

On the Characters in *And Then There Were None* Under Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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Abstract

Agatha Christie was a renowned British female writer in the 20th century. Her works have taken the fancy of readers all over the world because of the intriguing plots and intelligent designs that catch us all by surprise. *And Then There Were None*, published in 1939, as a representative novel of hers, is taken as one of the most popular detective novels. In this novel, ten strangers were invited to an isolated island where a well-designed massacre awaited them and then they ended up being killed in certain ways, one by one. This paper is going to analyze the characters in *And Then There Were None* under Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by classifying them into two groups in line with their social classes and uncovering their needs' deficiency and satisfaction based on Maslow's theory. And this paper will draw a conclusion on what needs they wanted to satisfy and how many needs were fulfilled, and analyze the reasons leading to characters' similarities and differences in needs. Therefore, the deeper mental worlds of criminals can be demonstrated, and a further understanding of the characters and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can be obtained. This paper aims at providing an angle to the studies and researches in the creation and analysis of literary characters and having us recognize the significance of needs deficiency and satisfaction.

Keywords

And Then There Were None; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs; Characters.

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and Significance

It is generally acknowledged that serious literature and popular literature are two types of literature. While the former explores themes that really matter in our lives, and does not follow an established or typical formula, the latter includes those writings designed for the masses and those that find favor with large audiences, and mostly made to entertain (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serious_Literature). However, the excellence of a book can not be easily defined based on the classification mentioned above. Ideas that popular literature is inferior to serious literature usually result from bias and insufficient understanding. Distinguished writer as Agatha Christie was, her works did not draw much attention in the academic circle in that many of her works are detective novels with *And Then There Were None* a representative, seldom taken as a type of serious literature. Although *And Then There Were None* is not defined as serious literature, the meaning and enlightenment Agatha tried to convey through the work are serious and sight-worthy. And as the center of a novel, characters are the reference to judge the literary value of the work. They did not just come from the author's imagination but were created from and above reality with much social meaning. Since the film and television industry began to bloom, Agatha's works have been adapted for the screens both at home and in cinema. Until now, there have been articles, in an increasing number, studying her and her works.

Many of these studies center on how to analyze Agatha's narration and characters' building for she was excellent in describing psychological movements and details. Some of the studies focus on linguistic uses and translation comparison based on her works, but among them are few studies concerned about psychology.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as an important theory in humanistic psychology, is often applied to education reform, psychotherapy and management training, but it can also play a crucial role in human development and the analysis of human behaviors. As time goes by, this theory is now utilized in literary criticism for it can provide a new angle of analyzing and understanding literary works. And it is the first time that this theory has been utilized to study *And Then There Were None*.

As Maslow stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs, this paper is to explore the needs satisfaction and deficiency of characters in *And Then There Were None* from various social classes based on this theory. And it aims to analyze the plots from a new psychological perspective, help us further understand the characters' building and call on people to pay attention to the needs satisfaction and deficiency.

1.2. Literature Review

Researches on *And Then There Were None* have covered various perspectives, including translation comparison, language style and so on.

Song Lingling (2012) put forward the excellence of Agatha's works attached with profound social meaning by analyzing characters and plots. So, the idea that popular literature is less meaningful than serious literature has been proved less convincing. And she pointed out that serious literature and popular literature can be combined. Song Rui and Li Xiaoming (2014) analyzed the main character and gave a profound analysis of the content and thought of *And Then There Were None* based on Freudian Psychoanalysis. In their research, psychological theory has been used in analyzing this novel, but it did not stand a contrast between the characters and failed to show the diversities of the characters' psychological movements because they only focused on Justice Wargrave. Wang Ke (2016) put forward Agatha's unique mastery of telling stories. His study explored how Agatha shifted readers' attention and demonstrated Agatha's writing features by analyzing the well-set plots, and proved once again the work's excellence. Liujia (2018) pointed out that Agatha was used to building a character with the "tool" of detailed description and did well in drawing a conclusion of characters' detailed descriptions, but her study did not go further on why the details were shown and what needs of the characters urged them to act so.

While Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs has been applied to many fields, literary researches in recent years with it adopted as research theory are quite few.

