

**A CRITIQUE OF VICTORIAN MORALITY REFLECTED BY THE MAIN  
CHARACTER IN KATE CHOPIN'S *THE AWAKENING***

**THESIS**

**Written by:  
Lia Dwi Sanjaya  
100110101062**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
JEMBER UNIVERSITY  
2015**



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**THESIS**

A 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:  
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100110101062**

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## DEDICATION

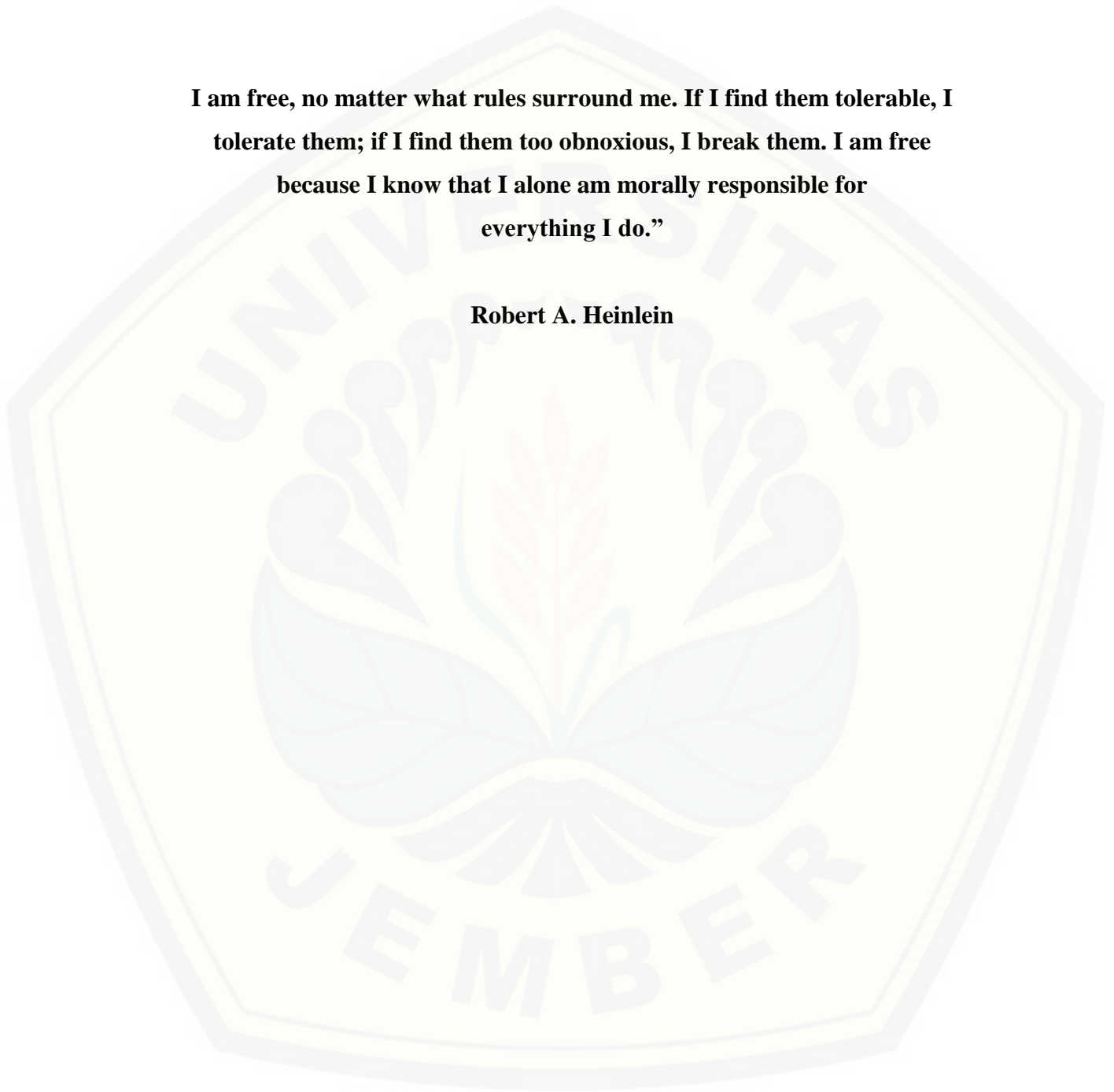
**This thesis is profoundly dedicated to:**

- My dearest parents, Kosim and Winartik, who always encourage me in every step of my study and pray for my success,
- My lovely sister, Feby F.Astutik, who become such a wise and cool sister, and my brother QikiNovantoro, thanks for your great support,
- My Alma Mater.

**MOTTO**

**I am free, no matter what rules surround me. If I find them tolerable, I tolerate them; if I find them too obnoxious, I break them. I am free because I know that I alone am morally responsible for everything I do.”**

**Robert A. Heinlein**



**DECLARATION**

I hereby state that the thesis entitled “**A Critique of Victorian Morality Reflected by The Main Character in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening***” is an original piece of writing. I declare that the analysis and the result described in this thesis have never been submitted for any degree or any publications.

I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used any help received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

Jember, September 2015  
The Writer

Lia Dwi Sanjaya  
100110101062

**APPROVAL SHEET**

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

Name : Lia Dwi Sanjaya  
Student Number : 100110101062  
Title : A Critique of Victorian Morality Reflected by The Main Character in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*  
Day/Date :  
Place : Faculty of Letters

Jember, September 2015

Examination Committee

Chairman,

Secretary,

(Dr. Eko Suwargono, M.Hum)

(Dra. Meilia Adiana, M.Pd.)

NIP. 196511061993031001

NIP. 195105211981032002

The Members:

1. Drs. Imam Basuki, M.Hum (.....)

NIP. 196309041989021001

2. Dra. Sopiastutik, M.Pd (.....)

NIP. 196605141998032001

Approved by the Dean

(Dr. Hairus Salikin, M.Ed)

NIP. 196310151989021001

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Lia Dwi Sanjaya

## SUMMARY

*A Critique of Victorian Morality Reflected by The Main Character in Kate Chopin's The Awakening; Lia Dwi Sanjaya, 100110101062; 2015; English Department Faculty of Letters, Jember University .*

*The Awakening* is a novel written by Kate Chopin in 1899. In her novel, Kate Chopin wants to show her critique towards Victorian Morality. Edna Pontellier is the main character who has the role to criticize Victorian Morality. Edna Pontellier as a controversial character in the novel struggles against the rule of society and being mother woman in the Victorian Era.

This thesis focuses on Edna's rebellion against the values as the indicator of Chopin's critique. Edna as the main female character breaks and rebels the conventional values surrounding her. The strongest influential factors that shape and influence Edna's rebellion are coming from the society, family and friendship. She breaks the conventional values by having free sexual partner, does not take care of her children and does not servesher husband. During the time, she flirts to other guy namedRobert, and shows her attention to him and rejects doing good behavior in her family. Moreover, this novel is interesting to analyze because the story of the novel teaches us many things in life, especially about Victorian Morality.

The discussion aims to analyze the Victorian morality working on the main character, Edna Pontillier, by using Moral Approach. It is used to analyze the moral of the main character by rejecting the Victorian Morality in the novel. Furthermore, theory of ethics by Immanuel Kant is used to analyze whether the main character, Edna Pontillier is categorized having good or bad moral. The deductive method is applied to analyze the general matter in the discussion to obtain the specific conclusion. Since this thesis is conducted by analyzing the words, sentences, and narration in the novel, qualitative research is applied. The other events or elements that do not have relation to rebellion against Victoian



Morality will not be observed. The author's motive in creating the novel, *The Awakening* is also discussed. Chopin wants to show that rigid moral in Victorian Era does not bring peaceful and comfortable for the society. It is actually a time of truly tied women for being mother women at home.

