#OpSherlock: Privacy, Surveillance, and Anonymous in *Elementary*

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Questions of privacy have always been focal issues in the detective genre, and have been problematised in crime fiction and film in several ways: in its most evident form, we can find (threats to) privacy as a motivation for crimes even in the earliest of Sherlock Holmes stories; the investigation process itself challenges and overwrites the everyday rules of privacy; and when the Great Detective is finally introduced into the process, he brings about a new set of practices and rules regarding privacy. Although the original Sherlock Holmes stories often address the issue both on the level of the plot and in the method of the detective, the discrepancies around privacy have become all the more visible in the most recent television adaptations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories, such as in *Elementary* and *Sherlock*. This development is at least partly due to the technological advances introduced in the past few decades, which made constant surveillance both in public and in private, not only possible but often unavoidable, but, on the other hand, recent historical events – specifically 9/11 and its repercussions – have apparently necessitated these measures as well. Apart from the official privacy measures and concerns, online initiatives, such as the hacktivist group Anonymous, and its spin-off endeavours, LulzSec and AntiSec have highlighted the severity of the situation concerning online privacy, or lack thereof. In my paper I would like to examine that corner of popular culture where Sherlock Holmes meets Anonymous, that is, the reflections of privacy issues and practices, and the emergence of hacker culture in the recent CBS series, *Elementary*.

Privacy and the Detective

"London, like New York, is a beacon of freedom and a target for terrorists. It is, as a consequence, one of the most observed cities in the world. Its network of thousands upon thousands of CCTV cameras tracks the movements of its citizens, looking for anything at all out of place" ("Step Nine"). This Foucauldian observation by Sherlock Holmes from an episode of *Elementary* touches upon a rather fitting diagnosis of the current state of surveillance: on the one hand, it

calls attention to the all-permeating presence of observation equipment in urban locations, and, on the other hand, it indicates its paranoid nature, as the means of surveillance is to find "anything at all out of place," anything extraordinary, which, in fact, is also a characteristic of the Great Detective's *modus operandi*.

At this point it would be advisable to take a look at the original Sherlock Holmes stories to find the foundation for this paranoid panoptical vision that has since been adopted not only by later reincarnations of Holmes, but by law enforcement agencies, and, on a larger scale, by liberal governments as well, in the so-called war on terror. Upon Dr. Watson's first meeting Holmes, the detective "reads" his future companion – "You have been to Afghanistan, I perceive" (Conan Doyle 18) –, which later on becomes a set feature in the stories: whenever a potential client visits Holmes in his rooms, he proceeds to figure out a number of facts about the caller, thus re-establishing himself as the Detective.[2] This, however, may seem as a mere party trick when compared to the more important use of Holmes's uncanny vision: in short, there is no privacy from the gaze of the Detective. His overactive observational skills come extremely useful in solving crimes, but, after all, these skills also enable him to see through those metaphorical walls surrounding private life – if it were not enough that his cases take him deep into people's private lives as well, when he is investigating step-fathers with a murderous intent ("The Speckled Band") or the love affairs of prestigious personalities ("A Scandal in Bohemia").

Sherlock Holmes' observation skills introduced in the canon are not only the stuff of legend, but have become something of a cliché as well, and thus run the risk of being reduced to mere showing off. The detective's uncanny gaze, however, is not simply a sign of excessive genius, but also a symptom of a pathological compulsion, not only a need to observe and map out everything the detective's gaze touches upon, but also an inability to not do so. Of course, the detective does use this ability (which, then, could even be labelled as a disability) to impress, but, boasting apart, it is apparently not something that he can exercise control over. This notion is often reflected in later adaptations, maybe best in the television series *The Finder*, where the Great Detective character, Walter Sherman, struggles with paranoia after a head trauma suffered in the Iraqi war. His disability paired with his newly acquired overactive observation skills allow, or rather, compel him to start a career as a self-proclaimed finder: he acts as specialized private investigator of lost items and lost causes. He manages to track down people, events (such as the missing parts of an overheard conversation or a dinner), or objects deemed lost by his client, but besides the usual occupational hazards he has to face internal risks as well: he must find what he is looking for, or