Guan Haixia (2013) analyzed how Maslow's theory was shown in the main characters and gave us a clear message that people would make cost to fulfill our needs in different periods of time. Wu Yushu (2016) exploited Holden's inner world as Holden grew, shared the thought that human growth always comes with complexity and inevitableness and made a deeper understanding of the hierarchy theory. Wang Zi (2019) exposed the characteristics and limitations of personal development by concluding three female characters' life experience and putting a comparison of their needs' deficiency and satisfaction, which are of value in human development. These scholars all analyzed the characters' development under Maslow's theory. Nowadays, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs has been a new theory to explain human development in literary works. But few literary researches are made combined with Maslow's theory, so there is still room for further studying and improvement. Assuming that *And Then There Were None* has drawn much more attention in academic circle than before and many critics speak highly of this novel's seriousness in its social meaning, this paper adopts *And Then There Were*

None as its research object and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as its research theory, presenting a new study prospect for the novel.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Abraham Maslow

Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) was a famous psychologist of the United States and was the founder of the third force of psychology (the first force was Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and the second John Watson's behaviorism). He has ingeniously combined the previous two theories, and put forward the humanistic psychology. And he is also well-known throughout the world for his theory of hierarchy needs, which has made great contribution to both academic and pragmatic psychological researches. Maslow was dubbed as the tenth most outstanding psychologist in the 20th century.

2.2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In 1943, the hierarchy of needs was put forward by Maslow in *A Theory of Human Motivation* Psychological Review, and it has been widely applied to many fields in our life. In line with the word "hierarchy", this theory is usually demonstrated in a pyramid, shown in Figure 1, classified into five tiers, which describes universal needs of people in society.

From the bottom to the top, physiological needs are in first tier of the pyramid, and they are the most basic biological elements that sustain human, such as air, food, sleep, shelter, and clothing etc. In the second tier are the safety needs, which are security and safety in all aspects usually provided by family and society. The love and belongingness needs, also known as social needs, in the third are roughly about the interpersonal relationship and feelings of belongingness from people and work. Esteem needs and self-actualization needs are in the fourth and fifth respectively. The esteem needs are defined by Maslow into two parts, the self-respect and desire for other people's respect. And the top needs mean the realization of a person or the desire of a man to fully exploit his potential and make the best use of it.



Figure 1. www.statisticssolutions.com

As the five tiers are connected, intersections lie on the connected parts. Usually, the higher needs will emerge after the lower ones are more or less gratified. At that time, hunger for the lower needs remains but their influence on human actions is reduced. And the order of needs emergence is not absolutely rigid due to outer factors and differences in personal development.

3. The Author and the Novel

3.1. Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie (1890-1976) was a prolific English detective novelist and playwright. Her works are of logic and sell quite well, outsold only by Shakespeare's and the Bible. And she is crowned as the queen in detective novel circle. At that time, she broke the general writing mode of detective novels, in which the absolute justice always prevailed in the end, and artistically integrated psychological description into her works, thus making the characters three-dimensional and vivid.

Agatha experienced a lot in her life and her experience sometimes showed itself in her works, which enriches the stories. Taking her logical and sophisticated use of poisons in her works as example, the skillful use of drugs in her works came from her experience as a medical volunteer in World War I and World War II.

Because she lived through both world wars, themes in her works are mainly about humanity. As a productive writer, she has written 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections, many of which are well-known, the detective novels in particular. The world's longest-running play, *The Mousetrap*, was also written by her. Her works have been translated into 103 languages and have gained great popularity. Even Queen Mary, mother of the Queen Elizabeth II, was fond of her works. To mark and praise her contribution to literature, she was knighted in 1956 and appointed a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1971.

3.2. And Then There Were None

And Then There Were None is a typical detective work created in the snowstorm villa model, a writing model in which characters gathered in a confined environment, and people take turns to be murdered until the real murderer is found among them in the end. ([https:// www.coursehero.com/file/31006556/the-Snowstorm-Villa-Modelpptx/](https://www.coursehero.com/file/31006556/the-Snowstorm-Villa-Modelpptx/)) This novel tells a story that ten strangers, from different social classes, were invited to the Soldier Island isolated by rainstorm and then they got murdered in the following days one after another in certain ways as an Indian nursery rhyme, known to all, sang. Much as the characters knew about the rhyme, they could not do anything to stop the pace of Death, which leads to the escalating tension when people are reading this book.

The theme of detective novels usually focused on the antagonism between the virtue and vice, which failed to enrich characters' complexity and imposes restrictions on story-telling. However, the set theme has no application to *And Then There Were None*. All its plots are intriguing but reasonable with everything set logically and perfectly. None of the characters is innocent and everyone is a paradox on that island.

The plots seem simple, but there is the darkest side of human nature and the most intense crime, thriller than you can expect. With barren civilization in the massacre, hopelessness and desperation exile all morals, and then there exist no survivors. On the one hand, this novel reveals the vices, such as selfishness and greediness, lying deep in human nature, and presents the epitome of that society where no voice of victims could be heard. On the other hand, it also radiates the hope of the author that a society honoring virtues and respecting laws can be built. Reading through this novel will probably not bring any relief even if you know the guilty died at last, but lead to further thinking of the society.

