

AN ANALYSIS OF THE “FALLEN WOMAN” IN OLIVER TWIST

A MASTER’S PROJECT

BY

MISS PAJAREE CHOCKSAKULWONG

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in English

at Srinakharinwirot University

March 2004

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AN ABSTRACT

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This study analyzed the "fallen woman" in Oliver Twist, a novel by Charles Dickens.

The ideal of womanhood was used to analyze Nancy, a female character.

The results of this study showed that Nancy was judged as a "fallen woman" because she differed from the ideal womanhood. The reasons that lead her to be a "fallen woman" were the environment, the subordination of women, and her lover. However, Nancy had a good maternal instinct. She helped Oliver until her lover killed her. The "fallen woman" is unaccepted in the society, so Dickens makes Nancy dies at the end of he story. Through Nancy, Dickens suggested that the judgement of the society is problematic because it limited females' roles.

การวิเคราะห์ "สถานภาพของสตรีที่ไม่เป็นที่ยอมรับของสังคม" ในเรื่อง โอลิเวอร์ ทวิสต์

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาวปาริย์ ไชยกุลวงษ์

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

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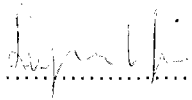
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งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อวิเคราะห์ สถานภาพของ “สตรีที่ไม่เป็นที่ยอมรับของสังคม” ในเรื่อง โอลิเวอร์ ทวิสต์ โดยวิเคราะห์ตัวละครเอกหญิงเน้นที่ ในการศึกษาที่มีการนำเอา ลักษณะของสตรีในอุดมคติในศตวรรษที่ 19 มาใช้เป็นเครื่องมือในการวิเคราะห์

จากผลของการศึกษาพบว่า การที่สังคมตัดสินว่าแนนซีเป็น “สตรีที่ไม่เป็นที่ยอมรับของสังคม” นั้นก็เนื่องมาจากว่าเธอแตกต่างจาก ลักษณะของสตรีในอุดมคติ แต่นั่นก็ไม่ใช่ความผิดของเธอ สิ่งที่ทำให้เธอเป็น “สตรีที่ไม่เป็นที่ยอมรับของสังคม” ก็คือ สิ่งแวดล้อม ความต่ำต้อยของสตรี และคนรักของเธอเอง แต่แท้ที่จริงแล้วเธอมีพื้นฐานจิตใจที่ดี ชอบช่วยเหลือผู้อื่น ดังเช่นที่เธอช่วยเหลือ โอลิเวอร์ ทวิสต์ จนต้องถูกคนรักของเธอฆ่า ชาร์ล ดิกเก้นส์ต้องการชี้ให้เห็นว่าการตัดสินคนโดยใช้ลักษณะของสตรีในอุดมคติในศตวรรษที่ 19 มาตัดสินนั้นทำให้เกิดปัญหาเพราะจะเป็นการจำกัดบทบาทของสตรีเกินไป

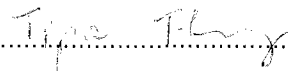
The Master's Project Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved
this Master's Project as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts
Degree in English at Srinakharinwirot University.

Advisor of the Master's Project

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(Dr. Supaporn Yimwilai)

Chair of the Master of Arts Degree in English

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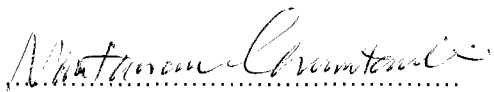
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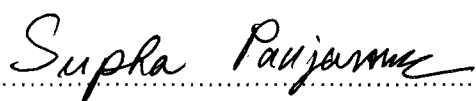
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This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the
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..........Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	1
Purpose of the study.....	4
Procedures.....	4
Scope of the study.....	5
Benefit of the study.....	5
Definition of term.....	5
2 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE.....	6
Related research.....	6
The ideal womanhood in the nineteenth century.....	8
Biography of Charles Dickens.....	12
3 AN ANALYSIS OF THE "FALLEN WOMAN" IN <u>OLIVER TWIST</u>	15
Nancy and the ideal womanhood.....	15
Is it her fault?.....	20
The comparison between Nancy and Rose.....	25

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUE)

Chapter

4 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESION FOR FURTHER STUDIES.....	31
Conclusion	31
Suggestion for further studies	34
REFERENCES.....	37
APPENDIX	41
VITA	44

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

G.C. Thornley and Roberts Gwyneth, in An Outline of English Literature, describe Charles Dickens as "one of the greatest English novelists." Indeed, they add the tribute by noting that Dickens' works are still popular after his death. Without any doubt, Charles Dickens is a famous novelist in the nineteenth century. Dickens brings his humanity and insight in his examination of the social problems and attitudes of people in the nineteenth century. The purpose of his novels is to improve the social conditions of the time (120). The Pickwick Papers, David Copperfield, Bleak House, Hard Times, Little Dorrit, A Tale of Two Cities, and Oliver Twist are some of his well-known works.

