

DEFENSE MECHANISM ON THE MAIN CHARACTER OF SHUTTER ISLAND (2010) AS PSYCHOANALYSIS STUDY

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Abstract

The purpose of the research is to examine the ego defense mechanism used by the main character of Shutter Island movie. This thesis uses qualitative approaches to uncover the main character's trauma in Shutter Island Movie, Teddy. This researcher focused on Teddy's defense mechanism, which she used to cope with his trauma. This research uses qualitative approaches to uncover Teddy's trauma and defense mechanism, based on psychoanalysis theories developed by Sigmund Freud, especially related to trauma. Based on the findings, there are three causes of Teddy's trauma. His guilt for killing hundreds of defenseless soldiers during World War II and his regret not taking his wife Dolores to psychiatrists led to her murdering their three children, and Andrew had to kill his wife. His anguish for his family's demise drives him to depression. His id can't stand the pain of remembering the event, so he forms a defense mechanism to avoid the guilt. Those three are associated by four types of ego defense mechanisms: repression, denial, projection, and Displacement.

Keywords: trauma, defense mechanism, psychoanalysis,

INTRODUCTION

A film is an adaptation of literary works in prose, particularly novels, which are long-form human portraits existence. It can use to investigate human nature as a substance. In a film, different types of human nature and life phenomena are mirrored, including mental illness. Nowadays, mental illnesses is in the spotlight in the community because of the many cases of death related to mental illness. It is because the incident happened close to the community, whether it is celebrities, relatives, or even their own family. Currently, many films voice the theme of mental health so that they can indirectly help people to be more aware of their mental health. Furthermore, mental illness is an exciting thing as a literary theme works because the stories are emotionally charged and inspire psychology to the readers. There are many causes of mental illness, and one of them is trauma. There are several trauma factors, one of which is painful things that happened in the past.

A defense mechanism is a psychological method used by individuals, a group of individuals, or even a country to deal with reality and maintain a sense of self-worth. Throughout their lifetimes, healthy people employ a variety of defense mechanisms. When someone overuses their defense mechanism, it becomes pathological, causing a person to become maladaptive/unable to adapt well, affecting their bodily and mental health. The defense mechanism's purpose is to protect the mind/self/ego from anxiety, trauma, and social punishments and to provide a location of "displacement" from situations that cannot to handled. In this study, the researcher wants to discuss using defense mechanism theory.

METHODOLOGY

In order to collect and analyze the data for this study, the researcher used the qualitative method. No numbers are needed to gather and analyze the data because researcher would

evaluate the data qualitatively. Furthermore, in order to conduct the research, the researcher will need to follow specific steps. The researcher begins by preparing the data resources, like finding the film, the script of that movie, and finding any journal related to the topic chosen by the researcher. The second step is for the researcher to watch that movie while reading the movie script., the researcher will read the movie script and watch the movie to find the defense mechanism of the movie's screenplay and the theory of defense mechanisms. After the researcher has read, understood, and watched the movie's script and theory, the researcher identifies the next step: the objective problem. After the researcher gets the data, the researcher continues interpreting the data supporting the theory.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Causes of The Main Character Does Ego Defense Mechanism

Defense mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies to protect a person from anxiety arising from unacceptable thoughts or feelings. According to Freudian theory, defense mechanisms involve distortion in some way so that we can cope with a situation better. In the case of the main character in the film *Shutter Island*, he uses his defense mechanism because of events in his past that hurt and traumatized him. According to Corsini (2002:1019), trauma results from a painful event, while the 'traumatic event or experience' is a damaging event itself. In teddy's case, it can be called trauma because teddy has gone through painful events that he experienced in the past.

Killing many people during World War II

According to Corsini (2002:1019), trauma results from a painful event, while the 'traumatic event or experience' is a damaging event itself. In the film *Shutter Island*, initially Teddy played the role of a US Marshall who was undergoing an investigation into the disappearance of a patient at Ashecliffe Hospital. but as time goes by, Teddy is actually one of the patients at Ashecliffe hospital who was formerly an Army veteran. It can be seen in the following citation:

Teddy: "Patient is highly intelligent, highly delusional decorated army veteran. Present for the Liberation of Dachau. Former US Marshal. Known proclivity for violence. Shows no more remorse for his crime because he denies the crime ever took place..." (Lehane, 2007)