4. Characters in And Then There Were None

There are ten main characters in this novel. Of the ten heroes and heroines, five are from the upper society and the other five are from the middle and lower one. And they were invited by U. N. Owen (similar to the pronunciation of "unknown", serving as a fake name and a metaphor)

to the Soldier Island for various reasons, none of which was real. Although they differed in gender and ranks of the society, they shared something in common, which was that they all had committed murder crime, intentionally or unintentionally, and that each of them managed to escape from the subjection to justice and duck out of punishments. On the island cut off from civilization, some of them suffered from self-guilty, and some struggled to justify what they had done and proved themselves innocent, but all of them got executed in this perfectly designed crime. In this story, they are all “victims” as well as the murderers. And the introduction of characters and the crimes they have committed will be made below by classifying them into the upper-class characters, and the middle- and lower-class characters.

4.1. The Upper-class Characters

4.1.1. Lawrence John Wargrave

Wargrave was an old gentleman and a retired justice. He is the representative of both the virtue and vice; he is not only a “glory” executor in God’s view, but also the ultimate murderer, writing letters in the forged name of U. N. Owen, inviting other characters to Soldier Island and ending their lives one by one, directly or indirectly. And he is a paradox, with the crazy urge to kill in his mind and surging justice in his heart. Working as a justice can meet his needs legally.

Justice Wargrave was in an important position of judicial process and has witnessed many death sentences. During his service to the Court, though the evidence was insufficient, he turned the jury right round and brought a man, crime-prone but innocent this time, in guilty. He succeeded in doing so with no loopholes to be found, and the man was hanged to death.

When retired, he found out that his days were limited-soon due to the fatal disease. And he thought he should cleanse the world by arranging a perfect massacre before his death. When the massacre began, he acted as a situation-controller for his rich experience spoke louder than any of the rest, and made an explicit analysis of the killer, which succeeded in allaying his suspicions of being the murderer, earning trust of the rest and manipulating their trains of thoughts. He talked to Vera in the end, hanging herself on the edge of dying, “I will keep our secret.” (meaning that they both killed more than once) (Agatha, 2015: 218) And he put off the trigger. All his self-analysis and act are the manifestation of the real murderer’s morbid psychology.

4.1.2. Emily Caroline Brent

Miss Brent was the eldest lady, well-educated in this novel. Being a believer of Catholicism, ardent and even fanatic, she persisted with some outdated ideas and looked at things under the only divine standards. She accepted the invitation for a free vocation to get rid of the modern world, which she had to live up with for her shrinking economy.

To maintain her reputation, she cast her maid, who had been abandoned and Miss Brent adopted, out of the house for her pre-marriage pregnancy, and her act was far from the doctrines of caring the living and saving everyone in *the Bible*. And then the girl ended her life by lying herself on the track of trains. However, when asked about her maid’s death, she said that her maid got herself into trouble in a family way, in which her own loose mother had her. Miss Brent reckoned that she had done nothing inappropriate or wrong and showed no sympathy for this tragedy. And she took the maid’s death as the God’s punishment for her unchasteness.

4.1.3. John Gordon Macarthur

Macarthur had served in army as a general for many years and won plenty of military medals. He accepted the invitation to the island for renewing acquaintance with his old comrades-in-arms.

Overwhelmed by outrageousness after finding out that his wife and his loyal man had had affairs, he murdered his deputy in the name of King and Great Britain by sending him to a war

in little hope of winning, let asides how able and loyal he was. But years after her wife's death, when isolated on the island, he said to Vera that he should have just stepped aside like a gentleman and just let them be happy. He regretted killing her deputy, and he was afraid of being exposed in the rest of his life.

4.1.4. Edward George Armstrong

Doctor Armstrong was a well-known physician among ladies enjoying high positions for his superb medical skills. For a vocation he had longed for a while because of his full appointments, and he accepted the invitation to have Mrs. Owen diagnosed.

But he once performed a horrible operation after drinking excessive alcohol and that led to the death of a poor patient. That was completely against a doctor's work ethic. To sustain his reputation, he said to the public that it was an inevitable accident due to the vulnerable conditions of the patient. When on the island, after he was accused of, his hands kept shaking, and he kept murmuring the words "just fucking stop". He was terrified and helpless at that time, so he sought help from Wargrave and created false impressions of the Justice's death to allure the murderer to give the show away. But what he did not realize is that he was "voluntarily" supporting the ultimate murderer to finish his perfect crime.

4.1.5. Anthony James Marston

Marston was a man born in money and a danger to society. The same as what a dandy would do, he indulged himself in the lap of extravagance. He was invited to a party with wines and beauties, held on a desolate island by a millionaire.

