so here Tyler says that to make the fight club he's building become a heated talk for people and to add to its member of Fight Club.

Excerpt 2

The second rule about fight club is you don't talk about Fight Club. (Fight Club Chapter 5 Page 36)

In the rules, Tyler mentions the same rule again as the first one. Writer here believes that when Tyler expresses the same rules as the first one, people consider them to be trivial and that Tyler's rules are just as easily broken for people who don't follow the rules.

Excerpt 3

That's the third rule in Fight Club, when someone says stop, or goes limp, even if he's just faking it, the fight is over. (Fight Club Chapter 5 Page 36)

In rule three, it may be defined that the Fight Club founded by Tyler Durden is not a competence, but it is founded on the basis of the flock with those who have joined the Fight Club. Writer also believes that Fight Club was founded as a means of expressing resentment or emotion to anything happened in the real world, for the example is the workplace or the romance.

Excerpt 4

Only two guys to a fight (Fight Club Chapter 5, Page 36)

Rule four, members are allowed to fight with only two guys. This has the mean that when members are upset by their work, the member can focus his emotion on his opponent and the member can express relief about happened in there real world. It also applies to its opponent, as if it were only 2 people because members could focus on one another and just vent their grievances.

Excerpt 5

One fight at a time. (Fight Club Chapter 5, Page 36)

In rule five, Tyler says fight within the hour. According to the writer it means that the Fight Club is a place to shed all manner of resentment that they cannot shed in real world when they experience a terrible thing happening in the real world. Fight Club that Tyler Durden founded was not a place to fight freely and beat someone up so brutally, but it was a place where one could understand another's feelings and it was a place to release their emotions.

Excerpt 6

They fight without shirts or shoes. (Fight Club Chapter 5, Page 36)

In this quotation Tyler said that when you fight you can fight without a shirt or shoes. The symbol of this shirt or shoe is defined as a weight that a person experiences when in the real world. In this case, it may be understood that when expressing resentment in the real world, they also release a burden of thought so that when they let it out, they do with a sense of relief and do not return to thinking about the burden of thinking in the real world.

Excerpt 7

The fights go on as long as they have to. (Fight Club Chapter 5, Page 36)

The seventh rule means that the fight must take place when some members feel that they are not content to vent all the burdens of the minds that burden them while in the real world. This rule has the sense that if any member has not actually satisfied it out with relief, then the member must not stop. The member had to really put it out so well that when this Fight Club ended, the member had a clear mind and was free of long-borne burdens.

Excerpt 8

"Is if this is your first night at fight club, you have to fight." (Fight Club Chapter 5, Page 38)

This eighth rule assumes that if new members join Fight Club, the member is required to fight immediately. This is to say that Tyler is giving new recruits the opportunity to vent all the resentment they've been carrying on. Tyler understood that when new converts joined them, they desperately needed a release that would relieve him, so Tyler gave the new member a chance.

2. Sofa

Excerpt 9

You buy furniture. You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. (Fight Club Chapter 4, Page 32)

A sofa is a form of a symbol of consumerism behavior that people experience, requiring that they keep up with new things that are in short periods of time, examples of couches or furniture with new models, that people are willing to spend money on the new models of a sofa or the latest models of other furniture. This consumerism behavior was also driven when America was a capitalist country in the 1990s.

3. Soap

Excerpt 10

You have to see," Tyler says, "how the first soap was made of heroes." Think about the animals used in product testing. Think about the monkeys shot into space. "Without their death, their pain, without their sacrifice," Tyler says, "we would have nothing." (Fight Club Chapter 7, Page 57)

In this dialogue it explains that Tyler durden made soap that came from fat that exists and even fat from humans. Tyler also explained that there is no need for fear in doing this (using fat as a soap maker's material) by comparing that some animals have sacrificed themselves in existing soaps. According to a soap, writer in this quote is defined as a dirty world, which is meant that people who consume on an item will not care about the filthy things (like human fat which may be a soap manufacturing material) on the process, they care only about the outcome that is perfectly visible in their eyes.

4. Scar

Excerpt 11

"This is a chemical burn," Tyler says, "and it will hurt worse than you've ever been burned. Worse than a hundred cigarettes."

The kiss shines on the back of my hand. "You'll have a scar," Tyler says. (Fight Club Chapter 6, Page 52)

There are two symbols of scar that I can get in this quotation, the first scar that is a symbol of a particular group's identity, proved when the members of Fight Club and Tyler Durden themselves had scar on his hand. With that in mind, a writer can conclude that scar belongs to a member and Tyler Durden is a specific group identity where usually a group has an identity that will attract attention to those around them and they will also wonder how the members get the scar. The second symbol is a huge undertaking, which is meant here is that when we want to achieve something large and acknowledged by people in the future, we must be willing to sacrifice ourselves of course in this case if the members of fight club get the scar.

5. Project Mayhem

Excerpt 12

It's Project Mayhem that's going to save the world. A cultural ice age. A prematurely induced dark age. Project Mayhem will force humanity to go dormant or into remission long enough for the Earth to recover. (Fight Club Chapter 13, Page 100)

In this passage it states that project mayhem is a form of protest against the local government, Tyler Durden created project mayhem because it keeps the government conscious of what they've done to the country. Tyler Durden invades local facilities like bombing a few skyscrapers. Writer analyzes this quote from the writer of Fight Club, which is Chuck Palahniuk gave a derogatory remark on the state of America back then in the 1990s, which is said to have caused much harm to the capitalist state.

6. Space Monkeys

Excerpt 13

This is the world's tallest building, and this high up the wind is always cold. It's so quiet this high up, the feeling you get is that you're one of those space monkeys. You do the little job you're trained to do. (Fight Club Chapter 1, Page 5)

Space monkeys here are symbolic of a person who always does what their superiors tell them to do, whether the job is safe for them or dangerous for them.

CONCLUSION

The researcher could find in the novel is symbols that relate to human personal life. In these opportunities, researcher also focus on the study of the meaning of the symbol Fight Club itself. After examined the study, researcher concluded that Fight Club was a symbol of the society in which people channeled their grievances in real life and that they channeled them to fight in Fight Club. Researcher also discovered another symbolism beside Fight Club that used in the novel, the 5 symbolism are: sofa, soap, scar, project mayhem, and space monkeys. Symbolism are very important because symbols are used to persuade and to attract readers to study a novel or the other forms of literary works. A symbol exists itself in the shape of phrase, figure of speech, an occasion, a action, and also a character.

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