



**BOOK REVIEW OF BARBARA DAWSON  
SMITH'S *THE ROGUE REPORT***

**A FINAL PROJECT**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer truly states that this project is compiled by her without taking the result from other research in any university, in S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree and in diploma. In addition, the writer ascertains that she does not take the materials from other publications or someone else work, except for the references mentioned in the bibliography.

Semarang, 15 June 2015

Ria Arindu Sari

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*The best revenge is a massive success.*

(Frank Sinatra)

*Life's hard. It will be harder when you're stupid, but the hardest is when you're not grateful.*

(Anonymous)

*This final project is dedicated to my beloved mother and father  
for their love, motivation, support, and expectation.*

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The writer realizes that the final project is still far from perfection. She would be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendations to make this final project better. Finally, the writer expects that this final project will be useful for its readers.

Semarang, 15 June 2015

Ria Arindu Sari

## TABLE OF CONTENT

TITTLE.....	i
PRONOUNCEMENT.....	ii
MOTTO AND DEDICATION.....	iii
APPROVAL.....	iv
VALIDATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Objectives of the Study.....	1
1.3 Biography of Barbara Dawson Smith.....	2
1.4 Summary.....	2
1.5 Cover of <i>The Rogue Report</i> Novel.....	5
2 Analysis.....	7
2.1 The Intrinsic Analysis.....	7
2.1.1 Theme.....	7
2.1.2 Character.....	8
2.1.2.1 Protagonist Characters.....	8
2.1.2.2 Antagonist Characters.....	9
2.1.3 Conflict.....	10
3. The Strengths and Weaknesses of <i>The Rogue Report</i> Novel.....	10
3.1 Strenghts.....	10
3.1.1 Theme.....	11
3.1.2 Character.....	12
3.1.3 Conflict.....	12
3.1.3.1 Internal Conflict.....	12
3.1.3.2 External Conflict.....	13
3.2 Weaknesses.....	15
3.2.1 Theme.....	15
3.2.2 Full of Stigma.....	16
4. Conclusion.....	16

## ABSTRACT

This book review analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of Barbara Dawson Smith's *The Rogue Report*. *The Rogue Report* is a novel which tells about the aristocrat society in London. The writer's purpose of this review is to explore the strengths and weaknesses by analyzing its intrinsic elements, namely theme, characters, and conflicts. The writer used a library research method and structural approach to analyze the intrinsic elements. In addition, the writer also adopted Erich Fromm's theory, *The Art of Loving* to examine the theme of the novel, namely *Love*. Every novel has its own uniqueness, though *The Rogue Report* has some weaknesses, it is still a good reading because it has a bunch of value of life.

Keywords: theme, characters, conflict, erotic love, revenge



## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Literature is the art of creating written works. As a form of creative art, it has a beautiful expression or thought, or even idea wrapped in words. It can give pleasure, experience, and knowledge to its readers. It can also be a life reflection of an author, a society, even nation. Literature can be divided into fictional and nonfictional works. Drama, short story, tales, and novel are included to the fictional works.

According to Reeve (1785:26) ,“A novel is a picture of real and manners.” It means that a novel can be a reflection of human life and behavior in reality, consisting of many things such as: problem, feeling, emotion, ambition, and desire. Even some of the novels tell the human’s life story which truly happens in reality.

*The Rogue Report* is a novel of love story written by Barbara Dawson Smith in 2006. The story is particularly well-crafted. It has a good value of secrecy, mystery, desire, and the characters in it are interesting and likeable. The plot begins with a conflict, then its plot develops gradually to the climax before it comes to the happy ending. Those all make the writer interested in analyzing the novel.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The writer has two objectives of this final paper: they are explaining the strengths and the weaknesses of the novel, and explaining the concept of *The Art of Loving*.

