

Karri Seppänen

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANDUIN WRYNN AND WRATHION IN WARCRAFT

Information Technology and Communication

Bachelor of Arts thesis

November 2021

ABSTRACT

Karri Seppänen: **The relationship between Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion in Warcraft**
Bachelor's Thesis
Tampere University
Bachelor's Programme in English Language, Literature and Translation
November 2021

The Warcraft game series has been one of the great global hits of gaming and especially *World of Warcraft*, a massively multiplayer online roleplaying game, redefined a genre of gaming through its success. *World of Warcraft* fan-community has long been debating whether or not there is a romantic relationship between two characters in the game, Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion. The reasoning behind them not being anything but good friends comes from the author of a *World of Warcraft* novel *War Crimes* (Golden 2011), who has stated so in her twitter account.

When it comes to authors and novels and whether or not something is based in reality, there are multiple tools to use to analyse the primary texts and find out what is actually going on. The purpose of this paper is to find out why the fan-community has been so driven to portray Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion as a romantic couple.

Critical Discourse Analysis is used in this paper as the primary tool of analysis, which is used to examine the language used in the texts. Especially the attitudes of the characters, interpretations inside the texts and the inclusions and exclusions of the readers have been located. This paper also uses two articles from Viktor Karandashev and Stuart Clapp that are used to gain some insight on the different features of a relationship through the differing aspects of love.

The research done shows that the fan-community readings could be based on certain situation inside the novel *War Crimes*, the game *World of Warcraft* and a certain cinematic shown inside the same game. However, it is also clear that there is not enough primary material to make a conclusive statement for one side or the other either.

Keywords: Warcraft, World of Warcraft, Quest, Critical Discourse Analysis, relationship, fan-community

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Karri Seppänen: **Anduin Wrynnin ja Wrathionin välinen suhde Warcraft-maailmassa**
Kandidaatintutkielma
Tampereen Yliopisto
Kielten kandidaattiohjelma: Englannin opintosuunta
Marraskuu 2021

Warcraft-pelisarja on ollut yksi pelialan suurista hiteistä maailman laajuisesti. Etenkin *World of Warcraft*, joka on massiivinen monen pelaajan verkkoroolipeli, määritteli uudelleen kokonaisen peligenren saavutuksillaan. *World of Warcraft* -faniyhteisö on jo pitkään väitellyt siitä, onko kahden pelin hahmon, Anduin Wrynnin ja Wrathionin, välinen suhde romanttinen vai ei. Perustelut hahmojen väliselle pelkälle hyvälle ystävyydelle tulevat *World of Warcraft* -kirjan *War Crimes* (Golden 2011) kirjoittajalta, joka on näin ilmoittanut Twitter-tilillään.

Kun puhutaan kirjailijoista ja kirjoista, ja siitä, pohjautuuko jokin todenperäisiin asioihin, on olemassa useita työkaluja analysoida primaaritekstejä ja selvittää mitä on oikeasti meneillään. Tämän tutkielman tarkoitus on selvittää, miksi faniyhteisö on niin määrätietoisesti esittänyt Anduin Wrynnin ja Wrathionin romanttisena parina. Tähän tutkielmaan on käytetty aineistoina *World of Warcraft* -peliä ja *War Crimes* -kirjaa, joka tapahtumat liittyvät Warcraftin maailmaan.

Tässä tutkielmassa käytetään ensisijaisena aineiston analysoinnin metodina kriittistä diskurssianalyysia, jonka avulla tarkastellaan teksteissä käytettyä kieltä. Teksteistä paikannettiin etenkin hahmojen asenteita, tekstin sisäisiä tulkintoja ja sitä, kuinka tekstissä sisällytetään tai suljetaan ulos erilaisia lukijoita tai lukijaryhmiä. Tutkielmassa käytetään myös kahta artikkelia Viktor Karandasheviltä ja Stuart Clappilta apuna suhteen ominaisuuksien määrittelemisessä erityyppisten rakkauden osa-alueiden kautta.

Tehty tutkimus osoittaa, että faniyhteisön tulkinnoille löytyy perusteet muun muassa tietyistä tilanteista *War Crimes* kirjassa, *World of Warcraft* pelissä ja eräässä väläilyssä samaisesta pelistä. On kuitenkin myös selvää, ettei ole olemassa tarpeeksi primaarimateriaalia lopullisen päätelmän tekemiseksi suuntaan tai toiseen.

