



Psychological Aspects of the Main Character in A Man Called Otto Movie (2022)

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Abstract. *This research aims to analyze the psychological aspects of the main character, Otto Anderson, in the movie A Man Called Otto (2022), using Bernhardt's (1953) theory of psychology. The study identifies five key aspects of human motivation reflected in Otto's character: appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes, and social motives. This research uses a qualitative method and applies descriptive analysis to examine the character's psychological behavior. Data were collected using the documentation method by selecting specific scenes from the film and classifying them based on Bernhardt's categories. The analysis reveals that Otto's behavior is deeply influenced by his psychological state, especially in response to the loss of his wife. Each psychological aspect demonstrates how his internal motivations are shaped by grief and gradually shift toward emotional healing and renewed engagement with others. This study contributes to the understanding of character development through psychological analysis in film narratives.*

Keywords: Main Character; Movie; Psychological Aspect.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis aspek psikologis dari tokoh utama, Otto Anderson, dalam film *A Man Called Otto* (2022), dengan menggunakan teori psikologi dari Bernhardt (1953). Studi ini mengidentifikasi lima aspek utama motivasi manusia yang tercermin dalam karakter Otto: *appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes*, dan *social motives*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan analisis deskriptif untuk menelaah perilaku psikologis tokoh. Data dikumpulkan dengan metode dokumentasi melalui pemilihan adegan tertentu dari film dan mengklasifikasikannya berdasarkan kategori teori Bernhardt. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa perilaku Otto sangat dipengaruhi oleh kondisi psikologisnya, terutama sebagai respons terhadap kehilangan istrinya. Setiap aspek psikologis memperlihatkan bagaimana motivasi internalnya terbentuk oleh rasa duka dan secara bertahap berubah ke arah pemulihan emosional dan keterlibatan sosial yang baru. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam memahami perkembangan karakter melalui pendekatan psikologis dalam narasi film.

Kata Kunci: Aspek Psikologi; Film; Pemeran Utama.

1. INTRODUCTION

Film is a form of modern literary work that not only entertains but also delivers moral, social, and psychological messages through its narrative and characters. In film studies, characters serve as the core element that reflects the complexity of human behavior and emotional experiences. Through a psychological lens, viewers can gain deeper insights into how trauma, grief, desires, and motivation shape a character's actions and personality.

A Man Called Otto (2022), directed by Marc Forster, presents a compelling psychological journey through its main character, Otto Anderson. As a widower who is deeply affected by the loss of his wife, Otto initially isolates himself from the world and struggles with emotional detachment. However, throughout the narrative, his interactions with neighbors and

renewed sense of purpose highlight a gradual emotional transformation. Otto's experience offers a realistic portrayal of psychological grief, healing, and the significance of human connection.

This study focuses on analyzing the psychological aspects of Otto's character using the theory of psychology proposed by Bernhardt (1953). Bernhardt categorizes human motivation into five major components: appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes, and social motives. These aspects serve as the framework for understanding how internal mental and emotional states influence behavior. Unlike previous research that tends to emphasize internal conflict or trauma, this study aims to provide a more structured psychological analysis using a comprehensive theoretical model. By applying Bernhardt's categories, the research identifies specific psychological motivations that define Otto's character and emotional development throughout the film.

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the psychological aspects of Otto Anderson based on Bernhardt's theory. This research is expected to contribute to the study of character psychology in narrative films and provide a better understanding of how human motivation and emotional complexity are represented in cinematic storytelling.

2. THEORY

Psychological analysis in literary studies offers a deeper understanding of characters' inner experiences, emotional conflicts, and behavioral patterns. In the context of film, characters are often shaped by psychological conditions that reflect real human experiences. The study of a character's mental state allows the audience to explore how grief, trauma, desire, and motivation affect personal behavior and decision-making.

This research applies the psychological theory proposed by Bernhardt (1953), which emphasizes the role of motivation and attitudes in shaping human behavior. Bernhardt categorizes psychological aspects into five types: appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes, and social motives. These five components interact to form the psychological foundation of an individual and are influenced by both internal and external factors.

1. **Appetites** are biological needs such as hunger, thirst, sleep, and physical comfort. When unfulfilled, these needs influence behavior until they are satisfied.
2. **Wants** refer to personal desires and ambitions that go beyond survival, shaped by life experiences, preferences, and values.
3. **Emotions** are spontaneous and intense reactions to certain situations, including anger, fear, joy, or sadness. These reactions can significantly influence decision-making.

4. **Feelings and Attitudes** are longer-lasting emotional states and consistent perspectives toward people or events, influenced by past experiences and emotional interpretations.
5. **Social Motives** include the desire for social approval, belonging, and achievement. They also reflect tendencies such as self-assertion (the need to succeed) and self-submission (the tendency to conform).