The scene citation above shows the truth that Teddy used to be an army veteran before ending up as a patient at Ashecliffe hospital. The scene above will show the connection between Teddy's trauma and the causes. Basically, trauma occurs when one loses the sense of having a safe place to retreat within or outside oneself to deal with frightening emotions or experiences (Bessel A. van der Kolk, 1987). In Teddy's case, he tries to deal with the fear he has experienced. During World War II, Teddy killed many German soldiers. After that, he considers himself a monster for killing all those innocent people at the camp, significantly influencing what Andrew feels later. He and the American army then brutally slay the remaining German soldier. The horrific sights never left Andrew's mind. We can see the scene when they are at the tomb, but a storm suddenly comes. Then Teddy and Chuck went into a cabin by the grave. It can be seen in the following citation:

Teddy: "when we got through the gates at Dachau, the SS guards surrendered. The kommandant tried to kill himself before we got there, but he botched it. Took him an hour to die. When I went outside, I saw all the bodies on the ground. too many to count. Too many to imagine. so yeah the guards surrendered. we took their guns and we

lined them up. it wasn't warfare. it was a murder. Yeah, and I've—I've had enough of killing”(Lehane, 2007)

In the citation above, Teddy tells chuck while remembering flashbacks of the incident. When he said, "it wasn't war, it was killer," he stated and thought he had committed a heinous thing, namely murder. But in reality, Teddy was doing his job. But deep in his heart, he regretted and regretted the incident. Teddy's actions, which seemed to show his guilt, became the trigger for his trauma. This also provides evidence that one of the triggers for Teddy's trauma was when he felt he had committed homicide while he was carrying out his job.

The Death of his wife

The second cause of his trauma is his regret of not taking his wife Dolores to psychiatrists, which led to her murdering their three children, and Andrew had to kill his wife. After that thing happens, he does not accept that his wife died and he was the cause of her death. He thinks of all the terrible things in his family because he ignored Dolores' mental condition and didn't take her to a psychiatrist even though Dolores repeatedly said strange things to her. This scene is at the last minute of the film. This can be seen from the citation below:

Teddy: “After she tried to kill herself the first time. Dolores told me, she had an insect living inside her brain. She could feel it, clicking across her skull, just pulling the wires, just for fun. She told me that. She told me that, but I didn't listen. I love her so much, you know?”

The citation above show Teddy's regrets that led to tragic events happening in his life. The scene above shows that maybe Teddy's wife has a mental illness, but Teddy doesn't realize it, and Teddy keeps blaming himself for what happened. The way he talk “She told me, but I didn't listen” shows how regrets he is. Another scene shows Teddy's regret for the tragic events in his life. It can be seen in the citation below:

Teddy : “I killed them, Because I didn't get her some help, you know. I kill them.”

The citation above shows how frustrated Tedy is, his regrets and ends up blaming himself for all the tragic things that have happened to him. The way he say “ I killed them” is a form of his regret.

The death of his children death

The third reason triggers the trauma that Teddy feels like the main character in the film shutter island. Trauma can happen to any factor. One of them is the result of painful events that occur in life. It also happens in Teddy's case that the death of his three children is the most traumatizing thing in his life. The deaths of his three children are revealed when he returns home after serving at Dachau. he does not see their children. He also asked his wife, and his wife replied they were at school. Then he approached his wife; her clothes were wet. he saw something floating in the lake behind their house: his children. Teddy seeing three pale logs floatig in the lake. He races for the water, plunging in headfirst, reaching the children's corpses in a few strokes. Teddy feels shocked, then he screams and cries. The following citations depict the conversation.

Teddy : “Oh, my god, no...come on, come on. Please god please no. Please God no.

The citation above shows a scene where Teddy sees his three children floating lifeless in the lake. he began to scream, in shock at what had happened. After that incident, he started to make a living of his imagination and forgot important facts in his real life.

Due to his trauma, he even forgot things about himself. He even forgot that Teddy had children, even though he had two sons and one daughter. It can be seen in the scene when Dr. Cawley tries to remind him of his natural life and ask some questions to Teddy and shows him three photos and saying they are his children. The following citations depict the conversation:

Dr. Cawley : “Your children, Andrew, your children. Simon, Henry”
Teddy : “I never had any children.”

The citation above shows that Andrew forgot that he has children even though Dr. Cawley shows the picture of Andrew's children. Teddy's action that forgot about his children because he can not accept the reality of his children's death. It shows that it was a traumatic event that he wanted to forget.

Ego Defense Mechanism does by the main character of Shutter Island

A traumatic experience is repetitious, timeless, and unspeakable, yet, it is also a literal, contagious, and mummified event (FERYAL, 2014). In Teddy's case, he uses a defense mechanism to face his trauma. Defense mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies used to protect a person from anxiety caused by unacceptable thoughts or feelings. According to Freud, ego defense mechanism theory has the aim of it is to decrease any kinds of fear or trauma.

