

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

This thesis presents an analysis of social and inner conflicts in Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*. This novel belongs to science fiction, which is “a genre of fiction dealing with imaginary but more or less plausible (or at least non-supernatural) content such as future settings, futuristic science and technology, space travel, aliens, and paranormal abilities” (“Science Fiction”). I am interested in analyzing the novel because I like to think of how the world will look like in the future. The analysis will also help people have possible images of the future and give them ideas about development in technology.

The author of *Uglies*, Scott Westerfeld, is best known as a science-fiction writer both for adults and young readers. In his fiction-writing career, Westerfeld began with his novel *Polymorph*. His next novel for adults is *Evolution's Darling*, which earned him a Philip K. Dick Award special citation, and “was praised by Trevor Dodge, who wrote a review for the Review of Contemporary Fiction” (“Scott Westerfeld”). He has also won many other awards from his works. In *Uglies*, he creates a futuristic world where cosmetic surgery

is a required step for everyone to take at the age of sixteen. *Uglies* was published in 2005 and named Best Book for Young Adults 2006 by the American Library Association and CCBC Choices (Bouret).

Uglies is a futuristic story which is interesting to read and gives the readers an image of what might happen in the future. “This book is for everyone as it deals with human’s feelings in general and tells about what young people go through and it is also connected to the issues of conformity, self-worth, body image and individuality, as well as the impact of strong peer pressure” (“Uglies”) so readers can learn from the book that it is fine to be themselves and that they are supposed to accept differences in people. The book *Uglies* is sold all around the world and has become the number-one New York bestselling book; the book has also been adapted into a movie which will be released in late 2012 (“Scott Westerfeld”).

The protagonist of the novel, Tally, experiences many conflicts, specifically social and inner conflicts, which I will analyze in my thesis. Conflicts have important roles in a story. “Conflict is something that makes a story worth reading. Without struggles, moral choices, tension, and opposing forces, a story would be nothing but a boring discussion of facts” (Richards). In *Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Harry Shaw states five kinds of conflicts, but only three of them are commonly found, namely physical, social and inner conflicts. Physical conflict is a struggle between man and the physical world. “It represents man versus forces of nature, the difficulties and dangers, for cold, heat, wild beasts in the jungle; these are constant obstacles to mankind” (91). “Social conflict means struggle between man and man” (91). The last kind of conflict is inner or

psychological conflict, which means “a struggle between desires within a person” (Shaw 91-92).

Statement of the Problems

The problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What conflicts does the protagonist in *Uglies* experience?
2. What are the causes of the conflicts?
3. What are the resolutions of the conflicts?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems presented earlier, the study is conducted

1. to identify the conflicts experienced by the protagonist in *Uglies*;
2. to identify the causes of the conflicts;
3. to identify the resolutions of the conflicts.

Method of Research

I apply the library research for my analysis. First, I read *Uglies*, a novel by Scott Westerfeld, as the primary text. In addition, I got some supporting information from a book and some online sources. Next, I analyzed the conflicts experienced by the protagonist in the novel, drew some concluding remarks of the result of my analysis, and finally wrote this thesis.

Organization of the Thesis

In my thesis, there are three chapters that are preceded by the Abstract, the Acknowledgments and the Table of Contents. Chapter One is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problems, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and the Organization of the Thesis.

Chapter Two is the Analysis of Social and Inner Conflicts in Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* and Chapter Three is the Conclusion. At the end of the thesis, there are the Bibliography and the Appendices, which consist of the Synopsis of *Uglies* and the Biography of Scott Westerfeld.