### 1.3 Biography of Barbara Dawson Smith

Barbara Dawson Smith was an American writer of historical romance novels and a member of Romance Writers of America since 1981. She also wrote under the pen name Olivia Drake. Her degree in journalism was obtained at Michigan State University, and soon after graduating, she sold her first historical romance only two weeks after sending it to a publisher. Some of her books had won awards, such as: the Golden Heart Award from RWA and Best Historical Romantic Suspense for her book, *Dream spinner* (1990), and Best Regency Historical for *A Glimpse of Heaven* (1995) from *Romantic Times*. She had been a five-time finalist for the prestigious RITA Award, and got her highest achievement in 2002, when she won the award for *Tempt Me Twice*. She had also been a finalist for the National Readers' Choice Award, Romance of the Year by *Affaire de Coeur* magazine, the Golden Quill, and the Booksellers' Best Award. ("Barbara Dawson Smith: About the Author": par 1)

Now Barbara lives in Houston, Texas with her husband and her two children. ("Barbara Dawson Smith: About the Author": par 2)

### 1.4 Summary

*The Rogue Report* told about the aristocrat society in London. Lady Julia Corwyn, known as a headmistress of a charity school, Corwyn Academy was dismissed by her family, then moved away from society. All that society knew, she gave birth out of wedlock. The news of her disgrace spread out like a wildfire, and her reputation was ruined forever. By inheriting a sizable fortune from her

grandmother, she started her new life with *her* son, Theodore Corwyn. She built a charity school which employed women only. Discretely, Julia was the author of an anonymous report entitled *The Rogue Report*. The report exposed the dishonor of aristocrat gentlemen: their debt gaming, mistresses, drinking habits, scandalous secrets, and the report was sent to aristocrat maidens twice a month. Oddly, every single occurrence was precisely described in the report.

Jack William Mansfield, the Earl of Rutledge, was one of the worst rogues who had been dishonored in *The Rogue Report*. His engagement with Evelyn, the wealthiest heiress in all of London was cut off, and he lost his chance to pay off his debts. He suspected that Julia was the author of the report because she was the only disgraced woman living in London. The need for revenge burned in him. Jack disguised as William Jackman, an applicant who applied for mathematics teacher position in Julia's school. Julia had no reason to refuse him because so far, he was the best candidate. Furthermore, she desired him at the first sight.

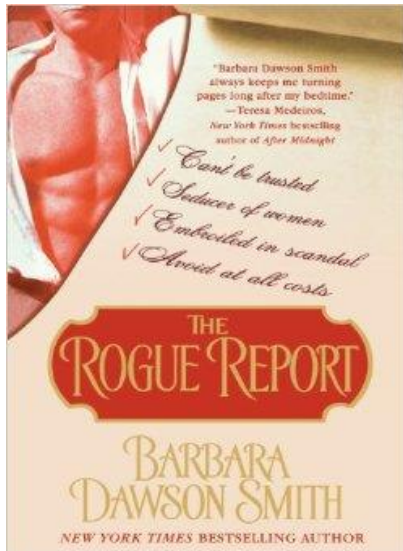
Jack planned to find the proof and revealed Julia's true identity. He thought that the society would never let their maidens get advice from a ruined woman, and that would give an end of the report. Seducing was his major plan toward Julia. Discretely, Jack desired Julia too. When he finally succeeded in making love with her, how aghast he was when he knew Julia was still virgin. It meant that Theo was not her real child. Unfortunately, he was not the only one who spied her. There had been three times an intruder trying to slip into the school. Either Julia or Jack hid big secrets about themselves. One day Julia took him to meet her mental handicap twin, Bella. There he knew all the truth about Julia; the

reason why did she write *The Rogue Report*; how she could get the information accurately, and since then, Jack lost his willingness to revenge and completely in love with her.

On another day, Jack brought Julia to his mother's house. There they poured out their lust, but unexpectedly Julia found Jack's true identity. She was extremely mad at him because of his deception. She left him away, and when she went back to the school, Theo was kidnapped. Julia went to meet the kidnapper by following the note's instruction left by the kidnapper. Meanwhile, Jack came to the school, intentionally wanted to clear Julia's misunderstanding toward him. Jack knew where she was going. He went after her and there he saw his close friend, George Gresham, he was menacing her with a pistol. In fact, Gresham-who was also Evelyn's cousin, was the intruder and Theo's kidnapper as well. There the truth was revealed. He was Theo's real father. He had raped Bella before. He kidnapped Theo in order to change his father's mind about cutting him out from inheritance. Of course, Jack made him paid off what he had done.

