

الفصام كما تم تمثيله أدبيا في رواية جيمس رايس أليس والذئابة

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الملخص

تتعمق الدراسة في آليات الفصام كما تم تمثيلها في رواية جيمس رايس أليس والذئابة (2015). تهدف الدراسة إلى تحديد الأسباب، والأعراض، وعلاج مرض انفصام الشخصية كما تم تمثيله أدبيا في رواية أليس والذئابة. توضح الدراسة كيف يعاني بطل الرواية من وصمة العار المرتبطة بالأمراض العقلية وذلك من أجل تغيير موقف القارئ تجاه المرضى النفسيين. تستخدم الدراسة نظريات نفسية مختلفة، مثل النظرية الديناميكية النفسية، ونظرية التحليل النفسي، ونظرية الاستعداد والضغط. الورقة مهمة لأنها تقدم معلومات طبية جافة من خلال دمجها مع أساطير أدبية. ستقدم هذه الدراسة رؤى جديدة لها فائدة كبيرة في زيادة الوعي بمرض انفصام الشخصية. الورقة مهمة لأنها تدعو القراء للتفكير في ممارسات المجتمع في التعامل مع المرضى العقليين. مع تحليل شامل للرواية، تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على ثلاثة مواضيع رئيسية تظهر في أليس والذئابة (2015). تتعلق الموضوعات بأعراض وأسباب مرض انفصام الشخصية، والتمثيل الأدبي للعقل المضطرب لمرض انفصام الشخصية، والوصمة المرتبطة بالأمراض العقلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفصام، الأوهام، التحليل النفسي، وصمة العار، الأسباب.

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Schizophrenia as Represented Dramatically in James Rice's Alice and the Fly

Abstract:

The paper delves into the mechanisms of Schizophrenia as represented in James Rice's Alice and the Fly (2015). The paper purports to delineate the causes, symptoms, and the cure of Schizophrenia as delivered literarily in Alice and the Fly. The paper shows how the protagonist suffers from the stigma associated with mental illnesses in order to change the reader's attitude towards the mentally ill. The study uses different psychological theories, such as psychodynamic theory, Psychoanalytic theory, and the diathesis-stress theory. The paper is significant as it delivers dry medical information by integrating it with fictional circuits. This paper will provide new insights that have much benefit into raising the awareness of Schizophrenia. The paper is significant as it invites readers to ponder the practices of society in dealing with the mentally ill. With a thorough analysis of the novel, this paper highlights three main themes that appear in Alice and the Fly (2015). The themes concern the symptoms and causes of Schizophrenia, the fictional representation of the turbulent mind of the schizophrenic, and the stigma associated with mental illnesses.

Keywords: Causes, Delusions, Psychoanalytic, Schizophrenia, Stigma,

1. Introduction:

Although literature and science may appear to be a farfetched match, James Rice's *Alice and the Fly* (2015) is an example of the intersection between science and literature, where literature functions as a medium for delivering scientific information. Literature can be inspired by science. Normally, we consider science as one type of human inquiry and literature as another, and that the two have nothing in common. However, *Alice and the Fly* brings these two fields together. Each field of study complements the others and contributes significantly to our ability to gain a thorough grasp of the entire.

There are many different ways that literary works have portrayed mental health. Some literary works present mental illnesses and associated therapies in a harsh, unflattering way. Others have accurately and sympathetically portrayed it, even if they unintentionally highlight how callous society is. For those fortunate enough to have never suffered from mental illness, autobiographical accounts of mental illness have long offered a fascinating window into the world of the insane. For instance, Plath's semi-autobiographical account of her own acute depression in *The Bell Jar*. Delores Price is shown a tragic experience and how she spends years in a facility after attempting suicide in *She's Come Undone* by Wally Lamb (1992). Leonard, one of the main characters in Jeffrey Eugenides' 2011 book *The Marriage Plot*, battles manic depression.

