



Crying-Laughing: The Case of Arthur in the Movie of *Joker*

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Abstract: Arthur's unresolved problems and many lies make Arthur a psychopathic figure. The purpose of this article is to describe how the main character turns his crying into laughing for expressing madness in *Joker* movie. The theory used by the researcher in this article is the psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). The method used is qualitative research with data collection techniques using documentation techniques, then the data is analyzed using 6 steps with Creswell's theory (2009). The result is found that the deeds performed by the main character in the *Joker*, Arthur Fleck, lead to a defense mechanism, namely Displacement. It reveals the form of causes in traumatic experience in his childhood physically and socially. The trauma lets him respond any triggers by laughing as he kills people, and the symptom shows the reaction of murdering is his own tortured experience imitation to others.

Keywords: Defense-mechanism, Psychoanalysis, Displacement

Abstract: Masalah Arthur yang belum terselesaikan dan banyak kebohongan membuat Arthur menjadi sosok psikopat. Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk menggambarkan bagaimana karakter utama mengubah tangisannya menjadi tawa karena mengekspresikan kegilaan dalam film *Joker*. Teori yang digunakan penulis dalam artikel ini adalah teori psikoanalisis dari Sigmund Freud (1856- 1939). Metode yang digunakan adalah qualitative research dengan teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan teknik dokumentasi, kemudian data dianalisis menggunakan 6 langkah dengan theory Creswell (2009). Hasilnya adalah ditemukan bahwa perbuatan yang dilakukan oleh karakter utama dalam *Joker* yaitu Arthur Fleck, mengarah pada mekanisme pertahanan yaitu Displacement. Ini mengungkapkan bentuk penyebab dalam pengalaman traumatis di masa kecilnya secara fisik dan sosial. Trauma memungkinkan dia merespons pemicu apa pun dengan tertawa saat dia membunuh orang, Dan gejala yang menunjukkan reaksi pembunuhan adalah pengalaman tersiksanya sendiri meniru orang lain.

Kata Kunci: Mekanisme Pertahanan, Psikoanalisis, Displacement

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

Depression appears in many unpredictable representations. Among those who suffered from depression pursue the problem solving by their own ways such as killing. Being a killer relieves disturbance coming from his environment. The one who experiences under pressured a lot will deal with the change personality unconsciously. It is well known as mental illness (Rathus & Greene in Natalia, 2018). It is also reported in Translational Behavioral Medicine that the attack of Virus COVID-19 impacts critical mental illness in America. Researchers in Boston College also report that symptom of mental illness increases as big as 50%, reaching 40% in 2020 amount that increases six times folded since 2019. In accordance with the fact, the arts work, especially movie, dealing with mental illness shows the increasing demand. It makes sense because the mental illness is recently happening. In the respect of research, the researcher is interested to take the phenomenon of mental illness as the topic of discussion in this research.

Along with the development, there are many genres circulating in the community. one of which is the psychological genre. Concerning with mental illness in movie, the production of psychological genre attracts the attention. Mental illness is portrayed in the movie in various ways, many of which are negative and untrue. With such a powerful media, the depiction finally opens up people's views on the diseases that turns out to be more dangerous than it is expectation (Kondo, 2008). Perhaps for those who do not have a similar mental illness in a movie that is shown in theaters, they are being casual. However, for people who have similar problems, it can actually be painful to watch, causing anger and sadness. Many movies with psychological genres with mental illness and it is terrible impacts have become people's favorite shows, including *Black Swan (2010)*, *Gone Girl (2014)*, *Split (2016)*, and *Joker (2019)*. Some of these movies have the same conflict, namely the main character has a mental illness. The analysis that researcher will do is about the mental problems of the Joker. *Joker* is a psychological genre movie, which features a psychopath as the main character, because the mental illness in this movie is unique and interesting. This is evidenced by the main character who is shown to have a mental illness that will affect his life in his performance, namely the clown as his occupation and how laugh a lot as he does criminal.

