THE PERSONALITY STRUCTURE AND DEFENSE MECHANISM OF NOAH SANDBORN CHARACTER IN *THE BOY NEXT DOOR* FILM

A Thesis
Submitted to Faculty of Adab and Humanities
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Strata One (S1)

GINA NURSHAFARINA
1113026000020

ENGLISH LETTERS DEPARTMENT
LETTERS AND HUMANITIES FACULTY
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY SYARIF HIDAYATULLAH
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ABSTRACT


This thesis aims to observe personality structure of the main character in *The Boy Next Door* (2015) film through psychoanalysis approach related to personality structure, and defense mechanism. This research is using qualitative method and descriptive analysis technique to analyze the psychological problem of the main character after describing the character using character and characterization theory of Petrie W. Dennis and Joseph M. Boggs.

Based on the research finding, the writer concludes that Noah Sandborn as the main character in *The Boy Next Door* film experiences character changing, in particular after he meets Claire Peterson as he sees as his mother’s figure projection. Noah Sandborn’s personality becomes abnormal because the absence of mother’s figure in his life through traumatic experience. Noah’s father had an affair with his secretary, therefore his late mother committed suicide. Due to that traumatic experience, Noah has unbalanced personality structure that makes him has obsession to have Claire Peterson completely. This research found that Noah considers the presence of people around Claire as his barriers in pursuing his desire which makes his ego run defense mechanisms, for instance acting out, displacement, and fantasy to overcome his anxiety and find a way to fulfill his id desire.

**Keyword:** Personality Structure, Defense Mechanism, Psychoanalysis Approach.
APPROVEMENT

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GINA NURSHAFARINA
NIM: 1113026000020

Approved by:

Elve Oktaviyani, M.Hum.
NIP. 1978010032001122002
(Day/Date: Thursday, August, 3, 2017)

ENGLISH LETTERS DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF ADAB AND HUMANITIES
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SYARIF HIDAYATULLAH
JAKARTA
2017
LEGALIZATION

Name : Gina Nurshafarina
NIM : 1113026000020
Title : The Personality Structure and Defense Mechanism of Noah Sandborn Character in The Boy Next Door Film

The thesis entitled above has been defended before the Letters and Humanities Faculty’s Examination Committee on August, 29, 2017. It has already been accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of strata one.

Jakarta, August 29, 2017

Examination Committee

1. Drs. Saefudin, M.Pd (Chair Person)
   19640710 199303 1 006
2. Elve Oktafiyan, M.Hum. (Secretary)
   19781003 200112 2 002
3. Elve Oktafiyan, M.Hum. (Advisor)
   19781003 200112 2 002
4. Inayatul Chusna, M.Hum. (Examiner)
   19780126 200312 2 002
5. Maria Ulfia, M.A., M.Hum. (Examiner)
   19821219 201503 2 002

Signature
Date
19/09/2017
15/09/2017
15/09/2017
12/09/2017
19/09/2017
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which is substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other or diploma of the university or another institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

Jakarta, August 2017

Gina Nurshafarina
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In the name of Allah the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful

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A. Research Background

Film is one of literary works that has been through numerous changes in various aspects, such as the theme, genre, and the film production process itself. Lumiere Louis (1864-1948) and Auguste (1862-1954) also well known as Lumiere Brothers is the pioneer of film industry revolution. Lumiere Brothers successfully released the first motion picture entitled *Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory* on December, 28 1895 in Paris. Moreover, the duration of Lumiere Brothers’ film is only a few seconds and the first showing of this film is only attended thirty people. As the time goes by, film industry is experiencing rapid progress, beginning in 1900’s as the Early Cinematic Origins and The Infancy of Film. One of the famous films in that era is *The Great Train Robbery* by Edwin S. Porter. In 1920, films were showed in the form of black and white and well known as the era of silent movie. Then, in 1927, Warner Bros released the first film with sound entitled *The Jazz Singer*. “The movie presents it’s first spoken words: “Wait a minute, wait a minute, you ain't heard nothin’ yet”” (Christopher 1).

Besides, the improvement of film quality and production, the genres of film are also improving. Today’s films have countless genres, for instance romance, action, horror, science fiction, thriller, etc. Recently, thriller becomes one of popular genres in today’s film industry. Actually, the popularity of thriller film already started in 1920s and the most influential person in introducing thriller film is Alfred
Hitchcock, an English film maker and director. According to Tim Dirks “Alfred Hitchcock is considered the acknowledged auteur master of the thriller suspense genre, manipulating his audience’s fears” (Dirks 1). Hitchcock introduces thriller film through his silent film entitled *The Lodger* in 1927. *The Lodger* tells about the story of a serial killer. It successfully gains immense popularity and good response at that time. *The Lodger* also considered as “The Finest British Film”, as Bioscope Journal on September, 16 1926 asserted “It is possible that this film is the finest British production ever made” (Marshall and Leland 69). Besides *The Lodger* as the first thriller movie with suspense thriller genre, thriller films also have several subgenres, for example, action thriller, political thriller, erotic thriller, religious thriller, science fiction thriller, and psychological thriller.

Nowadays, films start to depict the personality and behavior of character that refers to psychological film and this kind of film is usually presented in the form of thriller. It is usually called Psychological Thriller or psychothriller film genre. According to Sharon “a distinguishing characteristic of a psychological thriller is a marked emphasis on the mental states of its character: their perceptions, thought, and general struggle to grasp reality about death” (Sharon 87-90). The term of psychological thriller introduces in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s through Alfred Hitchcock’s film, *Psycho*. *Psycho* categorizes as horror film, however, Alfred as the producer also focus on the killer’s psychological condition, as Aguado stated “Not only did it present the audience with a killer that was obviously human (albeit psychologically monstrous), but also it spoke loud and clear about (the late 50’s) family as a horrific site of repression” (Aguado 166). Since *Psycho* film genre
is considered as the combination of horror and psychological themes so that psychological thriller film indicates as the special combination of horror, crime, and psychology genres. According to Barbara Klinger in her discussion of Robin Wood’s work, *Psycho*’s film characters are the combination of horror films character in 1970s, but the difference is, the problems are delivered more dramatically in psychological thriller films than horror films (Aguado 166).

Although Psychological Thriller film is the combination between horror, crime, and psychology, but psychological thriller film also has particular characteristics, such as the villain is usually man, the victim is usually woman, then Aguado added “the almost excessively paranoid stress they place on the family as an institution and the presence of a "monstrous" (because mentally deranged) figure, a "psychokiller" besieging the members of the families in these fictions” (Aguado 165). The example of psychological thriller films, such as *Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *American Psycho* (2000), *Shutter Island* (2010), and *The Boy Next Door* (2015) that would like to be the corpus of this research.

*The Boy Next Door* is one of the American psychological thriller films. It was directed by Rob Cohen and written by Barbara Curry and was first released on January 2015. Noah as the main character of the film has psychological problem. At first, Noah Sandborn 19 year old teenager is described as an ordinary man in his age. He is kind, caring, trustworthy, and mature. His character suddenly changes, after he becomes too obsessed with his neighbor, Claire Peterson, a 31 year old woman who is still in divorce process with her husband, Garret. In the beginning, Noah and Claire have a good relationship toward each other since Claire treats Noah
same as she treats her son, Kevin Peterson. However, accidentally, Noah and Claire spend night together and Noah feels that the sexual activity he had with Claire was precious since Noah is obsessed with Claire. Due to his obsession toward Claire, Noah starts to act abusively since he thinks by doing abusive behaviors, he can protect Claire, especially from Garret. For example, Noah follows Claire every day; Noah also broke Garret’s car brake when Garret wants to teach Kevin driving so that Garret and Kevin almost get into car accident. The similar method also applies when Noah kills his own father. Noah stuck in his memory about the death of his mother, because his father has an affair with his secretary.

The psychological problems of main character, Noah Sandborn in *The Boy Next Door* film, can be said as the problem of the film and the psychological problems in this film are different with common psychological thriller films. Based on the explanation above, the writer argues that it is necessary to analyze Noah Sandborn’s character by using Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis theory because this theory is considered as the proper method to analyze the psychological condition of the character.

**B. Research Focus**

According to the background of the study, the writer focuses and limits the research on psychological problems of the main character, Noah Sandborn in *The Boy Next Door* film which will be analyzed with Sigmund Freud’s personality structure and defense mechanism.
C. Research Question

1. How is the character of Noah Sandborn described in the film?

2. How does the psychological condition of Noah Sandborn reflect his structure of personality and defense mechanism according to the theory of Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis?

D. Research Objective

The objective of this research is to explain the character of Noah Sandborn showed in the film, his structure of personality and defense mechanism according to the theory of Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis.