In *Alice and the Fly*, Greg has suffered from Schizophrenia since childhood, and he has phobia of spiders, so he hallucinates their presence everywhere. Harassed at school and ignored at home, he becomes preoccupied with Alice, a girl to whom he has never spoken. Greg's journal entries are mixed with transcripts of police interviews in the novel, which make it evident from the start that something terrible has happened (Allan, 2015).

2. Problem of the Study:

This study's research questions center on Greg's psychological abnormality, which is schizophrenia. The researcher determines the following as the study's problems:

1. What symptoms of schizophrenia does Greg experience in *Alice and the Fly* by James Rice?
2. What are the contributing factors to Greg's schizophrenia in *Alice and the Fly* by James Rice?
3. What are the effects of schizophrenia experienced by Greg in James Rice's *Alice and the Fly*?

3. Objective of the Study:

There are numerous goals for this research project. The first is to determine whatever schizophrenia symptoms the protagonist of *Alice and the Fly* has displayed. Second, this study examines the factors of schizophrenia experienced by the main character. Thirdly, using a psychology-based method to literary criticism, the researcher examines how the main character's schizophrenia has affected him on the social level. The purpose of this study is to find out how schizophrenia occurs and its impact as illustrated in James Rice's *Alice and the Fly*.

4. Review of Related Literature:

Alice and the Fly is about Schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is "a chronic brain disorder that affects about one percent of the population" (Carpenter & Parekh, 2015, para. 1). The disease's symptoms can include hallucinations, delusions, trouble staying motivated, and issues with thinking and concentrating (Wahl, 1995, p. 4).

The branch of knowledge that is closest to literature, in terms of its relationship to human life, is psychology. Psychology and literature share a relationship that is representative of and intriguing to human thought. An example of the fusion of science and literature is *Alice and the Fly*, in which literature serves as a vehicle for

disseminating scientific knowledge. In an Interview by Steve Powell (2023), James Rice describes his way to grasp Schizophrenia: "I read, I watched documentaries, I researched case studies. But a lot of this was near the end, to be honest."

There are numerous prior studies that can be used as references by the researcher when authoring this study. The researcher has discovered earlier studies that employed *Alice and the Fly* by James Rice as their study's subject. The first study was conducted by Clare Allan (2015). According to Allan (2015), the primary strength of *Alice and the Fly* is found in its scathingly satirical depiction of a world in which everyone tries to hide the hollowness of their existence by using "metaphorical phantoms."

Alice and the Fly tackles a complex web of issues under the umbrella of schizophrenia. Matthew Selwyn (2015) describes the multiplicity of the topics that the novel tackles as:

This landscape, where people live psychically apart even when they are physically close, allows Rice to explore a wide-range of issues, from casual adultery to social inequality, bad and abusive parenting to mental illness. Even Greg, in the haze of his phobia, deals with very typical teenage issues: unrequited love, a fear and confusion over sexual love as opposed to romantic love, a want to fit in with his peers while disdaining much about what that means.

Because society is portrayed in *Alice and the Fly* as the antagonist or as an antagonistic force that is attempting to suffocate or suppress the protagonist, *Alice and the Fly* focuses on alienation to varying degrees. Each of the choices depicts the protagonist battling the negative repercussions of the oppressive power that society wields. According to Max Liu (n.d),

We're accustomed to young narrators with learning difficulties but Rice's stylistic verve and skillful storytelling make us keen to discover if we're right to be fearful for his characters, while also raising pertinent questions about social divisions and the way outsiders are treated today.

5. Methodology:

This study employs qualitative descriptive method. The researcher has analyzed the schizophrenic disorder experienced by the main character by using literary criticism theory with a psychological approach. The researcher analyzes abnormal psychology by Kurt Schneider 's theory of schizophrenia symptoms, psychodynamic approach, and the stress-diathesis model. This analysis is supported by the text and context based interpretation.