Avainsanat: Warcraft, World of Warcraft, Tehtävä, Kriittinen Diskurssi Analyysi, suhde, faniyhteisö

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck -ohjelmalla.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	5
2 Analysing Love.....	7
2.1 Critical Discourse.....	7
2.2 Psychometrics of Love.....	8
2.2.1 Multidimensional Love Scale	9
2.2.2 Passionate and Companionate Love	9
3 For the Love of Warcraft	10
3.1 Relevant Background.....	11
3.2 Inside the World (of Warcraft).....	12
3.3 War Crimes	15
3.4 The Semantic Field of Love.....	19
4 Of Brothers or Lovers	20
5 Conclusion	21
Appendix	23
Works Cited.....	25

1 Introduction

Through almost 20 years of interacting with the *Warcraft* franchise I have seen, read and experienced its universe from many angles. Throughout the official games, novels and other materials, there are situations in which the community, as well as the creators, interpret certain things differently. One of these events is the relationship between Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion in the world of *Warcraft*.

The Warcraft franchise is a series of four fantasy games that were developed by Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. (Blizzard). The three first games are all real time strategy games, but the fourth game, *World of Warcraft* (released in 2004), is the first *Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Game* (MMORPG in short) that Blizzard has developed. *World of Warcraft* had over 10 million subscribers¹ (Annual Report, 2008) only four years after the initial release, making it a highly successful as a game. In the game the player controls a character and adventures mainly around the worlds of Azeroth and Draenor fighting enemies and helping allies. There are two major opposing factions to choose from in *World of Warcraft*, the Alliance and the Horde, both of which contain a number of differing species of creatures in their ranks. In Azeroth, the main world in the game, there are also other factions that do not clearly side with either Alliance nor Horde but work as either neutral or hostile groups that the players interact with. The game itself mainly played through scripted quests or quest lines, that have the player follow different kinds of guidelines in order to receive a reward. Due to the nature of MMORPGs, it is also worth of note that the game is frequently updated, or patched as the game term goes, where the developers work to make the game

¹ Subscription based online games require the person who is playing the game to continuously buy a service in the game, most commonly it is either a monthly game time subscription (*World of Warcraft*, for example) or a premium membership subscription. Subscription business models exists in other fields of business as well, but especially in MMORPGs this is a common phenomenon. For reference half of the players of *World of Warcraft* in 2007 were Western and the other half Asian players, Western players paid around 15 dollars per month and Asian players around 5 dollars a month (E-Commerce Times, 2007), which would come together as around 100 million dollars per month through subscriptions only.

better. Sometimes these patches are also made to remove older, no longer applicable content from the game, but this is a rare situation overall.

Players meet Anduin Wrynn, the crown prince of the main Alliance nation, and Wrathion, the only sane black dragon, separately in different settings, but together for the first time in the fifth expansion of *World of Warcraft*, called *Mists of Pandaria*. The official stance from Christie Golden (Golden “only good friends”) (and through her, Blizzard) is that Anduin and Wrathion are only friends. However, due to tweets by Golden (Golden “I can see this”) that insinuate them being a couple, the interactions of the two characters in *World of Warcraft* the game, as well as the interactions in the book *War Crimes*, there is a reason to believe that the relationship between the two is not as clearly either romantic or that of friendship. This idea is backed by the different reactions inside the community, where the relationship between the two characters is depicted through fanfiction, pictures and other mediums in a wide variety of manners. To make sense of the situation and to see where the supporters of friendship and those of romance base their readings on, this paper will go through the relationship between Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion.

As the topic of evaluating the nature of a relationship is a difficult one, the theory I have chosen to use in this thesis include the psychometric evaluations of love from Victor Karandashev and Stuart Clapp and the method of Critical Discourse Analysis. To be able to evaluate a relationship based on the evidence shown, I have chosen not to include the gender of the characters in the analysis. This exclusion helps to bring the matter of the relationship into perspective, since the definition of a relationship does not include a description of the participants genders. Through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis, I will first find relevant references in the primary materials and then compare their nature to that of the findings from Karandashev and Clapp.

2 Analysing Love

Through the articles on psychometrics of love by Victor Karandashev and Stuart Clapp and utilising discourse analysis, Anduin Wrynn's and Wrathion's relationship will be studied. Critical Discourse Analysis will pinpoint and define the wordings and sentences that are important to the topic of this paper, and these will be compared to the psychometric research data for further analysis. The articles about psychometrics will give comparable and researched data to better understand the Critical Discourse Analysis done on the primary sources.

