

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Consumerism is an act of buying something we do not truly need. Consumerism has been spreading for a long time. It has already developed in many ways and shaped culture, economy, and society. Later, consumerism became a new way of life. There are many disadvantages of consumerism. Thus, there are many critiques regarding this matter, one of which is from literature, a novel named *Fight Club*. This research tries to show that *Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk portrays many consequences of consumerism in American society through Adorno and Horkheimer's theory.

The first part of consequences that the novel shows are standardization and pseudo-individuality. Standardization is trying to put everyone into a standardized society, providing a lot of given choices. The novel shows the standardization in the narrator's job with a monotonous routine and standard procedure, a metaphoric critique about society, and a realization statement about society that has been raised in standardization. After that, pseudo-individuality comes as a further consequence linked with standardization. Pseudo-individuality is raised because people are propagated to be unique as they are given many choices. The novel shows the narrator has many choices about furniture and other things he wants to buy. However, too many choices cause dissatisfaction, which leads to consumerism.

The second part is commodity fetishism and the loss of critical thinking among people. Commodity fetishism values things more than they should be. The narrator overvalues things as they give him pleasure for having them, not

because of the actual value of the things he bought. On the other hand, loss of critical thinking happens to people who cannot think critically anymore because of consumerism. The doctrine that prevents them from thinking about their genuine purpose, idea, creativity, and imagination pushes them down, so they lose their critical thinking. The novel shows that the narrator is just doing his job because he knows how to do it, and it proves that he is bored and unhappy with his life. His addiction to buying things also displays that consumerism makes him unable to think critically about his needs. Marla also portrays that people lose their critical thinking about leisure time as they always fill their time with programmed entertainment.

The third part is social inequality and alienation. Social inequality comes because the low and middle classes are targeted for advertisement, standardization in life, and any propaganda for keeping them in that same life as long as possible. These targeted ads and propaganda will create a massive societal gap in wealth, income, health, etc. The novel shows it in some quotes by Tyler Durden and the doorman who criticizes society. Society is raised to have a better life based on the capitalist standard, which leads them to try to impress other people, as not everybody can reach that standard. Furthermore, consumerism caused alienation in society. Again, Tyler Durden and the doorman criticize society by saying that as a representation of society, the narrator loses his way of life, is disconnected from what he wants, and tries to be somebody he is not.

It can be concluded that several consequences of consumerism, according to Theodor Adorno, have been represented in the *Fight Club* novel by Chuck Palahniuk. It represents the consequences of consumerism in American society

from the 1950s to the 1990s. Each decade may have different consequences because of technological differences, trends, and inventions. However, the six consequences stand the same.

It's critical to recognize that, despite the novel's status as a work of transgressive literature that seeks to reject society, it also makes an attempt to address consumerism. This novel aims to highlight the consequences of consumerism while demonstrating how it has already become a common way of life in society. As a result, it makes an effort to convince readers to quit consuming large amounts of unnecessary goods in order to challenge the normalization of consumerism in society, which has serious negative effects.

This research is anticipated to give a broader view of the consequences of consumerism in American society. This research may not be written perfectly and may lack different views of the consequences that are caused by consumerism. Hopefully, this research can give new information and a general overview of consumerism critiques from Fight Club novel through Adorno and Horkheimer's theory.