E. Research Significant

Academically, the analysis is to fulfill one of the requirements for strata one degree to English Letters Department, the Faculty of Letters and Humanities of the State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Practically, the writer hopes that the result of this analysis can be useful for those who interests in analyzing film with the same field and give them information or references, especially in understanding Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis Theory. The writer expects this research can provide an interesting explanation about the personality structure and defense mechanism of a character in the film, in particular Noah Sandborn in *The Boy Next Door* film. Furthermore, this analysis expected could enlighten people in considering psychological problems or trauma experience
in the past that can influence their personality. Therefore, people could anticipate and control their behaviors.

F. Research Methodology

The research methodology has some essential aspects of research, such as the method of research, technique of data analysis, the instrument of research, and the unit of analysis.

1. Research Method

The method of this research is qualitative method with descriptive analysis. “Qualitative method sees the correlation between the words and sentence that shaping a certain meaning, and analyze the correlation and experimental” (Farkhan 115). In addition, Merriam states that qualitative method has six types and it can be found in social sciences and applied fields of practice; qualitative case study, critical qualitative research, narrative analysis, phenomenology, ethnography, and grounded theory (Merriam 37). Based on the types of qualitative method, this research is categorized as narrative analysis type.

As the qualitative method, the writer will analyze, describe, and explicate the personality structure and defense mechanism of Noah Sandborn using the Psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud, and finds the answer of the research question through the data analysis and relates it to the theory. The researcher uses two of data sources; the primary source of the data is The Boy Next Door film and the secondary data is taken from other sources that support the data, for instance journals, articles, books, pictures, dialogues, and the scenes in the film.
2. Technique of the Data Analysis

The data analysis technique, which applied in this analysis, is descriptive analysis technique. Descriptive analysis technique organized by describing and explaining the facts founded, then analyzing it to result logical conclusion. The data analysis in this research follows certain steps. First, the writer watches *The Boy Next Door* film carefully and repeatedly then marks the data about Noah Sandborn’s action, dialogue, and appearance, related to his characteristics. Second, the writer will identify the data using character and characterization theory and continued by analyzing the data using Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis approach. Third, explaining the data such as dialogues and pictures from the film by using descriptive analytical method to explain the main character, the psychological problem of the main character based on Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis Theory. Finally, concluding the result of analysis.

3. Research Instrument

A research instrument is a tool that used to gather the data and to determine knowledge attitude and skills (Parahoo 52). The research instrument of qualitative research is the researcher for data collection and analysis. The advantages for the instrument (the researcher) in qualitative research are; he or she can expands their understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, process the data immediately, clarify and summarize the material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unanticipated responses (Merriam 15). The instrument of this research is the writer herself by watching *The Boy Next Door* film, analyzing the scenes or the parts that describe the problems,
collecting the data by writing down some dialogues, taking some snapshots of the scene to support the argument related to the changing of personality structure of the main character, and concluding the result findings. These are done in order to answer the research questions of this thesis.

4. Unit of the Analysis

The unit of analysis that is used in this research is *The Boy Next Door* film that was produced by Jason Blum, directed by Rob Cohen, and written by Barbara Curry. The first release date of the movie is at 23 January 2015 (USA).

5. Research Time and Place

This research begins in March 2017 in Jakarta and accomplished during the academic year 2016-2017 as a thesis in English Letters Department, Letters and Humanity Faculty of State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
CHAPTER II
THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Previous Research

The writer had tried to find the previous research regarding *The Boy Next Door* film, however, there are only several articles and review of the film. Therefore, the writer finds these previous researchers that are related to the writer’s research issue. Among all the previous researchers with the same issues, the writer chooses these two previous researchers since these previous researchers have several similar characteristics with the corpus in this research. For instance, the main characters are mostly adolescents around 15-19 years old, the main characters come from similar family background which are unhappy family, the main characters are very protective toward his mother or the projection of his mother’s figure especially in order to deal with men who has close relationship with his mother, the main characters run similar defense mechanism to overcome their anxiety such as displacement. In addition, family problems and unpleasant feeling in the past are the main factors that cause an imbalance of the main characters personality structure.

The first previous is a research entitled *Oedipus Complex dalam Novel “Yume No Ukihashi” Karya Junichiro* by Saripan in 2008 at Andalas University. This research analyzes Oedipus complex that is experienced by Tadasu as the main character in *Yume No Ukihashi* novel. Tadasu obsesses with his stepmother since his stepmother has similar characteristics with his biological mother. The writer uses psychoanalysis theory to analyze Tadasu’s Oedipus complex, and defense
mechanism concept to analyze Tadasu’s effort in order to deal with his Oedipus complex symptoms.

Furthermore, Tadasu comes from unhappy family so that Tadasu loses sexual contact with his biological mother at phallic psychosexual stage. Due to that reason, Tadasu has abnormal relationship with his stepmother, for instance, Tadasu likes to look at his stepmother’s body, massage her body, and even Tadasu does not want to marry other women except she has similar face and characteristic with his stepmother. However, Tadasu makes efforts to reduce his Oedipus complex symptoms by doing several defense mechanisms, for example, repression, displacement, and projection.

The second previous research is *Oedipus- Kompleks Pada Tokoh Ma Kun Dalam Novel “Tokyo Tawa: Okan To Boku, Tokidoki, Oton” Karya Riri Furanki* that is conducted by Putu Linda Trisnayanti Putrawan in 2014 at Udayana University. Putu Linda as the writer of this research analyzes the Oedipus complex symptoms, the factors that cause Oedipus Complex, and the efforts to overcome Oedipus Complex of fictional character, Ma Kun in *Tokyo Tawa: Okan To Boku, Tokidoki, Oton* novel. She uses psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud, namely psychosexual development stages, and the concept of Oedipus complex. This research demonstrates that Ma Kun as the main character is experiencing Oedipus complex symptoms. It can be proven through these characteristics, such as Ma Kun loves his mother as he loves his girl friend, the jealousy toward his father and other men close to his mother.
From the psychoanalytic perspective, past experiences become the essential factors that cause Ma Kun to experience Oedipus Complex until he grows up as a teenager. For example, the divorce of his parents, terrible relationship between Ma Kun and his father, and the most significant factor is Ma Kun’s mother who spoiled him too much. Those factors make Ma Kun cannot identify his father’s figure perfectly so that Ma Kun wants to own his mother’s love entirely and considers his biological father as a barrier to fulfill his desire toward his mother. Moreover, Ma Kun also had difficulty in order to deal with the obstacles in the next psychosexual development stages.

These previous researches that were conducted by Sunardi and Putu Linda Trisnayanti depict that fictional characters have unique psychological conditions and could be analyzed same as human. These two researchers prove that family role and unpleasant experiences in the past could influence and affect someone’s behavior and personality structure. Family also has an important role in the form of a person’s personality.

Therefore, these two previous researches can be used as the references for this thesis in order to analyze the psychological problem as the main issue of the main character in the corpus of this research that is The Boy Next Door film since the main characters in these two previous researchers have similar psychological issues with this thesis which is obsessed with their mother’s figure projection. Moreover, after the writer analyzes those previous researches, the writer uses psychoanalysis approach by Sigmund Freud to observe the main character psychological problem to reveal the main character’s personality himself.
B. Character Theory

One of the essential elements in film is the character. The role of character in film is very necessary since the story in the film cannot exist without character. Character also has the significant role to make interesting storyline, as Jane stated “characters are important points of reference in the criticism and the analysis of films and also occupy a central position in the production process: film scripts are rejected because one cannot identify oneself with the characters, or they are accepted because they offer good parts of stars” (Eder 7). When people decide to watch film, they would give special attention toward characters of the film. So, characters must have unique and particular traits in order to make the film more attractive. Furthermore, according to the book *The Norton Introduction to Literature* “character is someone who acts, appears, or is referred to as playing a part in literary work” (Beaty 102). Character’s role in film is not only demanded to act but also to have emotional lives toward the events or the other characters in the film. Emotional lives are including emotional response and this emotional response shapes the character to be more trustworthy and understandable for the audience.

The character also has special features that can be analyzed; however it is not easy to analyze the character. Jens Eder asserted “the process of analysis, as rule, follows certain steps: one watches the film or reads the script several times, concentrates on the aspect relating to characters and supplements the resulting impression with additional information” (Eder 14).

After discussing the character, the writer would like to discuss characterization based on *The Art of Watching Film Seventh Edition* (2008) by
Joseph Boggs and Dennis W. Petrie. Characterization is how the character depicted in the film. Characterization also has essential function in order to create the film storyline more fascinating. Therefore, Joseph and Dennis have mentioned eight elements of characterizations, but this research only applies four elements which are compatible for this research, those are characterization through appearance, characterization through dialogue, characterization through external action, and characterization through reactions of other characters.

