

BETWEEN REASON AND RESISTANCE: FREUDIAN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FEMINIST IDENTITY OF HERMIONE GRANGER IN *HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS* – PART 2

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Diterima: 20/8/2026; Direvisi: 3/9/2026; Diterbitkan: 7/9/2026

ABSTRAK

Representasi perempuan dalam sinema fantasi populer kerap ditempatkan dalam posisi subordinat dan sekadar pelengkap narasi kepahlawanan maskulin. Karakter Hermione Granger dalam film *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (2011) mendobrak stereotip tersebut melalui perpaduan ketahanan psikologis dan otoritas intelektual. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis struktur kepribadian (*id*, *ego*, dan *superego*) serta mekanisme pertahanan diri Hermione Granger, sekaligus mengkaji bagaimana dinamika psikologis tersebut mengonstruksi agensi feminisnya dalam narasi yang didominasi laki-laki. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik dokumentasi dan observasi audiovisual terhadap adegan, dialog, dan tindakan karakter yang relevan dalam film. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *ego* Hermione berperan dominan dalam memediasi dorongan instingtual (*id*) dan tuntutan moral (*superego*), memungkinkannya mengambil keputusan rasional dan strategis di bawah tekanan ekstrem. Ketahanan psikologisnya diperkuat oleh penggunaan mekanisme pertahanan diri adaptif, meliputi rasionalisasi, supresi, intelektualisasi, dan pemindahan (*displacement*). Dari perspektif feminis, kematangan psikologis tersebut membentuk agensi, kemandirian berpikir, dan kepemimpinan moral yang menantang stereotip kelemahan emosional perempuan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Hermione Granger merepresentasikan bentuk kepahlawanan feminis yang berakar pada kematangan psikologis, pertimbangan etis, dan agensi rasional.

Kata Kunci: Analisis Karakter Film, *Id*, *Ego*, dan *Superego*, Kritik Sastra Feminis, Mekanisme Pertahanan Diri, Psikoanalisis Freud, Hermione Granger

ABSTRACT

The representation of women in popular fantasy cinema has frequently been relegated to subordinate positions, serving merely as secondary figures within male-dominated heroic narratives. The character of Hermione Granger in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (2011) disrupts these conventional tropes through her psychological resilience and intellectual authority. This study aims to analyze Hermione Granger's personality structure (*id*, *ego*, and *superego*) and defense mechanisms, while examining how these psychological dynamics construct her feminist agency in a predominantly male-centered narrative. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through audiovisual observation and textual documentation of selected scenes, dialogues, and character actions from the film. The findings reveal that Hermione's *ego* plays a dominant mediating role between instinctual drives (*id*) and moral imperatives (*superego*), enabling rational and strategic decision-making under extreme

conflict. Her psychological resilience is reinforced by adaptive defense mechanisms, including rationalization, suppression, intellectualization, and displacement. From a feminist perspective, this psychological maturity fosters autonomy, intellectual authority, and ethical leadership that challenge traditional stereotypes of female emotional vulnerability. This study concludes that Hermione Granger embodies a model of feminist heroism grounded in psychological balance, ethical responsibility, and rational agency.

Keywords: *Defense Mechanisms, Feminist Literary Criticism, Film Character Analysis, Freudian Psychoanalysis, Hermione Granger, Id, Ego, and Superego*

INTRODUCTION

The film *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (Yates, 2011) represents the dramatic climax of the *Harry Potter* cinematic series, depicting intense moral dilemmas, existential threats, and the ultimate psychological development of its protagonists. Within popular culture, fantasy films often serve as cultural arenas where power dynamics, ethical choices, and gender representations are negotiated. While traditional heroic cinema tends to marginalize female characters into passive or secondary roles, Hermione Granger emerges as a central figure whose intellect, emotional endurance, and moral discernment directly govern the narrative progression. Her character operates not merely as a supportive companion, but as an indispensable agent who actively redefines the nature of heroism in a patriarchal fantasy setting.

