

**A MONSTROUS-FEMININE AS SEEN IN THE *JESSABELLE*  
MOVIE**

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining the Bachelor  
Degree in English Literature



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I certify that this thesis is definitely my own work and I completely responsible for the content of this thesis. For other writer's opinion and findings which are included in this thesis are quoted and cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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## **A Monstrous-feminine as Seen In The *Jessabelle* Movie**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Jessabelle* movie is a kind of horror film tells about the struggle of Jessabelle as ghost who have desire to life as Jessie Laurent. Then, she gets help from her mother, Kate. They are cooperating to take over Jessie's body. They take over Jessie's body because they get bad treat from man in their past. This research is a qualitative research that uses documentation technique in collecting data. This research aims to describe the depiction of women as a monster when they wrath with man in *Jessabelle* movie. This research uses the monstrous-feminine theory that focuses on abjection to describe the depiction in *Jessabelle* and Kate. The depiction of woman as monster divide in two kind, there are the depiction from outer appearance and attitude. The result shows the power of *Jessabelle* and Kate as a monster. *Jessabelle*'s power makes her victim feel scary with her treatment and her horrible face. Then, Kate ghost as the mastermind help *Jessabelle* to get Jessie's body with her plan. Those things makes their victims feels threaten and scary with their existence.

Keywords: *Jessabelle* movie, Monstrous-feminine, Abjection, Depiction

## **A Monstrous-feminine as Seen In The Jessabelle Movie**

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### **ABSTRAK**

Film *Jessabelle* adalah jenis film horor yang menceritakan tentang perjuangan hantu Jessabelle yang memiliki keinginan untuk hidup menjadisosok Jessie Laurent. Kemudian, dia mendapat bantuan dari ibunya yaitu Kate. Mereka bekerja sama untuk mengambil alih tubuh Jessie. Mereka mengambil alih tubuh Jessie karena mereka mendapatkan perlakuan buruk dari lelaki di masa lalu. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan teknik dokumentasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan penggambaran dari wanita sebagai monster saat mereka murka di dalam film *Jessabelle*. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori monstrous-feminine yang terfokus pada kehinaan untuk menggambarkan penggambaran dari Jessabelle dan Kate. Penggambaran wanita sebagai monster dibagi menjadi dua jenis, yaitu penggambaran dari wujud luarnya dan sikapnya. Kesimpulannya menunjukkan Kate dan Jessabelle memiliki kekuatan sebagai monster. Kekuatan Jessabelle dapat membuat korbannya ketakutan dengan menyerangnya dan menampakkan wajahnya yang mengerikan. Kemudian, Hantu Kate sebagai dalang yang membantu Jessabelle untuk mendapatkan tubuh Jessie dengan rencananya. Hal tersebut membuat korban-korban mereka merasa terancam dan ketakutan dengan keberadaan mereka.

Kata kunci: Film *Jessabelle*, Monstrous-Feminine, Kehinaan, Penggambaran

THE DEDICATION OF THIS GRADUATING PAPER

IS GIVEN TO;

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF STATE ISLAMIC

UNIVERSITY SUNAN KALIJAGA

MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER

ALL OF MY FAMILY

ALL OF THE READERS

**MOTTO**

*"Le 'effort est ma Force (The effort is my strength)"*





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Furthermore, the writer realizes that this paper is far from perfect due to the limited knowledge of the writer. Therefore, for the suggestion and criticism is doing welcomed. Finally, the writer really hopes this paper can be useful for the readers.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE .....	i
FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT .....	ii
APROVAL .....	iii
NOTA DINAS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
ABSTRAK .....	vi
DEDICATION .....	vii
MOTTO .....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURE .....	xiv
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1. Background of Study .....	1
1.2. Research Questions .....	5
1.3. Objective of Study .....	5
1.4. Significances of Study .....	5