1. Characterization through Appearance

The most noticeable feature of the characters while appear in the film is their appearance, for instance, their outfits, facial expressions, physical shapes and those aspects affect the audience’s first impression toward the characters. As Joseph and Dennis stated “The minute we see most actors on the screen, we make certain assumptions about them because of their facial features, dress, physical build, and mannerisms and the way they move. Our first visual impression may be proven erroneous as the story progresses, but it is certainly an important means of establishing the character” (Boggs and Petrie 60).

2. Characterization through Dialogue

Dialogues which are delivered by characters in the film can be the supporting aspects to represent the characters behaviors, manners, and emotions. “Their true thoughts, attitudes, and emotions can be revealed in subtle ways through word choices and through the stress, pitch, and pause patterns of their speech. Actors’ use of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and particular dialects (if any) reveals a great deal of their characters’ social and economic level, educational
background, and mental processes” (Boggs and Petrie 61-62). The characters’ grammars, vocabularies, and dialects can be the medium to define their backgrounds.

3. Characterization through External Action

The character’s action in the film becomes the most significant aspect to reveal character’s real personality. As Joseph and Dennis stated,

“There should be a clear relationship between a character and his or her actions; the actions should grow naturally out of the character’s personality. If the motivation of a character’s action is clearly established, the character and the plot become so closely interwoven that they are impossible to separate, and every action that a character takes in some way reflects the quality of his or her particular personality” (Boggs and Petrie 62).

However, not all forms of the actions that can be categorized to reveal a character’s personality. Several films reveal a character’s personality through ordinary action so that this kind of action can be easily understood by the audience. Moreover, one of the efficient characterizations is attained through the small action rather than large action, especially the unimportant ones.

4. Characterization through Reactions of Other Characters

A character’s perspectives toward the other characters usually expose an essential sign of characterization. As Joseph and Petrie stated “Sometimes, a great deal of information about a character is already provided through such means before the character first appears on the screen” (Boggs and Petrie 64). A character’s reaction can be considered as their assumptions to the other characters.

C. Psychoanalysis Theory

Psychoanalysis theory was found by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and was developed in late nineteenth century. To begin with, psychoanalysis is well known
as a medium to cure neurological problems. Psychoanalysis is using therapy method in order to cure a patient who has anxiety or mental disorder. In case of a character’s personality analysis, psychoanalysis theory focus on a person’s unconscious mind since almost conscious act is based on the process in unconscious mind. “Psychoanalysis view personality as the end result of the many forces acting within the individual. The unit study in psychoanalytic theory is thus the life history of a person” (Silverman 326). Besides, a person’s unconscious mind, the individual’s previous life becomes the main important element to be analyzed by Psychoanalysis theory. Psychoanalysis theory also has another function, as Freud stated “Psychoanalysis stands firstly for the investigation of physic processes which otherwise are barely accessible; secondly for a method of treatment of neurotic disorders based on this investigation; thirdly, for a series of psychological concepts acquired [sic!] by this means which gradually from a new scientific discipline” (Claude 109).

Furthermore, the basic concept of psychoanalysis consists of unconscious, preconscious, and conscious. Conscious only has small portion in human’s personality since there is only a little part of a person’s thought, memories, and sensation in conscious awareness. On the other hand, there is preconscious between conscious and unconscious. Preconscious consists of idea, memories, and perceptions that can be easily appear and summon to conscious every time. The last is unconscious, and it has the bigger portion in human’s personality than conscious and preconscious. According to Freud “this is the focus of psychoanalytic theory. Its vast, dark depths are the home of the instinct, those wishes and desires that direct
our behavior” (Schultz 49). *Unconscious* has the major role behind a person’s behavior since it cannot be seen or controlled.

### 1. Structure of Personality

In 1923, Sigmund Freud expands psychological theory by releasing a book entitled *The Ego and The Id*. This book contains Freud’s concept about personality structure of human: *the id, the ego, and superego*. Even though every structure has their own functions, operating rules, mechanisms, and properties, but these structures cannot be separated since each structure relates to another structure, and their contributions also affect human’s behavior. As Hall stated “behavior is nearly always the product of an interaction among these three systems: rarely does one system operate to the exclusion of the other two” (Hall 35).

**a) Id**

Id operates based on pleasure principle, as Yustinus stated “Id works with pleasure principle that always tries to get away from something that makes it uncomfortable. The id ignores and demands to fulfill as soon as possible [. . .] The id does not recognize the morality” (Yustinus 61-62). Id only concerns with satisfying personal desire and Id will use wish fulfillment in order to fulfill that desire, for instance, when a baby is hungry and she cannot stop crying since she does not see food nearby. A baby’s id imagines the food in order to satisfy her id for a while.

Moreover, Id can be considered as the source of human’s personality since Id contains of numerous desires and impulses affect toward a person’s behavior. In order to reduce the tension and gain pleasure, Id has two methods, namely reflex
action and the primary process. Reflex action means, “react automatically to in/externals irritant” (Grant 4) and the examples of reflex, such as, sneezing, blinking, coughing. However, if the needed object is currently unavailable, Id attempts to do the primary process, “imagery production aimed at gratification” (Grant 4). The examples of the primary process are fantasy, dream, and hallucination. In fact, the primary process is not able to reduce the tension so that the second structure of personality, namely ego, will solve this problem.

b) Ego

Ego’s main function is to satisfy the Id’s urges, but Ego’s works based on reality principle. “The reality principle stands in opposition to the pleasure principle, by which the Id operates” (Schultz 50). So, Ego is able to postpone their energy until appropriate situations or needed object appear unlike Id. As Minderop added “the ego has no morality like the id and does not consider the bad and good value in finding a way to fulfilling id’s desire” (Minderop 22). Ego also stands as a mediator between the demands of the id and superego, as Freud stated, “the ego has the task to mediating between the external world and the id. It must seek the compromise between the strivings for immediate gratification of the id and the realities of the external world. The tools which is accomplishes this task of arbitration are attention, perception, the control of motor activity and repression” (Arndt 269).

Freud symbolized the relationship between Id and Ego through a rider on a horse, “The raw, brute power of the horse must be guided, checked, and reined by the rider; otherwise the horse could bolt and run, throwing the rider to the ground” (Schultz 50). Ego cannot be separated with Id because ego gets energy from id. Ego has to obey Id’s demands without disobey reality principle. Furthermore, another
Ego’s function is ego runs defense mechanism. Defense mechanism is a part of psychological mechanism to reduce the anxiety and fear.

c) **Superego**

The third personality structure is superego, “The superego is the fundamental of moral conscience which contains the applicable rules and has an explanation about right and wrong to help the ego holds the desire of id” (Yustinus 67). Based on the statement above, superego personality system is different than id and ego since superego’s work is based on norm and social code. Superego is same as Ego, it is partly conscious and partly unconscious. Superego is obtained from childhood since a person starts to learn about good and bad things at that age through family and culture environment. Through those experiences, it constructs pride and guilt feelings based on those experiences and beliefs that achieved within family and culture.

Superego also has two different parts, namely the *ego ideal* and the *conscience*. Ablongman asserted “Ego Ideal is a person’s pride feeling by doing the right things while conscience is the guilty feelings by doing inappropriate behaviors” (Ablongman 284). The example of ego ideal is when parents give reward to their children since their children do good actions, on the other hand, the example of conscience is when the parents give a punishment because their children are breaking the moral values so that parents teach their children about disallowed behaviors.
2. Defense Mechanism

Defense Mechanism was found by Sigmund Freud through his paper entitled The neuro-psychoses of defense (1894), through this paper, Freud explains that a person is unconsciously doing a mental process to reduce unacceptable feeling. This mental process called “defense”. Moreover, Anna as Freud’s daughter develops the concept of defense mechanism, as Baek asserted,

“In 1936, Anna Freud published The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense. She elaborated upon, refined, and clarified the concept of defense, in relation not only to the theory of psychic conflict but also to the technique of psychoanalysis. She also noted that the unvarying use of a special method of defense, when confronted with a particular instinctual demand” She was the one who constructed a list of these “special methods of defense,” which by now were called "defense mechanisms" (Baek 4).

Anna introduces several kinds of defense mechanisms, for instance, repression, regression, reaction for motion, displacement, projection, isolation, undoing, denial, turning against the self, and reversal.

Defense Mechanism is the ego’s method to reduce or avoid anxiety. “Anxiety is an unpleasant emotional experience similar but not identical to feelings of nervousness, worry, agitation, or panic” (Burger 59). The other function of defense mechanism is to adjust people’s behavior in frustrating situation since Ego has to deal with Id and Superego. As William stated “When the ego is in conflict with the id and superego then the id creates tension and emotional problems, the ego runs defense mechanism to get rid of this tension. This is the way of ego to reduce anxiety” (William 3). Ego has the fundamental role to control the unacceptable feeling caused by id or superego, and to find the solution between the demand of Id and Superego. According to Freud “this conflict is ever present
because the instincts are always pressing for satisfaction (Schultz 61). Instincts and behaviors cannot be separated since human’s behavior comes from instinct so that defense mechanism becomes a helpful method to control human’s behavior in order to create peaceful society as well as ego from unpleasant feeling.