Oliver Twist is one of Dickens' most socially critical and popular novels. This book is famous in the English-speaking world. It has been translated into many languages, including Thai. Oliver Twist was written in 1837-8 and focused on the passing of the Poor Law in 1834, which stopped the government aiding the poor unless they entered workhouses. These institutions were notorious for their exploitation of the defenseless poor as they produced a never-ending supply of cheap labor for the new industrial cities which

sprang up during the period of the industrial revolution period. *Oliver Twist*, the central character, is a child of unknown parentage born in one such workhouse and brought up under horrific conditions. (Drabble 715). In the novel, Dickens presents the notion that poverty leads to crime. In a subplot, a critical female character is introduced, Nancy, and she goes to great lengths to protect Oliver. Tragically, she is killed by her boyfriend, Sikes.

There are numerous studies on Oliver Twist. Many studies focus on characters. For example, Robert Shafer notes that characters in Dickens' novels are 'alive' with a simple, rich, and full humanity. Without distinction of background, class, and religion, Dickens' characters become indispensable to the public, learned and unlearned, cultivated and uncultivated, as well as rich and poor, (466). Other researchers are interested in Dickens' ideas about the social problems of the time. For instance, Katie Silvey states in "An Analysis and Interpretation of Oliver Twist" that the purpose of the story is to promote a comprehensive program of social reform in the nineteenth century. Thorn and Gwyneth also state that Dickens' novels expose and attack many kinds of unpleasant and miserable places such as bad schools, government departments, and dirty houses. As a result, Dickens probably brings some measurable improvement to these conditions (122). Significantly, most researchers pay attention to characters or to social problems. Nobody has studied the "fallen woman" in this work yet.

During the nineteenth century, England was rapidly developing into a modern industrialized state. The economic, social, and political problems had also been building up. Nonetheless, the rights and status of women were normally defined as inferior to those of men, even in the family, the workplace, or the society. This inferior position is also shown in literature. For example, Tennyson explores some ideas related to an idealized view of a woman's role in *The Princess* as follows:

Man for the field and woman for the hearth:

Man for the sword and for the needle she:

Man with the head and woman with the hearth:

Man to command and woman to obey. (56)

This poem clearly reflects an ideology which asserts that a woman is only suitable for domestic roles. Woman should stay at home and obey her parents or her husband. Those are some of the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century. The researcher believes that Dickens, one of the most famous novelists of the period, tries to present problems of the female position in the nineteenth century through his writing. He is not only concerned with social problems, but also deals with the subject of the "fallen woman" and the ideal of womanhood in that period. Through *Nancy*, Dickens explores the position of women in the nineteenth century from a feminist perspective.

The researcher, therefore, will analyze Nancy. In this study, the researcher attempts to answer the following questions;

- 1.) Why does Nancy become a 'fallen woman'? Is it her fault?
- 2.) Why does Dickens have Nancy die at the end of the story?
- 3.) How does she differ from Rose, another female character?
- 4.) What does Dickens say to us through this character?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to study Nancy, one of the female characters in Oliver Twist.

Procedures

1. Accumulation of Information
 - 1.1 Study research related to Charles Dickens
 - 1.2 Study the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century
 - 1.3 Study Charles Dickens' biography
2. Information Analysis
3. Conclusion and Suggestion for further studies

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on Nancy, one of the female characters in Oliver Twist, a novel by Charles Dickens.

Benefits of the Study

1. The study of the “fallen woman” in Oliver Twist will help the reader to better understand the characteristics of women in the nineteenth century.
2. The study will show that the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century is problematic.
3. The study can be used as a guideline to explore position of women in other writings.

Definition of Term

Fallen woman refers to a woman who behaves differently from the ideal of womanhood, the expectation of the society in the nineteenth century. The ideal of womanhood comprises of four virtues; purity, piety, domesticity, and submissiveness. This makes her become an unrespectable woman.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on three major parts. The first part discusses the research concerning Charles Dickens. The second part deals with the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century. The third part concerns the biography of Charles Dickens.

Related research

In "The Treatment of Children in the Works of Charles Dickens and Fyodor Dostoevsky," Lorraine Poppe studied characteristics of children in the fiction of Dickens and Dostoevsky. She found that both novelists used the suffering of children as a means to advocate reform. Many children in Dickens and Dostoevskys' novel were victims of an unhealthy educational system, strict religious upbringing or an unloving family life.

In "The Child in Nineteenth Century Literature as Seen by Four Representative Authors: William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and Henry James," Victoria Stuchel explored the lives of children in the nineteenth century through the novels of four famous authors. She concluded that in the novels of Wordsworth, Dickens, Twain, and

James, children are always passive. They represented adult behavior and sensations with few individual characteristics.

In "Dickens and Melodrama: Character Presentation and Plot Motifs in Six Novels," Annette Doblix Klemp analyzed Dickens' character presentation and plot structure. She studied six novels of Dickens: Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, Martin Chuzzlewit, Bleak House, Little Dorrit, and Our Mutual Friend. She discussed two conventions in Dickens' six novels. The first one was the secret surrounding a character's birth. Another one was the villain and hypocrite. Dickens used these two conventions as a basis for his plot development. She not only focused upon the melodramatic nature of Dickens' characters and plots but also dealt with other melodramatic characteristics, such as reliance upon coincidence, comic subplot, and the use of hyperbolic language.

In Thailand, there are two selected theses. The first one is the thesis of Watanaporn Watanachaisilp. She studied the social problems presented in Charles Dickens' six novels: Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Bleak House, Nicholas Nickleby, Hard Times, and Little Dorrit. She compared the social problems presented in Dickens' six novels to the real social problems in England from 1812 to 1870. She concluded that all six novels revealed the problems of the English society in Dickens' period. In addition, Dickens provided the solutions to these social problems in his six novels.