1.5. Literature Review .....	6
1.6. Theoretical Approach .....	7
1.7. Research Methodology.....	11
1.8. Paper Organization .....	12

**CHAPTER II: THE INTRINSIC ELEMENTS OF THE MOVIE**

2.1. Theme.....	14
2.2. Plot Summary .....	15
2.3. Setting .....	20
2.4. Character and Characterization .....	21
2.4.1. Major Characters .....	21
2.4.2. Minor Characters .....	24

**CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION**

3.1 The Contrasting Character Between Jessie Laurent and Jassabelle.....	28
3.1.1 Jessie Laurent .....	29
3.1.2 Jassabelle .....	30
3.2 The Identification of Woman As A Monster .....	32
3.2.1 The Depiction of Woman Monster From the Outer Appearance ....	32
3.2.1.1 The Depiction of Jassabelle.....	33
3.2.1.2 The Depiction of Kate .....	35
3.2.2 The Depiction of Woman as A Monster From the Attitude .....	38
3.2.2.1 The Depiction of Jasabelle from her attitude .....	39



3.2.2.2 The Depiction of Kate from her attitude .....	45
3.3 The Power .....	48
3.3.1 The Power of Jassabelle .....	48
3.3.2 The Power of Kate .....	49
3.4 The Conduction of Voodoo in Jassabelle Movie .....	49
 <b>CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION</b>	
4.1. Conclusion .....	53
4.2. Suggestion .....	54
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	55
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> .....	57

## LIST OF FIGURE

Fig.1. The shot of Jessabelle .....	23
Fig.2. The shot of Kate.....	24
Fig.3. The shot of Jessie.....	24
Fig.4. The shot of Preston Saunders .....	26
Fig.5. The shot of Leon.....	27
Fig.6. The Shot of Moses .....	28
Fig.7. The shot of Jessie Laurent on the wheelchair.....	31
Fig.8. The shot of Jessabelle ghost attack Jessie Laurent .....	32
Fig.9. The shot of Jessabelle's body .....	34
Fig.10. The shot of Jessabelle's face.....	36
Fig.11. The shot of video by Kate.....	37
Fig.12. The shot of Kate became ghosts .....	39
Fig.13. The shot of Jessabelle attack Jessie Laurent.....	41
Fig.14. The shot of Jessabelle vomited swamp water to Jessie's face .....	42
Fig.15. The shot of Jessabelle kissed Jessie's forehead.....	43

Fig.16. The shot of Jessabelle touch Preston’s face.....44

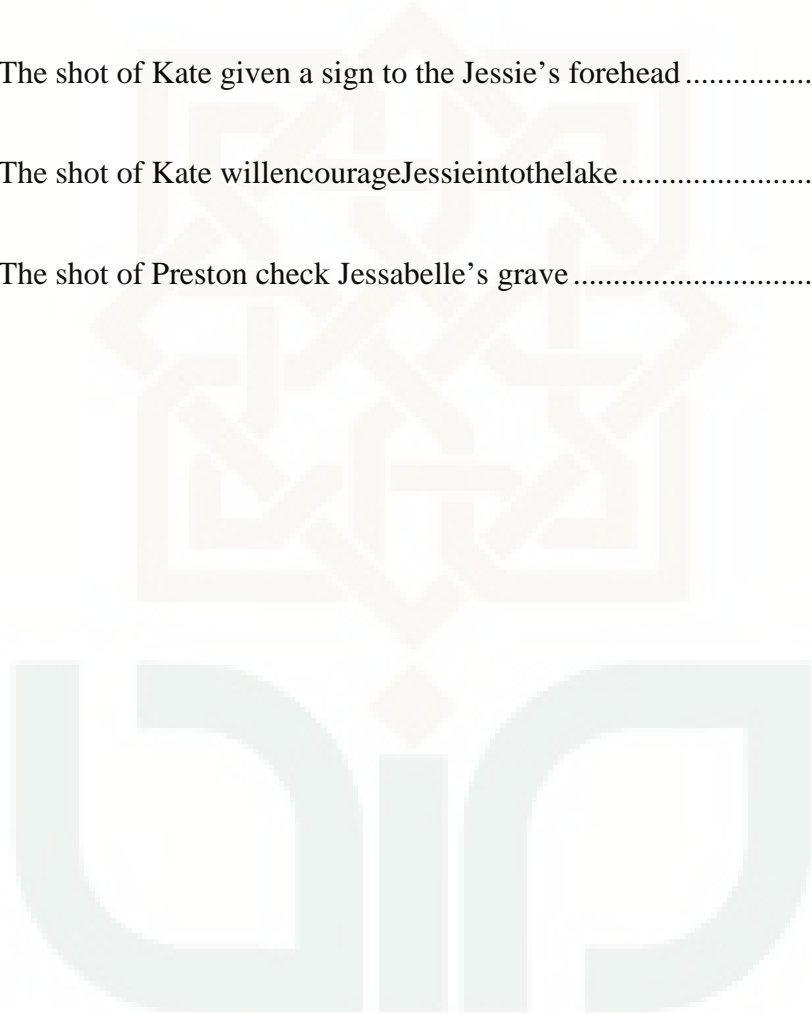
Fig.17. The shot of Jessabelle’s attack Preston.....45