To comprehend Hermione's internal development, this study applies Sigmund Freud's structural model of personality, comprising the *id*, *ego*, and *superego* (Busch & Delgado, 2024; Gabbard et al., 2025; Sulloway, 1992). The *id* encapsulates raw instinctual drives, basic survival impulses, and primal fears; the *ego* functions as the conscious mediator operating under the reality principle; and the *superego* represents internalized societal ethics and moral conscience (Ikke Puspitasari et al., 2026; Ismaya et al., 2026; Mamgain, 2026). In high-pressure situations, Hermione exhibits complex negotiations among these psychological components, maintaining cognitive composure even when personal vulnerability and instinctual terror threaten to overwhelm her.

Complementing this structural model, Freud and subsequent psychoanalysts conceptualize defense mechanisms as unconscious and semi-conscious ego-protective operations designed to mitigate acute anxiety (Cramer, 2012; Freud, 1987; Vaillant, 1992). In literary and cinematic analysis, psychological defense strategies—such as rationalization, suppression, intellectualization, and displacement—serve as valuable frameworks for examining how characters adapt to traumatic and hostile environments (Tyson, 2006). Hermione's reliance on structured knowledge, spellbooks, and tactical calculations illustrates these defense mechanisms in action, functioning as cognitive buffers that preserve psychological equilibrium amidst life-threatening chaos.

In parallel with psychoanalytic inquiry, feminist literary criticism provides the critical framework necessary to evaluate Hermione's positioning within the gendered hierarchy of the narrative. Simone de Beauvoir (2018) articulates that women have historically been designated as "the Other," positioned as subordinate and emotionally volatile in contrast to rational male subjects. Liberal feminist perspectives challenge this systemic marginalization by championing intellectual autonomy, equal agency, and active participation in sociopolitical decision-making (Tong, 2009). Hermione's character directly destabilizes patriarchal conventions by demonstrating superior intellectual prowess, strategic leadership, and unwavering moral fortitude (Tyson, 2006).

Extensive scholarship on the *Harry Potter* franchise has investigated themes such as moral pedagogy (Mishra & Ghosh, 2022), adolescent interpersonal dynamics (Falcón Díaz-Aguado & Díaz-Aguado, 2014), institutional power relations (Tiffany & Thorne, 2018), and theological depictions of good and evil (Winters, 2024). In gender studies, Hermione has frequently been discussed as an icon of female empowerment (Hakim et al., 2025). Conversely, psychoanalytic readings of the franchise have predominantly concentrated on Harry Potter's trauma (Fuadah & Kamilah, 2023) or the psychopathology of Lord Voldemort (Fitri, 2018). However, existing research tends to treat psychoanalytic and feminist methodologies as separate inquiries, resulting in an analytical gap regarding how internal psychological maturity actively constructs feminist agency.

To address this gap, this study offers an interdisciplinary framework combining Freudian psychoanalysis and feminist theory. This study aims to analyze the character of Hermione Granger in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (Yates, 2011) by examining the structural interplay of *id*, *ego*, and *superego*, along with her defense mechanisms, and interpreting how these psychological dynamics construct her feminist agency, autonomy, and resistance within a male-centered heroic narrative.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive textual design to systematically analyze the psychological development and character agency of Hermione Granger in the motion picture *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yates, 2011). Treating cinematic artifacts as multimodal cultural texts, the research analyzes character behaviors, spoken dialogues, gestural expressions, and dramatic interactions without imposing statistical manipulations. The primary corpus of data was gathered from the feature film through comprehensive audiovisual observation and verbatim transcription of critical narrative milestones. Researchers acted as primary human analytical instruments, systematically cataloging textual units across key scenes depicting Hermione's decision-making under existential duress (Tyson, 2006). Data extraction focused on isolating behavioral sequences that manifest internal psychic negotiation, tactical crisis interventions, and overt assertions of intellectual leadership. Secondary literature encompassing psychoanalytic frameworks and liberal feminist literary criticism provided theoretical anchoring for textual interpretation (Beauvoir, 2018; Tong, 2009).

