



**COMMITTING SUICIDE: A FAILURE IN REACHING AMERICAN
DREAM REFLECTED IN ARTHUR MILLER'S *DEATH OF A SALESMAN***

THESIS

Written by:

ANGGUN NIRMALA SAFITRI

NIM 080110101029

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS
JEMBER UNIVERSITY**

2014



**COMMITTING SUICIDE: A FAILURE IN REACHING AMERICAN
DREAM REFLECTED IN ARTHUR MILLER'S *DEATH OF A SALESMAN***

THESIS

Presented to the English Department,
Faculty of Letters, Jember University as One of the Requirements
to Get the Award of Sarjana Sastra Degree in English Study

Written by:

ANGGUN NIRMALA SAFITRI

NIM 080110101029

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS
JEMBER UNIVERSITY**

2014

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

- γ My beloved parents Santoso and Umi Nurin for their hard work, love, prayer, support and affection;
- γ My beloved brothers Bobby Lazuardi Santoso and Dandy Normansyah Ramadhani for their coming in this world;
- γ My Edhi Wibowo for his never-ending warmth;
- γ All of my friends, especially Titi, Niken, Ussi, Tam-tam, Sendi, Angga, Saka, and mas Alka for their support and friendship;
- γ My Alma Mater.

MOTTO

"...the more one has, the more one wants, since satisfactions received only stimulate instead of filling needs"

Emile Durkheim

DECLARATION

I hereby state that the thesis entitled **Committing Suicide: a Failure in Reaching American Dream Reflected in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*** is an original piece of writing. I declare that the analysis and the research described in this thesis have never been submitted for any other degree or any publication. I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used and any help received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

Jember, February 11th 2014
The Writer,

Anggun Nirmala Safitri
NIM 0801101029

APPROVAL SHEET

Approved and received by the Examination Committee of English Department, Faculty of Letters, Jember University.

Chairman,

Jember, February 11th 2014
Secretary,

Prof. Dr. H. Sutarto, M.A.
NIP. 194909211975031001

Irana Astutiningsih, S.S., M.A.
NIP.197407052005012001

The Members:

1. Drs. Imam Basuki, M.Hum. (.....)
NIP. 196309041989021001
2. Erna Cahyawati, S.S., M.Hum. (.....)
NIP. 197308271999032004
3. Dr. Ikwan Setiawan, M.A. (.....)
NIP. 197806262002121002

Approved by the Dean

(Dr. Hairus Salikin, M.Ed.)
NIP. 196310151989021001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praises to the Highest and the Almighty God to whom I kneel down and pray for His blessings and mercies so that I can finish my study. This thesis is written and well finished because of some supports. In this opportunity, I also would like to express my deepest appreciation and sincere thanks to:

1. Dr. Hairus Salikin, M.Ed, the Dean of Faculty of Letters, Jember University.
2. My consultants, Drs. Imam Basuki, M.Hum, my first advisor and Erna Cahyawati, S.S., M.Hum, my second advisor who have given me direct advices and spent much time to correct this thesis.
3. All of the lecturers of the English Department who have taught me the valuable knowledge.
4. The librarians of Faculty of Letters and the Central Library of Jember University.
5. Lembaga Pers Mahasiswa Sastra IDEAS for teaching me about brotherhood and soft skill.

I do realize that no one is perfect. The mistakes in this thesis belong to my being common creature. Finally, I hope this thesis will be useful especially for the progress of English Literature.

Jember, December, 2014

Anggun Nirmala Safitri

SUMMARY

Committing Suicide: a Failure in Reaching American Dream Reflected in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*; Anggun Nirmala Safitri, 080110101029; 2014: 52 pages; English Department Faculty of Letters, Jember University.

Death of a Salesman is a drama written by Arthur Miller. It tells about the suicide as the result of a failure in the attainment of American Dream. American Dream, an ethos which says that anything is possible to be attained through hard work, fails to be achieved. It is caused by the Great Depression that started in 1929. The depression had caused economic disorder which made the dream difficult to attain by Americans. Miller pictures the influence of Great Depression through the life of a common family, the Loman family. The suffering that is caused by the economic declines results in suicide.

There are three problems to discuss in this thesis. The first is the depictions of American Dream pursued by Willy Loman in the *Death of a Salesman*. The second is the cause of Loman's Suicide in the *Death of a Salesman*. And the last is how Loman's failure in reaching American Dream leads to suicide. Sociology of Literature is used to understand deeper the social condition of the era to get a clear description of the social events depicted in the drama. While Durkheim's theory of suicide is used to explain the suicide from sociological perspective. There are three steps of the analysis: the first is by identifying the depictions of American Dream pursued by Willy Loman. The next is by understanding Loman's abrupt economic transitions from sufficient to insufficient income and unemployment. The last is by explaining the suicide as a failure in reaching american dream.

The result of study shows that Loman has some desires that he wants to realize as the manifestation of American dream. Loman's desires are represented by the dream to become a successful person, the dream to have a more convenient house and the dream for his son to become a businessman. However, because of long lasting economic crisis which is called Great Depression, his dreams are unable to reach. He experiences abrupt financial declines so that he is not able to fulfill his needs as well as his dreams. His inability makes him commit suicide to get insurance money for his family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FRONTISPIECE	i
DEDICATION	ii
MOTTO	iii
DECLARATION.....	iv
APPROVAL SHEET	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
SUMMARY	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 The Background of the Study	1
1.2 The Problems to Discuss	3
1.3 The Goals of Study	3
CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
2.1 The Previous Research on the <i>Death of a Salesman</i>.....	4
2.2 An Overview of American Dream	5
2.3 Theoretical Review	8
2.3.1 Sociology of Literature.....	8
2.3.2 Durkheim’s Theory of Anomic Suicide	9
CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Type of Research	16
3.2 Type of Data.....	17
3.3 Data Collection	17
3.4 Data Analysis	18

CHAPTER 4. COMMITTING SUICIDE: A FAILURE IN REACHING	
 AMERICAN DREAM REFLECTED IN ARTHUR MILLER’S	
 <i>DEATH OF A SALESMAN</i>	
4.1 The Depictions of American Dream Pursued by Willy Loman	20
4.1.1 Loman’s Dream of Becoming a Successful Person.....	21
4.1.2 Loman’s Dream of Home.....	25
4.1.3 Loman’s Dream for His Son to be a Businessman.....	28
4.2 Loman’s Abrupt Transitions from Sufficient to Insufficient	
 Income and Unemployment	33
4.3 Committing Suicide as a Failure in Reaching American Dream..	39
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	45
APPENDICES	47