2 The uncanny, panoptical gaze of the Detective did not, of course, originate with Sherlock Holmes, as it was first introduced in the characterisation of Dupin in Edgar Allen Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," where, while walking the streets of Paris, Dupin answers his companion's unuttered observation, based on his own observations of the walk and the intimate knowledge of the workings of the companion's mind.

else he cannot cope with failure, cannot stop his investigations and this may drive himself into a catatonic state, which eventuality illustrates the less glamorous and more pathological aspect of the compulsive observational genius.[3] But even if the compulsion does not manifest itself as a psychological disorder, several portrayals of the Great Detective operate with drug issues to highlight the pathological nature of Holmes's skills (in recent adaptations *Sherlock*, *Elementary,* as well as in *House, M.D.*).

It has been characteristic of the crime genre since its inception that it introduced the latest advances and technologies in forensic science, thus making it easily acceptable for the general public, when these advances were later introduced in everyday use, from photography to fingerprinting, and later on more elaborate techniques.[4] This phenomenon has, however, expanded since then: it is not only the featured equipment and techniques that have been adapted, but the detective's paranoid gaze has apparently become an ideology as well: Julian Reid in his monograph *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror* depicts liberal societies' defence strategies in the war on terror, strategies (including surveillance) which can be paralleled with the detective's observational techniques. Reid explains this defence strategy with the concept of "logistical life," which implies the following: the individuals living according to the rules of the logistical life always live under the duress of the command to be efficient, they are ready to be positioned where they are required, use their time economically, they are able to move when told to, and able to extol these capacities as values for which one would willingly kill and die for, if necessary (Reid 20). The implementation of such policies in societies, albeit serving genuinely useful purposes of security, has the side-effect of aggravating the anxieties caused by the threat of possible (terrorist) attacks in the population and turns the individuals against each others, as citizens are encouraged to look for signs of danger and dangerous individuals anywhere, thus adapting the paranoid gaze characteristic of surveillance systems. What is more, these systems implemented in the defence of freedom may do, in fact, more harm than good to the very freedoms they are protecting, as it is the citizens, whose liberties are being protected here by taking away some of those liberties, the same citizens who are observed and held up for scrutiny during their

3 Interestingly enough, probably *The Finder* is the series, which, despite its light-hearted nature, manages best to showcase the dangers of the compulsive side of the Detective: the series ended after its first season, with Sherman hauled off to jail, as he was unable to stop an investigation and thus broke his promise made to the US Marshalls: he was supposed to stop looking for a person – his own mother – in witness protection, but he was unable to do so, because that would have meant failing to fulfil an assignment. In the course of his investigation he also killed three people trying to attack his mother, which obviously aggravated his situation. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the series was not renewed for further seasons, so this event could never become resolved, and thus it realised the imminent doom that is forever hanging over the Detective's head: going too far, from a legally grey area to illegality and (self-)destruction.

4 Cf. Thomas, Ronald R. *Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science*. Cambridge: CUP, 2004

everyday movements in the name of "democracy and freedom." Slavoj Žižek in his collection of essays, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!* comments upon this discrepancy thusly:

> […] all the main terms we use to designate the present conflict – 'war on terrorism', 'democracy and freedom', 'human rights', and so on – are false terms, mystifying our perception of the situation instead of allowing us to think it. In this precise sense, our 'freedoms' themselves serve to mask and sustain our deeper unfreedom. (2)

"Came for the Lulz, Stayed for the Outrage"

