

**THE IMPACT OF CONSUMERISM IN” CONSUMER BY CELINE CHARCOAL,
CONSUMERISM, MERELY ANOTHER GOD BY ROSS DIX PEEK, AND A SAD
TALE OF CONSUMERISM BY MICHAEL SHEPHERD**

PAPER

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
To Get the Strata One (S1) Degree*



**By :
Yudha Oka Pratama
04744/2008**

**Advisor:
Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei,M.A**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS
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2013**

HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN MAKALAH

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Nama : Yudha Oka Pratama
NIM / BP : 04744 / 2008
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Agustus 2013

Diketahui:

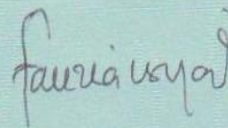
Ketua Jurusan,



Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A
NIP. 19540626 198203 2 001

Disetujui oleh:

Pembimbing,



Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A
NIP. 19660424 199002 2 001

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN MAKALAH

Dinyatakan Lulus Setelah Dipertahankan di Depan Tim Penguji Makalah
Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang

The Impact of Consumerism in “Consumer by Celine Charcoal, Consumerism, Merely another God by Ross Dix peek, and A Sad Tale of Consumerism by Michael Shepherd

Nama	: Yudha Oka Pratama
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Fakultas	: Bahasa dan Seni

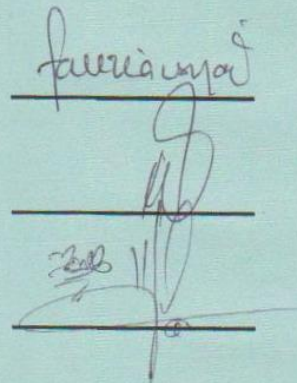
Padang, Agustus 2013

Tim Penguji,

Nama

Tanda Tangan

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Ketua | : Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A. |
| 2. Anggota | : Muhammad Al Hafizh, S.S, M.A. |
| 3. Anggota | : Delvi Wahyuni, S.S, M.A. |





UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS
Jl. Belibis. Air Tawar Barat. Kampus Selatan FBS UNP. Padang. Telp/Fax: (0751) 447347

SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:


Nama : Yudha Oka Pratama
NIM/TM : 04744/2008
Program Studi : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : FBS UNP

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Diketahui oleh,
Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris


Dr. Hj. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A
NIP. 19540626 198203 2 001

Saya yang menyatakan,


Yudha Oka Pratama

ABSTRAK

Pratama, Yudha Oka. 2013. The Impact of Consumerism in *Consumer* by Celine Charcoal, *Consumerism, merely another God* by Ross Dix- peek, and *A sad tale of consumerism* by Michael Shepherd”. *Makalah*. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Pembimbing: Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A

Karakter merupakan salah satu aspek terpenting dalam pengembangan dan jalannya ide utama pada suatu karya sastra. Tidak terkecuali pada puisi. Makalah ini ingin melihat bagaimana subjek utama dalam ketiga puisi dari Consumerism in *Consumer* oleh Celine Charcoal, *Consumerism, merely another God* oleh Ross Dix- peek, dan *A sad tale of consumerism* by Michael Shepherd. Dari ketiga puisi ini, memperlihatkan dampak yang diberikan oleh budaya consumerisme yang muncul pada saat ini..Analisis tersebut merupakan penginterpretasian terhadap puisi menggunakan teori budaya consumer oleh Wilkie, dan di tamabh dengan pendekatan dari Shiffman dan Kanuk. Dampak tersebut dipahami dalam dua hasil. Pertama, budaya tersebut menyebabkan manusia mengalami perubahan pola pikir,sehingga manusia tidak lagi mampu menentukan yang terbaik untuk hidup mereka. Dampak kedua, budaya tersebut mengakibatkan perubahan yang cukup kuat dalam gaya hidup manusia.Hal tersebut mengakibatkan perubahan gaya hidup manusia yang lebih consumptive terhadap segala bentuk dari produk budaya Analisis ini dilakukan terhadap ketiga puisi dengan menggunakan pendekatan pendekatan yang berkaitan dengan budaya consumerisme yang lebih spesifik mendekati budaya populer dan budaya consumptive.

Keyword: Consumerism, Consumptive, Consumer Culture

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The writer would like to say a very big thanks and gratitude from the deepest of his heart to his supervisor, Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A, for being really patient, understanding, and most importantly, for being such a best friend to assist the writer to accomplish the paper. His sincere thank also goes to Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A. as the chairperson of the English Department, and Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A. as the secretary, for all the supports. Moreover, the writer’s gratitude are also aimed to all lecturers and administration staff of English Department.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Consumerism is the equating of personal happiness with the purchasing of material possessions and consumption. Specifically, it is the tendency of people to identify strongly with products or services they consume, especially those with commercial brand names and obvious status-enhancing appeal. It is beyond the necessities of life with things that are an important part of human needs. According to Rachel Dwyer (2007), consumerism is the belief that personal wellbeing and happiness depends to a very large extent on the level of personal consumption, particularly on the purchase of material goods. The consumerism itself, does not only gives an impact on the development of culture, but it is also brings an impact toward human mind and life style.