6. Discussion:

6.1. Symptoms:

Schizophrenia is a complicated illness that affects 1% of the population. (Leucht et al., 2007, p.1). This mental upnormality is a severe mental condition characterized by a variety of bizarre behaviors, such as hallucinations, false or distorted perception, and bizarre thinking. Schizophrenics are unable to distinguish between real and imagined experiences. This kind of neurosis is characterized by problems with logic, possibly strange behavior or aberrant movements, and other symptoms. (National Institute of Mental Health, 2000). Life stressors may affect the onset and evolution of symptoms of Schizophrenia, according to researchers, who also believe that a number of genetic and environmental factors play a part in the disorder's development. (Torres,2020).

Kurt Schneider (1959) provided a lengthy list of signs and symptoms he believed to be pathognomonic for Schizophrenia. Such symptoms as delusions, visual and auditory hallucinations, and social retreat or isolation were referred to by him as

"first-rank symptoms" (Soares-Weise et al., 2015, p.1). Throughout *Alice and the Fly* (2015), Greg has the delusion to be in a love relationship to a girl whom he has never spoken directly to. He's totally preoccupied with this girl. In fact, the entire book is directed to her in an epistolary form. Greg also suffers from visual hallucinations; he visualizes the presence of spiders everywhere although they do not exist in reality. He refers to the spiders as "them":

It's not people so much that bother me. It's Them. I heard once that a person is never more than three yards away from one of Them at any time, and since then I can't help feeling that the more people there are around, the more there's a chance that one of Them will be around too. I know that's stupid. (Rice, 2015, Chapter 2, p.3)

The most common type of hallucinations is auditory, or hearing something that others can't hear (Soares-Weise et al., 2015, p.2). Greg has auditory hallucinations of "them": "I could hear Them, their usual whispers" (Rice, 2015, Chapter 16, p.3). Greg shows the symptom of social withdrawal and isolation (Soares-Weise et al., 2015, p.3). Greg lives in his own gloomy and lonely world:

IC; That's the thing. You could interview the whole class and you wouldn't find a single person that knows him. Not really. I guess that's what makes him creepy. I guess that's what makes him psycho, really. How alone he is. (Rice, 2015, Chapter 3, p. 17)

Schizophrenia has other different symptoms, such as speech difficulties as well as a propensity for aggressiveness, and suicidal thoughts (Soares-Weise et al., 2015, p.2). In the novel, Greg suffers from a lisp: "I asked the girls to excuse me. They laughed again. 'Excuse me!' 'Excuse me'" (Rice, 2015, chapter 30, p.24). Being Schizophrenic, Greg shows signs of violence towards others: "The knife was still tucked into my belt, cold against my hip. I couldn't help but imagine it, pressing it into your father's stomach (Rice, 2015, chapter 30 p.41). Greg thinks of different

violent ways of hurting others:" I doubt half a teaspoon of T-Rex Bleach could kill anyone. Especially not someone as big as your father (Rice,2015, chapter 14, p.5).

Itching or scratching appears to be a predominant symptom of Schizophrenia. Fjellner and Arnetz (1985) proposed that shakable psychological condition is observed to be associated with induced itch (pp.504–508). In the novel, Greg is described having the habit of scratching himself:" It was at this point I realised I was scratching at my arm, which is something I do when I'm nervous (Rice,2015 ,Chapter 3, p. 17) . The motivation for scratching is ""Pleasurable pain"". According to Bin Saif et al., scratching gives immediate relief of nuisance and may perhaps serve to decrease inner stress. Pain and pleasure have traditionally been thought of as opposites, with opposing forces influencing our behavior in opposing directions: we attempt to avoid pain while also seeking pleasure - supposedly never both at the same time. In far more widespread and ubiquitous occurrences, pain and pleasure commonly overlap and intersect, with pleasure being the result of pain. (Bin Saif et al., p.981) . Greg not only scratches himself but also others. He scratched his sister in the Filand Island and she was about to die:

I saw Sarah, not as she is now, but when she was little, when she'd scratch and scratch at Them, just like I was scratching at you now, trying my best to claw Them from your skin, but there were just so many, too many. t was like the time in the boat all over again, the other time on Finners Island, the time I try not to think about. (Rice,2015 ,chapter 30, p.107)

Moreover, he put Alice in the sink and kept scratching her body till she dies:

