

PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF RICK SANCHEZ AND MORTIMER SMITH PHOBIAS

Student's Name and Surname

Course

Due Date

Psychological Analysis of Rick Sanchez's and Mortimer Smith's Phobias

Rick and Morty is one of the most popular television shows of the last decade that has captivated the attention of people from all age groups due to its uniqueness and constant references to various elements of pop culture. Audiences are captivated by the show's comedic plot lines, smart approach to relevant social issues, and dark subplots that may be considered as funny at first glance. In addition, the creators of the show have succeeded to create original and memorable characters, with Rick and Morty being the brightest ones, mainly because they represent some of the most interesting psychological states that are known to general audiences. This research paper provides a reader with an overview of the specifics of the psychological states and phobias of the main characters of the series.

Rick Sanchez

The first most obvious peculiarity of Rich Sanchez is alcoholism. The main hero constantly drinks and openly admits that he is an alcoholic, an addiction which often affects his decisions. Some episodes feature Rick in a constantly drunk state, and he follows the patterns that are known as negative reinforcement, and this state is a natural progression from positive reinforcement.¹ Therefore, it is possible to say that Rick's constant drinking is connected to a negative emotional state that originated from a severely traumatic past event.

With alcoholism covered, it is possible to analyze some of the less-evident disorders that Rick is suffering from. Rick Sanchez avoids the development of any kind of meaningful relationship with other characters, which is pointing out the high possibility of both commitment

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Koob, George F "Theoretical frameworks and mechanistic aspects of alcohol addiction: alcohol addiction as a reward deficit disorder." in *Behavioral neurobiology of alcohol addiction*, (Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2011), 16.

phobia and relationship anxiety. Additionally, these psychological specifics of the main hero are connected to other types of behavior that Rick is continuously expressing during the show. For example, Rick's actions fall under six out of seven criteria that are used to diagnose the antisocial disorder:

- failing to conform to social norms
- irresponsibility
- deceitfulness
- recklessness
- aggressiveness
- and an indifference to the welfare of others²

Mortimer Smith

The psychological picture of Mortimer Smith does not feature the kinds of serious phobias and mental disorders of his grandfather. However, Morty is a character that constantly panics in any kind of stressful situation and he is constantly afraid that something can go wrong at any minute. It is also important to note that Morty struggles to develop relationships, especially romantic ones, during his time at school, and these facts have several clear implications.

To be more specific on the matter, it is clear that Morty is showing signs of a social anxiety disorder, which is most likely connected to the relationships with his parents, who constantly doubt his intellect, which was featured in the pilot episode when Morty's father states, "We both know you're not as fast as other kids, and if you want to compete in this world, you got

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to work twice as hard.”³ The traces of this disorder are clearly visible, especially considering the fact that people suffering from this mental state experience a number of physical symptoms. The list of symptoms is broad and Morty is constantly showing them during his adventures with Rick and in almost every situation:

- fear
- trembling
- trouble concentrating⁴

Conclusion

All the facts about the main heroes create a ground for the identification of the roots behind their phobias and mental issues. It is required to state that all of the behavioral patterns, world views, and dialogues indicate that Rick Sanchez developed alcoholism and antisocial disorder because of a stressful or traumatic event in the past, which also resulted in relationship anxiety and commitment phobia. As for Mortimer Smith, the underlying roots of his anxiety disorder are connected to the relationships with his family members. The most obvious evidence to suggest that Morty’s parents are responsible for his phobias is featured in the pilot episode of the show.

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Roiland, Justin. 2013. *Rick And Morty*. Film. U.S.A.: Adult Swim.

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Stein, Murray B., and Dan J. Stein. "Social anxiety disorder." (*The Lancet* 371, no. 9618, 2008): 1115.

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