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Blair Waldorf is one of the main characters of the TV series *Gossip Girl* (Von, 2003). The show revolves around the life of teenagers and the typical issues of that age; love, sex, and conflict. Belonging to an elite family of New York, Blair is known as the Queen Bee of Manhattan's social scene. However, her actions are under the constant scrutiny of an anonymous blogger; *Gossip Girl*. This person continues to update New York's youth via the digital world of technology. These posts did not only expose the scandalous life of the elites, but it was also responsible for the ups and downs in several relationships.

Blair is seen to manipulate people and dominate them merely on the basis of her social class, looks and capabilities. However, some of the people which play an influential role in her life include Serena Vanderwoodson; her best friend, her lover Chuck Bass, her parents who have been separated as her dad was interested in another guy (turns out to be a gay) resulting in her mother marries another man. Moreover, as the show progresses, Blair is seen to have a number of boyfriends initially starting with Nate followed by Dan and Chuck. However, despite her status and other interests, Blair has continuously shown dedication in her studies with the ultimate goal of getting admission into Yale.

On the outside, Blair appears to be the bitchy character that is rude, cruel and critical of others. She is sarcastic, blunt and evil. This is because of the way she treats other. Not only this, it is the popularity, financial power, status and the looks which gives her control to rule people. That is how she sees herself. For this reason, she is unable to adapt to the new environment at NYU because of the initial absence of her previous Queen B character.

However, on the inside, Blair is a sincere friend who has a series of personal and family issues that may be attributed to the way she behaves publically. However, the character growth of Blair Waldorf is observable while comparing her initial role and the one when the season ends. The earlier snobbish version of a high school girl eventually transforms to a caring and smart lady who is able to value relationships by putting in efforts to stabilize things (Katherine, 2009, p. 46).

Blair Waldorf is another name for passion, energy, excitement and determination. Throughout the serial, the character of Blair is seen to be surrounded with people at school, parties and at other occasions. She is seen to be the eye of every social event where she is not only popular as Queen B as conspicuous during her school years, but is seen to be the apple of the eye at every other party. Though people often view her with a look of resentment and jealousy, she continues to be the life of every event with her tactic, schemes and glamour. This is seen from the initial school years when she is indulged in organizing several events followed by the continuous parties she hosts. Not only this, she is seen to communicate and develop relations with renowned book and social clubs. As an extrovert, she is also seen to struggle at certain occasions in order to proof herself and maintain the earlier supreme identity. This is demonstrated by the manner in which she tries to develop friendships when she enters the new college environment. Her need to be around people and especially be superior extends throughout the show. Considering the different roles which she has played during the show, it is correct to state that she is not only full of life, but the trait of being open to experiences is demonstrated via the creativity

and intellect behind her public dealing and scheming. Despite the way she acts to make people work for her, even her manipulative and scheming behavior has an awe of realism, intelligence and innovation. However, in contrast to her extraversion, Blair is seen to be quite disagreeable. This trait is merely because of the status, class, popularity, and money which govern her life. For this reason, it is not only the nerds, the poor, or the ugly individuals who become the victim of her hatred and degradation, but even her best friend and boyfriend deal with this particular personality characteristic. Her intense resentment for Dan Humphrey especially after exposing himself as the gossip girl, and the often moves of Blair to sabotage Serena, are some of the examples of her rudeness and revenge which Blair is seen to be deeply involved in. For this reason, the aspect of agreeableness often found under the quality of extraversion is missing in the personality of Blair (John, 1999, p. 37). Regardless of this trait, she would score low on the personality characteristic of neuroticism because of her infrequent emotional fluctuations. Although, Blair has incessantly faced a number of difficult and challenging situations regarding her friends, her love, and her relationship with Chuck Bass and the parental issues, she has dealt with her anger and anxiety in a calm yet assertive manner. In other words, she cannot be classified as someone who would continue to throw temper tantrums or go high on drugs for several days because of a trouble bothering her, but she does show these behaviors in moderation. The days when things did not work well for her, Blair is seen to have more drinks and go with her maid to feed the ducks. Despite these activities, she has reflected a sense of motivation and achievement which leads her to struggle and get what she

desired. This is usually done by attaining peace via trips and nature. Hence for this reason, the ability to be in control, regulate emotions, and cope with difficult situations ultimately classify Blair to possess a moderate level of conscientiousness. She does not fall at the higher end because of her impulsive behavior at several instances which although might have created more trouble for her; has often proved constructive thereby helping her to work for her goals (John, 1999).

Furthermore, Blair Waldorf's personality can also be analyzed using the attachment theory along with the theory of psychosocial development presented by Erik Erikson (1963) as well as with the psychosexual theory of Freud (1910) discussed below.

