

**COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR OF CARRIE AND SAMANTHA IN
SEX AND THE CITY MOVIES**

A GRADUATING PAPER

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the Bachelor Degree in English Literature



By:

CHARLINA NINGSIH
09150029

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA**

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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduating paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other writer's opinions or findings included in the graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, 4 Oktober 2013

The Writer




Charlina Ningsih



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA

Jl. Marsda Adisucipto Yogyakarta 55281 Telp./Fak. (0274) 513949
Web : <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> E-mail : fadib@uin-suka.ac.id

PENGESAHAN SKRIPSI/TUGAS AKHIR

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THE CITY MOVIES**

Yang dipersiapkan dan disusun oleh :

Nama : Charlina Ningsih

NIM : 09150029

Telah dimunaqosyahkan pada : **Kamis, 17 Oktober 2013**

Nilai Munaqosyah : **B**

Dan telah dinyatakan diterima oleh **Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga.**

TIM MUNAQOSYAH

Ketua Sidang

Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, M.A.

NIP 19810203 200901 2 007

Penguji I

Witriani, M.Hum

NIP 19720801 200603 2 002

Penguji II

Jiah Fauziah, M.Hum

NIP 19750701 200912 2 002

Yogyakarta, 28 Oktober 2013

Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya



Dr. Hj. Siti Maryam, M.Ag

NIP. 19580117 198503 2 001



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA

Jl. MarsdaAdisucipto Yogyakarta 55281 Telp./Fak. (0274)513949
Web : <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> E-mail : adab@uin-suka.ac.id

NOTA DINAS

Kepada
Yth. Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
Di Yogyakarta

Assalamualaikum Wr. Wb

Setelah Membaca, meneliti, memberikan petunjuk dan mengoreksi serta mengadakan perbaikan seperlunya, maka kami selaku pembimbing berpendapat bahwa skripsi mahasiswa yang bernama:

Nama : Charlina Ningsih
NIM : 09150029
Judul Skripsi : **COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR OF CARRIE AND SAMANTHA IN SEX AND THE CITY MOVIES**

Yang sudah dimunaqosyahkan pada hari Kamis, tanggal 17 Oktober 2013 sudah dapat diajukan kembali kembali kepada Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya Program Studi Sastra Inggris UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta sebagai salah satu syarat untuk memperoleh gelar Sarjana Strata Satu Humaniora

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Yogyakarta, 17 Oktober 2013
Pembimbing

Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, M.A.
NIP.19810203 200901 2 007

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ABSTRACT

Sex and the City movies expose the portrayal of modern women in America. Their lifestyle especially consumerism is actualized through compulsive buying behavior. This research is intended to find the compulsive buying behavior of Carrie and Samantha as screened in *Sex and the City* and to analyze the factors that trigger or influence such behaviors. To do so, this research applies psychology theory of literature, which is then thoroughly examined by using the theory of compulsive buying behavior. The method used is qualitative research and library research. Based on the analysis, the research finds that Carrie and Samantha are compulsive in buying. From the discussion, they buy many products such as branded shoes, handbag, dresses, watch, and services such as luxurious hotel services, salon services, and restaurant services. Then it is also observed that Carrie and Samantha's compulsive buying behaviors do not stand by themselves. There are some internal and external factors that cause the compulsive buying behavior. The internal factors are depression which is experienced by Carrie, anxiety which is experienced by Samantha, self esteem which is experienced by both of Carrie and Samantha. The external factors are reference group, advertising, culture, and lifestyle.

Keywords: compulsive buying behavior, psychological causes, *Sex and the City*

COMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR OF CARRIE AND SAMANTHA IN *SEX AND THE CITY MOVIES*

Charlina Ningsih

INTISARI

Film *Sex and the City* membongkar penggambaran kehidupan wanita modern di Amerika. Jelasnya menggambarkan kehidupan gaya hidup yang khususnya diwujudkan melalui dorongan perilaku untuk membeli. Penelitian ini berniat untuk menemukan dorongan perilaku untuk membeli pada Carrie dan Samantha yang digambarkan dalam film *Sex and the City* dan untuk menganalisis factor yang menggerakkan atau mempengaruhi perilaku tersebut. Penelitian ini mengaplikasikan teori psikologi sastra, yang selanjutnya diuji dengan teori dorongan perilaku dalam pembelian oleh Letty Workman. Tambahan, Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif dan kajian pustaka. Berdasarkan analisis, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa Carrie dan Samantha memiliki dorongan dalam pembelian. Dari pembahasan mereka membeli banyak barang seperti sepatu bermerek, tas bermerek, baju bermerek, jam bermerek dan membeli jasa seperti jasa hotel megah, jasa salon dan jasa restoran yang mewah. Dorongan perilaku dalam pembelian itu tidak berdiri sendiri. Ada faktor dari dalam diri dan faktor dari luar yang mempengaruhi dorongan perilaku dalam pembelian. Faktor dari dalam yaitu depresi yang terjadi pada Carrie, kecemasan yang terjadi pada Samantha, dan harga diri pada keduanya. Faktor dari luar adalah pengaruh kelompok, iklan, budaya, dan gaya hidup.