Julia kept refusing to hear Jack's explanation and said that she would never want to meet him again. Yet her heart wanted him desperately, her mind thought of him every moment. Jack felt like he had lost his world, his breath, his only love he loved the most. His grandfather never saw him in such a mess. He suggested Jack to send her a letter, and Jack did it. She burned his first letter unread, but not with the following letters. At the end, through his letters he succeeded in assuring her that he had changed his ways. And Julia gave him the most surprising gifts ever.

## 1.5 Cover of The Rogue Report



The cover of the novel is made by its publisher, St Martin's Paperback. The total pages of this novel are 340 pages, publishing on June 2006. There are several symbols that are used to describe the content of the novel. The authors's name is written with a large size and attached with "NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR". It implies that the novel is worth reading and worth buying, because it is written by an excellent author. The title may elicit stigmatic thoughts and it uses red and gold colors. In Oxford Dictionary, rogue means a person who behaves badly. The red color may refer to erotic love, while the gold color may represent wealth or aristocrat concept. The main background color is cream, a sweet and calm color identically reflecting women.

"Red is the color of fire and blood, so it is associated with energy, war, danger, strength, power, determination as well as passion, desire, and love... Gold evokes the feeling of prestige. The meaning of gold is illumination, wisdom, and wealth" (Color Wheel Pro: Color Meaning).

On the iconic side, the cover presents an upper body of a man, with his half-opened skirt can be interpreted that the man has seductive purpose. The picture shows his half-naked chest and his lips only. Those indicate us to the first and second points beside. The chest may be interpreted as "seducer of woman", and the lips may be interpreted as "can't be trusted". The following statement may

prove that Jack can not be trusted: “He didn’t want her to know anything about his real life” (Smith, 2006:4). “He was *not* her beloved Jack, not an unpretentious, hardworking mathematic instructor. He was the notorious Earl of Rutledge” (Smith, 2006:280).

Meanwhile, “Seducer of women” could be proven by some dialogues: “I was swept away by your beauty” (Smith, 2006:132). “Because I was aching for you”. His voice grew low and honeyed. “I was dreaming about you, darling, thinking about how much I wanted you in my arms again” (Smith, 2006:202). “Darling Julia, I can give you great pleasure. Will you allow me?” (Smith, 2006:204). And also by the narrator’s speaking, “His gaze dipped to her mouth, and Julia felt a dizzying rush of pleasure. He was flirting” (Smith, 2006:72). “Once again, his hands lightly rubbed her shoulders, his fingers moving to her neck to work their melting magic” (Smith, 2006:168).

The next point, “Embroided in scandal” could be seen from this quotation, “He was the notorious Earl of Rutledge. A man who had squandered his fortune at gambling. A man who threw hedonistic parties and consorted with lightskirt. A man whose name had featured prominently in her newsletter” (Smith, 2006:280).

And the last point, “Avoid at all cost” is portrayed by these sentences: “He had slipped into another life, a life without creditors knocking on his door at all hours of the day. There had been a certain freedom in not having those worries constantly hanging over his head” (Smith, 2006:94). And also “The old Jack would have fobbed off the man with a careless promise” (Smith, 2006:331).

By combining the iconic and symbolic sides of the cover, it will totally describe what the story is about. It tells about the dishonest nature of the male characters. In this case, the dishonest men are noblemen. It can be said that *The Rogue Report* has a good composition of the cover which represents the content of the novel and attract its reader's attention.

## **2. Analysis**

### **2.1 The Intrinsic Analysis of *The Rogue Report***

The analysis would be discussed in this chapter namely:

#### **2.1.1 Theme**

Theme is the central insight, the idea controller, the principle of unity of a story. In other words, it is what the story about (Kennedy, 1991:144). Theme may be divided into two categories: major and minor theme. The writer finds that the major theme of the novel is "love", and the minor theme is "revenge". However, love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person. There are various types of love, which depend on the kind of object which is loved. The object of love is divided into five types: brotherly love, motherly love, erotic love, self-love and love to God (Fromm, 1956:46). In this review, the writer would focus on the erotic love only.