Before turning to *Elementary* and examining how the Detective and his uncanny gaze function in the series, and how they affect issues of privacy, I would like to introduce an entity which, on the one hand, had gathered significant public attention in the past few years and was featured in *Elementary* as well (at least in a fictionalized form), and, on the other hand, in its evolution and activities shows significant resemblance to the figure of Sherlock Holmes.[5] This entity in question is the online hacktivist group Anonymous, who have evolved from the attention-seeking "Hate Machine of the Internet" (FOX News, qtd. in Coleman) to a veritable and powerful, although still often disputed activist group, supporting important causes that may not otherwise gather the necessary attention or get the proper treatment from whatever agencies they concern, from law enforcement to corporate powers, and, to achieve their goals, they often resort to illegal means, may that be a DDoS attack against a website or garnering information by hacking ("owning/pwning") databases.[6] This evolutionary process is summed up wittily by a member of Anonymous, who claims that, joining the group, he "came for the lulz, but stayed for the outrage" (Coleman, Loc. 1069), that is, just like a significant portion of the membership, he joined the group for the fun of the havoc they were wreaking, but stayed on to contribute to and enjoy the attention – and certainly the outrage – their later, more activist-minded movements had caused. Although

5 Although Anonymous have a less clear-cut genesis than Sherlock Holmes, it has also gone through several mutations through the years, with sub-branches and independent groups emerging along different interpretations as to what should the main profile of Anonymous be like.

6 Gabriella Coleman in her recent monograph on Anonymous gives a detailed account of techniques most frequently used by the group: a DDoS, or a distributed denial of service attack, for example, is carried out by sending a huge number of requests to a server, which the server cannot process and thus it has to be temporarily shut down and cannot provide the service it is designated for. Anonymous have, over the years, carried out DDoS attacks against government agencies, security firms, and corporations like PayPal, Visa, and MasterCard.

it can by no means be said that Anonymous have one, defined profile and agenda, and its activities have certainly caused tension, disagreement, and division within the group itself, it is still clear that they have grown from petulant trolls to a political force to reckon with, as they organized or supported causes like the Arab and African Spring, the #Occupy movement, and #OperationAvengeAssange. One of their most recent operations (#OpFerguson) concerned the events of the summer of 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri, where Mike Brown, an unarmed, African-American young man was shot down by a police officer. Anonymous expressed a sense of dissatisfaction over the treatment of the issue, and as they perceived that the police were covering up the case to protect one of their own (or, as further cover-ups were revealed, several of their own), so they reacted by doxing members of the Ferguson police force, that is, publishing sensitive information about them, such as their addresses and social security numbers. This incident reveals the conflicting nature of Anonymous: in the spirit of the means justifying the end, their tactics may often cause major damage to the parties involved in or targeted by their operations. The nature of "the end" is also debatable and highly debated within the group: even though Anonymous have often supported social and political causes, the end that initially kicked off the group was "lulz," that is, entertainment. In an early communication aimed at their long-time enemy, Fox News, they have worded their philosophy thusly:

> We are everyone and we are no one … We are the face of chaos and the harbingers of judgment. We laugh at the face of tragedy. We mock those in pain. We ruin the lives of others simply because we can … A man takes out his aggression on a cat, we laugh. Hundreds die in a plane crash, we laugh. We are the embodiment of humanity with no remorse, no caring, no love, and no sense of morality. YOU … HAVE NOW GOT … OUR ATTENTION. ("Dear Fox News," *YouTube*)

The anthropologist Gabriella Coleman, who has spent years observing Anonymous, phrases it somewhat differently: "Lulz is engaged in by Internet users who have witnessed one major economic/environmental/political disaster too many, and who thus view a state of voluntary, gleeful sociopathy over the world's current apocalyptic state, as superior to being continually emo" (Loc. 510–12). The key aspects here, in my opinion, are that, on the one hand, the Internet users in questions are highly sensitive to social issues – especially to situations with negative outcomes or to those where a wrong has been committed, without further repercussions −, and, on the other hand, they engage with these situations with a sociopathic attitude, to seek out some kind of enjoyment in the meantime. As already stated, the actions and attitudes of Anonymous are anything but consistent: if we try to categorize their operations based on the motivation behind them, we can certainly find a significant number of "#ops" (especially in the later years of their existence), which have been initiated by social and/