Kata kunci: perilaku belanja kompulsif, faktor psikologis, *Sex and in the City*

MOTTO

To be a meaningful person for others.



Dedicated with honor, love and affection:

- *The Students of English Department
of State Islamic University Sunan
Kalijaga*
- *The Alumni of English Department
Chapter 2009*
- *My Beloved Parents (Sumarsih
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

According to Ergin, “compulsive buying is a behavioral disorder that causes an individual to make continuous purchases regardless of financial, social, or psychological consequences” (2010: 333). Nowadays, almost all people in the world are consumptive. They have high pretensions to consume many things. They always want something that is better than what they have. Sometimes, they buy goods that they do not need, and it shows extravagant behavior. Most of people become hedonistic and materialistic. Moreover, in Gardner’s *State the World 2004 A Worldwatch Institute Report on Progress Toward a Sustainable Society*, it is stated that “Worldwide, private consumption expenditures—the amount spent on goods and services at the household level—topped \$20 trillion in 2000, a four-fold increase over 1960 (in 1995 dollars)” (2004: 4) .

In *Consumption and the Consumer Society*, Goodwin et al (2008: 7) that “some people have consumerist values or attitudes so they always want to consume more to find meaning and satisfaction in life through purchase of goods”. People will work hard to get the goods that make them satisfied. Moreover, they consume just to get pleasure. They will pay no matter how much the cost of the product is. The goods are just as their collection. They do not think about the utility of them.

Moreover, they do not estimate the impact of their activity. Then, money is very important in their lives because it is used to get their happiness.

There are many consumerist countries in the world. One of them is the US. John Cairns, Jr states in his research, *Consumerism and the 21st Century Lifestyle*, that “Although people, even nations, worldwide in the 21st century want more material possessions, the United States is pivotal because although it has only 4% of the world’s population, it consumes approximately 25% of the world’s resources”(2006: 1). It is because it is easy for the Americans to get anything they need. Most of them have proper life. However, they have the financial freedom. They can do anything with their money.

American’s consumption may be related to the level of American’s prosperity. Anthony Fensom wrote in his article, *America’s Economy Still #1...For Now*, that “Released on December 26th, Cebr’s World Economic League Table 2013 surveys 30 countries and gives the United States the top ranking in 2012 with an estimated gross domestic product (GDP) of U.S.\$15.6 trillion, followed by China at \$8.2 trillion, Japan’s \$5.9 trillion and Germany’s \$3.4 trillion annual output.” (thediplomat.com)

From *Microsoft Encarta 2006, Forces That Shaped American Culture, The Impact Of Consumerism*, it is stated that “The American lifestyle is often associated with clothing, houses, electronic gadgets, and other products, as well as with leisure time” (countriesquest.com). It proves that Americans cannot be separated from fashion and brand in their life.

The most striking lifestyle is related to fashion. Teresa Altonaga states in the article *Top Ten Fashion Cities in the World* that New York is on the first rank of the world's leading fashion cities (lasplash.com). As a metropolitan area, there are many department stores in New York with their talented designers. Heather Cross (2013) states in the article *Plan Your Trip to New York City in 10 Steps* that New York stores offer merchandise for shoppers, from cosmetics, housewares to designer fashions and accessories (about.com). Kathryn Vercillo (2010) states in the article *Top 10 American Fashion Designers* that the top ten designers in New York are Marc Jacobs, Vera Wang, Oscar de la Renta, Calvin Klein, Kate Spade, Ralph Lauren, Anna Sui, Donna Karan, Todd Oldham and Bill Blass (hubpages.com). They are famous with their brands not only in New York but also worldwide. Their brands sometimes appear in the movie production.

As a part of popular cultures, consumerism is often brought to movies, such as *Confession of Shopaholic*, *the Joneses*, *Sex and the City*, etc. The movies tell the characters of the movies who are consumptive. The characters show the consumer behavior to get what they want. The main purpose of the characters in the movies is the same that is to fulfill their desire in getting something.