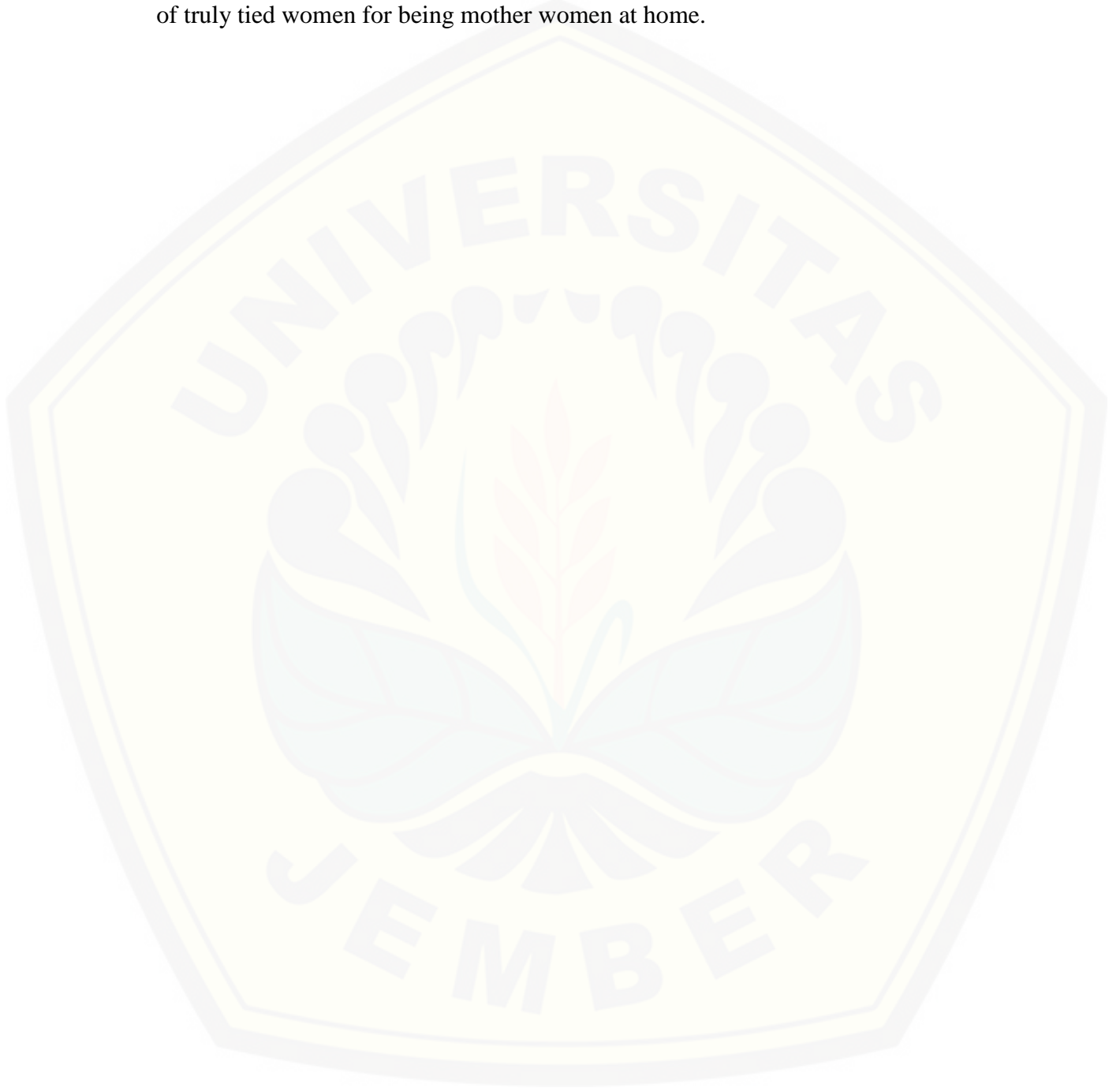


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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Novel as a form of literary work represents the ideology of period. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, novel is an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting (<http://www.britannica.com/dictionary/NOVEL>). From the statement above, novel reflects the idea of social condition during the certain era. The idea which is expressed in the novel doesn't come naturally from the author's mind, but it might describe the situation process and social condition in certain era. It means that the setting and the characters which are presented in the novel are fictional and the story is influenced by the social condition of human life in certain era.

A novel can be analyzed in several issues. One of its various issues is considered as a critique towards moral issues in a certain era, for instance Victorian Era. Victorian Era is an era which is well known with its strict rules; it is called as Victorian Morality. The moral critique of certain period can be conducted towards Victorian Morality which is reflected by the characters in the novel. Moral is a social system that controls human life. According to AS Hornby in *Oxford Learners Dictionary of Current English*, the term moral is defined as concerned with principles of right or wrong behavior (1995:755). The concept of right and wrong behavior determines attitude of someone. Victorian morality is a system of moral principles that control the people in the Victorian Era. Laura argued that:

“Victorian morality can be described as a set of values that supported sexual repression, low tolerance of crime, and a strong social ethic.”

(<http://www.laura-cenicola.de/brithist2/brithist/8-1-introduction-into-victorian-morality-what-exactly-was-the-victorian-era.html>)

From the statement above, during Victorian Era, the society is underpinned by rigid moral, with ideal forms of behavior. Victorian Era is an era during the reign of Queen Victoria over United Kingdom, from 1837 until 1901. Morality in Victorian Era is highly influenced by the increase of industrialization as the impact of industrial revolution. It does not only give positive aspects such as technology, invention, industrialization, but also gives negative effect on life. Industrial revolution is a time of development that many things are good and sufficient for human being. Most of Victorian literatures strongly focused on morality as well as the society oppresses the women's movement. Everyone has to obey the morality as the rule in the daily life. Victorian morality says characters with good attitudes are rewarded while characters who have bad attitudes will receive what they have done, they will receive their desserts in the end.

Victorian literature criticizes the deterioration of the society lifestyle and the increase of industrialization as the impact of industrial revolution. Thus, Victorian literatures are written with the intention of teaching morality to the readers and criticize the social condition in the time. Mitchel states in her book *Daily Life in Victorian England* that:

“Within the family, all legal authority rested with the father. Nevertheless, as middle-class advice books recognized, fathers who worked in business and the professions spent long hours away from home. Mothers were made responsible for moral and spiritual guidance, as well as for supervising all of the household's practical affairs. Fathers were typically distant and reserved” (Mitchel, 2009: 147).

From the statement above, in family roles the society marks women as an object that have the duty to take the responsibility at home and as the center of teaching morality to their children. This creates a protest towards society rules. The critique is called as moral movement because their perspectives about morality are absolutely different from the society point of view in the Victorian Era.

*The Awakening* is a novel written by Kate Chopin which has setting in New Orleans. This story takes place in the same period as Kate Chopin's life. This novel reflects the attitude of 19<sup>th</sup> century where men and women have certain defining roles. This novel is a novel centered on a woman named Edna Pontellier. Chopin in her novel *The Awakening* tells about the main character, Edna, who struggles to deal with the role of a woman in 1890's in America through her critique towards Victorian morality. *The Awakening* reflects that women are not able to truly express themselves in Victorian Era. The novel emphasizes the expectations of women in the Victorian Era, with its concerns about morality, proper behavior, and manners. In this research, the issue specifically discusses about the main character, Edna's rebellion against Victorian morality that appears in *The Awakening*. Mitchel states in her book *Daily Life in Victorian England* that:

“The most conventional image of the perfect Victorian woman is found in the title of a long poem written by Coventry Patmore: *The Angel in the House*. The pure woman's life was supposed to be entirely centered on the home. She preserved the higher moral values, guarded her husband's conscience, guided her children's training, and helped regenerate society through her daily display of Christianity in action. If she successfully made the home a place of perfect peace, her husband and sons would not want to leave it for an evening's (morally suspect) entertainment elsewhere” (Mitchel,2009:266).

From the statement above, in Victorian Era, there are many strict rules that have to be adhered especially to women. Women in the Victorian era must obey the rules that control their life such as to take care of the children, to

serve husbands, and being mother women. They are not allowed to work outside, earn money, and being independent women. Consider the idea of mother women, Chopin through her novel creates the main character, Edna, who has the role to criticize against Victorian morality. The novel is a form of a critique towards Victorian Morality because Chopin does not agree with the idea of strict rules at that time especially for woman. This novel shows how the main character reflects the critique towards Victorian morality.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

Concerning with the woman's rebellion in Kate Chopin *The Awakening*, the problems that will be discussed in this research are formulated in three questions:

1. How is Victorian Morality reflected in the novel?
2. How does Edna's rebellion appear in the novel related to Victorian morality?
3. What is the ideology brought by the author?

### **1.2 The Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is used to make more specific in analyzing the object of this thesis since there are many important points in the novel. The discussion of the thesis focuses on critique of Victorian morality conducted by the main character, Edna. The topic above leads to find the morality in Victorian Era. Secondly, the analysis leads to find how rebellion appears in the novel towards Victorian Morality. The last, the analysis leads to find the ideology of the author. The moral perspective used as the basis of theoretical review in this research is taken from Immanuel Kant's Theory of Ethics

#### 1.4 The Goals of the Study

There are some goals in writing this research. The first goal is to provide a description about morality that is legitimized in Victorian Era, especially for women. The second is to describe what is Edna's rebellion reflected in the novel. The last is to find the ideology brought by the author in the novel related to Victorian Era. In addition, I do hope that this research will contribute to readers, for the other students who are interested to analyze about Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. Furthermore, I hope this thesis can give valuable knowledge of moral critique and can help in conducting research about moral studies.



## CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 The Previous Researches

There are many researches related to the topic of my research. There are 2 previous researches that contribute to discuss this thesis. The first previous research is Ahmad Naufal's thesis conducted in 2013 entitled "*The Critique of Victorian Morality Implied in Oscar Wilde's the Importance of Being Earnest*". The second is Dede Nugraha's thesis conducted in 2012 entitled "*An Analysis of Atticus's Moral Values in Harper Lee's To Kill A Mockingbird*". Ahmad Naufal explores the morality through a well known comedy drama written by Oscar Wilde in his thesis. The drama criticizes the dark sides of the human beings and the society to awaken the consciousness of people. Naufal's thesis is highly concerned with the problem of society especially in Victorian Era. Using Nietzsche's theory, this thesis describes the concept of morality and the decadence of Victorian morality. This thesis is one of my previous researches because it has the same topic to discuss, a critique of Victorian morality. This research helps me to study about Victorian morality within a novel *The Important of Being Earnest*.

The second previous research is written by Dede Nugraha. His thesis describes the main character's moral values. Nugraha explores the moral values of Atticus through individual and social moral values. Atticus's individual moral values are about faith, good will, and bravery and social moral values are about friendship, care and love. The conclusion of Nugraha's thesis is to investigate the moral values through the main character, Atticus, which are clearly defined in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The data are taken to show how Atticus' moral values appear in the novel as the impact of a standard rule that was created by the society itself. "Rules exist in society as the standard of morality that is accepted and believed by the society" (Nugraha, 2012: viii). Nugraha's thesis has the same topic to discuss that is

about the standard rule created by society which must be followed by the society itself. If someone disobeys the standard rule, he will be categorized having bad moral, on the other hand if someone follows the rule, he will be categorized having good moral. This thesis helps how to analyze the data from a different novel, *The Awakening*. As Edna's disobedience becomes mother woman and she struggles against the society, so she is categorized as an immoral character in the novel. Her immorality in *The Awakening* is a form of critique towards Victorian morality.

