

**CATH'S SOCIAL ANXIETY IN RAINBOW ROWELL'S  
*FANGIRL***

**THESIS**



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**2021**

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Saleh (2017) said that humans face any situations or events that triggered anxiety every day, such as doing a presentation, coming late to class, working the deadline, having a job interview, etc. According to the Social Anxiety Institute, people with social anxiety disorder would feel more anxious than people in general. They fear speaking in front of a group and feel nervous and uncomfortable in almost all social situations.

This study discusses social anxiety found in Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl* because the novel's issue is very interesting to discuss, which is social anxiety. The researcher wants to analyze it deeply because social anxiety is a common issue in this era. This novel tells about college life, whereas the researcher is a college student, which also becomes why the researcher chooses this novel. *Fangirl* novel contains an issue about teenage life as a college student. In literary work, the issue of social anxiety also still rare.

In this part, the researcher presents few studies. First, Terananda (2016) focuses on how the character overcomes his social phobia in *Room* by Emma Donoghue. This study analyzed some symbols, characters, and tone that support Jack's effort to overcome his social phobia. In contrast, the recent study did not use the symbol to find ways to overcome Cath's social anxiety. This present study also analyzed the factors of social anxiety.

Second, Riswahyudi (2017) discusses the social anxiety disorder suffered by 14 years old girl in *Finding Audrey* novel. This research found that the main cause of Audrey's social anxiety was being bullied in the environment, while the main reason for Cath's social anxiety was a traumatic experience, which is about her











1. The researcher classified the data that has been selected and identified to find the problem
2. The researcher described Cath Avery's social anxiety portrayed in *Fangirl*
3. The researcher described the causes of Cath Avery's social anxiety portrayed in *Fangirl*
4. The researcher described the ways Cath Avery overcomes her social anxiety portrayed in *Fangirl*
5. The researcher described the role of Cath's peer to overcomes her social anxiety portrayed in *Fangirl*
6. The researcher concluded the analysis and made sure that it has answered the four research questions of this research.

















## 2.5. Previous Studies

Terananda (2016) analyzed research about social anxiety in Emma Donoghue's *Room*. This research explains how Jack's effort to overcome social phobia by using the symbol and tone to support it. Jack is the main character who has a social phobia. He is trapped in a shed until he is five years old with his Ma. Finally, he comes out from the shed, but he found it challenging to communicate with others. Except for his Ma, Jack does not meet with anyone. It makes him have a social phobia. After his great escape, he can overcome social phobia by accepting real life and living within. It shows the finding of this research about the symbol of the room. By coming to this room again, Jack realizes that room is not the "Real" world as he believes before. Say goodbye to this room means that Jack leaves his past and starts to live everyday life.

The following research is from Riswahyudi (2017). The researcher analyzed the main character's social anxiety disorder in *Finding Audrey* novel by Sophie Kinsella. This research aims to know the main character's social anxiety disorder, the factors caused, and how the main character resolves her social anxiety. The main character itself is named Audrey. She is a 14 years old girl who suffered from a social anxiety disorder. As a result, Audrey suffered deep trauma from bullying in her environment. Audrey also an introverted person with shy characteristics. It also supports Audrey's social anxiety disorder. She will get a panic attack and get somatic reactions when she is around strangers she has not known very well. However, Audrey can resolve her social anxiety by the therapist's role and using the treatment of speech. Besides, Audrey also gets help from some people who have

intimate relationships with her. From this research, we can know that environment has a significant role in our mental health.

The other research is from Susilo (2019). The main discussion of this research is about the introverted personality of the main character in the *Fangirl* novel by Rainbow Rowell. According to this research, the main character named Cath Avery is a girl who does not like to interact with others. She always alone in her room by writing a fan-fiction about Simon Snow on fan-fic.net. This research shows the factor of her introverted personality comes from the divorce of her parents.

The last related previous research is from Inggrita (2020). The researcher analyzed what kind of anxiety was reflected in Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl*. This research aims to know the dominant type of anxiety suffered by Cath Avery and determine the dominant type of anxiety in *Fangirl*. The result showed that realistic anxiety is the dominant anxiety experienced by Cath because she is worried about something real.

From many previous studies above, the researcher believes that this research is different because this research focused on the social anxiety that a teenager in college life suffers. In contrast, some studies analyzed social anxiety in children. Some researchers with the same novel only analyzed the general anxiety of the main character. At the same time, this study focused on the main point: social anxiety experienced by the main character. This research is also different because this research aims to answer the factors and how the main character and her peer help overcome her social anxiety.











































was interested in fan-fiction and wanted to increase her writing fan-fiction skills. However, the reality was far from her expectation.

Related to her roommate, Cath was afraid of Reagan's response about Cath and Levi because something happened the previous night. Cath claimed it was an accident because she knew that Levi was Reagan's boyfriend, although actually, he was not. Levi was in a relationship with Reagan, but their relationship ended before they entered the university. Unconsciously, Cath slept with Levi when Reagan was not back in her room. Cath felt so guilty to Reagan. "I..... I'm just sorry." (p.181), and Reagan said, "*Don't*. Do not apologize." (p.181). After that event, Reagan invited Cath to come to Levi's party. But Cath rejected it because she still felt guilty and she was so shy to meet Levi.

"She didn't want to go to Levi's party. Even though she liked him, she didn't like parties. And she didn't want the first time she saw him after what had happened to be at a party. With party people. With any people." (p.185).

Finally, Cath decided to stay in her dormitory. According to Clark & Leigh (2018), people start paying attention to what others think during adolescence. In Cath's opinion, something that happened yesterday night was not herself. She was terrified and anxious to meet Levi after this incident. Cath was shy to meet Levi because she thought that it was a bad event that Cath had done before. Cath was trapped in a room with Levi, and they did an adult activity. Besides that, Cath did not like parties. She also had an intended meaning not to meet Levi. That lousy memory was hard for Cath as a person with social anxiety.



















































got something hard for his work. Same with Cath, he also likes to think deeply about something.

The next is fear of negative evaluation. People with social anxiety afraid of negative evaluation from the other person. Cath is always constantly haunted by worry about people's evaluation. Start with an assignment and simple things as taking a lunch. She is afraid when people judge her as a stupid person or anything like that. The last reason for her social anxiety because of a cultural factor. A culture of some people that believe if people who have a twin is on one package. In reality, Cath is different from Wren. Cath doesn't like parties like Wren. Wren, who's more friendly and easy to talk to and associate with other people, sometimes makes Cath feel wrong with herself.

The researcher also found how Cath overcomes social anxiety is by self-acceptance, self-compassion, and peer role. This research found that simple things can solve social anxiety, as Cath has done. She tries to do self-acceptance and self-compassion by doing self-kindness and understand that she is not alone. She knows the way to avoiding something she's uncomfortable with. Cath knows her writing ability and has her way to reduce her stress by doing Kanye party when she needs to. The role of her peer also has a significant impact on overcoming her social anxiety. She has a good relationship with her friends. Those are Reagan, Levi, and Nick. Nick is her writing partner that makes Cath happy to have a paired task communicating with others before. While Reagan and Levi always support Cath without judging each other. Reagan and Levi are always inviting Cath to their activity that Cath never attend before.



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