Love is a word with thousand meanings and feelings. Every single human being has his own notion about love. It is the deepest emotion that is frequently thought about, talked about, sung about, and written about. How stunning the power of love is. For example, Jack, at the first burned with the need of revenge, as time went on, he lost his will altogether and completely in love with Julia. It

happened to Julia as well. She believed that men were nothing but trouble, but then she met Jack and she desired him at their first sight.

The novel presents emotions arosen by love, such as desire, happiness, jealousy, longing, anger, sadness, and confusion. The writer could see it through the narrator’s description. “No, something else weighed on his mind. Something that made him feel restless, uneasy, angry. Something named Julia” (Smith, 2006:175). Those were Jack’s feeling after she told him that Ambrose Trotter, her most persistent suitor willing to marry her. Love could trigger feelings that Jack had never felt before.

“He had completely lost his appetite for exposing her identity to society—“ (2006:217). Jack’s feelings for Julia had grown stronger. He lost his will to ruin her. He wanted to see her smile, make her happy, and protect her from any danger. Both Julia and Jack had lost their grudge because of erotic love.

### **2..1.2 Characters**

Characters are divided into two types, namely protagonist and antagonist. Protagonist is the main character in a story, novel, drama, or other literary work. It is usually an admirable figure, while antagonist is a character who becomes the opposite of the main character (protagonist). Antagonist will argue, across, and try to shatter protagonist (Perrine, 1987:66).

#### **2.1.2.1 Protagonist Characters**

##### 1) Lady Julia Corwyn

Julia wasthe main character. She was dismissed from her family, and then moved away from society. All society knew that she gave birth out of wedlock.



The news of her disgrace spread like a wildfire, and her reputation has been ruined forever. She was actually the anonymous author of a report entitled *The Rogue Report*. Yet it was just one of the secrets she had.

## 2) Jack William Mansfield

Jack William Mansfield, the Earl of Rutledge was also the main character in the novel. His engagement with Evelyn, the wealthiest heiress in all of London, was cut off after he was dishonored in *The Rogue Report*. He suspected Julia as the author of the report and wanted her to pay off what she had done. To find the proof, Jack disguised as William Jackman, an applicant who applied for mathematics teacher position in Julia's school. Things happened, and Jack who was a rogue in the beginning of the story turned into a good person in the end.

### **2.1.2.2 Antagonist Characters**

#### 1) George Gresham

Gresham was Jack's friend in the gambling table and also Evelyn's cousin. His dying father disinherited him from family inheritance. In fact, he was Bella's rapist. He was the intruder who came to school to have a look at Theo and tried to find the proof of Theo's birth certificate. He kidnapped Theo, because he intended to use Theo as a weapon to change his father's decision. It would not be difficult to assure his father that Theo was truly his son, because Theo closely resembled his younger brother, Henry, who died when he was child. Moreover, his father had a tender affection toward Henry.

## 2) Horace Rigby

Rigby was a brutal father of one of the teachers in Julia's school, Faith. She disappeared from the school after got a letter from her father. Julia ever saved Faith from hospital after she got coma because of her father's brutality. Julia made an agreement with Rigby never to set foot in London again after he pocketed her gold and money. He threatened to kill Julia if he ever saw her again. And then he was back and wanted Faith to go back home. Faith could not refuse it because she thought that it was her duty as a daughter. As Julia guessed, a scoundrel like Rigby would never change. He intended to sell his own daughter to a felon just for money.

### 2.1.3 Conflict

Conflict is an essential element in the development of the plot. It is absolutely necessary in every literary work because it will create the reader's enthusiasm to keep reading. The conflict of the character is divided into two main types of conflicts, they are internal conflict and external conflict (Wellek & Warren, 1989: 285). In the novel, both Julia and Jack undergone the internal and external conflicts.

## 3. The Strengths and the Weaknesses

In this chapter, the writer would discuss about the strengths and the weaknesses of *The Rogue Report* novel.

### 3.1 Strengths

There are some strengths of this novel, namely: theme, character, and conflict.