Sex and the City sequels are the portrait of women's consumerism lifestyles with a luxurious desire. *Sex and the City* sequels are made based on the serial television and the novel that have the same title. The themes of the movie are friendship, love, and lifestyle. The movie sequels show the kinds of brand of products in America. The four characters are career women who cannot organize

their money. They are the examples of the modern lifestyle in America. They spend much money for shopping and holiday. They renew many things for their appearances. Those become like a culture and custom that cannot be thrown away from their life.

From the information above, the writer wants to analyze *Sex and the City* sequels because the writer thinks that the movie reflects the psychological problem of Americans in the modern civilization. This movie also shows how the main characters spend their money for shopping and holiday.

B. Scope of Study

There are many things that can be analyzed from the movie, such as the theme, the characters, the settings, the plot, the intrinsic elements, the extrinsic elements, etc. Here the characters, Carrie and Samantha are as compulsive buyers that are active to consume. Then, Charlotte and Miranda are as non compulsive buyers who just follow Carrie and Samantha. There are many compulsive buying behaviors that Carrie and Samantha do. Based on the background of study, the writer limits the scope of the research and focuses on Carrie and Samantha's compulsive buying behavior reflected in *Sex and the City* movie sequels by Michael Patrick King and the factors that trigger them to become like that.

C. Problem Statements

According to the background of study and the scope of study, this research will try to answer the following questions.

1. What are the compulsive buying behaviors of Carrie Bradshaw and Samantha Jones as seen on *Sex and the City* movies?
2. What are the psychological factors that trigger the compulsive buying behaviors of Carrie Bradshaw and Samantha Jones?

D. Objectives of Study

The objectives of the research in this graduating paper are to analyze the compulsive buying behaviors of Carrie Bradshaw and Samantha Jones seen in the *Sex and the City* movie sequels by Michael Patrick King and to find out the psychological factors that trigger the compulsive buying of the main characters.

E. Significances of Study

Based on the objectives of the study, this research certainly has several significances, they are:

1. Theoretically, this research can be used as a helpful reference in order to understand the application of Psychology theory in literature. This research can also be used by students, especially for English Department students, lecturers, literati, or anyone who loves movies.
2. Practically, this research has several intentions, they are:
 - a) For students, it is hoped that this research can encourage them to know more about movies and challenge them to analyze movies.
 - b) For lecturers, it can also be used as an additional source to teach the students.

- c) For literati, this research can entice them to analyze some similar movies or even more other movies.
- d) For common people, this research can attract them to study about moral value from movies.

Furthermore, this research has significance for Muslims that is to attract them to analyze more movies which possibly contain any inappropriateness for the Qur'an.

F. Literature Review

There are some researches that analyze *Sex and the City* movies. Prior researches present some studies from the other students with the same object or the same topic. Here are some related researches:

The first prior research is “Representasi Feminisme Dalam Film (Analisis Semiotika Representasi Feminisme Dalam Film “Sex And The City 2 (2010)”)” “ by Rani Indah Komala Harahap from Sumatera Utara University (2011). This research analyzes semiotics of feminism. The research uses qualitative research. The theories used in the reseach are communication, semiotics, feminism, television codes, and film as media massa. In conclusion, this research states some symbols represent the feminism in the film.

The second is “Women’s Speech Features Used by the Characters of Sex and the City Movie” by Futika Permatasari from English Letters and Language Department Faculty of Humanities and Culture Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang (2010). This research focuses on analyzing

women's speech features used by the characters of *Sex and the City* movie. The research uses descriptive qualitative method. In conclusion, this research describes women's speech features used by the Character of *Sex and the City* movie.

The next is "The representation of gender roles in the media - An analysis of gender discourse in *Sex and the City* movies" by Therese Ottosson Xin Cheng from Bachelor's thesis in Political Science 15 ECTS Department of Economics and Informatics University West (2012). This research focuses on analyzing the gender representation in *Sex and the City* 1 and 2 movie. By using discourse analysis. In conclusion, this research shows different types of the gender representation and whether the characters in *Sex and the City* challenge the patriarchal privilege.

Different from the prior researches above, this research analyzes the consumer behavior of Carrie Bradshaw and Samantha Jones as seen in *Sex and the City* movie. This research uses psychology theory of literature to analyze the data of their compulsive buying behavior.

