

ABSTRACT

Anti, Elviera Margie. **Sullivan Harding's Denial on the Afterlife as Seen in Mitch Albom's *The First Phone Call From Heaven***. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2017.

The First Phone Call From Heaven is one of Mitch Albom's novels which portrays people's belief on the afterlife. Afterlife is seen as the life that exists after someone's bodily death. In this novel, its existence is illustrated by the ability of dead people to make a phone call to their relatives who are alive. The phone calls appears in Coldwater to eight people of the residents. The phone calls talk about the description of afterlife and the message of what the receivers should do as they are chosen to spread the news. Sullivan Harding is one of the residents who gets the phone calls but denies the existence of afterlife. His denial leads him to find the logical explanation beyond the phone calls.

There are three problem formulations discussed in this study. The first problem analyzes Sullivan Harding's characteristics, the second problem analyzes the reason Sullivan Harding denies the afterlife, and the third problem analyzes the result of Sullivan Harding's denial.

The writer applies library research in this study which uses both printed and online materials. Sullivan Harding's characteristics are analyzed through the theory of character and characterization and his denial is analyzed through the psychoanalytic criticism on the theory of defense mechanism.

The result of the study shows the characteristics of Sullivan Harding who is responsible, reasonable, and affectionate. Sullivan Harding stands as the only person who does not believe on the phone calls from heaven and tries to find the truth. His denial on the afterlife is seen as the defense mechanism he applies as he experiences the anxiety. It happens on the zones of mental processes; id, ego, and superego. Through the phone calls, his id demands him to believe on its existence in order to fulfil his pleasure, whereas his superego demands him to consider the logical explanation. When his ego is trapped between different demands, Sullivan becomes anxious and unconsciously uses denial as his defense mechanism. It leads him into finding the truth and reasonable explanation of the phone calls from heaven.

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The First Phone Call From Heaven adalah salah satu novel karya Mitch Albom yang menggambarkan kepercayaan terhadap kehidupan setelah kematian. Di dalam novel ini, kehidupan setelah kematian digambarkan oleh kemampuan seseorang yang sudah meninggal untuk berkomunikasi dengan kerabatnya yang masih hidup. Terdapat delapan orang yang tinggal di Coldwater yang mendapatkan telepon dari surga. Telepon tersebut berbicara tentang deskripsi surga dan pesan bagi para penerima telepon untuk menyebarkan berita tersebut. Sullivan Harding merupakan salah satu penduduk Coldwater yang menerima telepon tersebut namun menyangkal adanya kehidupan setelah kematian. Penyangkalan tersebut menuntunnya untuk menemukan penjelasan logis dari telepon tersebut.

Terdapat tiga permasalahan yang akan dibahas. Permasalahan pertama menganalisa karakteristik Sullivan Harding, permasalahan kedua menganalisa alasan Sullivan Harding menyangkal adanya kehidupan setelah kematian, dan permasalahan ketiga menganalisa hasil dari penyangkalan Sullivan Harding.

Penulis menggunakan studi pustaka sebagai metode di skripsi ini yang menggunakan data-data dari buku dan web. Karakteristik Sullivan Harding dianalisa melalui teori karakter dan karakterisasi, dan penyangkalan dianalisa melalui teori pertahanan diri di psikoanalitik.

Hasil dari analisa tersebut menunjukkan karakteristik Sullivan Harding yang bertanggungjawab, beralasan, dan penuh kasih sayang. Sullivan Harding adalah satu-satunya penduduk yang tidak percaya adanya telepon dari surga lalu berusaha mencari kebenaran. Penyangkalannya merupakan sistem pertahanan diri atas munculnya rasa cemas yang terjadi di zona proses mental; id, ego, dan superego. Melalui telepon tersebut, reaksi id Sullivan meminta dirinya untuk percaya, namun superego dalam dirinya memintanya untuk berfikir mempertimbangkan adanya alasan logis. Ketika ego terjebak di antara permintaan yang berbeda, Sullivan menjadi cemas dan tanpa sadar menggunakan penyangkalan sebagai pertahanan dirinya. Hal ini kemudian menuntunnya menemukan kebenaran dan penjelasan masuk akal terhadap telepon dari surga tersebut.