

**INTRUSIVE SYMPTOMS IN 'THE THINGS THEY CARRIED' BY TIM
O'BRIEN: WAR EXPERIENCES IN VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS**

THESIS

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG**

2024

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THESIS

Presented to

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

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2024**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled “Intrusive Symptoms in ‘The Things They Carried’ by Tim O’Brien: War Experience in Vietnamese Soldier” is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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Malang, 14 September 2024

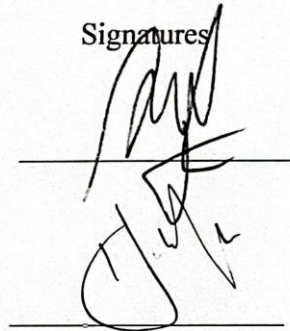
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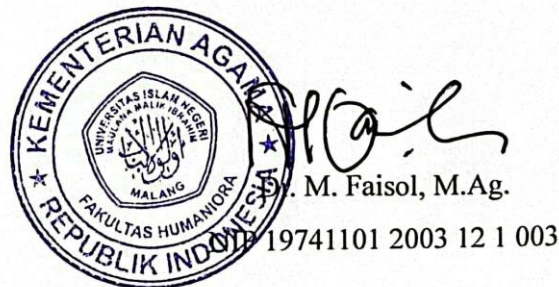
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The official stamp of Universitas Islam Negeri Malang, Faculty of Humanities, is circular. It contains the text: KEMENTERIAN AGAMA, UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MALANG, MALANG, FAKULTAS HUMANIORA, REPUBLIK INDONESIA. A handwritten signature of M. Faisol, M.Ag. is written over the stamp. Below the signature, the NIP number 19741101 2003 12 1 003 is printed.

MOTTO

“Respect someone if you want to be respected.”

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to myself, to my parents, my father and my mother, who always provide endless encouragement and prayers for my success. My parents have put in all their energy and resources so that I can achieve success. Thank you very much to my beloved parents.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, the researcher would like to express his deepest gratitude to Allah SWT most merciful and most merciful, for the grace and blessings that have been given to me and to his servants. Thank you for giving such great power to complete this thesis " Intrusive Symptoms in 'The Things They Carried' by Tim O'Brien: War Experience in Vietnamese Soldiers", Second, prayers and greetings will always be conveyed to our beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has guided us all from the age of darkness of ignorance to the age of light, namely Islam.

This thesis has been completed by the researcher. This is a challenge to achieve success that has been completed by researchers. With the support and prayers of those closest to me who have helped the researcher to complete this thesis. The researcher hereby thanks:

1. Beloved father and mother, Suko Budoyo, and Hersubiyanti who always provide prayers and support for me, as well as energy, funds and facilities. Thus, I am a very lucky and grateful person to have parents like them.
2. Prof. Dr. H. M. Zainuddin, M.A. as Chancellor of the State Islamic University Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
3. Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag. as Dean of the University's Faculty of Humanities Islamic State of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
4. Mr. Ribut Wahyudi, M.Ed., Ph.D. as Head of English Literature Department of Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang.

5. My thesis advisor, Whida Rositama, M.Hum. who patiently guided me in completing this thesis.
6. Lecturers in the humanities faculty, especially the English Literature Department, who have shared very valuable knowledge, information, experience and teaching.
7. My older sisters, Yuni Imania Konstanta and Yeni Famila Fasca, who have given me support and encouragement.
8. My dearest and closest friend, Reza Abdullah, who has supported and accompanied my life process.
9. My sincere friends Naili Qoidatus, Noer Fadhillah, Arvidianty Nuvikha, Laila Muza who have be friended and supported me during my studies.

Malang, 14 September 2024

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ABSTRACT

Putri, Yani Fa'aisyah Tryas (2024) *Intrusive Symptomps in 'The Things They Carried' by Tim O'Brien: War Experience in Vietnamese Soldiers*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Whida Rositama, M.Hum.

Key word: trauma, war, soldier's war experience

Currently, the issue of trauma may receive less attention from many groups in society. In fact, many people should pay attention to trauma-related problems, because trauma has a real impact on everyone. Trauma has serious scars on people who experience it (Lumbanraja, 2023). This research examines the trauma experienced by characters who are at war in the novel "*The Things They Carried*" by Tim O'Brien. This research aims to increase awareness and provide information to the public that it is important to pay attention to trauma. Many people may only know about trauma that is only experienced by ordinary people in households and so on, but it turns out that war trauma is more painful if you realize it. In this research, five forms of intrusive symptoms experienced by soldiers during war were found, including intrusive thoughts, memories of the past, regret, emotional stress, and finally physical reactions. The research results show that not all soldiers in the novel experienced these intrusive symptoms. In the aspect of intrusive thoughts experienced by two characters, namely Tim O'Brien and Rat Kiley. In the aspect of past memories experienced by one character, namely Tim O'Brien. In the aspect of regret experienced by three characters, namely Jimmy Cross, Tim O'Brien and Bobby Jorgenson. In the aspect of emotional stress experienced by four characters, namely Dave Jansen, Mitchel Sanders, Rat Kiley and Tim O'Brien. Finally, the aspect of physical reactions experienced by the five characters, namely Tim O'Brien, Mark Fossie, Azar, Rat Kiley and Mitchel Sanders. In this research, it was also found that there were five impacts experienced by the characters, namely Avoidance, Emotional Numbing, Hyperarousal, Survivor's Guilt, and Repression. These soldiers not only experience trauma disorders that occur on the battlefield, but problems regarding romance and other problems also influence causing these intrusive symptoms.

مستخلص البحث

بوتري، ياني فايسيا ترياس (٢٠٢٤) أعراض تنخلية في "الأشياء التي حملوها" بقلم تيم أوبراين: تجربة الحرب في الجنود الفيتناميين. أطروحة البكالوريوس. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الإسلام نيجيري مولانا مالك إبراهيم. مالانج. المستشارية ويدا روزيتاما الماجستير

الكلمات الأساسية: الصدمة، الحرب، تجربة الجندي الحربية.

في الوقت الحالي، قد تحظى مسألة الصدمة باهتمام أقل من العديد من فئات المجتمع. في الواقع، يجب على العديد من الأشخاص الانتباه إلى المشكلات المرتبطة بالصدمة. لأن الصدمة لها تأثير حقيقي على الجميع. الصدمة لها ندوب خطيرة على الأشخاص الذين يتعرضون لها (لومباراجا، ٢٠٢٣). يتناول هذا البحث الصدمة التي عاشتها الشخصيات الحربية في رواية "الأشياء التي حملوها" للكاتب تيم أوبراين. يهدف هذا البحث إلى زيادة الوعي وتوفير المعلومات للجمهور حول أهمية الاهتمام بالصدمة. قد لا يعرف الكثير من الناس سوى الصدمات التي يتعرض لها الأشخاص العاديون في الأسر وما إلى ذلك، ولكن اتضح أن صدمة الحرب تكون أكثر إيلاّمًا إذا أدركت ذلك. وفي هذا البحث تم العثور على خمسة أشكال من الأعراض النخلية التي يعاني منها الجنود أثناء الحرب، بما في ذلك الأفكار النخلية، ونكريات الماضي، والندم، والضغط النفسي، وأخيرًا ردود الفعل الجسدية. تظهر نتائج البحث أنه لم يعاني جميع الجنود في الرواية من هذه الأعراض النخلية. في جانب الأفكار المتطفلة التي تمت تجربتها هناك ٣ أحرف. في جانب النكريات الماضية التي تم تجربتها هناك شخصيتان. في جانب الندم الذي شهنته هناك ٣ شخصيات. في جانب الضغط العاطفي الذي يعاني منه هناك ٧ أحرف. الأخير يتعلق بجانب ردود الفعل الجسدية التي يعاني منها ٨ شخصيات. لا يعاني هؤلاء الجنود من اضطرابات الصدمة التي تحدث في ساحة المعركة فحسب، بل تؤثر المشكلات المتعلقة بالروماتية وغيرها من المشكلات أيضًا على التسبب في هذه الأعراض النخلية.

ABSTRAK

Putri, Yani Fa'aisyah Tryas (2024) *Gejala Intrusif yang ada Pada Novel 'The Things They Carried' Karya Tim'O'Brien: Pengalaman Perang Para Tentara Vietnam*. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing, Whida Rositama, M.Hum.

Kata kunci: trauma, perang, pengalaman perang para tentara.

Pada saat ini, isu trauma mungkin kurang mendapat perhatian dari banyak kelompok masyarakat. Sebenarnya banyak orang yang harus memperhatikan masalah terkait trauma, dikarenakan trauma mempunyai dampak yang nyata pada setiap orang. Trauma mempunyai bekas luka yang serius pada orang yang mengalaminya (Lumbanraja, 2023). Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang trauma yang dialami oleh tokoh-tokoh yang sedang berperang dalam novel "*The Things They Carried*" karya Tim O'Brien. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran dan memberikan informasi kepada kalangan masyarakat bahwa penting untuk memperhatikan tentang trauma. Banyak orang yang mungkin hanya mengetahui tentang trauma yang hanya dialami oleh orang-orang biasa dalam rumah tangga dan lain sebagainya, namun ternyata trauma perang lebih menyakitkan jika disadari. Dalam penelitian ini ditemukan lima bentuk gejala intrusif yang dialami tentara pada saat perang antara lain terdapat pikiran intrusif, kenangan masa lalu, penyesalan, tekanan emosional, dan terakhir ada reaksi fisik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tidak semua prajurit yang ada didalam novel tersebut mengalami gejala intrusive tersebut. Pada aspek pemikiran intrusif dialami oleh dua karakter yaitu Tim O'Brien dan Rat Kiley. Pada aspek kenangan masa lalu yang dialami oleh salah satu tokoh yaitu Tim O'Brien. Pada aspek penyesalan dialami tiga karakter yaitu Jimmy Cross, Tim O'Brien dan Bobby Jorgenson. Pada aspek stres emosional dialami empat karakter yaitu Dave Jansen, Mitchel Sanders, Rat Kiley dan Tim O'Brien. Terakhir aspek reaksi fisik yang dialami kelima karakter yaitu Tim O'Brien, Mark Fossie, Azar, Rat Kiley dan Mitchel Sanders. Dalam penelitian ini juga ditemukan lima dampak yang dialami oleh karakter yaitu Penghindaran, Mati Rasa Emosional, Hyperarousal, Rasa Bersalah Penyintas, dan Represi. Para tentara tersebut tidak hanya mengalami gangguan trauma yang terjadi di medan perang, tetapi masalah tentang percintaan dan masalah lainnya juga mempengaruhi menyebabkan gejala intrusif ini.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains an explanation of the general aspects of this study. In this chapter, things that include the background of the study and the research questions that exist from the research problem. This chapter also contains the significance of the research, the scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Intrusive symptoms is a part of post traumatic stress disorder. Post traumatic stress disorder is a part of mental disorders. Mental disorders are problems or abnormalities that occur in a person's soul. The disorders that occur can be mental health disorders or mental disorders. This disorder refers to the condition of a person whose thoughts, feelings and behavior have been affected (Sarah Beutler, 2022). Common symptoms that occur in someone who experiences mental disorders usually include changes in mood, feelings of excessive anxiety or fear, difficulty controlling oneself, severe anxiety, physical problems, etc. Currently, the issue of symptoms of mental disorders that occur is in the incident of the Israeli war that attacks Hamas, but what Israel targets is all people in Palestine, whether it is children and parents. This will surely leave a great trauma on the Palestinians (Indlieb, 2023). Mental disorders are not a form of weakness or failure that occurs in a person, but rather a medical condition that can be treated and managed with the help of mental health professionals (Bhandari, 2023).

