



Humanity Values In War: The Portrayal Of Desmond Doss In Hacksaw Ridge (2016)

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Abstract. *This research aims to analyze the portrayal of humanity values through the character of Desmond Doss in the movie Hacksaw Ridge (2016). Specifically, this study identifies the humanity values reflected in Desmond Doss's actions, decisions, and interactions, examines the factors influencing him to maintain these values during war, and determines the dominant humanity values represented in the film. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a qualitative content analysis approach. The primary data consist of dialogues, scenes, actions, and visual representations from Hacksaw Ridge, directed by Mel Gibson. The data were collected through documentation by repeatedly watching the movie, selecting relevant scenes, transcribing dialogues, classifying the data, and interpreting them using characterization theory by Kennedy and Gioia (2016), moral values by Lickona (1991), and moral development by Kohlberg (1981). The findings reveal that Desmond Doss demonstrates compassion, empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, respect for human life, moral courage, peacefulness, and selflessness. His values are influenced by religious beliefs, moral convictions, family upbringing, ethical responsibility, and humanitarian commitment. Compassion and sacrifice emerge as the dominant values. The study concludes that Hacksaw Ridge portrays humanity as moral resistance against violence and demonstrates that humanitarian principles can survive in wartime.*

Keywords: *Characterization; Desmond Doss; Film Analysis; Hacksaw Ridge; Humanity Values; Moral Values.*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis representasi nilai-nilai kemanusiaan melalui karakter Desmond Doss dalam film Hacksaw Ridge (2016). Penelitian ini secara khusus mengidentifikasi nilai-nilai kemanusiaan yang tercermin dalam tindakan, keputusan, dan interaksi Desmond Doss, menganalisis faktor-faktor yang memengaruhinya dalam mempertahankan nilai tersebut di tengah situasi perang, serta menentukan nilai kemanusiaan yang paling dominan dalam film. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan analisis isi. Data utama berupa dialog, adegan, tindakan tokoh, dan representasi visual dalam film Hacksaw Ridge karya Mel Gibson. Data dikumpulkan melalui dokumentasi dengan menonton film secara berulang, memilih adegan relevan, mentranskripsikan dialog, mengklasifikasikan data, dan menginterpretasikannya berdasarkan teori karakterisasi Kennedy dan Gioia (2016), nilai moral Lickona (1991), serta perkembangan moral Kohlberg (1981). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Desmond Doss merepresentasikan nilai kasih sayang, empati, pengorbanan, tanggung jawab, penghormatan terhadap kehidupan manusia, keberanian moral, cinta damai, dan sikap tanpa pamrih. Nilai tersebut dipengaruhi oleh keyakinan agama, prinsip moral pribadi, pendidikan keluarga, dan tanggung jawab etis. Kasih sayang dan pengorbanan menjadi nilai yang paling dominan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Hacksaw Ridge merepresentasikan kemanusiaan sebagai bentuk perlawanan moral terhadap kekerasan dalam situasi perang.

Kata Kunci: Analisis Film; Desmond Doss; Hacksaw Ridge; Karakterisasi; Nilai Kemanusiaan; Nilai Moral.

1. INTRODUCTION

Film is a form of literary work that presents stories, characters, and human experiences through visual and auditory elements. In addition to providing entertainment, film can communicate social, cultural, and moral values. Through characters and their actions, films allow audiences to examine human behavior, beliefs, decisions, and relationships with others. Therefore, film can serve as an important medium for understanding humanity and the values that influence human behavior. Humanity values refer to principles that emphasize respect for human life, compassion, empathy, kindness, courage, and concern for the well-being of others.

These values become particularly significant when individuals face difficult circumstances. In situations involving conflict and violence, maintaining humanity can become challenging because war is commonly associated with aggression, destruction, suffering, and loss of life. Such conditions may place individuals in situations where survival, obedience, and military duties compete with personal moral values. However, difficult circumstances do not necessarily eliminate humanity. Individuals can still demonstrate compassion, empathy, respect for life, and moral responsibility even when surrounded by violence.