Sumittra Dandphanit studied the ethics presented in Charles Dickens' novels. She analyzed the main characters in four novels of Dickens; Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Hard Times, and Great Expectations. She divided the ethics presented through the main characters of Dickens' four novels into eleven types. These were common sense, responsibility, diligence, unselfishness, truth, reasonableness, justice, faithfulness, gratefulness, morality, and modesty.

In short, many researchers focused on various aspects of Charles Dickens's work such as male characters, ethics, and social problems. Obviously, nobody has studied the "fallen woman" yet. Therefore, the researcher proposes to study the "fallen woman" in Oliver Twist.

The ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century

During the nineteenth century, a woman's position was subordinate. Many writers explored the ideal of womanhood in the Victorian period as follows:

Barbara Welter points out in The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860 that in the nineteenth century women were expected to have many virtues. Most people believed that a woman had a responsibility to maintain her virtue. If she lost her virtue, she would be a

fallen woman. These virtues comprised of piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity.

The details of each virtue are as follows:

1. **Piety** or religion was the core of woman's virtue. It was the first quality of the ideal womanhood. Women should pay attention to religion. Religion did not take women away from home. Moreover, men believed that Church work did not make women less domestic or submissive.
2. **Purity** was the second one of the virtues. People believed that purity was essential to young women. Without purity, women were judged as a member of some lower order. Generally, all true women were urged to maintain their virtue. The marriage night was the only one great event of women's life, when they gave purity to their husband. If women lost their purity, they would be left in silent sadness to bewail their imbecility, duplicity, and premature prostitution.
3. **Submissiveness** was the most important virtue expected for women in the nineteenth century. While men believed that they were movers, doers, and actors, women were expected to be a passive, submissive responder. The ideal women should have spirit of obedience and submission.
4. **Domesticity** was the last quality of good women. Women should focus on their domestic affairs. The true dignity and beauty of the female character seemed

to consist of a right understanding and faithful and cheerful performance of social and family duties.

However, Welter disagreed with this ideal of womanhood. She thought that the above virtues became problematic for women because these virtues limited their roles. Actually, woman had rights to go outside home, seeking other rewards for herself, not just the love of her husband. Welter suggested that woman should change and play a more creative role in society.

Similarly, in Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood, Burstyn stated that in the nineteenth century, there were obviously three classes of women: lower, middle, and high. Class was an issue in an attempt to prohibit other forms of unconventional sexual behavior. Each class of woman was linked to the occupations and incomes of males. Lower class women, in the Victorian society, worked all day to support their families, whereas women of the middle and high classes stayed at home and became consumers only. People thought that high-class women were symbols of the economic success of males. High-class women spent their time organizing the household, overseeing the care of their children, shopping for necessities and luxuries, and nurturing friendships. This way of life became the ideal for the whole of society. According to this ideal, home became a place where only women such as mistresses of the household, servants, and daughters

spent their lifetime. Obviously, home became women's intended place. The duties in home were only women's duties. People believed that women's duties were the sweet sanctities of domestic life for women. The ideal women were protected from such evils as dishonesty, cheating, and profligacy since they did not have to take part in worldly transactions. In addition, because of physical confinement and the lack of training for jobs, women could not find jobs. They had to stay at home and finally became a housewife. They should preserve the traditional virtues of society. The cultivation of characteristics of women stuck to all women's minds; as a result, every family taught their daughters to have self-denial, forbearance, and loyalty to males.

According to Burstyn, the ideal woman in the Victorian period was responsible for organizing the household, bringing up the children, and providing tranquility to man. Woman stayed at home all day, quietly participating in the routine of the house, while man worked outside. Women were expected to be morally pure and to be guardians of the home. Furthermore, Burtyn tried to state that the ideal of womanhood in this era led to many social problems, especially gender position.

Moreover, in Britain Yesterday and Today Arnstein also pointed out that in the Victorian era, a girl would be loved when she was pure, sweet, and unselfish. Purity was certainly the standard for a lady. The Victorian family believed that a wife belonged to her

husband. She should be obedient to her husband, and serve as household manager and social arbiter. Significantly, she was the mother of children. Ideally, home was the center of moral virtue and a refuge against the barbarism of the outside world (81-82).

To sum up, according to Welter, Burstyn, and Arnstein, characteristics of the ideal of womanhood were submissiveness, purity, piety, and domesticity. However, the ideal of womanhood became a problem in the society. People in the nineteenth century believed that woman should stay at home and preserve her virtues. In this way, the ideal womanhood obviously led to many social problems such as prejudice against gender and oppression of women. The researcher will apply the idea discussed above to analyze Nancy, a female character in Oliver Twist.