A person who is experiencing a mental disorder, many things in his body and soul that have been affected in an essential way. Mental disorders that occur usually include various conditions such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and many more. The impacts that will occur from these mental disorders can include physical health, emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, and daily functioning (Robinson, 2023). One of the most common or main impacts that can occur from mental disorders is on emotional and psychological well-being. Someone who may experience feelings of sadness, hopelessness, confusion, or a deep sense of helplessness (SAMSHA, 2021). For example, when someone experiences depression, this can affect many other things, such as reduced appetite, irregular sleep, and interest in daily activities that becomes more unproductive than usual. This can also give rise to tension in a person, excessive vigilance, and prolonged fear, even in situations that are actually safe. Each person experiences different levels of mental health. Apart from that, each person also has different ways of dealing with stress and challenges.

Due to the many problems regarding mental disorders, literary works exist as a medium for shaping a person's psychic guidelines. Currently, trauma studies can also study a literary work text from a person's psychological perspective to create a person's spiritual and intellectual through the guidelines contained. A novel is a literary work that has played an important role in instilling psychological, spiritual and intellectual values to increase a person's self-awareness. This happened because the novel is able to build emotional intensity with the reader through the elements contained in it. Another thing that happens is that novels can help readers

enjoy, reflect and understand more deeply the psychic messages conveyed. In similar terms, novels can invite readers to care more about the trauma studies field within a person. In summary, the cultivation of trauma studies guidelines can be done and occurs through literary works in the form of novels.

Based on the research that I have carried out, to support my research, I explain previous studies that are related to my research. To support my research, there are several previous studies related to my research topic. Kirkinis, Pieterse, Martin, Agiliga, & Brownell (2021), Heidarizadeh (2015), and Redican, Nolan, Hyland, Cloitre, McBride, Karatzias, & Shevlin (2021), these research studies are similar in nature and have the same focus in trauma and its effects. All three studies have the same object, namely literature. These three studies also have the same focus, namely on the phenomenon of trauma which has a broad and complex impact. Although the perspectives on each research are different and in different contexts between literature and psychoanalysis; racial discrimination; and psychological trauma disorders. However, the researchers underscored the importance of understanding and dealing with trauma to improve the mental health and well-being of the character who experienced the trauma.

Further relevant research is in Feder, Rutter, Schiller, & Charney (2020), Kraneveld, de Thejje, van Heesch, Borre, de Kivit, Olivier, & Garssen (2014), Pratiwi, Maca, & Asyrafunnisa (2023), Sripiya (2023). These four studies have the same object, namely researching PTSD related to trauma. These four studies have the same research object, namely researching novels. Even though the four studies have different perspectives, the four studies have the same focus on understanding

PTSD which refers to trauma, and these studies are equally included in the scope of the literature review.

The latest relevant research is research conducted in a thesis researched by Murtafi'atul Fitriani (2024), Ahmad Faizin (2022), and Devina Dwi Nurjayanti (2020). The thesis research was carried out in the same way as the research I had done. There are three theses that have the same research objects and topics. The three thesis studies also have similarities in examining trauma in the characters in the novel. The three thesis studies have the same focus in examining the trauma that occurs within the characters in the novel. The three relevant studies as a whole aim to understand how trauma affects characters in a fictional context, as well as how these characters can recover from the trauma that occurs.

The researcher examined the novel "*The Things They Carried*" using trauma study theory with the aim of finding out which characters experienced this trauma disorder. This novel is very suitable to be researched using trauma studies theory because the essence of the story in this theory is about war. It can be concluded that in every war at the end of every war the soldiers will experience many things that have happened. It is what happens after the war that will make the soldier characters experience trauma.

B. Problem of Study

In line with the research background above, a problem was formulated in this research as follows:

1. What are forms of intrusive symptoms experienced by characters in *The Things They Carried* ?
2. How is the intrusive symptoms impact on the soldiers' emotion by characters in *The Things They Carried* ?

C. Significance of the Study

The expectations from this research provide two practical benefits for readers. First, this research will provide insight into proving one's abilities in the field of literary criticism, especially in analyzing characters who experience intrusive symptoms in novels. Second, hopefully this research will be useful in enriching readers' knowledge about the influence of intrusive symptoms on character behavior and how this can provide a deeper picture of this mental condition. With better understanding, readers can develop greater empathy and understanding for individuals experiencing intrusive symptoms. Additionally, this research can serve as a foundation for other researchers to conduct further research in related fields, paving the way for a more in-depth exploration of the impact of intrusive symptoms in the literature.

D. Definition of Key Terms

There are four key terms in this research.

a. Sigmund Freud's opinion, Mental disorders originate from a conflict between unconscious desires or impulses that conflict with social norms or demands.

(Meretoja, 2020, p. 2)

b. According to Cathy Caruth, trauma is an extraordinary experience caused by an uncontrollable event. Trauma can also be known as a psychological impact that

highlights emotional responses that arise without control. (Meretoja, 2020, p. 79)

c. Post-traumatic stress disorder is one of the many mental health challenges that often occurs but often goes unnoticed. This disorder arises because it is triggered

by trauma due to past experiences. Traumatic events such as physical violence, sexual harassment, earthquakes, conflict, or discrimination can trigger post-

traumatic stress disorder. Individuals who experience this disorder tend to constantly remember difficult moments in the past, such as nightmares or

flashbacks (Sosalia, Maca, et., al. 2023).

d. Intrusive Symptoms is one of the many mental health challenges that often occurs but often goes unnoticed. This condition arises due to trauma from past experiences.

(Richard A. Bryant a, 2011)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature as a basis for theory and analysis. The theory used is useful as a guide for answering research problems in detail and in depth. This chapter discusses trauma studies theory to discuss the impact of intrusive symptoms on the characters in the novel.

A. Trauma Studies Theory in Literary Context

The context of trauma studies in literature emphasizes that trauma studies can examine literary works such as novels. Traumatic experiences in literary works can be researched using trauma studies theory (Meretoja, 2020, pp. 288-289). The aim of research on trauma studies in literary works is to understand the traumatic experiences experienced by characters and novel authors. In this research, the literary work studied is a novel, where the novel is a true story of the war experiences experienced by the author himself. Over time, traditional approaches have given way to more comprehensive models of trauma, which posit that trauma can be a response in many ways to extreme events, rather than simply a single characteristic. The concept that traumatic experiences can challenge language, divide the soul and even confuse meaning, set the first boundaries in the field and continues to influence conversation important, especially when Alternative approaches replace these ideas (Richter, 2018, pp. 360-361). Furthermore, in detail, there are definitions related to trauma studies theory. According to Cathy Caruth Trauma is considered an event that destroys consciousness and hinders the ability

to describe it directly with words. His approach highlights the severity of suffering by implying that unforgettable traumatic experiences can result in damage to the psyche. (Meretoja, 2020, p. 80) Trauma is considered an event that cannot be fully absorbed, thereby destroying identity and leaving fragments outside the realm of memory and story. The process of fragmentation or dissociation was seen as the root cause of trauma; this view helped shape the transhistorical concept of trauma, suggesting that trauma has an essential or universal impact on consciousness and narrative memory, making it possible to link individual traumatic experiences with collective experiences. Traumatic experiences and their inherent dissociation hinder efforts to understand and express them linguistically due to the level of fear that inhibits the mind's ability to do so. Although the experience may never be clearly expressed or identified, it functions like a tumor in consciousness that causes injury. These traumatic experiences have negative and often pathological effects on consciousness and memory, thereby hindering the integration of the past into the life narrative. This model emphasizes how much suffering is caused by external factors that cause internal changes in thoughts and identity, which can have permanent effects (Richter, 2018, p. 363). According to Cathy Caruth, trauma is an extraordinary experience caused by an uncontrollable event. Trauma can also be known as a psychological impact that highlights emotional responses that arise without control. According to Mark Heberle, (Meretoja, 2020, pp. 385-386) strong trauma literature comes from American writers such as Tim O'Brien who are able to understand and diagnose trauma in detail. In 2016 the term PTSD has evolved into a superior but still controversial study. This approach aims to outline the

complexity and long-term impact of the experience of trauma, while emphasizing the importance of reflection and understanding to aid the healing and recovery process of individuals and society as a whole. Therefore, the study of trauma does not only focus on diagnosis or clinical analysis, but also considers the social and cultural context for understanding and overcoming trauma (Richter, 2018, p. 363). According to Mark Heberle in a book discussing the Vietnam War, Cathy Caruth stated that the difference between general trauma and war trauma lies in several aspects. General trauma usually occurs due to painful or shocking experiences such as accidents or violence (Meretoja, 2020, pp. 385-386). Meanwhile, war trauma is related to extreme violence, loss and life-threatening situations on the battlefield which can happen at any time and to anyone.

B. Intrusive Symptoms

In this section the researcher will explain Intrusive Symptoms in detail. This section is divided to three. Namely understanding the definition, the significance, and the and categories Intrusive Symptoms.

1. The Definition of Intrusive Symptoms

Regarding (Meretoja, 2020, p. 386) the Vietnam War, Cathy Caruth has also expressed her ideas, namely Cathy Caruth explained that Caruth's initial definition of trauma focused on the experiences of soldiers in the war, especially American Vietnam War veterans. Trauma is described as a response to the experience of facing sudden death and massive violence around them. In that state, soldiers often felt emotionally or psychologically numb as the events unfolded, but they would later

relive the experience in the form of recurring nightmares. Intrusive Symptoms is one of the many mental health challenges that often occurs but often goes unnoticed. This condition arises due to trauma from past experiences. Various traumatic events such as physical violence, sexual harassment, earthquakes, conflict, or discrimination can trigger Intrusive Symptoms. Individuals affected by this condition tend to constantly remember distressing moments from the past, experiencing nightmares or flashbacks. These symptoms can disrupt their emotional stability and even hinder their ability to access emotions (Sosalia, Maca, et.,al. 2023). Every traumatic event that occurs in the past can significantly impact a person's future.

Intrusive Symptoms are among the various mental health challenges that many individuals encounter, often without full awareness. These symptoms surface due to triggers linked to past traumatic experiences. While trauma serves as a common trigger for the onset of Intrusive Symptoms, both biological and psychosocial factors contribute to the intensity, duration, and manifestation of these symptoms. Much like other mental disorders, Intrusive Symptoms can profoundly impact those affected. Various traumatic events such as physical violence, sexual harassment, natural disasters, armed conflict, and discrimination can act as catalysts for these symptoms. Individuals grappling with Intrusive Symptoms often grapple with recurrent memories of distressing past moments, like nightmares or flashbacks. These experiences can lead to emotional instability, and in some cases, individuals may struggle to access or express their emotions (Asyrafunnisa et al., 2023).