## 2.2 The Approach to Use

Moral has contribution towards the world of literature. The moral approach in literary works is to raise dignity and values of human being. The term moral used in this study is explained by Wilbur S. Scott in *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism*. He states that:

“Man is a being who may be distinguished from the animal by his reason and his possession of ethical standards. He stands as a free being, prone to animalistic urges or egocentric yawps; but is responsible to place these tendencies, insofar as he wishes to cultivate his peculiarly human nature, under the control of reason. Freedom is thus not only liberation from circumstances, but subjection to “inner law”. So the watchwords of Humanism are order, restraint, discipline “ (Scott, 1962:23-24).

AS Hornby states in *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* that ethic is a system of moral principles or rule of behavior (1995:393). The term moral is defined as concerned with principles of right or wrong behavior (1995:755). From the statements above, it is clear that ethics is theory of moral values that will assess the action while moral is the practical on the actions of doing good or bad behavior. This approach discusses moral values prevailed in society.

It can be concluded that, moral approach is used to analyze and find moral values that appear through the characters' behavior. The characters' behavior depends

on how the writer constructs the characteristic of each character inspired by the social condition. Thus, through the characterization, the writer shows that literary works bring a certain social condition and social life. The writer brings his ideology and critique through his literary work, for instance novels, poems, short stories etc. Therefore, the research is narrowed on studying a critique toward Victorian morality conducted by the main character in the novel, *The Awakening*. It will show the moral value of the main character in Victorian era at that time. It is as a protest towards a set of principles in Victorian Era that tied people especially for women. This research will be discussed why such character acts in such way. By using this approach, the analysis concerns to analyze rebellion against Victorian morality implied by Edna as the main character.

### **2.3 The Overview of Moral**

Moral is seen by judging goodness or badness of human action or behavior. Discussing morality does not simply talk about the standard of right or wrong. The term morality deals with many aspects of life such as religion, lifestyle, value, belief, discipline, custom and judgment of a certain age. Morality is defined as social judgment towards people's behavior determining on what side people belong to, good or bad moral. It is also determined by socio cultural aspects. The morality of a person whether he is good or bad depends on how the society views such phenomenon. The theory above is used to discuss what the standard moral concept is received within the view of the society. Then, if the moral concepts are well established and applied within the character behavior, she will be categorized having a good moral. On the other hand, if the moral concepts are rejected, then the doer will be sorted as having bad moral.

Moral is considered as a social system that works on and controls human life as a belief. The belief creates the reason why people to do so, to be categorized into two conducts, good or bad. Brandt in his book *Fact, Values and Morality* states that:

“Every social system presupposes... basic moral axiom. They are implicit in the categories of values and behavior which we sum up in concepts such as rights, duties, justice, amity, respect, wrong, sin. Such concepts occur in every known society, though the kind of behavior and the content of values covered by them vary enormously” ( Brandt,1996:75).

Morality can be assumed as the unspoken rules of right and wrong which can only be determined through behavior. The character’s behavior will belong to good moral if she behaves well. The word behave is the word to make character to act in accepted moral.

Moral, in the novel, appears as the conduct of the characters. Characters as the element of prose bring different moral values that can be analyzed to understand characterization. Furthermore, the analysis is related to the discussion on how such character can establish and has different morality from another.

## **2.4 Theory of Ethics by Immanuel Kant**

Morality is principle of life that shows people to act based on the standards of right and wrong by means of teaching them goodness and correctness of behavior in their life. To make the concepts of morality more obscure, it will be supported by a relevant theory. The theory that supports the analysis is Theory of Ethics by Immanuel Kant. The theory consists of the goodwill, duty, reason and freedom, and consciousness. This theory is the relevant theory to match with the character of Edna as a protagonist in *The Awakening*. The theory will be interpreted in the following:

### **2.4.1 Goodwill**

Goodwill, in Kant’s theory of ethics, is the only thing in the world that can be called goodness without qualification. Goodwill in other words is the concept of giving someone without hurting her feeling instead of support his good will that can

possibly turn into passion. Goodwill is a way to encourage someone with compassion and modest heart. People with goodwill might accomplish good deeds, but producing beneficial outcomes is not what makes goodwill. Even someone's best efforts at doing goodness should fall short and cause harm, the goodwill behind the efforts is still good. People might have opinion that the motivation which makes an action good is having a good goal such as to make people happy or to provide some benefit but that is not the right sort of motive. Kant in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* states that:

“closer investigations into human nature shows what propensities in it are particularly relevant to virtue; it shows, for example, that "affects" can indeed coexist with what the *Groundwork* called a "good will," now specified as a virtuous disposition, whereas "passions" enter more readily into kinship with vices, which are incompatible with a virtuous disposition (Kant, 1991:17).

From the statement above, goodwill has different meaning from passion where passion involves vices that people sometime unaware to do so. Goodwill in other words can be defined as something virtuous where it is purely an essence of doing something good without expecting something good in return. Next level will bring people to the evilwill as the obstacle of goodwill. Evilwill possibility appears in every aspect of lives. Thus, people should have ability to solve evilwill instead of turning it into a good will. Moreover, people should know how to increase and boost their good will in higher level. Kant also argues that:

“harmony of a being's will with its final end, requires him first to remove the obstacle within (an evil will actually present in him) and then to develop the original predisposition to a good will within him, which can never be lost. (Only the descent into the hell of self-knowledge can pave the way)” (Kant, 1991:236).

Kant's theory gives an example to see friendship as the form of goodwill. The concept of friendship definition is a relationship that may lead people to happiness. It happens because people share something each other so it comes along respecting. However, even friendship is a way to bring happiness, but friendship does not cover all happiness in the world but the good will inside designates it so. Kant in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* states about friendship that:

*“Friendship (considered in its perfection) is the union of two persons through equal mutual love and respect. It is easy to see that this is an ideal of each participating and sharing sympathetically in the other's well-being through the morally good will that unites them, and even though it does not produce the complete happiness of life, the adoption of this ideal in their disposition toward each other makes them deserving of happiness; hence men have a duty of friendship”* (Kant, 1991:261).

It is clear that people consider their will carefully to reach happiness. The selection of will will influence moral character in conducting an action. The will leads moral dimension of act. As what has been stated previously, in friendship, there is always goodwill where it will bring happiness to the people.

#### **2.4.2 Duty**

Theory of duty is concerned with what people do, not with the consequences of their actions. Someone who follows the theory of duty should do the right things, even if that produces more harm or less good result. This theory in other words teaches that some acts are right or wrong because of the sorts of things they are, and people have a duty to act accordingly, regardless of good or bad consequences that may be produced. People do the action for the sake of moral responsibility, not because of other tendency. Kant argues in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* that:

“from the *Doctrine of Right*. Again, one can be coerced to perform an action but not to set an end. One's duty is that which is prescribed by a law. Hence the duties prescribed by external laws, laws that can be given by another, can consist only in actions. Only internal or ethical lawgiving can prescribe as duties the adoption of ends. From the perspective of duty, ethics is again distinguished from the *Doctrine of Right*. If obligation can be called "what is formal" and duty "what is material" in any lawgiving, ethics is a separate division of moral philosophy with regard to both the form and the matter of the moral determination of choice. This accords well enough with Kant's division of a metaphysics of morals” (Kant, 1991:19).

The theory believes that we do the right thing because it is right, and for no other reason, and that we hold ourselves up to the standard of principles. Doing right things are simple, no matter how we feel about them. They only need to be done and we quite simply need to do them. It is not because we are heroic, but we want to be true. So, people do something good if they are doing a morally right action. For example, a person must tell a lie in order to save a friend from a murderer. In moral doctrine says that telling a lie is bad moral. In this situation, however in terms of law it is an obligation to help people but there is a context people should consider whether he must tell the truth that it can cause his friend murdered or tell lie to save his friend from a murderer. Kant also states his theory in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* that:

“in all lawgiving (whether it prescribes external or internal actions and whether it prescribes them a priori by reason alone or by the choice of another) there are two elements, **first** a law which represents action that is to be done as *objectively* necessary, that is, which makes the action a duty; and **second**, an incentive, which connects a ground for determining choice to this action *subjectively* with the representation of the law. Hence, the second element is this: that the law makes duty the incentive. By the first the action is represented as a duty, and this is a merely theoretical” (Kant, 1991:46-47).

The first and the second idea from the statement above show that the duty to help person is a duty but the incentive to do so plays a bigger role to make someone acts the moral. Moral in society is absolute but it becomes subjective when it comes into a real context of situation. Theory of duty questions someone moral's values to call his humanity. This theory can be translated into a responsibility which should be taken by someone by adjusting himself with the context of situation when such event happens. Some kinds of action are wrong or right in themselves, regardless of the consequences.

Theory of duty appears in the story when Edna disobeys the rules of society. She has to take care of her children and husband. As a woman, she should follow the social rules and principles but she goes too far. The theory of duty as a woman is neglected. In real life, the theory of duty may represent good or bad moral as it is implemented also in many character. Woman is considered to have a good moral if she obeys the rule made by society, but she will be considered having bad moral if they dare to violate the rules. This theory requires an understanding to perform good sense of morality with the moral values of the character.