Actually, the consumerism causes some impact on people's lives and their communities, for those who follow that life style. However, the impact is not obvious around us like other phenomena. The impact of consumerism, it more attacking human mind. As a result, human may not understand the changes that occur in their life. It happened, because of this life style does not lead to the use of an object, but more emphasis on the human desire to have something without thinking about the usability and the purpose using it.

The consumerism brings the people become consumptive. It is known as consumer culture. The only thing that consumer culture known is always consume many things as a part of the activity of their life.

Moreover, the consumption becomes a central activity for the consumer culture. The consumption leads them changes their attitude and behavior. As Benson (2000) stated that:

Consumption, the buying of consumer products, has become central to the meaning full practice of our everyday life. People make their consumption choices based not only on a product's utility value, but from the personal symbolic meanings they invest in objects.

The impact of the consumerism does not only occur because of the attitude of the human that influenced easily, but also because of many aspect. The aspects are many things that exist around human life such as advertisement in magazine, television, and supermarket.

In real life, the consumerism occur because of the people cannot resist many temptation that coming to mind. According to Wisalo (1999) consumerism occurs because of human's insecurity in their hearts and minds. It means that being a consumer in the way for people to gain their comfort and save. People "under the influence of consumerism" never feel completely satisfied because owning something cannot help one meet the security of heart and mind, the deeper needs of humanity.

In daily life, the impact of consumerism can be found in two aspects. The first aspect is psychological. It means that the consumerism has the relation to the people. The select or buy things and use or dispose products and service, so that

they can satisfy their needs of consumption. The second impact can be seen in economy aspect. The consumerism exists on economy world. Business tries to control the development of their business by forcing consumer to be consumptive. Nowadays, consumerism can be found in a new sense of fashion and taste, development of infrastructures, organizations, the rise of shopping, advertising, and marketing.

The case above is also reflected in literary works. The three poems, *Consumer* by Celine Charcoal, *Consumerism*, *Merely Another God* by Ross Dix-Peek, and *A sad tale of consumerism* by Michael Shepherd depicts the impacts of consumerism that attacking human mind and it also changes human life style.

The impacts could be understood in two ways. The first impact is changing human mind. It refers to the human who never think about the usability and the functionality of something that they used and bought. The second impact is changing human life style. It means that human become addicted on product, but they do not know the purpose of using it.

1.1.1. Impact of Consumerism

The term impact of consumerism refers to some effect that society have when they have affected by consumerism. The terms of the impact of consumerism can be classified into two terms. John Wiley (2010) stated that the definition of impact is one thing crashing into or having an effect on another. This definition leads to people or societies that have been affected by the consumerism.

It gives an effect to their life. This effect can be understood from the changes of human life. Specifically, it comes to their ability.

In this study, the impact of consumerism can be seen by the changes of human life. The human ability refers to the ability of human to think about the usability and the functionality of something that they used and bought. This situation leads the human become a consumer culture. According to Yiannis Gabriel and Tim Lang (1995) consumer culture is a social arrangement in which the buying and selling of goods and services is not only a predominant activity of everyday life but also an important arbiter of social organization, significance, and meaning. It is emphasizing that as a consumer, consuming is not only as way to get their happiness and satisfy. In other word, consuming become a important part of human act which done every time and give other meaning to their life.

1.1.2. A brief of The Poets: Celine Charcoal, Ross Dix Peek, Michael Shepherd.

1.1.2.1 Celine Charcoal

She was born in South Africa, has lived in New York since 1963; holder of prestigious literary awards, including of African Prize for Literature (1999). A noted anthologist, translator and educator as well as a poet and novelis Writer of poetry, short fiction, articles, reviews of literature and art; Founding member and past chairperson of the African Association of Writers in English

1.1.2.2 Ross Dix-peek

Ross Dix-Peek was born in Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe), in July 1970 and subsequently grew up and was educated in South Africa, matriculating at the Hill College in Port Elizabeth. A fifth-generation Southern African (of British and Dutch descent), he now resides in Swords, Dublin, Ireland. He came late to poetry and his other interests include sport, history and military history, the English language and writing. He nominate for National Magazine Award winner for his work in 1997.