Joker directed by Todd Phillips is a movie that tells the story about the insane guy. It is casted by an American actor, Joaquin Phoenix, who plays Arthur Fleck with a stage name, Joker. Arthur is described as someone who works as a clown and also works as a comedian. He always laughs excessively to entertain people, but he feels depressed in his life. Set in the city of Ghotam, New Jersey, United States, in 1981, the city is described as a chaotic city. The city inhabits bad people, the difference in social status between the rich and the poor, and the chaos of the political system. Politics is controlled by businessmen and is used to oppress the lower classes, not to support the performance of the Ghotam people. Arthur Fleck once is being laughed at many times and belittled. Finally, he plans for crime until he is well known as Joker. It attracts the curiosity of the researcher that he expresses his deep sadness into laughing. Many interpretations appear. First, laughing is crying at once. Laughing is the transformation of crying because crying is not the problem solving to relieve his pain. Laughing is also the expression of relieving because he succeeds to be somebody in the city. Among the corrupted behaviors of powerful people, he questions who the bad guy really is, his or theirs. Focusing on the meaning of Joker's laughs, the researcher challenges herself to uncover how it turns bitterness into expression of laughing. *Joker* granted many achievements as the evidence that it is popular. This movie discusses a lot about a person's identity in the midst of community and

government polemics. *Joker* managed to become the highest-grossing R-rated movie in the world. As of February 2, 2020, *Joker* has earned \$335 million in the United States and Canada, and \$736.7 million in other regions. When it premiered, the movie with a duration of 122 minutes received a positive response from the market and became the highest-grossing movie so that it became a trending topic. This movie has achieved many achievements, including Best Drama Movie Actor (Joaquin Phoenix) at the Golden Globe Award 2019, Best Director (Todd Phillips), Best Music Director (Hildur Guadnadottir), Best Performance by an Actor In a Leading Role at the 2020 OSCAR event (<https://www.tagar.id/film-joker-raih-4-nominasi-golden-globeawards2019> accessed November 16, 2022), received the Golden Lion award for Best Movie in the Event of the Venezia International Film Festival 2019 (*Joker*) (<https://amp.kontan.co.id/news/filmjoker-sabetpenghargaan-difestivalfilminternasionalvenezia> accessed November 16, 2022), and was the best teaser in the Golden Trailer Award nomination. Based on the data, the popularity of *Joker* is undoubtedly with the awards and achievements is the reason of taking the movie as the object of the study.

Considering the previous studies, it is needed to strengthen the research focus as it is original and is important to be conducted. Desyana and Nandita (2022) examined Esther Greenwood mental disorder in Sylvia Plath's novel *The Bell Jar*. They resulted a feeling disorder, namely physical, psychological, and social symptoms. This is indicated by a body that is easily tired, sensitive, and difficult to interact with other people. It means the changes may come into real as a sign that something is not right in her mental. Meilina and Sutrisno (2020) examined Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) experienced by Kevin in the movie *Split*. They resulted found three symptoms of DID in Kevin, namely depression, mood swings, and psychotics. In addition, DID also has influences on Kevin's life such as Depersonalization (out of body), amnesia and confusion. Arfani (2018) examined the Schizophrenia in The Main Character of *a Beautiful Mind* Movie Directed by Ron Howard. They resulted that there are three types of Schizophrenia in the *A Beautiful Mind* movie, including paranoid Schizophrenia, with hallucinatory and delusional symptoms. Then disorganized Schizophrenia, with symptoms of irregularity of speech and behavior. Lastly there is undifferentiated schizophrenia, with symptoms of lack of interest in the world. To uncover the research focus, the researcher takes theories. Theory of psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud is fitted to analyze how the expression of sadness is presenting in laughing.