According to Schultz “Although defense mechanisms vary in their specifics, they share two characteristics: (1) they are denials or distortions of reality—necessary ones, but distortions nonetheless, and, (2) they operate unconsciously” (Schultz 61). There are several kinds of defense mechanisms which are used in this research; they are acting-out, displacement, and fantasy. These are the most suitable method to analyze how Noah Sandborn is using defense mechanism in order to reduce his anxiety.

a) Acting-Out

According to Steiner “Acting-out translates disturbing impulses into action so fast that the person escapes feeling or thinking” (Bowin 10). Based on that explanation, it can be concluded that acting-out deals with the anxiety directly without thinking further in executing the action, whether the action breaks superego’s rules or not. For instance, the action can be in the form of a man who kills his friend because his friend intimidates the man about something, the man does not think twice to murder his friend although he knows that murder opposes superego’s rules.

b) Displacement

According to Mussen, Harry, and Kagan “displacement is the kind of defense mechanism that the uncomfortable impulses are attributed to the other
subject, not the true subject” (Musen 517). In order to reduce the anxiety, displacement is channeling the anxiety to a less risking object. Furthermore, the uncomfortable impulses are not only attributed to other subjects, but also to a less threatening object. On the other hand, the less threatening object cannot reduce the tension same as the original object. Once a person starts doing displacement as defense mechanism, that can be the beginning of the other defense mechanisms occur, as Schultz stated “If you are involved in a number of displacements, a reservoir of undischarged tension accumulates, and you will be driven to find new ways of reducing the tensions” (Schultz 54).

The example of displacement is, when a teacher yells at a student, and then a student is afraid to express their hostility for fear or being punished. So, she decides to displace her aggression toward her teacher onto someone else or the other object. Freud noted that “many of ours apparently irrational fears, or phobias, are merely symbolic of displacement” (Burger 61). For instance, a student afraid of her teacher might be displaced to something that symbolically represents her teacher’s figure, such as strong and powerful like eagle.

c) Fantasy

Fantasy can be defined as a defense mechanism in the form of imagination when personal desire cannot be achieved since the real world’s condition become too painful, difficult, and stressful. Furthermore, fantasy can help someone to forget his personal failure, and made him thinks that the circumstances were not bad as they appeared. As Freud stated,

“Freud himself, especially in his central usage, and even more for his immediate followers, phantasies is conceived as imagined fulfillments of frustrated
wishes. Whether they originate in the system conscious or the system preconscious, they are an activity of the ego and are formed according to the principles of the secondary process” (Spillius 361).

Fantasy uses imagination as the medium to reduce the anxiety or unpleasant feeling so that the superego rules are not applicable in this defense mechanism. As Steven asserted “we will argue that fantasy is central to all psychoanalytic work and that inference about the consequences of different meanings or usages of the term distort and exaggerate differences in clinical work” (Steven and Lawrence).

In fact, the uses of defense mechanisms are safety and normal since defense mechanism help to reduce someone’s anxiety and fear. However, if someone uses defense mechanism extremely, it can bring harmful effects toward other people and society. Moreover, based on the character and characterization, and also psychoanalysis theory that the writer explains in this chapter, will be used to reveal Noah Sandborn’s characters and his psychological condition.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter tries to answer the research questions, namely; How is the character of Noah Sandborn described in the film? and How does the psychological condition of Noah Sandborn reflect his structure of personality and defense mechanism according to the theory of Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis? In order to answer these questions, firstly the writer would like to analyze how the main character depicts in The Boy Next Door film using character and characterization theory of Petrie and Boggs. By analyzing the character and characterization, the writer found that the main character suffers psychological problems. Secondly, the writer will apply the psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud to describe the main character’s psychological problems.

By watching carefully and continuously the film, the writer notes and quotes every essential dialogues and monologues and captures every emotions, acts and interaction of the main character with other characters. The quotation of dialogues, monologues, and the picture of emotions, acts, and interaction will be added to this research as the evidence to strengthen the writer’s arguments in answering the research questions above.

To begin this analysis, the writer explains the main character through character and characterization theory of Petrie and Boggs on the passage below.
A. Noah Sandborn’s Character Analysis

Noah Sandborn is identified as the main character that has significant role in the plot. The main character in *The Boy Next Door* film is Noah Sandborn, a 19-years-old teenager who comes from San Bernardino. Noah is a good looking man that shown by his physical appearances; white skin, tall, pointed nose, brown hair, and athletic body shape (Picture 1 and 2).

From the pictures above, as Petrie and Boggs stated, “the most a character appears on the screen, the most people can give assumption to help the film establish the character. It involves their physical appearances, facial feature, dress, manner and the way they move” (Petrie and Boggs 50). Noah lives with his uncle, Bob Sandborn since he is an orphan. His parents died approximately one year ago, his father died in car accident and his mother committed suicide. Noah decides to move from San Bernardino to live with his uncle because Bob needs Noah to take care of him while he wants to get transplant operation.

As a 19 years old teenager, Noah shows his good character. He is depicted as the figure of kind and friendly. He also cares to other people especially his uncle, Bob Sandborn. Even though Noah is still teenager, he sincerely takes care of his uncle who has transplant organ operation (see picture 3).
Furthermore, Noah who has recently moved to Uncle Bob’s house is willing to offer a help to Claire and Kevin as his new neighbor. Noah helps to open Claire and Kevin’s broken garage door although at that time, Noah does not know Claire and Kevin personally since Noah recently just moved to Uncle Bob’s house. Moreover, Noah also offers help to repair Claire’s garage door by buying clutch at a nearly hardware store. It can be proven through the dialogue below.

Noah : I can fix that if you want. I can, uh, take a look at this real quick. Hey, how you doing? I’m Noah.
Kevin : Kevin. Yeah. I don’t know what the issue is. It might be off the track, but …
Noah : Nah. Actually, it’s the clutch. We can get another one at the hardware store if you want. (00:05:10 – 00:06:00)

After Noah helped Claire, he started to interact with Claire and befriend Kevin Peterson, Claire’s son. Noah shows his friendly character when he tries to befriend Kevin so that he can build a good relationship with Kevin. Kevin is depicted as a shy teenager and does not have many friends around him. Noah starts to do many activities with Kevin, for instance, teaching Kevin about automotive (see picture 4), shooting, helping Kevin to get closer with a girl whom Kevin likes.
Those are Noah’s methods to befriend Kevin so that Noah also can build closer relationship with Claire through his close relationship with Kevin. Noah’s methods are successful because the way Noah treats Kevin with sincere attitudes and behaviors, has attracted Claire Peterson to know more about Noah deeply. Therefore, what Noah’s done relieves Claire that Kevin finally has a good friend around him. That can be proven through Claire’s happy expression when she sees Noah interacts with Kevin (see picture 5 below).

However, after Noah sees Garret visits Claire’s house, Noah starts to feel dejected of losing Claire. Since Noah concludes that Claire wants to accept Garret as her husband once again even though Garret cheated with his secretary and left her and Kevin for nine months. Noah’s dejection turns him into possessive towards
Claire then Noah starts to do bad behaviors. Therefore, what Noah did is described his action in order to stay close with Claire and does not lose Claire on his side.

![Picture 6](01:04:10) ![Picture 7](01:04:12)

Picture 6 shows Claire’s car with the silver color, then picture 7 portrays Noah is stalking Claire behind her car after school ends. Noah does not consider that his action is categorized as criminal action because he will do anything to gain his purpose without thinking the risk and in this case is Claire’s safety.

Moreover, Noah interests to Claire grow widely. That situation happens when Claire rejects Kevin’s request for inviting Noah dinner with him and Garret. Noah starts to feel that he is rejected by Claire after Garret comes back to Claire’s life. Claire knows about Noah’s true characteristics from Vicky that Noah is expelled from his previous school because of his abusive behavior. Therefore, Claire does not want Noah to get involve in her life and befriend Kevin again.

In addition, Noah threatens Claire by printing out Claire’s nude photos and patching those photos in Claire’s classroom (see picture 9).
Noah does those actions since he feels unwanted by Claire and he wants to convince Claire that the intimate moment they had together is precious. The reason behind Noah’s decision to spread Claire’s nude photos because Claire starts to avoid Noah so that he wants to attract Claire’s attention. On the other hand, Claire thinks that the moment when she and Noah spent night together was a mistake. Moreover, Noah’s anger starts to explode when Claire calls Garret as her husband, Noah does not like hear Claire says Garret as her husband since Garret had hurt Claire’s feeling by having an affair with his secretary. From Noah’s perspective, those photos are used as the evidences that Claire promises Noah that she does not want to leave him and also as the proof Claire accepts Noah’s presence in her life. On the other hand, Claire considers those things as a threat and dangerous since it can damages her reputation as a teacher and hurts Kevin’s feeling. It can be proven through the dialogue below.

