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The Victimized Antihero in *Breaking Bad*, the Netflix TV Series

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Abstract:

This paper examines the development of the character of Walter White, the central character in Vince Gilligan's TV series *Breaking Bad*. It analyzes Walter White's transformation into an antihero in the context of social psychology, drawing upon these three concepts: motivation, frustration-aggression hypothesis, and attitude change. This paper delves into these psychological contexts along with the role of the secondary characters who are seen as part of the reasons for this transformation. The aim of this paper is to raise awareness and to pinpoint the propagation of the antihero's character.

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Introduction:

Social psychology is one of the most modern sciences that study how social behaviours, thoughts, and feelings are influenced by others. In other words, it investigates the person within the social context and how he is affected by his perceptions of himself and of others as well as by the relationships that he has in his life. Social psychology is a broad discipline that covers many subfields or areas of study such as cognition, attribution, social influence, attitudes, behaviours, prejudice and discrimination, aggression, and many others which are seen as vital factors in engendering the antihero. This paper examines how Walter White has evolved into an antihero through a close critical analysis of those areas of social psychology that are pertinent to the series. Of the six basic factors: 1) motivation, 2) frustration-aggression hypothesis, 3) attitude change, the paper will begin by examining the antihero through the following three: motivation, frustration-aggression hypothesis, and attitude change. Next, the paper will demonstrate how the social behaviour of the antihero's assistant conforms to these social psychology factors: 1) prejudice, 2) attribution. Last, the paper will analyze the tools that are used in the work of art including the dramatic tools.

According to social psychology, the antihero is identified and marked by his behaviour. However, behaviour cannot be addressed without mentioning Freud's psychoanalytic psychology and Jung's personality psychology. Jung's concept of the shadow applies and explains the antihero's behaviour. However, the focus of the paper is to analyse the behaviour of the antihero with regards to his society, and within the framework of social psychology. This means that personality psychology will be addressed, but it will not be the focus of the research.

Walter White is the antihero in the Netflix series *Breaking Bad* (originally aired on AMC, a television channel). The series talks about a chemistry teacher who has two jobs in order to afford his expenses and to satisfy his pregnant wife's needs. To his devastation, he is diagnosed with lung cancer, an illness which expensive treatments he cannot afford. He asks Hank, his brother in law and a DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration), to help him get a job and goes out with him on a mission. Later, Walter meets Jesse who used to be his student, and who is running away from Hank because of his involvement in making a type of drug called Meth. Walter asks him to start the Meth cooking with him. Meanwhile, his wife Skyler starts to doubt him, until she finds out about his illness. She begins to push him to ask Elliot, his former partner, to pay for his treatment expenses. White had previously owned a company (Gray Matter) with Elliot, but White sold his share in it. Walter used to date his assistant Gretchen, but after they broke up, White left the company. Gretchen married Elliot. Later on, this company became a huge success which caused Elliot to be wealthy. This is why Walter obsesses about power and wants to earn his own money. He not only wants to show that he is capable of affording his own expenses, but he also wants to prove that he will be able to leave his family with a lot of that money and power.

Accordingly, Walter starts his cooking with Jesse. The first Meth distributor they try to deal with is Crazy 8 who threatens to kill both of them. They plot to kill him instead, so Walter White

