



**THE FAILURE OF AMERICAN SUBURBAN MYTH DEPICTED BY  
GENDER PERFORMATIVITY IN *L.I.E* (2001)**

**A THESIS**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Bachelor Degree Majoring American Cultural Studies in  
English Department Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

Submitted by:

ADIRA KHANIA

NIM. 13020122130097

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY**

**2026**

## PRONOUNCEMENT

I sincerely affirm that this thesis titled “The Failure of American Suburban Myth Depicted by Gender Performativity in *L.I.E* (2001)” is my original work. This thesis was conducted independently without incorporating any material from other researchers in the diploma, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree at any university. In addition, I declare that I rely solely on the provided sources attached and do not include content from any other sources.



Semarang, 13 May 2026

Adira Khania

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“If you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.” – **Sherlock Holmes.**

“There is always only one truth.” – **Kudo Shinichi, Edogawa Conan.**



*“This thesis is dedicated to my Mother who is stronger than anything in this whole world. I craved this degree for you”*


**APPROVAL**

**THE FAILURE OF AMERICAN SUBURBAN MYTH DEPICTED BY  
GENDER PERFORMATIVITY IN *L.I.E* (2001)**

Written by  
Adira Khania  
NIM. 13020122130097

Is approved by the Thesis Advisor  
On 13 May 2026

Thesis Advisor



Dr. Sukarni Suryaningsih, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 197212231998022001

The Head of English Department



Dr. Oktiva Herry Chandra, M.Hum.  
NIP. 196710041993031003

## VALIDATION

### THE FAILURE OF AMERICAN SUBURBAN MYTH DEPICTED BY GENDER PERFORMATIVITY IN *L.I.E* (2001)

Submitted by:  
Adira Khania  
13020122130097

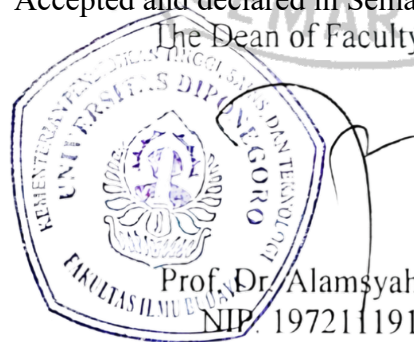
Approved by:  
Strata I Thesis Examination Committee  
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University  
on 18 June 2026

Chairman,  
Dr. Retno Wulandari, S.S., M.A.  
NIP. 197505252005012002

Member,  
Sindy Sintya Mianani, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 199405182024062003

Member,  
Dr. Sukarni Suryaningsih, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 197212231998022001

Accepted and declared in Semarang on 18 June 2026  
The Dean of Faculty of Humanities



Prof. Dr. Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 197211191998021002

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In writing this thesis, I acknowledge this work of mine is full of limitations. Thus, I look forward to any feedback that will elevate its quality. It is my desire that this study will provide a valuable reference for scholars and readers.

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Adira Khania

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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates the failure of American suburban myth depicted in gender performativity portrayed in *L.I.E* (2001) directed by Michael Custa. The research aims to explore how the environment of American suburbia in the movie is not coherent in the idea of a great suburban life as what society has been taught and how this stigma can be a struggle for non-gender conforming people. The method in conducting this research is the library research method. The researcher also uses Scott Donaldson's theory of The Suburban Myth and Judith Butler's theory of Gender Performativity. The results show *L.I.E* (2001) uncovers how suburbia can be a failure and not as ideal as reflected by the stigma of success and fulfillment in the context of the American dream. This failure is associated with the norms that individuals should conform to binary gender roles, which do not represent what is portrayed in the movie. This research provides insight in viewing how the failure of American suburban myth is existential.

**Keywords:** American suburban myth, American dream, gender performativity, *L.I.E* (2001).