Claire : What did you do in my classroom today?
Noah : You’ve been avoiding me.
Claire : What do you think? This is some kind of game we’re playing here? This is real life. That is my home! Okay. You’re doing things in front of my kid, in front of my husband?
Noah : Your husband. Your fucking cheating, lying husband?
Claire : Okay. What’s your plan? What do you think? What do you think, We’re going to date? We’re going to go on family vacations together? What do you think is going to happen here?
Noah : Here? Nothing. But it’s a big world out there, Claire.
Claire: Oh my God this is crazy.” (Claire tries to get out from Noah’s bedroom).

Noah: No, No, No. Wait, wait, wait. You see that video, and the proof of our love as a threat to this life, but I see it as a promise. For a better one. And more of this will ever see the light of day. If you let me show you what’s possible. Because, Claire, I will never ever gonna let you go.

Claire: (slap Noah’s face).

(01:01:08-01:02:37)

Petrie and Boggs emphasize that what the characters say in the film is one of the sources that can reveal their character. It involves how they say include the stress, pitch, and pause patterns of their speech (50). From the dialogue above, it can be assumed that Noah’s possessive manners are successfully makes Claire afraid to stay close with Noah. That can be seen through Claire’s reaction when she tries to get out from Noah’s bedroom by saying Noah’s assumptions about their relationship is crazy and does not make sense. In Noah’s point of view, the relationship with Claire cannot be obstructed since Noah is confident that he can give Claire a better future which is different from Garret who always hurts Claire’s feeling.

In addition, Noah’s obsession towards Claire becomes uncontrollable. Noah starts to show his manipulative characteristic and abusive behaviors to people around Claire. Noah starts to show manipulative characteristic toward Kevin. Noah manipulates Kevin’s to hate his biological father, Garret. Noah states his own perspective about Garret’s true intention behind Garret’s good attitude to Kevin and Claire. It can be proven through Noah’s dialogue below.

Noah: Like a dinner and a camping trip can just make you forget about how he walked out on you. Yeah, it’s so predictable. A guy in his middle age and suddenly staring death in the face. He wants to feel
alive again. He wants to feel that rush. So, he picks up a younger woman and poof! Whole new life. Then the guilt sets in. Because he basically just left the first kid in the dust. So, he tries to bribe him. With things. Like computers.

(00:34:36-00:35:38)

Noah is successfully befriending Kevin, and as the time goes by, he starts to manipulate Kevin’s perspective about his father. As Petrie and Boggs state, the action that taken by the character is done for a purpose (51), and what Noah did is described his action in order to make Kevin hates Garret as his biological father. That can be seen through Noah’s dialogue toward Kevin, the word kid in the dialog refers to Kevin meanwhile the word A guy in his middle age refers to Garret who tries to build a good relationship again with Claire and Kevin after he left for nine months. Furthermore, Noah is using computers as an example since Garret gave Kevin a computer as a gift. Indirectly, Noah manipulates Kevin’s perspective toward his father by saying that Garret gave computer to Kevin as a bribe. Therefore, what Noah has already done prevent Garret to have good relationship with Claire and Kevin. Noah is successfully manipulating Kevin’s point of view toward his father. It can be proven through Kevin’s rude dialogue to Garret.

Garret: So, what’s up? How’s school?
Kevin: It is what it is.
Claire: Tell him about your computer class. He is learning how to write his own software like father like son.
Garret: That’s cool. We can do some stuff together.
Kevin: I dropped it.
Claire: What?
Kevin: I dropped it. It was boring. Going out for boxing now.
Garret: You are going out for boxing? You do not like boxing!
Kevin: How would you know? How would you know? Seriously, how would you know what I like and what I do not like?
Garret: Am I missing something here?
Kevin: Yeah! Okay, you have been missing it for nine months,
Dad! You just cannot come back in here and expect to pick up, like nothing happened!

Claire : Alright Kevin, that’s enough.
Kevin : No! Mom, he’s gotta hear this! Okay, life is been happening, Dad.

(00:35:55-00:36:42)

The dialogue above proves that Noah is successfully manipulates Kevin’s perspective towards Garret since Kevin acts disrespectful by replying Garret’s question discourteously. Kevin shows his anger towards Garret because Garret suddenly comes back easily without guilt after nine months leaving Claire.

In addition, Noah still makes an attempt to manipulate Kevin’s perspective that Kevin does the proper behavior towards his father by doing disrespectful attitude. Noah convinces Kevin that his behavior is fine. He also tells Kevin to keep Claire away from Garret because Garret is only using her by saying “someone he screws in the meantime”. Because of Noah’s opinion, Kevin’s anger against Garret becomes higher than before. It can be seen through the dialogue below.

Noah : Hey, uh, how was dinner with your dad? Come on, talk to me. Dinner?
Kevin : God, I was a jerk, okay? I feel really bad about it.
Noah : No! No! Dude’ that’s good. It means he knows you’re onto his bullshit. We just have to hope that your mom doesn’t fall for it. Can’t let her, uh, be his meantime girl.
Kevin : What’s that?
Noah : You know, someone he screws in the meantime.
Kevin : Someone he screws in the meantime.

(00:37:05-00:37:43)

Furthermore, Noah also acts abusive manners towards Vicky as Claire’s best friend by kidnapping her (see picture 10). In addition, Noah cannot control his own emotion so that Noah decides to act more offensively by killing Vicky (see
picture 11). The reason behind Noah’s action is Noah sees Vicky as a barrier for him in order to stay close with Claire. Since Vicky cooperates with Claire to avoid Noah from Claire. Therefore, Noah is willing to do criminal actions as long as he can get rid of people who want to separate him from Claire.

In conclusion, after analyzing Noah Sandborn’s character through four ways of characterization theory of Petrie and Boggs, the writer concludes that Noah Sandborn is the major character in *The Boy Next Door* film. As the main character in this film, Noah Sandborn experiences character changing. At first, Noah is depicted has good character, but his personality becomes more brutally when people try to avoid him with Claire Peterson. The further reason behind the changing of Noah’s personality is part of the essential issues that will be analyzed by the writer at the next sub-chapter about Noah’s personality structure.

**B. Noah Sandborn’s Personality Structure**

*The Boy Next Door* film narrates a story about Noah Sandborn who has the psychological problem. The main character Noah Sandborn becomes obsessive with his neighbor, Claire Peterson, 31 years old woman who has one son. Noah is being obsessed with Claire since Noah unconsciously sees Claire as his projection of his mother. He also becomes an aggressive and abusive towards everyone who
will disturb his way in his effort to accomplish his desire which keeps staying close with Claire as his mother’s figure projection. Noah has no doubt to do dangerous activities and attacks someone who tries to avoid Noah from Claire.

As the writer explains previously on the second chapter, in common condition, id, ego, and superego are cooperating to produce a normal behavior of a human. However, this condition does not work towards a man who has the strong desire from id and weak superego so that he cannot control his own ego properly. People who have an imbalance personality structure usually have abnormal behaviors. The same condition also happens to Noah Sandborn who has an imbalance personality structure. According to Feist and Feist, “a man with this type has the id which dominates a weak ego and a feeble superego, preventing the ego from counterbalancing its incessant demands of the id and leaving the person nearly constantly striving for pleasure regardless of what is possible or proper” (Feist and Feist 37).

At the beginning of the film, Noah Sandborn is depicted as 19 years old teenager who has “normal” personality structure since his personality structure works harmoniously so that Noah shows normal behavior as “normal” teenager even though Noah was born in family that is not harmonious. Noah’s father had affair with his secretary, therefore his mother committed suicide. Because of this reason, Noah decided to kill his father and his secretary by breaking his father’s car brake so that his father dead from car accident. After the death of his parents, Noah has disturbance in his personality by showing abusive behaviors in his school since the lack of parents’ role, especially mother figure, in his life through traumatic
experience. Noah’s abusive manners also affect Noah that causes him to be expelled from his school. That can be proven through Vicky’s dialogue as Noah’s vice principal at his new school.

**Vicky**: So, I was looking at your files.
**Noah**: Why?
**Vicky**: I’m a vice principal. It’s my job.
**Noah**: Whatever.
**Vicky**: So, what a surprise I found when we didn’t have your transcripts from your old school, so I called them. Know what they told me?
**Noah**: To mind your own business.
**Vicky**: No! That you were kicked out for disorderly conduct.

(00:48:48-00:48:55)

Moreover, Noah moves from San Bernardino to live with his Uncle, Bob Sandborn since Bob needs Noah to take care of him while he wants to get transplant operation. On the other hand, Noah also needs to start a new chapter in his life by living with his uncle as explained in the dialogue below.