or political concerns, such as #OpFerguson, #Occupy, and their involvement in the Arab and African Spring. However, several other ops have been carried out purely for fun, and, to put it simply, because it was possible to be done. They have attacked, for example, several security companies and obtained highly sensitive information for their servers (such as credit card information and passwords of customers), because they could: ironically, said security companies had rather low security measures installed, which made it possible for hackers to gain access to sensitive information.[7] While these operations had excellent "lulz" potential to them, they certainly raised important concerns as well – which were, to some extent, the motivation behind the initiatives: to call attention to the fact that this is how our information is treated. This is how our privacy is treated. This is how − despite several agencies trying to convince us otherwise − there is no privacy on the Internet. Another example which sheds light upon the attitude of Anonymous towards those perceived as enemy is an excerpt from their communiqué to the Church of Scientology, which they set out to destroy back in 2008, after the church attempted to remove material from a highly publicised Tom Cruise interview from the Internet, and thus limited the freedom of information: "For the good of your followers, *for the good of mankind—and for our own enjoyment*—we shall proceed to expel you from the Internet and systematically dismantle the Church of Scientology in its present form" (qtd. in Coleman, Loc. 213–14, italics mine).

If one observes the evolution of Anonymous and compares it to the evolution of crime fiction, several similarities can be found between the hacktivist group and the figure of the Great Detective (which, just like Anonymous' profile, has gone through a number of regenerations and reinterpretations and is thus not entirely consistent). Probably the most significant of these parallels is that both the Detective and Anonymous started out with extraordinary but rather (self-) destructive skills, which needed to be managed and channelled into good use, otherwise they would turn against their users. Although Holmes often works closely with the police, his methods reside in a legally grey area, occasionally dipping into the illegal, though he is given much leeway to manage things his own way, as often happens with criminal informants − as Coleman points out when discussing the anomalies of the informant system.[8] Law enforcements agencies are a lot less benevolent with Anonymous: several members are currently in

7 See Coleman's "Sabutage" chapter for further details about an attack against Stratfor, a global intelligence company that was hacked in 2011.

8 The extent of Holmes' criminality once again depends on the interpretation: in certain versions he merely turns to unusual means when chasing a criminal, but in BBC's *Sherlock* he eventually ends up as a murderer – although he acts in defence of his friends, but the fact remains. So does that fact that his actions are covered up by his brother, and even his punishment of exile (and very probable death in action) is lifted when his skills are needed back home.

prison or on trial for their participation in the group.[9] A very significant distinction is, however, that Anonymous cannot be commissioned: it is one of their core principles that they are not going to be anyone's personal army (Coleman, Loc. 2341), they only get involved in cases that raise their attention and can get the approval of some majority ("some" in the sense that even though there appears to be a core initiating operations and coordinating tasks, the decision making process is always contingent on the currently active members at any given moment, which is by no means a static group). While in the case of Anonymous outside requests are rarely welcome, the Detective can be commissioned – but he only commits to cases that interest him, and, we can often see, he is willing to go any length to get involved in a fascinating case even when the police do not want his assistance.[10]

Another important aspect that is significant both for the Detective and for Anonymous is the question of morality or lack thereof. The Detective mostly keeps to his own principles, which do not necessarily coincide with the letter of the law, and, more importantly, he is more motivated by the mystery than by the urge to bring justice to criminals, and thus could be labelled amoral – although an evolution process can be observed here, as well, which is different in different interpretations, but as a tendency Holmes usually comes to embrace a certain kind of morality. In Anonymous, the original amorality is quite obvious, and in fact, the issue of "moral faggotry"[11] has proved to be a point of disagreement several times, and even caused breaches within the group, when certain members felt that the support of serious, worthy causes suppresses the original purpose of the group, which was the lulz. As a result, branches like LulzSec and AntiSec came about, which were really more about the lulz than anything else.