2. The Significance of Intrusive Symptoms

Intrusive Symptoms is a serious mental condition that can affect a person after a traumatic experience. In the context of a novel, research into a character's Intrusive Symptoms can bring many significant benefits. This allows the authors to provide a more precise picture of the experiences and challenges faced by individuals experiencing Intrusive Symptoms. Additionally, this research also opens a window into how characters can overcome and grow from their trauma. In this article, I describe some of the main benefits of conducting research on Intrusive Symptoms in characters in a novel.

a. The character's response to experiencing trauma

Research on Intrusive Symptoms allows writers to paint a more accurate picture of how characters will respond to and overcome trauma. This increases the level of authenticity in the story, allowing readers to feel connected to the characters on a deeper level. With a better understanding of the symptoms and reactions that may occur in characters with Intrusive Symptoms, writers can create more colorful and complex narratives (Nogalski et.,al 2016).

b. Public Education and Community Awareness

Through novels, authors have the opportunity to educate readers about intrusive symptoms. Careful and detailed research allows the authors to present accurate and educated information about this disorder. Readers can learn the signs and symptoms of Intrusive Symptoms, as well as various treatment methods and approaches to help individuals experiencing it. Thus, research on

Intrusive Symptoms in novels has the potential to increase public awareness of this disorder.

c. Understanding of Highlight Resilience and Character Growth

Through research on Intrusive Symptoms, researcher are able to show how characters are able to survive and grow from their traumatic experiences. This sends an important message about human resilience and the ability to overcome difficult obstacles. In stories, characters with Intrusive Symptoms may experience significant emotional growth, reinforcing messages of hope and perseverance for readers (Peterson et.,al 2008).

d. Erases Stigma and Increases Empathy

Novels that thoughtfully discuss Intrusive Symptoms can help erase the stigma associated with this disorder. By presenting characters with Intrusive Symptoms as complex and strong individuals, writers can help change society's perception of those with mental disorders. Additionally, reading about a character's experiences with Intrusive Symptoms can also increase the reader's empathy for individuals who experience something similar in real life (Parrot, 2022).

e. Provide a source of inspiration and support

Characters in novels who successfully overcome Intrusive Symptoms can be a source of inspiration for readers who experience something similar. They can see that there is hope for recovery and growth after experiencing trauma. Apart from that, this novel can also provide moral support and motivate

individuals to seek help if they or someone close to them suffers from Intrusive Symptoms (Boudin, 2023).

f. **Encourage Discussion and Reflection**

Novels that explore Intrusive Symptoms can encourage important discussion and reflection about mental health, trauma, and ways to provide support to individuals experiencing this disorder. Readers can think about how they themselves can contribute to helping those around them who may be experiencing Intrusive Symptoms.

3. The Types of Intrusive Symptoms

There are five main types of intrusive symptoms, including:

a. **Intrusive thoughts**

Intrusive thoughts are mental experiences that involve the emergence of unwanted thoughts, often related to traumatic experiences or anxiety. It is an experience in which a person finds himself or herself constantly disturbed by thoughts that are surprising, disturbing, and difficult to control. For example, someone who experiences intrusive thoughts may be constantly reminded of a traumatic moment they experienced, despite their efforts to distract themselves. These thoughts can be very strong and intense, disrupting concentration and profoundly affecting a person's emotional state, even when they try to distance themselves from these thoughts.

b. Past memories

Past memories is a haunting experience within a person that involves the repetition of a strong and intense memory of a traumatic event that occurred in the past. When someone experiences the past memories, they feel the sensation of returning to that moment so vividly that it is as if they are experiencing the event again. These experiences can appear suddenly, are triggered by various stimuli such as sounds, images, or smells, and are often accompanied by very strong emotional reactions. As if time is turning back, past memories can make a person feel trapped in painful memories, cause anxiety, and make it difficult to separate reality and the experience being remembered.

c. Regretness

Regretness is a feeling experienced by someone. The feeling of regret is a feeling of disappointment and sadness that has been experienced. These feelings of sadness and disappointment occur because an event that someone has experienced is not as expected. Regret events that occur are usually sad events. Therefore, the person feels disappointed and sad about this incident. That's what will cause regret.

d. Emotional Distress

Emotional Distress refers to intense and disturbing emotional experiences within a person, often associated with feelings such as anxiety, fear, anger, or deep sadness. This can appear when someone is reminded of a previously experienced traumatic event. These strong emotional reactions can

interfere with a person's ability to live daily life calmly and can impact social interactions, work, and overall well-being. Pain, excessive anxiety, or persistent feelings of guilt are often part of the experiences associated with Emotional Distress, which may require professional help to understand and overcome.

e. Physical reactions

Physical reactions are bodily responses that occur in a person in response to certain situations or stimuli. When a person experiences a physical reaction due to a traumatic experience, as in the case of intrusive symptoms, the body may show a variety of signs that include increased heart rate, excessive sweating, shaking, or even panic attacks. This physical response often occurs when individuals are exposed to triggers related to the traumatic event, and can occur even when the individual is simply reliving the experience. These physical reactions can be very disturbing, making individuals feel uncomfortable, tense, or afraid, and can affect their ability to function normally on a daily basis.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter provides the research method to conduct the research. This part consists of the description about research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis. This method is useful so that Researchers can design research in a detailed and structured manner.

A. Research Design

This study was a kind of literary criticism as it analyzed literary work. This is expressed through creative writing to convey the author's ideas. In addition, this study used trauma studies approach to answer the research question. The literary studies are research that requires a theoretical basis (Ambarini, Harjito, and Umayana, 2010), in this research an approach from trauma studies theory is used as a theoretical framework.

B. Data Source

The data source is a a novel entitled "*The Things They Carried*". The novel book published on March 28, 1990. The novel was published by Houghton Mifflin. The author of the novel is named Tim O'Brien. Furthermore, the data is in the form of word types, clauses, and sentences contained in the novel "*The Things They Carried*".

C. Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through several stages as follows:

1. Researcher use in-depth reading strategies to gain a comprehensive understanding regarding to the intrusive symptoms experiences contained in the text.
2. Researcher identify the data needed, namely the elements that give rise to aspects of the intrusive symptoms trauma experience.
3. Researcher record the necessary data related to the elements that give rise to aspects of the intrusive symptoms trauma experience.

D. Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed through several steps.

1. Analyze and describe the data collected in the form of related aspects against intrusive symptoms in Trauma Studies
2. Identify indicators of intrusive symptoms in the data that has been described
3. Identify and describe the intrusive symptoms aspects of the indicators found using Trauma studies theory.
4. Draw conclusions to close the discussion

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the researcher discusses the occurrence of intrusive symptoms or what could be called trauma that occurs to the characters in the novel. This intrusive symptoms or trauma occurred because of a war carried out by Vietnamese soldiers. There are different types of intrusive symptoms experienced. Memories that happened or sad things are what cause the symptoms to occur. Not only memories about war but there are also memories about love inserted in the novel. The plot prepared by the author in the novel helps researcher understand the existing storyline well. The divisions or sub-chapters in the novel are also very helpful in understanding the trauma disorders experienced by the characters.

Several divisions or sub-chapters listed in the novel include; The Things They Carried, Love, Spin, On the Rainy River, Enemies, Friends, How to Tell a True War Story, The Dentiest, Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong, Stockings, Church, The Man I Killed, Ambush, Style, Speaking of Courage, Notes, In the Field, Good Form, Field Trip, The Ghost Soldiers, Night Life, and The Lives of the Dead. These several divisions or sub-chapters help make it easier for researcher to find out the intrusive symptoms or trauma disorders that occur in several characters in the novel. The characters in the novel include: Tim O'brien, Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Dave Jensen, Ted Lavender, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Rat Killey, Kiowa, Curt Lemon, Lee Strunk, Elroy Berdahl, Eddie Diamond, Azar, Mark Fossie, Linda, Mary Anne, and Bobby Jorgenson.

A. The form of intrusive symptoms experienced by the characters

There are several forms of intrusive symptoms experienced by the characters, including intrusive thoughts, past memories, regret, emotional distress, and the last one is physical reactions. The past war events experienced by the characters in the novel are not only about the physical experiences that occur to the characters due to war. Mental experiences have also affected the souls and bodies of the characters in the wars that occurred in the past. The mental experience they experience when fighting can be a pleasant experience or a sad mental experience.

1. Intrusive thoughts experienced by the character Tim O'Brien.

Intrusive thoughts usually come in the form of negative or frightening things. These negative and frightening things are what make each person or character in the novel experience intrusive symptoms. There is evidence of statements stating intrusive thought can be seen from some of the data below.

“For more than twenty years I've had to live with it, feeling the shame, trying to push it away, and so by this act of remembrance, by putting the facts down on paper, I'm hoping to relieve at least some of the pressure on my dreams. Still, it's a hard story to tell.” (Page 39 Chapter 4)

Intrusive thoughts are a traumatic part of a traumatic experience that has not been resolved. The quote describes an individual who is struggling against painful traumatic experiences in the past. In the sentence "act of remembrance" describes efforts to face traumatic experiences as part of the healing process, as explained by Judith Herman in her book entitled *“Trauma and recovery”*. (Judith Herman, 1992) In this quote, O'Brien states that for more than twenty years he has had to live with

the shame and emotional burden of his past experiences, indicating that the trauma he experienced is ongoing and not easily removed. From the data above, it can be seen that the intrusive thoughts experienced by Tim O'Brien. He tried really hard to ignore it but these thoughts just kept coming up over and over again. By writing the story he was trying to overcome these disturbing thoughts. In Tim O'Brien's efforts to try to control these minds. He was also forced to write down the painful reality in the hope of channeling the burden he experienced into the words he wrote.

"I imagined myself dead. I imagined myself doing things I could not do charging an enemy position, taking aim at another human being." (Page 44 Chapter 4)

This data describes the inner struggle a character experiences in dealing with trauma. Based on trauma theory, as proposed by Cathy Caruth in her book entitled *"Explorations in Memory"*, trauma is not just an event, but a complex experience that disturbs a person's personality, this often causes symptoms such as repetition of intrusive thoughts or avoidance. (Caruth, 1995) Imagination of death and violence indicates a form of avoidance in which characters try to distance themselves from reality by imagining death as an escape from trauma. Additionally, the images of "attacking an enemy position" and "taking aim" reflect violent confrontations that may stem from unresolved trauma or a desire to regain control over a difficult situation.

2. Intrusive thoughts experienced by the character Rat Kiley.

There is evidence of statements stating intrusive thought can be seen from some of the data below.

"Anyway," Rat said, "the days aren't so bad, but at night the pictures get to be a bitch. I start seeing my own body. Chunks of myself. My own heart, my own kidneys. It's like I don't know it's like staring into this huge black crystal ball." (Chapter 21 Page 223)

This data depicts the deep trauma experienced by Rat through strong visual depictions and intense emotional reactions. Rat revealed how terrifying thoughts haunted him at night, such as seeing his own body parts cut off. This shows elements of trauma as described in Carlson's theory in his book entitled "*Trauma Assessments*", which describes individuals feeling disconnected from their own bodies and experiencing intense emotions, especially in the form of intrusions of traumatic memories (Carlson, 1997). Rat's description of "staring into this huge black crystal ball" reflects the uncertainty and fear often experienced by someone who has experienced trauma. This experience shows how trauma can disrupt the memory process, causing individuals to feel trapped in a cycle of memories they cannot control. Rat's trauma experience illustrates strong evidence of the intrusive thoughts that often occur in PTSD. Carlson's theory helps explain the complexities of the trauma experienced by Rat, including how trauma affects identity, emotions, and memory processes in profound ways.