Fig.18. The shot of Kate given a sign to the Jessie’s forehead .....47

Fig.19. The shot of Kate given a sign to the Jessie’s forehead .....48

Fig.20. The shot of Kate willencourageJessieintothelake.....49

Fig.21. The shot of Preston check Jessabelle’s grave ..... 53



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

*Jessabelle* is a horror movie written by Ben Garant and directed by Kevin Greutert. This movie was released on November 7, 2014. Everything happens when Jessie Laurent moves to her father's house. She got a bad dream about a woman ghost. This woman ghost is Jessabelle. Jessie often got interference from Jessabelle. Jessabelle's role in the story cannot be separated from her mother, Kate. She is the mastermind of everything that happens to Jessie Laurent. After Kate was died and became a ghost, she was doing the last ritual to take over Jessie's life. Thus, women ghosts in this movie is including to the conception of monstrous-feminine.

The monstrous-feminine theory is pioneered by Julie Kristeva in her book *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection (Pouvoirs de l'horreur Essai sur l'abjection)* 1980. The *Power of Horror* book focus on explaining the subject as abjection in horror genre. Barbara Creed extends the discussion of abjection by Kristeva in Creed's book *The Monstrous-Feminine*, first published in 1993. Based on Creed's book, Shohini Chauduri stated that, monstrous-feminine was analysis the figuration of women as monster on the horror films (2006: 91). It means that Creed focused on the analysis of monstrous-feminine in movie. Thus, the writer chooses movie to become the object of this research because movie is part of the



monstrous-feminine theory. Besides that, movie includes in the scope of pop-culture that has been fame in society.

Among the three effects of globalization on culture, the growth of global pop culture tends to get the most attention, and to strike people on a visceral level. Pop culture is manifested around the world through movies, music, television shows, news papers, satellite broadcasts, fast food, and clothing, among other entertainment and consumer goods (<http://www.globalization101.org/pop-culture/>).

It can be said that, movie is a work of art from human creativity that presents any information from human society. Anne O'casey said, "Films are carefully constructed to create a particular meaning and are constructed within a particular context and time. The representations of life in film become deliberately constructed" (2012: 3). In other words, movie was constructed to shows the representations of life in society. Therefore, when people watch movie they can find out a message conveyed by the filmmakers. Turner also said, "Film is seen to be analogous to literature" (2003: 1). Thus, film is including in the literary perception that present about representation of life in society. The representations of life also add some mystical value to make it different, for example, a horror movie.