#### **2.4.3 Reason and Freedom**

Reason is the basis or motive for an action, decision, or conviction, and freedom is the condition of being free of restraints. Freedom is an idea of reason that serves an indispensable practical function. Reason cannot act without the assumption of freedom, the assumption of being free. Kant's theory sees that being purely rational purely reasonable and being autonomously free are the same thing. Kant in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* states that:

“We must understand, on the contrary, by the term freedom, in the cosmological sense, a faculty of the spontaneous origination of a state; the causality of which, therefore, is not subordinated to another cause determining it in time. Freedom is in this sense a pure transcendental



idea, which, in the first place, contains no empirical element; the object of which, in the second place, cannot be given or determined in any experience, because it is universal law of the very possibility of experience, that everything which happens must have a cause, that consequently the causality of a cause, being itself something that has happened, must also have a cause” (Kant, 2010 :317).

The reason has an unavoidable interest in thinking of itself as free. That is, theoretical reason cannot demonstrate freedom, but practical reason must assume for the purpose of action. Reason creates the idea of a spontaneity which can begin to act of itself, and according to the natural law of causality. Having the ability to apply reason puts us outside that system of causal events. Hence, people are supposed to be free to express themselves through reasoning even they must oppose an absolute power or dogmatism.

The theory of reason and freedom is not a medium to accept what has been stated through generations, but more into taking liberty to question every phenomenon. This mental puts logic before everything and question the morality. For instance, a child will never stop questioning her mother if the answer never fits with his intriguing mind or cannot answer the questions with acceptable reason. In this situation, a child has a freedom to question and experiment it to seek the answer. For instance, a child will never obey her parents not to eat pepper because it is hot. His disobedience is valued as bad moral but there is a good reason doing it and freedom to experience it. The moral value is quite difficult to determine since it demands a contextual situation.

The theory of reason and freedom, in the novel, are shown when Edna rebels being a mother woman because she cannot give her life for her family. She is lack of love from her husband and she rebels the moral values in Victorian Era such as idolized their children, worshiped her husband, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface herself as individual and grew wings as ministering angel. Reason is the process where Edna tries to flirt with another guy, Robert, to get love, and freedom is shown

when she decides to jump into the sea. She gets freedom of her decision of her life. The reason and freedom are generated through analytical process, reasoning is also the key. It is concluded that the decision to get freedom is to decide the end of Edna's life because she never gets what she wants from her family.

#### **2.4.4 Consciousness**

Men are tied up with the dictates of reason to move the consciousness. People are sensible, intellectual, and rational. They are neither wholly determined to act by natural and rational impulse. The natural and rational impulse are done by full of consciousness. This consciousness will lead people to the rules of conduct. People need principle that declares how they ought to act when it is in their power to choose. Kant comments about consciousness:

“The consciousness of self (apperception) is simply representation of the “ego”; and if by means of that representation alone, all the manifold representations in the subject were spontaneously given, then our internal intuition would be intellectual. This consciousness in man requires an internal perception of manifold representations which are previously given in the subject; and the manner in which these representations are given in the mind without spontaneity, must, on account of this difference (the want of spontaneity), be called sensibility. In the faculty of consciousness is to apprehend what lies in the mind, it must all act that and can in this way alone produce an intuition of self” (Kant, 2010:60-61).

Consciousness can be defined as the manifestation of reason as people analyze any occurrences during their daily activity, their consciousness dictates them to sort many information in accordance with logic. Consciousness is the result of reasoning process, the information which cannot be accepted logically will be rejected, this happens when people deal with a phenomenon. People need principle to rule how they supposed to act when it is in their power to choose. Since people find themselves as human being that will experience the situation of processing reason,

being able to act according to their own perception of rules, there is a burden on them. The ability to choose the principle to guide actions, people should manage their power of consciousness, their will and reason to act. Thus people has power of their consciousness should select and sort on how they should manifest the acts to make thing tolerable. In this situation, people must exercise their will and reason to act. Will is the capacity to act according to the principles provided by reason and reason assumes freedom and conceives of principles of action in order to function.

Theory of consciousness is the next level of theory of reason. The consciousness plays a big role to decide Edna's act. In this case, Edna takes decision to jump to the sea after seeing that she is lack of love and doesn't get any happiness in her life. The decision shows that consciousness works on this duty. The consciousness plays as the reason should consolidate and adjust itself into a more supportive context. This theory of consciousness is also considered to be a mental state where a person learns to realize what good for him and also considers the response of the society to accept his or her action. Making a decision of what is good and wrong for someone takes the reason to do so. Hence, reasoning is the basic idea before consciousness comes to the surface, if the consciousness is able to compromise with the surrounding.

### **2.5 Repositioning Moral Approach**

Morality judgment is subjective and relative. The judgment is based on the basic element of morality; the accepted rules or principles of law. The idea of morality can be considered as a good or bad moral in the same time. It depends on what point of view that the society perceives the idea. Everyone can render his idea and maintain it as long as the idea is rationale, explainable and can be accepted. Since morality follows the progress of people, culture and civilization of the world, morality becomes dynamic and changeable. In every era, it has its own characterization of morality. It can be concluded that morality is principle of life that conducts people to act based on the standards of right and wrong by means of teaching them goodness of behavior. To

know how is good or bad morality of somebody, the decision should be taken or done in a certain situation and seen through the acts they perform. It is also determined by socio culture aspects.

Moral critical approach is as a vehicle to help the readers to understand characterization, the good or bad moral, despite social and psychological characterization. Studying literature using moral approach is therefore to determine whether a work conveys a lesson or message to the readers. *The Awakening* brings a message to the readers. Using moral approach, it shows that Edna as the main character in the novel has strongly bad moral. Edna's immorality is done by full of consciousness of herself. Edna rebels the society as being a mother woman in the Victorian Era. It is as a critique towards social condition of Victorian morality that oppressed woman's rights at that time.

## CHAPTER 3. THE METHOD OF RESEARCH

The role of research design and methodology to formulate a good thesis is important. This subchapter deals with the procedure of the research. It includes type of the research, data collection, data processing and data analysis. All of these procedures make this thesis clear to understand.

### 3.1 Type of Research

This thesis uses qualitative research to collect the data which are relevant to the topic discussion about a critique of Victorian Morality reflected in the novel, *The Awakening*. It concerns with material and information which are taken from books, dictionaries, articles, journals and references to support the analysis in the form of non numeric data. The propensity of doing qualitative research is doing exploration and explication toward text as detailed as possible (Blaxter, 2006:64). In this research I want to analyze about rebellion against Victorian Morality reflected in *The Awakening*.

### 3.2 Data Collection

Every research is conducted by choosing and organizing the relevant technique and the equipment of data collection. It also needs a suitable method to give the objectivity of the result of the research. As Blaxter states that documentary method is a method in collecting data by using written materials as a basis for the research by reading ( Blaxter, 2006:15). Documentary is applied in this research as the technique of data collection. Blaxter states that:

“Documentary analysis proceeds by abstracting from each document those elements which we consider to be important or relevant, and by

grouping together these findings, or setting them alongside others which we believe to be related. What you see or read in documents will be a product of your viewpoint, discipline or focus” (Blaxter,2006:208).

Documentary analysis is used to give classification about important or relevant information which are found from some references to be the material which support the topic of this research.

The data collection of this research is arranged by the data from some sources. The writer uses the novel of Kate Chopin *The Awakening* as the source data. The primary data include the dialogues or sentences which are used as the proof in my analysis. In collecting the primary data, firstly, I do close reading to the novel, *The Awakening*. Secondly, I find out the words, sentences, and also dialogues that indicate the representation of Victorian morality. Then I highlight those words, sentences, and also dialogues. This primary data are supported by the secondary data which are taken from some information in the references, such as taken from the books, papers, journals, articles, and the data that used in the previous researches. The other sources are found from internet as supporting reference. In processing and collecting the secondary data. Firstly, I do close reading to the books and references that is related to the topic discussion about Victorian Morality. Secondly, I find the words, sentences, and statements to support the topic discussion Victorian morality. Then, I understand and comprehend the Theory of Ethics by Immanuel Kant. The last, I process the data from primary data using the Theory of Ethics by Immanuel Kant.

### **3.3 Data Processing and Data Analysis**

This thesis uses deductive method analysis because the discussion of this thesis goes from the general to the specific discussion. It starts with the general idea about the morality in Victorian Era which appears in society goes to the specific

discussion about the rebellion and morality of the main character in the novel. This way of reasoning will produce a specific conclusion about the topic.

There are some steps to do this research. Firstly, by using moral approach to find the data related to morality. Those data are described in order to answer the question about the main character's morality, Edna, in the novel *The Awakening*. Secondly, is to find out morality in Victorian era. Secondly, it is to describe Edna, as the main character, rebels against the Victorian morality. The last is to find the ideology of Victorian morality in the novel *The Awakening*. The data which are related with the problem to discuss in this research will be used to answer some research questions. This data processing step is necessary to ensure proper data for the analysis in this thesis. Immanuel Kant's Theory of Ethics is used as the basis of the analysis. The data from the novel are used to examine how the main character's morality in the novel is. Moreover, the statements in the novel are used to support the analysis completely.

## **CHAPTER 4. A CRITIQUE OF VICTORIAN MORALITY REFLECTED BY THE MAIN CHARACTER IN KATE CHOPIN'S *THE AWAKENING***

This chapter is the next step of the previous chapters. The theory from the previous chapter will be applied to analyze the sorted data. Since the main discussion is the critique towards Victorian Morality in the novel *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, the extension of the discussion will cover the rebellion against Victorian Morality reflected by the main character, Edna. Moreover, this chapter describes morality in Victorian Era and Edna's rebellion toward Victorian Morality in the novel. This chapter also explains about the ideology of the author, Kate Chopin which is brought in the novel *The Awakening*.