3. Past memories experienced by the character Tim O'Brien.

Usually, memories that suddenly appear in someone's mind are traumatic experiences that are difficult to forget. Several traumatic events occurred to the characters in the novels that have been researched. There is evidence of statements stating past memories can be seen from some of the data below.

“Forty-three years old, and the war occurred half a lifetime ago, and yet the remembering makes it now. And sometimes remembering will lead to a story, which makes it forever. That's what stories are for. Stories are for joining the past to the future.” (Page 38 Chapter 3)

The data illustrates how memories, trauma, and narrative are related to each other in a literary context. Based on Eve B. Carlson's trauma theory in her book entitled *“Trauma Assessments”*, memory is considered a dynamic process that shapes an individual's experience and identity (Carlson, 1997). In the quote, "memory makes it now" shows that even though the war occurred decades ago, the trauma is still remembered. Additionally, “remembering will lead to a story” emphasizes that narratives help individuals process trauma and connect the past with the future. Stories become an important tool in dealing with trauma, allowing individuals to heal by giving meaning to painful experiences. The conclusion is that memory is not just about recording past events, but is also a long-term and ongoing memory process, especially for those who have experienced trauma.

“It happened, to me, nearly twenty years ago, and I still remember that trail junction and those giant trees and a soft dripping sound somewhere beyond the trees.” (Page 70 Chapter 7)

This quote describes a deep experience of trauma. based on trauma theory by Eve B. Carlson in her book entitled *“Trauma Assessments”*, (Carlson, 1997). traumatic memories are often repetitive, as seen in the phrase "I still Remember," indicating that the event continues to live in memory even though it happened

almost two decades ago. This trauma is also sensory, reflected in specific details such as “giant trees” and “gentle dripping sounds,” which trigger emotional reactions. Even though time has passed, the strength of the memories and sensory details show how this trauma has a long-term impact on the individual, consistent with Carlson's theory which emphasizes that trauma is often not forgotten and continues to influence a person's life. This is a form of ongoing trauma that is remembered throughout time when you remember or see the place you were in during war at that time.

“I'd remember getting shot and yelling out for a medic and then waiting and waiting and waiting, passing out once, then waking up and screaming some more, and how the screaming seemed to make new pain, the awful stink of myself, the sweat and fear, Bobby Jorgenson's clumsy fingers when he finally got around to working on me. I kept going over it all, every detail.” (Chapter 20 Page 200-201)

The data above describes a deep experience of trauma. The phrase “I keep going over everything, every detail” shows the repetitive nature of traumatic remembering, where a person constantly remembers painful memories. This is a form of effort to understand or overcome trauma. This experience is in accordance with Freud's theory described in the book entitled *“The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma”* written by Colin Davis and Hanna Meretoja, (Meretoja, 2020). which explains that trauma often resurfaces in memories, creating a repeating cycle. In addition, the phrase “waiting and waiting and waiting” reflects feelings of hopelessness that arise from failure to forget, this shows that trauma makes a person trapped in time and finds it difficult to move on with life. This quote shows how powerful trauma can be in shaping a person's memories. This is a form

of ongoing trauma that is remembered throughout time when we remember painful events that occurred during the war.

4. Regretness experienced by the character Jimmy Cross.

Regretness is a feeling of deep regret for an event that has occurred. Someone who experiences regret will experience continuous sadness, disappointment and guilt. Regret arises when someone makes a mistake. This will make someone constantly think about the mistakes they have made. There is evidence of statements stating regretness can be seen from some of the data below.

"Lieutenant Cross felt the pain. He blamed himself. They stripped off Lavender's canteens and ammo, all the heavy things, and Rat Kiley said the obvious, the guy's dead." (Page 8 Chapter 1)

From the data above it can be seen that regretness occurs in the character Jimmy Cross. Lieutenant Jimmy Cross feels very guilty and sorry for Ted Lavender's death. Lieutenant Jimmy Cross felt like he was carrying a heavy burden when he saw Ted Lavender lying lifeless. This feeling of guilt and regret really haunts Jimmy Cross. he didn't stop blaming himself continuously. the bitter reality turned out to be real. What Jimmy Cross can only do is feel regret, he can't repeat what happened. This regret will continue to haunt Jimmy Cross because he is a leader. The responsibility of a leader is enormous and sometimes Jimmy Cross feels that the burden is heavier than the burden on the battlefield.

"At one point, I remember, we paused over a snapshot of Ted Lavender, and after a while Jimmy rubbed his eyes and said he'd never forgiven himself for Lavender's death." (Page 27 Chapter 2)

From the other data above, it can be seen that regretness occurs in Lieutenant Jimmy Cross who fights in the novel. This regretness arose because of the death of one of the members in the war. Jimmy Cross always feels deep regret because he has not been able to forgive himself for Ted Lavender's death. Regret and guilt continue to follow and haunt Lieutenant Jimmy Cross. Jimmy Cross has been holding back the burden inside himself. This feeling of guilt emerged when Jimmy Cross saw a memorable photo with Ted Lavender, he couldn't hold back the tears he had been holding back. The feeling of guilt and regret is not only momentary but also lasts a lifetime.

5. Regretness experienced by the character Tim O'Brien.

There is evidence of statements stating regretness can be seen from some of the data below.

"I did not kill him. But I was present, you see, and my presence was guilt enough. I remember his face, which was not a pretty face, because his jaw was in his throat, and I remember feeling the burden of responsibility and grief. I blamed myself. And rightly so, because I was present." (Chapter 18 Page 179)

The data illustrates how trauma can arise from a terrible event even if someone is not directly involved. In this quote, there is a depiction of deep guilt which is in accordance with Judith Herman's trauma theory in her book *"Trauma and Recovery"*. According to Herman, trauma is often accompanied by feelings of guilt, even if someone does nothing, because simply being present can make someone feel involved and responsible (Judith Herman, 1992). This can be seen in the narrative when the narrator blames himself even though he did not kill. This is

a form of regret from ongoing trauma that is remembered for a long time when remembering painful events that occurred during the war.

6. Regretness experienced by the character Bobby Jorgenson.

There is evidence of statements stating regretness can be seen from some of the data below.

“Jorgenson kept pushing his hand out at me. He looked so earnest, so sad and hurt, that it almost made me feel guilty. Not quite, though. After a second I muttered some. thing and got into my jeep and put it to the floor and left him standing there.” (Chapter 20 Page 200)

In this data, there is a depiction of Jorgenson's character who looks sincere, sad and hurt, which almost triggers feelings of guilt in him. This can be connected using Judith Herman's trauma theory in her book *“Trauma and Recovery”*. Herman explained that trauma is often accompanied by feelings of guilt and a desire to avoid emotional involvement as a defense mechanism. (Judith Herman, 1992). Tim O'Brien's actions in avoiding Jorgenson demonstrate a common behavioral pattern in trauma, namely the inability to connect emotionally with others. Despite the urge to feel empathy, the narrator still feels isolated. Herman also emphasizes that recovery from trauma requires a process that involves facing emotions, but in this quote, the narrator avoids this process. This reflects the impact of trauma that causes emotional distance between an individual and those around them.

7. Emotional distress experienced by the character Dave Jansen.

Emotional distress is an unpleasant condition for a person. Feelings of anxiety, sadness, anger, emotions and other negative things will continue to haunt a

person when they feel emotional distress. Emotional distress is usually caused by thoughts or events that have occurred that disturb and attack a person's mental state. There is evidence of statements stating emotional distress can be seen from some of the data below.

“No safe ground: enemies everywhere. No front or rear. At night he had trouble sleeping a skittish feeling-always on guard, hearing strange noises in the dark, imagining a grenade rolling into his foxhole or the tickle of a knife against his ear.” (Page 63 Chapter 5)

This quote illustrates the deep insecurity and emotional anxiety that the character continuously experiences in a traumatic situation. Based on Judith Herman's trauma theory in *“Trauma and Recovery”*, individuals who experience trauma tend to experience hypervigilance, or excessive awareness of threats around them (Judith Herman, 1992). In this quote, constant alertness ("always on guard") and trouble sleeping are typical symptoms of PTSD, where the character feels that there is no safe place, both physically and emotionally. According to Herman, this isolation makes the recovery process even more difficult because of the importance of social support in healing trauma. Thus, this quote shows how trauma, through hypervigilance, sleep disturbances, and negative imagination, can affect an individual's mental well-being in profound ways.

8. Emotional distress experienced by the character Mitchell Sanders.

There is evidence of statements stating emotional distress can be seen from some of the data below.

“Sanders wanted me to believe him, his frustration at not quite getting the details right, not quite pinning down the final and definitive truth.” (Page 76 Chapter 7)

This data describes the struggle of a character named Sanders in conveying the truth of his traumatic experience. In Judith Herman's trauma theory, this shows how trauma often interferes with a person's ability to relate experiences clearly. (Judith Herman, 1992). Sanders felt frustrated at not being able to reveal precise details, showing how memories of traumatic events are often hazy. His desire to have the figures he convinces believe him highlights that Sanders is experiencing emotional validation. This is important in the trauma recovery process. Sanders' uncertainty about the "ultimate truth" illustrates the lack of clarity that accompanies traumatic experiences, which makes it difficult for victims to find an appropriate narrative.

9. Emotional distress experienced by the character Rat Kiley.

There is evidence of statements stating emotional distress can be seen from some of the data below.

“Rat Kiley was crying. He tried to say something, but then cradled his rifle and went off by himself.” (Page 79 Chapter 7)

This quote describes a deep emotional response due to the trauma of war. According to Judith Herman's trauma theory, Kiley's crying demonstrated her vulnerability and difficulty expressing feelings (Judith Herman, 1992). His inability to speak reflects the hampered communication that trauma victims often experience. Additionally, Kiley's choice to be alone is a form of self-isolation, a

common defense mechanism when dealing with intense pain. Kiley's role as a medic, constantly dealing with death, makes the trauma he experiences even worse, showing how the psychological burden of war can cripple a person's ability to face reality.

"In parts, at least, it was a funny story, and yet to hear Rat Kiley tell it you'd almost think it was intended as straight tragedy. He never smiled. Not even at the crazy stuff. There was always a dark, far-off look in his eyes, a kind of sadness, as if he were troubled by something sliding beneath the story's surface." (Page 97 Chapter 9)

In this quote, there is a narrative about the character Rat Kiley who tells a story that is supposed to be funny, but he tells it in a gloomy tone and without a smile, as if the story is a tragedy. This reflects the inner conflict he experienced, where on the surface the story seems light, but in fact there is deep sadness hidden. His unsmiling attitude and distant and sad gaze reflect that he is trapped in a trauma that still haunts him. According to Judith Herman's trauma theory in *"Trauma and Recovery"*, trauma often makes it difficult for individuals to express positive emotions and is disconnected from the reality around them, as shown in Kiley's attitude (Judith Herman, 1992). It shows how trauma can leave a person feeling isolated and carrying a heavy emotional burden, which is evident in their inability to find humor even in funny stories.