According to Carol, "Horror is a genre which represents an unnatural thing and there is a threatening monster character on it and the point of horror is provoked by outrage, fear, and disgust" (As cited in Fahy, 2010: 14-15). In other words, horror movie has a purpose to give the effect of fear to the audiences. In addition, horror movie has a specific concept like Shonini Chauduri said, "horror movie is one of popular genre in movie has the unconscious concept to repressed

fears and desire for the audiences” (2006: 91). So, the specific concept of horror movie is the unconscious concept to make the audiences feels fear and shock.

In this research, the writer chooses *Jessabelle* movie as the main data in two reasons. First, the women characters, Jesabelle and Kate symbolize women's wrath. They are wrath because their life snatched away by Leon. He is angry with Kate because he knows that Kate has affair with Moses. She has a baby with Moses. Leon kills the baby and Moses. Leon adopts Jessie Laurent to cover his crime. Then, Kate decides to suicide herself. Kate was wrath with everything that happen to her. For the first wrath, she decides to take over Jessie Laurent's life and give for Jessabelle. Then, Jessabelle haunt Jessie and take over Jessie's life. For the second wrath, Kate makes some videos about her life and the prediction for Jessabelle's life. Those videos have purpose to make Leon feel worried when Jessie sees those videos. He worried when Jessie knows about his crime.

Second, women as ghosts has concept as a monster in this movie. According to Barbara Creed, “All human societies have a conception of the monstrous-feminine, of what it is about woman that is shocking, terrifying, horrific, abject” (1993:44). In other words, the conception of woman as a monster can make her victim feel scared with her depiction. Thus, the women as ghosts in this movie include in the monstrous-feminine because she can make her victim feels scared about her figure.

Therefore, this analysis focus on the depiction of women as ghosts. The depiction of women as ghosts in this movie can make their victim feel scared because they manifest herself in the form of a shadow or with original form.

Furthermore, this analysis also focuses on women as ghosts by their movement. The movement is about her direct attacks to their victim. It illustrates that ghost in this movie can do something with human.

According to the writer's belief, the concept of the ghost can do something with human is rational in Islam perspective. It can be seen in Surah Al-A'raf: 27:

يٰۤاٰدَمُ لَا يَفۡتِنَنَّكَمُ الشَّيۡطٰنُ كَمَاۤ اَخۡرَجَ اٰبَوٰيۡكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ  
 يَنۡزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْۤءَۤاٰتِهِمَاۗ اِنَّهٗ يَرٰكُمۡ هُوَ وَقَبِيۡلُهٗ مِمَّنۡ  
 حِيۡثُ لَا تَرَوۡنَهُمْۗ اِنَّا جَعَلۡنَا الشَّيۡطٰنَ اَوْلِيَّآءَ لِلَّذِيۡنَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

“O ye children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you, in the same manner as he got your parents out of Garden, stripping them of their raiment, to expose their shame : for he and his tribe watch you from a position where ye cannot see them: We made the Evil Ones friends (Only) to those without Faith,”(1983: 346).

The verse above shows that Jinn or Satan can see human but human cannot. Satan also can attacks human. They affect human through the promptings. They can persuade people to pass up bad thing even they break the God's prohibitions. Moreover, there is kind of Jinn that manifest his shape in front of human and kill human. They also permeate through the blood stream of human body. The explanations above tell about the reflection between human and ghost in real life.

Finally, the writer analyzes women as ghosts in *Jessabelle* movie. The writer focuses on two women of major characters: Jessabelle and Kate. Jessabelle is Kate's daughter killed by Leon after she was born. Then Kate as Jessabelle's mother died after Jessabelle was born. She died because suicide by gun. So, they have relationship between mother and daughter which is strengthens by mystical power in this movie. This analysis aims to understand how women as ghosts can include in the category of monstrous-feminine. To support the analysis, the writer also analyzes the cinematography of the movie because all things that are presents in the movie have their own meaning to support the theme of the movie.