Bernhardt's framework provides a comprehensive lens through which to analyze the psychological motivations of fictional characters. In this study, each of the five aspects is used to interpret the psychological condition of Otto Anderson in *A Man Called Otto*, with a focus on how these aspects manifest through his actions, dialogue, and development throughout the film.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research utilized a documentation method combined with a note-taking technique. The study employed a qualitative method with descriptive analysis to interpret the data based on Bernhardt's (1953) psychological theory, which includes five aspects: appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes, and social motives. Triangulation was applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the data through a process of check, re-check, and cross-check. The findings were presented informally, using descriptive explanations in narrative form. As suggested by Sudaryanto (1993), this method allows the analysis to be delivered in a clear and accessible way for readers to understand the psychological dynamics of the character.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Appetites

Data 1:

00:44:37 – 00:44:51

Sonya : Why didn't you get an entrée?

Otto : **I ate at home.**

Sonya : Why?

Otto : So you could order whatever you wanted.

This scene demonstrates Otto's basic biological need hunger, being voluntarily satisfied beforehand, allowing him to prioritize someone else's comfort. According to Bernhardt (1953), appetites are physical urges such as hunger or rest, which motivate behavior until the need is fulfilled. Otto's decision to eat at home before the dinner date shows that his appetite has already been addressed, which in turn enables him to focus on Sonya's needs instead. This act,

though simple, reflects emotional maturity and care rooted in a stable psychological state regarding his basic needs.

Wants

Data 2:

01:21:35 – 01:22:03

Marisol : When my father died, my mother, she stopped living.

Otto : Stop talking! Stop it.

Marisol : Okay! Don't yell at me.

Otto : Why can't people mind their own business? Idiots. Interrupting me at every turn. The more they babble, the more they drown out the memory of her voice. **I don't want to clear Sonya from my life. She was everything. There was nothing before her, and nothing after!**

This moment clearly represents Otto's deep *wants*, his emotional desire to hold on to the memory of his late wife, Sonya. Bernhardt (1953) states that wants are personal, emotionally charged desires that go beyond physical needs. Otto's words, "I don't want to clear Sonya from my life," reflect his strong psychological attachment and refusal to move on. His internal motivation is to preserve her presence, showing how his psychological state is shaped by an unfulfilled emotional need that continues to dominate his thoughts and behavior.

Emotions

Data 3:

01:06:47 – 01:07:05

Otto : **What is wrong with you? She's learning how to drive.**

Nick : Calm down, old man.

Otto : **I'm not your old man! You son of a bitch! If you honk that horn one more time, it'll be the last thing you do. You hear me?**

This outburst illustrates Otto's intense emotional reaction, anger. According to Bernhardt (1953), emotions are powerful and often unpredictable, influencing how a person behaves in moments of stress or confrontation. Otto's aggressive response is disproportionate to the situation, which suggests that his anger is not only directed at the driver but also rooted in deeper emotional pain and unresolved grief. His emotional instability shows how suppressed feelings can erupt unexpectedly, impacting how he interacts with others.

Feelings and Attitudes

Data 4:

00:25:03 – 00:25:05

Otto : **Nothing works when you're not home.**

This line, spoken quietly at his late wife's grave, represents Otto's persistent emotional state and negative attitude toward life. Bernhardt (1953) explains that feelings are long-lasting emotional responses, while attitudes are consistent reactions shaped by those feelings. Otto's despair and sense of meaninglessness after Sonya's death show how his emotions have shaped a cynical outlook on life. His feelings of emptiness directly influence his behavior, leading to social withdrawal and hopelessness.

Social Motives

Data 5:

00:46:32 – 00:46:41

Marisol : Tommy is in the hospital, and he may be dying as we speak. So, are you gonna drive me to the hospital or are you gonna make me take a bus?

Otto : **I will drive you to the hospital.**

Marisol : Thank you.

This data reflects Otto's *social motive*, particularly his tendency toward *self-submission*. According to Bernhardt (1953), social motives involve the need for affiliation, with behaviors driven by either self-assertion or self-submission. Otto's quick decision to help Marisol shows his willingness to support others despite his emotional state. This moment indicates a shift in Otto's psychological condition, from isolation to social involvement. His response reveals a growing empathy and a renewed connection with others, marking progress in his emotional healing.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study has analyzed the psychological aspects of the main character, Otto Anderson, in the film *A Man Called Otto* (2022), using the theoretical framework of Bernhardt (1953). The findings demonstrate that Otto's behavior and personality are significantly shaped by five psychological aspects: appetites, wants, emotions, feelings and attitudes, and social motives. Each of these aspects reflects his internal struggles, primarily rooted in the grief of losing his wife. Through selected data, the study reveals that Otto's psychological condition evolves throughout the narrative. His initial state of emotional detachment, bitterness, and

social withdrawal gradually shifts as he begins to reconnect with his environment and the people around him. This transformation illustrates how psychological motivation is intricately tied to human behavior and social reintegration.

This research contributes to the field of literary and film studies by applying psychological theory to character analysis in cinematic narratives. It highlights the value of understanding character psychology in interpreting themes such as grief, loneliness, healing, and human connection. Further studies may explore more diverse character analyses or apply different psychological frameworks to other narrative genres. It is also recommended that future research analyze supporting characters or broader social contexts in films to enrich the understanding of psychological representation in visual storytelling.

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