The representation of humanity in a wartime context can be observed in *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016), directed by Mel Gibson. The film presents the true story of Desmond Doss, a combat medic who served during World War II. Unlike other soldiers, Doss refused to carry or use a weapon because of his personal beliefs. Despite facing criticism, pressure, and hostility from people around him, he remained committed to his principles. His role as a medic allowed him to contribute to the war effort by saving wounded soldiers rather than taking lives. His actions demonstrate that courage and strength can also be expressed through protecting and helping others. Desmond Doss provides an important representation of humanity because his decisions are consistently influenced by his concern for human life. He risks his own safety to rescue wounded soldiers and continues helping others despite the dangerous conditions of the battlefield. His behavior reflects several humanity values, including compassion, empathy, courage, respect for life, and moral integrity.

The character also demonstrates how personal beliefs can influence an individual's behavior when facing social pressure and extreme circumstances. The film therefore provides a relevant object for examining how humanity values are maintained and expressed in a wartime environment. The present study focuses specifically on the humanity values reflected through Desmond Doss's actions, decisions, and interactions in *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016). It also examines the factors that influence him to maintain and demonstrate these values during war. The study further identifies the most frequently represented humanity values in the character. By examining these aspects, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how a film portrays human values in conditions characterized by violence and conflict. This study is significant because it contributes to literary and film studies by examining the representation of humanity through character and characterization. It also provides an understanding of how moral values can be represented through a character's choices and actions. In addition, the findings may help readers and future researchers examine the relationship between character development, moral values, and human behavior in films. Thus, the analysis of Desmond Doss

in Hacksaw Ridge demonstrates how film can present humanity as an important aspect of human behavior even in extreme situations such as war.

2. Research Methods

Research Design This research employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the portrayal of humanity values through the character of Desmond Doss in Hacksaw Ridge (2016), directed by Mel Gibson. A qualitative approach was selected because the research focused on interpreting dialogue, actions, decisions, and interactions presented in the film rather than measuring numerical data. The analysis examined how Desmond Doss demonstrates humanity values within the context of war. Character and characterization were used to identify how his personality and moral behavior were presented through the events in the film. **Research Object** The object of this research was the character of Desmond Doss in Hacksaw Ridge (2016). The analysis focused specifically on scenes, dialogues, actions, decisions, and interactions that represented humanity values.

The research examined Desmond Doss as the main character who maintains his moral principles despite facing violence, pressure, and dangerous conditions during wartime. Other characters and aspects of film production, such as cinematography, filming locations, and technical elements, were not the primary focus of the analysis. **Data Source** The primary data source was the movie Hacksaw Ridge (2016). The data consisted of selected scenes, dialogues, actions, decisions, and interactions involving Desmond Doss that reflected humanity values. The research also used relevant theoretical sources concerning humanity, character and characterization, war and humanity, and moral values to support the interpretation of the findings. The humanity values identified in the data included love and affection, helping others, responsibility, peacefulness, and sacrifice. These categories were based on the theoretical framework used in the study. **Data Collection Technique** The data were collected through several systematic steps. First, the researcher watched Hacksaw Ridge (2016) repeatedly to understand the overall storyline and identify scenes related to Desmond Doss. Second, the researcher identified and recorded relevant dialogues, actions, decisions, and interactions. Third, the researcher noted the timestamps of the selected scenes to facilitate data verification. Fourth, the researcher classified each selected datum according to the relevant humanity value. The collected data were organized based on the scene, timestamp, transcript, character's action, humanity value, and interpretation. This procedure follows the analytical structure used in the research, in which character actions, decisions, dialogues, and interactions serve as the main indicators for identifying humanity values.

Data Analysis Technique The data were analyzed descriptively and interpretively. After collecting the relevant data, the researcher reduced the data by selecting scenes and dialogues directly related to the research questions. The selected data were then classified according to the types of humanity values represented by Desmond Doss. Each datum was interpreted by examining the relationship between the dialogue or action and the humanity value represented. The analysis considered character and characterization as supporting concepts. Desmond Doss's actions, decisions, and interactions were examined to understand how his humanity was constructed throughout the film. The analysis also considered war as the context in which his humanity values were tested. War creates conditions characterized by violence and moral conflict, while Desmond Doss demonstrates compassion, responsibility, peacefulness, and concern for human life despite these conditions. Finally, the researcher interpreted the findings by connecting the identified humanity values with the theoretical framework. The analysis was directed toward answering three research questions: the types of humanity values reflected in Desmond Doss's behavior, the factors influencing him to maintain these values during war, and the most represented humanity values in the film.

