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Anti-heroism in Children's Literature: A Psychoanalytic Study of Jeff Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

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Abstract

Anti-heroism in children's literature becomes one of the scholarly interests in recent times. Anti-heroism reveals the lack of heroic traits and imperfection of protagonists and emphasizes their failure as being ideals and icons for children. This research discusses Jeff Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (2007) aiming to examine anti-heroism in Greg Heffley's character, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory and mind structure of Id, Ego, and Superego. The study argues the struggle of middle child in the family and his behavior in the school showing the problems faced by him as a protagonist who unexpectedly go through many shortcomings and downfalls. The study answers questions as why Greg Heffley is portrayed as an anti-hero and how does the psychoanalytic approach help to examine the structure of Greg's personality? This study is divided into two sections and a conclusion. Section one sheds light on anti-heroism, children literature and Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. Section two deals with the novel's analysis according to Freud's theory of psychoanalysis showing antihero qualities in the protagonist's behavior. The last part of the study is the conclusion that sums up the findings of the study.

Key Words: Anti-heroism, heroism, children's literature, Psychoanalysis, mind structure.

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اللابطولية في ادب الأطفال: دراسته تحليلية نفسية لرواية مذكرات طفل اخرق لجيف كني

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الملخص

أصبحت اللابطولية في أدب الأطفال أحد الاهتمامات العلمية في الآونة الأخيرة. تكشف اللابطولية عدم وجود سمات بطولية ووجود عيب في أبطال الرواية وتؤكد فشلهم كمثل وأيقونات للأطفال. يناقش هذا البحث مذكرات جيف كيني لروايته مذكرات طفل اخرق (2007) بهدف فحص مناهضة البطولة في شخصيه البطل جريج هيفلي ، باستخدام نظرية التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد وهيكلية للعقل على أساس لـ Id و Ego و Superego. تناقش الدراسة نضال الطفل الأوسط في الأسرة وسلوكه في المدرسة مما يوضح المشكلات التي يواجهها كبطل يمر بشكل غير مرتقب بالعديد من أوجه الفشل والإخفاقات. تجيب الدراسة على أسئلة مثل لماذا يتم تصوير شخصية جريج هيفلي على أنها مناهضة للبطولة؟ وكيف يساعد نهج التحليل النفسي في فحص بنية شخصية جريج؟ تنقسم هذه الدراسة إلى قسمين وخاتمة. يلقي القسم الأول الضوء على مصطلح اللابطولية وأدب الأطفال ونظرية التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد. يتعامل القسم الثاني مع تحليل الرواية وفقاً لنظرية فرويد في التحليل النفسي التي تُظهر الصفات اللابطولية في سلوك بطل الرواية. الجزء الأخير من الدراسة هو الاستنتاج الذي يلخص نتائج الدراسة.

Section One

1.1 Introduction

Heroes are characters who appear as typical humans to save other people. They appear as means for attaining liberty and equal rights for all people in society. Zimbardo states that “heroes are people who transform compassion (a personal virtue) into heroic action (a civic virtue). In doing so, they put their best selves forward in service to humanity” (Zimbardo 2019: 2). There are different types and attitudes of heroes appear through caring, helping and sacrificing their lives for the sake of others.

Despite that, not all heroes have positive traits. Protagonists sometimes do not show any characteristics of heroes and called Anti-heroes. Anti-heroes are protagonists who lack some of the conventional attributes of traditional heroes like courage or morality. Anti-heroes live in a world with gloomy and ambiguous moral code having flaws and doubts in themselves. They lack physical and moral qualities unlike traditional archetypes of heroes. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* is classified under the umbrella of children literature. It tells the story of the protagonist, Greg Heffley who appears as an ordinary child living with his family and acting as a middle school student.