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kidnaps him. As the scene between them progresses, Crazy 8 attempts to kill Walter White, but Walter manages to kill him. Following the killing, White turns himself into Heisenberg (the assumed name he gives himself as a drug lord). The series traces the obstacles he and Jesse face until they grow bigger in business and meet Gus Fring, one of the big distributors. He offers Walter White a lot of money in exchange for his time to cook. However, Gus does not want to work with Jesse because he smokes meth. Gus forces Walter to cook with his new assistance Gale and leaves Jesse behind. At the beginning Walter agrees, but he could not work with the new assistant and wants Jesse to assist him. Gus gets angry with Walter and threatens he will kill all Walter's family. Walter starts plotting to kill Gus and, after a lot of failed tries, he succeeds to kill him. Meanwhile, the DEA, and Hank in specific, tries to search for the new meth makers. Hank starts to connect the evidences that Walter is the one behind all of that, but does not have enough proof, especially that Hank believes Walter is a very smart person. He does not leave enough evidence. Walter and Jesse run out of materials and plot to steal the materials in order to begin cooking again. A distributor who wanted to buy the materials with a huge sum of money finds out about Walter's plan and kidnaps Hank. Once he discovers that Hank is one of Heisenberg's relatives, he threatens to kill him. Walter tries to offer all his money to the distributor to keep Hank alive. But the distributor kills Hank anyway and kidnaps Jesse to cook for him. Walter goes to save Jesse as his last move and kills everyone, but he is wounded by a gunshot. He asks Jesse to kill him, but Jesse does not agree and runs away to start a new life, leaving the dying Walter behind in the lab.

In order to understand how Walter White evolves into an antihero, we have to investigate the factors outlined by social psychology which are relevant to him. Of the six factors, five have clearly contributed to his transformation. These are: 1) motivation, 2) frustration-aggression hypothesis, 3) attitude change, 4) judgement and decision-making, and 5) revenge. This paper will

focus on the following three factors: motivation, frustration-aggression hypothesis, and attitude change.

To begin with, the first factor that turns the protagonist into an antihero is his social motivation. The protagonist's motivation goes through many stages. The first and basic stage of social motivation is the antiheroes' needs. Baumeister and Leary, in their article, "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation," aim "to develop and evaluate the hypothesis that a need to belong is a fundamental human motivation and to propose that the need to belong can provide a point of departure for understanding and integrating a great deal of the existing literature regarding human interpersonal behavior" (497). They argue that the need to belong is linked/interrelated to the need for "power, achievement, intimacy, approval, and to a lesser extent, affiliation" (498). Similarly, Leary and Cox, in their chapter "Belongingness Motivation: A Mainspring of Social Action", agree with Baumeister and Leary and argue that the need to belong is the basic fundamental human motivation. Accordingly, the first basic motivation of White as an antihero is to fight for his need for belonging. Nevertheless, there are other motivations. In fact, the theory of motivation itself has been divided into many types indicating different needs, inclinations or tendencies. In this paper, the analysis will focus on Fiske's division of motivation, namely: 1) belonging, 2) understanding, 3) controlling, 4) self-enhancement, and 5) trusting. In *Breaking Bad*, four of these motivations are relevant.

Walter White has four motivations (belongingness, controlling, self-enhancement and trusting). To begin with, due to the instability of his job, health and marriage, White's first response to belongingness deprivation is turning to cooking drugs. With reference to lack of belonging in marriage, Baumeister and Leary propose two complementary views on conflicts in marriages: "Relationships marked by conflictual interactions are much less beneficial and sometimes harmful" (513); and "bad marriages fail to

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satisfy the need to belong, then, as a result, they should stimulate a search for new attachments” (516). Walter White’s relationship with his wife does not provide the partners with enough satisfaction, belongingness or trust. In fact, it even becomes harmful and destructive.

Yet, Walter White, according to their analysis of the need to belong, is not willing to dissolve the social bond he has with his wife because, even if the relationship does harm him, he is still in need of this belongingness connection. Walter says: “Skyler, all that I’ve done, all the sacrifices that I’ve made for this family, all of it, will be for nothing if you don’t accept what I’ve earned. This family is everything to me. Without it, I have nothing to lose” (Season 3, Episode 3). Hence, it can also be argued that, initially, turning to the drug trade was motivated by his sense of belongingness: he wanted to provide his family with financial stability to continue their life after his death due to his illness. He begs her to stay in the house to fulfil his need of belongingness, and stay attached to his social bond, his family, while, at the same time, he manipulates her to invest his money and launder it through the car wash business they buy together.