This dandy man, after one carnival, drove home drunken and cracked down two children to death. But he only took that day as his unlucky day, and claimed that the children's parents should be to blame for letting their children out at night, and the dead children should also be to blame for his license suspension. When facing the accusation, he said, "It was jolly bad luck but their roads were magnificent." (Agatha, 2015: 48) After he traded with money for his innocence, his car roared in the road as usual and he drove himself again to the luxury without any self-guilty.

4.2. The Middle- and Lower-class Characters

4.2.1. Vera Elizabeth Claythorne

Vera was a young teacher in a third-class school. In shortage of money, she accepted the part-time job from Mrs. Owen as her private secretary.

She could have worked in a better school if she had not been involved in Cyril's death. She fell in love with her pupil's (Cyril's) uncle Vigor. To help Vigor, as the second heir, hand over the possessions belonging to the first heir Cyril, she got the chance in swimming time, by letting Cyril swim himself in deep waters, which would easily take away his life, and it did happen. And when inspected, she said the rescuers could prove when she tried to save him she was having a spasm and nearly drowned herself too, which helped her get rid of prison and even win Cyril's mother's trust. But vigor broke up with her though there was no enough evidence. and she got her record stained.

On the island, when the first people, Marston, died, she thought in her minds that death was for other people. And that implies that she is selfish and ready to do anything to protect herself.

4.2.2. Philip Lombard

Lombard was the captain of mercenaries, acting in arbitrariness and cold blood. He was pre-paid a hundred guineas for an unknown mission to the island. He was also a racist.

He and his 21 African team-members, during one mission, were trapped in a wild forest. And as a racist and colonizer, he abandoned the rest, taking all the supplies away and having them starve to death. But he had no guilty at all, and calmly confessed what had happened and blamed

the human instinct driving him to survive. When Miss Brent said that the white and black were all brothers, he burst into laughter and said that he was hysterical and not himself. He was totally unaware of what selfishness was. Sharp contrasts stand among them that it did not take much for him and Marston to admit that they were murderers and the rest eight managed but failed to prove that their hands were clean.

4.2.3. William Henry Blore

Blore had been a policeman before he was working as a private detective, with sharp and sensitive mind. And he was hired to keep an eye on everyone on the island.

On his duty as a policeman, he provided false statements to set up an innocent man into prison where the scapegoat died and the real burglar was at large because he did not resist the temptation of money. But it was uncovered for soon; though he was not punished harshly, he got sacked. As a detective, he had all eyes and ears. He kept guessing and analyzing. When he learned that there was an army man around them, he talked to himself, "Dangerous men came back from over there." (Agatha, 2015: 28) He believed no one on the island was innocent and he changed his mind quickly about who was the real murderer.

4.2.4. Thomas Rogers

Thomas was a typical individual from the lower-class society. He and his wife had been working for a long time as house servants. He was employed as the butler to arrange things in the flat on Soldier Island. As an indifferent man, he sometimes treated his wife violently and he did not feel sad about her wife's death in the story.

Before he entered the island, he and Mrs. Rogers had served Miss Brady, an old lady with no family member. As a servant in the family, Mr. Rogers had accomplished all the housework well for his former employer. But when Miss Brady was extremely sick, on the verge of dying, Mr. Rogers did not take any instant action to help because he was eager to hand over her fortune. Instead of offering aid, he suffocated Miss Brady with a pillow. He claimed that it was of a sudden, and the strong wind had stopped his way to a doctor and the broken telephone failed to work, so he did not manage to save her. And in the conversation with her wife, he described her as a dozy bitch because she was scared again to be found.

4.2.5. Ethel Rogers

Ethel, wife of Thomas, also came from the lower rank of the society. She was not a fighter, and she endured pressure from her husband and insults from the upper-class. She was employed a maid and cook by Mr. Owen and Mrs. Owen to clean rooms and prepare tasty meals for the people they invited to the island.

Although she did not directly take part in murdering Miss Brady, she had witnessed all and did not dare to speak out. But in fact, Mrs. Rogers felt guilty about that, while Mr. Rogers did not, and got post-traumatic eye disease stimulated by watching the Miss Brady die. After getting the legacy of Miss Brady, she and her husband still worked as house servants.

5. Maslow's Hierarchy Needs Reflected in the Characters

And Then There Were None is a detective novel, in which murder is an inevitable part. When murder occurs, attention will always be attached to the sins and dark sides of humanity. However, the purpose of murder is generally to gratify deficient needs that present themselves as the dark sides in humanity. The following part will combine Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs with the characters in this novel to show their satisfied and unsatisfied needs respectively, and provide a new angle to comprehend how the plots developed and why they killed.

5.1. Characters' Satisfied Needs

5.1.1. Physiological Needs

Physiological needs are also known as prerequisites for survival. Except Lombard, characters from both higher and lower rank have met their basic needs. Marston was born in a rich family, so he did not need to worry about these indispensable needs at all even though he worked for no one. And the rest eight all had a job, some of whom worked in decent positions like doctor, justice and general.