The results were then presented descriptively to explain how Hacksaw Ridge portrays humanity through its main character. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the portrayal of humanity values through the character of Desmond Doss in Hacksaw Ridge (2016), directed by Mel Gibson. The qualitative approach was selected because the study focused on interpreting meanings, values, and human experiences presented through the film rather than analyzing numerical data. The research examined how humanity values were constructed through Desmond Doss's dialogue, actions, decisions, and interactions in the context of war. The main humanity values examined in this study included compassion, empathy, selflessness, respect, responsibility, and moral courage. The primary data source was the movie Hacksaw Ridge (2016). The data consisted of selected scenes, dialogues, and actions involving Desmond Doss that represented humanity values. Secondary data were obtained from books, journal articles, and previous studies related to humanity values, moral values, character and characterization, and film analysis. The selection of the film as the primary data source was based on its strong representation of moral struggle and humanitarian principles within a wartime context.

Data were collected through observation and documentation. The researcher watched the film repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of its storyline and to identify scenes and dialogues relevant to the research focus. Relevant scenes were selected, transcribed, and documented along with their timestamps and contextual information. The researcher then

classified the selected data according to the humanity values demonstrated by Desmond Doss. This process focused not only on his verbal expressions but also on his actions, decisions, reactions, and interactions in critical situations. The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

The analysis consisted of several stages. First, the researcher identified relevant dialogues, scenes, and character actions and recorded their timestamps. Second, the data were classified into categories of humanity values, such as empathy, sacrifice, courage, responsibility, and integrity. Third, each datum was interpreted based on its context and relationship to the research objectives. Fourth, contextual analysis was conducted by considering the situation, conflict, setting, and interactions presented in each scene. Fifth, characterization theory and the concept of humanity values were applied to explain how Desmond Doss's character represented humanity through his speech, actions, and decisions. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions based on the patterns and meanings identified in the data to answer the research questions. The trustworthiness of the research was maintained through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established by repeatedly watching the film and supporting the analysis with direct dialogue, timestamps, and contextual descriptions. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context and scope. Dependability was maintained by following a consistent and systematic process of data collection, classification, analysis, and interpretation. Confirmability was achieved by grounding the findings in evidence from the film and relevant theoretical perspectives, thereby reducing personal subjectivity in the interpretation.

3. METHODE

3.1 Results

The analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) reveals that humanity values are strongly represented through the character of Desmond Doss. The findings were obtained by examining dialogue, character actions, emotional responses, interpersonal interactions, and important scenes throughout the movie. The analysis identified several interconnected humanity values, namely compassion, empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, respect for human life, peacefulness, selflessness, and moral courage.

The findings indicate that these values do not appear separately. Instead, they frequently overlap in the same action or scene. For example, Desmond's decision to return to the battlefield to rescue wounded soldiers simultaneously represents compassion, empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, selflessness, and respect for human life. This finding shows that the film

constructs Desmond's humanity through consistent patterns of behavior rather than through isolated statements. The main findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 3.1 Humanity Values Portrayed Through Desmond Doss

No.	Humanity Value	Major Evidence	Representation
1	Compassion	Desmond treats wounded soldiers under dangerous battlefield conditions	He responds directly to the suffering of others
2	Empathy	Desmond recognizes the fear, pain, and vulnerability of wounded soldiers	He provides medical and emotional assistance
3	Sacrifice	Desmond remains on the battlefield after other soldiers retreat	He places others' safety above his own
4	Responsibility	Desmond continues performing his duties as a combat medic	He considers saving wounded soldiers a personal moral duty
5	Respect for Human Life	Desmond refuses to carry a firearm and chooses to save lives	He views every human life as valuable
6	Peacefulness	Desmond rejects violence and does not retaliate against harassment	He maintains nonviolent principles
7	Selflessness	Desmond repeatedly returns to dangerous areas to rescue soldiers	He prioritizes others rather than personal safety
8	Moral Courage	Desmond maintains his principles despite punishment and rejection	He accepts personal consequences rather than compromising his beliefs

Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

Table 3.1 demonstrates that respect for human life, compassion, sacrifice, and peacefulness form the central values in Desmond Doss's characterization. These values become visible through repeated actions rather than direct characterization. His humanity is particularly evident when his decisions place him in conflict with military expectations.

The findings also show that Desmond's humanitarian behavior develops progressively throughout the narrative. His moral position is established during military training when he refuses to carry a weapon. It becomes stronger when he accepts rejection and punishment.