### **4.1 Victorian Morality in Victorian Era Related to the Novel *The Awakening***

*The Awakening* is a novel written by Kate Chopin published in 1899. This story takes place in the same period as Chopin's life. This novel reflects the idea of Victorian morality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Victorian Morality is principles that control people in the Victorian Era. Victorian Era is an era during the reign of Queen Victoria over the United Kingdom, from 1837 until her death in 1901. Victorian morality is well known as rigid moral, strict to the rules, so the society must obey the morality as the rule in daily life. Nelson argues in his book entitled *Family ties in Victorian Era* that:

“Many people, for example, believe that Victorian society was safe, family-centered, and stable because women could not work outside the home, although every census taken during the period records hundreds of thousands of female laborers in fields, factories, shops, and schools as well as more than a million domestic servants—often girls of fourteen or fifteen—whose long and unregulated workdays created the comfortable leisured world we see in Merchant and Ivory films. Yet it is also true that there were women who had no household duties and desperately wished for some purpose in life but found that social



expectations and family pressure absolutely prohibited their presence in the workplace” ( Nelson, 2007:ix).

Victorian Era is often idealized as a model of parental authority, loving relationships, inner harmony, and straight to the society expectation. It supports the idea of rigid moral in Victorian morality. In the late nineteenth century, also known as the Victorian Era, women have no place to work outside instead of staying at home with household duties. There is a little possibility to get freedom and they are essentially the property of their husbands. Their main duties and privileges as women and wives are to take care of their children and please their husbands. In the Victorian Era, women have been marginalized and oppressed by the society because physically women are weaker than men. Women just have roles in private and domestic area, such as being mother women at home, take care of children, teach morality to their children, decorate and cleaning the house, serve their husbands and dedicate their life for their family. Chopin in her novel *The Awakening* writes :

“The mother women seemed to prevail that summer at Grand Isle. It was easy to know them, fluttering about with extended, protecting wings when any harm, real or imaginary, threatened their precious brood. They were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels” ( Chopin, 2014:11).

“If one of the little Pontellier boys took a tumble whilst at play, he was not apt to rush crying to his mother's arms for comfort; he would more likely pick himself up, wipe the water out of his eyes and the sand out of his mouth, and go on playing. Tots as they were, they pulled together and stood their ground in childish battles with doubled fists and uplifted voices, which usually prevailed against the other mother-tots. The quadron nurse was looked upon as a huge encumbrance, only good to button up waists and panties and to brush and part hair; since it seemed to be a law of society that hair must be parted and brushed”( Chopin,2014:10).

The description above shows that Chopin describes the typical of mother woman in Grand Isle in the Victorian Era. The mother women in this case are defined as the

women who idolize their children, worship husbands, and esteem it a holy privilege. They are formed by the society to be mother women who fully dedicate herself to their family. In the novel, *The Awakening*, Chopin symbolizes women as ministering angel means that women are placed to be ready anytime when their family needs them.

Victorian society believes that Victorian morality with rigid moral and strict to the rule will bring peace, often portrays as peaceful, comfortable, but it is actually a time of truly breathtaking change and oppress women. Women find that social expectations and family pressure absolutely prohibited their presence in the workplace. Moreover, they have to follow the society rules and society expectation instead of experience multiple oppression. The husband has role to be the leader at home, feeds the family and makes money, while women have to stay at home doing the household duties.

“He was returning to the city to his business, and they would not see him again at the Island till the coming Saturday. He had regained his composure, which seemed to have been somewhat impaired the night before. He was eager to be gone, as he looked forward to a lively week in Carondelet Street” (Chopin, 2014:9).

“Mr. Pontellier gave his wife half of the money which he had brought away from Klein's hotel the evening before”(Chopin, 2014:9).

The quotation above explains that in Victorian Era, women don't have any chances to have place working outside. Men have to accept and exercise leadership. They live up to their own standards, as businessman or professional men that are honorable and dependable. Men have economic control over their family, their wives, and their children because the family depends on their income. In family, men have strong authority work in business and spend long hours in their professions. Men send their wife money while women arrange the money for household requirement. Mitchel argues in his book *Daily Life in Victorian England* that:

“Upper-class parents delegated the entire care of children to a nurse (or *nanny*)” (Mitchell, 2009:150).

“The full-fledged nanny was a professional who had full charge of the children and their upbringing. Mothers recognized their own amateur status and deferred to a nanny’s training and experience” (Mitchell,2009:150).

Wives, in taking of children, are helped by nanny or nurse. The roles of nanny is a helper who takes care of the children, looks after them, and feeds them and accompanies them playing. Children spend almost their time with the nanny. The idealized nanny was largely a figure of late-Victorian and Edwardian upper-class households. Most nursemaids and nurse girls could more properly be described as child-minders or mother’s helpers (Mitchell, 2009:150). Mothers pay little attention to what goes on from day to day towards their children. However, mothers still have big roles toward their children’s development. They have to be ready anytime when their children need them such as when the children cry and need hugs. They have to be good mothers who give and dedicate their life to them. So, even though the nanny takes some part towards children, mothers still have big authority and responsibility towards their children.

The society judges that women are the center of family. They must bring happiness and peace at home for their family, their husbands, and their children. They must have higher moral values as a mirror their children because women have role to teach, guide their children about morality and serve their husbands and dedicate her life for family. Women in Victorian Era are expected to have a good attitude, follow the rules of the society with its concerns about morality, proper behavior and manners. They have to keep the essence of morality, stability, and comfort at home. Women are legally subordinate and obedient to their husband and somehow are supposed to rule the home. Men have economic control over their family because the family depends on his income. The managers at home are women. They are as

provider for food, clothing, cleanliness, and comfort necessary to health, and for the good nursing necessary in sickness. Women have to be kept safe at home, their perfect compliance, obedience, and being mother women will make them accepted in society life as good wife and mother. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Victorian morality has come to imply prudery, hypocrisy, sexual repression, and rigid social control. Victorian Era sees women as mothers and wives who have role to take care of their children and serve her husband.

## **4.2 Edna's Rebellion Against Victorian Morality Reflected in the Novel *The Awakening***

### **4.2.1 Rebellion Against Being Mother Woman**

Kate Chopin in her novel, *The Awakening* describes that family is the second factor after society that has strong influence in shaping women identity. The family treats women that they have to follow family's rules and are arranged by parents. Parents want to see their children to be good successful women. Successful women are described as having successful husband and good life. Chopin states that:

“Her marriage to Leonce Pontellier was purely an accident, in this respect resembling many other marriages which masquerade as the decrees of Fate. It was in the midst of her secret great passion that she met him. He fell in love, as men are in the habit of doing, and pressed his suit with an earnestness and an ardor which left nothing to be desired. He pleased her; his absolute devotion flattered her. She fancied there was a sympathy of thought and taste between them, in which fancy she was mistaken. Add to this the violent opposition of her father and her sister Margaret to her marriage with a Catholic, and we need seek no further for the motives which led her to accept Monsieur Pontellier for her husband”( Chopin, 2014:22).

The statement above implies that Edna rebels her family. She wants to show her family that she wants to marry a man and ignores the background and the religion of her husband. Leonce Pontillier is a Catholic. He is a kind husband who wants Edna

being mother woman who fully dedicates herself to the family such as takes care of children and serves husband. Her marriage brings her in suffering and expectation being a good wife and mother at home. Later she realizes that her marriage is an accident and brings her in bad life. She realizes the existence of herself in the world.

“In short, Mrs. Pontellier was beginning to realize her position in the universe as a human being, and to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her. This may seem like a ponderous weight of wisdom to descend upon the soul of a young woman of twenty-eight--perhaps more wisdom than the Holy Ghost is usually pleased to vouchsafe to any woman”( Chopin, 2014:17).

*The Awakening* introduces the reader to the life of Edna Pontellier, a woman who struggles to find love and her true identity in a rigid society that expects woman to be nothing more than devoted wife and nurturing mother. Her identity is defined by the awakening of her soul, the awakening of her social life, and her role in society. Edna transforms herself with a disobedient character and emotions which she no longer has to repress. Her transformation is shaped by her surroundings. Her behavior turns to be more shocking and horrifying because of her position in society, it is that position which causes her to feel restrained and makes her yearn to rebel. Edna attempts to find the deepest truth about her by not conforming to society's norms. Moreover, Edna discovers that she wants more out of life, something about her marriage is not allowing her to achieve fulfillment. Through her relationships, confrontations, and conflicts with other characters and society norms, Edna discovers herself of being under control.

Edna's behavior questions morality that exists at that time in the novel. Edna Pontellier, places herself in the position to be the individual going against society from the beginning of the novel. In the beginning of the novel, Edna's characteristics and actions are worthy of rebuke lead to a breakdown of her moral integrity. In social life, people live with two concepts, bad or good moral. The good thing is something

that brings benefits but the bad thing is something that makes people lose something, or having a harmful effect. From that idea, bad moral is defined as a peculiar behaviour which results in violating the laws and norms of the people in a certain circumstances. People can be considered doing bad moral according to the context of the social condition surroundings. Kant provides more emphasizes to the understanding of bad moral in different contextual situation. He asserts reason and knowledge as a tool to determine people behaviour, in this case bad moral. He argues in his book *The Methaphysis of Morals* that:

“The rule of right and wrong must help us to the knowledge of what is right or wrong in all possible cases; otherwise, the idea of obligation or duty would be utterly null, for we cannot have any obligation to that which we cannot know. On the other hand, in our investigations of the phenomena of nature, much must remain uncertain, and many questions continue insoluble; because what we know of nature is far from being sufficient to explain all the phenomena that are presented to our observation” (Kant, 1991:288).