This, however, does not place her in a better position than him. She is not faithful or trust-worthy either. To augment the family troubles, the relationship with his son Walter Jr. (Flynn) is not satisfactory either because Flynn always considers Hank as his role model which increases Walter’s resentment and jealousy of Hank. Accordingly, Walter White considers forming a new bond with Jesse Pinkman as a replacement to his son. This is what Baumeister and Leary assert: “[T]he need to belong can, in principle, be directed towards any other human being, and the loss of relationship with one person can to some extent be replaced by any other” (500). This is why Walter White succeeds in creating other relationships. Regardless of the implications of this relationship, that it causes more harm to Walter White and consequently turns him into a drug lord, he needs to have the sense of belongingness and respect. In fact, he expresses his parental

affection towards Jesse saying, “I want you to know that, no matter how it may look, I only had you in my heart. Goodbye, kid” (Season 5, Episode 16). This is the last scene before Walter’s death when he expresses his sincere care for Jesse. Their father-son relationship is considered a replacement for a mutual belongingness relationship. It also signifies that he has been in need for belonging throughout his journey with his family until he dies. Even when the family bond is thwarted, he prefers replacing it with a more interesting work to him (using chemistry and cooking meth) than losing his family to fulfil his needs because he is still in need to have a family.

The second motivation which Walter White exhibits is the control motivation. The control motivation is considered one of the fundamental motivations of social psychology. Markman and Weary’s chapter, “Control Motivation, Depression, and Counterfactual Thought”, suggests that internal motivation, external circumstances and individual differences can affect the control motivation. They argue that “the control concerns characteristic of depressed individuals are important determinants of the content of their counterfactual thoughts” (364). In other words, they consider that depressed people think of the things they can control rather than the things they could change in the past events. This point of depression is interrelated and can be considered the base of the frustration-aggression hypothesis that will be discussed later in the paper. However, control deprivation can influence the response of control motivation. This means if the person has control deprivation to begin with, this will increase the capacity of control motivation as a result. This can be applied to the character of Walter White in two ways. First, Walter does not have any control over his life and his huge change of control starts with his cancer diagnosis. He admits:

I have spent my whole life scared, frightened of things that could happen, might happen, might not happen. Fifty years I spent like that. Finding myself awake at three in the morning. But you know what? Ever since my diagnosis, I sleep just fine. What I came to realize is that fear, that’s the worst of it.

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That's the real enemy. So, get up, get out in the real world, and you kick that bastard as hard as you can right in the teeth. (Season 2, Episode 8)

Control motivation as an internal motivation starts to take place at the discovery of his illness with cancer in the second season. He believes being frightened is one part of losing control while being afraid of losing his family is the other. However, being confronted with the external circumstances of this illness, he decides to take the whole risk and regain control over his life. Second, the fact that he will be dying soon anyway can be regarded as the green light for him to enjoy the present by doing what he loves (chemistry) and going ahead getting money regardless of the cost.

The third psychological motivation that drives Walter White's transformation from a simple teacher to a drug lord is the self-enhancement motivation. The self-enhancement motivation is the tendency to see oneself in a positive view. In the article "Self-enhancement: Conceptualization and Assessment", Krueger, Heck and Asendropf explain the basic conceptualization of self-enhancement as "the perception of the self in overly positive terms" (1). In other words, one tries to ignore/reject any negative image, enhance any positive one and prefer to see oneself in the positive. However, self-enhancement can be a defensive reaction against depression. Due to Walter White's poor feedback on control, he suffers low self-esteem. According to the article, "The Dark Triad and Self-Enhancement: A Social Psychological Analysis of Walter White", Sara Konrath and Brian P. Meier argue that Walter White uses strategies of self-enhancement like narcissism and Machiavellianism to rationalise his attitude change to become a killer and a drug lord.