Blair is seen to do well in several stages of psychosocial development as conspicuous through the different events of the story. She is hopeful in most of the situations as seen from the incidences when she is able to humiliate school girls along with the time she stands up to face the crowd after her sex scandal with the hope of regaining her queen Bee title. In a similar manner, her ability to exercise power and take charge of things is seen throughout the show. She is a leader and a risk taker. Her autonomy is evident from the fact that since most of the time her mother is far away mainly because of her business, she leads an independent life making most of her decisions and taking control of everyone and every situation. From an eye of a positive and a kind person, Blair might appear to be an evil person that looks down on almost every individual by finding out faults in them. Despite this negative side of hers, her ability to be in-charge of a situation and tactfully deal with people makes her a strong person worth looking up to.

Blair's life is governed by a purpose and has a direction which is noticeable through her dream of entering into Yale. This drive is often present when she aims at achieving the attention of Chuck Bass and other men. Once the educational period comes to an end, her goal becomes directed towards marrying Chuck Bass and expanding her mother's fashion line. Thus, whether it is education, work, or love, Blair is seen to be extremely determined about what she wants. Despite the initial confusion regarding studies which is acceptable for a teenager, she gradually becomes adamant about her objective. She masters the art of scheming. Though often evil, her problem solving abilities and saving her friends by getting them out from troublesome situations (example: helping out Serena when she tends to somehow kill someone or saving her from the inappropriate company of Georgina Sparks). In addition, she initiates several activities which not only include the birthday and other upper east parties, but also when it comes to flirting, cheating or making any other move. Despite her risk taking and adventurous behavior, the mal-adaptation of the initiative vs. Guilt stage put forward by Erik Erikson (1963) is also noticeable in the personality of Blair Waldorf to some extent. This can be seen by her exploitative and uncaring nature as she looks down on almost everyone especially those belonging to a lower social strata as well as people with ugly and an inappropriate appearance (Erikson, 1963).

While applying the Erik Erikson's theory (1963) of psychosocial development to analyze the personality of Blair Waldorf, it would be correct to state that the stage of Industry and Inferiority along with the identity vs. Role confusion is not completely resolved. Despite her manipulative and extreme

competitive behavior at several occasions, she is seen to possess a fragile self esteem and the hidden element of inferiority complex which often fluctuates and is shown during the presence of her mother. Although, her relationship with her mother is not based upon violence, she does suffer from parental neglect. Moreover, the way her mother keeps on commenting Blair on her dressing, looks and diet, despite her beauty and perfect figure, she tends to develop an eating disorder along with an extra concern about her appearance only for her mother's approval. Throughout the story, Blair feels a sense of insecurity which often made her an overachiever thereby creating a complex personality. Moreover, Blair at several occasions is seen to feel inferior to her best friend; Serena. For instance, when her mother chooses Serena over her for her fashion line, Blair is scared off Serena's popularity. Similarly, when Serena gets the admission at Yale unlike Blair, she publically humiliates her revealing her deepest darkest secrets in front of a huge crowd.

Furthermore, despite the fact that Blair's personality depicts a positive resolution of several psychosocial stages as presented by Erik Erikson (1963) which leads to virtue, Blair often struggles with the idea of forming stable and long term relationship. This is not only applicable on her romantic relationship but also her friendship especially with Serena. The frequent shift from one boy to another along with her promiscuous behavior after ending the relationship with Nate and sleeping with Chuck Bass every other day shows the negative resolution of the Intimacy vs. Isolation stage. She does show care and warmth in her relationship with Chuck, but she dominates and controls others in most of her other relationships. However, this is seen to

change by the end of the show when maturity and the successful resolution of the earlier stages make her extensively care about Chuck. The strength of the love between the two becomes so strong that Blair is ready to wait for Chuck till he achieves his target. Moreover, the earlier flirty and uncaring attitude transforms so positively that Blair becomes ready to run away with Chuck in order to save him from being imprisoned for the death of his dad. Therefore, with time, instead of attributing the changes to a stage of maturity, it might be correct to point out the amends which Blair makes adopting several key characteristics of a secure individual. This is seen via the complete trust, affection and space in her romantic relationship with Chuck. Consequently, having a stable relationship with love and intimacy becomes the key objective of Blair which she successfully achieves by finally marrying Chuck Bass.

In regard to her romantic relationship, Blair Waldorf at one instance can be said to be securely attached because of her extreme love and trust for Chuck (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). However, upon close analysis, it would be correct to say that she possesses an anxious attachment style. This is depicted through her initial fear of being threatened by relationships and due to her frequent break-ups. Also, she demonstrates intense emotional reactions which revolve around anxiousness and anger (Bowlby, 1969, p. 39). This is not only in relation to her love partners but also towards school mates and friends. For this reason, she is extensively seen to be involved in various schemes which gradually subside to a certain extent towards the end of the final season. Although, several specific features of an anxiously attached individual such as showing reluctance towards intimacy are not

seen to fit in the case of Blair, the idea of maternal deprivation especially during childhood, hints at the attachment style of Blair. This is also seen throughout the initial episodes of the serial where she continues to show a distant relationship with her mother. In addition, after taking charge of her mother's fashion line; the Eleanor Design, she initially displays quite a lot of difficulty in coping with the workplace stress. Despite the difficulties, her determination and creativity results in great success. However, with time, instead of attributing the changes to a stage of maturity, it might be correct to point out the amends which Blair makes adopting several key characteristics of a secure individual. This is seen via the complete trust, affection and space in her romantic relationship with Chuck. Consequently, having a stable relationship with love and intimacy becomes the key objective of Blair which she successfully achieves by finally marrying Chuck Bass (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2007).