1.2 Anti-heroism

In recent years, anti-heroes as protagonists have spread in a variety of popular texts, especially in television, movies, comic books and diaries. Anti-hero can be considered as a great deviation from the ideal character of the archetypal hero. There are various sources and definitions that explain and mark the first usage of the term anti-hero and reveals that it is not a modern term; its use may return back to the seventeenth and eighteenth-century literature. It appeared in literature since the time of Greek dramatists and is applied in the period of disillusion after the Second World War. Abrams assumes the first use of anti-hero in the Picaresque novel in sixteenth century and in the protagonist of Defoe's *Moll Flanders* in 1722. *The Underground Man* by Dostoyevsky presents an anti-hero protagonist in 1864. In nineteenth century, the term anti-hero is found in John Wain's *Hurry on Down* 1953. (Abrams1999:11)

According to Abrams an anti-hero can be defined as "the chief person in a modern novel or play whose character is widely discrepant from that which we associate with the traditional protagonist or hero of a serious literary work." (Ibid) Anti-heroes are commonly contrasted with the stereotypical image of protagonists or heroes in serious literary works. If a hero owns characteristically heroic traits like having gallantry or potency as the ones who are found in old epic stories, an anti-hero will not attain those deeds heroically or even does not have any of those traits. The character of an anti-hero might show outright manners or nothing to be appreciative of. Anti-heroism as a term refers to a character who possesses unique qualities that are opposite to those of heroes. Anti-heroes are to be morally and mentally cowards, flawed and weak. The anti-hero can also portray the characteristics of selfishness, although he/she does not realize that; he/she only thinks about his safety and success and forgets other people.

The anti-heroes are central characters in narratives and drama, lacking the admirable qualities of toughness, honesty, decency, and courage that traditional heroes typically have. The character of anti-heroes is difficult to understand because this sort of characters is conveyed implicitly in fiction and often resembles villains in several ways. The anti-heroes are not only a typical villain act as protagonists, but also such bad characters with lots of flaw brought by their actions.

Jessica Page Morell (2008: 44) defines an anti-hero as "someone who disturbs the reader with his weaknesses yet is sympathetically portrayed and who magnifies the frailties of humanity. An anti-hero often reflects society's confusion and ambivalence about morality". Anti-heroes usually have weakness in their characters, personality, decision-making and even the action they take. Anti-heroes may have physical weakness in their bodies and that let them feel weak in front of others. Gurung (2010: 15) ensures that "the person who is given the vocation of failure, a type who is incompetent, unlucky, tactless, clumsy, backhanded and buffoonish."

Anti-heroes are usually depicted as characters who fail in most situations, possess fragile self-esteem, and sometimes appeared as outsiders. They have a lot of flaws and unadmirable qualities, that leading them to be failure. Cairoli (2012: 3) states that "an anti-hero might not have high moral standards. Unlike traditional principal characters of mythology, folklore, or legends, they also might be indecent. Yet, there must be a good side in an anti-hero that makes him/her the main role of a story. There are certain messages or moral lessons that the author wants to extend implicitly".

The anti-hero is portrayed as ambiguous heroic figure, a figure who is good at providing effective moral lesson, willing to break or bend rules by adopting strategies to prevent this moral lesson from spread in the contemporary world. Abrams (1999: 11)

states that the antihero is “petty, ignominious, passive, ineffectual, or dishonest instead of manifesting largeness, dignity, power, or heroism”.

Based on the explanation above, and according to Hornby, the characterizations of an antihero can be concluded as follows:

- a. Petty: “Caring too much about small and unimportant matters, especially when this is unkind to other people” (Hornby: 1130).
- b. Ignominious: “What makes or should make you feel ashamed” (Ibid:771).
- c. Passive: “Accepting what happens or what people do without trying to change anything or oppose them” (Ibid: 1107).
- d. Ineffectual: “Without the ability to achieve much; weak; not achieving what you want to” (Ibid: 793).
- e. Dishonest: “Not honest; intending to trick people” (Ibid: 438).
- f. Fragile: “Weak and uncertain; easily destroyed or spoilt” (Ibid: 615).
- g. Lonely: “Unhappy because you have no friends or people to talk to” (Ibid: 905).

Anti-heroes are the central characters and protagonists in the novels but without common traits of the archetypal heroes.

1.3 Children Literature

Children’s literature is a literary genre has been recognized during the last three centuries. Children’s books are considered as gateways to literature, culture and art. Even when the adults reading the favorite books again or reading them for children may bring old memories from childhood.

Children’s literature is a complex genre wherein finding suitable definition is a challenge task. It has changed over time, and it is possible to find cultural preference for different types of children’s books across the world. Oittinen states that “children themselves do not decide how their literature is defined” (2000:69). Oittinen declares that children have no role in deciding which books are translated, published, or even bought for them. Literature that is said to be for children is actually based on adults’ decision about what they like or dislike. Furthermore, children are not allowed to choose what they want to read (Ibid).