And yet, despite all the criticism and the moral and ethical dilemmas surrounding them, both the iconic Great Detective and Anonymous have a great following and they are surrounded by constant admiration from certain circles, at least. Admittedly the Detective is somewhat harder to despise as he stands on a firmer moral ground, or at least his reputation is more established, yet the similarities are hard to ignore. To crack open the reason why these figures are so alluring, we need to turn to Walter Benjamin, as he observes that the great criminal "however repellent his ends may have been, has aroused the secret

9 Interestingly, though, Coleman's book reports a case when the FBI employed an influential member of Anonymous as their criminal informant and thus allowed him to organise and/or carry out a number of highly illegal operations in order to take down other members of the group. The CI eventually faced only a couple of months of incarceration. The chapter "Sabutage" in *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy* contains a detailed account of the case.

10 Such an example can be seen in the first episode of *Sherlock* ("A Study in Pink"), where Sherlock keeps bombarding police officers and reporters present at a press conference with texts, in which he expresses his disagreement with the police's official stance on the case.

11 The term "fag" appears to be a general way of addressing members of the group or units within the group (e. g. "leader fags") and does not necessarily carry judgement. In the case of "moral fags," it most certainly does.

admiration of the public" (qtd. in Coleman, Loc. 4608–10). Coleman explains that "[this] admiration stems from the fact that criminality reveals the limits of the state's monopoly on violence and the force of the law" (Loc. 4608–10). While the Detective only borders on the criminal, his work certainly points out the limits of the state's monopoly on the force of the law, as his very existence is justified by the fact that there are cases where the official powers cannot effectively do justice – often because they cannot descend into legally grey areas. As Robin Woods also notes, when commenting on the detective's isolation in Golden Age crime fiction − although this statement is certainly not limited to that era −, the detective is too close to the criminal ever to become part of society, otherwise he might transmit criminality back to the communities he is trying to protect (106). The hacker in general also exists in a similarly grey, liminal state, as what s/he is doing is often illegal and motivated merely by a thirst for knowledge and the intrigue of mysteries, but in fact, the results of their labour very often benefits society as they discover and point out such flaws in electronic systems, which could be exploited for malicious purposes, if they are not corrected in time.

In the specific case of Anonymous, some of their recent operations have shown that they act when law enforcement cannot or will not act: besides #OpFerguson, there have been several incidents where Anonymous worked to bring justice to victims of small-town rape cases, which have been covered up by the local police and school personnel (such as the Steubenville rape case of 2013). This kind of vigilante justice certainly has its allure, especially among those who previously have felt powerless against the workings of the system – and if Anonymous have proved anything, it is that previously suppressed or disregarded individuals (like the often mocked geek) can have significant political power, when equipped with the right tools – and that right tool may be a single laptop in a mouldy basement.

There is, however, a rather significant difference between the Detective and Anonymous: while stories are constantly being told with the detective in the focus and cast in the role of the hero, Anonymous are mostly featured − at least, in mainstream media − in the stories of the other, and consistently cast in the role of the villain. It is perhaps Coleman's *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy* which focuses entirely on Anonymous, without typecasting them as the bad guys.

You now have our attention: the Detective and Anonymous

Since its first big operation in 2008 (#Chanology, against the Church of Scientology) Anonymous has proven its political potential and aroused a significant amount of attention from all walks of life, thus it hardly comes as a surprise that they have been featured in popular culture as well (especially considering that the group grew out of geek culture in the first place). My previous comparison of the Great Detective and Anonymous has not been incidental: in the final part of my paper I would like to examine how they are brought together in *Elementary*, where a

fictionalized version of the group, named Everyone, has been featured in several episodes. I have chosen two episodes for the present analysis, the first being "We Are Everyone." It was first aired in October 2013 as part of the second season of the series, and the plot relies heavily on recent events concerning public security and certain freedoms, especially the freedom of information, partly discussed earlier in this paper. Holmes and his protégée, Joan Watson are commissioned to find a hacker/whistleblower called Ezra Kleinfelter (reminiscent of Edward Snowden), who has been leaking classified government information. In retaliation for Holmes' investigation of Kleinfelter, a group of cyber terrorists or hacktivists called "Everyone" are wreaking havoc in the detectives' lives (among other things, doxing them), and, if that were not enough, Holmes and Watson turn up on the radar of the CIA as well.