According to psychoanalytic theory, defense mechanisms are automatic (unconscious) reactions to the fear that the id's desires will overwhelm the ego. Freud believed that a healthy personality was one in which the id's demands are met, but also the super-ego is satisfied in making the person feel proud and not overwhelmed by guilt. The following are the ego defense mechanism shown by Teddy and its evidence in the movie of Shutter Island.

Repression

Repression is an unconscious defense mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious. Anna Freud also called "motivated forgetting" repression not being able to recall a scary situation, person, or event. Ideas that are often repressed are those that would result in feelings of guilt from the superego (Freud, 1966). Repression, according to Feist, is the most basic protective strategy because it involves each other. When the ego is confronted by undesired id impulses, it defends itself by repressing the impulses, or forcing the feelings into unconsciousness. (Dr. Hartono & Boy Soedarmadji, S.PD., 2012)

In this movie, the researcher can find any action the main character does that represents repression as his defense mechanism. Teddy's form of repression is when he buries all memories of his original life and chooses to create his own story, which he believes to be his real life. But some scenes show the form of repression carried out by Teddy. As clearly reflected by the subsequent citation:

Teddy : “So this female prisoner”
Dr. Cawley : “Patient.”
Teddy : “Patient. One Rachel Solando, escape sometime in the last 24 hours”
Dr. Cawley : “Last night between ten and midnight”

The scene above is at the film's beginning, and it is recognizable that Teddy is investigating a missing patient. However, Teddy was one of the patients there. Teddy buried the fact that he was a patient in his subconscious, which could be considered an act of

repression. Another scene that represents repression that Teddy does is when they in into Rachel's rooms and Teddy find a paper. As clearly reflected by the subsequent citation:

Dr. Cawley : "that's definitely Rachel's handwriting. I have no idea what the "law of 4" is, though"
Teddy : "not a psychiatric term?"

In the scene above, Teddy find a paper with teddy finds a piece of paper that says "The law of 4, who is 67?" scene above shows that teddy did not know what the writing meant. But in fact, the report is related to himself. It includes acts of repression where he does not remember things about himself.

Then there is a scene where he interviews patients about Rachel Solando. He also questions them about "Laeddis," who he believes was the cause of his wife's death. As clearly reflected by the subsequent citation:

Teddy : "I just have one more question for you, Mrs. Kearns. Did you ever meet a patient names Andrew Laeddis?"
Mrs. Kearns : "No. Never heard of him"

In the scene above, he finds out about Andrew Laeddis, who he believes was the cause of the apartment fire that killed his wife. Andrew Laeddis is himself. Again, this action can be categorized as repression because Teddy forgot and buried the facts in his real life.

Denial

This denial is one of defense mechanism that arises because the individual cannot accept the existing reality.(Dr. Hartono & Boy Soedarmadji, S.PD., 2012) In Teddy's cases he uses his defense mechanism because he feels uncomfortable or threatened. The first defense mechanism that he does is denial. Teddy/Andrew denies everything that makes him trauma. He denied everything in his life by creating a fictional story and felt as if it was real life. It shows in a scene when Dr. Cawley tries to tell him the truth about his "real life," but Teddy denies that. When DR. Cawley gives his intake about his psychological condition, he reads it. As evidenced by the following citation:

Teddy : "Patient is highly intelligent, highly delusional decorated army veteran... (after he read it, then he says)"

Teddy : "I've enough of this bullshit."

Denial is a defense mechanism proposed by Anna Freud which involves a refusal to accept reality, thus blocking external events from awareness(McLeod, 2020)

Based on that statement, we can see that Teddy's action included in the Denial defense mechanism is because he tried to accept the reality he got from Dr. Cawley. He can not take that he is a patient at Ashecliffe Hospital. In another scene, when Dr. Cawleys shows him "the rule of four," he still denies things that are a game for him. As evidenced by the following citation:

Dr. Cawley : "I'm afraid.I have to. Notice anything these four names in common? Its your rule of four. Andrew what u see?"
Teddy : "If you're done anything to my partner, doctor, that is violation of.."

Dr. Cawley : “Focus Andrew, what u see? The names have the same letters. Edward daniels has exactly the sam 13 letters as adrew laeddis. The same as rachel solando and dolores chanal. The names are anaram for each other.”

Teddy : “Your tactics. They are not gonna work on me.”

In that scene above, Teddy's action is included in the Denial defense mechanism. Because his action fits with the definition of Denial, he always refuses the fact that he heard from Dr. Cawley and states that what Dr.Cawley said was a mere tactic. It is a form of denial.

Projection

Projection is a self-defense mechanism that projects or directs the cause of anxiety in oneself to others. The researcher can find self-defense mechanisms, especially the projection that Teddy does in the shutter island movie. The first projection that Teddy makes is in the scene where Chuck asks if Teddy already has a girlfriend or is married. Teddy replies that he is married, but his wife has died. It is consistent with the following quotation:

Chuck :”Sure. What about you? U got a girl? Married?”