The statement above shows that the life is based on the knowledge of particular person. However, Kant’s theory cannot answer the whole negativity of the world because the knowledge is limited until it is developed.

The novel describes the social condition in the Victorian era where women are expected to provide well-kept homes and being mother women. Edna as the main character in the novel is described her protest toward Victorian morality that ties and limits her. In her husband's eyes she fails in her duties as a wife and as a mother to her own children. What her husband expects from her is never what she does.

“Mr. Pontellier had forgotten the bonbons and peanuts for the boys. Notwithstanding he loved them very much, and went into the adjoining room where they slept to take a look at them and make sure that they were resting comfortably. The result of his investigation was far from satisfactory. He turned and shifted the youngsters about in bed. One of them began to kick and talk about a basket full of crabs.

Mr. Pontellier returned to his wife with the information that Raoul had a high fever and needed looking after. Then he lit a cigar and went and sat near the open door to smoke it.”

“Mrs. Pontellier was quite sure Raoul had no fever. He had gone to bed perfectly well, she said, and nothing had failed him all day. Mr. Pontellier was too well acquainted with fever symptoms to be mistaken. He assured her the child was consuming at that moment in the next room.”

“He reproached his wife with her inattention, her habitual neglect of the children. If it was not a mother's place to look after children, whose on earth was it? He himself had his hands full with his brokerage business. He could not be in two places at once; making a living for his family on the street, and staying at home to see that no harm befell them. He talked in a monotonous, insistent way” (Chopin, 2014:8).

The quotation above shows that Leonce is severely displeased by Edna's refusal to submit to his demands. Leonce asks Edna to check that Raoul seems to have fever but she replies that the child is fine when he goes to bed. Leonce insists that she does not attend her duty for her habitual neglect to the children. After a cursory visit to the boys' bedroom, Edna returns to bed, refusing to answer any of her husband's inquiries. She finds herself unhappy many times before and feels comfortable by the kindness and devotion of her husband. Edna experiences multiple oppression. His criticism about Edna is a negligent mother that reveals trapped by society, Edna is shunned by the society for her deviation from its norms. Furthermore, Leonce does not regard his wife as a partner in marriage but as a possession. When he notices that she is sunburned from swimming, he looks at her “as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage” (Chopin, 2014:4).

"Oh! I don't know. Let me alone; you bother me."

“It sometimes entered Mr. Pontellier's mind to wonder if his wife were not growing a little unbalanced mentally. He could see plainly that she was not herself. That is, he could not see that she was becoming herself and daily casting aside that fictitious self which we assume like a garment with which to appear before the world” (Chopin, 2014:69).

The quotation above explains that Leonce feels her wife is totally different after Robert left her to Mexico. When Leonce and his family come back to his home in New Orleans, Edna turns to be different and careless. She is more careless to her duty, does not take care of children and husband and cannot be a good hostess for her husband's guest. Edna replies that she is not at home to receive visitors, nor does she leave the servants with an excuse with which they might placate her guests. Her condition makes Leonce feel angry with her because she neglects her social duties. He wonders what happens to her wife since she has backed home.

Edna often visits her best friends, Madam Ratiognalle and Madam Lebrun or painting any objects in New Orleans. From her daily painting, she can make money and this condition makes Edna financially independent. She occupies her time with painting rather than domestic chores. When Leonce notices her neglect of household chores, he is worried about the negative effect in Edna's actions which may have on his social standing. Her activity makes her ignore to stay at home as the family centre. She begins to rebel being a mother woman instead of to be an independent woman. This condition also makes one of her best friend Madam Ratiognalle worry about Edna's family condition and her condition as a mother woman for her husband and her children. Edna tells Madam Ratiognalle that she will never sacrifice herself for anyone, even for her children. Leonce feels dissatisfied with Edna's treatment to their children. Unlike the others, who are mother-women, Edna does not idolize her children or worship her husband at the cost of her own individuality.

"Edna had once told Madame Ratignolle that she would never sacrifice herself for her children, or for any one.

I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, I would give my life for my children; but I wouldn't give myself. I can't make it more clear; it's only something which I am beginning to comprehend, which is revealing itself to me.

I don't know what you would call the essential, or what you mean by the unessential," said Madame Ratignolle, cheerfully; but a woman



who would give her life for her children could do no more than that-- your Bible tells you so. I'm sure I couldn't do more than that." Oh, yes you could! laughed Edna" (Chopin, 2014:57).

From the quotation above, Madam Ratiognalle reminds her about what the Bible said about the duty of woman in the family. It does not about give her children money but it about gives her life for family and for children. The women in family should totally dedicate themselves for the family because they are called as ministering angel at home. Mothers have to be ready at home and handle all the things at home. In this case, Madam Ratiognalle has different view about commonly woman in Victorian Era. Madam Ratiognalle is a good figure of woman in the Victorian Era. She follows the society's norms that her duty is at home as a wife that serves her husband and a mother for her children.

Adelle Ratiognalle is described as a mother woman in *The Awakening*. She is an example of great woman in Victorian Era. She overdoes her mother and wife role while at the same time allowing glimpses of her true self to emerge from that role. Her true self is confident and powerful. She is labeled as a mother woman who has passionless and self-sacrificing. Adele Ratignolle embodies all the grace and charm of a romantic heroine, is the prime example of the mother-woman.

Edna's rebellion is seen when she moves to pigeon house. Edna's move to the "pigeon house" also allows her to move away from her husband's possessive holds over her. She wants to show that she becomes an independent woman.

"The pigeon house pleased her. It at once assumed the intimate character of a home, while she herself invested it with a charm which it reflected like a warm glow. There was with her a feeling of having descended in the social scale, with a corresponding sense of having risen in the spiritual. Every step which she took toward relieving herself from obligations added to her strength and expansion as an individual. She began to look with her own eyes; to see and to apprehend the deeper undercurrents of life. No longer was she content

to "feed upon opinion" when her own soul had invited her" (Chopin, 2014:112).

Edna no longer has to look at the material objects that Leonce has purchased, and which reminds her of his ownership of her. Edna does not need to be a mother woman who takes care of children and serves her husband. She can behave as she likes, without regarding how others will view her actions. It does provide Edna with independence and isolation, allowing her to progress in her sexual awakening and to throw off Leonce's authority.

#### **4.2.2 Rebellion Against Society**

Edna meets Robert Lebrun in Grand Isle. During in Grand Isle, Robert accompanies Edna to take a walk and swims at the sea. She deeply fall in love with him that she never felt before towards her husband Leonce Pontillier. Robert devotes himself to a different woman every summer but his playful attentions to Edna differ from his treatments of past women.

"Good-by, my sweet Robert. Tell me good-by." He kissed her with a degree of passion which she had not before he entered into his caress, and strained her to him.

"I love you," she whispered, "only you; no one but you. It was you who awoke me last summer out of a life-long, stupid dream. Oh! you have made me so unhappy with your indifference. Oh! I have suffered, suffered! Now you are here we shall love each other, my Robert. We shall be everything to each other. Nothing else in the world is of any consequence. I must go to my friend; but you will wait for me? No matter how late; you will wait for me, Robert?"

"Don't go; don't go! Oh! Edna, stay with me," he pleaded. "Why should you go? Stay with me, stay with me."

"I shall come back as soon as I can; I shall find you here." She buried her face in his neck, and said good-by again. Her seductive voice, together with his great love for her, had enthralled his senses, had deprived him of every impulse but the longing to hold her and keep her" (Chopin, 2014:129).

Edna has deep emotional feeling towards Robert. She loves Robert so much and does not care of her husband. It is explained in the beginning that her marriage with Leonce was totally an accident and Leonce cannot give what she wants such as pleasure, desire, appreciation to her and emotional feeling to him. In her family, she just wants to prove that she can choose something good for herself. In the end, her marriage becomes complicated. Robert gives her much attention to Edna and she gets what she wants. When Robert and Edna are alone separated from reality and their respective roles, they express themselves and indulge in their fantasy of being together. They love each other, but Edna has already been the wife of Mr. Pontillier and has two sons. Her desire for emotional and sexual leads her to seek her fulfillment to other men. With Robert she feels deeply insane and finds herself as a woman that needs happiness in her life rather than dedicates herself for the family that brings her to sad life. Robert helps her to realize the existence of herself as a human being. She starts to discover herself as full human being who needs sexual desires, independence, a place, and emotional feeling.

Robert knows that her feeling and relationship is not good for their future. Robert wants to make a serious relationship with Edna, but the situation says different. He makes a decision leaving Grand Isle to Mexico and Edna without any permission. He hopes that she will be having better life and stays close to her husband and her children while he is far away. On the other hand, what Robert hopes will happen totally makes Edna feel empty and broken. She feels so stressed and gets depressed because she loses the one that she truly loves in her life. Edna is constantly possessed by thoughts of Robert. She feels as though her entire existence has been dulled by his departure. She often visits Madame Lebrun to chat and study the pictures of Robert in the family. She declares that she is no longer one of Leonce's possessions and will give herself to whomever she pleases. Robert is shocked, perhaps even dismayed, by her announcement.