Children’s literature is referred to as a general literature read specifically by children and young adults. The problem that arises is these children’s books are published for mixed audience, both adults and children. This means children’s books should be written, chosen, and consumed by adults. Children’s literature has to read by adults, parents, teachers, critics and publisher, until it reaches its target audience. Children and young adults tend to read books that are not written for their age, as Reiss claims:

"Literature for children and young people (referred to simply as children’s literature now on) is defined not as those books which they read (children and young people read and always have read a wide range of literature), but as literature which has been published mainly for-children and young people "(Reiss 1982:7)

Oittinen provides a poetic and little specific definition of children’s literature which expresses the general idea of what it embraces "I see children’s literature as literature read silently by children and aloud to children. "(Oittinen 2000:4)

Doderer says that “if a large group of children choose to read the same books and make these books popular, this would be considered children’s classics”. According to Doderer, everything that is received by children and young adults is ranked as a reading material for them. Moreover, even the newspaper text and article

in a schoolbook are classified as children's literature. Children's literature also differentiates between books written for education or for entertainment. Most critics argue that children should have fun and entertainment when reading children's literature. Children's books that are intended to convey educational message will lead to boredom for children readers and may not be classified as children's literature.

Kimberly Reynolds highlights that "our transliterate age as e-books, fan fiction and computer games may come under the umbrella of children's literature" (Reynolds 2011:2) Fred Inglis suggests that children's stories are also considered as moral education because narrative stories serve as a way to create and presume cultural identity. Children literature also includes books that became part of one's own childhood and encourage social communication and interaction with other people. Reynolds says that in the UK and US children's literature is restricted to written for 0-16 years old children.

McDowell claims that

"Children's books are generally shorter; they tend to favour an active rather than a passive treatment, with dialogue and incident rather than description and introspection; child protagonists are the rule; conventions are much used; the story develops within a clear-cut moral schematism which much adult fiction ignores; children's books tend to be optimistic rather than depressive; language is child-oriented; plots are of a distinctive order, probability is often disregarded; and one could go on endlessly talking of magic, and fantasy, and simplicity, and adventure." (McDowell 1973:51)

There are some characteristics for children literature that can be summed up as follows:

- 1-The main target audience for books of children literature are children and young people.
- 2-Children literature is written by people who do not belong to the same target group of readers, i.e., it is written by adults.
- 3-Children literature can be perceived as a literature as well as a tool for education and socialization.
- 4-Sharing, performance and reading aloud.
- 5-Emotivity.
- 6-Humour.

All in all, children literature can be defined as material written and produced for information or entertainment of children and young adults. Children books are mainly consumed and beloved by children and young adults, taking into consideration that adults play a big role in writing and deciding on the quality of children's books.

1.4 Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory is mainly developed by Sigmund Freud, and it means mental analysis and that mind is divided into three closely interrelated structures: *Id*, *Ego*, and *superego*. According to Freud the *Id*, *Ego* and *superego* are not person, place, or physical thing, they are the names given to certain motivation forces whose existence is inferred from the way people behave.

The parts of mind structure according to Freud's theory are:

A) *Id*: is the principle of pleasure, it drives the individual to imagine happiness. Individual's personality is much influenced by their *Id*. *Id* refers to the original system

in the personality, it is a selfish, primitive childish, pleasure-oriented part of the personality with no ability to delay gratification. Freud states that *Id* is the primary source of all energy, it is the biological aspect or the original system of personality and home base for instincts. *Id* is the conscious psychic energy to operate *ego* and *superego*. Bressler states that “*Id* is a term used by Sigmund Freud to designate the irrational, instinctual, unknown, and unconscious part of the psyche as differentiated from the ego and superego (Bressler 1994:172).

b) *Ego*: is the principle of reality. It leads the individual to make what they imagine become reality. *Ego* is a psychological aspect of personality and emerges because of the organism need to get in touch with the reality. *Ego* has a function to reduce the tension in organism by finding the appropriate balance. *Ego* is internalized societal and parental standards of ‘good and bad’, ‘right and wrong’ behavior. *Ego* is the part of mind that contains the consciousness. Bressler says that “Ego is a term used by Sigmund Freud to designate the rational, logical, waking part of the psyche as differentiated from the id and the superego” (Ibid:170).