### **1.2. Research Question**

The researcher formulates the question based on the background of study above as follow:

How are women as monster depicted in the *Jessabelle* movie?

### **1.3. Objective of Study**

The aim of this research is:

To discover how are women as monster depicted in the *Jessabelle* movie.

### **1.4. Significances of the Study**

This research is significant to the development of literary study both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research uses feminist literary criticism. Feminist literary criticism used to understand woman character in the literary work based on the monstrous-feminine, especially in *Jessabelle* movie. This paper also gives much information about the depiction of the woman character as ghost in *Jessabelle* movie.

Practically, this research can be used as a reference to give an overview about monstrous-feminine in literary work. Then, the writer hope, this research can attract the student to analyze monstrous-feminine as the theory of their research.

### **1.5. Literature Review**

Related to this research, the writer did not find other writers with the same topic about the monstrous-feminine in the *Jessabelle* movie. The writer concludes some previous analysis about monstrous-feminine.

First, D. Bruno Starr writes in his research entitled, “If we stretch our imaginations”; the Monstrous-Feminine Mother in Rolf de Heer’s *Bad Boy Bubby* (1993) and *Alexandra’s Project* (2003)”. In his research, he analyzes the figure of horrific mothers whose unrestrained libidos over-ride their maternal responsibilities. He analyzes the figure of mother in two movies. The mother disregards the incest taboo and sleeps with her son in *Bad Boy Bubby* movie. Then, the mother fails to acknowledge the paternal order, working as a prostitute and stealing her children away from their father in *Alexandra’s Project* movie.

Second, Kateryna Burkush writes her research entitled, “Revising “Monstrous-Feminine”; Madness, Sexuality, Perversion in Contemporary Psychohorror” (Central European University: 2012). In her research, she explores various forms of female filmic of monstrosity from a piano teacher (2001), *Black Swan* (2010), and the *Antichrist* (2009). She argues that they belong to the hybrid ‘post-modern’ genre in psychohorror. Then, she argues about the monstrosity of

female sexuality is overlap through those movies. They will be dangerous for social order because her attitude is deviate from society.

Based on the description of the previous writers above, they analyze same theory but there are some differences. These writers use the monstrous-feminine by the third category of abjection. They used maternal as the third category of abjection to analyze their paper. The paper of Bruno Starr focuses on unrestrained libidos over-rides their maternal responsibilities. Then, Kateryna Burkush focuses to discuss about the un-controlled and un-reproductive sexuality, represented in films as perverse and dangerous for social order and therefore subjected for further repression.

As the opposite, the present writer only focuses on the monstrous-feminine by the first and second category of abjection in Barbara Creed theory. This research uses those categories of abjection to explore the depiction of woman characters as the ghost. Then, the question is how are women as monstrous-feminine depicted in the *Jessabelle* movie.

## **1.6. Theoretical Approach**

### **1.6.1. Feminism Theory**

The women characters are dominant in the *Jessabelle* movie. They have a role in the story. Especially, a woman character as the ghost is dominant in this movie. So, this research focused on women character as the object of this research. The proper theory of this research is feminist theory. Based on Carter, “the common goal of a specific technique criticism in the feminist theory is to raise awareness of women’s roles in all aspects of literary production (as writer, as

character in literature, as reader, etc.) and to reveal the extent of male dominance in all of these aspects” (2006: 91).

There are some kinds of feminist thoughts such as liberal, radical, Marxist, psychoanalytic, care-focused, eco-feminist, monstrous-feminine, multicultural, etc. All of those thoughts explain about the women role in society. The writer chooses the monstrous-feminine to analyze the object of this research. It is because the women characters as ghosts in the *Jessabelle* movie includes in the conception of Monstrous-feminine. They struggle to get their purpose after their happiness was obtained by a man. So, they became monster and try to fight back. This research will focus on the analysis of a horror movie which use monstrous-feminine theory.