"You have been a very, very foolish boy, wasting your time dreaming of impossible things when you speak of Mr. Pontellier setting me free! I am no longer one of Mr. Pontellier's possessions to dispose of or not. I give myself where I choose. If he were to say, 'Here, Robert, take her and be happy; she is yours,' I should laugh at you both" (Chopin, 2014:128).

Victorian era comes to imply sexual repression. Talking about sexual desire in Victorian era is something taboo. Flirting is forbidden. This condition inspires the author to expose the social condition at that time. The author shows Edna needs to get happiness and fulfills her sexual desire. In this case, she just fulfill her sexual desire not her emotional feeling. She makes a friend with Alcee Robin and their relationship becomes intimate.

"He responded at once by presenting himself at her home with all his disarming naivete. And then there was scarcely a day which followed that she did not see him or was not reminded of him. He was prolific in pretexts. His attitude became one of good-humored subservience and tacit adoration. He was ready at all times to submit to her moods, which were as often kind as they were cold. She grew accustomed to him. They became intimate and friendly by imperceptible degrees, and then by leaps. He sometimes talked in a way that astonished her at first and brought the crimson into her face; in a way that pleased her at last, appealing to the animalism that stirred impatiently within her" (Chopin, 2014:93).

Robert gives her emotional feeling about love and she falls in love with him. She loves Robert so much. Different from the feeling towards Alcee Robin, Alcee introduces Edna such sexual desire. When she was alone she looked mechanically at the back of her hand which he had kissed so warmly (Chopin, 2014, 92). She has never known before that her sexual desire is her needs and she needs to fulfill it. Her sexual desire is an indication of her awakening. He stood close to her, and the effrontery in his eyes repelled the old, vanishing self in her, yet drew all her awakening sensuousness. He saw enough in her face to impel him to take her hand and hold it while he said his lingering good night (Chopin, 2014:91). Though the

physical contact between Edna and Alcee, Chopin shows *The Awakening* reflects woman social condition at that time which she needs to fulfill her sexual desire. Moreover, Kate Chopin shows in her novel Alcee and Edna consume their love needs.

“He stood up beside her and smoothed her hair with his soft, magnetic hand. His touch conveyed to her a certain physical comfort. She could have fallen quietly asleep there if he had continued to pass his hand over her hair. He brushed the hair upward from the nape of her neck.”

"I hope you will feel better and happier in the morning," he said. "You have tried to do too much in the past few days. The dinner was the last straw; you might have dispensed with it."

"Yes," she admitted; "it was stupid."

"No, it was delightful; but it has worn you out." His hand had strayed to her beautiful shoulders, and he could feel the response of her flesh to his touch. He seated himself beside her and kissed her lightly upon the shoulder.

"I thought you were going away," she said, in an uneven voice.

"I am, after I have said good night."

"Good night," she murmured" (Chopin, 2014:110).

Desire as the natural needs of women, is not a taboo. They do not have to ignore it because it is also to get their satisfaction and happiness in the field of sexuality. Edna shows her idea about sexuality where she does not care about society norms and forgets to dedicate herself only for her husband. She does whatever what makes her happy and rejects the society's judgment. Every person has many choices in their life and they have their own rights to decide what the best thing for their life is. Edna decides to fulfill her sexual desire with Alcee Robin, her emotional feeling with Robert, becomes an independent woman as well as financially independent. On the other hand, she rejects being a mother woman such as rejects taking care of children and serves her husband. Her rebellion in Victorian rigid moral is seen as bad moral or immoral. She is different with Adele who is an ideal woman in Victorian Era. She is a good mother woman in Victorian Era. Edna wants to stay away from

society norms, her husband's oppression and family restraint. She simply wants to place for herself to be a woman in her own way and not to give her soul for her family. She wants a life for herself and she can enjoy her life according to her willing. Edna is expected to be a woman in Victorian Era, to be a good mother and wife for her family, but Leonce has treated her as the property.

Edna indicates her awakening since her vacation in Grand Isle and some people try to help her existence of human being such her rebirth, sexual awakening, and self-discovery. Remembering the passionate infatuations that had consumed her before her marriage, Edna is suddenly stricken by the contrast between those feelings and the feelings she has then in her marriage. She experiences multiple oppressions. Her oppression causes her rebellion. Edna starts to express herself through painting and swimming. Because of her activity, she neglects her children and husband and being mother woman. Her marriage with Leonce is a mistake. She falls in love with Robert and fulfills her sexual desire with Alcee Robin.

Edna is never happy with her marriage. This is what happens in Edna's life. Her life is full of sadness and emptiness, even though she is blessed with a fancy house, rich and successful husband and fabulous two sons. Thus, during her vacation she realizes about what she truly wants and finds something to fulfill her emptiness. Through Madam Ratiognalele, Robert Lebrun and Alcee Arobin, Edna gets her awakening. Edna learns painting from Madam Ratiognalle where she can make money and a financially independent woman. She dares to leave the house and the children at home without thinking of her roles and duty. Since her meeting with Robert Lebrun in Grand Isle, she falls in love with him that she has never felt with her husband. Her relationship with Alcee Arobin gives her sexual desire and fulfills her satisfaction and lust. Her experiences change her life from an obedient Victorian woman becomes someone that is totally ignorant to her role in the society, her duty at home and sets herself free.

### 4.3 The Ideology Brought by the Author

Literature is closely related to human being life. Literature describes social life and social life itself is social real life (Damono,2009:1). Literature is social institution using language as a medium and to show the social life during certain period. The social life inspires the author in creating literary works based on his imagination. It describes fictional characters, event, and setting. Through the novel, the writers can express their idea, feeling, imagination, protest which usually come from their experiences in their life. Some of literary works imply the society and the era when the writers live and compose the novel.

Novel is a form of literary work as the reflection of human life. It imitates human life through intrinsic elements novel. Novel reflects the author's life, the ideology of the author, and the experience of the author. Kate Chopin is the author of a great novel *The Awakening*. *The Awakening* is the object to analyze in this thesis. In discussing about the ideology of the author, the biography of the author is a reference to help the analysis. Wellek and Warren also argue in their book *Theory of literature* that:

“Literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. Such traditional literary devices as symbolism and meter are social in their very nature. They are conventions and norms which could have arisen only in society. But, furthermore, literature "imitates" "life" and "life" is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary "imitation"” (Wellek and Warren,2011:89).

The statement above explains that literature is a social institution which uses language as a production of social creation. Literature as a mirror of social condition imitates life and social reality. Subject individual thoughts are also objects of literature. Wellek and Warren explain about the relation of social condition around

human which influences their life including their thought. Wellek and Warren state that:

“Since every writer is a member of society, he can be studied as a social being. Though his biography is the main source, such a study can easily widen into one of the whole milieu from which he came and in which he lived. It will be possible to accumulate information about the social provenience, the family background, the economic position of writers” (Wellek and Warren, 1949:91).

Wellek and Warren explain that an author is a member of society where social life happens. The social life of the writer can be learned through his biography. It will completely help to find the information about social life, the family background, and social condition during her life. Then, the information of the writer’s life will help to understand and comprehend literary works.

Kate Chopin is one of woman authors who experiences in Victorian Era. Kate Chopin or Catherine O’Flaherty was born in St. Louis on February 8, 1850. She died on August 22, 1904. Her mother, Eliza Faris, comes from an old French family that lives outside of St. Louis. Her father, Thomas, is a highly successful Irish-born businessman. Chopin grows up in a household dominated by women: her mother, great-grandmother, and the female slaves her mother owned who take care of the children.

Chopin's second novel and her most famous work is *The Awakening*, published in 1899. *The Awakening* concerns with issues of identity, morality and woman issues. It creates a tremendous controversy and protest. Critics called it morbid, vulgar, disagreeable, dirty, poison and unacceptable. Willa Cather, who becomes a well known twentieth century American author, label it trite and sordid (<http://www.katechopin.org/biography/>). *The Awakening* reflects Chopin’s life.

Kate’s family on her mother’s side was of French extraction, and Kate grew up speaking both French and English. She was bilingual and



bicultural—feeling at home in different communities with quite different values—and the influence of French life and literature on her thinking is noticeable throughout her fiction. (<http://www.katechopin.org/biography/>)

The quotation from the biography above proves that the using of French language in her novel is based on her experience in her family. Her mother family is French family. She grows up both of speaking French and English. She combines two language French and English in her novel *The Awakening*, “Passez! Adieu! Allez vous-en!”, “Blagueur--farceur--gros bete, va!” (Chopin, 2014:1).

Kate Chopin marries Oscar in June 1870, and they moved to New Orleans. She has six children in order of birth, Jean Baptiste, Oscar Charles, George Francis, Frederick, Felix Andrew, and Lelia. Like Edna and Leonce Pontellier in the novel *The Awakening*, Chopin’s family also vacation during summers on Grand Isle. It means that the setting in the novel reflects her experience vacation in Grand Isle. Chopin’s experience to be a widow in her age thirty two. When Chopin’s husband died, he left his family in great debt and with the responsibility of raising six children. In her condition at that time, she decides to leave a small French village of Cloutierville, Louisiana and moves back to St. Louis to live with her mother. Before she leaves Cloutierville, Chopin has an affair with a local planter who is said to be the prototype for Alcee Arobin in *The Awakening*. The controversy and vulgar about marriage is brought in her novel *The Awakening*.

Kate Chopin lives in Victorian Era which appears in 19<sup>th</sup> century where Queen Victoria becomes a Queen in UK since 1837-1901. The spirit of Victorian Era comes to imply prudery, hypocrisy, sexual repression, and rigid social control. Rigid social control is especially to control woman movement. Women are emphasized to have proper behavior, manners, being mother women, serve her husband and take care of children and fulfill their duty at home. Victorian Era is well known with

Victorian morality. Everyone has to obey the morality as the rule in daily life. Her works, especially *The Awakening* is as a protest toward Victorian Era.

