

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

In writing this paper, the writer chooses the novel *Prozac Nation: Young and Depressed in America* by Elizabeth Wurtzel. This novel is based on the real experiences of the author. Elizabeth Lee Wurtzel was born on July 31st 1967 in New York City. She graduated from Harvard, where she wrote for *The Harvard Crimson* and received the 1986 Rolling Stone College Journalism Award. At the age of 26, she published a groundbreaking memoir, "*Prozac Nation*," chronicling her battle with depression. As a journalist, she also writes for *The New Yorker* and *New York Magazine*. (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0943442/bio>)

The writer chooses this novel because this novel reveals the reality that we may face in our life. As we know, the complex problems in family or unhappy family will affect someone's mental and behavior. In here, the problems occur in families that are not working as well as they should, where parents are unhappy with each other, use their children against each other. The other reason why the writer is interested in this novel is because the author tells her own experience through the character of Elizabeth in her novel and this novel has also been filmed.

This novel reveals Elizabeth's own experience with the depths of a mental illness and how she manages to live through particularly difficult periods while completing college and working as a writer. The primary causes Elizabeth's deeply sorrowful feelings were divorced parents when she was two years old and loss of her relationship

with her father after custody was granted to her mother. Her relationship with her mother as she grew up was not good and her self-esteem was harmed by her father when in the age of 10, he told her that once her mother was pregnant, he wanted an abortion. Of course, that wasn't the biggest disappointment in her life that makes her extremely sad. She also gets disappointment with a rejection by her boyfriend that she loves after a long relationship with him. She always feels that there is no one who can understand her. In her college, she was exiled by her friends despite of her brilliant activity in Harvard University.

Elizabeth's mental illness or so-called depression was not miraculously cured by Prozac although she claims that Prozac was the miracle that saved her life and jump-started her out of a full-time state of depression. She realizes that years of therapy and antidepressant drugs are not the answer to cure her mental illness. The only ways for her to be released from this illness are love and work. She is aware that two important aspects of anyone's life are love and work. She gets the recovery from living a life she enjoys, not from any of psychiatry's so-called therapies or psychiatric drugs.

1.2 Statement of Problems

The statements of problem in this paper are:

1. What are the symptoms, causes, effects and treatments of depression illness that are showed by Elizabeth?
2. How does Elizabeth face the depression and undergo her life as the sufferer of this mental illness?

1.3 Scope and Limitation

The scope for this paper is the novel, *Prozac Nation: Young and Depressed in America*: A memoir by Elizabeth Wurtzel and the limitation is focused on the main character's disturbed behavior because of depression illness. The analysis will be limited to the analysis of the causes, effects and treatments of depression and it will be supported by the analysis of sociological environment, especially family's influence that become the primary effect of this mental illness. The theories that will be used are theory of depression as a part from psychoanalysis criticism and sociological theory.

1.4 Goals and Functions

In coherence with the problem above, the goals of this study are:

1. To show the symptoms, causes, effects and treatments of depression illness that is showed by Elizabeth in the novel *Prozac Nation*.
2. To show that the unharmonious family's relationship can be the main factor of depression illness.
3. To show the way of Elizabeth's recovery to be released from the illness

The functions of this study are:

1. To help the future students who want to know more about depression theory as a part in psychoanalysis criticism, particularly the symptoms, causes, effects and also the treatments from this mental illness.

2. To show the readers that this mental illness or depression has the debilitating effect for their sufferer. They must get support from the other people, especially from the family and society to recover from this illness.

1.5 Research Methods

The writer uses qualitative method. He will conduct library research and website research. He will collect the information about the theory of depression and socio-psychological theory. He will conduct library research in Bina Nusantara University's Library (especially in Self Access Language Learning Centre), University of Indonesia's library and Atma Jaya University's library. Besides that, he also conducts website research in which he will use the search engines, such as Yahoo, Google and Info seek.