c) *Superego*: is the principle of morality. It consists of some values and norms. *Superego* operates according to the morality principle and serves primarily to protect society and us from Id. The *Superego* controls our sense of right and mistaken guilt. It helps us fit into society by getting us to act in socially acceptable ways. Freud’s theory implies that the *Superego* is symbolic internalization of the father figure and cultural regulation. The *Superego* acts as the conscience, maintaining our sense of morality and proscription from taboos. Bressler defines superego as “A term used by Sigmund Freud to designate that part of the psyche that acts like an internal censor, causing us to make moral judgments in light of social pressures.” (Bressler1994:182). Superegos are of two parts: the ego ideal which includes the standards and rules of good behaviors. These behaviors include those which are approved of by parental and other authority figures. Obeying these rules leads to feelings of pride, value, and accomplishment. The second part is, the conscience which includes information about things that are viewed as bad by society and parents. These behaviors are often forbidden and lead to bad punishments, feelings or consequences of guilt.

1.5 Jeff Kinney’s Life Sketch and Main Literary Works:

Jeff Kinney was born in 1971 in Maryland. Kinney loved to draw cartoons, so he had an idea of drawing a comic strip of comic characters. He drew and uploaded cartoons that had kept in different journals since 1998. Then, he had collected 1,300 pages of material. Those exact pages are the basis of his *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. The first book of the Wimpy Kid series *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* was published in 2007.

Kinney confesses, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* was only his “reaction to not having any success becoming a syndicated cartoonist”. For him, it was only after he had given up this dream that his “life as an author started” (Famous author 2014, online). In his interviews, Kinney has confirmed that he gets the inspiration for the story of the Wimpy Kid from his own childhood experiences in good and bad. In addition, the main character Greg Heffley is based on Jeff Kinney himself. The alike names are not chance either. Jeff has two brothers so he may portray his life by his character Greg. (Schmidt 2010, online). Kinney’s ability to write and think like his middle age main character account for the success of his book <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/buecher/tagebuch->

Until now, the online version of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* has had more than 80 million visits and was soon to be found leading the New York Times bestseller list. “I

really can't wrap my head around the fact that kids from all over the world are reading my books." (Ibid).

In 2009 Jeff Kinney was chosen amongst the top 100 most influential people by the Time magazine. One reason for this is most definitely his talent of getting children who are usually not interested in books to read. (McGrath 2012). He was awarded with the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award in 2009. <http://www.famousauthors.org/jeff-kinney>.

Section Two

2.1 Anti-heroism in *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

Diary of a Wimpy Kid is a story about Greg Heffley's adventures and his time in middle school and home. When his mother gives him the diary, he likes to call it 'journal', because he thinks diaries are embarrassing. The only reason for Greg to keep writing his journal is that, in case he becomes famous, he won't have to answer questions about himself and his life and can simply refer to his diary "when I'm rich and famous, I'll have better things to do than answer people's stupid questions all day long. So, this book is gonna come in handy." (Kinney 2007:2)

The diary begins with the beginning of the new school year and Greg is not excited about it. He prefers to spend more time on becoming famous instead of being bullied by kids that are according to him, "just a bunch of morons" (Ibid). After school, Greg spends his time at his best friend Rowley Jefferson's home to play video games instead of playing outside as his dad wants him to do. Being a middle child in a home with two brothers is not easy for Greg, because his older brother Rodrick keeps pranking him and Greg must look after his younger brother Manny. At Halloween, things became worse, they don't get a lot of candy and a group of teenagers starts chasing them and they have to run and stay at home.

At school things are better. Girls don't seem to care about Greg and his idea to run for Treasurer. He decides to become an athlete to gain more popularity, but he fails as he is small and lacks muscles. As the novel evolves, Greg's mom makes him sign up for the school play of *The Wizard of Oz*. He gets the role of tree. The show goes horribly wrong, and Greg is still far from being famous. Things seem to be better at school when Greg and Rowley become members of Safety Patrols and have to walk the kindergarteners home every day. That leads them to missing the lessons and getting free hot chocolate. One day, Greg messes with the kids while Rowley was sick. Everyone thinks it was Rowley who chased the kids with worms because Greg had borrowed his coat. Rowley receives the blame for this accident. Greg does not confirm his fault to what happened, and this ruins their friendship. Then Rowley is chosen to be the new cartoonist for the school newspaper, he becomes popular and finds new friends. This makes Greg jealous of Rowley and almost starts to fight him. At the end, the teenagers that chased Greg and Rowley at Halloween find them at their school and make Rowley eat a piece of cheese that had been lying at the basketball court for almost a year. After that, Greg tells others that he ate the cheese and thereby he saves Rowley from being made fun of, and they end being friends again.