They consider three strategies Walter White uses: self-serving attributes, moral disengagement, and self-affirmation. The antihero places his success on his abilities and cleverness, but his failure relies on external factors. He considers himself as a helpless victim of the unfair circumstances that happen to him. This is very clear in the case of Walter White. For example, he considers

himself the best in chemistry and thinks he should build his own empire: "I did it for me. I liked it. I was good at it. And I was really . . . I was alive" (Season 5, Episode 15). He disregards his immoral actions, seeing his killings as if he were forced to do them and his victims as if they deserved what happened to them: "We're not killing anyone, Jesse. What we're doing is knocking them out temporarily, giving us time to get away with the goods" (Season 2, Episode 9). According to the article, Konrath and Meier confirm that Walter White uses "euphemistic labelling" which is the use of phrases that sound less harmful like the "goods". He calls his meth "crystals", a name which reflects the way he sees himself; and he calls the meth business the "empire" business, a title which reflects how big and powerful he sees it. He wants to build self-esteem by being less negative and more accepting. He also uses "advantageous comparison" which is justifying the immoral actions by comparing them to what is worse. For example, he says "knocking them temporarily" instead of "killing them" to sound less harmful. He tries to reconcile his negative actions by the positive image he wants to build. He also uses the "displacement of responsibility" which is to shift the blame for his ruthless actions on those who force him to do so. He uses this technique to avoid the guilt he might feel. He justifies turning into an antihero by convincing himself that he did it for the sake of his family and not for his own benefit. Finally, he uses "dehumanization" in which he wants to view his victims as inferior and unworthy of respect. He calls drug addicts "junkies" or "snitches". Moreover, he shows that eliminating them will prevent any threat that can happen to him. He focuses on his self-identity to achieve his self-affirmation and always believes that he can give more to his family and work. For instance, he says "I did it for the family. I swear to God, everything that I did, every move that I made, was for this family" (Season 5, Episode 14). Therefore, giving the impression that doing all these massive crimes is because of the external unjust circumstances allows Walter White to feel good and alive, and with a higher self-esteem.

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Trust is the fourth fundamental social psychological motivation that turns Walter White into an antihero. According to “Commitment, Pro-Relationship Behavior, and Trust in Close Relationships”, Foster and Agnew believe that trust is an “interpersonal phenomenon” (944). They consider trust as a variable trait that relies on the quality and expectations of the relationship. In addition, in “Trust in close relationship”, Holmes and Rempel consider trust to have three components: predictability, dependability and faith. Predictability is what people gain from the interactions of their experience. This applies to Walter White’s relationship with his wife as it was predictable when it was stable. However, by the course of time and when he starts lying to her, he becomes less predictable, which, in turn, results in making her angry and unsatisfied. Furthermore, she too becomes less predictable when she cheats on him with Ted, launders his money, and tries to expose him. He talks to his wife mockingly when she starts questioning his strange behaviour and says: “So right now, what I need . . . is for you to climb down out of my ass. Can you do that? Will you do that for me, honey? Will you please, just once, get off my ass? You know. I'd appreciate it. I really would” (season 1, episode 2). What is curious is that Walter acts annoyed and defensive when he talks to Skyler after she asks about his strange behaviour while he is actually lying to her.

The second component of trust, dependability, occurs when the partner would be seen as trustworthy and can have mutual dependence. Undoubtedly, Walter White's relationship with Jesse Pinkman, his partner, should be built on trust; however, throughout the course of action, and after setting each other in danger more than one time, they end up not trusting each other. Jesse Pinkman gets angry and upset with Walter when Walter tries to convince him to work again as partners. Jesse rejects and says:

I am not turning down the money. I am turning down you. You get it? I want nothing to do with you. Ever since I met you, everything I have ever cared about is gone... Ruined, turned to shit, dead, ever since I hooked up with the great

Heisenberg. I have never been more alone. I have nothing! No one! All right? It's all gone! Get it? No. No, no. Why-Why would you get it? What do you even care as long as you get what you want? Right? You don't give a shit about me. You said I was no good. I'm nothing! Why would you want me? Huh? You said my meth is inferior, right? Right? Hey! You said my cook was garbage! Hey, screw you, man! (season 3, episode 7)

Jesse Pinkman gets angry when he knows that Walter White left Jane (his girlfriend) to die. Jesse blames him that he always puts him in danger and ruins everything related to him for his own sake.