Finally, his values reach their strongest expression during the Battle of Okinawa, when he risks his life to rescue wounded soldiers.

Table 3.2 Development of Humanity Values Throughout the Narrative

Stage	Major Scene	Humanity Values	Main Significance
1	Refusing to carry a firearm	Respect for human life, peacefulness, moral courage	Establishes Desmond's ethical principles
2	Facing rejection and harassment	Sacrifice, self-control, peacefulness	Shows his willingness to endure social pressure
3	Serving as a combat medic	Responsibility, compassion, empathy	Provides a humanitarian form of military service
4	Treating wounded soldiers	Compassion, empathy, responsibility	Demonstrates concern for suffering individuals
5	Remaining on Hacksaw Ridge	Sacrifice, selflessness, courage	Places others' survival above his own
6	Repeatedly rescuing soldiers	Compassion, sacrifice, responsibility	Demonstrates consistent humanitarian commitment
7	"Please, Lord, help me get one more"	Faith, compassion, sacrifice, moral courage	Represents his strongest commitment to saving life

Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

The table shows that Desmond's humanity develops from personal moral conviction into concrete humanitarian action. His refusal to use weapons establishes his principles, while his rescue actions demonstrate how those principles operate under extreme conditions.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Compassion and Empathy as Humanitarian Action

Compassion and empathy are among the most visible humanity values in *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016). Desmond Doss repeatedly responds to the suffering of wounded soldiers by providing medical treatment, emotional support, and physical assistance. His behavior demonstrates that compassion is not represented merely through feelings or verbal expressions. Instead, it becomes meaningful through concrete actions that reduce the suffering of others. One of the clearest examples occurs during the Battle of Okinawa. Desmond remains focused on wounded soldiers even when the battlefield becomes increasingly dangerous. While gunfire, explosions, and enemy attacks create an environment dominated by fear and survival, Desmond continues searching for individuals who require medical assistance.

This behavior reflects the concept of compassion proposed by Jacob (2023), who explains that compassion can be represented through efforts to protect others and reduce their suffering despite personal risk. Desmond's actions correspond to this concept because he does not simply recognize the suffering of wounded soldiers. He actively responds to it.

Empathy is also demonstrated through Desmond's treatment of injured soldiers. He recognizes that wounded soldiers experience physical pain, fear, and psychological vulnerability. His medical assistance therefore has both physical and emotional dimensions. Kauppinen (2023) explains that empathy enables individuals to understand the experiences of others and encourages prosocial behavior. Desmond's behavior reflects this relationship because his awareness of suffering motivates him to help.

The distinction between compassion and empathy is important in understanding Desmond's character. Empathy allows him to recognize the suffering of others, while compassion motivates him to respond to that suffering. The film therefore presents both values as interconnected elements of humanitarian behavior.

The statement, "Please, Lord, help me get one more," further strengthens this interpretation. Desmond expresses concern for another wounded soldier even after rescuing several people. The statement demonstrates that his concern is not limited to a specific individual. Instead, he remains committed to saving anyone who still needs assistance.

The findings are consistent with Lim and DeSteno (2023), who associate compassion with prosocial behavior toward vulnerable individuals even when helping involves personal burden. Desmond's actions demonstrate this principle because he repeatedly accepts physical danger and exhaustion to help wounded soldiers.

Therefore, compassion and empathy function as foundational values in Desmond's characterization. They transform his medical role into a humanitarian responsibility and distinguish his behavior from the violent environment surrounding him.

3.2.2 Sacrifice and Responsibility in Desmond Doss's Character

The findings show that sacrifice and responsibility are closely connected in Desmond Doss's character. Desmond repeatedly accepts physical, social, psychological, and emotional costs to maintain his humanitarian principles.

His sacrifice begins before the battlefield. During military training, he refuses to carry a weapon even though his decision results in rejection, humiliation, and punishment. He understands that maintaining his beliefs will create serious consequences, but he does not compromise his principles.

This finding corresponds with Tarisha et al. (2021), who explain that sacrifice in humanitarian narratives involves accepting personal loss or suffering for the welfare of others. Desmond demonstrates this form of sacrifice because he accepts social rejection and personal hardship to remain faithful to his moral convictions.

His sacrifice becomes more significant during the Battle of Okinawa. When other soldiers retreat, Desmond remains behind to rescue wounded soldiers. He repeatedly enters dangerous areas even though he understands that he may be killed.

