

**DEFENSE MECHANISMS USED BY SECRET KEEPERS AS SEEN IN
THE SECRETS OF MIDWIVES BY SALLY HEPWORTH**

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to study the psychology of secrecy as seen in the characters in a literary work. The study uses the novel *The Secrets of Midwives* written by Sally Hepworth (2015). The focuses of the analysis are to find out the psychological effects in the secrecy and how the secret keepers use defense mechanisms against the psychological effects. The literary theory used is psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud, the psychological effects because of keeping secret by Alan Burdick and defense mechanisms by Anna Freud. The method of research is descriptive method and close reading technique. The findings show that the effects to psychology of the secret keepers because of keeping secrecy are stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness and low self-esteem. The defense mechanisms used are displacement, denial, sublimation, projection and avoiding. The characters as the secret keepers used displacement to counter stress, anxiety and loneliness. Denial is used by the secret keepers to reduce the anxiety. Sublimation is used to fight the depression after keeping a big secret for years. Projection is used to reduce anxiety. The last defense mechanism used is avoiding to counter low self esteem.

Key words: *secrets, psychological effects, defense mechanisms*