Faith, the last component of trust, refers to the support the partner gives in risky situations. For example, Hank, his brother in law, says "I don't know who you are. I don't even know who I'm talking to" (season 5, episode 9). Hank feels very disappointed in Walter White because he had faith in him and never imagined that he turned out to be the murderer and the drug lord Heisenberg he is searching for. All this shows how Walter has trust issues, but is not really trusting. At the beginning, he seems to be trusting, but later on, especially after turning into an antihero, he does not give trust to anyone.

The second social psychological factor that leads Walter White to be an antihero is the frustration-aggression hypothesis. Walter White's transformation passes through more than one stage. Berkowitz defines frustration as thus: "a person was frustrated if he was kept from attaining the satisfactions he expected at the time he thought he would have them (or, more loosely, if his active hopes were dashed)" (692). Berkowitz considers this as the fundamental meaning of the frustration phenomenon. In other words, if a person repeatedly fails to achieve his goal by the expected time, he becomes frustrated. This rule is applicable to Walter White's character. Walter's dashed expectations to be rich, despite his excellence in chemistry, especially when he is diagnosed with his lung cancer, place him in frustration. At the beginning of the

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series, he is shown to be a very clever chemist who has founded a company with a former colleague to his named Elliot. Together, they started a company but Elliot marries Walter's past lover Gretchen Schwartz. By the time Walter leaves the company and goes on with his life, he expects to establish another company and be more successful. Instead, he barely can handle his household expenses. He becomes so afraid to get himself into debt that he takes on a second job. What is more, he is always teased by his family members and acquaintances, including Hank. Added to all this is his being diagnosed with lung cancer and the consequent need for chemo-therapy which he knows quite certainly that he will not be able to afford. He turns to cooking drugs. Yet, throughout the series, he regrets many of his actions. After he starts his cooking and is compelled to go through a lot of killings, he starts losing connection with his family. White feels the frustration he causes to his family. He says: "I have made a series of very bad decisions and I cannot make another one" (Season 3, Episode 5). His constant frustration to all the surrounding people is encountered as a motivator for his aggression and frustration.

Skyler, Walter's wife, is one of the major reasons why he is frustrated. There is a sense of insecurity and mistrust between Walter and Skyler. She forbids him to live a normal life and to have his own space. According to Lewin, any individual needs to have sufficient free movement, confirming that "if his independence of the group is insufficient, the individual will be unhappy, [and] too intense a frustration will force him to leave the group or even destroy the group" (87). In addition to Lewin, the self-determination theory of Ryan and Deci agrees with Berkowitz in linking between frustration and aggression and the ideology of needs. They believe that frustration can be defined as the feeling that arises when one's basic psychological needs for relatedness, autonomy, or competence are not met. Walter White's fragile marital state causes him to break bad. On the other hand, it can be argued that the frustrating sexual relationship (sexual need) between him and his wife is a clear representation of the tension they are having since Walter's

evolution into Heisenberg. The audience is able to see the gradual tension in the sexual relationship between Walter and Skyler. As Lewin suggests, there should be balance in their sexual life. To be sure, there are three clear examples that represent this tension. First, in the very beginning of the series, Skyler does not give it much importance when she tries to fulfill Walter's sexual needs while at the same time she is distracted with her work on the laptop.

Second, when Walter starts to cook and his self-esteem grows, he has an exciting sexual encounter with Skyler in the car. However, later on, and because of the tension between them, she cheats on him. In conclusion, Walter White feels constant frustration to the surrounding society. In *Why Men Rebel*, Gurr argues that when the individual experiences frustration repeatedly and for a long time, it can cause them to become aggressive and violent.