"Not crying, but up against it. He said he was scared. And it wasn't normal scared. He didn't know what it was: too long in-country, probably." (Chapter 21 Page 222)

In this quote, it is clear that there is a depiction of how trauma can affect this character deeply. The statement "not crying, but up against it" describes the

character as being under great emotional pressure, but the character is unable to express his feelings. This is a phenomenon explained in the theory of trauma by Judith Herman (Judith Herman, 1992). This inability to cry indicates that the character may have experienced trauma that suppressed the ability to react emotionally. In addition, feelings of abnormal fear and confusion about what he was feeling showed how deep the trauma he had experienced. The phrase "too long in-country" suggests that spending too long on the battlefield has worsened mental conditions, a sign that long-term exposure to traumatic situations can lead to stress buildup and psychological disorders such as PTSD. Overall, these quotes reflect how trauma affects a soldier's mentality in ways that are profound and often difficult to explain.

10. Emotional distress experienced by the character Tim O'Brien.

There is evidence of statements stating emotional distress can be seen from some of the data below.

"It's a hard thing to explain to somebody who hasn't felt it, but the presence of death and danger has a way of bringing you fully awake. It makes things vivid. When you're afraid, really afraid, you see things you never saw before, you pay attention to the world." (Chapter 20 Page 192)

This quote illustrates how the presence of danger and death can increase the character's alertness and awareness. In the trauma theory proposed by Judith Herman, (Judith Herman, 1992), traumatic experiences often strengthen a person's attention to their environment, making everything appear more clear and striking. This is demonstrated in the quote by the statement that deep fear makes a person "see things that were previously invisible" and pay more attention to the world. This

impact can be attributed to an adaptive reaction to trauma, where the character becomes more sensitive to potentially dangerous environments. At the same time, this experience also shows how trauma can shape a person's view of the world. Herman stated that in this case the quote illustrates how fear can magnify a person's perception and involvement in the world around him.

"I'd lie there all fidgety and tight, then after a while I'd feel a swell of anger come on. I'd squirm around, cussing, half nuts with pain, and pretty soon I'd start remembering how Bobby Jorgenson had almost killed me." (Chapter 20 Page 192)

From this data, it can be seen that the narrator describes the symptoms of trauma he experienced after the war, such as uncontrollable physical tension, anger that emerged as a response to pain, and repeated memories of traumatic events. Through Judith Herman's trauma theory in *"Trauma and Recovery"*, (Judith Herman, 1992), this symptom can be categorized as hyperarousal, where the character becomes very alert and easily agitated. The anger felt by the narrator is also a common emotional response to trauma, it is often a form of defense to deal with deep pain. Repetition of a traumatic memory suggests an intrusion, where the painful event continually appears in the narrator's mind, creating ongoing pain.

"I felt something shift inside me. It was anger, partly, but it was also a sense of pure and total loss: I didn't fit anymore." (Chapter 20 Page 198)

This quote describes psychological changes due to trauma, where the narrator feels there is a shift within himself. According to Caruth, trauma is not only the experience experienced, but also how the experience is internalized (Carlson, 1997). Here, the mixed feelings of anger and total loss demonstrate the complexity

of emotional reactions to trauma, in which the narrator feels a loss of identity and connectedness to himself and the world. The statement “I don't fit anymore” describes the isolation that individuals often experience after trauma, indicating a loss of a sense of place in their lives. Caruth highlights that trauma often causes a person to feel disconnected from themselves, as reflected in this narrative.

“So pretty soon you'd get jumpy. Your nerves would go. You'd start to worry about getting cut off from the rest of the unit--alone, you'd think- and then the real panic would bang in and you'd reach out and try to touch the guy in front of you, groping for his shirt, hoping to Christ he was still there. It made for some bad dreams.” (Chapter 21 Page 220)

In this quote, the narrator describes the feelings of anxiety and fear that arise as a result of war, where the feeling of panic and isolation is increasingly felt when the character feels worried about being separated from his unit. This quote reflects the experience of trauma described through emotional responses such as anxiety, fear of losing control. These feelings create nightmares depicting trauma that continues to haunt the narrator even outside the battlefield. This analysis can be connected to Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma, which explains how traumatic experiences recur in a person's memory, disrupting daily life and creating feelings of isolation and emotional symptoms such as panic and nightmares (Carlson, 1997).

11. Physical reaction experienced by the character Tim O'Brien.

Physical reaction is a person's physical reaction to disturbing memories or events. This reaction can occur suddenly or occur automatically to someone. Traumatic experiences usually cause more physical reactions to occur. Some of the physical reactions that usually occur in a person include sweating, anxiety, rapid

heartbeat, shaking, changes in body temperature or sometimes even physical pain. There is evidence of statements stating physical reactions can be seen from some of the data below.

"We waited another ten minutes. It was cold now, and damp. Squatting down, I felt a sudden brittleness come over me, a hollow sensation, as if someone could reach out and crush me like a Christmas tree ornament. It was the same feeling I'd had out along the Song Tra Bong. Like I was losing myself, everything spilling out." (Chapter 20 Page 213)

The data describes the physical and emotional response of a character who has experienced trauma. The narrator feels "freeze" and "empty," indicating that his body is responding to heavy emotional stress. The sensation of being "crushed like a Christmas tree ornament" depicts extreme vulnerability, where the narrator feels as if he has lost his identity. This traumatic experience does not just occur once, but repeatedly, as shown by the memories of the events in Song Tra Bong. According to Eve B. Carlson's trauma theory, these experiences can be considered a form of flashbacks that trigger emotional pain and alienation, in which the narrator feels disconnected from himself and the world around him (Carlson, 1997).

"I was brand-new to the war. It was my fourth day; I hadn't yet developed a sense of humor. Right away, as if I'd swallowed something, I felt a moist sickness rise up in my throat. I sat down beside the pigpen, closed my eyes, put my head between my knees." (Chapter 22 Page 226)

This quote describes the narrator's physical and emotional reactions in facing traumatic experiences in his early days on the battlefield. Analysis using trauma theory from Bessel van der Kolk in his book *"The Body Keeps the Score"* links the physical nausea felt by the narrator to the body's response to trauma, where stress and emotional tension often manifest in the form of physical symptoms

(KOLK, 2014). The narrator who has not been able to find humor in the midst of a difficult situation also shows hypervigilance or excessive caution, which is common in individuals who have just faced danger. The actions of closing his eyes and placing his head between his knees are examples of avoidance strategies used to cope with anxiety, in which the narrator attempts to calm himself from excessive external stimuli. These early experiences of trauma highlight how individuals can feel overwhelmed by new, threatening situations, and how bodily reactions are often the first way to express emotional tension.

12. Physical reaction experienced by the character Mark Fossie.

There is evidence of statements stating physical reactions can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

In this data, Tim O'Brien describes Fossie's physical condition as clearly affected by trauma and stress from his experiences on the battlefield. With a face covered in sweat despite the cool night air, bloodshot eyes, and pale skin, Fossie showed signs of deep emotional and physical distress. In the context of Bessel van der Kolk's trauma theory, Fossie's bodily reactions, such as excessive sweating and changes in skin color, reflect the body's response to the trauma he experienced. (KOLK, 2014). Van der Kolk explains that trauma often triggers physical responses such as sweating and fatigue due to the body remaining in defense mode, as if it is struggling to fight or flee from danger. This highlights how trauma can affect a

person's overall physical and mental health. Fossie's condition shows how the trauma of war can leave a deep and painful impact, not only on the mind, but also on the body.

13. Physical reaction experienced by the character Azar.

There is evidence of statements stating physical reactions can be seen from some of the data below.

“Azar was wound up tight. All afternoon, while we made the preparations, he kept chanting, "Halloween, Halloween." That, plus the finger snapping, almost made me cancel the whole operation.” (Chapter 20 Page 203)

In this quote, the depiction of Azar's behavior can be analyzed through Bessel van der Kolk's trauma theory from his book *“The Body Keeps the Score”* (KOLK, 2014). Azar showed signs of physical hypervigilance through visible tension in his body, reflecting the high alert state described by van der Kolk as the body's response to trauma. In addition, Azar's repetitive behavior of constantly buzzing the word "Halloween" is a form of instinctive response to stress, in which the body repeats actions without realizing it. The snap reflects the fight-or-flight response, which often occurs in individuals with severe trauma. This physical strain also affects those around him, such as the narrator, who nearly cancels the operation because of the discomfort caused by Azar.

““Creepy,” Azar said. “Wet pants an' goose bumps.” He held a beer out to me, but I shook my head.” (Chapter 20 Page 209)

In the quote there is a description of physical and emotional reactions to stressful situations. The phrases "wet pants" and "goose bumps" describe Azar's

uncontrolled body response to stress, in which the body responds with physical symptoms such as sweating and goosebumps. This is in accordance with van der Kolk's understanding in *"The Body Keeps the Score"* that trauma can trigger physiological reactions without realizing it (KOLK, 2014). In addition, the feeling of "creepy" expressed by Azar reflects emotional tension due to traumatic experiences, where individuals often feel alert and anxious. Overall, these quotes illustrate how trauma affects the mind and body, and how individuals try to adapt to these experiences.

14. Physical reaction experienced by the character Rat Kiley and Mitchel Sanders.

There is evidence of statements stating physical reactions can be seen from some of the data below.

"It was a tense time for everybody, Sanders said, but for Rat Kiley it ended up in Japan. The strain was too much for him. He couldn't make the adjustment."
(Chapter 21 Page 219)

This quote illustrates the physical reaction of war trauma in Rat Kiley, who ultimately had to be evacuated to Japan because he could not bear the emotional burden of the situation he faced. According to Bessel van der Kolk's trauma theory in his book *"The Body Keeps the Score"*, trauma often produces real physical impacts (KOLK, 2014). The strain experienced by Kiley ("the strain was too much for him") is an example of prolonged stress that can trigger physiological changes such as fatigue and sleep disturbances, which are often experienced by traumatized individuals. Kiley's inability to adapt ("he couldn't make the adjustment") also

reflects the difficulty trauma victims have in adjusting to life after facing a traumatic event. In this context, the war trauma Kiley experienced led to difficulties in managing emotions and responses to stress, something Van der Kolk also describes as a hallmark of psychological trauma.

B. The Impact of intrusive symptoms on a character's emotions.

In the context of trauma, a variety of responses to painful experiences are seen in Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*. Avoidance refers to an individual's tendency to avoid situations, places, or people that remind them of the trauma, as a way to protect themselves from emotional pain. Emotional numbing is a condition where a person feels unable to feel emotions normally, often occurring after trauma, making them appear indifferent to events that should trigger an emotional reaction. Hyperarousal describes a state of constant tension, in which the individual feels alert and awake, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as a rapid heartbeat and difficulty sleeping. Survivor's guilt or the guilt felt by those who survive traumatic situations, creates a feeling that they do not deserve to live when others do not, which often interferes with the healing process. Lastly, repression is a mechanism in which individuals suppress painful memories and feelings from their consciousness, so that even though they try to forget, these feelings remain and can reappear in the form of nightmares or anxiety. All of these mechanisms are interrelated and contribute to the experience of the traumatized individual, creating challenges in the process of healing and adjusting to life after trauma (Dymczyk, 2020).