This episode in question illustrates – albeit on a small scale − some of the imaginable consequences which may occur as a result of Anonymous' real-life operations. As part of Everyman's revenge, the electronic devices in the detectives' home are hacked, their phone numbers are published in what appears to be advertisements of very specific sexual favours, and Watson's profile on a dating website is hacked, stating radical and false opinions about sensitive matters and publishing her home address. Although in the series the viewer's sympathies lie with the detectives, who eventually manage to extricate themselves from the technological and social troubles, the episode (especially when viewed alongside the latest events) is certainly indicative of the power of those who have access to the excessive information stored about each individual in virtual and physical records, and points out how excessive freedom of information ultimately leads to unfreedom.

While the general public is often supportive and sympathetic towards the endeavours of Anonymous, perceiving the "system" and its bureaucratic and often covert operations as hostile, *Elementary* offers a completely different point of view. First of all, Kleinfelter, the hacktivist in the centre of the manhunt turns out to be a murderer as well (though the circumstances and motives of said murder remain rather weak and underdeveloped in the episode), Everyone is depicted as a hostile group, and Kleinfelter is willing to sacrifice the life of a dozen of covert agents by publishing records containing their identities, in exchange for his freedom – all in the name of freedom of information. What we can see here is two radically different interpretations of the notion of "freedom of thought," and the machinery of ideology working behind the episode seems to suggest that complete and utter freedom of information can be fatal in inappropriate hands, therefore it is better to revoke it from everyone, just to be on the safe side. Here, similarly to the application of mass surveillance, we can see the suspension of certain freedoms for the sake of "freedom" in general. Or, to quote Žižek once again, "you're free to decide, on condition that you make the right choice" (3). While the concerns raised by the episode are somewhat legitimate, it is also important to point out the fictional Everyone − or at least their representative, Kleinfelter −,

is depicted is plainly immoral, as opposed to the often playful amorality of the real-life Anonymous.

Interestingly enough, though, later *Elementary* episodes present a rather different view on Everyone, as the detective on occasion engages their services when he needs to obtain information he could not get through legal channels. Although Everyone, whom Holmes dubs as "a bunch of anonymous, immature hackers" ("The Many Mouths of Aaron Colville"), seems to be more willing to accept commissions than their real-life inspiration is, the lulzy aspect is clearly there: whenever Holmes puts in a request to the group, he has to perform some minor act of self-deprecation: he either has to post a video of himself performing the song "Let It Go" from the film *Frozen* in a pink prom dress, or stand on the street with a sign inviting people to punch him in the arm, as the price for Everyman's help. Holmes seems to understand and accept the economics of the group as he performs his assignments without any further ado, and at one point, he even explains the exchange value of the lulz as currency to Watson. We can see him cooperating with Everyone in a number of episodes in the second season, most notably in "The Many Mouths of Aaron Colville" and "The Grand Experiment."