Review of Literature

In this section, previous research also conducted research related to this researcher. Research that has been carried out, among others. Elfryda, Rosyidin and Natalia (2018) state that there are three types of anxiety as Amy's mental disorder factors are, realistic, moral, and neurotic anxiety. Amy experiences anxiety because it was her husband who caused Amy to have a mental breakdown. Effects of interference the mentality of the movie is that the story has a different atmosphere, and makes the story more vivid but it became more complicated.

According Aprillia, Andayani and Choirunnisa (2020) define 7 symptoms of antisocial disorder are found in the *Joker* character. The 7 symptoms include; failure to conform to social norms, cunning, impulsive, emotional, aggressive, careless, and irresponsible. This disorder is caused by his childhood trauma. Isrohayati and Widiyanti (2020) state the discovery of primary and secondary symptoms of Schizophrenia that occurred in Sarah. Primary symptoms are associations and ambivalence, while secondary symptoms are hallucinations and delusions. Sarah's mental condition is anxiety disorder due to delusions, stress due to Schizophrenia disorder.

According Chodidjah, Dadan Hidayat, Luspianti (2021) there are 2 types of popular culture based on the theory from Brummet. The two types of popular culture are top down which consists of 8 points, including branded products, luxury stores, shopaholic, credit cards, displays, property, taxis, and gadgets. While the bottom up consists of 2 points, namely boot and coat.

Research Focus and Purpose of The Research

The focus of the problem on this research is intended to make the focus of the problem to be discussed and more in-depth the discussion of the research carried out. Based on the background of the problem, namely how does crying turn into laughing for expressing madness in *Joker*. Regarding the focus of the problem that has been presented, the purpose of this research is to analyzing how crying turns into laughing for expressing madness.

METHOD

In this research, researcher use qualitative research. In this research, data sources were divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data is the movie itself, namely the *Joker* movie (2019). The data is in the form of images. The image is a screenshot of a scene from the movie. Meanwhile, secondary data from, 1) journals used in previous studies, 2) psychoanalysis theory books, books on research methods, 3) from the internet containing awards such as what *Joker movie* won. For data collection techniques in this research, researcher use documentation technique to collect data to gain understanding then be conveyed through descriptive. The data validity, researcher use technique of continuous observation and use reference materials (Guba and Lincoln 1985). For the data analysis, researcher use Creswell (2009), researcher began to detail the data, where the data was visual and then screenshot and give meaning to images that are screenshot and analyzed / processed using a psychoanalysis by Freud. The researcher then provided a detailed description. There were 4 analyses discussed to answer the research questions in sub-chapter A data and analysis. Researcher collected all the scenes where Arthur was crying but laughing in the movie, by capturing the visuals into screenshot. Second, it describes the reasons Arthur crying but laughing. Third, researcher describe the symptoms that appear in Arthur's mental illness. Fourth, the researcher described the name of Arthur's mental illness. The four analyses, describe. Then the results of the third analysis, namely symptoms, researcher found a finding. These findings are then discussed in sub- chapter B, namely finding and discussions. Researcher describes the type of defend mechanism in a paragraph. Then tell whether the results of this research are the same, different, or new compared to previous research. After this, the researcher gives the conclusion of the research.

RESULT

This section is to describe how the main character turns his crying into laughing for expressing madness in *Joker* movie (2019). To analyze it, the researcher needs a psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud (1856- 1939). It will reveal the background, the reason, the symptom, and what mental illness the main character suffers from.

The description will go with the appearance of crying-laughing scene in the movie by capturing the visual into screenshot. The screenshots are data which need to be paraphrased because the screenshots involve the story goes during certain minutes. The paraphrasing is important to go to the analysis and interpretation. This will be sub-chapter A and it will be followed by a finding that proceeds to the discussion part in sub-chapter B.

Display and Analysis

The beginning of this section is crying-laughing scenes to make clear the phenomenon of mental illness suffered by the main character, named Arthur. Arthur's occupation is a clown which is

identified by a laughter-making to send happiness. His performance is funny, cheerful, and clothed in colorful costume. Arthur's choice to be a clown is by reasons, but his daily personal life goes in contrast. The followings are the data in screenshots and paraphrases.