H. Theoretical Approach

This research analyzes the characters of *Sex and the City* movie, so this research uses psychology of literature. According to Wellek and Warren (1956: 75) in the book *A Theory of Literature*, it is stated that psychology of literature means the psychological study of the writer as a type as and as individual; or the study of creative process, or study of the psychological type and laws present within works of

literature. Finally, the effects of literature influence its reader (audience psychology). This research focuses to study the psychological type laws present within a literary work.

This research uses psychology theory to analyze the data. According to Feldman (2010: 4) in the book *Psychology and Your Life*, psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The phrase “behavior and mental processes” means many things; it encompasses not just what people do but also their thoughts, emotions, perceptions, reasoning processes, memories, and even the biological activities that maintain bodily functioning.

People’s psychology is very important to determine the compulsive buying behavior. Lee (2004:1711) states that compulsive buying is part of a broader category of compulsive consumption behaviors such as drug addiction, alcoholism, and excessive behavior associated with exercise, work, or sex. There are two factors that trigger compulsive behavior:

1. Internal factors including depression, anxiety, and self-esteem.
2. External factors including references group, social class, lifestyle, culture, and advertising.

I. Method of Research

1. Type of Research

This research is a qualitative research. Christina Hughes writes in her writing. Qualitative research is more open and responsive to its subject (Best and Khan 1989: 89-90). Qualitative research, is concerned with collecting and

analyzing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible. It tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples which are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve `depth' rather than `breadth'. (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 1996: 61).

2. Source of Data

Lofland states via Moleong (47) that the main source of data in qualitative research is the words and actions, and the rest is largely additional data such as documents and other. The data of this research can be divided into two. There are main data and supporting data. The main data is the important source that is used in analyzing. The main data of this research is taken from the script of *Sex and the City* movie sequels by Michael Patrick King. The supporting data is data that can add and support the main data. The supporting data are obtained from the electrical sources that are related to the title of this thesis such as About.com, thediplomat.com, lasplash.com, etc. The written sources include books, journal, or any references from internet that are relevant and can support the subject matter.

3. Method of Collecting Data

Collecting data is a method of obtaining materials, informations, facts and reliable informations. (Basrowi and Suwandi, 2007: 93).

In collecting data, the writer uses documentation by watching the movie and reading the script. Besides, the writer will also read other supporting data

such as articles, critics, etc. that are related to this research and pay attentions to statements, words, or sentences that have close relationship with the problem of the research.

4. Research Data Analysis

Research data analysis means to group data based on variable and type of respondents, tabulate data based on variables of all respondents, present data for each variable of study, calculate to answer the problem statements, and measure to test the hypotheses that have been proposed (Sugiyono 2010: 207).

The process of data analysis is the most important step in the research. In this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. Bogdan and Biklen state (via Sugiyono (1982)) that “Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected are in the form of words or figures rather than number.” This research is governed through three steps.

- a. To get the main source of data, the writer watches *Sex and the City* movie sequels repeatedly and comprehends deeply. Then, the researcher makes the list of data, selects the data that deal with the problems and excludes the data that are unnecessary.
- b. After collecting and classifying the data, the researcher applies the psychology theory, that is, compulsive buying behavior of Carrie and Samantha.
- c. After describing and analyzing the data, the researcher infers the entire discussion to certain conclusion.

J. Thesis Organization

This paper is divided into four chapters. Chapter one is the reasons to analyze the compulsive buying behavior of Carrie and Samantha, problem statements, significances, prior researches and the theory used in this analysis. Chapter two presents the theory of compulsive buying behavior. Chapter three is the discussion about compulsive buying behavior of Carries and Samantha in *Sex and the City* movie sequels by Michael Patrick King. Chapter four is the conclusion from the entire discussion and the writer's suggestion about compulsive buying behavior in civilization to the readers.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Compulsive buying behavior is an action of buying product or service frequently which cannot be stopped. Sometimes compulsive buying happens as a release of psychological feelings. *Sex and the City* movies are show many cases of compulsive buying done by Carrie and Samantha as the compulsive buyers when they buy products and services. They buy products such as apartment, branded dress, jewelry, branded watch, branded shoes, branded handbag, etc. They buy services such as services of hotel, salon and restaurant.