The action demonstrates that sacrifice in the film is not simply a single heroic moment. It represents a repeated behavioral pattern. Desmond rescues one soldier, then returns for another, and continues despite exhaustion. This repetition strengthens the characterization of Desmond as a selfless individual.

Responsibility also plays an important role. Desmond considers his role as a medic a moral responsibility rather than merely a military assignment. He understands that wounded soldiers depend on him for survival. Consequently, he continues performing his duties even when the circumstances become dangerous.

Hooft (2009) argues that moral responsibility involves an internal ethical obligation toward others. This concept is relevant to Desmond because his responsibility does not depend entirely on institutional commands. He voluntarily accepts responsibility for people who remain vulnerable on the battlefield. The relationship between sacrifice and responsibility can be summarized as follows:

Table 3.3 Relationship Between Sacrifice and Responsibility

Aspect	Sacrifice	Responsibility	Representation in the Film
Personal safety	Desmond risks injury and death	He remains committed to saving others	Staying on the battlefield
Social acceptance	He accepts rejection	He refuses to abandon his principles	Refusing to carry a weapon
Physical energy	He continues despite exhaustion	He considers wounded soldiers his responsibility	Repeated rescue missions
Emotional burden	He witnesses suffering and death	He continues helping vulnerable soldiers	Treating wounded soldiers
Moral principles	He accepts punishment	He remains accountable to his beliefs	Maintaining nonviolence

Time effort	and He searches for survivors	repeatedly He continues fulfilling his humanitarian duty	“One more” rescue
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Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

The table indicates that sacrifice and responsibility cannot be separated from Desmond's humanitarian identity. Responsibility motivates him to act, while sacrifice represents the personal cost of fulfilling that responsibility.

3.2.3 Respect for Human Life as the Central Humanity Value

Respect for human life emerges as one of the most significant findings of the study. This value provides the moral foundation for many of Desmond's decisions and actions.

The clearest representation occurs when Desmond refuses to carry a firearm. His decision is based on his belief that taking human life is morally unacceptable. Instead of abandoning military service, he chooses to become a combat medic.

Desmond explicitly explains his position through the statement, “While everybody else is taking life, I'm gonna be saving it.” This dialogue directly establishes the central conflict between destruction and preservation. While military combat requires soldiers to participate in violence, Desmond defines his contribution through saving lives.

The statement also demonstrates that Desmond does not reject service itself. He rejects participation in killing. This distinction is important because his humanity does not result in passivity. Instead, it motivates him to find another way to serve.

Matulesky et al. (2025b) emphasize that Desmond Doss's heroism is associated with moral fortitude and humanitarian responsibility rather than physical domination. This finding supports the present analysis because Desmond's heroism develops from his commitment to protecting human life.

Respect for human life is also visible during the Battle of Okinawa. Desmond does not view wounded soldiers simply as casualties. He treats them as individuals whose lives still possess value. His decision to remain behind and rescue them demonstrates that respect for life requires action.

Putri and Cahyaningrum (2024b) similarly explain that Desmond's heroism is strongly connected with moral courage and humanitarian values. The present study extends this interpretation by showing that respect for human life functions as the principle connecting several other values, including compassion, empathy, sacrifice, and responsibility.

Table 3.4 Respect for Human Life as a Central Value

Evidence	Immediate Value	Broader Humanitarian Meaning
Refusal to carry a firearm	Peacefulness	Rejects participation in killing
Choosing to become a medic	Responsibility	Finds a nonviolent way to serve
“While everybody else is taking life, I'm gonna be saving it”	Moral courage	Defines service through preservation of life
Treating wounded soldiers	Compassion and empathy	Recognizes the dignity of suffering individuals
Staying on the battlefield	Sacrifice	Places others' lives above personal safety
Repeated rescue efforts	Selflessness	Demonstrates that every life deserves protection
“Please, Lord, help me get one more”	Compassion and faith	Maintains commitment to saving life

Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

Table 4 demonstrates that respect for human life operates as a central principle connecting the other humanity values found in the film. Desmond's peacefulness explains why he rejects weapons. His compassion explains why he treats wounded soldiers. His responsibility explains why he continues his medical duties. His sacrifice and selflessness explain why he risks his life to save others.

Therefore, respect for human life can be considered the central ethical foundation of Desmond's characterization.