Biography of Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England on February 7th, 1812. He was the second of eight children. His father was a clerk working for the Navy Pay office and was imprisoned for debt when Dickens was very young. Due to the lack of funds, Dickens went to work at a blacking warehouse when he were twelve. The hunger and loneliness that Oliver Twist suffers while he was in ward of the parish were very real to Dickens during his own family crisis. Furthermore, a concern for social justice and reform which surfaced

later on in his writings grew out of the neglect and harsh conditions he experienced in the warehouse. Although he had little formal schooling, he was able to teach himself shorthand, leading him to get a job as a parliamentary reporter at a newspaper. During 1836-7, he wrote The Pickwick Papers which was published in monthly installments and sold over forty thousand copies for each issue. In 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, who was the daughter of a fellow co-worker at the newspaper. Their marriage was not a happy one, but they had ten children before their separation in 1858. In May 1837, his beloved seventeen years old sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth, died. The characters of Rose and Nancy in Oliver Twist were based on Mary. While Rose survives a dangerous illness, Nancy died a brutal death. Dickens was haunted by dreams about Mary. Likewise, Sikes is hunted by a vision of Nancy's eyes after he has killed her.

Oliver Twist and Nicholas Nickleby reflected Dickens' understanding of his comedic genius. As a reporter and journalist, Dickens had seen the seamy side of urban life. He had met criminals like Fagin, Sikes, and women like Nancy. Moreover, in 1843, Dickens published one of his most famous works, A Christmas Carol. This story was evidence that Dickens was disenchanted with the economic philosophy of the world.

Also he traveled abroad, first to America and then all over Europe. In the 1840s, he began a different stage in his life. His writings became more serious. In the weekly

periodicals he started, Household Words (1850) and All the Year Round (1859), he also published such well-known novels as Tale of Two Cities and Great Expectations.

Dickens first thought of setting a novel in the time of the French Revolution when he read Thomas Carlyle's book, The French Revolution, first published in 1839. Dickens finally came up with a way to use it in 1857, when he acted in Wilkie Collins' play, "The Frozen Deep." Dickens played a self-sacrificing lover in the play; this role inspired him so much that he wanted to use it in his own novels. He eventually decided to place his own sacrificing lover in the revolutionary period, a period of great social upheaval. A year later, he separated from his wife, and revitalized his career by making plans for a new weekly literary journal called All the Year Round. In 1859, A Tale of Two Cities was published. It was popular, not only from the fame of its author but also for its short length.

Dickens' health started deteriorating in the 1860s. On June 9, 1870, Charles Dickens died and was buried in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey. Though The Mystery of Edwin Drood was unfinished at the time of his death, he had written fifteen substantial novels and countless shorter pieces by then. While he pointed out problems and inequality within society, he offered readers, at the same time, a solution. Alternately insightful and whimsical, Dickens' writings have shown the readers over generations the reward of being true a human.

CHAPTER 3

AN ANALYSIS OF THE “FALLEN WOMAN” IN OLIVER TWIST

This chapter is an analysis of the “fallen woman” in Oliver Twist. Nancy is the female character that the researcher choose to analyze as a “fallen woman.” The results of the study are divided into three main sections. In the first section, the researcher employs the ideal of womanhood which was used to judge women in the nineteenth century to explain the character of Nancy. The second section aims to answer whether it is Nancy’s fault. The last section compares Nancy to another main female character, Rose.

Nancy and the ideal of womanhood

Nancy is a young woman born into a life of crime and hardship. She is a prostitute and an accomplice of the crooks, Fagin and Sikes. She also has a strong connection with Oliver. However, Nancy who tries to reveal Monks’s plan to get Oliver arrested, meets a bloody end at the hands of her lover, Bill Sikes. As mentioned in chapter 2, the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century comprises of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. These four virtues are the standard to judge women in the nineteenth century, and the researcher uses this idea to analyze the characteristics of Nancy.

By adhering to the ideal of womanhood, women are expected to always be dainty and lovely. They are also expected to stay abstinent until marriage. It means that purity is an important quality that all men want from their brides. In the Victorian period, purity is the standard for ladies. The loss of purity brings madness or death to all women (Welter 154). Similarly, David Holbrook proposes that innocence is what men want from girls of their class, and the girls must not only be innocent but also give the outward impression of being innocent (64). In the case of Nancy, she clearly is a prostitute. Dickens describes:

“They wore a good deal of hair, not very neatly turned up
behind, and were rather untidy about the shoes and stockings.
They not exactly pretty, perhaps; but they had a great deal of
color in their faces, and looked quite stout and hearty.” (78)

Dickens describes how prostitute dress; it can be concluded that they are lower class people. And Nancy is one of them. Prostitutes have long been referred to as whores or tarts. Because their work is prostitute, so they naturally lack of purity.

An Ideal woman should have piety. According to the religious revival of the late 1850's, prostitution is 'the great social evil.' She is labeled as a public enemy. Welter states that religion or piety is the “core of woman's virtue, the source of her strength.” Religion is a gift of God, given so that the “universe might be enlightened, improved, and

harmonized by women.” Women naturally possessed virtues of faith, simplicity, goodness, self-sacrifice, tenderness, affection, sentimentality, and modesty (21-22). In that period, women are judged as either angels or whores. Because Nancy is a whore, she becomes “the great social evil.” Welter also emphasizes that “a ‘fallen woman’ is a ‘fallen angel’.” They are unworthy of the celestial company of her sex” (154). It is undoubted that prostitution leads to decline in morality. Prostitutes destroy families. Husband, normally, left home and turns to prostitutes when they want to have sex. In this way, prostitutes are called as the social evil. In addition, the conceptions of the ideal of womanhood are supported by religious beliefs, and women are taught that they should aspire to live a moral life. Nancy is not only a prostitute but also a part of a pickpocket's gang. It seems that prostitute and thief are immoral in every religion.