Berkowitz's argument against the early theory, that explains the frustration will only lead to aggression, proposes that "[m]any aggressive actions are instrumental to the attainment of nonaggressive goals even when they seek to hurt someone" (695). For example, in the war the soldier might hurt his enemy to protect himself. So, he believes that there might be some other causes of aggression like social approval, economic goals, etc.. He does not agree with the second proposition as well, arguing that it can be replaced with "frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is an instigation to some form of aggression" (696). To be more precise, let us first introduce aggression. It is considered the response to injury to an organism. Accidents are not to be included as they do not hold the intention to injure. Analysing aggression in Walter White's character, one can argue that the initial cause is frustration; but aggression can have many other causes later on like self-protection and social approval. White looks enviously at Hank. Hank is socially accepted by all the characters surrounding Walter, like his wife and his son. During family gatherings, Hank is always the head, talking about his

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accomplishments and how he has played one of the most important turning points in Walter's transformation. Moreover, Walter's son, Walter Jr., always talks to Hank, even consults him and takes his opinion into consideration. Therefore, when Walter sees the amount of money that comes out from cooking, which equals being socially accepted, he begins to enjoy cooking even if it costs breaking bad, becoming a criminal. In season 5, "Confessions", he makes a DVD to confess everything he did and threatens Hank (DEA officer) to involve him in his drug cooking:

This is my confession.
If you're watching this tape,
I'm probably dead . . .
murdered by my brother-in-law,
Hank Schrader.

Hank has been building
a meth empire
for over a year now,
and using me as his chemist.
Shortly after my 50th birthday,
he asked that I use
my chemistry knowledge
to cook methamphetamine,
which he would then sell
using connections that he made
through his career
with the DEA. (season 5, episode 11)

Walter speaks as if he were a victim of Hank which, for him, justifies his deeds. He even blackmails Hank to quit thinking about arresting him. Last, he envies Elliot, who later marries his past lover Gretchen Schwartz and owns the company that Walter spends his life building. Walter realizes that he does not have anything of what these characters have. All these are justified reasons for his frustrations that turn into aggression and his aggression that, at times, turns into self-protection.

The third factor that makes a character turn into an antihero is attitude change. Attitude change usually happens at moments of dissonance arousal. Dissonance arousal, according to Festinger's book *The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, is a psychological state of discomfort occurs when the person feels the contradictory cognitions. Walter White changes into a wilder character. One of the instances that show Walter White's attitude change towards evil can be analysed with Pierrakos' study, "Anatomy of Evil" in which he confirms that a healthy person has a positive attitude. However, Pierrakos argues that evil is not a fixed trait, but a result of a lack of needs. He depicts the states of evil. He claims that evil people distort the facts to justify their actions and blame others for their problems. There are as many as ten instances that reflect the causes for Walter's change, but the following three are quite significant. These instances reflect the causes of the change in Walter White's attitude to become Heisenberg, examined in the light of Pierrakos stages and points of view on the evil that is "a distortion of facts" (88). In Season 1, Episode 3, Walter White commits his very first killing. Pierrakos explains that the evil person "feels that the ills in his life and functioning come from the outside" (88). Presenting Walter White as a helpless person, who does not control anything in his life is the starting point of attitude change in which dissonance arousal starts to take place. In that scene, he faces a dilemma of either killing Crazy 8 or risking everything by releasing him. Walter White spends a lot of time convincing himself to let Crazy 8 go. Yet, once Walter feels betrayed, he decides to end Crazy 8's life. The second instance takes place in the second season. Walter has the same choice to keep Jane, Jesse's girlfriend, alive after blackmailing him for money. Walter is convinced that she is a threat to him. He hesitates to save her, and then adds some justifications for himself that she is considered a threat to him. This is where he starts the next stage of dissonance reduction. Dissonance reduction is a process in which the person tries to decrease the psychological discomfort. He then decides to leave her to choke in her own vomit.

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This confirms what Pierrakos describes as the next stage of evil. Pierrakos says “[t]hen the person becomes lukewarm; he hates, but doesn’t even know it. He is ambivalent” (89). The third and final instance occurs when Walter confesses to Skyler that what he did was done for his own sake. Pierrakos defines evil as “[t]he manifestation of evil is thus not something that is intrinsically different from pure energy and consciousness; it is only creation that changed its characteristic. In essence there is no evil, but in the realm of human manifestation there is” (90). In other words, acting evil starts consciously and then develops to the unconscious. So, Walter White becomes the evil hero.