1. The impact on character Tim O'Brien

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

"For more than twenty years I've had to live with it, feeling the shame, trying to push it away, and so by this act of remembrance, by putting the facts down on paper, I'm hoping to relieve at least some of the pressure on my dreams. Still, it's a hard story to tell." (Page 39 Chapter 4)

Eve B. Carlson, in her book *"Trauma Assessments"*, explains how figures who have experienced trauma often use coping strategies such as avoidance to avoid painful memories and emotions (Carlson, 1997). In the context of the quote taken from Tim O'Brien, "For more than twenty years I've had to live with it, feeling the shame, trying to push it away," it is clear that the character is trying hard to suppress the memories and feelings related to the trauma what he experienced. These efforts reflect a desire to avoid the emotional pain produced by traumatic experiences, which is often considered too much to bear. Carlson points out that avoidance can be a temporary defense mechanism, but it can also worsen long-term psychological conditions. The character feels the heavy burden of his traumatic memories, and despite trying to "push them away," this process is not completely successful, as the trauma remains in the form of shame and emotional distress. Thus, avoidance in this context not only creates distance between the individual and the traumatic experience, but also hinders the healing process needed to overcome the trauma.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

“We waited another ten minutes. It was cold now, and damp. Squatting down, I felt a sudden brittleness come over me, a hollow sensation, as if someone could reach out and crush me like a Christmas tree ornament. It was the same feeling I’d had out along the Song Tra Bong. Like I was losing myself, everything spilling out.” (Chapter 20 Page 213)

Based on Eve B. Carlson in her book *Trauma Assessments* explains that emotional numbing is a phenomenon in which a character experiences an emotional response to the surrounding environment (Carlson, 1997). In the context of the quote, it is clear that the character experiences a lack of normal emotional response. Words like "brittleless" and "hollow sensation" indicate that the character is experiencing reduced empathy, which is a manifestation of emotional numbing. Carlson points out that emotional numbing often occurs as a result of extraordinary trauma, such as that experienced by the characters in the novel *The Things They Carried*. This trauma can cause individuals to feel unable to react normally to the surrounding environment, so they experience an internal empty sensation ("hollow sensation") and emotional weakness ("brittleless"). Therefore, emotional numbing is a strategy used by some characters to manage stress and trauma briefly, but it can also affect their quality of life long term if not addressed appropriately.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

"I'd lie there all fidgety and tight, then after a while I'd feel a swell of anger come on. I'd squirm around, cussing, half nuts with pain, and pretty soon I'd start remembering how Bobby Jorgenson had almost killed me." (Chapter 20 Page 192)

Based on book Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains that hyperarousal is a condition in which a character or person experiences levels of physical and mental activity that exceed the norm, often as a response to trauma. (Carlson, 1997). In this quote, it is clear that the character is experiencing high physical and emotional tension. The inability to feel calm and the appearance of anger indicate that the character is in a constant state of alert, which is a characteristic feature of hyperarousal. Additionally, another quote that states, "You'd start to worry about getting cut off from the rest of the unit—and then the real panic would bang in," shows how the fear of losing his comrades triggers an extreme panic response. Carlson highlights that these experiences create a cycle of tension and anxiety that not only disturbs the characters mentally, but also affects their daily lives. Hyperarousal causes sleep disturbances, irritability, and difficulty concentrating—all of which contribute to difficulty processing traumatic experiences.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

"For more than twenty years I've had to live with it, feeling the shame, trying to push it away, and so by this act of remembrance, by putting the facts down on paper, I'm hoping to relieve at least some of the pressure on my dreams. Still, it's a hard story to tell." (Page 39 Chapter 4)

Based on Eve B. Carlson's Trauma Assessments, repression is understood as the process of transferring traumatic memories to sub-constituents, so that a person or character is no longer aware of the trauma (Carlson, 1997). Analysis of character quotes in the novel *The Things They Carried* shows how repression can be observed through attempts to ignore or erase traumatic memories. The quote shows the character's efforts to avoid or reduce the intensity of negative emotions related to trauma. This reflects the coping strategies used by some characters to manage stress and trauma briefly, but can also affect their quality of life long term if not addressed appropriately. Carlson responded that repression is not a permanent solution to trauma. Individuals who use repression may not be aware of it for a short time. Repression can lead to a gradual deterioration of a person's mental state.

e. Survivor's Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor's Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

"I did not kill him. But I was present, you see, and my presence was guilt enough. I remember his face, which was not a pretty face, because his jaw was in his throat, and I remember feeling the burden of responsibility and grief. I blamed myself. And rightly so, because I was present." (Chapter 18 Page 179)

In Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains that Survivor's Guilt is a feeling of guilt experienced by people who have survived a tragedy or traumatic event, even though there is no logical reason for it. Carlson believes that Survivor's Guilt can arise due to a person's presence at the scene of the trauma (Carlson, 1997). This quote shows that the character in the quote feels guilty because he was not

actively involved in the incident, but his presence was enough to make him feel responsible for the deaths of his colleagues. This feeling is reflected in detailed visual descriptions ("his jaw was in his throat") and great empathy ("burden of responsibility and grief"). Carlson highlights that Survivor's Guilt is not just about concrete actions, but also about the presence and inevitability of feelings of guilt. Thus, these feelings of guilt can significantly affect an individual's psyche, even after a long time has passed since the initial incident.

2. The impact on character Rat Kiley

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

"Rat Kiley was crying. He tried to say something, but then cradled his rifle and went off by himself." (Page 79 Chapter 7)

Based on Eve B. Carlson's Trauma Assessments, avoidance is a coping strategy used to avoid stimuli that are considered to cause stress or trauma (Carlson, 1997). The quote shows that Rat Kiley often avoids social interactions and prefers to be alone. This is an indication of an effort to avoid painful stimulation, such as emotional pain and trauma experienced during war. Rat Kiley may feel uncomfortable in social situations after losing his best friends, such as Curt Lemon, who died in his military operations. This behavior reflects an attempt to avoid the pain and trauma associated with war experiences. Carlson points out that avoidance is not just avoiding painful situations, but can also worsen long-term psychological conditions. By isolating himself, Rat Kiley not only avoids social interactions, but

also hinders the healing process necessary to effectively overcome trauma. Therefore, avoidance in this context is not just avoidance; it is a barrier to the healing process necessary to overcome that trauma effectively.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

“In parts, at least, it was a funny story, and yet to hear Rat Kiley tell it you'd almost think it was intended as straight tragedy. He never smiled. Not even at the crazy stuff. There was always a dark, far-off look in his eyes, a kind of sadness, as if he were troubled by something sliding beneath the story's surface.” (Page 97 Chapter 9)

Based on book Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains that emotional numbing is a phenomenon where individuals experience a reduction in emotional response to the surrounding environment (Carlson, 1997). In the context of the character Rat Kiley from the novel *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, emotional numbing can be seen through a quote that states, "There was always a dark, far-off look in his eyes, a kind of sadness, as if he were troubled by something sliding beneath the story's surface." This statement reflects how Rat Kiley shows signs of losing the ability to fully feel emotions. The words "dark, far-off look" and "kind of sadness" indicate that Kiley not only feels disconnected from the situation around him, but also experiences a deep sadness that he cannot express directly. Carlson highlights that emotional numbing is often a defense used to protect oneself from excessive pain. In Kiley's case, the experience of losing his friends on the battlefield and the stress of being a medic left him feeling isolated and unable to

feel happiness or satisfaction in normal situations. Thus it shows that although he tries to remain functional in difficult situations, the psychological impact of the war has changed the way he perceives and interacts with the world around him.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

““Anyway,” Rat said, “the days aren't so bad, but at night the pictures get to be a bitch. I start seeing my own body. Chunks of myself. My own heart, my own kidneys. It's like I don't know it's like staring into this huge black crystal ball.”
(Chapter 21 Page 223)

In Eve B. Carlson's Trauma Assessments, hyperarousal is described as a condition in which a character or individual has a level of physical and mental activity that exceeds the norm (Carlson, 1997). This quote shows that Rat Kiley feels very alert and his physical and mental tension is high at night. This phenomenon reflects hyperarousal, in which the Rat feels persistent irritability, excitement, and paranoia. Not only did he feel wary, but he also experienced terrifying thoughts about his own body being dismembered. Carlson points out that hyperarousal is one of the main symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), which is often accompanied by other symptoms such as sleep disturbances, difficulty concentrating, and hypervigilance. Hyperarousal can cause individuals to feel constantly on alert, making them vulnerable to prolonged stress and anxiety. In Rat Kiley's case, hyperarousal has changed the way he perceives and interacts with the world around him, leaving him feeling constantly in a state of tension that cannot be normalized. Thus, the hyperarousal experienced by Rat Kiley is not

simply a reaction to trauma, but also reflects a deeper internal struggle to overcome an unbearable emotional burden.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

*"It was a tense time for everybody, Sanders said, but for Rat Kiley it ended up in Japan. The strain was too much for him. He couldn't make the adjustment."
(Chapter 21 Page 219)*

Repression is a process in which individuals transfer traumatic memories into subconstituents, so that they are no longer aware of the trauma (Carlson, 1997). In this quote, repression can be seen through his efforts to avoid stress by leaving the battlefield. The quote, "It was tense time for everybody, but for Rat Kiley it ended up in Japan. The strain was too much for him; he couldn't make adjustments," shows that Kiley is trying to escape from the emotional stress caused by his traumatic experience. This analysis reflects that although Rat Kiley moved to Japan to escape confrontation with the trauma he experienced, he failed to adapt well to the new environment. The decision to leave the battlefield was not an effective solution, but rather a form of repression in which he tried to suppress the memories and painful feelings associated with the death of his friends and the burden of being a medic. Carlson highlights that repression often results in individuals not fully dealing with their trauma, which can impact long-term mental health. In this case, Rat Kiley is an example of how individuals can attempt to ignore trauma without

truly confronting and processing it, resulting in the psychological impact of the experience remaining and can impact their lives as a whole.

e. Survivor's Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor's Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

"Not crying, but up against it. He said he was scared. And it wasn't normal scared. He didn't know what it was: too long in-country, probably." (Chapter 21 Page 222)

Based on Eve B. Carlson's Trauma Assessments, survivor's guilt is explained as the feeling of guilt felt by someone who has survived a tragedy or traumatic event, even though there is no logical reason for it (Carlson, 1997). Analysis of the character Rat Kiley in the novel *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien shows how Rat Kiley experiences survivor's guilt. This quote shows that Rat Kiley feels guilty about his own life and is afraid of the strange things he experienced during the war. This feeling emerged after he experienced the loss of his friends, such as Curt Lemon, who died during his military operations. Rat Kiley may have felt that he had to be responsible for the fates of those who did not survive, even though there was no logical reason for it. Carlson points out that survivor's guilt often occurs due to someone's presence at the scene of a tragic event, making them feel partly responsible for what happened. In Rat Kiley's case, the experience of losing his friends and his responsibilities as a medic made him feel guilty about his own life. Survivor's guilt in this context is a maladaptive defense mechanism that can significantly affect an individual's mental health.