Picture 1. *Arthur at the health department (00:04:21- 00:04:34)*

He is in the department of health. He treats as a patient for past several years. He usually tells the officer what he did and thought. Bullying is the main problem that impacts his stability psychologically. He is laughing in telling his suffering from bullied people instead of crying. When he told the incident, Arthur laughed out loud even though he was crying.

Working as a clown and living in the Ghotam city, with a high crime rate is a bad thing for him, because Arthur often gets bad deeds from his environment. His illness often leads him into situations he does not expect. The following screenshot is the data,



Picture 2. *Arthur is on the bus and his illness arises (00:08:36-00:09:12)*

When Arthur was on the bus and was joking with a child, the boy's mother was angry at Arthur for disturbing her son. Feeling distrusted and anxious, Arthur's illness recurs and he laughs out loud even though he is sad because he was accused of something he did not do.

Arthur's mental illness, which often brought him into situations he did not want, makes him always get negative reaction such as physical abuse. The opposite kind of life proves that his job as a laughing clown is just a mask to cover his sadness as the data,



Picture 3. *Arthur's illness reappears when feeling anxiety (00:30:43- 00:31:34)*



Picture 4. *Arthur is bullied by three wall street workers on the train (00:31:50- 00:32:04)*

On his way home from a show at a children's hospital, Arthur falls into feeling sad. He has fired because he was caught carrying a gun in his performance. Later, on the train, Arthur sees three men flirting with female passengers. He laughs loudly and makes them angry, thinking that Arthur was laughing at him. Arthur asks not to hurt him and explains that he laughed because he had an illness. Yet, they would not listen and attack Arthur.

Arthur, who is always looked down upon by those around him, makes whatever he says seem nonsense and only becomes a joke for them. The reality in Ghotam city which is full of chaos, makes Arthur hates his situation even more so that he wants to turn into someone doing evil. Below shows the data,



Picture 5. *Arthur meets Thomas Wayne (01:06:56- 01:07:05)*

The scene shows Arthur's meeting with Thomas Wayne, a politician who will serve as mayor of Ghotam. Thomas Wayne is the father of Arthur. This statement was obtained from Penny Fleck, Arthur's mother. Knowing this, Arthur really wants to see Thomas Wayne. After meeting him, Arthur tells about both of them, hoping that Thomas Wayne will recognize him as Wayne's son. However, Arthur actually gets a painful act, and gets a statement that he is not Penny Fleck's biological son.

Regarding those data, the researcher needs to declare that the crying-laughing phenomenon simply shows a madness. The main character is sick mentally. This kind of madness seems illness psychologically. Based on Freud's structure of personality (Freud in Haq & Parnaningroem, 2021), the psychological illness comes from the imbalance within one of the personality's structure. It happens because the ego is failed to control the driving force feeling of anxiety. It appears when people do bullying or misunderstanding for what the main character does. Even, he does the right thing turn to be wrong. All causes Arthur in a weak position as a loser. Becoming a loser, he feels into uncertain feeling. It hurts and it needs to resist from the attack of uncertainty. This uncertainty pushes him to defend from the pain. He is so sad and pressured for not showing his sadness, his fear, and his weak performance. He drives to show the opposite expression, smiling and laughing instead of tears. It happens in a second to turn the expression, crying to laughing from which the researcher puts the term crying-laughing in the title of this chapter. So, the real expression should be crying but it appears on reverse, laughing, unconsciously. In regard to Freud's dimension of personality, the attempt of covering the real weakness happens in ego. The outer attack counters the function of ego and the power of outer attack is bigger than the ego. In the normal way, the ego might fail and crying should appear on

the surface face. Yet, it works in the unnormal way by showing defense done by the ego. It is called a defense mechanism (Freud, 1856- 1939). In short, laughing is a form of a defense from not showing weak covering the anxiety.