**Kevin**: But, you’re not from around here.
**Noah**: No, San Bernardino. My Uncle, mmhh, actually my Great Uncle, he needed a help, I needed a change, so I figured I’d go back to school here.
**Kevin**: You mean college?
**Noah**: There was this, uh, accident. So, I lost some time. So, I’m gonna finish up at Monroe High.
**Kevin**: That’s where I go. My mom teaches there, actually.

(00:06:30 – 00:06:55)

The dialogue above happens after Noah meets Claire Peterson so that Noah lies to Kevin about the reason he moves from his previous school by using the word *accident*. He does that to stay close with Claire by making friend with Kevin. Therefore, Noah decides to hide his past in San Bernardino in order to show good impression towards Kevin as Claire’s son.
Moreover, Noah shows normal behaviors as “normal” teenager when he meets Claire Peterson for the first time. That can be seen through Noah’s effort to befriend Claire Peterson, a 31 years old woman who lives near Bob Sandborn’s house. At first, Noah helps Claire to repair her broken garage door and since then, Noah makes an attempt to get attention from Claire so that he can build a good relationship with Claire. In addition, Noah tries to do positive behaviors by giving attention to Kevin who is always bullied by his friend, Jason Zimmer (see Picture 12 and 13).

Therefore, Noah tells that incident to Claire, and suddenly, Noah successfully attracts Claire’s attention because Claire starts to feel comfortable with Noah even though at that time, Claire does not know Noah’s character deeply. However, Claire tells Kevin’s bad past experience to Noah comfortably. That can be proven through the dialogue below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noah</th>
<th>Hey, there was a kid at the hardware store giving him a hard time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Jason Zimmer? Uhmm…skater kid, red hair, permanently dumb look on his face?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah</td>
<td>That would be the one. Kept on calling him “The Whiz”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>He actually had an incident a couple of years ago on the playground where he got stung by a bee, and his throat swelled up and he panicked and lost control. Kids can be him cruel especially a kid like Jason Zimmer. But, please, don’t tell I told you. He’d be mortified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah</td>
<td>You can trust me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Claire : (Claire smiles).

(00:08:55-00:09:36)

From the dialogue above, it can be concluded that Noah is successfully fulfills Claire’s expectation through his genuine personality, in particular towards Kevin. It also made Claire becomes more impressed with Noah’s attitude when she accidentally sees Noah, as a teenager, sincerely takes care of his uncle who has transplant organ operation (see picture 14 and 15). That can be seen through Claire’s smile when she sees Noah’s attitude towards Bob.

Furthermore, Claire even ignores Vicky’s opinion about Noah’s personality that Noah seems to have strange personality (see picture 16) and in Vicky’s point of view, Noah’s character is mysterious and difficult to understand (see picture 17 and 18).
Based on picture 16, it can be concluded that, Noah’s efforts to show positive impressions towards Claire are successful since Claire denies Vicky’s judgments about Noah’s personality although they have been being friends for a long time. It is proven that Claire’s affection and protection affect Noah’s behaviors so that Noah can control his behaviors by pretending to show “normal” manners as a teenager in front of Claire. Furthermore, the similar condition also happens when Noah makes an attempt to kill Kevin. Noah can hold his desire to kill Kevin because Claire successfully persuades Noah by praising him that Noah succeeds to change Kevin into a better personality unlike his biological father, Garret. That can be proven through the dialogue below.

Noah : You know, I was going to take Kevin with us. Seems like he’s got too much of his father in him. No, he needs to go.
Claire : No! No . . . . No . . . No!!! He’s not like his father at all. Noah, you’ve taught him. You’ve changed him.
Noah : (He stares at Claire with happy expression). Alright, Alright, then, uh….. He’ll come with us (smile to Claire).
Claire : Yes.
Noah : Form our own family (talking to Garret emotionally).

(01:18:26 – 01:19:00)

The dialogue above emphsizes that Noah can control his possessiveness of Claire completely when she convinces him that he has an essential role in order to make Kevin’s personality better than Garret by saying “Noah, you’ve taught him.”
You’ve changed him”. Noah considered Claire’s statement as an acknowledgement that he successfully becomes a hero in Claire’s life because in Noah’s point of view, Claire’s confession makes Noah considers that his existence is important in Claire’s life. In addition, Claire’s statement can reduce Noah’s anxiety of losing her, that can be proven through Noah reaction with smile on his face therefore he changes his decision to follow Claire’s wish which is to take Kevin with him and Claire. In short, these conditions emphasize that Claire can be considered plays superego role for Noah after he loses mother’s figure in his life since from Noah’s point of view, as a woman, Claire is depicted as a perfect figure through her role as an adult woman, a mother, and a teacher.

On the other hand, Noah’s personality starts to change. It occurs when Claire is being left alone in her house because Kevin is going fishing with her father, Garret. At that night, Noah cannot control his own sexual drive. Freud states that a man’s sexual desire has significant role in order to give pleasure and satisfaction sensation by using the word sexual (Juniati 145). Those sexual desires come from Id, and Noah’s id at that night starts to dominate because Noah’s sexual desires about taking pleasure from Claire cannot be controlled. Therefore, at that night, Noah forces Claire to make love together. As a result, Noah and Claire spend night together (see picture 19). The trigger of that condition happens because of Noah’s desire that is continuously forced to be satisfied immediately. As Yustinus stated “The Id ignores and demands to fulfill as soon as possible [. . .] The Id does not recognize the morality” (Yustinus 62). Ego has the main function to satisfy Noah’s urge, however, as already explained previously, Noah’s desire cannot be controlled
so that id very dominates at that night without cooperating with the superego since id works based on pleasure principle. In the writer’s opinion, sexual activity between Noah and Claire is considered as the form one of Noah’s desire to be close with Claire which has been realized (see picture 19 and 20). Noah makes love with Claire in his bedroom since bedroom is symbolized as the medium to obtain the sexual pleasure and also as the medium to connect to a person’s unconsciousness. As Tony asserted “The bedroom also obviously relates to sexual pleasure, rest; the holy place in which we meet oneself and or another person deeply and passionately [. . .] These arise because the bedroom is a doorway to meeting the unconscious with all its hidden and unmet traumas and their pain and fear” (Crip 1). This circumstance relates to Noah’s intention through the sexual activity he did with Claire.

In addition, Noah considers the sexual activity with Claire as his attempt in order to fulfill his lifelong desire which is to unite with his mother. Noah is making love together with Claire since Noah unconsciously sees Claire as his mother’s figure. Noah unconsciously associates the sexual activity he had with Claire as his effort to return to the safe place in her mother’s figure and in psychoanalysis
concept refers to womb. “Freud conceptualized the desire for the womb as an expression of primary narcissism defined by the wish to be fully taken care of, protected from excessive desire, and provided with a psychic sense of safety outside of an oedipal logic” (qtd. in Silver 415). In addition, sexual activity between Noah and Claire in Noah’s point of view unconsciously, is considered as the medium to rebound with his mother and return to the “womb” which Noah identifies as the place where he belongs, comes from, and also the secure place for him after one year Noah lost mother figure in his life so that Noah is fulfilling his desire through the sexual activity he had with Claire.

According to Ferenczi (1938) in his article entitled *Thallas: A Theory of Genitality* wrote that “coitus reflects men’s desire to return to the mother’s womb, a state of bliss and security” (qtd. in Silver 415). As already explained before, Noah has traumatic experience in the past when his mother who decides to do suicide because her father is having affair with his secretary left him. Noah’s traumatic experience is considered as Noah’s unconsciousness, as Juniati emphasized that a man’s desires that pressed from conscious to unconscious remains in id as long as those desires have not yet realized or transmitted (145). This condition happens in Noah since Noah’s desire to reunite with his mother’s figure that had long been buried since her mother died one year ago. Therefore, Noah does the sexual activity with Claire in order to fulfill his lifelong desire as he unconsciously sees Claire as his mother’s figure.

In short, after Noah meets Claire, his desire is transmitting through the sexual activity with Claire who is considered by Noah as his mother’s figure
projection. Furthermore, Claire also has the same problem with Noah’s late mother namely dishonesty. The issue of dishonesty that is experienced by Noah’s late mother led to his mother commits suicide then left Noah alone. Therefore, Noah does not want similar things to happen to Claire. That can be proven through Noah’s dialogue towards Claire below.

Noah : When I love somebody, I protect them. That’s what heroes do.
Claire : No heroes kill their mother and fathers.
Noah : I would never ever hurt my mother. I loved my mother but she killed herself (Noah closed his eyes while talking about her late mother’s issue). My cheating father and his whore got what they deserved. But hey, I protect people I love. This is all for you.