3. The impact on character Jimmy Cross

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

"Lieutenant Cross felt the pain. He blamed himself." (Page 8 Chapter 1)

Based on Trauma Assessments by Eve B. Carlson, avoidance is explained as a coping strategy to avoid stimuli that are considered to cause stress or trauma (Carlson, 1997). The quote describes the guilt Jimmy Cross feels over Ted Lavender's death and how he tries to avoid the pain by resetting his emotions. Although he tried to avoid the emotional burden of the traumatic experience, his efforts were not completely successful because he still felt burdened by guilt. Carlson emphasizes that avoidance is not just about avoiding painful situations, but can worsen long-term psychological conditions. In Jimmy Cross' case, his guilt and responsibility as a commander made him try to avoid pain, although in the end he still struggled with the trauma. This suggests that the avoidance he experienced was not only a reaction to trauma, but also reflected a deeper internal struggle to overcome an unbearable emotional burden.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

"At one point, I remember, we paused over a snapshot of Ted Lavender, and after a while Jimmy rubbed his eyes and said he'd never forgiven himself for Lavender's death." (Page 27 Chapter 2)

In Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains that emotional numbing is a reduction in emotional responses as a defense mechanism (Carlson, 1997). In the character Jimmy Cross from “The Things They Carried”, emotional numbing is seen when he reacts to a photo of Ted Lavender by rubbing his eyes, which shows emotional exhaustion. Despite feeling guilty for Lavender's death, Cross cannot fully feel the emotion, displaying feelings of emptiness and isolation. Carlson emphasized that this numbing occurred to protect himself from excessive pain, which made it difficult for Cross to face emotional burdens and heal himself.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

“They stripped off Lavender's canteens and ammo, all the heavy things, and Rat Kiley said the obvious, the guy's dead.” (Page 8 Chapter 1)

Based on Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains that hyperarousal is a condition of increased physical and mental activity that often arises as a result of trauma (Carlson, 1997). In the character Rat Kiley from the novel The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien, hyperarousal is seen after the death of Ted Lavender. Kiley engages in reactive and aggressive physical acts, such as “stripping off Lavender's canteens and ammo,” which reflect her emotional and physical tension. These impulsive actions exhibit typical hyperarousal characteristics such as irritability and emotional instability, resulting from constant states of war and loss of friends.

Carlson explained that symptoms of hyperarousal include easy startling, irritability, and difficulty sleeping, which were seen in Kiley. Although Kiley's reactions may not necessarily reflect classic hyperarousal, his impulsive actions demonstrate the significant psychological impact of trauma. Kiley's hyperarousal is not only a response to Lavender's loss, but also reflects a deeper inner struggle to deal with the emotional burden of war. This trauma profoundly changed the way Kiley felt and interacted with his environment.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

“Lieutenant Cross felt the pain. He blamed himself.” (Page 8 Chapter 1)

In *Trauma Assessments* by Eve B. Carlson, repression is explained as a mechanism for suppressing trauma memories into the subconscious so that individuals are not aware of the trauma (Carlson, 1997). In the novel *The Things They Carried*, Jimmy Cross tries to avoid emotional pain by reorganizing his feelings, as seen in the sentence “Lieutenant Cross felt the pain. He takes the blame himself.” Despite trying to suppress his feelings of guilt over Ted Lavender's death, his efforts were not completely successful as those feelings continued to weigh on him. Jimmy's repression, such as burning Martha's photos to erase traumatic memories, does not solve the deeper problems. Carlson emphasized that repression only delays healing from trauma and does not resolve its impact effectively. Jimmy Cross continues to feel guilt and suffering despite his best efforts to forget the

trauma, suggesting that repression is a maladaptive coping strategy. These mechanisms slow down the recovery process from PTSD, affecting a person's thought patterns and behavior without providing a lasting solution to emotional suffering.

e. Survivor's Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor's Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

"After a while Jimmy rubbed his eyes and said he'd never forgiven himself for Lavender's death." (Page 27 Chapter 2)

In Trauma Assessments, Eve B. Carlson explains survivor's guilt as the feeling of guilt that someone who has survived a traumatic event experiences, even though there is no logical reason for it (Carlson, 1997). The character Jimmy Cross in Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* shows how he feels survivor's guilt regarding Ted Lavender's death. Jimmy feels responsible for Lavender's death, as he believes his focus on Martha, rather than his duties as commander, caused the tragedy. Even though there was no concrete evidence that his actions caused the death, his presence at the scene made her feel guilty. Carlson emphasized that survivor's guilt often arises from one's presence in a traumatic event, such as what Jimmy experienced. This emotional burden becomes a difficult internal struggle, in which guilt is inevitable despite being irrational, illustrating the deep psychological impact of war.

4. The impact on character Bobby Jorgenson

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

“Jorgenson kept pushing his hand out at me. He looked so earnest, so sad and hurt, that it almost made me feel guilty. Not quite, though.” (Chapter 20 Page 200)

In the novel *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, Bobby Jorgenson faces complex trauma, including avoidance. According to Eve B. Carlson in *Trauma Assessments*, avoidance is a strategy to avoid excessive emotional stress (Carlson, 1997). The quote describes Jorgenson's attempt to apologize to O'Brien for his failure when O'Brien was injured. However, O'Brien refused to get involved and chose to avoid it. Carlson points out that avoidance often arises as a response to emotional pain. Although Jorgenson attempted to right the wrongs, O'Brien avoided confrontation, creating emotional distance. This shows that trauma hinders communication and interpersonal relationships. O'Brien and Jorgenson's avoidance displays how trauma can cause individuals to withdraw from important social interactions, even when there is an intention to improve the relationship.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

“I hated him for making me stop hating him.” (Chapter 20 Page 200)

Emotional numbing is a phenomenon where individuals experience a reduction in emotional responses as a result of trauma, as experienced by Tim O'Brien's character in the novel *"The Things They Carried"*. The quote "I hated him for making me stop hating him" shows his difficulty in feeling consistent emotions, especially regarding mixed feelings towards Bobby Jorgenson. O'Brien is caught in a conflict between hatred and guilt, reflecting the emotional impact of his experiences on the battlefield. According to Eve B. Carlson in *"Trauma Assessments"*, (Carlson, 1997). emotional numbing is often a defense mechanism to protect individuals from excessive pain, but in O'Brien's case, this actually hinders the healing process and creates distance between himself and others. This suggests that the trauma of war has changed the way O'Brien perceives and interacts with the world around him.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

"I'd squirm around, cussing, half nuts with pain." (Chapter 20 Page 200)

Based on *"Trauma Assessments"*, Eve B. Carlson explains that hyperarousal is a condition where individuals experience excessive physical and mental activity as a response to trauma (Carlson, 1997). In the novel, Tim O'Brien's character shows signs of hyperarousal, as depicted in the quote, "I'd squirm around, cussing, half nuts with pain." This condition reflects high tension and irritability due to traumatic experiences. Symptoms such as difficulty sleeping and excessive responses to

stimuli are signs of hyperarousal, which keeps O'Brien on high alert. The trauma of war created a constant sense of alertness that disturbed his comfort, even in safe situations. This hyperarousal reflects an internal struggle to deal with heavy emotions, which becomes a barrier to the psychological healing process.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

"It's not that easy," I said. (Chapter 20 Page 200)

Repression is the process of moving trauma memories into the subconscious so that the individual is not aware of the trauma. In Tim O'Brien's the character Bobby Jorgenson shows repression through the quote, "It's not that easy," which reflects his difficulty in facing the fact that he cannot change the past. It depicts his efforts to suppress painful traumatic memories, even though he is aware of how difficult the process is. Jorgenson appears to be struggling with unresolved feelings of guilt and trauma, and these attempts at repression only exacerbate his internal conflict. According to Carlson, repression is often a maladaptive coping strategy, in which individuals attempt to avoid emotional pain without truly dealing with its impact, leading to deeper psychological problems (Carlson, 1997).

e. Survivor's Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor's Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

"I felt miserable... I kept seeing you lying out there." (Chapter 20 Page 200)

Survivor's guilt is the feeling of guilt a person experiences after surviving a traumatic event, even if there is no logical reason for it. In the novel **The Things They Carried** by Tim O'Brien, Bobby Jorgenson experiences this feeling when he feels guilty for not being able to immediately help the injured O'Brien, as seen in the quote, "I felt miserable... I kept seeing you lying out there." Jorgenson felt trapped in thinking that he could have done better to prevent the injury. According to Eve B. Carlson in *"Trauma Assessments"* (Carlson, 1997) survivor's guilt can cause feelings of isolation and depression, and hinder the healing process. Jorgenson continues to struggle with traumatic memories, which worsen his mental condition and hinder acceptance of what happened. Survivor's guilt creates a heavy emotional burden, affecting the individual's mental health and interaction with their environment.

5. The impact on character Mitchell Sanders

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

"Sanders wanted me to believe him, his frustration at not quite getting the details right, not quite pinning down the final and definitive truth." (Page 76 Chapter 7)

In the data it can be seen that Mitchell Sanders' character shows signs of avoidance as a form of coping strategy for trauma. This avoidance is seen when Sanders struggles to talk about his experiences but has difficulty conveying the details accurately, reflecting his efforts to avoid confrontation with harsh reality.

His frustration in telling the truth suggests an inability to deal with the emotional pain associated with traumatic memories. Carlson explains that avoidance often arises as a response to excessive emotional pain. Sanders seems trapped in an inability to face his traumatic reality, choosing not to discuss the painful details (Carlson, 1997). This highlights how the trauma of war affects the way he interacts with the world and adds a psychological burden that is difficult to overcome

b. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

“The strain was too much for him.” (Chapter 21 Page 219)

In this quote, it can be seen that Mitchell Sanders experiences hyperarousal, which is a condition where a person has excessive levels of physical and mental stress. The quote “The strain was too much for him” reflects the strain Rat Kiley experienced, which also influenced Sanders. Hyperarousal, as explained by Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”*, (Carlson, 1997) is the body's response to trauma which makes individuals always on alert. Sanders not only felt the impact of personal trauma, but was also affected by the psychological condition of Kiley and his colleagues. Symptoms such as anxiety and irritability affected his social interactions and his ability to function normally. War trauma not only impacts individuals directly involved, but also those around them, suggesting that hyperarousal becomes a barrier to emotional healing and worsens psychological conditions if left untreated.

c. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

“His frustration at not quite getting the details right.” (Page 76 Chapter 7)

Repression is a mechanism in which traumatic memories are suppressed into the subconscious, so that the individual is no longer aware of them. In this quote, Mitchell Sanders' character experiences repression, as seen from his frustration in expressing the details of a traumatic experience correctly. This data inability reflects an attempt to suppress traumatic memories that was not completely successful. This frustration shows that repression not only protects Sanders from emotional pain, but also creates internal conflict. Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”* explains that repression can make individuals trapped in a cycle of denial, trying to avoid uncomfortable feelings, but still being affected by the emotional burden of trauma (Carlson, 1997). Sanders, despite trying to share his experiences, remains overcome by the psychological impact of the trauma he experienced.

d. Survivor’s Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor’s Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

“Sanders wanted me to believe him.” (Page 76 Chapter 7)

In this data, Mitchell Sanders experiences survivor's guilt, namely feelings of guilt for surviving a traumatic event. The quote “Sanders wanted me to believe him” reflects his frustration in conveying a traumatic experience, creating additional emotional burden. Sanders feels he has failed to honor the memory of his friends if he cannot convey the truth accurately. According to Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”*, survivor's guilt arises when individuals feel responsible for the fate of others, even though logically they know nothing can be changed (Carlson, 1997). These feelings of guilt caused Sanders to continually reflect on what could have been done differently, creating deep emotional tension and hindering his healing. Survivor's guilt affects mental health and hinders the healing process if left untreated.