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, people can go higher to fulfill the higher needs when the physiological needs are met. But the emergence of needs is flexible, which results from discrepancies of individual development. And Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Rogers are an example. While they were paid, they did not climb up to realize the higher needs, but murdered their former employer Miss Brady for her legacy and still worked as house servants.

5.1.2. Safety Needs

Besides security and stability, freedom from fear and chaos can also find its place in safety needs. With Lombard put asides, the rest characters lived in a moderately safe society, with war field far away and personal safety assured. They enjoyed the relative security provided by the country before they entered Soldier Island where their lives were threatened.

Murderers as they were, some of them could have the freedom from fear of being charged and uncovered. Marston was a heartless playboy with the physiological needs largely gratified. Therefore, he could instantly bounce back to his extravagant life after crushing two children to death, and drive at a fast speed as ever. And regarding Justice Wargrave, he was so professional and cunning that no loopholes could be found. And he thought though the man sentenced to death was innocent this time but this sentence would compensate for the crimes he had committed before. On the "moral highland", Miss Brent sniffed at the charge against her because she had nothing to do with her dead previous maid, and she did the right thing based on the doctrines in her minds; but obviously she did neglect the faith about caring the living in her religion. With safety needs gratified, they acted naturally as if nothing had happened or things were supposed to be like that.

5.1.3. Love and Belonging Needs

Love radiation and reception, and acceptance in their social groups mainly constitute love and belonging needs. When people meet the previous two tiers of needs, they are ready to share themselves with social groups.

Claythorne once fulfilled these needs: she had fallen in love with her pupil's uncle, Hugo. They were in hot love and taking good care of each other. That was the prime time in her life until she killed his nephew. For a lower-class woman, it took too much to pursue love. Regarding Miss Brent, she found her place and belonging in religion and among upper-class ladies most of whom were racists and resented the modern world. To further integrate into her social circle, she was always the loyal defender against people's acts transgressing the doctrines even if doing so would take away the life of her considerate maid. As for Justice Wargrave and Doctor Armstrong, they were outstanding figures in their working field, and enjoyed the sense of belonging.

5.1.4. Esteem Needs

Esteem needs are a person's desire for respect from himself and other people. The longing for recognition, honor and prestige is the main part of respect from the others. It is a higher level of needs, advancing with human evolution.

Justice Wargrave was no doubt highly recognized, therefore, when murder happened, he could compose a contemporary court and guided the rest to find the killer, while keeping himself from being taken as the murderer. Social status plays a crucial role in being recognized, which is

stereotypical ideas. The rest characters believed in him for his rich experience and gentle behavior. And General Macarthur also enjoyed the high reputation for he had served for the whole country. Doctor Armstrong was a “shining star” in physician circle. And to maintain his reputation, he bought the nurses witnessing his after-drinking operation and covered the fact that he had killed a poor patient. And when it comes to Miss Brent, raised by a military family, she was also a lady highly respected by people, and even the dandy Marston said she was not a woman to mess up with.

5.1.5. Self-actualization

Self-actualization is the highest form of needs in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. It is a journey for people to realize their maximum potential. And when people, who have fulfilled the previous four tiers of needs, are pursuing these needs, they would find that there are always more opportunities and possibilities to improve themselves. However, according to statistics and Maslow, only a small percentage of population has reached this level of needs.

Justice Wargrave, the real killer, is the only character in *And Then There Were None* who has fulfilled these top needs. But he did not get his peak experience until the well-designed massacre was completely performed. And in line with Maslow, the top needs were not felt by the rest characters because they all kept struggling to satisfy the previous four tiers of needs, and mostly to make sure the gratification of safety needs on the island.

5.2. Characters’ Unsatisfied Needs

5.2.1. Physiological Needs

When these needs are not least gratified, the higher needs cannot be felt by people. Compared with other characters, Captain Lombard was the only one who sometimes failed to fulfill these needs. Because he worked as a mercenary and the mercenaries insisted on a basic principle that who pays the higher gets their service no matter what task is given.

Therefore, Lombard once took a task as a colonizer to East Africa where gunfights often happened and lives were taken every day. He and his team lost in woods, and ran out of food and water. Facing this life-threatening situation, he stole all supplies and abandoned his team, thus surviving his teammates. At that time, other higher needs seemed vanished and he was totally controlled by the urge to satisfy the physiological needs. With physiological needs barely gratified, people in that primitive environment would also act like our ancestors, trying anything to survive at all costs.