(01:16:20-01:16:40)

From the dialogue above, it can be concluded that Noah still remembers his traumatic experience about the death of his mother and that experience is still hurting Noah. That can be seen through Noah’s expression when he tells about his late mother (see picture 21 below). Noah close his eyes when he recalls his memory about his late mother. His face expression portrays the combination of sadness and anger because he also automatically remembers his father’s affair with his secretary which is traumatic for him.

![I loved my mother.](image-url)
In addition, Noah called himself as a hero in Claire’s life since Noah thinks that he succeeds to protect Claire from her cheating husband, Garret because Noah sees Claire as a woman who does not deserve to get hurt especially by her own husband. However, Claire says that the sexual activity between her and Noah was a mistake because Claire, as a woman who is older than Noah, is spending night together with a teenager who has the same age as her son. On the contrary, Claire’s disagreement created a sensitive feeling for Noah. It is reflected in Noah’s disappoint face towards Claire’s compunction about the sexual activity she had with Noah (see picture 22). On the other hand, Noah was sensitive because he thinks that sexual activity with Claire is symbolized as the medium to reconnect with his longing mother which Noah unconsciously identifies Claire as his mother’s figure projection.

After Claire’s rejection, Noah starts to feel anxious about losing a mother’s figure for the second time. As the result, Noah starts to show his abusive manners since Noah cannot hold his desire anymore to have Claire completely even though Claire has already rejected him. His trauma about losing his mother figure is what haunt him and changes his personality. His superego cannot work well and his ego
is dominated by the id's desires since Noah’s desire to stay close to Claire as his mother’s figure projection is increasing. That can be proven when Noah traps Claire in Claire’s school restroom in order to satisfy his desire towards Claire (see picture 23 and 24). Noah does not consider about his surroundings even though that accident happens at the school. Since Noah’s desire to reunite with Claire cannot be controlled anymore, and Noah’s ego becomes weak in the situation where there is only Noah and Claire at that time. As Minderop states, “the ego has no morality like the id and does not consider the bad and good value in finding a way to fulfilling id’s desire” (Minderop 22). Noah’s desire forces to be satisfied immediately because id works based on pleasure principle, then Noah had lost his balance of personality structure because his desire is dominating.

Moreover, Noah still makes an attempt to flirt with Claire unhesitatingly by kissing and offering Claire to make love at Claire’s kitchen when Kevin and Garret are gathering together (see picture 25).
Picture 25 (01:00:15)

Picture 25 portrays Garret and Kevin is behind Claire and Noah when Noah tries to kiss Claire at the kitchen. In addition, Noah forces Claire to make love at the kitchen because Noah unconsciously identifies kitchen as a place full of security.¹ Therefore, Noah feels more secured and loved by Claire while doing the sexual activity at the kitchen as Noah sees Claire as his pleasure to feel safe and comfortable. Furthermore, Noah’s ego cannot control the id’s desires at those situations, especially when Noah’s position is close with Claire. This condition occurs because Noah’s id cannot hold energies or desires that want to be satisfied immediately so that he does not consider about his surroundings.

Based on the explanation above, someone’s behavior is influenced by his past or traumatic experience. Therefore, the same condition also happens to Noah Sandborn. Noah grows up to be a teenager without empathy about the abusive behaviors he did and leads an imbalance in his personality structure. The writer can conclude that Noah Sandborn’s personality changes become abnormal as the trauma and anxiety about losing mother figure haunts Noah’s life. Noah develops psychological issue that makes him obsessed to Claire Peterson as his mother’s

¹ As Dr. Carole Lieberman, the MD, Psychiatry, and the Author of Bad Girls: Why Men Love Them & How Good Girls Can Learn Their Secrets book stated “Man is crazy about woman when woman is in the kitchen because he unconsciously associate kitchen with being treated or taken care of”.
figure projection with him all the time. Noah becomes emotional and anxious after Claire starts to avoid him so that Noah’s ego makes some efforts in order to reduce his fear and anxiety by using several defense mechanisms that would be explained in the next sub-chapter.

C. Noah Sandborn’s Defense Mechanism

As has been explained before, Noah Sandborn has an unbalanced personality structure that causes Noah to do abusive behaviors. Noah Sandborn’s personality changes to be abnormal as the trauma about losing mother figure haunts Noah’s life so that he unconsciously sees Claire Peterson as his mother’s figure projection. Moreover, his trauma leads to the emergence of anxieties of losing Claire Peterson. Noah’s ego unconsciously runs defense mechanism when the ego feels threatened by an uncomfortable circumstance that can block the id to fulfill his desire. Noah uses defense mechanism in order to overcome his anxiety. The writer found that there are some defense mechanisms that Noah Sandborn’s uses to shield his ego from anxiety.

a) Acting-Out

Noah Sandborn’s first attempt to reduce his anxiety that is shown in this film is acting out. Noah does abusive action in order to reduce his anxiety, in particular toward people whom Noah sees as barriers to stay close with Claire as his mother’s figure. As Steiner asserted about acting-out “Acting-out translates disturbing impulses into action so fast that the person escapes feeling or thinking” (Bowin 10). Noah does the abusive behaviors brutally without considering the superego rules. In addition, Noah performs acting-out by performing murderous act to Vicky, as
Noah’s school vice principal and Claire’s best friend, and also Garret as Claire’s husband. At first, Noah prepares murderous plan to Garret by damaging Garret’s car brake (see picture 26).

Picture 26 (01:07:48)

Picture 26 portrays that Noah has a file in his computer about how to break Garret’s car brake. This condition occurs when Claire opens Noah’s computer and finds a folder about how to break a car’s brake with same as Garret’s car type. The purpose of Noah damages Garret’s car brake is to inflict a car accident for Garret and Kevin. Therefore, when Garret wants to teach car driving to Kevin, the brake cannot work properly (see picture 27). As the result, they are almost getting into an accident.

Picture 27 (00:58:00)

The trigger for Noah to perform this action is because Noah feels threatened by Garret’s existence since Noah believes that Garret’s presence in Claire’s life as a barrier for him to stay close with Claire. Noah hates Garret since he left Claire and
had affair with his secretary. However, Garret still does not want to divorce Claire. Those circumstances affect Noah recalls about his late father who is also having affair with his secretary and left his mother then his mother commits suicide. Moreover, these conditions also influence Noah to kill Garret through the same method when Noah killed his father and his secretary by breaking his car brake since Garret’s attitude who has affair with his secretary reminds Noah with his late father.

Besides the murderous act towards Garret, Noah also performs murderous act to Vicky as Claire’s best friend (see picture 28). Noah considers Vicky as a threat since Vicky threatened Noah’s desire to stay close with Claire by influencing Claire to avoid Noah. Moreover, Noah feel intimidated since Vicky as Noah’s vice principal has already known about Noah’s background in his previous school, especially about Noah’s abusive manners. Noah’s anxiety becomes unbearable when Vicky cooperates with Claire by pretending to be Claire by driving her car when Noah stalks Claire after school. In addition, those circumstances successfully make Noah upset because he believes that Vicky plays an essential role who is helping Claire by keeping his distance from her. Therefore, Noah decides to kill Vicky at the same time (see picture 29).

Picture 28 (01:13:21)  Picture 29 (01:15:26)
The further explanation about Noah’s decision to kill Vicky can be proven through Noah’s dialogue towards Vicky below.

Noah: See, I’ve got a bit of a temper. There’s no denying that and sometimes, it gets the best of me. Like, when I feel like I’m being bullied. And no one likes to be bullied, Vicky. See, my guess, Vicky, is that, uh, you don’t like to be bullied. I mean, who would? But that’s what you were doing to me today. You and Claire. You were playing a joke. A silly little game. Trying to make me think that you were her so she could do what? something sneaky? Something . . . she’s hiding from me? What was it, Vicky?


Based on Noah’s dialogue to Vicky, it can be concluded that Noah feels disturbed with Vicky who interferes to avoid Noah from Claire. That can be seen through the word *bullied* in that dialogue. Noah admits that he has a big temper and the reality that Vicky helps Claire to run some plan is disturbing Noah. Furthermore, Noah performs murderous act towards Vicky so that Vicky would feel the same as Noah, in this case, is *being bullied* through Noah’s method.

Another reason that causes Noah to kill Vicky is that he does that solely for Claire’s sake while saying that Vicky is not a good friend for her. In fact, Noah feels anxious that he would lose Claire since Vicky knows about Noah’s abusive characters in his previous school. That can be proven through the dialogue between Noah and Claire below.