6. The impact on character Mark Fossie

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

The data shows that Mark Fossie's character shows the impact of trauma through the concept of avoidance explained by Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments.”* (Carlson, 1997). Quotes depicting Fossie with a sweaty face, bloodshot eyes, and pale skin reflect the physical and emotional stress he experienced. This condition reflects an attempt to avoid painful feelings and

memories related to the war. His inability to cope with stress makes him tend to withdraw from social interactions and situations that remind him of the trauma, creating a continuing cycle of emotional burden. Thus, the avoidance experienced by Fossie is not just a reaction to trauma, but also reflects a deep internal struggle. Although he tries to function in difficult situations, the psychological impact of the traumatic experience has fundamentally changed the way he perceives and interacts with the world.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

Emotional numbing is a phenomenon where individuals experience a reduction in emotional responses to the environment due to trauma. In the context of the character Mark Fossie in the novel by Tim O'Brien, his physical condition shows emotional numbing, as can be seen from the quote that describes his sweaty, sick face and red eyes. This tired appearance reflects his inability to feel emotions fully, which often occurs after traumatic experiences, leaving him isolated and unable to enjoy life. According to Eve B. Carlson's analysis in *“Trauma Assessments”*, emotional numbing functions as a defense mechanism to protect individuals from pain (Carlson, 1997). In Fossie's case, the trauma of the battlefield created a heavy emotional burden, forcing him to suppress his feelings and avoid

harsh realities. Thus, Fossie's emotional numbing reflects a deep internal struggle to overcome the psychological impact of her experience.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

In this quote, Mark Fossie's character experiences hyperarousal, a condition in which individuals experience excessive levels of physical and mental activity. Quotes depicting Fossie's face wet with sweat and his eyes bloodshot reflect the high tension he was experiencing. These physical symptoms indicate his body's reaction to stress and trauma, with the nervous system remaining in "fight or flight" mode even when there is no immediate threat. Eve B. Carlson's analysis in *“Trauma Assessments”* explains that hyperarousal is often accompanied by anxiety, irritability, and difficulty sleeping (Carlson, 1997). In Fossie's case, this tension interfered with her ability to function normally on a daily basis, creating feelings of anxiety and an inability to feel calm. Hyperarousal is not only a reaction to trauma, but also indicates a deep internal struggle, worsening the psychological condition if not treated properly.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

Repression is the process of transferring traumatic memories into subconstituents, so that the individual is not aware of the trauma. In the context of the character Mark Fossie from the novel by Tim O'Brien, repression can be seen from his physical condition, where he is depicted as sweating, with a sick face and red eyes. This condition reflects his efforts to suppress traumatic memories, but these efforts are ineffective. Fossie's physical and emotional exhaustion suggests that although he is trying to forget the traumatic experience, the impact of the trauma continues to weigh heavily on him. According to Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”*, repression functions as a defense mechanism, but also creates an inability to completely forget the traumatic experience, which affects mental health and social interactions (Carlson, 1997).

e. Survivor's Guilt

There is evidence of statements stating Survivor's Guilt can be seen from some of the data below.

“Even with the cooling night air Fossie's face was slick with sweat. He looked sick. His eyes were bloodshot; his skin had a whitish, almost colorless cast”.
(Page 108 Chapter 9)

Survivor's guilt is the feeling of guilt experienced by someone who has survived a traumatic event, especially when others have not survived. In the novel *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, the character Mark Fossie reflects the impact of these feelings even though it is not stated explicitly. Fossie's tired and ill

physical condition reflects the emotional burden that may have been caused by the guilt of surviving when his comrades did not. He may feel like he should have done more to help them, and that his continued life is unfair compared to the friends he lost. These feelings can result in psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression, creating an internal struggle to cope with the emotional burden of battlefield losses (Carlson, 1997).

7. The impact on character Azar

a. Avoidance

There is evidence of statements stating avoidance can be seen from some of the data below.

“Azar was wound up tight. All afternoon, while we made the preparations, he kept chanting, “Halloween, Halloween.” That, plus the finger snapping, almost made me cancel the whole operation.” (Chapter 20 Page 203)

In this quote, Azar's character shows the impact of trauma through the concept of avoidance, which is explained by Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”*. Avoidance is a coping strategy to avoid stimuli that cause stress (Carlson, 1997). Quotes describing Azar's constant "chanting" and "finger snapping" reflect his attempts to distract himself from uncomfortable feelings and traumatic memories. Although these actions do not directly indicate trauma, Azar tries to avoid confrontation with the harsh realities of the battlefield. Carlson explained that traumatized individuals often use avoidance to protect themselves from negative emotions. Thus, Azar's behavior reflects his internal struggle in dealing with an intolerable emotional burden, which in turn hinders the necessary healing process.

b. Emotional Numbing

There is evidence of statements stating Emotional Numbing can be seen from some of the data below.

““Creepy,” Azar said. “Wet pants an’ goose bumps.” He held a beer out to me, but I shook my head.” (Chapter 20 Page 209)

Emotional numbing is a phenomenon in which individuals experience a decreased emotional response to the environment, often as a result of trauma. In this quote, Azar's character shows emotional numbing when he mentions feeling "creepy" and "wet pants an' goose bumps." His shallow delivery indicates his inability to feel emotions fully, reflecting Azar's struggle with the trauma of war. According to Eve B. Carlson in *“Trauma Assessments”*, emotional numbing functions as a defense mechanism to protect individuals from excessive pain (Carlson, 1997). As a result, Azar felt isolated from his feelings, creating distance from the traumatic experience he had experienced, thereby increasing difficulty in interacting with other people. This suggests that the psychological impact of trauma changed the way Azar felt and interacted with the world.

c. Hyperarousal

There is evidence of statements stating Hyperarousal can be seen from some of the data below.

“Azar was wound up tight. All afternoon, while we made the preparations, he kept chanting, “Halloween, Halloween.” That, plus the finger snapping, almost made me cancel the whole operation.” (Chapter 20 Page 203)

In this data, Azar's character experiences hyperarousal, a condition in which individuals have levels of physical and mental activity that exceed the norm. The quote "Azar was wound up tight" reflects the high tension he experienced in response to stress and trauma on the battlefield. This condition indicates that Azar is on constant alert, which can lead to ongoing anxiety and difficulty feeling calm. Eve B. Carlson's analysis in *"Trauma Assessments"* notes that hyperarousal is often accompanied by symptoms such as irritability and difficulty sleeping (Carlson, 1997). Trauma has changed the way Azar interacts with the world, affecting his social relationships and his ability to function normally. This hyperarousal reflects a deep internal struggle to overcome the emotional burden of a traumatic experience.

d. Repression

There is evidence of statements stating Repression can be seen from some of the data below.

"Azar was wound up tight. All afternoon, while we made the preparations, he kept chanting, "Halloween, Halloween." That, plus the finger snapping, almost made me cancel the whole operation." (Chapter 20 Page 203)

Repression is the process of moving trauma memories into subconstituents, so that the individual is no longer aware of the trauma. In this data, Azar's character shows behavior that reflects repression, as can be seen from his efforts to remain active even though he is experiencing emotional tension. His "wound up tight" behavior reflects an attempt to suppress traumatic memories, but the tension indicates an inability to fully repress. His physical and emotional exhaustion

reflects the impact of the trauma weighing on her. According to Eve B. Carlson in “*Trauma Assessments*”, (Carlson, 1997) repression functions as a defense mechanism, but in Azar's case, the psychological impact still affected his interactions with the world around him, creating feelings of isolation.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter the researcher explains the conclusions as well as the results and discussion from Chapter IV which have been discussed and researched in this research. There is one paragraph presented in Chapter V regarding conclusions. The first thing to discussed in chapter V is the conclusion about who experiences intrusive symptoms and what types of intrusive symptoms they experience. Apart from discussing that, this research also provide suggestions that aim to help with developments that occur in future research that is the same as this research.

A. Conclusion

This conclusion section aims to answer the research questions in this study uses the trauma studies theory model in the realm of PTSD which looks for the presence of intrusive symptoms. After the researcher has finished carrying out the analysis, the researcher concluded that in the novel *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'brien, not all characters experience or feel intrusive symptoms, but most of them experience it. Below the researcher explain the characters who experienced the intrusive symptoms. There are forms of intrusive symptoms found by researchers, among others intrusive thoughts, past memories, regretness, emotional distress, and physical reactions. The first is in the intrusive thoughts. The characters who experience intrusive thoughts are the main characters Tim O'brien, Lieutenant Jimmy Cross, Rat Kiley, and all the soldiers who are at war experience intrusive thoughts. Second is the aspect of past memories. The characters who experience

past memories are the main character Tim O'brien, and Lieutenant Jimmy Cross. There are only two of these characters who experience past memories, but most of those who experienced it were Tim O'brien. The reason why Tim O'brien experiences a lot of Past memories is because the novel tells about the war he experienced. The third is the aspect of regretness. The characters who experience regretness are the main characters Tim O'brien, Lieutenant Jimmy Cross, and Bobby Jorgenson.

Fourth is the aspect of emotional distress. The characters who experienced this include the main characters Tim O'brien, Lieutenant Jimmy Cross, Dave Jansen, Mitchell Sanders, Rat Kiley, Mary Anne, and Henry Dobbins. Characters who experience emotional distress generally all experience it. Some characters such as Tim O'brien or Rat Kiley experience emotional distress a little more often. Lastly, the fifth aspect is the physical reaction aspect. Characters who experience this include the main character Tim O'brien, Lieutenant Jimmy Cross, Kiowa, Mark Fossie, young soldier (name unknown and not explained), Azar, Rat Kiley, and Mitchel Sanders. all of the characters on average experience this physical reaction. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that not all war experiences cause intrusive symptoms, but there are stories of love, family and friendship that also cause this. It was also concluded that not all characters experienced intrusive symptoms and it was concluded that emotional distress and physical reactions were experienced by many of the characters.

B. Suggestion

Based on the findings and discussion in Chapter IV, it can be seen that trauma theory, which extends to PTSD, can clearly be applied to research on literary works such as the novels that have been studied. Researchers found that trauma studies theory can include PTSD leading to the realm of Intrusive Symptoms. Researchers suggest that the use of trauma study theory needs to be developed for the continuation of other theories and other domains in the field of research analysis that occur in the future. Apart from that, in terms of handling trauma, the researcher suggests that what needs to be done for further research is to find ways to overcome the forms of intrusive symptoms that have been experienced by the characters and to provide more detailed explanations so that more references are included and there are more aspects or types of trauma which can be explained.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



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