Teddy :” I was. She died”

Chuck : “jesus, boss, I didn’t”

Teddy : “It’s ok. There was a fire in our apartement building, while I was at work.”

In the above Scene, Teddy's action can include a projection defense mechanism because he was direct his causes of anxiety on others, that is "Laeddis," whom he believes has responsibility for his wife's death. He says his wife died from a fire in their apartment building. That is just his projection action. In another scene, he states that the fire was caused by an electrical man in their apartment named 'Laeddis.' The fact His wife is who makes their apartment on firebug. It is consistent with the following quotation:

Dr. Leehan: “Dolores was insane, maniac- depressive, suicidal. You drank, stayed away, ignored what everyone told you. You move to that lake house after she purposely set your city apartment on fire.”

The scene above shows and states that the cause of the fire in Teddy's apartment was not an electrical man but his wife. Teddy's action of projecting things that make him feel uncomfortable is a projection type of defense mechanism. He projection the responsibility for the firebug is Laeddis, but it was his wife doing.

Displacement

The redirection of an impulse (usually aggression) onto a powerless substitute target is known as displacement. The target can be a person or an object that serves as a symbolic replacement. Teddy's form of self-defense mechanism, 'displacement,' can be seen when he relieves his headache by drinking 'aspirin.' The scene demonstrates when they first entered the Aeshecliffe Hospital area and entered Dr. Cawley's room. Then dr. Cawley explained a bit about Rachel and gave a photo of Rachel Solando. Suddenly an image appeared in Teddy's head, a flashback. Teddy blinks his eyes and tries to clear his mind of a glimpse of a picture in the past. It is possible to see it in the following citation.

Teddy : “sorry doctor, u dont happen to have an aspirin, do you?”

Dr. Cawley : “prone to headaches, Marshal?”

Teddy : “sometimes. But today, im little more prone to seasickness.”

Dr. Cawley : “ah, dehydration”

Then Teddy drinks the aspirin given by Dr. Cawley. It's called a displacement action because Dr. Cawley minimized the pain he felt by taking aspirin as a form of defense in him. The researcher also finds Teddy does displacement in another scene, which is in the location where he feels excruciating pain in his head when he takes medicine. It is possible to see it in the following citation.

Dr. Cawley : “Marshal, are you having migraine?”
Teddy : “I’ll be all right“
Chuck : “Come on, come on I got you. Whats wrong with him?”
Dr. Cawley : “Take these marshal, couple of hours, you’ll be as clear as a bell”
Chuck : “Whats wrong with him?”
Dr. Cawley : “He’s having a migraine. Imagine someone sawed open your head, filled it with razors, and shock it as hard as they could. Take thi pills, marshal.”

From the dialogue above, the researcher can conclude that teddy's actions in the scene, including displacement, are teddy's actions of always taking medicine to relieve his headache. It follows the definition of displacement, which means transferring the cause of pain to another object. The object referred to here is medicine that Teddy’s consume.

CONCLUSION

Shutter island is a film directed by Martin Scorsese and adapted from a novel by Dennis Lehane with the same title, Shutter Island. This study aims to find the causes of the trauma of the main character of shutter island and explain how the main character does his defense mechanism to cope with his trauma. In the beginning, Andrew Laeddis is the main character who was treated as one of the patients at Ashecliffe Hospital. He was treated there after experiencing some traumatic things in his life. The traumatic thing is when he killed hundreds of people while serving as a soldier in world war two, the guilt of not taking Dolores to a psychiatrist caused Dolores to kill their three children, and finally, the guilt he felt when he was forced to shoot his wife, Dolores.

The impact of the trauma makes Andrew experience a life of imagination created by himself. His imaginary life includes investigations into the disappearance of one of the patients named Rachel Solando, he and his partner, Chuck Aule, who came to the island. His unconscious mind created a new identity for him and the people around him because it could not withstand the pain of his trauma. As a result, Andrew made his own imaginary life. In that imaginary life, he was Teddy Daniels, a U.S. marshal who came with his partner, Chuck Aule. They came to Aeshecliffe hospital on an island called Shutter Island. He made up the story as if he was investigating the disappearance of one of the patients named Rachel Solando.

After doing this thesis, the researcher can find the cause of Andrew doing his defense mechanism because of the trauma he experienced. Three things caused the trauma: regret that he had killed many German soldiers during the two worlds, his guilt of not taking his wife to a psychiatrist, and finally, the death of his three children, who drowned by his wife in the lake behind their house. He also uses four defense mechanisms to cope with his trauma: denial, displacement, projection, and repression

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