Unlike Erik Erikson (1963) who focuses upon the contribution of social experiences in personality development, Freud (1910) uses the psychosexual stages to analyze a personality. The similarities in the two theories could easily be noticed because of the underlying fact that Erik Erikson formulated his own theory upon being influenced by the theory of Freud (1910). However, Erikson's model is an extension of Freud's (1910) theory as it also covers the later stages of adult life.

According to the psychoanalytic theory of Freud (1910), the Id is supposed to play a dominant role in Blair's character because of her high sexual needs and her extreme desire to make things go her way which she achieves by exploiting and hurting others. Most of her actions are based on immediate

gratification where the perspective of morality and reality lack in her decisions.

Using the psychosexual theory of Freud (1910) to analyze the personality of Blair, it could be said that she has an anal retentive character because of her obstinate, withholding, precise and orderly characteristics. This is also apparent from her perfect attire and beauty treatments along with her withholding character demonstrated at several occasions especially with her affair and other issues with Chuck. In a similar manner, her promiscuity and seductiveness shows her inability to resolve the Electra complex also because of parental neglect and an unhealthy relationship with her parents. In other words, according to Freud (1910), Blair is fixated at the phallic stage of psychosexual development which reflects the Initiative vs. Guilt stage of psychosocial development which is mentioned above. This is also evident from her narcissist personality when the love for her out passes every other thing. Her self-assured, proud and vain personality characteristics also show her fixation during the phallic stage (Ahmed, 2012).

Similarly, the inability to form strong bonds with friends and romantic partners at several instances throughout the story, reflect the fixation and the negative resolution not only faced in the initial stages of psychosexual development but also during the latency and the genital period. This resembles the intimacy vs. Isolation stage as presented by Erik Erikson (1963) which was discussed previously.

Thus, although Blair Waldorf appears to be a highly dominating, exploitative and manipulative person, she is a vulnerable, intelligent and a smart being. Although her social class, resources and relationship with her parents might

be responsible for several personality characteristics, she continues to remain an appreciated and loved character. Therefore, on appearance, one would describe Blair Waldorf as someone who is a snob, a spoiled brat, and an evil person who is so proud of her social status and money that she measures the worth of others on the basis of similar characteristics. Despite these qualities such as that of status and social class as found in her best friend Serena, she has a high sense of inferiority complex. This is evident from the fact that several achievements and strengths of her best friend are often considered as major threats for Blair. Regardless of these differences, she is a sincere friend who continues to save Serena as well as her other ex-boyfriends helping them with their personal, family as well as financial issues. Although academically as well as socially intelligent, Blair is seen to struggle a lot with her romantic life. Her initial affairs with Nate and Dan, followed by a prince and several other affairs show her unwise decision to immediately fall for people. In other words, her impulsive and emotional behavior led her to make several wrong decisions which also included a marriage. For this reason, she can be said to be moderate on the trait of neuroticism similar to her score on conscientiousness because of her controlled coping mechanism. Although she is seen to fly away to another land or do things to get away from worry for some time, she is always seen to successfully resolve difficult issues by using her intelligence and tactics. Her outgoing and adventurous nature makes her an extrovert with the shortcoming of the personality characteristic of agreeableness which might be attributed to the way she was raised. Growing without a father, having a highly professional and career oriented mother who has been quite critical

and particular about Blair's behavior and appearance, and the status consciousness and the social surrounding might be responsible for the negative attributes of Blair. Her consequent anxious attachment style, as well as her fixation with sexual desires and a manipulative behavior which has previously been discussed in detail using the psychosocial and psychosexual theory, can be traced down to her brought up at one extent, whereas on the other hand such characteristics can be reasonably be attributed to Blair's own choices and preferences (Ahmed, 2012). Despite the negativities and flaws found in her personality, the character has potentially grown throughout the season. Although a series of responsibilities did not completely change Blair Waldorf, a number of transformations in the character are visible towards the end of the show. For instance the earlier mean and selfish character continues to be highly involved in the scheming activity although the nature of the tactic changes with the progress in life. Finally, it subsides to a great extent with a sense of realization which starts to dwell towards the end of the show. Similarly, the earlier flirtatious role governing several love affairs and wrong decisions regulated around series of emotions minimized with time as Blair finally finds her true love. Chuck Bass becomes her ultimate partner for whom she is ready to sacrifice and wait.

Thus, as Blair matures and life progresses from graduating to entering a work environment and finally marrying, the number of people she meets, and the troubles which she experiences, makes her a stronger woman. Therefore, despite her earlier deduced attachment style, personality characteristics and the areas of fixation, Blair has successfully proofed

herself by making amends in her overall personality which automatically makes her fan love her even more.

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