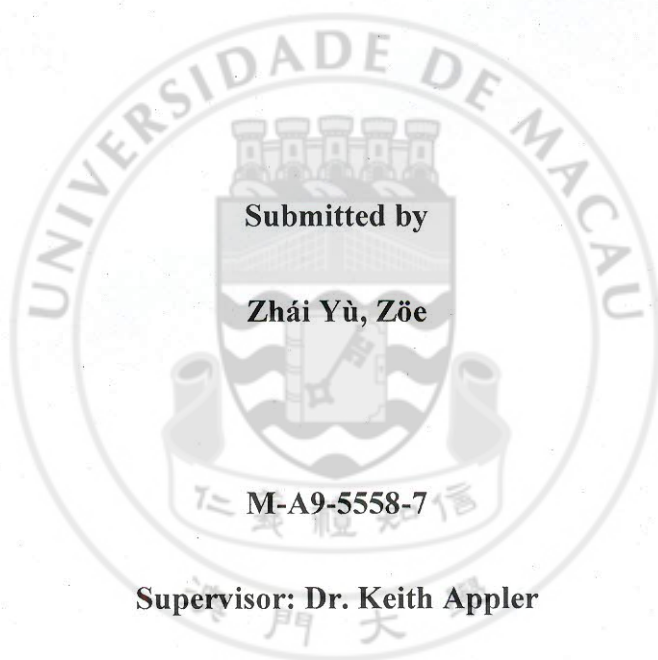


**Against Interpretation: Dream Work and Film Work in Susan Sontag's *Death Kit***



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### Abstract of the Thesis

As Susan Sontag's second dream novel in the 1960s, *Death Kit* has a controversial audience reception due to its ambiguous ending. However, regarding to Sontag's famous essay collection *Against Interpretation* written in the 1960s between two early novels, her works could be re-evaluated in light of ideas in those essays, that literary works were over-interpreted by critics. Sontag tries to prevent literary works from being comprehended with political, social or moral meanings. In the first part of *Death Kit*, Sontag portrays a dying man Dalton's dream with responses to his childhood flashbacks and adult life. Chapter one's psychological approach suggests three related triangles within the novel, namely Dalton's childhood triangle, adulthood triangle as well as the triangle in his dream. These triangles reflect an Oedipus complex in Dalton's unconsciousness. In Chapter two, a more philosophical reading of *Death Kit* will analyze characters with the ideas of doppelgänger theory, as Dalton acts in his dream as Diddy, another view from others projecting on his own mind. Besides, in order to preserve art's originality in literature works, Sontag injects filmic elements in the end, hoping to show an original picture in her mind. In general, *Death Kit* is haunted by a melancholy atmosphere, which not only because of the background of the novel was set as a dying journey, but Sontag also expresses her own melancholy struggles within one man's death ordeal, which shows her obsession with death, and willingness to seek immortality.