

Solitary Behaviour of Dexter in Jeff Lindsay's Darkly Dreaming Dexter

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Abstract:

Jeff Lindsay is a modern American writer and his work is mostly based on psychological aspects. His works come under the genre of mystery and thriller. He was famous for this work series Dexter. In this series the first novel "Darkly Dreaming Dexter", he writes about the psychic nature of the protagonist Dexter. By using Carl Jung's theory of archetype the character of Dexter was analyzed. According to him archetypes build up the character's personality. In this theory of archetype the Persona, the Shadow and the Self plays the main role in the character of Dexter. This archetype made his ego consciousness to identify his identity in the negative role as a serial killer even though he has a good profession as Forensic blood spatter analyst; he plays the dark side as a serial killer in the mask of Forensic blood spatter analyst. When analysis Dexter's characteristics by applying to Jung's archetypes, he is a man with psychopathic characteristic who hides his dark side as a serial killer and plays the role as a Forensic Blood spatter analyst, a well reputed profession. He uses his profession as a mask in the society. This paper explores the character of Dexter in the psychological aspects to reveal the personality aspects of the serial killer.

Keywords: archetype, persona, shadow, self, characterization, crime.

I. INTRODUCTION

Jeff Lindsay is an American playwright, his work *Dexter* book series is one of his best works and it was adapted into a TV series which gained him more popularity. It was one of the major awards winning TV series. This series has a total of eight parts and I have taken the first part "Darkly Dreaming Dexter" for my research. In this paper I will analyse and explain the psychological characteristics of Dexter and why he is considered as a protagonist who is actually a charismatic serial killer. Dexter is a serial killer who is also specialised as a Forensic blood spatter analyst in Miami.

Though Dexter is a serial killer, he did not kill all the men he saw to satisfy his anger in whatever way to seek pleasure.

II. ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Carl Gustav Jung was the Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who coined the term Analytical psychology. He is notable for his work in literature, psychology, archaeology, psychiatry, philosophy, and religious studies. Analytic psychology is also referred to as Jungian analysis. Jung was influenced by Sigmund Freud and they made a lot of discussions about psychology. But later Freud separated and established a separate school of thought called Analytical psychology. According to him, the structure of the mind has three parts: the conscious mind, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious.

The conscious mind is the upper layer of the structure of the mind. It contains thoughts, memories, and feelings. In this, the ego is the conscious mind and it reflects conscious behavior. The ego is a representation of one's identity in society. It is only a fraction of the human mind. The unconscious mind was present below this layer and it was so divided into two different parts: the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. An individual personal consciousness is about the life experience of an individual. It consists of desires, thoughts, ideas, feelings, fears, guilt, forgotten incidents, anxieties, and dreams which are suppressed in the unconscious mind. The overall personal experience or private experience which was repressed in the unconscious mind comes under this personal unconscious.

The next layer which lies beneath the layer of personal unconscious is called the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is not private but it is universal to all individuals. Even if it is not inherited by the memories from an ancestor, it just transforms the modes of thinking, feeling and archetype which are used in literary analysis and psychology. In psychology, it defines the root and base of the collective unconscious. It represents the idea and forms which are transformed from ancestors stored in the unconscious mind. His method slightly differs from Freud's concepts. Freud's concept about the development of the mind is based on the experience in real life but Jung believed that human minds are developed by the biological aspects of our ancestors. In literary criticism, it determines the form and function of literary works. The literary text contains both cultural and psychological myths. The idea of images, patterns, and symbols comes under the Cultural Archetype. In a story, the Characters' behaviours and thoughts come under the psychological archetype.

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V. CARL JUNG'S ARCHETYPE

Carl Jung defines the term Archetype in the field of psychology and it defines the character personality. In this archetype, he defines that a group of memories comes together by the evolution of the mind. Under his archetype he defines, different types of archetypes among the major archetypes the commonly used archetypes are, the Persona, Shadow, the anima or animus, and the self.

A. Persona Archetype

The Persona means the person who shows himself to society. It is derived from Latin and it means mask. The mask represents the person who adopts his personality for social roles or the writer who adopts his character as the fictional character in his story. Carl Jung defines that persona as about in the society the person has a lot of personas depending upon the situation they are surrounded. Some people have different types of characteristics among the different types of people, like one's character may be quite different from when they are with friends and family. The Persona leads one to lack original identity. The Persona also defines another meaning when we come to do a character analysis: A person who hides his true emotion to exclude unwanted results and expresses another emotion to achieve his/her goal. For an example, to explain this Persona, Imagine a man is going for an interview and he feels nervous from the beginning. When he is being questioned in the interview session, he hides his fear and faces the interview charmingly and intelligently.

B. Shadow Archetype

The next type is Shadow is about the representation of the unconscious behaviour of a person. It contains sex and life instincts. It resembles the concept of Freud's Id and it does not have to identify ego identity. The Shadow mostly represents animals in man which are located in the unconscious mind and it also represents weakness and their desires. It does not follow any rules, it only acts for its self-pleasure. It is the hidden or unknown side of a person. Every person has a shadow in both positive and negative ways. The negative side includes behaviour like hate, aggressiveness, greed, and envy. The positive represents the hidden talent of a person like creative thinking. The shadow mostly appears in the dream of a person to visualize the exotic figure, snake, monster, and demon.