According to Freud's Psychoanalytic theory and division of personality, the Ego is the state of the mind in contact with reality creating balance. The Ego of Greg appears when he did not tell Rowley about the truth of the safety patrol. When he dishonestly about what happened and who is responsible for the accident this is his Id but when he decided to tell his friend the truth this is his Ego. "On the way home from school, I

came clean with Rowley and told him the whole truth about what happened, and how it was me who chased the kids with the worms.” (Kinney: 2007:183)

In Freud’s Psychoanalytic theory, Superego refers to the rationality of personality aspect. The principle of morality comprises many values and evaluated norms. Superego operates according to the morality principle and operates predominantly to protect society and us from id. “Superego acts as an internal censor, causing us to make moral judgments in light of social pressures” (Bressler, 1994: 151). The superego of Greg appears when group of adolescents pushing Rowley to eat the cheese from the ground, so he gets the cheese touch. If Rowley speaks, he would be finished, at this time Greg behaves in a moral way so he tells the others that “I told everyone that I knew what happened to the Cheese. I said I was sick of it being on the blacktop, and I just decided to get rid of it once and for all.” (Kinney:2007:215).

Diary of a Wimpy Kid is classified under the umbrella of children literature because it has used cartoon drawing and mainly set in a school. These points support its genre as children literature. Moreover, it deals with Greg Heffley, a middle school student who lives an ordinary life; his adolescence is like that of the average children in twenty-first century in America. Although Greg lives a very different childhood from other heroic characters in fictional works, Greg’s story is read by millions of children in over thirty languages. Even though his character’s popularity, Greg is described as a selfish and despicable anti-hero character. Though Greg exaggerates his childish behavior of everyday trails; he as an anti-hero, does not need to go through dangerous journeys or complete various trails. Greg shows his bad characteristics with relating to his everyday exploit.

Greg begins his diary by defending himself against accusation of being wimpy. He also struggles in athletics and exercises. He criticizes the structure of middle school to put the weakling against the oversized and bullies. Greg identifies himself as weak in gym since he is the lightest kid in his class. Despite the misgivings about his physical abilities, Greg shows his own intellectual superiority to others around him. He considers himself as superior and this superiority extends to his attitudes towards his parents, teachers, and his friend Rowley.

Greg has some traits shared with other central character since he looks for popularity. In his diary, he does not only record his dreams and hopes, but also practices his future success when he ignores the “stupid questions” (Kinney2007:2) that masses will ask him. But now, he gets himself to being "stuck in middle school with a bunch of morons" (Ibid).

According to Freud’s division of personality, the Id serves as the pleasure principle since its function is to seek satisfaction of pleasure drives. “The irrational, instinctual, unknown, and unconsciousness part of the psyche Freud calls the id. wanting immediate satisfaction for all its instinctual desires” (Bressler, 1994: 150). The first representation of Id appears when Greg aims to satisfy his desires and instincts to be a famous person “Like I said I’ll be famous one day” (Kinney: 2007:2). His desires and dreams are unfulfilled due to many shortcomings.

Greg lacks moral action, so he makes up these inadequacies in his laziness. His laziness extends to play and work, causing him to disrupt his position to avoid advance reading groups, preferring muscle-building to health exercise. Greg’s actions expose his unheroic qualities and less admirable mentality. Many of his flaws appear when he failed to act well. Greg ignores the school and parental authorities. He usually lies to his father about his place because he preferred playing video games to the outdoors activities. He frequently irritates his father by trying to subvert his parental authority.

His mother is sad especially by Greg's wimp and failure to get the expectation of a mature male.

Greg is both a middle-schooler and middle child in the house, he suffers injustice in school and house. His brother Manny and Rodrick represent rivals that take place outside school while in school he suffers from bullies. Mrs. Heffley generally shows patient and understanding with all her children, but she does not accept mistreatment for spoiled Manny. When Greg passes his usual level of misbehavior, his mother abandons to encourage him.

Heffley represents himself positively, suggesting that he can contribute meaningfully to the society and deliver moral message. He does not say that he is perfect but simply an ordinary child aspires to success in future. Greg displays ignorance about some aspect of life, he offends every teacher he meets by disturbing recess, contributing to fall of his study and submitting newspaper comics cartoon considered unsuitable. Greg reveals his school's hidden curriculum easily, he realizes how teachers classify students and manipulating the internal system of school according to their advantage.