In term of domesticity, a good woman should stay at home and focus only on her family duties. Victorian people judge woman who works outside home as outside the realm of the ideal womanhood and its protection. Burstyn points out that “neither wives nor daughters are expected to earn money. Women should find their occupation in the home” (118-119). John Tosh also states that “the image of Victorian domesticity is focused on woman. Domesticity should be interpreted as empowering or repressive to women. Many women accept the ideology that a woman's proper place is in the home” (78). According

to Arnstein, "home is the center of moral virtue and a refuge against the barbarism of the outside world" (82). It is an important consideration that the sphere of woman's happiest is a domesticity. Women should feel happy with their household duties only. In Oliver Twist, Nancy needs to work in the street because she is a poor woman who has to work for her life. In this way, the society judges that Nancy is not a domestic person because she is not a housewife. Though she is a mistress of Sike, she cannot pay attention only to housework.

However, Nancy's character is domestic. She takes care of her husband, Sikes, when he is sick. She says "such a number of nights as I've been patient with you, nursing and caring for you, as if you had been a child" (354). She stays with him and nurses him. However, when he is finally strong enough to get up, he hits her and does not mind her feeling. He says "...don't come over me with your woman's nonsense" (355). It shows that in his opinion woman is always naive and nonsense. In fact, Nancy feels that she has no home although she lives with Sikes in a small room:

"...being a mean and badly furnish apartment, of very limited size;

lighted only by one small window in the shelving roof, and abutting

on a close and dirty lane" (353).

However, she says to Rose that "When such as I, who have no certain roof but the coffin-lid, and no friend in sickness or death but the hospital nurse" (376). It means that she still thinks she does not have a real home; in other words, she also feels lonely. She knows that there is nobody who takes care of her if she is sick or dies.

Finally, according to Welter, submissiveness is, basically, the most important virtue that all good women should have. The ideal woman should have the spirit of obedience and submission. A woman should completely devote herself to her husband. She should carry out her husband's every wish. Nancy is a mistress of Sikes. She, therefore, follows her husband's wish. Though she knows that Sikes is a thief and murderer who wants to harm Oliver, she is still obedient to her husband. She cannot help Oliver more than protecting Oliver from harm and telling Monks' plan to Rose Maylie. She risks her life to save Oliver from a life of depravity. However, Sikes thinks Nancy does not obey him. He thinks Nancy betrays him by telling his secret to other people. He does not think that when he is seriously ill and nearly dies, she takes care of him although she can let him die. Moreover, when Rose offers a safe place away from crime, Nancy does not take it because she is worried about Sikes who is desperately ill. She says, "I can't leave, no, not even to be saved from the life I am leading now" (374). She does not want to separate from, "such a home as I have raised myself with the work of my whole life..." (435). Before Nancy's

death, she persuades Sikes to move to another country with her and start a new, better and more moral life, but Sikes refuses.

To sum up, Nancy is judged as a "fallen woman" because she differs from the ideal of womanhood in the nineteenth century. She is not virgin. Her occupation is judged as "social evil" by the religion. She is not a domestic woman because she works outside home. Her lover also judges that she is not submissive because she tells his secret to another person. She lacks of all virtues that people in that period expect a good woman should have, so she is a "fallen woman."

Is it Nancy's fault?

Bernard Grebanier refers to Jean Jacques Rousseau's idea in English Literature and Its Background that children are born good, but the environment makes children sin. People are made unhappy and corrupted by their experiences in society. He views society as "artificial" and "corrupt." Rousseau believes that civilization and society corrupt human being from their original kindness (6).

Rousseau's idea is clearly shown in Nancy's case. Nancy grows up in London's slum. The story takes place in England, 1830s. The atmosphere of the story is mostly incredibly dark and surly. The author explains that it is "a dark and gloomy den, where a

flaring gas-light burnt all day in the winter time; and where no ray of sun ever shorn in the summer" (127). Significantly, London is developing into an industrialist state, but among the civilization, the environment in slum rapidly declines. Nancy grows up in that environment. Thieves, prostitutes, pickpockets, burglars and overall mean people in the true sense of the word live in slum. Nancy does not have a family. She does not have home and family that can teach and support her living. The result is that she works out in order to earn her own living. She is presented as a part of Fagin's gang from an early age. As a child of the streets, Nancy has been a thief. She has had a terrible childhood and that reflects upon her behavior throughout. She says to Fagin "I thieved for you when I was a child not half as old as this!" (145). She expresses her feeling that she is confronted with the hard life since she is young. She obviously grows up in a shabby background and due to her husband and Fagin, she has been forced into a criminal life.

The subordination of woman is one of the reasons that lead Nancy work illegal job. Particularly, woman in that period had no opportunity to run the business or work outside the home. Moreover, women have no opportunity to study. They should be an angle at home, so they are not necessary to study or work. They need to depend on men such as her husband, her father or her brother. As a result, women who have no family to depend on and who have no skills and education are mostly ends up with illegal jobs such as

prostitutes or thieves. In Oliver Twist, Nancy is a good example. She has no family, and does not have the opportunity to study or train any kind of works. Therefore, she becomes to be prostitute and thief.