According to Creed, “All human societies have a conception of the monstrous feminine, of what it is about women that is shocking, terrifying, horrific, and abject” (1993: 1). In other words, the depiction of women as monster make someone else feels shock, terrify, and afraid with them. Then, they include with the category of abjection.

According to Creed, the category of abjection are, “the first category of abjection; includes bodily wastes such as ‘shit, blood, urine, and pus’, as well as dead bodies, which are the ultimate in abjection” (2001: 11). It means the depiction of monster looks like a dead body or dead person. The dead body is the body from dead person looks disgusting with shit, blood, urine, and pus.

According to Creed, “the second category of abjection in the horror film lies in the collapsing of boundaries or boundary ambiguities. The monster is what

crosses or threatens to cross the “border”, ‘for example, the border between human and non-human; natural and supernatural; normal and abnormal gender behavior and sexual desire; the clean, proper, well-formed, and the dirty or deformed body’ (2001: 11). It means a monster makes his victim threatened with their movement that crosses the border or collapsing of boundaries or boundary ambiguities.

According to Creed, the third category of abjection is the maternal (2011:11). Maternal has concept to constructs the patriarchal ideology with women as an abject being. (2001: 83). Creed said, “the horror movie terrifies us but fascinates us all the same. The abjection attest to the audience’s desire confront ‘sickening, horrific images’ to witness the taboo, which is what provokes shock and terror; then, once we have taken our fill, to throw up, throw out, eject the abject” (2001 : 10). It means the abjection gives shock and terror effect for the audiences.

Those theories about monstrous-feminine deal with the condition of the women as ghosts in the *Jessabelle* movie. The concept of woman as a monster shows in the depiction of Jessabelle and Kate. Kate becomes monster because she feel wrath with Leon. It is because Leon killed Jessabelle and Moses. Then, Jessabelle grow up become a scary ghost. She haunt Jessie because her place was replaced by Jessie when they still a baby. This analysis also presents the pictures and dialogue based on Jessabelle movie. It helps the writer to explain the depiction of Kate and Jessabelle.



### 1.6.2. Film Theory

The second theory is film theory. Actually, film theory can support feminist theory. Feminist theory has many approaches to cinema analysis, regarding the film elements, and theory of filming. Film theory debates the essence of the cinema and provides conceptual frameworks for understanding film's relationship to reality, the other arts, individual viewers, and society. Andrew said "Film theory, in short, a verbal representation of film complex" (Andrew, 1984: 4). It means film is a representation of the text that presented in a visual form.

The techniques of shooting in this movie can use the techniques of cinematography. There are three elements of cinematography used to analyze the data, there are; camera angle, camera distance, and depth of field. The first element is camera angle, the angle of the camera use to marks the specific location when video camera take a shot (Villarejo, 2007:151). The second element is camera distance, the distance between the camera and the subject which it records. The camera distance uses extreme long shot, long shot, medium long shot, medium shot, medium close-up, and extreme close-up (2007: 151). The last element is depth of field, a combination of deep space to distance between the nearest and farthest objects in a scene (2007:153). Those three elements are going to be used in this research.

Thus, the writer uses cinematography to support the analysis of women as a monster in the *Jessabelle* movie. The film theory gives more a specific explanation about what moviemaker intends to say in the movie. This analysis use

film theory to find out the meaning behind the movies. For further explanation about film theory will be discussed in the chapter three.

## **1.7. Research Methodology**

### **1.7.1. Type of Research**

This research uses qualitative method. Qualitative research methodology, on other hand, “is concern with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind. Qualitative research aims to discovering the underlying motives, desires, using in depth interviews for the purpose” (Pauline V. Young: 30). This method uses emergent design which aims to understand the social phenomena from the perspective of the researcher (Sukmadinata, 2012: 12).

So, qualitative research aims to collect the data by qualification not statistical. However, in this research, the writer does not do the interview, but only collects data based on textual and pictures of the movie.