The analytical procedure was systematically executed across three sequential phases: data identification, contextual interpretation, and interdisciplinary theoretical synthesis. First, extracted narrative units were classified into 3 structural psychic components (*id*, *ego*, and *superego*) and mapped onto 5 distinct ego defense mechanisms, including rationalization, suppression, intellectualization, displacement, and sublimation (Cramer, 2012; Freud, 1987). Second, contextual analysis examined how cognitive equilibrium modulates crisis management, group stabilization, and strategic Horcrux elimination across narrative battlegrounds. Third, textual units were synthesized with feminist paradigms of autonomous agency, intellectual authority, and systemic resistance, evaluating how internal psychological stability actively constructs female empowerment in patriarchal fantasy spaces (Tong, 2009; Tyson, 2006). Analytic rigor and interpretive credibility were maintained through rigorous source triangulation, iterative cross-referencing between visual-dialogic cues and theoretical taxonomies, and systematic peer auditing among co-researchers to eliminate individual interpretive bias.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The analysis of Hermione Granger in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* reveals distinct interactions among her personality components, adaptive defense strategies, and feminist agency across critical plot milestones.

1. Freudian Structural Personality: Id, Ego, and Superego

Hermione's personality structure exhibits an active negotiation among basic instinctual responses (*id*), conscious rational control (*ego*), and internalized moral duties (*superego*).

Table 1. Analysis of Id, Ego, and Superego in Hermione Granger's Key Scenes

Structural Component	Psychological Manifestation	Cinematic Scene Evidence
<i>Id</i>	Primal survival instinct and visceral fear of annihilation.	Trembling, hyperventilating, and physically clinging to Harry and Ron while evading Death Eaters in the forest.
<i>Id</i>	Instinctual affective attachment, emotional vulnerability, and jealousy.	Manifesting distress, tearful reactions, and insecurity during Ron's temporary absence from the group.
<i>Id</i>	Acute fear response under imminent physical danger.	Exhibiting immediate bodily panic and adrenaline-driven urgency during the perilous dragon escape from Gringotts.
<i>Ego</i>	Analytical problem-solving and reality-based tactical planning.	Devising the Polyjuice Potion strategy and orchestrating the operational infiltration of Gringotts vaults.
<i>Ego</i>	Emotional containment and strategic group coordination under duress.	Suppressing personal panic during the forest expedition to organize defensive wards and maintain group focus.
<i>Ego</i>	Rapid decision-making and crisis management in active combat.	Directing defensive spells, guiding peers, and prioritizing tactical Horcrux destruction during the Battle of Hogwarts.
<i>Superego</i>	Altruistic moral imperative and ethical duty toward marginalized beings.	Advocating for the protection of innocents and consistently defending the rights of vulnerable creatures.
<i>Superego</i>	Principled adherence to ethical restraint and rejection of dark magic.	Refusing to utilize lethal or destructive curses indiscriminately against compromised adversaries.
<i>Superego</i>	Empathic concern and commitment to collective psychological welfare.	Providing emotional reassurance to Ron and Harry, subordinating individual exhaustion to preserve team cohesion.

Based on Table 1, Hermione's *id* surfaces during life-threatening crises through primal survival instincts and emotional vulnerability. However, her *ego* remains the dominant operational force, successfully processing environmental threats and directing calculated, rational responses. Her *superego* consistently steers her actions toward ethical responsibility, ensuring that tactical pursuits do not compromise moral integrity.

2. Ego Defense Mechanisms

To endure extreme traumatic stress and existential danger, Hermione deploys specific psychological defense mechanisms.