Indeed, they do compulsive buying behavior because of some factors. The factors can be divided into two: internal factors and external factors. The internal factors are depression which is experienced by Carrie, anxiety which is experienced by Samantha, self esteem which is experienced by both of Carrie and Samantha. The external factors are reference group, social class, lifestyle and advertising. Carrie and Samantha belongs to the group of people who buy products or services to get rid of their bad feeling and to get satisfaction. Not every compulsive buying behavior in this movie reduces a psychological feeling, because it is not triggered by internal factors. But it is also caused by external factors. From the movies, the writer is found that Carrie and Samantha are mostly influenced by external factors. Their psychological disorder in buying or spending

seems to have been shaped by their environment, that is, the society of Manhattan New York.

In conclusion, generally, people buy or go shopping to overcome their psychological feeling. This is represented by Carrie and Samantha who buy anything they want to get rid of their bad feeling. It proves that they buy many products and services to reduce their psychological feelings.

A. Suggestions

1. Suggestion for Future Researchers

The writer realizes that the analysis in this graduating paper is still far from perfect. There are a lot of shortcomings in some parts of this graduating paper. Due to the limitation of time and source, it is impossible for the writer to discover all discussion about the movies. *Sex and the City* movie is a very interesting movie and there are many topics that can be discussed from this movie.

In addition, the writer suggests future researchers to use this study as a comparative literature study on *Sex and the City* movie. Future researchers may use the same work to be analyzed from different point of view. The writer suggests they to analyze the movie about the background of economic condition. Therefore, a further analysis of *Sex and the City* movie might be conducted through Marxist theory.

2. Suggestions for Readers

Carrie and Samantha are the main characters in *Sex and the City* Movie. They do compulsive buying behavior because of their psychological feeling. They have jobs that can fulfill their needs of buying something.

In Islamic point of view, persons are not permitted to be spenders. It can be seen in the holy Qur'an surah Al Isro:

وَأَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلَا تَبْذِرْ تَبْدِيرًا

إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ ط وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

According to Taqiuddin and Muhsin in the *Noble of Qur'an in the English Language* the translation is,

26. And give to the kinsman his due and to the *Miskin* (poor) and to the wayfarer. But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.

27. Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayatin (devils), and the Shaitan (Devil-Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord.

In conclusion, the persons who spend their money unwisely are hated by God. God asks human in the world to share their wealth to the poor through charity. Spending much money decreases the financial income when they cannot manage the financial well.

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APPENDIX 1

Compulsive Buying Behavior	Character	Frequency	Brand	Price	Location	Quantity of product	Factors
Buying Apartment	Carrie	2	-	-	Manhattan	1	Self esteem, lifestyle, social class, reference group.
Buying Shoes	Carrie	1 But change shoes 24 times.	Gold Louboutins, Dior Gladiators, Minolo Baltik.	US \$525	-	Many shoes	Self esteem, lifestyle, social class, reference group, anxiety
Buying Jewelry	Samantha	1 but every changes a dress changes accessories.	Christie Jewelry	Sixty dollar	Christie's Auction House	1	Self esteem
Buying Handbag	Both of them	Carrie: 1 But changes 27 Samantha: 1 but changes 15	Prada, Louise Viton, Guccci, Chanel	-	-	Carrie: 1 Samantha: many handbag	. Self esteem, lifestyle, social class, reference group, anxiety
Buying Watch	Carrie	1	Rolex	-	-	1	lifestyle
Buying Dress	Both of them	Carrie: 2 But changes about 82 times Samantha: 1 but changes about 45 times	DVF	-	P&D, etc.	Many	Self esteem, lifestyle, social class, reference group.
Purchasing Hotel Service	Both of them	2	-	22,000 dollars per night	Emirates palace	2	Self esteem, lifestyle, reference

							group, depression.
Purchasing Salon Service	Carrie	1	-	-	-	-	Self esteem, lifestyle, depression.
Purchasing Restaurant Service	Both of them	20	Mercer Kitchen, Buddakan, Starbucks Raoul's, Restaurant Junior's Restaurant, etc.	-	Manhattan	Many	Self esteem, lifestyle, reference group, depression



APPENDIX 2**CURRICULUM VITAE****A. IDENTITY**

Name : Charlina Ningsih

Place of Birth : Gunungkidul

Date of Birth : 10 August 1990

Sex : Female

Marital status : Single

Contact address : Geblug Rt 01/Rw 01, Kenteng, Ponjong, Gunungkidul

55892

B. FORMAL EDUCATION

1998-2003 : Elementary School 1 Kenteng

2003-2006 : Junior High School 1 Ponjong

2006-2009 : Senior High School 1 Karangmojo

2009-2013 : Studied in State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

C. LANGUAGE ABILITY : able to use Java, Bahasa, and English