Moreover, during the period of industrialization, the wages of the labor were low and the poor have to suffered from long working hours and bad working conditions. Actually, in 1834, the Poor Law was enacted. According to Grebanier, the Poor Law is provided for the herding of the poor into workhouses where they have to surrender their freedom in exchange for the opportunity to labor (423). People who do not enter the workhouse normally confront with a hard life. Oliver Twist is written to attack the Poor Laws and to get people to sympathize with the poor. They have no jobs, and the government refuses to help them, so they turn to illegal jobs such as thieves and prostitute to earn their own living. In that period, the numbers of prostitutes on the street of all Victorian cities are increasing. Statistically, most prostitutes are from poor families and most are orphans. They are expected to be able to support themselves. It is the job that the lower class woman, which have no opportunity in the society, can easily do. Nancy is an orphan and has no family. She also is an uneducated and a lower class person who does not enter the workhouse and has to work out in order to earn a living for her own. Therefore, she ends up as a prostitute and being a part of Fagin's gang.

Nancy's relationship with Sikes also leads her to criminal acts for his sake and eventually to her own death. As mention before, women depend on men and have to obey their husbands. She has to obey her husband. In fact, a husband should take care of a family but Sikes does not. He is a robber and murderer, and always harms Nancy. Moreover, he forces her to work illegally such as sends her to find out what happened to Oliver at the magistrate's office and forces her to help him kidnap Oliver. Fagin says to Nancy that Sikes "treat her like a dog – like a dog! Worse than his dog" (419). Though her husband treats her badly, she still does everything that her husband wants her to do.

However, Nancy is a unique character in Oliver Twist. In much of the novel, morality and nobility are black-and-white issues, but the boundary between virtue and sin of Nancy's character is not always clearly drawn. In fact, the novel is full of characters who are all good and can barely comprehend evil, such as Oliver, Rose, and Brownlow, and characters who are all evil and can barely comprehend good, such as Fagin, Sikes, and Monks. For example, the character of Fagin is presented as "very old shriveled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face...matted red hair" (71). Mr. Brownlow's character is described as an "old gentleman" (100). He takes Oliver home and nurses him out of fever when he first meets Oliver. He also advises Nancy to change her lifestyle. He presents as a generous man, concern for other people.

Nancy's love for Sikes exemplifies the moral ambiguity of her character. Her love and her sense of moral decency come into conflict when Sikes abuses Oliver. She feels confused whether she should obey her lover or should do the right thing. She loves him, but she also knows that he is the bad person. She cannot stand when Sikes or Fagins injure Oliver. She wants Oliver get away from the criminal life, so she always help Oliver when he suffers from Fagin and Sikes. Once, she protects Oliver from Sikes's dog. She says, "the child shan't be torn down by the dog, unless you kill me first" (142). This scene shows that she has a good instinct to help the boy. Her maternal instinct is the main reason that leads Nancy to help Oliver, or she may realize what will happen to Oliver, if he stays with Fagin. Also, she sacrifices her life for Oliver when Sikes murders her for revealing Monks's plots. Dickens describes that she "felt burdened with the sense of her own deep shame" (370). She, finally, decides to correct her fault and do the good thing. She reveals Monks' plan to Rose Maylie. However, she does not want anything bad to happen to Sikes. When Rose urges Nancy to stay with her, but Nancy firmly refuses. Nancy says that she needs to return to her lover, though she is careful not to mention Sikes' name. Nancy is loyal to Sikes until the end of her life. She still stays with him, even though he treats her badly, and smacks her around. Sikes trusts Noah Claypole who tells him that Nancy betrays him. At the end of the story, he brutally beats Nancy to death and

then accidentally hangs himself when he tries to escape. Sikes' behavior may come from the conditions of the slum in which he lives or his weakness for drinking.

To sum up, the researcher believes that it is not Nancy's fault. The environment that she grows up forces her to be an illegal person. She does not have family, which support her living, so she has to work out to earn her living. Also she does not have chances to study or to be trained for work. Prostitute and thief are jobs that Nancy, who does not enter the workhouse, can do. Her lover, Sikes is another person who leads her to criminal acts. However, she commits the noblest act in the novel when she sacrifices her own life in order to protect Oliver. She decided to reveal the plan of Fagin and Monks that they want to make Oliver to be a thief. She has a good instinct to protect Oliver from the criminal life, which she suffers before. Because of helping Oliver, she dies in the hands of her beloved. Her ultimate choice to do a good thing shows that she has a basic goodness, no matter how many environmental obstacles she faces. It appears that Nancy's morality is unique among the major characters in this novel.

The comparison between Rose and Nancy

There are similarities and differences between the two characters, Rose and Nancy. First both are young and have no parents. As the child, Nancy, is grown up in

slum by Fagin. Dickens refers to her as "free and agreeable in their manners" (78). Oliver also thinks that she is very nice girl indeed. She is a girl raised on the street and a prostitute. She does not have home and good gradient that can protect her from an evil world. She has to fight for herself since she is young. That makes her differ from an expectation of the society, so people judged that she is not valuable. She, however, feels sad about her own fate.