While in "The Many Mouths of Aaron Colville" (aired April 2014) Everyone's role is mostly restricted as acting as Holmes' personal hackers, they have a smaller, but probably more significant appearance in the finale of the second season, "The Grand Experiment," which also focuses heavily on different forms of surveillance. Leading up to this episode, we learn that Mycroft, Sherlock's brother, who has been so far known as a successful restauranteur with establishments all over the world is, in fact, an MI6 asset and his New York City restaurant is frequented by a French gang of criminals, who are, in turn, watched by the MI6. After a series of accusations and counter-accusations, Mycroft's handler, Sherrington turns out to be a traitor to MI6, who threatens to torture Watson in her own home if she does not provide him with information about Mycroft's whereabouts. Watson has been prepared, though: she reveals that she has been in video connection with fifteen members of Everyone throughout the discussion, they have been listening in on Sherrington's admission and threats, and would not be averse to making it public, in case anything happens to Watson. I find this short scene significant, because it toys with the (reverse) uses of surveillance: this technique, as we know it today, is mostly exercised by agencies of power, to keep tabs on individuals both in (mostly) public areas and online. As Coleman notes:

> What surveillance really is, at its root, is a highly effective form of social control. The knowledge of always being watched changes our behavior and stifles dissent. The inability to associate secretly means there is no longer any possibility for free association. The inability to whisper means there is no longer any speech that is truly free of coercion, real or

> implied. Most profoundly, pervasive surveillance threatens to eliminate the most vital element of both democracy and social movements: the mental space for people to form dissenting and unpopular views. (Loc. 6303–7)

MI6, along with its international equivalents all over the world, have been wielding this power of social control over individuals with their extensive and ever more pervasive forms of surveillance and they aim to regulate the dissenting elements of society. Surveillance, however, cannot be limited to the (potentially) dissenting only: while mass surveillance of public places and online activities is − theoretically − conducted in the interest of citizens, as a consequence everyone is treated equally as a potential delinquent, and the thus gathered excessive data, such as CCTV footage, records of online activities, virtual profiles stored in internet archives can function as circumstantial evidence in the eventuality when the suspect becomes a perpetrator.

At this point let me once again recall Sherlock Holmes's opening thoughts about the metropolis: "London, like New York, is a beacon of freedom and a target for terrorists. It is, as a consequence, one of the most observed cities in the world. Its network of thousands upon thousands of CCTV cameras tracks the movements of its citizens, looking for anything at all out of place" ("Step Nine"). I find this statement symptomatic for several reasons: the beacons of freedom are targeted for their very essence, and, as a response, the protectors of this freedom turn the cities into places of confinement. Sherlock's wording is accurate: it is the citizens, whose liberties are being protected here by taking away some of those liberties, the same citizens who are observed and held up for scrutiny during their everyday movements in the name of "democracy and freedom." In "The Grand Experiment," however, this power is twisted out of the authority's hand and turned against it: what Sherrington believed to be a private moment where he could exercise his influence and make threats from the safety of his position (which would also allow him to cover his tracks), turned out to be a rather public moment, due to new forms of surveillance. At this point, my argumentation turns back to the previous discussion of Anonymous: both through the lulz and their more serious operations, they have proved that privacy is either non-existent for most individuals, or rather hard to achieve (mostly through technical expertise) for those in the know. But while so far mostly individuals' privacy has been violated either by malevolent forces (such as criminals specialized in the area) or by certain authorities, whom we have, on occasion, but certainly not always, allowed to violate our privacy for the sake of our safety. As recent developments − such as the previously mentioned Edward Snowden case − have shown, the main concern has not always been our safety – or at least, this "us" is probably a more limited concept then previously thought. Therefore the lulz and the #ops often turn violations of privacy against those who are guilty of these crimes as well: security firms, the NSA – and, in the episode in question, the MI6.

The conclusions of these *Elementary* episodes – and of the recent activities of Anonymous –, just like the conclusions of the present paper are hardly uplifting: even though groups such as the fictional Everyone and their real-life equivalent are fighting – often dirty – for the security of everyday Internet users, for the security of *everyone*, basically, what they managed to raise awareness to is probably the virtual impossibility of privacy and security. Therefore, in some aspects, we are back to the early days of Sherlock Holmes: privacy is given up to the all-seeing gaze of the Detective for the sake of some greater freedom – only now this uncanny, all-seeing, panoptic gaze is everywhere, following us around online and offline.

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