



AMERICANS' VIEWS OF LESBIANISM IN THE 1960s AS DEPICTED IN *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR* (1961)

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for S-1 Degree Majoring American Studies in the English Department
Faculty of Humanities
Diponegoro University

Submitted by:

Andrea Zahra Shafira

NIM 13020122140161

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY

SEMARANG

2026

PRONOUNCEMENT

I ethically state that this thesis entitled “Americans’ Views of Lesbianism in the 1960s as Depicted in *The Children’s Hour* (1961)” is written by myself without taking any works from other researchers in any university, in diploma degree, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree. I also ascertain that I do not take any material from other works except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, 12th May 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrea Zahra Shafira

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

If I had one ambition it was to make my life itself into a poem.

Natalie Clifford Barney

But to feel nothing so as not to feel anything—what a waste!

André Aciman

I dedicate this thesis to

My family, friends, and those

Who are in search of their identities

APPROVAL

AMERICANS' VIEWS OF LESBIANISM IN THE 1960s AS DEPICTED IN *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR* (1961)

Written by:

Andrea Zahra Shafira
13020122140161


Is approved by the thesis advisor
on 12th May 2026

Thesis Advisor



Sindy Sintang Mianani S.S., M.Hum.
NIP. 199405182024062003

The Head of English Department



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

VALIDATION

AMERICANS' VIEWS OF LESBIANISM IN THE 1960s AS DEPICTED IN *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR* (1961)

Submitted by

Andrea Zahra Shafira
13020122140161

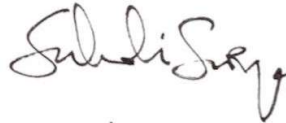
Approved by

Strata I Thesis Examination Committee
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University
On June 19, 2026

Chairman
Dr. Arido Laksono, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP.197507111999031002



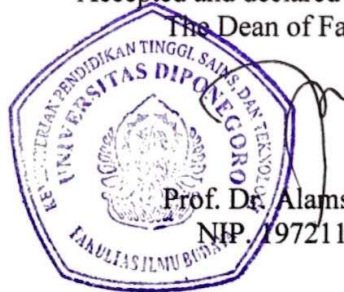
Member
Dr. Sukarni Suryaningsih, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP.197212231998022001



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



Accepted and declared in Semarang on June 19, 2026
The Dean of Faculty of Humanities



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

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I am not in doubt that this thesis is far from perfect, hence I am open and will appreciate any corrections and recommendations or suggestions. Finally, I hope this thesis will be useful for future researchers that is learning about related fields.

Semarang, 12th May 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea', written in a cursive style.

Andrea Zahra Shafira

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled “Americans’ Views of Lesbianism in the 1960s as Depicted in *The Children’s Hour* (1961)” examines the homophobia towards lesbians in 1960s America. Using the film *The Children’s Hour* by director William Wyler as the main object, this study aims to uncover how a lie could lead to the hate of queer people, specifically lesbians. This study is different from previous studies because it uses the film, instead of the play as the object, and it highlights homophobia and its effect on its characters, providing a deeper psychological and character-driven study of how lesbians and societal repression interact. This study uses Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* to analyze how the society constructs and punishes lesbian identity. The findings show that a lie can destroy the lives and reputations of people, particularly lesbians in the 1960s. It also leads to the repression faced by many women regarding their sexualities.

Keywords: Homophobia, Lesbianism, *The Children’s Hour* (1961), 1960s America, Sexuality