2.1 Critical Discourse

For my analysis I have chosen to employ Critical Discourse Analysis, since it allows one to look for the meanings inside the text as well as possible effects it would have on the community the text is related to. Discourse as a form of study is regarded as a study of ideologies, experiences, social organizations and any other aspects of language use (Fasold 65; Fowler). Because Shore and Wright said that "discourses are ways of thinking, which may overlap and reinforce each other and close off other possible ways of thinking" (qtd. in Iverson 554), we can say that games are a form of discourse and that the character interactions written in a game can be seen as conduits of the creator's thoughts written in a form that allows others to experience it.

In conducting the analysis, I have followed the typical steps of critical discourse from Fairclough, where I; selected a text, looked for attitude revealing words and phrases, took into consideration the reader as a part of the Warcraft community, found the ready-made interpretations inside the text, thought about the process of text production and examined the

differing forms of text and their approachability. However, I was forced to omit some steps from my process, such as the analysis of quotations and borrowed language, the international cultural context and the contrasting with similar texts, since they were not applicable to the primary texts or they would have required a larger scale theoretical paper that goes beyond the point of this thesis. Especially interesting in analysing a fictional world with fictional characters being interacted with by a human player is that the assumptions about the world can be separated from the real-world limitations, thus making it possible for multiple different types of analyses to exist.

2.2 Psychometrics of Love

To be able to study love and the various forms it can take, Victor Karandashev and Stuart Clapp have done research on love and have created a psychometric scale for love in “Multidimensional Architecture of Love: From Romantic Narratives to Psychometrics” (2014). The psychometric scale for love is useful to have comparable results on what love actually is and utilizing this information Karandashev and Clapp have defined 33 dimensions to use. Due to these studies there are now more information and possibilities for “scholarly investigation” (Karandashev and Clapp, Multidimensional Love) when it comes to love. Karandashev and Clapp’s second study this thesis refers to was conducted to “explore the psychometrics and structure of Passionate and Companionate love” (Karandashev and Clapp, Multidimensional Love) to further test and improve the psychometric scale.

2.2.1 Multidimensional Love Scale

Berscheid gave the reason for researching love and its attributes, when he "noted that more comprehensive instruments are needed in order to measure love." (qtd. in Karandashev and Clapp, "Multidimensional Love" 676). To accomplish this feat of analysing love, Karandashev and Clapp firstly did a discourse analysis on romantic stories, where they identified different types of quotes and reformulated them to "form declarative, descriptive statements" ("Multidimensional Love" 678). Afterwards they located similarities in the statements and divided them into different dimensions such as Yearning or Elation. Up to 33 different dimensions were formulated in this manner and the different dimensions were then put on an online survey where they were represented by 266 different questions overall.

After analysing the data, Karandashev and Clapp formulated different dendrograms for different genders and relationship types. The results Karandashev and Clapp found in their dendrograms showcased the differences between male and female thoughts about the dimensions as well as differences between relationship types.

2.2.2 Passionate and Companionate Love

In the second research, by Karandashev and Clapp, the complexity of love is evaluated more and two key types of love are pointed out. Conclusions such as "Passionate Love is driven by passion, sexual desire and needs satisfaction" ("Passionate and Companionate Love" 75) and "Companionate Love is selfless, caring for and treating the partner as an extension of their self" ("Passionate and Companionate Love" 75) were gathered. These conclusions were drawn from an online survey, where Karandashev and Clapp utilized a Two-Step Cluster Analysis to identify two different kinds of answer clusters which they then used Principle

Component Analysis on to define their characteristics. In dividing different dimensions to different types of love, Karandashev and Clapp compared the results of both clusters and identified those that were not present in one or the other and grouped them up for better understanding.

After the data was analysed, Karandashev and Clapp noted that especially women tended to define their love as companionate love. The age distribution also showed that older people and older relationships tended to be more companionate in contrast to passionate love. The different dimensions of companionate and passionate love are discussed extensively in the article and emphasis is added to the diversity of possible combinations of values. The same values and dimensions are present in both types of love but at different degrees, which also applies to different people and as such no universal pattern for love can be established. (“Passionate and Companionate Love” 75)

3 For the Love of Warcraft

In this section I will endeavour to analyse the relationship between Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion using the theories listed above and combining them with the primary source materials. The usage of Critical Discourse Analysis in the following part can be seen through the attitudes, interpretations, inclusions and exclusions that have been taken into consideration in the analysis itself. It is also important to note, that due to *World of Warcraft* being an online game that is ever changing, I will firstly determine the time and place I need to place this analysis at. *World of Warcraft: Cataclysm* is where the character of Wrathion is first introduced to the players and it is also where the events from the novels *The Shattering: Prelude to Cataclysm* (Golden, 2011) and *Wolfheart* (Knaak, 2011) are situated in. Wrathion had a bigger role in the next expansion, *World of Warcraft: Mists of Pandaria* and the end of

the *Mists of Pandaria* expansion is also the point in time where *War Crimes* (Golden, 2015) takes place. For two expansions afterwards Wrathion has not been in any way relevant to the story, except for one quest in *Warlords of Draenor*, until *The Battle for Azeroth* expansion, in which Wrathion took a more prominent role again. The story of Anduin Wrynn encompasses a larger area, but I will mention which expansion I am referring to if I am using materials outside of *Cataclysm* or *Mists of Pandaria* related content.

