

## Narcissism the nub of Sherlock & Moriarty by Doyle

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### Abstract

*Narcissism is a malignant prodigy of Anti-Social Personality Disorder which is capitalized by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. His opus are not merely minutiae of great Sherlock Holmes and his detections but are somber versions of psycho-sociopathy, dissocial personality maneuvering to narcissism and paradigms of narcissism which lay surreptitiously in his compositions. The present study pivots around meaning of Narcissism, its mythological origin, two fundamental degrees of classification i.e. healthy and unhealthy narcissism and evaluation of Holmes's and Moriarty's Narcissism. The focus of this research would be helpful to analyze and discover those socio-psychological and auxiliary aspects which are liable to metamorphose an innocent being into a narcissist. Doyle nurtures this ominous perception intermingling it with sundry hues of subsisting anthology of personage and manipulate it in his art with its copious arrays.*

**Keywords:** Narcissism, Malignant prodigy etc.

"Detective thrillers" mellowed as an au courant genus of literature with vehemence and an ardor with the influx of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on this frontier. Doyle urbanized the scenario of his narratives in a methodically meticulous panache. He sculpted Sherlock Holmes his legendary character accompanied by Doctor Watson his comrade, associate and confederate.

The repute of Sherlock Holmes could be gauged and avowed in words of Orson Welles "the world's most famous man who never was". (Russell, 2009, p. 142) It primed Doyle as a grandee among the zealous partisans of this genre. Prior to Doyle till 1841, this genus had a meager and derisive stature. The materialization of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841) revolutionized its prominence. The overture of Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin accompanied by his acquaintance by Poe pioneered an itinerary for imminent authors.

Emile Gaboriau reminiscently of Poe crafted detective inspector M. Lecocq in "L'Affaire Lerouge" (1866) enthused by a real life policeman Eugene Francoise Vidocq, the Father of Modern Criminology. In his "Bleak House" (1852) Charles Dickens fabricated Inspector Bucket which was nascence of detective thrillers in Britain. The league was pursued by Wilkie Collins through "The Moonstone" (1868).

Then eon of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes loomed when Doyle adroitly articulated this legacy as "A Study of Scarlet" (1887). Sherlock Holmes transcended as paramount and eclipsed all his antecedent fictional detectives. The vestiges of Sherlock's conception

could be derived from his antecedents and Dr. Joseph Bell.

"Dr. Joseph Bell, a tall angular figure with sharp features, a beak like nose, piercing grey eyes- Arthur said he had a face like a Red Indian – and the long sensitive fingers of a musician." (Russell, 2009, p. 49)

"Bell was only 39 years old but already a legend among medical students as a master of observation, logic and deduction, possessing almost clairvoyant powers of diagnosis. A showman who loved center stage, his showmanship had a serious purpose: to alert trainee doctors to the wealth of information a patient provided before opening his or her mouth, much of it invisible to the untrained eye." (Russell, 2009, p. 49)

Sherlock's veneer impeccably corresponded with Dr. Bell on both corporeal and cerebral echelons.

Doyle is an adroit raconteur who chronicles his account in an uncomplicated yet well associated fashion. His edifices are adhered in union of thought and festooned with the enchanting persona of Sherlock Homes. Dr. Watson is the chronicler plus biographer of Holmes and the mouthpiece for Doyle. All the narrations, commentaries, remarks are manifested ingeniously through Dr. Watson as he cannot use Holmes because of the prospect of premature revelations of specifics. This would eliminate the ingredients of enigma and enthusiasm of his opus.

Crime, its detection and deterrence are the soul of his work. He is a fervent observer of society and populace; he successively uses these premises in his narratives. He

often uses murky themes of criminal psychology in a veil with elegant finesse. Narcissism a personality disorder is one such premise employed and exploited by him in forging the most notorious detective and his diametrically opposed parallel.

Narcissism generally known as Narcissistic Personality Disorder enthralled since primordial era. It is basically a saga of malediction meted out on Narcissus which he grossed for himself by affronting Echo. She was nymph who fell in love with Narcissus an arrogant, negligent young man. Echo effusively avowed her feelings to him and advanced to embrace her beloved. He humiliated her and shattered her heart in retaliation. Crestfallen she faded away which angered the goddess Nemesis. She cursed him that he will fall in love with his own reflection when he would look in Echo's pond and would die retaining his own amorous gazes.

The notion of narcissism went through bounteous amendments prevalently and predominantly it is related to the psyche of an entity and its socio-cultural environ. Narcissists upsurge with subsequent eccentricities:-

- ❖ Egoists
- ❖ Self-focused
- ❖ Hyper-sensitive to insolence
- ❖ Lack empathy for others
- ❖ Detest those who do not revere them
- ❖ Prone to hurt others by exploiting them
- ❖ Onerous to maintain healthy relationships
- ❖ Coy and reticent to express their feelings

These bizarre entities fall in the strata of Narcissists. A self obsessed individual who lives with his idealistic traits contended.