3.2.4 Peacefulness and Anti-Violence as Moral Commitment

Peacefulness is another major humanity value represented through Desmond Doss. His peacefulness is not passive. He actively maintains his nonviolent principles despite functioning within a military institution.

Desmond's refusal to carry a firearm provides the strongest evidence. He faces pressure from military authorities and fellow soldiers, but he does not change his position. He accepts the consequences of his decision rather than compromising his beliefs.

This behavior demonstrates moral courage because Desmond knows that his decision will create conflict. Nevertheless, he remains consistent.

His peacefulness also appears when fellow soldiers reject and physically attack him. Desmond does not respond with revenge. Instead, he maintains self-control and continues pursuing his goal of serving as a medic.

Nurjani and Efendi (2022) identify peacefulness, respect, and unselfishness as important moral values in the portrayal of Desmond Doss. The present findings support this interpretation because Desmond's peacefulness appears through both his refusal to kill and his response to interpersonal conflict.

The film therefore challenges the assumption that courage requires aggression. Desmond demonstrates courage through restraint, persistence, and humanitarian service. His decision to enter the battlefield without a weapon becomes particularly significant because it places him in danger without allowing him to respond through violence.

Table 3.5 Manifestations of Peacefulness and Anti-Violence

No.	Evidence	Desmond's Response	Meaning
1	Pressure to carry a weapon	Refuses to use firearms	Moral resistance
2	Military rejection	Maintains his principles	Moral courage
3	Physical harassment	Does not retaliate violently	Self-control
4	Combat environment	Serves as a medic	Humanitarian alternative
5	Battlefield violence	Focuses on rescue	Protection of life
6	Repeated danger	Continues saving soldiers	Active peacefulness

Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

The findings indicate that Desmond's peacefulness should not be interpreted as weakness. His peacefulness requires significant courage because he maintains it in an environment where violence is institutionalized and socially expected.

3.2.5 Humanity as Moral Resistance Against War

The final major finding is that humanity functions as moral resistance against war. Desmond Doss does not physically oppose the military institution. Instead, he resists the destructive values associated with war through his behavior.

The film constructs a strong contrast between the battlefield and Desmond's actions. The battlefield is associated with violence, fear, destruction, injury, and death. Desmond's actions are associated with medical treatment, rescue, compassion, and preservation of life.

This contrast creates the central moral tension of the narrative. Desmond exists within the same war environment as the other soldiers, but he responds to that environment differently.

Wang (2023) explains that humanitarian resistance in conflict narratives can emerge through characters who preserve empathy and ethical awareness within violent systems. Desmond represents this form of resistance because he maintains his moral principles despite institutional and social pressure.

Ruiter (2023) similarly explains that humanitarian characters in war narratives can symbolize resistance against violence and dehumanization. Desmond's character strongly reflects this pattern. He does not eliminate violence from the battlefield, but he refuses to allow violence to determine his own moral behavior.

His resistance occurs at several levels.

First, he resists the expectation to participate in killing. Second, he resists social pressure from fellow soldiers. Third, he resists the psychological tendency toward emotional detachment by maintaining empathy toward wounded individuals. Fourth, he resists the normalization of death by repeatedly choosing to save lives.

Table 3.6 Humanity as Moral Resistance Against War

No.	Form of Resistance	Evidence	Humanity Value	Interpretation
1	Resistance to killing	Refuses to carry a firearm	Peacefulness	Rejects participation in violence
2	Resistance to social pressure	Accepts rejection and harassment	Moral courage	Maintains principles despite consequences
3	Resistance to dehumanization	Treats wounded soldiers as human beings	Empathy	Recognizes individual suffering
4	Resistance to abandonment	Remains on the battlefield	Responsibility	Refuses to leave wounded soldiers
5	Resistance to selfpreservation	Repeatedly returns for survivors	Sacrifice	Places others' lives above his own
6	Resistance to normalization of death	Continues medical assistance	Respect for human life	Treats every life as valuable

7	Resistance through faith	“Please, Lord, help me get one more”	Compassion and Maintains humanitarian commitment under extreme pressure
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Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

The table demonstrates that Desmond's humanity functions as an active moral position. He does not merely possess humanitarian values. He applies those values when they are most difficult to maintain.