5.2.2. Safety Needs

Physiological needs are often taken as the basic needs that sustain human. And safety needs are the ones that can increase people’s life expectancy based on those basic conditions. In accordance with Maslow’s theory, deficiency of safety needs is often caused by war, violence and death. And unsatisfied safety needs may give rise to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a persistent mental disease. Miss Rogers and Doctor Armstrong were suffering from PTSD. Having watched and helped her husband kill at his instigation, Miss Rogers got eye disease because of shock and uneasiness. As for the doctor, his hands trembled every time when he remembered that his hands supposed to save had killed a poor patient.

When on the island cut off from the society, no one could guarantee his or her safety. Therefore, out of personal safety, they took a skeptical attitude that anyone could be the murderer. So, they acted in a group with at least three people, and ate no food served only by one person, which did not help them escape from the Death. When Claythorne and Lombard were the last on that island (plus Wargrave in false death), she thought Lombard was the ultimate killer, and she squeezed the trigger of the gun stolen from him and killed him. Due to emotional outburst for her experience of witnessing murder and killing a child, she tried to hang herself in the end. Ungratified safety needs will impose a great impact on human, both physically and mentally.

5.2.3. Love and Belonging Needs

When in absence of these needs, people will become more sensitive to loneliness and anxiety from social communication. And the love needs include the sexual and unsexual part.

Vera Claythorne was not accepted by any second-rated school, not to mention the first-rated schools, due to the death of Cyril. And she was abandoned by Hugo for he approached the truth that she had killed his beloved nephew and knew why she did so. All of a sudden, she lost her job and affection of Hugo, and stepped down from her prime time. The deficiency of love and belonging needs makes her feel lonely. To satisfy the love needs sexually was the reason why she had a night with Lombard, a cruel man who she disliked at all.

General Macarthur thought he had a happy marriage until he found out his wife was cheating on him for a long time. He tried to regain the love from his wife as ever, and to satisfy his love needs by killing her lover.

Miss Brent was devoted believer and the product of the hypocritical aristocratic society, who hated the modern world and lacked the deficiency of belonging needs. To satisfy these needs, she accepted the invitation to get away from this industrialized society.

And characters on that island found that they could seldom feel the sense of belonging because they differed in gender and social ranks. Taking Lombard as an example, he was not accepted by the others for his cruelty. At the first dinner on Soldier Island, they were all charged with killing people. At that time, their gratification of belonging needs was challenged. Therefore, most of them denied the charge, which was the behavior trying to maintain the sense of belonging, because they did not want to be excluded as a murderer.

5.2.4. Esteem Needs

The absence of esteem needs will generate a person's self-doubt, a sense of weakness and inferiority about his or her capacities, which will possibly lead to mental diseases.

Whenever the topic is about respect, social inequality rises. At that time, servants and colored people were topped by everyone else over the social rank, and women could take no higher position, either. And in this novel, although Miss Rogers as the cook did her best in service, she was still insulted by Marston and Miss Brent with words, both of whom teased her for her eye disease. After Marston and Mrs. Rogers were murdered, Mr. Rogers was the first one to be accused, by all, of killing them. But Miss Rogers and his husband did not fight against the rude behavior and groundless accusation. And Claythorne was also treated unfair; when she talked with Miss Brent, Miss Brent said a third-rated school where Claythorne was working could only produce people like her. When the house-serving couple died, Claythorne was the next to have been accused of killing by Doctor Armstrong with sex discrimination.

5.2.5. Self-actualization

The embodiment of self-actualization varies from person to person due to different individual pursuits and ambitions. People on their way to achieve self-actualization have a clear understanding of what they want to be at that time. However, the unsatisfied self-actualization may not affect people's life while many of us are still struggling for the gratification of the previous four types of needs.

Maslow indicates that people can have basic needs partially satisfied and unsatisfied simultaneously. Wargrave's self-actualization was special due to his paradoxical and morbid mentality. Although Wargrave's safety needs was not fully gratified, he felt that his self-actualization was to be a murderer and justice-maker, only murdering killers whom laws failed to punish. His confession at the end of the story told us that he was a man with two sides, one of which was to act like an artist in criminology and the other of which was a justice dominated by the sense of justice born with him. His deficiency of self-actualization was finally gratified as the story went to its end.

Before he died, he designed this gathering on Soldier Island, and committed a flawless crime. As the representative of justice in his whole life, he could naturally earn their trust, and perfectly hide himself. And during his self-actualization, he was excited for the unknown things to come and was free of outside interference or domination, which is the typical manifestations of self-actualization. And he thought this crime was what he must do, and he was the same as “problem centered” people that Maslow defined as people in self-actualization. And, as he shot himself in the head with a gun attached with Claythorne’s fingerprint, his needs of self-actualization were gratified and he reached his peak experience from his perspective.