Table 2. Analysis of Defense Mechanisms in Hermione Granger's Actions

Defense Mechanism	Operational Function	Cinematic Scene Evidence
Rationalization	Formulating logical justifications for high-risk, dangerous actions.	Articulating why breaking into Gringotts Bank is an unavoidable necessity to eliminate Voldemort's Horcrux.
Suppression	Consciously setting aside personal grief and terror to execute immediate tasks.	Concealing her acute emotional exhaustion and dread during the Horcrux hunt to maintain operational morale.
Intellectualization	Translating distressing emotional situations into abstract, technical problems.	Focusing strictly on historical spell lore, basilisk venom mechanics, and magical theory when facing catastrophic danger.
Displacement	Redirecting feelings of powerlessness and emotional turmoil into pragmatic activities.	Channeling anxiety regarding relationship conflicts and warfare into intensive tactical research and spell casting.
Sublimation	Channeling destructive tension and fear into socially constructive heroic protection.	Transforming her righteous anger against systemic tyranny into formidable defensive enchantments around Hogwarts.

Based on Table 2, Hermione utilizes rationalization and intellectualization to convert overwhelming emotional anxiety into analytical problem-solving. Suppression and displacement enable her to maintain functional stability, ensuring that trauma does not paralyze her capacity to act decisively in moments of crisis.

3. Feminist Identity: Agency, Intellect, and Resistance

Hermione's psychological balance directly informs her feminist positioning within the narrative.

Table 3. Feminist Critique of Hermione Granger's Characterization

Feminist Concept	Analytical Dimension	Cinematic Scene Evidence
Agency and Autonomy	Independent strategic leadership and decisive self-determination.	Formulating and executing complex mission plans autonomously without waiting for instructions from male peers.
Intellectual Authority	Dominance of knowledge, logic, and pedagogy in critical decision-making.	Deciphering ancient magical lore, producing counter-curses, and instructing Harry and Ron on necessary tactical maneuvers.
Resistance to Patriarchy	Dismantling patriarchal stereotypes of female passivity and emotional frailty.	Fighting on the front lines of the Battle of Hogwarts as an equal combatant and indispensable strategist.
Ethical Leadership	Anchoring collective action in moral justice rather than aggressive domination.	Demanding the ethical preservation of innocent lives and guiding the collective resistance with principled empathy.

Based on Table 3, Hermione consistently subverts patriarchal conventions by demonstrating that female heroism is driven by intellectual competence, autonomous agency, and ethical leadership rather than submissive dependence.

Discussion

Dynamic Interplay of Id, Ego, and Superego

The cinematic depiction of Hermione Granger validates Freud's structural model of personality by illustrating a mature, well-integrated psyche (Busch & Delgado, 2024; Gabbard et al., 2025; Sulloway, 1992). Her *id* is neither extinguished nor pathological; rather, it manifests naturally as instinctive self-preservation and authentic emotional depth when confronted by Death Eaters and mortal peril. These instinctual reactions reflect the universal human drive for survival (Ikke Puspitasari et al., 2026; Ismaya et al., 2026). However, unlike characters whose unchecked *id* drives lead to destructive impulsivity or crippling panic, Hermione's *ego* acts as a resilient cognitive regulator. Operating firmly under the reality principle, her *ego* evaluates immediate tactical variables and channels internal tension into coordinated action. Complementing this mediation, her superego serves as a robust internal scaffold, upholding ethical commitments and loyalty even when under immense psychological strain (Kuriakose & Maragathavel, 2024; Ramadhan & Yusril, 2026; Tachi & Suroso, 2026; Troyer et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Hermione's *superego* functions as an internal moral compass that tempers utilitarian impulses, ensuring that her rational calculations remain anchored in social justice and ethical responsibility (Mamgain, 2026). This psychological configuration explains why Hermione consistently remains effective under extreme pressure: her *ego* successfully balances the raw drives of the *id* with the ethical demands of the *superego*, demonstrating exceptional psychological maturity. This integration highlights how, unlike individuals whose fractured psyches result in dissociation or unresolved trauma, she maintains a coherent sense of self throughout her developmental challenges (Aulia & Sari, 2024; Helmita & Ano, 2025; Kuriakose & Maragathavel, 2024; Pah, 2026; Paratu & Sriastuti, 2025).