This finding is consistent with Adalta and Maisarah (2024), who explain that humanitarian figures in cinematic narratives can symbolize ethical resistance by preserving compassion and empathy within systems dominated by violence. Desmond's character illustrates this process through his consistent refusal to compromise his principles.

The relationship between humanity and moral resistance is particularly visible in the battlefield scenes. Desmond enters an environment designed for combat, but his purpose remains humanitarian. He carries medical equipment rather than a weapon. He searches for wounded soldiers rather than enemies. He treats injuries rather than inflicting them.

His famous prayer, “Please, Lord, help me get one more,” provides the strongest expression of this moral resistance. The prayer demonstrates that his commitment continues even when his physical resources are almost exhausted. His concern remains directed toward another human life.

From the perspective of Kohlberg's (1981) theory of moral development, Desmond's behavior can be understood as strongly connected to internalized moral principles. He continues to follow his beliefs even when those beliefs result in punishment, rejection, and personal danger. His actions are therefore not primarily motivated by external rewards or social approval.

The findings also support the characterization framework proposed by Kennedy and Gioia (2016). Desmond's personality is revealed indirectly through his actions, dialogue, emotional responses, and interactions with other characters. The film does not establish his humanity only through explicit descriptions. Instead, audiences understand his character through the consistency of his behavior.

Overall, the film presents humanity as an alternative moral response to war. Desmond cannot stop the war, but he can determine how he behaves within it. His choice is consistently directed toward protecting human life.

3.3 Dominant Humanity Value

Based on the overall findings, respect for human life emerges as the most dominant humanity value in Desmond Doss's character. This value appears repeatedly across different stages of the narrative and provides the foundation for other humanity values.

The relationship among the identified values can be summarized as follows:

Table 3.7 Relationship Among Humanity Values

Humanity Value	Main Function in Desmond's Character	Relationship with Other Values
Respect for Human Life	Provides the central moral principle	Connects compassion, sacrifice, responsibility, and peacefulness
Compassion	Motivates him to respond to suffering	Strengthens empathy and selflessness
Empathy	Enables him to recognize others' suffering	Supports compassion and medical assistance
Sacrifice	Represents the personal cost of helping others	Strengthens responsibility and selflessness
Responsibility	Encourages him to continue his humanitarian duty	Supports sacrifice and compassion
Peacefulness	Prevents him from participating in violence	Reinforces respect for life and moral courage
Selflessness	Places others' welfare above personal safety	Strengthens sacrifice and compassion
Moral Courage	Enables him to maintain his values under pressure	Supports peacefulness and moral resistance

Source: Researcher's analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016)

Respect for human life becomes dominant because it explains Desmond's most important decisions. His refusal to carry a weapon originates from his belief in the value of life. His decision to become a medic provides a practical expression of that belief. His treatment of wounded soldiers demonstrates the value through action. His willingness to remain on the battlefield demonstrates the extent to which he is prepared to sacrifice for that principle.

The finding also shows that compassion, empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, peacefulness, and selflessness operate as interconnected manifestations of respect for human life. These values collectively construct Desmond's humanitarian identity.

Therefore, *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) portrays Desmond Doss as a character whose heroism is primarily based on the preservation of human life. The film presents an alternative concept of heroism in which courage does not depend on the ability to kill or dominate others. Instead, courage emerges through the willingness to protect vulnerable individuals, maintain moral principles, and accept personal risk for the benefit of others.

3.4 Overall Discussion

The overall findings demonstrate that *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) constructs humanity through consistent moral behavior. Desmond Doss's character does not separate humanitarian values from military responsibility. Instead, he transforms his military role into an opportunity to protect human life.

The analysis identifies three major patterns. First, humanity is represented through direct assistance to people who suffer. Desmond treats, comforts, and rescues wounded soldiers. Second, humanity is represented through moral consistency. Desmond maintains his principles despite rejection, punishment, and physical violence. Third, humanity becomes moral resistance when Desmond applies these values within an environment dominated by violence.

The findings support Lickona's (1991) understanding of moral values as involving care, responsibility, respect, and ethical awareness. Desmond demonstrates care through compassion and empathy, responsibility through his medical duties, respect through his protection of human life, and ethical awareness through his refusal to compromise his principles.

The findings also support Kohlberg's (1981) view that moral behavior is closely connected to internalized ethical reasoning. Desmond does not abandon his principles when external pressure increases. Instead, pressure makes his moral commitment more visible.