1.1.2.3 Michael Shepherd

Michael Shepherd was born in New York City in 1963 and grew up in the Bronx. He interested in English Literature and had a some jobs; bookshop assistant; art journalist; book reviewer; small book on Barbara Hepworth, 1984 art critic for national newspapers and magazines 20 years. He earned a BA from Bennington College and studied at Brown University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. His first collection, *Some Are Drowning* (1994), won the Associated Writing Program's Award in Poetry; his fourth, *Otherhood* (2003), was a finalist for the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize; and his last book, *Fata Morgana* (2007), won a Silver Medal in the Florida Book Awards. Shepherd's work is known for its elegance, beauty, and critical argument.

1.1.3 Consumer, Consumerism, Merely Another God , and A sad tale of Consumerism.

The three poems, Consumer, Consumerism, Merely Another God, and A sad tale of consumerism depicts the impact of consumerism in human life. According to S.E. Smith (2003) consumerism refers to a way of life in which people place a high value on material possessions, and in which people tend to consume more than they need. This concept gives impacts toward human life. The impacts are changing human mind and human life style.

The first impact is changing human mind. It means that consumerism cause a people became addicted on anything. Human do not think about the usability and the functionality of something that they used and bought. This impact can be found in the first and second poem. In the first poem, it describes a human who become addicted on products without knowing the purpose. In the second poem, it describes a human who have been affected because of the insecurity of human heart and mind.

The second impact of consumerism is changing the human life style. It leads to a pattern of life that should be developed because the human mind is being changed due to the influence of the product. It emphasizes on the loss of the human ability in choosing the right way for determining the real way of their life. The last poem described the loss of the ability of human to choose the life that is affected by consumerism.

1.1.3.1 The Poems

Consumer

I consume
 all I got
 preciously, with my own hands,
 can consume,
 all that's not
 somebody else's purchased
 self,
 is what I consume,
 not me,
 but a good
 thing in itself.

Consumerism, Merely Another God!

We don't ask why, we just buy
 Seduced by yet another lie,
 Told we need,
 The subliminal bleed,
 Spend, spend, spend
 The madness knows no end,
 Consumerism, merely another God
 And still transfixed, onward we plod,
 Desire and possession,
 Money the obsession,
 Man's maniacal law,
 The fiscal flaw,
 And meek, do we genuflect
 Before the invisible architect,
 Told what to wear, and what to eat
 What to buy, the ultimate deceit,
 And when in debt, spend they say
 And like mere robots, we obey,
 Not a murmur, Not a whimper,
 And still we feed this awful Monster,
 And when, I ask, alas and alack,
 Will we finally take our lives back!

A sad tale of consumerism

I was born poor uneducated trailer trash;
worked myself up by my own efforts;
now I'm rich; but still inside, feel poor...

so last week, I celebrated wealth -
bought my first \$20,000 Cartier watch...

now everyone who sees it, laughs...
I wonder why?

1.2.Problem of the Study

This study is going to expose the cause of the impact of consumerism in human life : Consumer, Consumerism, Merely Another God, and A sad tale of consumerism Poetry. In order to reveal the issue, research questions are needed. Those questions are:

1. What are the dominant elements in the Poems; Consumer, Consumerism, merely another God, A sad tale of consumerism that help to expose the issues impact of consumerism?
2. How do the elements of poetry; speaker, tone, and metaphor give contribution to reveal the issues of the impact of consumerism?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This analysis is intended to disclose the issue of the impact of consumerism in three poems. The poems are Consumer, Consumerism, Merely Another God, and A sad tale of consumerism. This study is also going to

investigate to what extent the elements of poetry such as speaker, tone, and metaphor give contribution in disclosing the causes of the impact of consumerism.

1.4. Previous Study

There are some studies that have given contribution and inspiration in analyzing this poems through the impact of consumerism issue.

The first analysis is written by *Subhashini Kaul* entitled *Consumerism and Mindless Consumption Sustaining in “the New Age” Urban Indian’s Identity* . This study analyzes the Abhishek ‘s novel “the New Age” (2007). This article analyzes the impact of consumerism toward urban Indian society. In this analysis, Kaul focused on revealing the novel as a symbol of Urban Indian society that joined in the life of consumerism. The impact can be seen in two points . The first point is the consumerism leads the society to the” Individual Self. In her article, she explains the “ Individual Self” refers to the goal of the society. It means that the standart of life is based on the act of society to bough much product in their life. The second point is The consumerim leads the society to “the Erosian of identity. She stated that the erosian of identity refers to the procces creating the new identity. The new identity means to the new culture that they must use in their life as a standart of post modren development.

The other study that gives contribution to this study is written by Ian Woodward (2011) in *Journal of Consumer Culture* November 2011 vol. 11 ” *Toward an object-relatios theory of consumerism; The aesthetics of desire and*

the unfolding materiality of social life” . This journal shows other impact that coming to the society caused by consumerism. The consumerism gives an impact human psychology, especially to the society. The first impact is gives a high desire in order to get their goal. The impact focuses on the process of increasing the society’ s desire in a way to consuming the products. The second impact shows the addiction of society as a consumer society. The development of consumerism, it is accompanying by the product of consumerism. The product known as food, health, fashion, and technology. It also leads the society comes to the gate of materialism.