3.1 Relevant Background

Due to the primary materials being in two different formats, either as a novel or as in-game text, it is noteworthy to point out that only in-game dialogue and text is partly affected by the player, but even then we can locate all the versions and differences through meticulous research. The players can experience certain events in differing orders and depending on the faction they have chosen to play as they would have a different side of the story that they see. I will mainly be using materials from the point of view of an Alliance member because of Anduin Wrynn being a character on the Alliance side, while Wrathion is part of a neutral party. The events in the game are also happening in a much larger timespan, where there is no real way to estimate how long has passed between dialogues, which makes the summary of events relative to the amount of time the player has had to experience them. However, the novels are set in specific periods of time and as such they can be easily located in the overall timeline and used to have more precise information. The novels are also written from the point of view of the characters and as such there is certain type of deliberate dissonance present in the narrative which comes through as an unreliable narrator. For instance inside the novels a character might be sympathetic and understanding in their thoughts towards a certain event, where as in the next chapter a different character might be shown to have hateful and

judgemental thoughts about the same event, making the reader effectively doubt if either of these mentioned characters are believable.

3.2 Inside the World (of Warcraft)

In *World of Warcraft: Cataclysm* we see the emergence of the character Wrathion, an uncorrupted black dragon, through the quest line for legendary Fangs of the Father daggers. The questline is the part of the end game content of the *Cataclysm* expansion and afterwards there are no mentions of Wrathion in other contexts until *World of Warcraft: Mists of Pandaria* was released. In *Mists of Pandaria* Wrathion serves as a quest giver for different quest chains along the expansion.

During *Mists of Pandaria*, Anduin Wrynn, the Crown Prince of the human nation of Stormwind, has also found himself in the new continent of Pandaria. The first part of the expansion leads the player to eventually face a dark creature called Sha and during the confrontation Anduin is badly wounded. The recovering prince decides to rest in the Tavern in the Mists, which is also where Wrathion has been keeping his headquarters. When the 5.2 *Rise of the Thunder King* patch to *World of Warcraft: Mists of Pandaria* was released, Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion are shown to discuss the matters of leadership over a Pandaren game of Jihui. Anduin tells the player that he “enjoy[s] talking with him” and further explains that Wrathion is “not like other black dragons” (Meet Me Upstairs 5.2), “completely honest and yet always hiding something” (Meet Me Upstairs 5.2) and “[n]ot at all what I expected” (Meet Me Upstairs 5.2), making it clear that Anduin at least sees the Black Prince in positive light and presenting an initial social structure between the two. This is countered shortly afterwards in another quest, where Anduin tells Alliance players to not “blindly trust a black dragon” and for the members of the Horde he warns not to “blindly trust this black dragon” in

reference to Wrathion. The implications of Anduin singling out Wrathion from other black dragons to not to trust blindly are unclear, since the player gets to question Anduin's decision to "trust a black dragon, after what they put [Anduin's] family through" in an earlier quest text already. This question comes from the gaming context where the player knows the history of the black dragons and the Wrynn family, that being that the black dragons have been actively trying to harm the Wrynn family in the past. Even up to date, the game only has two black dragon characters who are shown to be either neutral or friendly towards the players, one of those being Wrathion and another one being a character that is only introduced to the players in the expansion named *Legion*.

The two characters are shown to disagree about the ways to lead a nation and they also send the player on different quests. Especially Anduin voices out his negative opinions of the trustworthiness of Wrathion by calling Wrathion's quests "plotting" (The Crown of Heaven 5.2) and warning the player to "think twice before putting that thing on [their] head" when given a crown as a gift from Wrathion (Echoes of the Titans 5.2), showing an assumption that is made inside the text already for the player to see. Anduin also tells the black dragon "I don't trust you", to which Wrathion replies with "[y]ou are wise not to" (Heart of the Thunder King 5.2), clearly showcasing the attitudes of the two for the Critical Discourse Analysis. On the other hand, Wrathion's attitude is shown to be only positive towards Anduin, telling him that he "keep[s] no secrets" (The Crown of Heaven 5.2), that Anduin is "welcome to accompany [them]" (The Crown of Heaven 5.2) and shows beautiful vistas to Anduin, to which Anduin does mention them being "breathtaking" (The Crown of Heaven 5.2). Wrathion also implores Horde members not to harm an important member of the Alliance including the reader, who is in this case the player, to take their role as a part of the community, that being a part of the Horde faction that opposes the Alliance.

