

The Child-parent Relationship in *The Night Child, My Name is Lucy Barton, We Need to Talk about Kevin, and Lullabies for Little Criminals*: An Eriksonian Approach

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Abstract

This thesis portrays the importance of the child parent relationship in accordance with Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory. Erikson sheds light on how the childhood of any person will have an effect on the person's adulthood, psyche and overall life. The success or the failure of the developmental stages will make it clear how the person will react in his/her adulthood. The thesis will also focus on the society and the experiences every person has and how it will have an effect on the character's development through their lives.

The selected works focus on the child-parent relationship in different events and societies. Each character will experience psychosocial issues and problems with their parents that will make each one develop a healthy or unhealthy personality.

The thesis will discuss one character in each of the following four novels: Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (2003), Heather O'Neill's *Lullabies for Little Criminals* (2006), Anna Quinn's *The Night Child* (2018) and Elizabeth Strout's *My Name is Lucy Barton* (2016). Each character will be analyzed in accordance with the eight stages of Erikson and in terms of the relationship between these characters and their parents. In addition, an account will be provided of each characters'

determining social surroundings. In this thesis, the four novels will also be discussed in reference to other psychoanalysts such as Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Karen Horney.

Key Words: Psychosocial, child-parent relationship, Erik Erikson, *The Night Child*, *My Name is Lucy Barton*, *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, *Lullabies for Little Criminals*.