Aside from the antihero’s transformation, secondary characters too undergo certain changes. They are influenced by the antihero in a number of different ways. Baumeister and Leary argue that “social bonds to other criminals or to criminal groups may foster crime.... a need to belong attracts unattached young people to join violent gangs, which tend to serve as a surrogate family” (509). In other words, if the person deals with criminal or criminal groups they will easily be involved in crime. This is applicable to Jesse Pinkman in *Breaking Bad*. He was initially a drug addict, and subsequently, he knew drugs and where to get them. Being favourably prejudiced/biased to the antihero is one of the motifs that the authors and the producers of the series intend to show. Also, because Walter White is Jesse’s former teacher, this shows that White holds power over Jesse while at the same time Jesse’s attribution towards White shows even more, especially when Jesse’s family abandons him. Jesse attributes White as a family member and not just a business partner. Jesse’s constant exposure to Walter White makes their relationship even more complicated. White spends his full time with Jesse, a fact which affects his attribution and prejudice towards White.

In their article, “The Breaking Bad Effect: Priming with an Antihero Increases Sensation Seeking”, Ulqinaku, et al confirm that “[t]he authors showed that merely looking at the image of a hero or a villain attached to the label of a product could actually affect

consumers' perceptions of the product and thus their purchase intentions" (296). This concept of affecting perception can be applied to Jesse Pinkman. He follows Walter White as if he were his shadow, not only because he cooks, but also because he respects him throughout and refers to him as "Mr White". The article argues that

when primed with an antihero, people's temporal focus will shift to the present, leading them to engage in present-oriented behaviour such as risk-taking and thrill-seeking activities, which maximize their pleasure sensations, namely sensation seeking. (296)

This rooting for the antihero can also be applied to the audience. In the article, they argue that when people see an antihero on the screen their focus will be on the present and they will start to think about their current behaviour. Seeing an antihero makes them tend to have more risks, and make more thrilling activities that allow them to have more sensation and pleasure. Hence, we see how the other characters contribute in the development of the antihero.

From a different perspective, the artistic elements of the series' production have a powerful impact on the image of the antihero. With regard to visual tools and techniques in *Breaking Bad*, the use of colour seems to be the central tool. Drappa's paper on "The Visual Representation of the Antihero in Quality TV" is significant. She believes that the colour aspect affects the plot and characterization. It is connected directly to the moods of the episodes. The plot twists are highlighted clearly. Gilligan (the author of the series) in an interview commented on the colour choices saying "color is important in *Breaking Bad*: we always try to think in terms of it. We always try to think of the color that a character is dressed in, in the sense that it represents on some level their state of mind". Walter, our antihero, is called Walter White. As his name 'White' suggests, he starts being an innocent man. He lives in a street called Negro Arryo Lane which is the Spanish translation of "black steam". This is one of the symbols that

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foreshadow the way that Walter White is going to follow. At the beginning of the show, he mostly wears light colours. He upgrades, with his attitude, to darker colours like red, blue and black. In addition, one of the most important colours that are used in the series is yellow. According to Bellantoni “That’s your first clue, or warning. One of the reasons yellow is the color used for caution signs is that it’s visually aggressive. . . We’ve built in into our consciousness as a cautionary color” (76).

To sum up, this paper examines the most important three of the six factors which engender the antihero. These factors are: motivation, frustration-aggression hypothesis, and attitude change. Walter White has four motivational aspects: belongingness, controlling, self-enhancement and trusting. In addition to motivation, frustration-aggression hypothesis and attitude change play a major role in his transformation as an antihero.

This paper demonstrates how the social behaviour of the antihero’s assistant conforms to these social psychology factors. The paper discusses two of the three factors that applies on the secondary character. These factors are prejudice, attribution, and exposure effect. Finally, artistic production techniques, specifically the attention to colour is proven to be an important element contributing to the characterisation and development of the antihero and his world.

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