Regarding to the analysis of laughing as a defense of the ego, the following is the causes. Based on Freud perspective, a person who is angry and feels high anxiety is declared mentally unhealthy. Expressing laughing instead of crying comes from traumatic incidents (Kibtyah et. al, 2022). It is the reason why Arthur has a mental illness.

Arthur's mental illness has existed since he was a child. The process of coming to adult, with an illness is not an easy thing for him. He only lives alone with Penny Fleck, his mother. Penny always calls Arthur "Happy". This is due to Arthur's illness which always laughs even though it is not laughs that expresses happiness. There are various reasons a person has a mental illness, such as traumatic factors, lack of contact with others, divorce, birth defects, and others (Bhandari, 2020) as the data,



Picture 6. News about Arthur's abused childhood (01:14:48- 01:14:52)

The scene shows when Arthur finds out facts about Penny Fleck whom Arthur has always loved very much. It is a news from which the truth is revealed that Penny Fleck is only his adoptive mother. Penny Fleck has been fantasizing about her relationship with Thomas Wayne. She seems also has a mental illness that is delusional. That made Arthur shocked because of all liars.

The traces of the abuse leaves evidences on the body, as the data below,



Picture 7. Arthur recalling the past (01:15:07- 01:15:10)

The scene shows Arthur recalls his childhood sadness. In his memory, Penny Flack talks to her psychologist doctor. Arthur sees the doctor explaining to Penny that Arthur was found inside Penny's dirty apartment. His condition was malnutrition and had many bruises on his body. Penny and her boyfriend physically abused Arthur.

Those two data are evidence the source of Arthur's traumatic moments that cause him suffer from the mental illness, laughing as his defense from his anxiety. In addition, Arthur also finds out the reason he has such syndrome. It is due to his childhood which was often physically abused by his adoptive mother. The physical abuse that Arthur often felt causes damage to the nervous system in his brain, causing great trauma to Arthur Fleck. In short, long term abuses raise last long trauma (Johns Hopkins, 2020). To cope it, Arthur laughs a lot as his defense to hid weakness, crying.

Thinking about the representation of crying-laughing as Arthur's illness mentally and the source of it which is traumatic experience in the childhood, it is necessary to describe the effect of the psychological chaos. It aims to show Arthur's madness. Madness is the researcher choice of word to get more attention that the illness goes far than as it is. The data is described as follows,



Picture 8. Arthur shoots wall street workers inside the train. (00:32:36- 00:32:45)



Picture 9. Arthur shoots wall street workers outside the train. (00:33:46- 00:33:53)

In the two data above, Arthur shoots three male workers inside and outside the train. Previously, Arthur's illness appeared on the train because he felt anxiety when he saw a female passenger being disturbed by the three men. Then Arthur shot the three men, because they had physically abused, so Arthur retaliated. Arthur shoots using a gun he was carrying during a performance at the children's hospital.



Picture 10. Arthur kills his adoptive mother, Penny Fleck (01:21:33- 01:21:40)

In this scene, Arthur kills an old woman he has loved so much, namely Penny Fleck. The feelings of love turned hatred, because Arthur is fed up with tortured. Penny has lied to him all along, that Arthur is not biological son of Penny and Thomas Wayne. He killed Penny when she was hospitalized, using a pillow and smothered her to death.



Picture 11. Arthur kills Randal, his co-worker who is considered a traitor (01:27:51- 01:28:06)

In this scene, it shows when Arthur killed his former co-worker named Randal. Arthur remembers that Randal is *musuh dalam selimut*, because he leaked the secret of Arthur's once carrying a gun while working at a children's hospital, which resulted in Arthur being fired from his job. So, when Arthur knows that Randal and Garry came to his house to offer condolences for the death of his adoptive mother, Penny Flack, Arthur kills Randal with a knife.