6. Needs of the Characters in *And Then There Were None*

Characters in *And Then There Were None* were decisively created and arranged. They came from different social ranks in a stratified society, thus making the story rich and gifting the work with more convincing social meanings.

As the embodiment of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is shown in the fifth part, this part is to draw a conclusion of characters’ needs based on their social ranks and Maslow’s theory, and to make a brief analysis of the similarities and differences in needs and factors concerned.

6.1. Needs of the Characters in Different Social Ranks

6.1.1. Needs of the Upper-class Characters

The upper-class characters include Justice Wargrave, Miss Brent, General Macarthur, Doctor Armstrong and Marston. Their needs are as follows:

Wargrave, highly-esteemed court worker, was the only one that satisfied the previous four tiers of needs, and his needs came to the top of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Before his death, he thought that it was his obligation and life-time dream to cleanse the world by killing people on his own.

Miss Brent, though born in an aristocratic family, needed to lower her spending on her life by accepting a free tour to the island for the declining number on her bank account. Besides, her accepting the invitation was also out of the need to maintain her “noble” living habits which did not match the modern world.

Macarthur was an influential man in military and enjoyed high reputation in life. The only thing he needed to make sure was that no one ever talked about his deputy’s death, and if not, his dear fame would vanish and his consciousness would be tortured.

Armstrong was a high-paid physician busy around the hospital. He accepted the invitation for he was working like a strained string and he wanted to live in a stable life even for a while. And he was afraid of the nurses would gossip around that operation where he had killed.

As for Marston, although he got nothing to worry about, he still stayed at the bottom needs. Having enough money, he needed nothing but parties to indulge in.

6.1.2. Needs of the Middle and Lower-class Characters

The middle- and lower-class characters are Claythorne, Lombard, Blore, Rogers and his wife. Here are their needs:

As a young woman who just broke up with Hugo, Claythorne was in need of love and desired to walk out of the last relationship. Besides, her fame was stained because of Cyril’s death, so she needed to be recognized again. And being a third-rated school teacher failed to economically support her life, and she accepted the part-time job as Mrs. Owen’s secretary.

Although Lombard kicked for thrills, he was agile of everything. Therefore, he always kept his gun accompanied for self-protection during his satisfaction of pursuing excitement.

Blore and the servant couple were driven by money to provide false evident and murder their former employer respectively.

6.2. Analysis of the Similarities and Differences

6.2.1. Similarities and Differences

Physiological needs and safety needs are the needs they share. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the physiological and safety needs can be also known as basic needs. These needs will not just vanish, even when the higher needs are activated. As we can see in this novel, no matter what social ranks they are from, they could not neglect these basic needs even when some of them are already paid as policeman and governess or some of them have taken over a big fortune of legacy. But the lower class they are, the more and harder they will work to satisfy these basic needs. When in the face of uncertainties threatening their lives, they also wanted to fulfill belonging needs in order to be included and cared, thus making sure their safety. So, people in a higher position of society cannot avoid meeting their physiological needs, and their position may make a reversed impact on their development.

The obvious difference of their needs is esteem needs. While the upper-class would act to maintain their reputation at any expense like Doctor Armstrong buying the nurses to keep a secret and Marston trading with the officials, the lower class, like the servant couple who were the first to be suspected, just lived up with all the unfair insults and groundless charges instead of stepping forward to defend themselves or fight against the inequality. Self-actualization needs are only fulfilled by Justice Wargrave, the representative of the upper-class. In general, their social ranks roughly match the height of the pyramid of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs.

6.2.2. Factors Concerned

Similarities and differences of needs are the result of the discrepancies of human development. Besides, social elements also play a pivotal role in shaping people's structure of needs to some degree. Factors concerned lead to these similarities and differences of the characters are as follows:

Human instinct is what remains in human in the long course of human evolution. Human instinct for food and safety is the lowest form of needs. Compared with the higher needs that are activated by enthusiasm according to Maslow's theory, the lower needs are activated easily and unconsciously. Human instinct will dominate human especially when people are dwelling in a primitive environment or their lives are at peril. Characters from lower class tried to survive, to crawl up for a better living standard, or to maintain his or her social status. And higher social status did not contribute to the reduction of human instinct. Characters, under this kind of situation that everyone is doomed to die, especially in certain ways that they have already been told in the Indian nursery rhyme, turned everything left in their bodies and minds into the human instinct for survival.

Generally speaking, different needs may emerge and co-exist at the same time. However, the dominant needs vary due to individual discrepancies. As the lower needs did not affect the upper class to a great extent, their actions were driven by the urge to satisfy higher needs. Religion is an inevitable element influencing people's words and actions. And religious doctrines confined the thoughts of Miss Brent in stereotype. And the void in soul caused Anthony's indulgence in luxury and his indifference. And with respect to the Justice, it is much more complicated to make an explanation. With morbid mentality, he took himself as an auxiliary hand of the God putting sentences to the vice. The ranking system in society and inequalities between men and women are also the factors leading to the differences that while the middle and lower class were struggling for lower needs, the upper class were pursuing the gratification of higher needs.

