James Patterson’s Works: A Comparison Essay, Research Paper

Similarities Between James Patterson?s

Novels

An essay

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James Patterson?s novels have made all the best seller lists, won several awards, and some have even been made into major motion pictures. Yet, through all his success, his writing formats are very similar. In the Alex Cross series , these similarities are more evident due to the common formats used. In Hide and Seek, the similarities exist, but aren?t as obvious. An example of such would be the psychological problems possessed by the criminals in the novel. Other examples include the descriptions of the character?s feelings, relationships, and sexual activities occurring during the novels read , or the need for attention, which all the villains crave. Each of which occur in every novel. James Patterson deals with the mind, thoughts and feelings similarly throughout his novels.

It is a common trend among each of the novels, to designate a character (mainly the villain) with some psychological problem, or dilemma. For instance, in the novel Kiss the Girls, Will Rudolph and Nick Ruskin experience a rare condition, which Alex calls twinning. He explains it well when he says,

“Twinning was caused by an urge to bond, usually between two lonely people. Once they ?twin,? the two become a ?whole?; they become dependent on each other, often obsessively so. Sometimes the ?twins? become highly competitive” .

Another villain, Gary Soneji, suffers from schizophrenia (his personalities mimic that of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde), in Along Came a Spider. Alex explains this concept when at a conference meeting at the prison.

“He talks about ?lost days,? ?lost weekends,? and even ?lost weeks.? In such a fugue state, a patient can wake in a strange place and have no idea how he got there, or what he had been doing for a prolonged period. In some cases, the patients have two separate personalities, often antithetical personalities” .

James Patterson also presents some interesting theories about Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome in the novel Hide and Seek. Will Shepherd is forced to see his father commit suicide, and is traumatized for life. His constant need to achieve personal perfection, and his homicidal urges, according to Patterson, are caused by the event, and the related syndrome. He also forces himself to put the world?s weight on his shoulders. This is conveyed by the repeated lines, “It?s all your fault. It?s always been your fault” . In all of the novels, the villains possess some sort of psychological problem, or condition effecting the way they react in various situations.

It is a common scene to see the main character fall in love with another. In the novels Jack and Jill, Kiss the Girls, and Along Came a Spider, Alex falls in love with a women that he must work with to solve the case at hand. Each of the novels describes the romance in relatively the same fashion in each book. In Kiss the Girls, Alex develops a relationship with Kate McTiernan, a woman abducted by Casanova.

“We kissed gently. Just the briefest kiss. There was something right about it. I liked the feel of Kate?s lips, her mouth on mine. We kissed again, maybe to prove that the first one hadn?t been a mistake, or maybe to prove that it had been” .

The relationship conveniently ends at the end of the novel, in time for him to begin a new relationship in the next book. Similarly, Alex develops another relationship in Along Came A Spider. Jezzie Flanagan, who was in charge of the FBI agents sent to guard the kidnapped children, is the guilty party in this case. He finds himself slowly falling in love with her. “I wanted to be held by somebody right then. I think Jezzie did, too” . Another example would be in Hide and Seek, when Maggie explains her feelings for her second husband, Patrick O?Malley. They are explained in relatively the same fashion,

“I knew all about ?falling from grace,? but falling in love was something I realized I hadn?t really understood before. It was happening, slowly, gradually, beautifully, between Patrick and me. Day by day, our feelings for each other grew deeper and deeper. It was different from infatuation, which we?d experienced as well” .

Feelings and thoughts, for another person, are conveyed similarly and are evident throughout all of the novels.

It has been proven that when babies cry, they cry to receive attention. Patterson?s villains are the same way in every novel; they must receive the attention they think they deserve. In Jack and Jill, Danny Boudreaux is obsessed with dominating the media coverage, which has been occupied with the Jack and Jill killers. He is quoted saying,

“What do you think of me now??How do I stack up against those assholes Jack and Jill? How about against the great Gary Soneji?” .

This proves that he has a need for attention, like many other villains in Patterson?s novels. Will Rudolph is almost the same way (in Kiss the Girls). This can be proven by his use of Beth Liberman, journalist for the LA Times. His letters to her, depicting the entire murder in great detail, down to the location and time of death of the body. His threats to kill her if they weren?t published were quite obvious. Thus proving his obsession with his personal coverage in the media. In Hide and Seek, Will Shepherd suffers from the same condition. He is constantly forcing himself to move on to bigger and better things, but is also convinced that all his achievements deserve recognition. He moves from woman to woman, team to team , like everything is tangible. “The Blond Arrow needed to move on to a much larger stage” . Patterson?s villains posses egos that need to be recognized for the evil they commit.

James Patterson?s characters are very similar. The villains in the novels possess many of the same characteristics. Some include the constant appetite for the recognition of their achievements, and their psychological problems that happen to be plaguing them, and causing their actions. Also, even though Alex Cross and Maggie Bradford, are from separate novels, they are both alike in the fact that their emotions and relations with significant others are described similarly. James Patterson deals with the psyche, and other personal thoughts in the same way, in all his novels.