Rose, in contrast, is rescued and protected by Mrs. Maylie and grows up secure. She has a good gradient. She is described as "so pure and beautiful," (260). Rose may have been likely to go the way of Nancy if she has not been provided with a home, first by the "poor cottager" who took her in, and then by Mrs. Maylie. Dickens explains that "cheerful, happy smile, are made for home, and fireside peace and happiness" (260). She is presented as a young lady of good breeding and perfect chastity.

In addition, both women want to help Oliver. Nancy tries to protect Oliver when Fagin and Sikes abuse him. And when she overhears conversations between Fagin and Monks, she becomes worried that Oliver is in danger. She meets Rose in order to reveal that Monks is Oliver's half-brother, and he wants to keep the inheritance for himself. Like Nancy, Rose is compassionate and devotes herself to Oliver. Rose and Mrs. Maylie adopt Oliver when he is injured. She wants to rescue Oliver and Nancy too. She offers

Nancy to refuge, but Nancy refuses. She says to Rose "dear, sweet, angel lady, you are the first that ever blessed me with such words as these" (375). Rose is presented as an ideal woman. She is also kind to Nancy. However, only Rose is a representation of all good instincts of Victorian society, because she is a model of purity, while Nancy is a model of sin.

Significantly, Nancy and Rose have much love in their lovers. Both sacrifice her life for their own lover. Rose thinks she is illegitimate. She is unwilling to damage her lover's career. Therefore, she refuses to marry Harry Maylie. In case of Nancy, she sacrifices her life to stay with her cruel lover. She is faithful to Sikes because she loves him, but Sikes always abuses her. She takes care of him when he is sick and does what she tells her to do. Also she refuses Rose when Rose offers her a refuge because she wants to be with her lover.

At the end of the story, these two women meet different ends. Rose finds out that she is Agnes Fleming's younger sister and Oliver's aunt. Henry Maylie also dedicates himself to his love. He decides to be a clergyman instead of a politician. There is no need to worry about hurting his career. Rose and her lover find happiness together after their suffering at the end of the story.

In contrast, Nancy is tragically killed by her lover. Her murder is the worst and the cruelest scene in the story. She tries to make Sikes understand that she chooses to stay with him, but it is useless. Sikes is beyond reasons. He believes that Nancy betrayed him so he decides to kill her. He beats her face with his gun. He thinks that if he fires a gun, he will be discovered. Dickens describes:

“..he beat it twice with all the force he could summon, upon
the upturned face that almost touched his own. She staggered
and fell : nearly blinded with the blood that rained down from a
a deep gash in her knees, drew from her bosom a white
handkerchief” (444 - 445).

The description of the morning after Nancy's murder is dreadful. The room is in a mess. Sikes tries to draw the curtain to block out the light but cannot do it. A dead body of Nancy is discovered and people say that it is a dreadful murder.

In short, Nancy and Rose have both similarities and differences. The differences happen because they are very different in personal background. Throughout the book, Nancy is judged to be a fallen woman by the society that surrounds her, while Rose is thought to be the picture of goodness. These two women are very different in personal backgrounds. Therefore, even though they have a good maternal instinct to help Oliver,

only Rose, a good lady of the nineteenth century, is honored, and received a reward.

Unfortunately, although Nancy does the noblest things, her goodness is ignored. Because people judge Nancy as a "fallen woman," she has no opportunity to live happily and end in tragedy.

In Oliver Twist, Dickens emphasizes that environment plays in distinguishing sin from virtue: the same loyalty to lover and Oliver that would be a virtue in Rose is a self-destructive force for Nancy. Though Nancy is compassionate and intelligent, she deflects Rose's attempts to save her from her life of crime, thus proving that the damage done by a bad upbringing is irrevocable. Her love for Sikes and her compassion for Oliver together compel her to sacrifice her own life.

This novel is clearly made to show the reality of the world; it reveals Dickens' attitudes toward female problems. It seems that the person who is alienated from the society should be eliminated. Megara Bell states, "public opinion demand that once someone have fallen from virtue, she is lost forever. Cultural beliefs about the fallen woman necessitate that she be victim of a sacrificial death. While her death may have seemed shocking to us, there is no other way that Dickens can have told her story." In this way, Nancy who differs from the ideal of womanhood should be dead. In this way, Dickens makes Nancy die at the end to show that woman who differs from the ideal womanhood is

not accepted in the society. Like Jane Rogers' ideas, the "fallen woman" in fiction in the mid-nineteenth century commonly dies, often at her hand, as a result of her crime. The goodness does not save her from the death. The deep-root abhorrence of such deviant behaviour, especially in a culture, which idealize sexually passive female behaviour, is widely felt. It is interesting to note that "fallen women" are still human beings worthy of forgiveness. Nancy are offered the chance to reject their pasts and start over, but her new beginning is never to be.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This chapter presents the outcome of the study. A conclusion and discussion of the researcher are presented. Besides, some interesting topics about the novel are also expressed.

Conclusion

According to this study, the researcher can conclude that, in Oliver Twist, Nancy is judged as a “fallen woman” by the society. In the nineteenth century, women should have the four virtues, which are purity, piety, domesticity, and submissiveness. These four virtues are important standards for ladies. However, Nancy works as a prostitute and is a part of Fagin’s gang. She loses purity, and the religion judges that her occupation is a “social evil.” Moreover, she is not a housewife. Her lover also judges that she is not submissive because she reveals his secret to another person. Therefore, the society judges that she lacks of all four virtues. In other words, it appears that she is different from the ideal of womanhood, so she is a “fallen woman.”