In *Battle for Azeroth*, Wrathion returns after a lengthy absence to greet, the now king, Anduin Wrynn. During the Visions of N'zoth cinematic, Wrathion walks to Anduin's throne room and gets punched in the face by Anduin himself after being accused of being the reason for Anduin's father's death (Visions of N'zoth 8.3) showcasing the changed attitude of Anduin towards Wrathion. Later in the same cinematic, Anduin orders Wrathion to tell him how to prepare for an impending attack from the main antagonist of the expansion, an old evil creature called N'zoth, making the social structure starkly different from two friends discussing their views. This is where Wrathion shows that the attack will be aimed at the mind and while telling about it, Wrathion also brings two of his fingers close to Anduin's temple, to which Anduin does react by recoiling, but not as much as one would do with a clear enemy in sight (Visions of N'zoth 8.3) which implies an already improving attitude from Anduin's side and subverts hostile interpretation from earlier in the cinematic making it important when thinking about Critical Discourse Analysis. The scene starts to shift into an illusionary world inside Anduin's head while the viewer hears Wrathion telling the characters present that the main antagonist will "manipulate emotions, get people to act in ways contrary to their nature" (Visions of N'zoth 8.3), after which Anduin is shown to force his hands to open from a fist. This in particular should be taken inside the context, since the player already knows that the character of Anduin Wrynn is a peace loving one, who even defends those that have wronged him personally as shown in in *War Crimes* for example. Hitting someone outright is uncharacteristic of Anduin Wrynn, which in this cinematic is shown to be due to the influence N'zoth is having over Anduin's mind (Visions of N'zoth 8.3), further subverting the hostility shown in the beginning of the cinematic.

After the initial dramatic greetings and the events of the Visions of N'zoth-cinematic, the two start working together to devise a way to prevent the main antagonist from fulfilling its plans. During this time Wrathion works together with the players and at some point travels

with the player to a nightmare version of Stormwind, the capital of the human kingdom and the seat of King Anduin Wrynn. During this visit to an alternative Stormwind, the players can trigger a short event with Wrathion by approaching the keep of Stormwind, the place where Anduin's throne room is located in. Wrathion stops the player from entering the keep and tells them "[n]ot the keep. That is one vision I would rather not see." (Vision of Stormwind 8.3), showcasing the agony it would cause to Wrathion to see someone especially dear to him be changed into a nightmarish version of themselves. Even after Wrathion agrees to accompany the player into a literal nightmare, through which we can assume that he is prepared to face anything that the visions can show, the confident black dragon is shown to hesitate which is not something the players are used to seeing from him.

3.3 War Crimes

After the events that concluded the *Mists of Pandaria* expansion, but long before *Battle for Azeroth*, Garrosh Hellscream, the person who caused the injuries Anduin Wrynn experienced, is taken to trial. The novel *War Crimes* handles the trial through which Garrosh is judged and how a multitude of famous characters from the game, including Prince Anduin and the self-proclaimed Black Prince Wrathion, act during the trial. In the novel, Anduin is shown to visit Garrosh in prison a few times while Wrathion is shown to appear only when Anduin is also on the scene one way or another. The trial ends abruptly when Garrosh, with the help of Wrathion and some other characters, escapes into an alternate timeline.

The interactions between Wrathion and Anduin are shown as being very warm and friendly up to the point when Anduin learns of what role Wrathion has had in the escape of Garrosh Hellscream. The friendliness in these scenes is in stark contrast to what their relationship is inside the *World of Warcraft* the game, which leads the reader to assume that

their opinion of each other has greatly improved in a relatively short time. Anduin mentions in the novel that he invited Wrathion to join the trial and that he is glad that the Black Prince decided to do so (Golden 51-53), thus showing that the attitude Anduin has towards Wrathion has improved since the events at the Tavern in the Mists. It is also explained to the reader that Anduin and Wrathion became “friends of a sort” (Golden 51-53) during the events in the game, which is mentioned to be because of their differing outlooks when it came to leadership and them resembling youths of the same age (Golden 51-53). Another character, Aunt Jaina as Anduin calls her, is shown to think that Anduin has had “few equals his own age” (Golden 51-53), while also having a feeling that Wrathion might be a “bad influence” (Golden 51-53), showcasing an attitude and an interpretation inside the text for Critical Discourse Analysis. These mentions of similar ages and friendship offer the reader a view of kinship and camaraderie from an outsider’s perspective, but also show almost motherly concern over Anduin because of his company. Jaina also points out that the reason for her misgivings about Wrathion is not that he is a black dragon, a point which is significant to note because of the racial difference of the two characters in question. This might be due to Jaina’s own past with a blue dragon named Kalecgos and their romance that is depicted in the games and another novel as well.