C. Self Archetype

The next archetype is 'The Self' occurs through the process of individuation. He refers to it as a circle, square, and mandala. Self defines the total personality of a person in which ego plays a central role in the consciousness of the mind. The realization of self is not only a positive way but there is also

a negative way that people like psychopaths who identified their own identity as serial killers, tend to do more criminal activities. The development of self is based on how the psyche of a person is developed in their developmental stages. If the ego consciousness develops well, that person can identify his true nature in the positive role, but if he fails then it leads to the person identifying himself in a negative role like a thief, serial killer, or drug dealer. People who identify their dark intention as their own identity will be dangerous for themselves and others because they will do negative things for their pleasure as their found identity.

VI. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF DEXTER

In "Darkly Dreaming Dexter" where Dexter wants to hide his psychopathic mentality by taking the role as Forensic Blood spatter analyst and kills the other serial killers. He hides his serial killer nature by using a Forensic blood spatter analyst as his mask. He hides his dark nature and forms his own identity by his intelligence as a Forensic blood spatter analyst working for the police department in Miami, USA. No one around him can find him that he is a serial killer. When Dexter was twelve, he found that he killed the dog due to his killer instincts and he guided him in a particular way to kill the people. Harry taught him that he should kill the bad guys rather than innocent people, he taught him to kill the people who have escaped from justice by committing more crimes. He also taught Dexter to be careful, exact and smart enough to escape without leaving any evidence. That is what Dexter calls as Harry's code and he follows this code and kills the people.

A. Dark passenger inside Dexter

At the beginning of the novel, Dexter mentioned his urge to kill people; an inner voice within turned his urge into a habitual thing and made him an addict to kill bad people. The inner voice created an urge within Dexter and it made him realize that it is his desire to satisfy his killer instincts. He mentioned the inner voice as below

All calling to the Need. Oh, the symphonic shriek of the thousand hiding voices, cry of the need inside, the entity, the silent watcher, the cold quiet thing, the one that laughs, the moon dancer. The me that was not me, the thing that mocked and laughed and came calling with its hunger. With the need. And the need was strong now, very careful cold coiled creeping crackly cocked and ready, very strong, very much ready now- and still, it waited and watched, and it made me wait and watch. (1)

He hides his serial killer nature by using a Forensic blood spatter analyst as his mask. When we see the Shadow Archetype it represents the animal in the man which means the dark nature of man and it was unknown to others. The character often has been shadowed. According to Jung “Everyone carries a shadow and less it is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, the blacker and denser it is.” (Psychology and Religion, 131). The shadow acts as a veil and hides the ego and is made to act as the main element within the character. Here the character Dexter hides his dark side and the shadow within him is his psychopath nature. Dexter played the serial killer and Forensic blood spatter analyst role in this *Darkly Dreaming Dexter*. Here his ego-consciousness identifies his identity in the negative role as a serial killer even though he has a good profession as Forensic blood spatter analyst; he plays the dark side as well as a serial killer. He identifies himself as, Serial killer, in the mask of a Forensic blood spatter analyst.

B. *Dexter's victims*

In this novel he mentioned his first victim was a Priest whose name was Father Donovan he even puts on the mask as Priest and abuses the children at St. Anthony’s orphanage and he also kills the children. He wears the Priesthood as his mask, does wrong, and stains the reputation of one of the most respected professions by the society which should actually lead people to God by telling them to do good deeds. He killed seven children and wrapped them in the rubber sheet. This character, Father Donovan is the serial killer who killed the children and when Dexter came to know it he killed him. Another person who was killed next to the priest by Dexter was Jamie Jaworski, he worked as a Janitor in the high school and targeted the light hair colored girls between the ages of twelve and thirteen. He uses his profession as Janitor as his mask and made a terrible sin by kidnapping those girls and trading the copper in the black market. Then, Dexter’s first Victim was the Last Nurse. When Dexter was nineteen, she used Morphine to overdose on the patients and killed them. She used her profession, Nurse, as a mask and killed the people.

All these serial killer characters kill the people to satisfy their urges and for that, they use their professions as a mask to hide their dark nature. But when we see the Dexter character he hides the dark side by using the professional Forensic blood spatter analyst as a mask and killing the person who deserves it, he kills the other serial killer. His target is to kill the serial killers by plotting in his mind. With the help of Harry, he properly guides by his code. Otherwise Dexter would have been just like other serial killers who knew no bounds of sparing an innocent soul.

VII. CONCLUSION

In "Darkly Dreaming Dexter" the character Dexter who was a serial killer and also a Forensic blood spatter analyst. Dexter the person who hides his dark side and adopts plays the role of Forensic blood flatter analyst for the society then only the cop cannot find his dark side and playing this role also helps him to find the victim easily to catch. He made a relationship with Rita. It is also for social purposes. He does not have any sexual interest but for society's sake he shows off that he was a family man. The role of forensic blood spatter and his relationship with Rita is the mask for him to hide his dark side nature as a serial killer. The character Dexter shows a perfect example of a psychopath because he made his role properly that he was intelligent and cunning. By playing dual roles he can manage his dark side by being a serial killer and hides it from others by adopting a profession such as Forensic blood flatter analyst as his job as his mask. He lives in a society fully aware of being a serial killer. He does not have any emotions but he can feel others' emotions. For example, when Deborah needed Dexter's help, he was there for her. He was very manipulative while playing the double role of serial killer and Blood spatter analyst. He hides his dark side as a serial killer in the form of shadow archetype and identifies his self as a serial killer by adapting himself to the society in the mask of Forensic blood spatter analyst as his profession.

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