### 3.1.1 Theme

The first strength of the novel is its the theme. Erotic love is being the central idea of the story. Erotic love is a love between two persons only. Fromm states that, "It is exclusive only in the sense that I can fuse myself fully and intensely with one person only" (1956:43).

The novel completely serves the characteristics of erotic love, which not only is a relationship between two people, but also contains a commitment, promise, decision. Erotic love is not just a strong feeling, but it also includes sexual attraction. It is love between Jack and Julia. They both were mutually fascinated from their first meeting. Started from sexual attractions, their feeling was going stronger. Until the point when they realized that they were completely in love each other. Never in Jack's life had he been so attracted with a woman. He dreamed her every night and always wanted to protect her, see her, and touch her. Until the poin when he had succeeded in making love with her, then he found out all of her secrets, her kindness and innocence had changed everything. Those could be seen in this sentence, "Oh, Jack, I love you,. So very much"... "Marry me, then" he whispered urgently. "Be my wife" (Smith, 2006:273). And Julia did feel the same, "She had enjoyed the attentions of many adoring gentlemen...None of them had made her burn. None of them had provoked this reckless desire to join herself with him in every may humanly possible" (Smith, 2006:203).

Their love is not about a deep feeling and sexual contact only. They wants stronger than that. And finally they agree to have a commitment, take a big deal on their life, and promise be a better person for each other.

### **3.1.2 Character**

As the main protagonist characters, Julia and Jack are adorable figures. They both have strong characteristics which can easily make the readers love them. Julia is described as a beautiful, tough, smart, goodhearted, attractive, and independent woman. She has a deep concern and humanity to others. Meanwhile, Jack is a rogue who hide behind his mask, described as a heroic, well-mannered, masculine, and good-looking. But actually he is a good man. Moreover, he is illustrated as a round character. His live completely reverses from a dishonest man in the beginning of the story to a good man in the end.

### **3.1.3 Conflict**

Either Julia or Jack undergoes internal and external conflict. Every conflict faced by the characters makes the readers wonder what will happen next, so that they will keep turning the pages to find the secrets of Jack and Julia. The secrets of the characters are well-crafted, because Smith withholds them cleverly then reveal it slowly. Those make the readers curious about the outcome of the events.

#### **3.1.3.1 Internal conflict**

In the story, Julia's internal conflict set in when her heart crazily desired Jack, but her head told her that she might not have an illicit affair with her employee.

“Nothing in her life had prepared her for the intense pleasure of intimacy or the burning desire to experience it again. Once would have to be enough, though. Not only because of the risks but because Jack was her employee. It would be unconscionable to carry on an affair at her school. Impossible!” (Smith, 2006:241).

Meanwhile, the internal conflict undergone by Jack was when Julia herself told him that she was the author of *The Rogue Report*. He did not feel such a triumph. Then when he had succeeded in making love with her and knew that Julia was still a virgin, he felt terribly frustrated and blamed himself. "He had himself to blame... No, he wouldn't let himself even consider marriage. Lady Julia Corwyn was his enemy. So, why did her nonchalance make him want to shout at her?" (Smith, 2006: 213).

Also, his internal conflict happened when Julia knew his true identity then left him. She brought him into a new life, something he had never expected and imagined before, and he felt hard to lose it all.

### **3.1.3.2 External conflict**

The external conflict between Julia and Jack was when Jack took Julia to Willowford Hall, his mother's house. There she accidentally found out Jack's true identity by finding a book with a bold black inscription on the first page.

"Jack William Mansfield, Earl of Rutledge". With a furious cry, she slapped him. So hard that her whole arm tingled... Then he said gruffly, "I'll admit that I came to the school with vengeance on my mind. I never meant to fall in love with you, Julia. But it happened nonetheless" (Smith, 2006:286).

Jack tried to give an explanation and told her all the truth. He intended to start showing his portions of his life by taking her to the house. But she had burned in anger, felt deceived, and left him.