Throughout the trial, Anduin is shown to seek solitude because of the events happening in the court and on both occasions Wrathion appears in the scene as well (Golden 92-94; Golden 274-276). Wrathion politely asks Anduin if he can join the Prince of Stormwind, to which Anduin agrees on both occasions, once with a smile on his face (Golden 92-94) and once with a sarcastic comment about his father not wanting Anduin to spend time with Wrathion (Golden 274-276). The courtesy shown by Wrathion in these scenes shows respect towards Anduin, while Anduin’s responses are signs of comfortability in being with the black dragon. During the first scene Anduin and Wrathion are shown to disagree about

the proceedings in the trial, which leads to Anduin becoming weary and asking whether Wrathion the dragon would consider them friends (Golden 92-94). Wrathion is surprised by the question, but eventually tells Anduin that he does think of them as friends, to which Anduin says “[t]hen... can we just... stay here in comfortable silence for a while? As friends?” (Golden 92-94) and Wrathion agrees to this. Even after the two characters disagree with something, they are shown to have consideration for each other and be able to sit in silence with each other, which is arguably a good sign in any kind of relationship. Anduin’s weariness can also be seen as vulnerability and showing that you are vulnerable to another person is a sign of great trust with people as well as in many animal species.

The second scene where Anduin and Wrathion are shown to be alone happens after Anduin has been testifying in court. Wrathion comes “to see if [Anduin is] all right after [...] today’s testimony” (Golden 274-276) and assures Anduin that he “was quite prepared to break [Anduin] out of prison if [his] father was so inclined as to put [him] there” (Golden 274-276), showing concern, empathy and loyalty towards Anduin. The Prince of Stormwind has stopped visiting Garrosh in prison, to which Wrathion comments that “I confess I should be rather sad to hear that, although I’ve long maintained your naiveté will be your undoing” (Golden 274-276), to which Anduin explains that he has become very tired of “all this” (Golden 274-276). Anduin again shows signs of vulnerability towards the Black Prince whereas Wrathion acknowledges Anduin’s trait as something to be happy about, even though he personally does not see the value of it. To cheer Anduin up, Wrathion tells him that “When I am a little older [...] I shall, if asked politely, take you on my back and ferry you to fascinating places, where we will have adventures that will age your father ten years in one night” (Golden 274-276). The comment works on Anduin and the two begin to play a board game together, having Wrathion effectively change the negative mood of Anduin into a

positive one on purpose, which shows the attitude of the two characters towards one another and making it relevant for the Critical Discourse Analysis.

Eventually, Wrathion ends up betraying Anduin in the novel and freeing Garrosh from his prison. When Anduin realizes that Wrathion is behind the escape, he is “sickened as his heart [contracts] at yet another betrayal” (Golden 348-349), showing how deep the relationship between the two had gotten by then in Anduin’s eyes. Wrathion explains that in his view “it is not yet within [Anduin] to suspect treachery” (Golden 348-349), that he is “deeply sorry for what [he] now must do” (Golden 348-349) and that he still considers Anduin and himself friends (Golden 348-349), showing remorse and consideration for Anduin even while going against his wishes. After the declaration of friendship from Wrathion, Anduin says “friends? Friends don’t kill each other” (Golden 348-349), a claim that is told to have made Wrathion almost look hurt. Wrathion then explains that he has already only knocked two other people unconscious during the escape and that he “[cares] far less about them than [he does of Anduin]” (Golden 348-349), which is where Wrathion is explicitly shown to care for Anduin. The Black Prince then explains that he is doing what he believes is for the best and that he has a “deep hope that one day [Anduin] will understand. And on that day, you and I will face a terrible enemy. Perhaps we shall even do so as brothers” (Golden 348-349), which implies, through Critical Discourse Analysis, that Wrathion truly wants for his relationship with Anduin to continue, although in brotherly fashion. Anduin proceeds to try and reach out to Wrathion by saying “[y]ou don’t have to do it this way. Tell me what’s going on. We can work together. We can find some way to –“ (Golden 348-349), focusing on fixing and clearing things out together instead of as individuals. All through this brief exchange, it is good to point out that Wrathion’s attitude towards Anduin has improved even further when compared to the events during *Mists of Pandaria*, and even though Anduin at first seems to have gone from trusting and vulnerable

to something akin to hateful, he still tries to cling to the positive connection from before. After this, Anduin is knocked unconscious and Wrathion makes his escape only to appear again in the aforementioned *Battle for Azeroth* cinematic.