Picture 12. Murray Franklin was shot dead on his own live talk show (01:45:11- 01:45:15)

The scene tells when Arthur is invited by Murray Franklin, the presenter of his favorite comedy talk show. Arthur has the opportunity to be a guest star on a famous talk show in Ghotam City. Arthur has previously been disappointed with Murray for showing footage of his joke video clip that became the subject of a joke. He decides to come to the show because he will take revenge. He thinks Murray had embarrassed him. Arthur understands the real purpose of invitation is to insult. Upon arriving at the talk show set, Arthur reveals the fact that he is the ruthless killer on the train from the “Clown Mask Killer”. He is very sad that everyone cared so much of the three workers he had killed just because they were close to famous authorities and wealthy businessmen. He questions what if the dead were someone who had always been looked down upon like Arthur. Do they have the same sympathy?

Those data prove that the trauma of Arthur triggers crimes, murdering enemies. In the perspective of psychoanalysis, (Kurniawan, 2020) explained that the desire for violence has become a basic human nature. Everyone has the potential to do violence against themselves or others. These evidences are also as the form of expressing madness because showing happiness by laughing is not enough. It goes to do crimes, a psychopathic deed.

This is a symptom of the appearance of mental illness in Arthur. Arthur's condition became very bad, eventually bringing about a major change in him towards the negative and detrimental to his environment. A person who has a mental illness is often associated with crime. Symptoms that appear are usually characterized by traits, namely grumpy, often feel sad, cruel, excessive anxiety, depressed, and changes in behavior (Konkel, 2021). The followings are the data emphasizes what Arthur does during committing crimes.



Picture 13. Arthur made a smile from blood (01:51:48- 01:51:55)

The scene shows when Arthur feels he has succeeded in making a big change to the Ghotam city, with the crazy things he does. He expresses happiness by making a fake smile using blood from his mouth. His heroic murders, such as killing a politician, a famous presenter, three workers, make greatly chaotic in the Ghotam city. According to him, turning evil and hurting those who hurt him is a form of satisfaction and happiness in his heart. Arthur's change in behavior is due to the cruelty of the world that has always been unfair to him. Arthur's changes such as the term

“bad people are good people who are always hurt”, and the mental illness he has, is one of the causes of changes in his behavior.

People who have mental illness usually feel excessive anxiety, contradicting from normal people. In *Joker*, Arthur's excessive anxiety is a sign that Arthur has a mental illness, as the data



Picture 14. *Arthur feeling anxiety (01:19:21- 01:19:45)*

In the data above, the scene tells when Arthur finds the fact that he is not the son of Penny Fleck. Penny Fleck is someone who makes Arthur has mental illness. This scene shows Arthur in his apartment alone with feelings of sadness and anxiety that cause him to laugh out loud even though his feelings are very sad, after finding a fact that broke his heart. Succeed to find the fact that Penny had been lying to him all along, his feelings of anger, sadness, and hurt became high anxiety.

Often feeling sad is the symptom that signals mental illness in humans. This condition usually occurs when getting a painful fact. In the *Joker* movie, Arthur often feels sad causing high anxiety. The following data shows evidence,



Picture 15. *Arthur playing with children (00:08:07- 00:08:15)*

The scene shows when Arthur is on his way home from the health department, he is silent, daydreaming, anxious, and sad thinking about the problems he has. Then he saw a little boy and asked him to joke with the joke he made, so that the little boy laughed happily.

Arthur's symptoms are the same as those mentioned in psychoanalysis theory, where it is said that unhealthy personalities include irritability, sadness, lying, being cruel, excessive anxiety (Yusuf in Saifullah, 2018). Such a symptom exists in Arthur, when he feels sadness. In the scene, it shows a move away from negative emotions that make Arthur silent because of sadness and anxiety thinking about the problems that occur in his life. But he met a child, then Arthur reduced anxiety by venting to a child in front of Arthur, by inviting a child to play which he felt did not disturb his comfort. Here we see a mechanical process in the form of energy transfer carried out by Arthur and transferred to a child.