The other external conflicts of Julia and Jack were their conflicts with Horace Rigby and George Gresham. Her conflict with Horace Rigby was when she wanted to save one of her teachers in academy, Faith. Earlier, Julia had saved Faith from hospital after she got a coma because of her father's brutality. Julia made

an agreement with Rigby never to set foot in London again after he pocketed her gold and money. He threatened to kill Julia if he ever saw her again. Yet then he was back and wanted Faith to go back home. He intended to sell his own daughter to a felon just for money. And because of Jack's help, she succeeded in saving Faith for the second times. Jack came to save them. He saw Julia was in danger, and with his fighting skill, he succeeded in collapsing Rigby. "As the rope gave way, blood tingled into Julia's numb fingers. She sprang out of the chair, looking for something heavy she could use to strike Rigby. But it was over, she realized in a jolt of triumph" (Smith, 2006:119)

Then the next external conflicts of Julia and Jack were their conflict with Gresham. Theo was kidnapped, and the kidnapper left a note for Julia. Julia went to meet the kidnapper by following the note's instruction. In fact, Gresham was the kidnapper. He wanted to use Theo to change his father's decision of cutting him off from inheritance.

"My father is dying. And on his deathbed, he's changed his will, cut me out completely...It's no small amount, either. Half a million pounds will go to my cousin Evelyn unless i can convince the old miser that i've changed my ways... He closely resembles my yonger brother who died as a child. My father always had a soft spot for Henry. So do your part and instruct your little bastard" (2006:305).

Meanwhile, Jack came to the school, intentionally wanted to clear Julia's misconception toward him. One of the teachers told him what was going on, and Jack knew where Julia was going to by looking at a maidservant who was at school that night. The teacher said that the maidservant was given the night off unexpectedly so she came there to sleep. Jacks went after Julia and there he saw his close friend, George Gresham, was menacing her with a pistol. There the truth

was revealed. He was Theo's father. Gresham raped Bella, and Jack made Gresham paid what he had done toward Bella, Theo, and Julia.

### 3.2 Weaknesses

There are two weaknesses of the novel, namely: theme and full of stigma.

#### 3.2.1 Theme

The minor theme, namely revenge, is being the weakness of the novel. Either Julia or Jack had a strong motivation to take revenge. The need for revenge burned in Jack because he lost his chance to pay off all his debt because of *The Rogue Report*. To accomplish his goal, he disguised himself as William Jackman, hid his true identity by making some lying, planned to ruin her enemy, and seduced her. "She had exposed all of his faults and mistakes at the worst possible time. She had ruined his plan to pull himself up out of the quagmire of debt and debauchery. And by God, he intended to make her pay" (Smith, 2006:28).

While Julia wanted to take revenge for all rogue in society, because they had placed her sister and herself into hard situations. Her report was her one and only way to help other maidens to decide the right man for their future. "She had felt driven to help other women in her dire straits and, at the same time to punish those scoundrels who would prey upon well-born young ladies like herself" (Smith, 2006:157). She used her student's parents, which mostly were maidservants, to be her spies then revealed the information which she had gathered from them through *The Rogue Report*. That was why the details in the report could be described accurately.

### 3.2.2 Full of stigma

The title of the report itself leads us into a negative thought. *Rogue* means a person who behaves badly.. The novel shows us a lot of female stigma towards men, as if they are just a trouble makers. “Ne’er-do-wells like the earl are weak, foolish, immoral man who fritter away their own fortunes at the gaming tables, then seek to acquire another through marriage. They’re no better than thieves” (Smith, 2006:250).

Drunkard, gambler, seducer, better, liar, intruder, cheater, and profiteer of heiresses are some stigma included within the story. Julia always states that men are nothing but troubles.

## 4. Conclusion

*The Rogue Report* is a romance novel written by Barbara Dawson Smith in 2006 which tells about the aristocratsocial in London. Bringing erotic love as the major theme,it is particularly well-crafted. It has a good doses of secrecy, mystery, and desire. This novel presents us the richness emotion within love, such as: passion, happiness, jealousy, longing, angry, sad, and confusion. The power of love could lose hatred between the characters. Love is greater than revenge. Character, conflict, and plot of the novel are also being the strengths. Every novel has its own uniqueness. Though *The Rogue Report* has some weaknesses, yet it still be a good reading because it has a bunch of value of life. No work is perfect, because it is manmade. Nobody is perfect, but people change, and so does Julia andJack.



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