

**THE VIRGIN SUICIDES: DEMYSTIFYING GIRLS' SUICIDALITY THROUGH
THE GENDER PERFORMATIVITY THEORY**



An Undergraduate Thesis

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for *Sarjana* Sastra Degree**

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES AND COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PURWOKERTO
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UNIVERSITY OF MUHAMMADIYAH PURWOKERTO 2025**

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Through The Gender Performativity Theory

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Purwokerto, 8th August 2025

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The Virgin Suicides: Demystifying Girls' Suicidality Through The Gender Theory
An Undergraduate Thesis

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MOTTO

*"From the moment we enter crying to the moment we leave dying, it'll just cover
your face as you wail and cry and scream."*

— Todd Anderson, *Dead Poets Society*



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to myself, for not giving up even when things got tough.

To my parents, for their support, patience, and unconditional love.

And to everyone who helped me along the way, and to the readers.



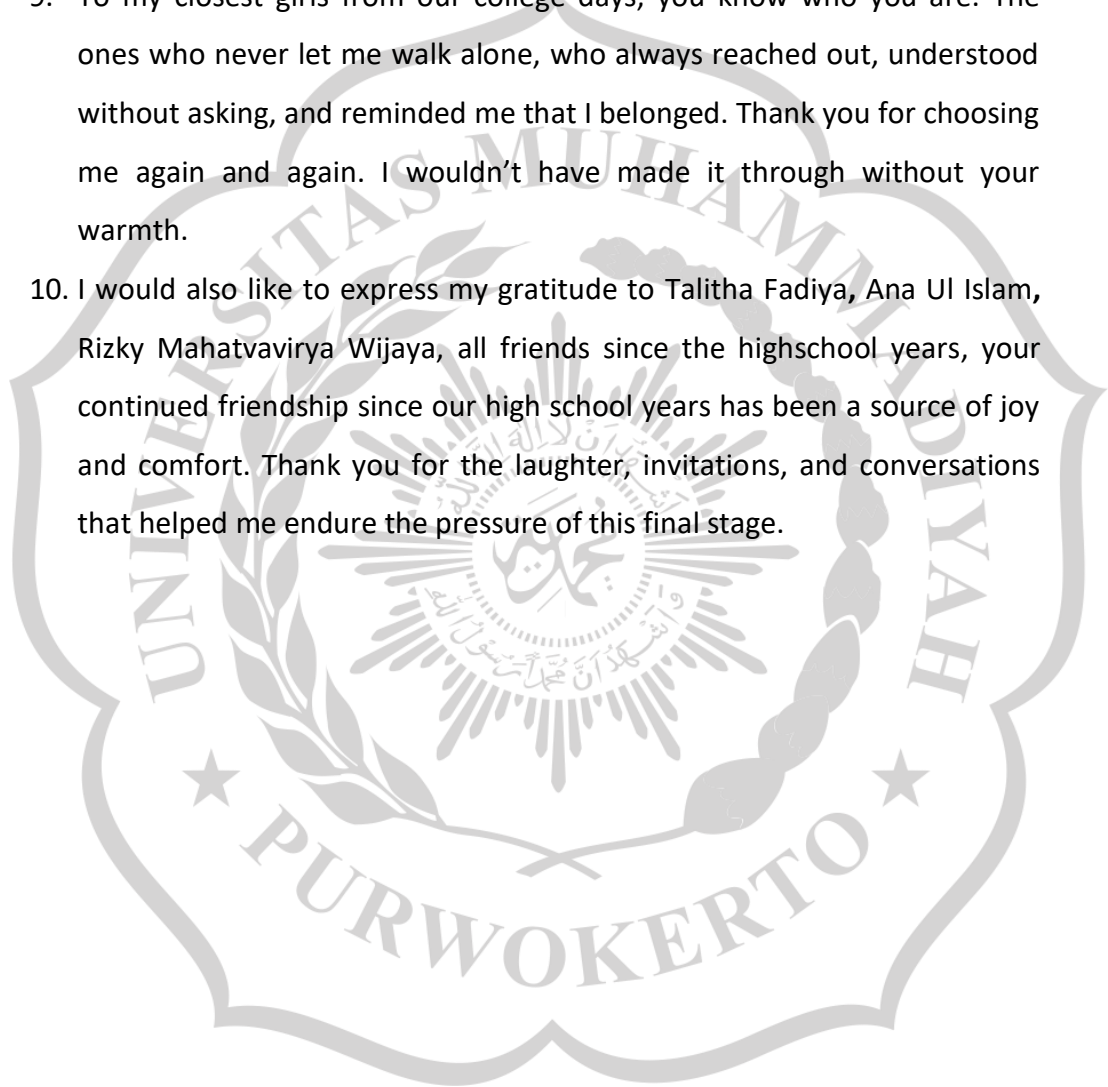
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ABSTRACT

Nada, Bathary. 2109010035. 2025. THE VIRGIN SUICIDES: DEMYSTIFYING GIRLS' SUICIDALITY THROUGH THE GENDER PEFORMATIVITY THEORY. Skripsi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya dan Komunikasi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

This study analyzes Sofia Coppola's *The Virgin Suicides* (1999) through the lens of Judith Butler's gender performativity theory to investigate the suicidality of the Lisbon sisters as a reflection of gender oppression. The film portrays how patriarchal norms, religious morality, and familial control contribute to the psychological deterioration and eventual suicides of five adolescent sisters. Using qualitative descriptive and semiotic analysis methods, this research explores how gender expectations are imposed through visual representation, narrative framing, and performative roles within the film. The Lisbon sisters' suicidality is interpreted as a performative resistance against the impossible standards of femininity and the silencing effect of the male gaze. Their deaths become a critique of the rigid cultural norms that define womanhood through purity, passivity, and aesthetic suffering. By applying gender theory and film analysis, this study contributes to the discourse on female mental health, gendered violence, and the representation of girlhood in media.