Greg has few traits to endure him to the upper levels of the middle school hierarchy, but his attempts usually fail like in athletics came to nothing, communication skills are undeveloped and inability to get popularity. Greg as an anti-hero represents the action and trails of the ordinary person more than traditional hero. Anti-heroes maintain the realism and contemporaneity more than traditional heroes. Depicting Greg as a wimpy kid rather than a hero provides a viewpoint about the problem of bullies.

Greg embodies traits that adults consider them as problematic and unsuitable for children. Adults refuse Greg's anti-heroic action while children laugh at his misguided efforts to impress them. Jacobs says that " All you can do is pray your children understand irony. And that they don't view the Greg Heffley as role models. And that they read long enough to see that bad behavior does have consequences. " (Jacobs: 2012). Greg stands for everyone in his childhood rather than typical protagonist who morally upright and physically fit. He shows how children deal with difficulties of middle schools. Greg is stereo typical image of an anti-hero.

One of the most important situations that proves Greg as an anti-hero is the safety patrol. The safety patrol is a service ran by middle school. The purpose of safety patrol is to act as the police in the middle school. Their tasks include taking children from the kindergarten and enforce the laws of the school. The members of safety patrol have a lot of privileges like free hot chocolate, missing the classes and protection from bullies. Greg claims that getting caught with safety patrol officer, may get others into trouble such as being suspended or getting outside from the program.

Greg and Rowley sign in the safety patrol because of the benefits to enjoy hot chocolate and miss at least twenty minutes of the classes. Their job is to walk some children from kindergarten to home back. One day, Rowley was absent from safety patrol because he has to take a quiz, so Greg takes Rowley's coat. Greg terrorizes the children with worms, they became scared and run with Greg chasing them. At that moment "It was Mrs. Irvine, who is a friend with Rowley's mom. She must have thought I was Rowley because I was borrowing his coat. And I wasn't about to correct her, either" (Kinney 2007,181).

Mrs. Irvin sees him but because he is wearing Rowley's coat, she mistakes him to Rowley, so she berates him and complains to Mr. Winsky. Rowley is suspended from the safety patrol, and he apologizes to all children. After talking with his mother about the accident without specific details and how he struggles to solve the problem, his mother tells him to do the "right thing" (Kinney,2007:183). He confesses his guilt and

tells Rowley the truth. “I came clean with Rowley and told him the whole truth about what happened, and how it was me who chased the kids with the worms” (Kinney 2007, 183). Greg expects that his friend will accept the punishment but when Rowley refuses, he gets angry of him. Later, Mr. Winsky knows the truth and kicks Greg out while reinstating and promoting Rowley to be the team’s captain. Greg misused authority in the safety patrol, proves one of the characteristics of anti-heroes that is dishonest. The following figure illustrates this situation clearly:

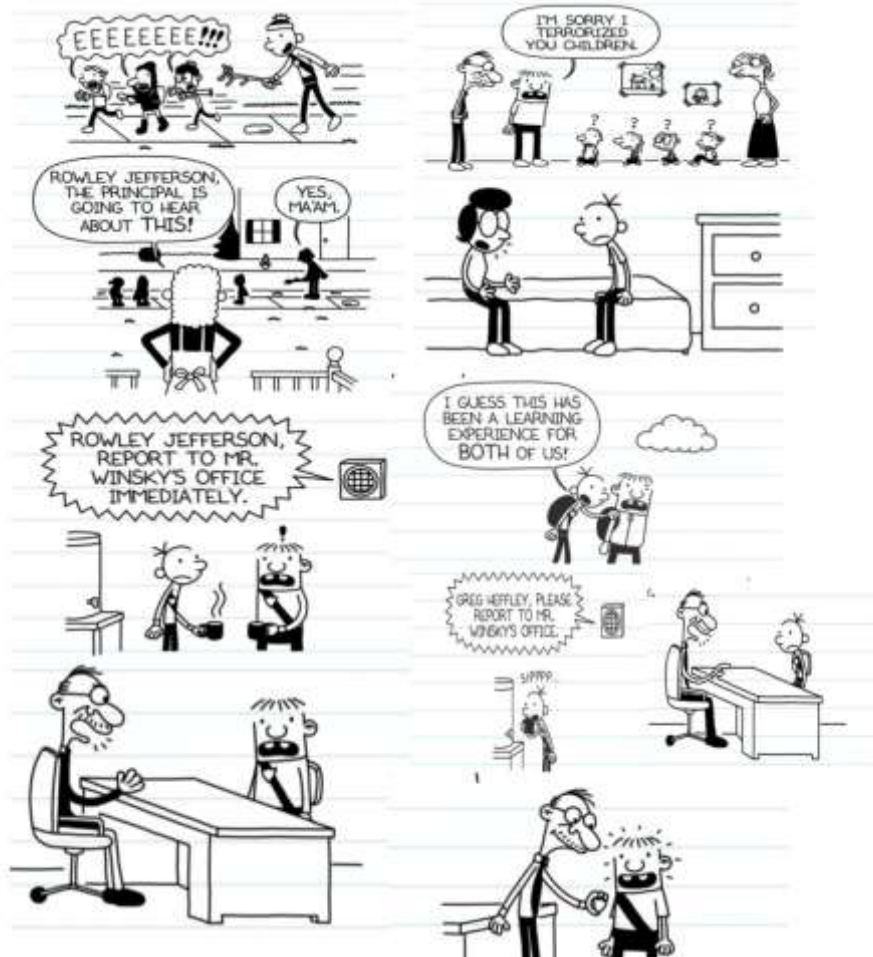


Figure (1) Safety Patrol

Another situation proves Greg as anti-hero is the big Wheel accident. In Christmas, Rowley gives a big Wheel to Greg. Greg disappointed because he was hoping something better from Rowley. Later, Greg makes up game with the big Wheel. The game is to knock Rowley off the bike by a ball. One time, Greg misses and knocks the front Wheel of the big wheel. Rowley falls and breaks his hand. Greg tries to cheer him with jokes, but Rowley was hurt badly. after Christmas vacation Rowley wears a cast and everybody at school crowded around Rowley as if he is a hero and he babied by the girls. Greg saw Rowley's popularity and tries to cash in by telling others “I'm the one who broke his hand” but he totally falls. (Kinney 2007:142). He feels himself making something good for Rowley when he breaks his hand and became famous among the students. Greg portrays the anti-hero characteristics of petty and ignominious as it is revealed in the following figure.



Figure (2) Big Wheel

Zoo-wee-mama is a comic cartoon appears in *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Through the novel, the school announces to choose a new cartoonist for the school newspaper. Greg and Rowley register to be the cartoonist of newspaper. Greg thinks that this is his chance to be famous and get popularity since he is talented at drawing. Rowley cartoon is Zoo-wee-mama which originally is the idea of Greg. Rowley continuous drawing the cartoon even after Greg abandons it. Greg all the time tries to draw something different “I told Rowley maybe we should come up with some new ideas, but he just wanted to keep writing Zoo-Wee Mamas” (Kinney 2007:170).

Rowley's drawing is chosen and published in the school newspaper, and Rowley becomes the new cartoonist. Rowley gets famous among students and has new friends. “So now Rowley's getting all the fame that was supposed to be mine.” (Kinney 2007:205). Greg gets jealous from Rowley's fame and feels lonely. Jealousy and loneliness prove Greg as anti-hero.



Figure (3) Zoo-Wee Mama

Conclusion

Anti-heroes retain the realism and contemporaneity more than conventional heroes. *Dairy of a Wimpy Kid* proves the denial of virtues existed in conventional heroes, failure to offer role models to adolescence readers, and slight criticisms of

cultural standards. Greg Heffley conveys the boredom of school, increasing anxieties that American schoolchildren are becoming disastrous, and demonstrates intensified irresponsibility when society places larger challenges on young people than ever before. Over time, the slightly changing prospects of heroes in children's literature subsequently influence the progress of the antihero. Greg can be seen as a typical example of the pattern of comic antiheroes, who join influence with courage but fail to realize their failure to achieve their goals.

Kinney distinctively thrive in enticing young and adolescence readers because flawed protagonists more intimately like real-world children. Whether the antiheroes offer ethical instances to their readers or not, their importance to their stories prompts children that they need not kill dragons or save the world to draw the attention and win praise. Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis exemplifies many situations and behaviors in the novel that shows Greg Heffley's personality and struggle in middle school in America as being a wimpy kid rather than a hero facing many problems including bullies.

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