3.4 The Semantic Field of Love

Comparing the analysis results from critical discourse with Karandashev and Clapp’s psychometric research on different types of love works to unveil the reasons for fanfiction writers being interested in Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion being a pair. Out of all the parts analysed in the previous sections, some aspects of love that Karandashev and Clapp acknowledged appeared. The aspects mentioned are listed below in a table (Table 1) together with the number of times these feelings and thoughts appeared in the parts analysed, some of which appeared in the same parts, since there were overlapping emotions and explanations for them. During the process of assigning these factors to specific parts of text, I followed a logic where all applicable factors were assigned to the text at hand. As an example “keep[s] no secrets” (The Crown of Heaven 5.2) shows signs of trust and sharing while “sickened as [Anduin’s] heart [contracts] at yet another betrayal” (Golden 348-349) shows that there was trust to be betrayed. Following in this manner, the rest of the chosen pieces of text were also analysed, the full list can be found in the appendix, and processed into a table (see fig. 1).

Acceptance	1	Concern	5	Protection	2
Affection	1	Devotion	1	Service	2
Attachment Anxiety	1	Empathy	3	Sharing	7
Comfort	6	Faith	1	Trust	3
Companionship	7	Forgiveness	2	Understanding	5
Compatibility	1	Interest	3	Uniqueness	3

Fig. 1. Psychometrics in CDA.

The feelings of comfort, companionship, concern, sharing and understanding were the most common ones that came up in the Critical Discourse Analysis. These factors are both common in companionate and passionate love, since Karandashev and Clapp have grouped together some of these feelings, where Partnership for instance includes comfort and sharing when thinking about passionate love, but also scored highly in the Cluster 2 Factor Analysis they did, depicting that these are also important emotions in companionate love.

4 Of Brothers or Lovers

While doing the analysis, the data proved out to be rather sparse with any kind of references about the type of relationship Wrathion and Anduin Wrynn have. It was also pointed out that many of these references were actually negative in nature, further limiting the positive notions to be used in the analysis. All factors considered, the relationship between the two characters is a fluctuating one, where the feelings they have for one another might not be similar in comparison to the other's feelings. Wrathion's feelings and general attitude towards Anduin improves, ever so slightly, across the timeline, while Anduin goes back and forth between doubt and trust over and again. Since the primary material was rather limited in quantity, it is surprising to notice so many changes in Anduin in such a small amount of text. This limitation in regards to the primary material also in turn explains why there are different readings about the relationship between Wrathion and Anduin. The way the characters are written leaves it rather ambiguous as to whether the relationship is homosocial or homosexual in nature, since it was evident in the analysis that some aspects of love that Karandashev and Clapp had mentioned, both the highly positive and the negative ones as well, do exist between the two.

In favor of homosexual attachment between Wrathion and Anduin, we can point towards the feelings and comments of the two during *War Crimes*. The types of companionship, comfort and concern shown in the novel are some of the important qualities that passionate and companionate love consist of. They are also something that, if the reader so wanted to, could be read as homosocial behaviour. The companionship especially, and the comment of hopefully doing things as brothers in the future, (Golden 348-349) would be something that a reader intent in a homosocial reading would take out of the relationship between the two.

However, it is also noteworthy to point out, that if the character of Anduin would have been a female one, it is highly likely that the companionship the two show towards one another would have been more readily read as love than of friendship. As an example, if a female character is shown to enjoy the company of a man even when she desires solitude, the closeness of the relationship becomes that much more evident. In a situation where there are two men involved however, there still persists a strong air of camaraderie instead of affection between men.

5 Conclusion

After considering the differing aspects that came up in the Critical Discourse Analysis and the aspects of love that Karandashev and Clapp presented, the basis of the fan-community's views have been located and studied thoroughly. The multiple instances of tender caring, trust and respect between Anduin and Wrathion are there even in the primary material and they can be read as signs of a romantic relationship between the two characters. Whether or not the gender of the characters affects the readings people have of Anduin and Wrathion is

another matter entirely, and should be studied in a larger context of sexual orientation and gender norms, for this thesis did not aim to find that out to begin with.