Furthermore, the characterization of Desmond supports Kennedy and Gioia's (2016) view that character can be understood through actions, dialogue, responses, and interactions. Desmond's humanity becomes evident through repeated behavioral patterns. His refusal to carry weapons, response to harassment, medical service, and rescue efforts collectively establish his moral identity.

The findings also correspond with recent studies by Sokołowska (2024b), Matulessy et al. (2025b), Putri and Cahyaningrum (2024b), and Adalta and Maisarah (2024), which associate Desmond Doss with humanitarian values, moral courage, peacefulness, and resistance against violence. However, the present analysis further emphasizes the relationship among these values. Respect for human life functions as the central value, while compassion,

empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, peacefulness, and selflessness operate as its behavioral manifestations.

Thus, the representation of humanity in *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) is systematic rather than incidental. Desmond's humanity develops from personal moral conviction into social resistance and finally into humanitarian action on the battlefield. The film demonstrates that ethical principles can continue to guide individual behavior even when the surrounding social environment normalizes violence.

The central finding of this study is therefore that Desmond Doss's humanity is represented as an active moral commitment to preserving human life. His compassion motivates him to help, his empathy enables him to understand suffering, his responsibility encourages him to continue serving, his sacrifice allows him to accept personal risk, and his peacefulness prevents him from responding to violence with further violence. These values collectively establish humanity as a form of moral resistance against war.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion presented in Chapter IV, this research concludes that *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) represents humanity values through the character of Desmond Doss. The analysis identified five major humanity values, namely compassion and empathy, sacrifice and responsibility, moral courage and ethical integrity, respect for human life, and peacefulness and anti-violence principles. Each value was identified in five data, resulting in a total of 25 findings. These values are represented through Desmond's dialogue, actions, emotional responses, and interactions with other characters. The findings show that Desmond consistently chooses to help and protect others despite facing violence, discrimination, social pressure, and dangerous situations during war. His character demonstrates that humanity can be maintained even in an environment dominated by conflict and violence.

Regarding the first research question, the study found that Desmond Doss demonstrates humanity through five major values. Compassion and empathy are shown through his concern for wounded and suffering soldiers. Sacrifice and responsibility are demonstrated through his willingness to risk his life to save others. Moral courage and ethical integrity are reflected in his commitment to his beliefs despite pressure from military authorities and fellow soldiers. Respect for human life is demonstrated through his determination to save every wounded soldier without discrimination. Meanwhile, peacefulness and anti-violence principles are represented through his refusal to carry or use a firearm because of his strong moral conviction

against taking human life. These findings support Lickona's concept of character values, particularly caring, responsibility, respect, and moral concern for others.

Regarding the second research question, the study concludes that several factors influence Desmond Doss in maintaining his humanity values. These factors include religious belief, personal moral principles, empathy toward human suffering, family influence, humanitarian responsibility, psychological resilience, and resistance to violence. These factors strengthen Desmond's determination to follow his ethical beliefs despite rejection, punishment, humiliation, and physical danger. His decisions demonstrate a high level of moral commitment because he does not easily abandon his principles when facing external pressure. This finding is consistent with Kohlberg's theory of moral development, particularly the idea that individuals with principled moral reasoning may follow internal ethical principles even when those principles conflict with social expectations or institutional demands.

Regarding the third research question, respect for human life is identified as the most dominant humanity value in *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016). This value appears repeatedly in Desmond's refusal to use weapons, his commitment to rescuing wounded soldiers, and his determination to preserve human life regardless of a person's identity, position, or background. Respect for human life also becomes the foundation for other humanity values found in the study. His compassion motivates him to help others, his responsibility encourages him to continue rescuing soldiers, his moral courage enables him to maintain his principles, and his peacefulness prevents him from taking human life. Therefore, respect for human life can be considered the central value that shapes Desmond Doss's humanitarian character throughout the film.

Overall, *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016) presents humanity as an important form of moral strength within the context of war. Through Desmond Doss, the film shows that heroism does not depend solely on physical strength, combat ability, or military achievement. Instead, heroism can also be demonstrated through compassion, empathy, sacrifice, responsibility, moral courage, peacefulness, and respect for human life. Desmond's character demonstrates that individuals can maintain their humanity and ethical principles even when facing violence, social pressure, and life-threatening circumstances. Therefore, the film communicates that protecting human life and maintaining moral integrity are essential expressions of true humanity.

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