Another symptom that indicates an unhealthy personality is cruelty. Usually people like this often do dangerous things, not only to themselves but also to their surroundings. So, the actions he did harmed many others. The following data shows evidence,



Picture 16. *Arthur in a police car (01:47:34- 02:01:49)*

This scene tells when Arthur in a police car. Arthur has arrest for killing a presenter of a famous comedy talk show in Ghotam City named Murray Franklin while live at the event. Before Arthur has arrest, he also admits that he has kill the three men on the train, then his adoptive mother in the hospital, and kill his friend named Randal in the apartment. This statement causes Arthur to be arrest by the police. Arthur feels satisfy and proud when can makes a chaotic in the Ghotam city.

Freud's psychoanalysis perspective states that being cruel is also a sign of an unhealthy personality (Yusuf in Saifullah, 2018). It is clear that Arthur behaves under the unconscious and being the cause of trouble. He is being evil by destroying, killing, and causing Ghotam city chaos. Arthur becomes aggressive by attacking someone who makes him feel high anxiety which makes his illness appear. Arthur had done something wrong, though he thinks he is doing good. In addition to disturbing others, he makes himself free to react the triggers banished. It is Arthur's justice.

Using the theory of psychoanalysis from Sigmund Freud, the researcher finds that Arthur's deed lead to a defense mechanism. A defense mechanism is unconscious strategy that humans use to reduce anxiety caused by unacceptable and potentially harmful stimuli, so that the individual feels good again (Freud in The Neuro- Psychoses of Defence, 1894). To come to the decision, it needs the state of being which is crying-laughing phenomenon, the impact of it which is committing crime, and the symptom such as fast response to the insults that trigger his anxiety. Such symptoms diagnose that Arthur suffers from the *Displacement* defense mechanism. This is the finding.

DISCUSSION

The following is the discussion addressing to displacement from other sources such as theory and scientific writings studying defense mechanism. Displacement is one of 10 types of defense mechanisms. Displacement is an individual's strategy to reduce anxiety in themselves by transferring a negative emotion in themselves to other objects (Freud in S. Hall, 1954). Displacement has characteristics, including; venting emotions to other people / objects that do not like to disturb others, cause problems, damage, and if bad actions continue to be done will get a bad response (Minderop, 2016). Neisya & Karindrati (2022) supports it that displacement is a safe defense mechanism for the ego when the individual is unable to express his disappointment.

The characteristics of this mechanism are the same as those carried out by the main character in the *Joker* movie, Arthur Fleck. To mention others, it is also such as Happy Gilmore in *Happy Gilmore Movie* and Christopher McCandless in *Into the Wild* (Siregar, Rusnandar., et al., 2022; Neisya & Karindrati, 2022). Displacement is triggered by internal conflicts and external conflicts. Internal conflicts relate to psychological disturbance, while external refers to physical and social abuses. All of them leads to a trauma.

Whatever experiences, especially bad ones, involve memories lied in id. When the outer circumstance meets bad memories in id, it will emerge nerves. This kind of nerve is known as anxiety sent to ego where the reaction comes to the surface. It should be normal reaction, but it appears in

contrast. The emerging reaction shown by the ego may be vary, one of it is displacement. It is in line with Minderop (2016) that displacement happens as a person displaces his emotion to other objects out of control. Displacement tends to be the weird manifestation. It depends on the inner drives fitted to such as cursing a ball or laughing out loud without reasons but a big sadness.

CONCLUSION

The illness grows as the reaction of depressed memories in id such as physical abuse by beloved one. It lets the psychological disturbance in Arthur's deep suffers which is exposed unconsciously by the ego in the form of laughing. Laughing is a covered his crying and displaced to object, people he killed. This is a bad trauma expressing in a bad impact for his surroundings. Arthur displays a mechanism as his defense to cure himself from mental illness. This defense mechanism of displacement occurs when a person feels tense anxiety and he does reactions to find safe.

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