### **1.7.2. Data Sources**

The main data of this research is *Jessabelle* movie. Thus, the data are including the plot, the pictures, and the movie script.

### **1.7.3. Data Collection Technique**

The writer collects the data by documentation method. The method of documentation research is finding some picture and script from the movie. Then, the writer interprets the character by uses some pictures and dialogue. After that, the writer gives some marks to find the important act, dialogue, and pictures.

Besides, collecting the data related to the movie, the writer tries to understand about the intrinsic elements of this movie. Then, the writer analyzes the data based on the theory that is used in this research.

#### **1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique**

This research uses objective analysis method. Ratna said, “an objective analysis is an analysis which views on the intrinsic elements and throws away extrinsic elements such as historical aspect, sociological aspect, and political aspect” (2008:73). In this case, the writer uses intrinsic elements to describe the main data. Objective analysis method is used to describe the intrinsic elements in the movie. The intrinsic elements are character, characterization, and plot. This way leads to write the conclusion of the analysis. The analyzing data steps are:

1. Identifying the pictures and the movie script from women characters that indicates women as monster.
2. Analyzing the plot of *Jessabelle* movie to describe women characters that indicates women as monster.
3. Analyzing the appropriate data by using monstrous-feminine and film theory to show women characters as ghosts depicted in the *Jessabelle* movie.
4. Drawing conclusion.

#### **1.8. Paper Organization**

This research consists of four chapters. The organizing of each chapter is as follows: The first chapter presents the introduction of this research including; background of study, research questions, objective of study, significance of the

study, literary review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter presents the analysis of the intrinsic elements of the *Jessabelle* movie including the theme, character and characterization, setting, and plot. The third chapter provides the analysis to answer the research question in the first chapter. The fourth chapter is conclusion of the analysis and the researcher's recommendation for other research.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

#### 4.1. Conclusion

The aim of this research is to discover how are women characters depicted in the *Jessabelle* movie. The women characters are dominant in this movie. They give scary effects in the story. That thing is reinforced with the belief of voodoo that is very thick in giving the scariest effects to the audience. Women as ghosts are identified as monster in this movie. There are two things that can be found in analyzing women ghosts as a monster in *Jessabelle* movie.

First, women as ghosts become a monster when they feel wrath with men. Kate and Jessabelle shows they wrath with men who take their happiness. Leon kill Jessabelle and replace her with adopt a white baby, Jessie Laurent. Kate wrath with Leon, she decided to take over Jessie's life and give for Jessabelle. It because Jessabelle want to life again becomes Jessie Laurent.

Secondly, women characters in this movie are shown to be a scary figure. It can be seen from their outer appearance. Kate's depiction after she died looks like human but her depiction different when she was still life. Before she died looks pale and sick but when she becomes a ghost looks like a human and beautiful. This shows the primness appearance of Kate. From Jessabelle appearance is like a dead body. She has curly and messy hair, black teeth, pale face and mud body.

In conclusion, women characters as ghost in the *Jessabelle* movie include in the category of monstrous-feminine. They are including in the first and second category of abjection that are like a dead body and cross the border between human and non-human. Women characters as ghosts in the *Jessabelle* become a monster because they feel wrath with everything that happen to them. They also have frightening figure on their appearance.

#### **4.2. Suggestion**

At last, the writer has suggestion to be considered by the next researchers. The depiction of women as the ghosts has a conception of monstrosity. They're become monsters because they gets bad experience before died. Moreover, the writer analyzes this movie by using Feminist theory that focused on monstrous-feminine. The writer believes that this research is not perfect. Therefore, in humbly the writer open opportunities for the reader to give criticism and suggestions for this research.

*Jessabelle* movie also can be the subject for other writers because there are many parts of this movie that can be analyzed. The others writer can be analyzed this movie uses the other theory and perspective.

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