Keywords: *gender performativity, suicidality, patriarchal oppression, feminist film theory, The Virgin Suicides*

INTISARI

Nada, Bathary. 2109010035. 2025. THE VIRGIN SUICIDES: DEMYSTIFYING GIRLS' SUICIDALITY THROUGH THE GENDER PERFORMATIVITY THEORY. Skripsi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya dan Komunikasi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

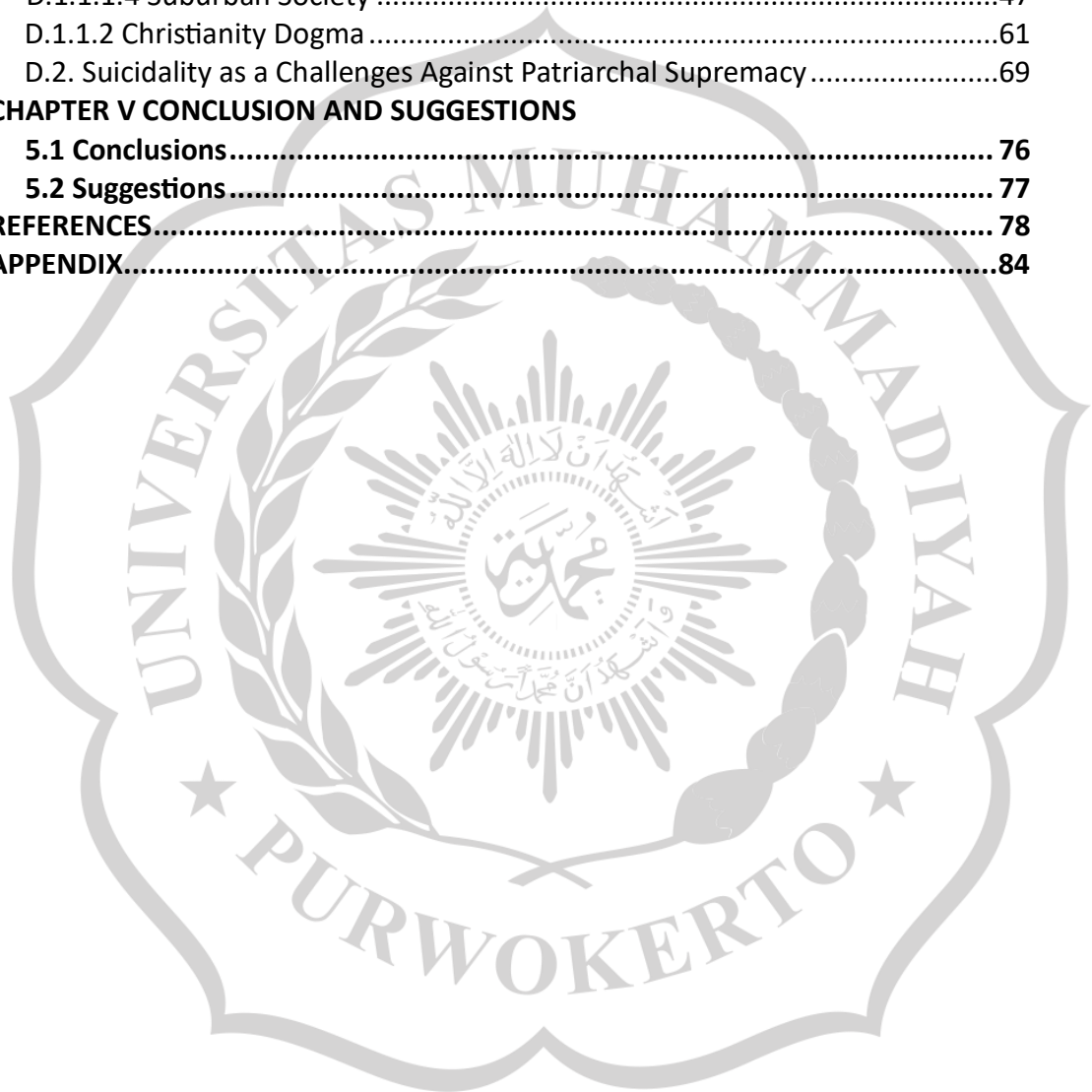
Penelitian ini menganalisis film *The Virgin Suicides* (1999) karya Sofia Coppola dengan menggunakan teori performativitas gender dari Judith Butler untuk mengkaji bunuh diri para kelima remaja perempuan keluarga Lisbon sebagai cerminan dari penindasan berbasis gender. Film ini menunjukkan bagaimana norma patriarki, moralitas agama, dan kontrol keluarga berperan dalam membentuk tekanan psikologis yang akhirnya membawa kelima remaja perempuan tersebut pada tindakan bunuh diri. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dan analisis semiotik, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana ekspektasi gender diwujudkan melalui representasi visual, pbingkai naratif, dan peran-peran performatif dalam film. Bunuh diri kelima remaja perempuan keluarga Lisbon dipahami sebagai bentuk perlawanan performatif terhadap standar femininitas yang mustahil dan efek pembungkaman dari pandangan laki-laki. Kematian kelima remaja perempuan keluarga Lisbon menjadi kritik terhadap norma budaya kaku yang mendefinisikan perempuan melalui kemurnian, kepasifan, dan penderitaan yang terestetisasi. Dengan menerapkan teori gender dan analisis film, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap diskusi mengenai kesehatan mental perempuan, kekerasan berbasis gender, dan representasi masa remaja perempuan dalam media.

Kata kunci: *performativitas gender, bunuh diri, penindasan patriarki, teori film feminis, The Virgin Suicides*

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