Those two analyses have contributed to deliver the issue of the impact of consumerism . In the first analysis, the impact of consumerism leads the society to the individual self and the erosion of identity . Meanwhile, in the second analysis the impact of consumerism gives the high improvement of society’ s desire, and it also shows the process of consumerism leads to the materialism. On the other hand, this paper focuses on another causes of the impacts of consumerism; the changing of human mind and the changing of human life style.

1.5.Theoretical Framework

The analysis of these poems deals with the consumer culture and the behavior of consumer culture. Wilkie (1994) stated that consumer culture defined as the mental, emotional , and physical activities that people engage in when selecting, purchasing, using, disposing of product and service to satisfy their

needs and their desire . In this case, the impact of consumerism leads the society as consumer in development of consumerism.

The other point that supported the development of consumerism is the behavior of the consumer culture. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) argued that the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. It leads the people that become consumer culture addiction on product. In fact, they cannot find other way to get their satisfaction except addicting on products.

The form of this analysis is text-based interpretation. Madden (2002) stated that text-based interpretation focuses on analyzing literary works in isolation from its reader, its context and its author. It means that literary work is seen as autonomous body. Thus, the process of analysis is happened within the text only without regarding the other aspects outer the text. The process of analyzing in order to get the meaning is done by analyzing the sign system that constructs a literary work.

The process of interpreting of meaning on this poetry is using textual interpretation. According to Riffaterre (1990) textual interpretation is a way to express ideas and emotions not by interpreting them directly but by suggestion what they create in the mind of the reader through the use of unexplained signs.

The process of analyzing these poems is done by examining the elements of poetry. It focuses on speaker, tone, and metaphor. Speaker is the crucial elements in the poems that needs to be examined to reveal the meaning. It is

supported by J Paul Hunter, (1996). He argued that speaker is who is speaking and what we know about him or her; the person whose voice is the voice of the poem.

The second elements that is used in this analysis is tone. According to DiYanni (2002), Tone is how a poem says what it says; an attitude the poem's speaker takes toward the poem's subject and theme; some tones derive from feeling, others from the senses, still others from thought.

Another important element that can help in the process of analyzing of these poems is Metaphor. According to Di Yanni (2002) Metaphor is comparison between essentially unlike things without an explicitly comparative word

From the explanation above, The elements of poetry is very important to reveal the issue. Each elements gives other contribution toward other elements, in a way to reveal the issue “ The Impact of consumerism”.

1.6.Methodology

This analysis is supported by text-based interpretation which examines the interrelation between elements of poetry. The elements of poetry are speaker, tone and methapor. These elements are inseparable since they support each other. This analysis is going to reveal the issue of impacts of consumerism. These elements are analyzed based on the concept of consumer culture by Wilkie, and the behavior of consumer culture by Schiffman and Kanuk.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

The three poems, *Consumer* by Celine Charcoal, *Consumerism, merely another God* by Ross Dix- peek, and *A sad tale of consumerism* by Michael Shepherd depicts the impacts of consumerism. It is exposed through text based interpretation by focusing on analyzing the elements of poem such as speaker, tone, and metaphor. The impacts of consumerism can be understood in two points. The impacts are changing human mind and changing human life style.

In the first poem, *Consumer* by Celine Charcoal depicts the impact of consumerism. It is done by showing the work of consumerism could control the victim of consumerism have been influenced. The influencing of the consumerism is not announced the time when the consumerism begins. It means that the consumerism catches the mind of the victims very fast

Next, the second poem” *Consumerism, merely another God* “ by Ross Dix-peek also illustrated the impact of the consumerism. This impact can be seen from the situation of victims mind. In their act, they do not think why they have to consume any product on their life. This case leads the victim of consumerism more consumptive. Their act is controlled by desire which is a part of human needed

In the third poems, *A sad tale of consumerism* by Michael Shepherd depicts the impact of consumerism. The Impact can be seen by the effort of the victims just a kind of useless thing for their life. Everything that they do, it will keep

continue until the end of their life. It also reveal the daily activity of the victim to keep consume many things that would brings the happiness for their life.

In short, the development of culture in this era would bring the new impacts in their life. It happened because of the loss of human awareness in adapting in the changes of culture. The work of culture itself, it is not only brings the new agreement in society to create the new life. Sometimes, culture also gives other impact that understood in negative side. Specifically, the consumerism has a big negative effect for human life. The first is consumerism changes the human mind. In other word, it can be understood that consumerism is used for people as mind control. The second point consumerism changes the human life style. Extremely, the consumerism leads all the victims of consumerism to the gate of hesitation in life.

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