Then a scratching started over at the sink and I turned in time to see another, crawling out from behind the mirror. This one was enormous, about the size of your hand – which I was holding

now, clutching in my bloodied fist – and it too approached the bathtub, only quicker than the first, not so slow and steady but in these short scurrying bursts. (Rice,2015 , chapter 31/12, p. 102)

6.2 Causes

Rupani and De Sousa (2017) proposed that Schizophrenia, according to the psychodynamic approach, is caused due to an unsettled conflict between the id, ego, and superego. As the conflict is unsettled, it leads to the regression of ego into the id. The ego is the rational component of the mind and in Schizophrenia, the ego is not separated from the id, so the person ceases to operate on the basis of the reality principle, therefore losing touch with reality (Rupani & De Sousa, 2017, p.7). Cognitive disorders, hallucinations, and delusions are all symptoms of the id's attempts to satisfy its needs in the absence of the ego (Rupani & De Sousa, 2017, p.7). Greg looks to be disconnected from reality in the novel; he lives in his own dream world and loses touch with reality as a result. Greg's instructor emphasizes this: "Miss Hayes has a new theory. She thinks I'm not really scared of Them. She thinks they're just something to blame my anxiety on. She thinks I hide my real fears behind Metaphorical Phantoms" (Rice,2015 ,chapter 12, p. 1).

In *Alice and the Fly*, the relationships within this family plays an important role in developing Greg's Schizophrenia. Rice's work makes us consider the limitations of familial love. His Mother is busy spending her time redesigning their already perfect home and with social gatherings instead of spending the time with her children: "We live in one of the avenue's corner houses with a total of ten rooms and every couple of months my father gives Mum his credit card and she goes to work on one. New style, new theme, new colour scheme. Sometimes she gets walls knocked down or fireplaces installed" (Rice,2015, Chapter 2, p.1). His Father, the plastic surgeon,

doesn't come home for days:" Sundays are becoming kind of a big deal because it's the only night my father eats with us (Rice,2015, chapter 5, P. 21). More and above, Greg hints that his father has relationships with other women:" I'd love one day for my father to employ a male secretary, flat-chested with natural black hair and a fat nose. I think it'd stop Mum getting so tense" (Rice,2015, chapter 5, P. 20). His sister is also busy rehearsing for the Christmas Dance without paying attention to her brother. His father absents himself with work and women, and his mother distracts herself with social climbing and decorating and his younger sister Sarah dances her way away from the misery in the house. Greg alludes to the crack in the ceiling which is a symbol of the crack in their familial ties: "Today's decorators were a father-and-son plastering firm, smoothing over the cracks in the lounge ceiling. (Rice,2015, Chapter 3, p. 3). Every child should have a caring father and a nice mother, according to God's plan. If either parent neglects, the child's sense of security and emotional stability will be jeopardized. In order to comprehend how each of us shapes our identities via eight phases of psychosocial development from childhood to adulthood, Erik Erikson (1968) established a psychosocial theory. Erikson (1968) asserted that the "well-parented" child comes out confident in himself, thrilled with his newly discovered control, and proud rather than humiliated. A family should be a close-knit group of people who live together in a loving and caring environment. Family relationships have a significant impact on one's well-being. The quality of family ties, including providing love, guidance, and care or the opposite of that, can influence the well-being of children (Thomas, Liu& Umberson, 2017, pp.1-2).

According to Tsuang et al. (2004), the stress-diathesis model denotes that both the individual's particular genetic make-up and environmental stressors contribute to this propensity to develop Schizophrenia (p.73). If a first-degree blood relative, such as a parent or sibling, has a condition, the risk goes up. The condition that

shows how susceptible a person is to both biological and environmental stimuli. A condition's onset can be triggered by an environmental stressor, particularly in those who are genetically susceptible to it. Only a small amount of stress is necessary to start Schizophrenia in someone who is predisposed to acquiring it (Tsuang et al. ,2004, pp.73–83).