The researcher believes that it is not Nancy's fault. The environment, the subordination of women, and her lover are the reasons that lead her to work an illegal job. The environment that she grows up is the first reason that leads her to a criminal life. She does not have a home. She grows up in a slum and works for Fagin at an early age. Because she does not have a parents or protector, she has to earn living by herself. In this way, she becomes a street woman when she is a teenager.

The second reason is the subordination of women in that period. Actually, the society does not give the opportunity to women. Women do not have chances to study and train for work. Thus, when they does not have a supporter, most of them end up with illegal jobs such as prostitutes or thieves. The Poor Law is the other factor that leads Nancy to be a "fallen woman." The law determines that the government will not help the poor unless they enter the workhouse. Nancy does not enter the workhouse. Also she does not study and train to work. Therefore, she has to earn her living by being a prostitute and help Fagin and Sikes to do an illegal job.

Her lover is an important person who leads her to a criminal life. She needs to depend on her lover, who is a robber and a murderer. He and his companion try to make Oliver to be a thief. Nancy, as a Sikes' wife, should obey and execute the order of her

husband. However, because of her good instinct, she decides to help Oliver. At the end of the story, Sikes kills her, when he knows that she reveals his plan to Rose Maylie.

Comparing to Rose, another female character, she receives a good reward, at the end. She knows her background. Her lover, Henry decides to wed with her. That is because she is an ideal woman. She is a model of women in the nineteenth century. She has grown up in a good environment with good gradients. In contrast, Nancy who does not have home and family grows up in a slum. She works in order to earn her living. Finally, she is murdered cruelly by her lover. She does not receive any reward for her goodness because she is judged to be a "fallen woman" by the society.

Dickens tries to present that people, normally, do not give an opportunity to alienation. Women are judged by society. If they are judged to be ideal women, they are suitable to receive a reward for their goodness. On the other hand, some women who are judged to be a "fallen woman" are punished because they differ from the ideal of womanhood of the society. The researcher believes Dickens thinks that the ideal of womanhood is problematic. Also he comment that people should judge others from their hearts and their actions. In addition, the judgement of the society leads to many problems such as the inequality, repression, and oppression of women. This power of men over women is maintained through acts of sexual aggression such as sexual abuse and

prostitution. Women are expected to be submissive and subordinate, nowadays. Dickens shows his attitudes toward women through Nancy. He opposes the social values, judgement and the old tradition, which accept that women have a lower status than men do. He also presents the attitude of people that the "fallen woman" cannot be accepted in the society. Therefore, Dickens decides to make Nancy die at the end of the story.

The researcher believes that women's status is still problematic in our society nowadays. The problems left many women in misery. There seems to be no way out for the fallen woman and many of them even commit suicide. This problem should not be neglected and the situation should be improved. It is not as poor as it is if women have education. In the novel, Nancy is immersed in the sin by the environment that she lives and grows up, the subordination of women, and her lover. Actually, she is loyal, strong, brave and innocent. However, she is an orphan who has no family and lacks of education. If women are educated, they can be able to work with their knowledge. Consequently, the problem may not be as serious as it is.

Suggestions for further studies

In order to provoke and promote further studies of the novel, the following interesting topics are suggested:

1. The analysis of other novels in the nineteenth century that reflect the "fallen woman" and the ideal of womanhood should be studied.
2. The character of Sikes as a typical criminal should be studied.
3. The comparison of the other characters in their relationship to Oliver should be studied.
4. Thai novels that reflect the "fallen woman" should be studied.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Plot summary of Oliver Twist

Oliver Twist is a novel of Charles Dickens, published in 1837-8. Oliver Twist was born an orphan when his mother died in a parish workhouse. Oliver was brought up by parish charity. When he was nine years old, he was sold as an apprentice to Mr. Sowerberry. He got into a fistfight and was locked in the cellar for punishment. He decided to run away to London. He met Artful Dodger, who offered him a home with Fagin and his gang. He finally found that Fagin and his gang were thieves. While being trained to be a thief, Oliver was arrested for picking Mr. Brownlow's pocket. Mr. Brownlow took him home. However, Fagin decided to kidnap Oliver back. Later, Oliver was forced to help Sikes, one of Fagin's gangsters to committed a robbery in Mrs. Maylie's house. Unfortunately, Oliver was wounded. Mrs. Maylie and Rose cured him.

Monks, Oliver's half-brother, pressed Fagin to capture Oliver and turned Oliver to be a thief. Nancy, Sikes' girlfriend, revealed to Rose and Mr. Brownlow that Monks wanted to keep an inheritance for himself, so that he caused harm to Oliver. Rose offered Nancy refuge, but she refused. However, Noah Claypole, a spy of Fagin, had overheard her conversation. Finally, Sikes beat Nancy to death. While trying to escape, Sikes

accidentally hanged himself. Fagin was arrested, convicted, and hanged. His gang was scattered. Before Monks died in prison, Mr. Brownlow forced him to reveal Oliver's parentage. Finally, Rose also found that she was an aunt of Oliver. Mr. Brownlow adopted Oliver and they all lived happily.

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