Even while Christie Golden mentions in her tweet (Golden “only good friends”) that the relationship between Anduin Wrynn and Wrathion is that of good friends, it is not unreasonable to read the relationship as a romantic one either. The lack of further evidence, that would point towards a romantic or a friendly relationship, leaves room for so much speculation, that even the slightest notions inside the existing primary material can be read as reflecting either homosexual or homosocial affection. Even when the homosocial aspect seems to be dominant, the fans have good reason to believe that there is more to the relationship than that. Thus, it is not a wonder that the fan-community has been active through showing their own readings about the two characters and how they see the relationship between Anduin and Wrathion.

Appendix

“enjoy[s] talking with him”	Comfort
“not like other black dragons”	Uniqueness
“completely honest and yet always hiding something”	Interest, Understanding
“[n]ot at all what I expected”	Interest
“[y]ou are wise not to”	Acceptance
“keep[s] no secrets”	Sharing, Trust
“welcome to accompany [them]”	Companionship
shows beautiful vistas	Service, Sharing
working together	Sharing, Companionship
“[n]ot the keep. That is one vision I would rather not see.”	Attachment Anxiety, Concern
he invited Wrathion to join the trial and that he is glad	Comfort, Sharing,
differing outlooks	Interest, Sharing, Uniqueness
youths of the same age	Companionship, Compatibility
politely asks	Concern, Comfort, Understanding
[t]hen... can we just... stay here in comfortable silence for a while? As friends?”	Comfort, Companionship, Sharing, Understanding, Empathy
“to see if [Anduin is] all right	Concern, Empathy
prepared to break [Anduin] out of prison	Companionship, Trust, Protection, Comfort, Service, Understanding
rather sad to hear that	Uniqueness
take you on my back and ferry you to fascinating places	Companionship, Comfort, Devotion

sickened as his heart [contracts] at yet another betrayal

Trust

“deeply sorry for what [he] now must do”

Concern, Empathy

showing remorse and consideration

Concern, Empathy

“[cares] far less about them than [he does of Anduin]”

Affection, Companionship, Protection

“deep hope that one day [Anduin] will understand

Understanding, Faith, Forgiveness

“[y]ou don’t have to do it this way. Tell me what’s going on. We can work together. We can find some way to –“

Concern, Forgiveness, Sharing

Works Cited

- Activision Blizzard Inc. *2008 Annual Report*, 2008. <https://investor.activision.com/static-files/6a3821f5-f503-4f4a-a9ea-c9d53c988ccb>. Accessed 25 March 2019.
- Fairclough, Norman. *Analysing Discourse : Textual Analysis for Social Research* . London: Routledge, 2003.
- Fasold, Ralph. *Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.
- Fowler, Roger. *Literature as Social Discourse : the Practice of Linguistic Criticism* . London: Batsford Academic, 1981.
- Golden, Christie. *The Shattering: Prelude to Cataclysm*. Pocket Star Books, 2011.
- . *World of Warcraft: War Crimes*. Simon & Shuster, 2015.
- Golden, Christie [@ChristieGolden]. “@malikishak91 Their relationship was only good friends. XD” *Twitter*, 10 October 2015, <https://twitter.com/ChristieGolden/status/652880331683422208>
- . “Yep, @PrinceAnduin and @BlackPawn_, I can see this: sneakyfeets.tumblr.com/image/52268623025” *Twitter*, 21 June 2014, <https://twitter.com/ChristieGolden/status/480165916752510976>
- Iverson, Susan. “Performing Gender: A Discourse Analysis of Theatre-Based Sexual Violence Prevention Programs.” *NASPA Journal*, vol. 43, no. 3, Informa UK Limited, Jan. 2006.
- Karandashev, Victor, and Clapp, Stuart. “Multidimensional Architecture of Love: From Romantic Narratives to Psychometrics.”, *Journal of Psycholinguist Research*, Vol. 44, Issue 6, 2015, 675-699.

---. "Psychometric Properties and Structures of Passionate and Companionate Love.", *Interpersona: An International Journal on Personal Relationships*, Vol. 10, Issue 1, 2016, 56-76.

Knaak, Richard A. *Wolfheart*. Gallery Books, 2011.

Lawrence, Ken. *John Lennon: In His Own Words*. The United States of America, Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2005.

LeClaire, Jennifer. "'World of Warcraft' Wows 8 Million Subscribers" *E-Commerce Times*, <https://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/55135.html>. Accessed 25 March 2019.

World of Warcraft. Version Battle for Azeroth for PC, Blizzard Entertainment Inc., 2018.

World of Warcraft. Version Cataclysm for PC, Blizzard Entertainment Inc., 2010.

World of Warcraft. Version Mists of Pandaria for PC, Blizzard Entertainment Inc., 2012.