Greg combines both the genetic as well as the environmental stressors to develop Schizophrenia. In the novel, Greg has genetic predisposition to develop Schizophrenia as his grandmother is also Schizophrenic. MZ twins have a 48 percent chance of developing Schizophrenia, according to Gottesman (1991, p.1). Greg's grandmother is described throughout the novel to behave in a similar fashion to Greg:

Believing all that stuff, believing in imaginary people, right? Anyway, she got Greg's condition and her own all jumbled. She was trying to help him but she was making it worse, going on about 'them' all the time, taping up all the cracks in the house (Rice,2015, Chapter 29, p.30).

At the same time, Greg suffers from environmental or social stressors because of the absence and negligence of his parents. A negative emotional atmosphere is another reason linked to Schizophrenia. (Brown et al, 1958, pp. 241-258). Having both genetic and environmental catalyzers, Greg has become schizophrenic.

5.3 Stigma

The novel addresses the discrimination against the mentally ill in a way to arouse empathy in the readers. Readers become pathetically aroused as they read the novel. Much of *Alice and the Fly's* focus is how Greg's society and family slowly forget that he is still part of society and slowly treat him as less than human. The protagonist, who suffers from Schizophrenia, is avoided by his peers for and called "psycho": Greg is often stigmatized for having a mental illness and is considered "crazy" by

society, so he prefers to shun himself from society: "Some of them whispered. Carly Meadows said the word 'psycho', which is a word they like to use." (Rice, 2015, p. 11). Ultimately, this stigma labels Greg as the other. One of his classmates humiliates him by showing the medical pills he takes in front of all students: "I used to take it at school on my lunch break but then Goose found them in my bag and showed them to Ian and he stood up and read the label out in front of everyone and so now I keep them at home. (Rice, 2015, chapter 5, P. 24). Instead of supporting him, his sister disdains him: "Whatever. Just hurry up and get out of here. If anyone asks, we're not related, OK" (Rice, 2015, chapter 30, p. 29). Instead of backing him, Greg's mother feels embarrassed by his mental disorder and urges him to behave normally in front of her guest: "Whatever. Just hurry up and get out of here. If anyone asks, we're not related, OK" (Rice, 2015, chapter 30, p. 29).

Mental illness is more of a social blindness rather than a mental disorder. According to Corrigan and Watson, many people with serious mental illness face dual challenges. On the one hand, people experience the disease's symptoms and disorders. In the meantime, they dispel misconceptions about mental illness that lead to prejudice and stereotyping. (2002, p. 1). In reality, the patient's illness could deteriorate as a result of social stigma and discrimination.

6. Conclusion

The paper examines the mechanics of Schizophrenia as they are shown in *Alice and the Fly* by James Rice (2015). Schizophrenia is highly transmissible as demonstrated in the novel. The purpose of the study is to outline Schizophrenia's causes, symptoms, and treatment as they are presented literarily in *Alice and the Fly*. In order to alter the reader's perception of people with mental illnesses, the article illustrates how the protagonist experiences the stigma connected with such conditions. The study makes use of a variety of psychological theories, including the

stress-diathesis theory, psychodynamic theory, and psychoanalytic theory. The study is important because it uses made-up circuits to integrate dry medical knowledge. This essay will offer fresh perspectives that will greatly help spread the word about Schizophrenia. The study is significant because it challenges readers to consider how society operates in.

The significance of the piece lies in its invitation to readers to consider how society treats those who are mentally ill. This study emphasizes three key ideas *from Alice and the Fly* with a detailed analysis of the book (2015). The topics center on the signs and causes of Schizophrenia, a fictitious portrayal of the schizophrenic's chaotic mind, and the stigma attached to mental diseases.

The author excels at making the reader care about and even empathize with the main character despite his mental instability. This book places a strong emphasis on the importance of the mentally ill. The novel explores the depths of mental, emotional, and spiritual struggles.

Based on the study, it can be inferred that violent behavior by schizophrenic characters occurs frequently. The findings of this study are anticipated to be able to make theoretical contributions to literary studies and serve as a resource for future researchers to elaborate and explain schizophrenia in more detail.

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