“In addition, *Victorianism* remains a living concept in social and political debates, although its meaning is ambiguous: it is used to describe exploitation and class division, sexual repression, hypocrisy, values of hard work and self-help, moral certainties about family life, and a wide variety of arrangements intended to solve public problems” ( Mitchell, 2009:xiii).

Through her novel *The Awakening*, Chopin conveys her critique toward Victorian Morality with its controversial topics dealing with women, marriage, sexual desire, and suicide. She is also against Victorian Era and it influences the way of life in her novel. It is because she disagrees with the rigid rules which take the people's rights and freedom, especially women. In 1883 and 1884, Chopin's recent biography, Emily Toth, writes, Kate has an affair with a local planter. But she then moves with her family back to St. Louis where she find better schools for her children and a richer cultural life for herself. Shortly after, in 1885, her mother died.” (<http://www.katechopin.org/biography/>). In Victorian Era, discussing about sexual repression is a taboo and it is considered immoral if someone flirts with someone else. Through *The Awakening*, Chopin shows a married woman highly protests of being mother woman, fulfills her sexual desire and flirts with another guy.

Kate Chopin writes *The Awakening* is a way how she is against Victorian Morality. In this novel the kind of opposition to Victorian Morality is in rebellion form. Rebellion happens in Victorian Morality and it is opposed by Kate Chopin through *The Awakening*. The spirit of Victorian Morality influences the ideology of Kate Chopin. According to *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, the term ideology is defined as the body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture (2004:688). The statement above explains that

ideology is what someone's belief and holds on. It is a set of ideas that represents someone's purposes, goals, ambitions, action and expectation.

Chopin's ideology is against Victorian Morality because during Victorian Era people are tied by rigid moral, especially for woman. As a form of her ideology, she creates a character in her novel *The Awakening* who has rebellious characteristic. The rebellious character who is created by Kate Chopin is Edna Pontillier, a married woman. Her rebellious characteristic such as rejects to take care of children, neglects to serve husband, flirts with another guy, and commits suicide. In the novel, Chopin wants to show that rigid moral in Victorian Morality can make a married woman suffer and has bad moral. Then, it will make her commit suicide because to stay alive doesn't make her life happy.

"Good-by--because I love you." He did not know; he did not understand. He would never understand. Perhaps Doctor Mandelet would have understood if she had seen him--but it was too late; the shore was far behind her, and her strength was gone. She looked into the distance, and the old terror flamed up for an instant, then sank again. Edna heard her father's voice and her sister Margaret's. She heard the barking of an old dog that was chained to the sycamore tree. The spurs of the cavalry officer clanged as he walked across the porch. There was the hum of bees, and the musky odor of pinks filled the air "(Chopin, 2014:137).

The quotation above implies that Victorian Morality strongly controls Edna's life until in the end of the story she commits suicide. After her rebellion, she still does not get what she truly wants in her life such as love, sexual desire, independent woman and happiness. Edna rebels against society because of expectations and responsibility of a woman must have in the Victorian Era. Kate Chopin as the writer of *The Awakening* conveys a message to the readers and show how Victorian Morality works on an individual who has freedom soul. The novel has tragic story in the end of the novel. She brings her ideology to her novel against Victorian Morality

based on her opposition to the Victorian Era through the rebellious character in the novel.



## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

*The Awakening* is a novel which criticizes Victorian Morality with its controversial topics dealing with women, marriage, sexual desire, and suicide. Women in Victorian Era are expected to have a good attitude, follow the rules of the society with its concerns about morality, proper behavior and manners. They have to keep the essence of morality, stability, and comfort at home. Women are legally subordinate and obedient to their husband and somehow supposed to rule the home. Men have economic control over their family because the family depends on his income. The managers at home are women. They are providers for food, clothing, cleanliness, and comfortable necessary to health, and for the good nursing necessary in sickness. Women have to keep safe at home, their perfect compliance, obedience, and being mother women would make them to be accepted in society life as good wife and mother. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Victorian morality has come to imply prudery, hypocrisy, sexual repression, and rigid social control.

*The Awakening* is a novel which portrays a life of Edna Pontellier, a woman who struggles to find love and her true identity in a rigid society that expects women to be nothing more than devoted wives and nurturing mothers. Victorian Morality strongly controls Edna's life so Edna rebels against the society because of the expectations and responsibility a woman must have in the Victorian Era.

Rebellious character that is described in the novel *The Awakening*, is a character who rejects taking care of children, neglecting to serve the husband, flirting with another guy, and committing suicide. Edna, as the main character has rebellious character. She neglects being a mother woman at home who takes care of children, serves her husband and dedicates herself for family. She is supposed to be an angel at home who supposed to be ready anytime she is needed and she must be a

woman who is expected by the society in Victorian Era. Edna's rebellion goes too far. Furthermore, her rebellion is her feeling for Robert and her relationship with Alcee. Her feeling for Robert comes from her deepest heart, while her relationship with Alcee is a form of her sexual desire fulfillment that she never had before. It can be concluded that Edna wants to set her free and reach happiness. She commits suicide as her success and choice to make her life better after her death. In Victorian Era, all her rebellions are considered as bad moral. Chopin wants to show that rigid moral in Victorian Era does not bring peaceful and comfortable for the society. It is actually a time of truly tied women for being mother women at home.

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## APPENDIXES

### 1. Biography of Kate Chopin

Catherine or Kate O'Flaherty was born in St. Louis, Missouri, USA, on February 8 1850. Kate is the second child of Thomas O'Flaherty of County Galway from Ireland, and Eliza Faris of St. Louis. Kate's family on her mother's side is French. Kate grows up speaking both French and English. She is bilingual and bicultural with different communities and values from two sides of family. The influence of French life is noticeable throughout her works. Kate becomes a widow at age thirty-two, with the responsibility of raising six children and she never remarried. In 1883 and 1884, Chopin's recent biographer, Emily Toth, writes that Kate has an affair with a local planter. She died on August 22 1904. She has cerebral hemorrhage. She buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis.

Kate Chopin is an American author since 1850 until 1904. Her work focuses on the lives of sensitive, intelligent women and woman issues. Her stories appear also in her two published collections, *Bayou Folk* (1894) and *A Night in Acadie* (1897), both of which receive good reviews from the readers across the country. Other her short stories are well received in her own time and published by some of America's most prestigious magazines such as *Vogue*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Young People*, *Youth's Companion*, and *Century*. By the late 1890s Kate Chopin is well known among American readers of magazine fiction.

Kate Chopin writes two published novel. Her early novel *At Fault* in (1890) and the second is *The Awakening* (1899). *The Awakening* is widely condemned and gets many critics. A few critics praise the novel's artistry, but most are very negative, calling the book morbid, unpleasant, unhealthy,

vulgar, disagreeable, dirty and poison. During the time, she attracts great attention from scholars and students. They do critics and analysis of some of her works. Her works have been translated into other languages, including Chinese, Czech, Dutch, French, Galician, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam, Polish, Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, and Vietnamese. She is well known as a classic writer who speaks eloquently to contemporary concerns. *The Awakening*, *The Storm*, *The Story of an Hour*, *Désirée's Baby*, *A Pair of Silk Stockings*, *A Respectable Woman*, *Athénaïse*, and other stories are embraced by people for their sensitive, graceful, poetic depictions of women's lives and issues.

## 2. Synopsis of *The Awakening*

The story begins with Pontellier family, Leonce, a New Orleans businessman of Louisiana Creole heritage, his wife Edna, and their two sons, Etienne and Raoul, have vacation on Grand Isle at a resort on the Gulf of Mexico managed by Madame Lebrun and her two sons, Robert and Victor. During vacation, Edna spends most of her time with her close friend Adele Ratignolle, who always shows and reminds Edna of her duties as a wife and mother. Moreover, she prefers to spend days with Robert rather than with her husband and sons. Robert sometimes accompanies Edna to swim in the sea. Eventually Edna feels a connection with Robert Lebrun, an earnest young man who seeks Edna's attention and affections. When they fall in love, Robert realizes that Edna is a married woman and has two sons so he leaves her and flies to Mexico for work. When summer vacation ends, the Pontelliers return to New Orleans. Edna starts to rebel against New Orleans society and some of the duties traditionally associated with motherhood. She begins painting and makes money by herself. Edna also reaches out to Mademoiselle Reisz who has contact with Robert while he is in Mexico. Reisz receives letters

from Robert regularly. Edna begs her to reveal the letters proving that Robert is thinking about her.

Oneday Leonce prepares to travel to New York City on business, he sends the boys to his mother. He left home alone Edna to breathe and reflect on various aspects of her life. While her husband is still away, she moves out into a small bungalow nearby called as Pigeon house and begins a dalliance with Alcee Arobin, a persistent suitor with a reputation for being free with his affections. Alcee Robin introduces Edna such sexual desire. Edna fulfils and consumes her sexual desires with Alcee Robin. By the time, Robert returns to New Orleans and confesses his passionate love for Edna. Robert comes to Edna's place, but Edna is called away to help Adele with a difficult childbirth. When Edna returns home, she finds a note from Robert stating that he leaves forever, as he loves her too much to shame her by engaging in a relationship with a married woman. Edna is shocked. She rushes back to Grand Isle, where she had first met Robert Lebrun. Edna feels so down and she commits suicide by drowning herself into the sea.