Adaptive Functionality of Defense Mechanisms

Hermione's reliance on defense mechanisms exemplifies healthy, adaptive ego protection in traumatic environments (Cramer, 2012; Freud, 1987; Vaillant, 1992). In high-stress scenarios, her primary cognitive response is intellectualization and rationalization, whereby terrifying existential realities are translated into structured, solvable intellectual challenges (Tyson, 2006). When confronting lethal threats such as the Horcrux in the Chamber of Secrets, she consciously bypasses debilitating fear by focusing on magical mechanics and historical precedents. By transforming abstract anxiety into concrete academic inquiry, she utilizes these defense mechanisms not to repress trauma, but to sustain agency amidst overwhelming adversity (Choudhary, 2025; Gwenwen & Omar, 2024; Hardian, 2025).

Similarly, her use of suppression and displacement allows her to defer personal grief and channel emotional frustration into pragmatic, life-saving endeavors. Rather than signifying psychological denial, these mechanisms operate as sophisticated self-regulatory strategies that shield her cognitive faculties from trauma-induced paralysis, enabling her to sustain both tactical focus and leadership efficacy throughout the conflict (Flores-Carrera & Ong, 2025; Hardian, 2025; Klymkiv et al., 2025; Press, 2024). This developmental stability highlights that her character serves as a model for secure ego-identity, where the integration of emotional regulation and ethical commitment facilitates long-term psychological resilience.

Interlocking Psychological Maturity and Feminist Agency

Comparing these findings with prior literature highlights the necessity of an integrated analytical approach. While earlier studies examined Hermione's moral values (Mishra & Ghosh, 2022) or categorized her as a general symbol of female empowerment (Hakim et al., 2025), and psychoanalytic scholarship focused primarily on Harry's trauma (Fuadah & Kamilah, 2023) or Voldemort's narcissism (Fitri, 2018), this study demonstrates that Hermione's feminist agency is directly enabled by her internal psychological balance. By subverting the traditional archetypes of the passive helpmate, her robust self-regulation allows her to actively challenge the wizarding world's oppressive structures through social activism (Briguglio, 2024; Chez, 2025; Renu & Singh, 2025; Xie et al., 2025).

Hermione's character dismantles Simone de Beauvoir's (2018) paradigm of woman as "the Other." Throughout *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*, she refuses to occupy a peripheral or purely nurturing role. Drawing upon the principles of liberal feminism (Tong, 2009), Hermione claims intellectual authority through rigorous knowledge, empirical logic, and strategic foresight. She does not merely assist the male protagonist; she establishes the analytical conditions necessary for his success. Her capacity to regulate emotional impulses (*ego* dominance over *id*) refutes patriarchal stereotypes that equate femininity with irrationality and emotional volatility (Tyson, 2006). Hermione presents an alternative model of heroism—one where rational agency, emotional resilience, and ethical commitment converge to produce an autonomous, empowered female protagonist.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Hermione Granger's character in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* embodies a sophisticated synthesis of Freudian psychological maturity and feminist agency. Her personality structure is defined by a dominant *ego* that effectively mediates between instinctual survival impulses (*id*) and internalized moral ethics (*superego*). Supported by adaptive defense mechanisms—particularly intellectualization, rationalization, suppression, and displacement—Hermione maintains cognitive clarity and operational composure under severe trauma. This internal psychological equilibrium directly empowers her feminist agency, allowing her to assert intellectual authority, exercise autonomous leadership, and dismantle traditional patriarchal tropes of female passivity within popular fantasy cinema.

These findings suggest that cinematic narratives can offer nuanced representations of female heroism that value intellectual and ethical strengths alongside emotional depth. Future research is encouraged to expand this interdisciplinary psychoanalytic-feminist framework to other female characters across diverse popular culture franchises, as well as to conduct longitudinal analyses tracking character psychological maturation across entire serialized cinematic adaptations.

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