Claire: You killed Vicky!
Noah: For you. For you, okay? She wasn’t your friend, Claire!
Hey, hey, hey! When I love somebody, I protect them. That’s what heroes do.
Claire: No heroes kill their mothers and fathers!
Noah: I would never ever hurt my mother. I love my mother but she killed herself. I protect people I love. This is all for you.
(01:16:13-01:16:49)
According to the dialogue above, it can be concluded that in Noah’s opinion, the murderous act towards Vicky is awesome action as if he is a hero in Claire’s life. It also becomes evidence that Noah loves Claire as he loves his mother and he is willing to do anything in order to protect Claire. Moreover, the writer thinks that Noah action of acting-out is in the form of murder. His ego is not considering his superego’s conscience as long as he can fulfill his desire to have Claire completely as his mother’s figure projection. Noah kills Vicky and Garret because Noah sees their presence as a threat who can avoid him from Claire as the projection of his mother and also as the process to reduce his anxiety about losing Claire as his mother figure.

b) Displacement

Displacement is the second defense mechanism that Noah uses to shield his ego from anxiety. Noah uses displacement when he cannot express his anger after his desire that want to stay close to Claire is threatened. In this film, the writer found that Noah displaces his emotion through things or other activities, for instance, door, table, and doing boxing movement. This condition occurs when Noah cannot overcome his anxiety towards Claire’s rejection about his perspective regarding the sexual activity between Noah and Claire (see picture 30).

In addition, Claire’s refusal makes Noah’s emotion uncontrollable that it makes his ego produces anxiety. In this circumstance, Noah can still control his ego by displacing his anxiety about Claire’s rejection to the door by hitting it until his hand bleeds (see picture 31 and 32). Noah knows if he puts his anger upon Claire directly, she will stay away and hate him so his ego finds him a way to maintain himself from
his anxiety by transferring his anger through object displacement and in this case, hitting the door until his hand bleeds. As Musen asserted, “displacement itself is one of the defense mechanism that the unpleasant feeling is channeling to the less threatening object” (Musen 517).

Furthermore, Noah is channeling his anger towards Claire through the door by hitting the door because Noah thinks that Claire’s statement is same as a rejection. That can be proven through Noah’s dialogue “God damn it” when he hits the door (see picture 31) until he can release his anger to that rejection so that he hits the door with his fists until bleed (see picture 32). Second, Noah is also transferring his uncomfortable impulses towards Garret by doing a boxing movement when he sees Garret’s car in front of Claire’s house through his bedroom window (picture 33 and 34). As the result, Noah stands in front of a mirror with an angry expression and transfers his anxiety to the table by hitting the table (see picture 35). After that, Noah is doing boxing movement into the air (see picture 36).
Based on the pictures above, Noah is channeling his anxiety towards Garret by hitting the table and doing a boxing movement into the air as if Garret stands in front of him (see picture 35 and 36). This condition categorized as a defense mechanism of displacement because Noah thinks that his position is threatened to be replaced by Garret when he sees Garret’s car in front of Claire’s house. In Noah’s opinion, that circumstance indicates that Garret and Claire are spending time together and Claire gives a second opportunity to Garret as her husband.

In addition, Noah cannot accept the reality about losing Claire which makes his anxiety start to appear. At the beginning, Noah displaces his anxiety about Claire’s rejection by hitting the door until his hand bleeds, then Noah transmits his anger towards Garret by punching the table and doing boxing movements into the air with hatred and emotional expression.
c) Fantasy

In this film, the writer found that Noah is doing fantasy as one of his defense mechanism. At first, this condition happens exactly after Noah is channeling his anger to Garret by doing boxing movement into the air. Once Noah is doing displacement as his defense mechanism, his ego starts to run other defense mechanism and in this case is fantasy. As Schultz stated “If you are involved in a number of displacements, a reservoir of undischarged tension accumulates, and you will be driven to find new ways of reducing the tensions” (Schultz 54). When Noah sees Garret’s car is parked in front of Claire’s house (picture 34), Noah’s anxiety starts to appear and he reduces his anxiety by doing displacement which is punching the table.

On the other hand, Noah’s anxiety about the possibility that Claire can build a relationship for the second time with Garret and left him still cannot be reduced. In order to reduce that anxiety, Noah starts to imagine the sexual activity with Claire he had before (see picture 37 and 38). This condition is categorized as fantasy, as Freud stated “phantasies [sic!] is conceived as imagined fulfillments of frustrated wishes” (Spillius 361).

Picture 37 (00:45:20)  Picture 38 (00:45:15)

As has been explained before in Noah personality structure sub chapter, according to Noah’s perspective, the sexual activity he had with Claire is considered
as the process of reuniting with his mother’s figure. Noah thinks that the sexual activity he had with Claire was meaningful. In addition, that moment associates as his attempt to return to the “womb” since through that moment, he can reunite with Claire as he sees unconsciously as his mother’s figure projection.

In addition, Noah recalls Claire’s voice at that night (see picture 39) and the essential part of that moment as the form of his defense mechanism. Noah performs fantasy as his defense mechanism in order to reduce his anxiety at that time when Garret is spending time together with Claire. This defense mechanism makes Noah forget his anxiety about the possibility that Claire would be reconciled with Garret for a while because that reality is hurtful for Noah. Therefore, Noah starts to recollect the sexual activity with Claire by remembering his intimate moment with her. This is an act of his effort to distract his unpleasant feeling towards the painful reality about Garret who is spending time together with Claire so it would make him think that the circumstance is not as bad as he thinks.

Based on the explanation above, the writer can conclude that there are some efforts from Noah Sandborn’s ego to decrease his fear and anxiety about losing his mother’s figure by using several kinds of defense mechanisms. In order to maintain himself from anxiety, Noah uses three types of defense mechanisms those are, acting-out, displacement, and fantasy. Those defense mechanisms are pushed from
the id’s urgency and force the ego to make an attempt in order to fulfill the id’s urgency even though he has to disobey the social rules.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

*The Boy Next Door* (2015) is a film produced by Blumhouse Productions, Smart Entertainment, and Nuyorican Productions directed by Rob Cohen. *The Boy Next Door* written by Barbara Curry and first released on January 2015. The film tells about 19 year old teenager, Noah Sandborn’s who has abnormal obsession with his neighbor, Claire Peterson, a 31 year old woman. At the beginning of the film, Noah is depicted as a “normal” teenager with good characters, but his personality becomes abnormal and abusive as the trauma and anxiety haunts Noah’s life. In order to answer the research questions, firstly the writer uses character and characterization theory of Petrie W. Dennis and Joseph M. Boggs. By analyzing the character and characterization, the writer found that the main character suffers psychological problems. Secondly, this research applies psychoanalysis approach to describe Noah Sandborn’s psychological problem and personality structure to reveal Noah Sandborn’s personality.

From the explanation in the previous chapter, the writer draws a conclusion that Noah Sandborn as the main character in *The Boy Next Door* film experiences character changing. In the beginning of the film, Noah Sandborn is depicted has an ordinary teenager with good character. He is described as the figure of kind, friendly, and caring. However, Noah Sandborn’s personality becomes abnormal because he lost his mother through the traumatic experience since his father had an
affair with his secretary, therefore his late mother committed suicide. Therefore, Noah develops psychological issue that makes him obsessed Claire Peterson as he sees unconsciously as his mother’s figure projection.

In addition, Noah Sandborn grows up to be a teenager without empathy about the abusive manners he did and leads an imbalance in his personality structure. Noah’s abusive manners are influenced by his past and traumatic experience when he loses his mother. Noah Sanborn’s personality structure is dominated by the id’s desire as the trauma and anxiety about the absence of mother figure in his life haunts Noah’s life. Noah becomes aggressive and anxious after Claire starts to avoid him so that his ego makes an attempt in order to overcome his anxiety.

Furthermore, when Noah’s id faces some obstacles, his ego produces anxiety and runs defense mechanisms to reduce his fear and anxiety. The writer finds that Noah uses three types of defense mechanisms. The first is acting-out; Noah performs acting-out by preparing murderous acts towards Garret as Claire’s husband and Vicky as Claire’s best friend. The trigger Noah performs acting-out to Garret and Vicky because Noah sees their presence as a threat that can separate him from Claire as the projection of his mother. Second displacement; Noah displaces his emotion through things or other activities, for example, door, table, and doing boxing movement. At the beginning, Noah displaces his anxiety about Claire’s rejection by hitting the door until his hand bleeds, then Noah transmits his anger towards Garret by punching the table and doing boxing movements into the air with hatred and emotional expression. The third is fantasy; Noah recalls the intimate
moment he had before with Claire in order to make Noah forget his anxiety about the possibility that Claire would be reconciled with Garret for a while since the reality is painful for Noah.

B. Suggestion

Based on the data that the writer uses in this research that is *The Boy Next Door* film, the writer suggests readers who are interested in doing the same research by using this film as the unit of analysis to apply different theories and approach with the purpose to give different ambience to the research. On the other hand, the writer recommends readers to analyze other psychological issues that occur in this film or analyze Claire Peterson’s personality structure as the female lead in this film. In brief, many theories and point of views are potential to analyze this movie to enrich and value literature.
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX

A. Cover of *The Boy Next Door* Film

![Cover of The Boy Next Door Film](image-url)