7. Enlightenment

7.1. Significance of Paying Attention to Hierarchy of Needs for Individuals

The hierarchy theory applies to all people in society. People act to satisfy their needs that hide in their consciousness. From the bottom to the top, the theory roughly goes hand in hand with people's development. If self-actualization, the top needs, has been gratified by people, the peak experience will be brought to them.

If attention is attached to hierarchy needs as well as their development, a clear sight will be made of what has been fulfilled and what is to do next. And the unconscious needs can be turned into conscious ones that come as people's priority. When basic needs are moderately gratified, people ought to focus on higher needs, which are of much more value when fulfilled. If people can keep moving forward for higher needs, they may have the chance to activate and meet self-actualization, which grants possibilities and never ends.

However, to gratify needs does not mean that people can act at all costs. Nowadays, healthy development is what we pursue. And the healthy development requires that no one's rights shall be violated during the satisfaction of individual needs. Justice Wargrave, as an example, fulfilled his self-actualization and got his peak experience, but he did it illegally and immorally, making no contribution to the society but leaving an unsolved murder case. Therefore, gratification of needs achieved in healthy ways can help you become the best in your perspective and can benefit others and even the society at the same time.

7.2. Significance of Paying Attention to Hierarchy of Needs for Society

With literary works created based on the reality, abnormal phenomena in literary works are the depiction and reflection of the society. It is reminded that only when the extreme social phenomena are reduced in reality, can the related literary phenomena decrease. Society serves as a major reason causing the differences of people's needs and discrepancies in the structure of needs.

The structure of people's needs is directly linked to the country's economic and technological development, educational level of the public and culture. Much as the world has developed, there remain issues such as development disparities in regions, gap between the rich and the poor, and inequality between men and women.

In fact, society is a big platform for people to fulfill their needs. If the society is well-built with sound "infrastructure", with basic needs satisfied easily, the general needs of people would be the higher ones. If society is aware of the structure of its people's needs, measures should be taken to restructure their needs. More attention should be attached to the vulnerable groups, who are treated unfairly and in depression. Like Claythorne and Mrs. Rogers, they were in a society where women were lower than men, so their needs could not be largely gratified and they just stood still in the lower part of the society. This year marks a special year because of the coronavirus pandemic, and a nation should know what needs should be held high in its agenda during this special time. A country's direction is no doubt greatly affecting its population. Literature comes from reality, and this study shows that it is vital to pay attention to people's needs. Taking China as an example, as a major country in the world, China has shown great enthusiasm in caring about people's needs which have a close bearing on the society. Based on the main issue in China that is people's growing demand for a better life, the Chinese government has implemented a series of strategies and policies to meet the material and cultural needs of the masses, thus achieving a harmonious environment where individual characteristics are respected and social stability is ensured. And China has done well in directing people in the Covid-19 pandemic, and having people's basic needs, which are the most important in this special time, satisfied to a great degree. China's feasible act comes from the lessons learned from history and literature.

Besides, efforts should be made to upgrade people's thoughts amid the surging economic and technological progress, which requires the society to invest more in education. By enhancing its comprehensive strength and lifting people's education, the society can form an enabling environment for more people to fulfill their needs and realize their value.

8. Conclusion

Agatha Christie was one of the most famous writers in Britain. She played a pivotal role in creating the writing style of the storm villa model and breaking the general writing mode of detective novels at that time. Her representative work, *And Then There Were None*, describes the main characters' murder cases on and off the island, and Wargrave's well-designed massacre. The five tiers of needs can be reflected in the characters and their behaviors.

Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a method newly applied to literary criticism, this thesis analyzed characters' needs, drew a conclusion of their similarities and differences in needs, and listed the factors which caused these similarities and differences. Therefore, the picture of characters' development is drawn and the reasons why they killed are shown based on Maslow's theory.

In conclusion, it is of meaning to attach attention to literary characters' needs from the perspective of Maslow's theory. To begin with, it helps us to further understand the characters' motivation hidden behind their behaviors and the social meaning the work tries to convey. Additionally, we can get a clearing understanding of the structure of people's needs and the factors concerned. Therefore, to achieve healthy development, on the one hand, people shall care about their own needs according to Maslow's theory so that they can know what to do to become the best. On the other hand, efforts should be directed by society in eradicating sex discrimination and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. With such conditions achieved, people can realize their goals and pursuit more easily and serve the society better, and the abnormal phenomena in literary world can be largely reduced.

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