Narcissistic personalities as described by Otto Kernberg *"Narcissists present various combinations of intense ambitiousness, grandiose fantasies, feelings of inferiority and overdependence on external admiration and acclaim, chronic uncertainty and dissatisfaction about themselves, conscious or unconscious exploitiveness and ruthlessness toward others."* (Alexander, 1997, p. 6)

The phenomenon of Narcissism is customarily tolerable if it resides in a constructive mind and is beneficial to society. There is an infinitesimal periphery between healthy narcissism and dangerous narcissism. The splendid prototypes of a healthy narcissist and a dangerous narcissist are Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarity respectively.

Russell Miller describes the persona of Sherlock as; *"Holmes was an arrogant, unashamedly narcissistic misogynist, a cold, calculating, analytical ascetic who admitted to a few emotions: I am a brain Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix."* (Russell, 2009, p. 111-112)

Narcissism could be realized and apprehended in the temperament of Holmes by some instances: he is fundamentally a quite man with regular habits, typically lies on his couch without moving a muscle from morning till night when thinking on an issue, glees on bemused investigators with his ascendancy, uses drugs to purge

ennui, a hard nut to crack and he is tremendously delighted when eulogized for his presumptions and proficiency. He is astringent and un-obsessive with criminals and women as he feels no remorse of his dealings with them in the midst of his sleuthing. He is severely egoistic and does not express empathy towards his family and his friends for instance Dr. Watson.

Professor Moriarity is a detrimental counterpart of Holmes. He is a man of resolution, contemplation, rationale and reckoning of a reprobate. Criminal psychology associates with omnipresent prototypes with impetuous and belligerent demeanor who persuasively infringe civil liberties of other individuals to accomplish their aspirations. They are apprehended deliriously in their aspirations and delusions which become deleterious for them and for society. An Antisocial or Dissocial ingredient upsurges in their persona which is malignant and smears their entire constitution.

Professor Moriarity as in words of Holmes *"You know my powers, my dear Watson, and yet at end of three months I was forced to confess that I had at last met an antagonist who was my intellectual equal. My horror at his crimes was lost in my admiration at his skill."* (Arthur, 2011, p. 288)

Professor Moriarity and Sherlock Holmes have a showdown in the short story "The Final Problem" where the two narcissists try to levy each other with their pseudo-psychotic narcissistic perfections:

*"You evidently don't know me," said he.*

*"On the contrary," I answered, "I think it is fairly evident that I do. Pray take a chair. I can spare you five minutes if you have anything to say."*

*"All that I have to say has already crossed your mind," said he.*

*"Then possibly my answer has crossed yours," I replied.*

*"You stand fast?"*

*"Absolutely."* (Arthur, 2011, p. 290)

Their encounter was not a sheer endeavor of the duo to let down and forewarn one another of the jeopardy; but both of them enjoyed the collision of parallel intellectual harmony which entertained their narcissistic egoistic personas. In fact it is an appetizer served by Doyle prior to the belligerent combat of two highly narcissistic intellectuals which led them to a rendezvous with their ends. This story was conceived by Doyle to eliminate Holmes; as he labored to ascertain his repute as an author of significant genres of literature.

There are miscellaneous stratum of psyche and behavioral precedents amongst diverse individuals and these two entities which are diametrically opposed to one another. The key differences between these stratum could be derived from aggregating notion that common people are bound with desires by birth i.e. Id, they are driven by corporal needs and spend their lives in its accomplishment. Id is the aspect which procreates ego in order to restrain itself; Ego in turn tries to create equilibrium between Id, the outside world and the entity.

When Id goes riotously feral it culminates in a crime. A higher controlling degree is produced known as Super Ego; it can also be articulated as one of the nuance Narcissism. Super Ego constricts an individual through socio-cultural control. Holmes is a super-egoist who curtails his narcissism abided by socio-cultural norms which moulds him in a healthy narcissist as he does wrong sporadically to set things right.

Moriarty on the other hand a man with explicit knowledge and skills but he despite of his fine birth and natural talents converges to gratify narcissistic cerebral desires. He is an exceptional paradigm of a gaffed Super-ego a narcissist whose narcissism levitated to the degree of anti-social personality as he despised socio-cultural norms and mutated as a criminal mastermind. His crimes escalated above the normal premises of Id which forges an entity into a pedantic transgressor by choice not by chance. He committed crimes for his narcissistic satisfaction not for the accomplishment of Id which is the ultimate objective of a normal individual and a common criminal.

Narcissism latterly is not criminal in nature in fact a petite magnitude of it dwells in every individual.

Narcissism and Super Ego are analogous they are a boon if one permeates it in oneself robustly. An individual is an inseparable fraction of civilization and a narcissistic clanger creates a pandemonium and it would camber towards annihilation if this self love goes zanily feral. Healthy narcissist like Sherlock Holmes was adulated and venerated over for ages and would continue to be so for numerous imminent eons.

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