

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF ALEX STANDALL ON THE DEATH OF HANNAH BAKER ON NETFLIX'S THIRTEEN REASONS WHY (2017)

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the psychological impact experienced by Alex Standall on the death of Hannah Baker, presented in the *Thirteen Reasons Why* series adaptation of the novel of the same title by Jay Asher. This study is a qualitative research. The data source used is the TV-series *Thirteen Reasons Why* first season. The data collection technique is from analyzing the series. The theory used in this study is the psychology of literature. The results of this study are as follows: first, the initial factors that triggered Alex Standall to do bad things to Hannah Baker. Second, the psychological condition of Alex Standall after making a mistake about Hannah Baker. Third, the guilty towards Hannah Baker that caused Alex Standall finally decided to end his life.

Keywords: *thirteen reasons wh;*, *Alex Standall*; *psychology of literature*.

INTRODUCTION

Drama is one genre in the literature that usually dealing with many characters and complicated problem. Drama according to Reaske (1996) is a work of literature or composition which depicts life and human activity by means of presenting various actions of and dialogues between a group of characters. Endraswara (2011) states that drama is one of the literary genres etimologically derived from the Greek '*dran*' which means to do something. Drama is one form of arts and performances. Drama has existed since ancient Greece and Roman and continues to grow until now. According to Bella (2020) drama is also divided into various types; first, drama is distinguished based on the play, there are tragedies, comedies, comedy tragedies, operas, melodrama, farce, tablo and ballet. Second, drama is distinguished based on the presence or absence of manuscripts, there are modern dramas and traditional dramas. Third, drama is distinguished from the means of the performance, there are stage plays, radio dramas, television dramas, film dramas and puppet plays.

The drama to be discussed this time is the drama based on the means of the performance. This drama is called television dramas. One of the television drama is television series or TV series. A TV series usually consist of several episodes, and one TV series usually can be divided into several seasons or maybe just a season. In United State and Canada, it called seasons, while in United Kingdom it called series. Netflix is an American TV series service provider. Netflix can be enjoyed by streaming online. Netflix was discovered in 1997 by Reed Hastings and Marc Radolph in California. One of Netflix's TV series that attracted the audience was *Thirteen Reasons Why* based on Jay Asher's novel with the same title. *Thirteen Reasons Why* developed by Brian Yorkey and produced by Joseph Incaprera. Originally released on 31 of March 2017, consists of thirteen episodes in first season.

This series tells about a girl named Hannah Baker who committed suicide. Before she finally cut off her own hands, she recorded her voice into seven tapes and each tape contained two sides of stories about people who had caused Hannah to commit

suicide. On Hannah's tapes, she told about the things that she experienced and also whoever did those things to her.

The reason why the researcher interested in this study because this series presents many problems that are more directed to psychological problems. The researcher is very interested in Alex Standall's character and wants to investigate more deeper that character. Furthermore, there is no further analysis of the character of Alex Standall in the *Thirteen Reasons Why*. This study discusses The Psychological Impact Of Alex Standall on The Death of Hannah Baker on Netflix's *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2017). In this study, the researcher investigates how the impact of Hannah death on psychology of Alex Standall. The researcher describes the psychological condition of Alex Standall' character on *Thirteen Reasons Why*. In this case, the researcher uses psychology of literature theory.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the story of *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Rismauli P, Lidya Gabriella Bethly (2018); Adha, Nurul Fazri (2018); Alfikri, Annisa 'Alwiyah (2018); Martani (2017); Agustinus S, Raja Tua (2016); Nuralita, Yosephin Diva Fabiola (2018).

In this study the researcher proposed the major objectives to be described as follows :
: 1) To identify factors that causes Alex Standall do bad things to Hannah Baker. 2) To describe Alex Standall's psychological conditions after making mistakes to Hannah Baker. 3) To reveal Alex Standall finally commit suicide.

METHOD

In this research, the type of research that will be used is qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claimed that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach: "This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). The

method of collecting data for this research is library studies. The researcher analyzed the research by collecting conversations and expressions from Alex's characters in Netflix's *Thirteen Reasons Why* TV series. To check the trustworthiness of the data, theoretical triangulation, credibility and dependability were used in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis the data which has been conducted by the researcher, the researcher found some findings.

1. The Factor That Causes Alex Standall Do Bad Thing To Hannah Baker

Through thirteen episodes on the first season of Netflix's *Thirteen Reasons Why*, the researcher can find out the factor that causes Alex Standall do bad thing to Hannah Baker.

a. Refused to have sex with Jessica Davis

Before Alex and Jessica started dating, they were friends with Hannah. They were good friends, but when Alex and Jessica started dating, they want to hang out without Hannah. After that, they were never hanging out together again, in the tape Hannah said that Alex was the one who never coming again to Monet, but later Jessica never come because she and Alex started dating. Hannah worked at Crestmont and had day off on Wednesday, so Jessica and Alex went there to watch movie but unexpectedly Hannah was on charge, so she saw them two. Hannah feels left out because they did not ask Hannah to join them.

After they are not friends anymore, Alex and Jessica are still together as a couple. Everything is fine until one day Alex asks Jessica to have sex, but Jessica refuses it. Then they break up. After they broke up, Alex makes the "hot or not list". It contains who has the best and worst body parts. He awarded Hannah Baker as the "best ass" and

Jessica Davis as the “worst ass”. He made the list just to make Jessica mad, but the things turn out to be unexpected. Jessica thought that Hannah is the reason why she broke up with Alex. Jessica meets Hannah at monet then ask about it, but then she slapped Hannah on the face because of that. Hannah who knows nothing was shock because Jessica slapped her.

When the ‘hot or not’ list spread to the whole Liberty High School, Hannah becomes the subject of gossip at school, then the worst is Bryce Walker and several others sexually harrassed Hannah.

2. Alex Standall’s Psychological Conditions After Making Mistake To Hannah Baker

a. Depressed

Aras, G (2015) states in his research that works of literature and art enable individuals to be aware of their personalities and individual differences and to question life and existence, the main data in the field of psychology as well. Alex Standall’s psychological conditions has changed after making mistake to Hannah Baker. The factors that cause changes in Alex’s psychological condition are depression, guilty and anger. According to Kring, Davison, Neale, and Johnson (2012) “depression is an emotional state marked by great sadness and apprehension, feeling of worthlessness and guilt, withdrawal from others, loss of sleep, appetite and sexual desire, loss of interest and pleasure in usual activities”. Alex Standall feels what he done is not right, and he kept thinking about his mistake dragging on. His action is one of the reasons why Hannah Baker is died. Alex showed his depression that he has going through after Hannah’s death. The things that shows that he is depressed is when he wants to play the song “Gloomy Sunday” with his bandmates but they reject it because the song

is very depressing and when he throws himself carelessly and hopelessly into a pool. He sinks and hoping to drown himself. This showed in the following dialogue and picture:

Alex Standall : If they want a spirit-raiser, how about "Gloomy Sunday"?

Troy : Are you serious? That song's totally depressing.

Alex Standall : Or it's beautiful, if you have taste.

Troy : Or if you're suicidal.

Clay Jensen : Is "Gloomy Sunday" really a song?

*Alex Standall : Yeah. Google "Hungarian Suicide Song."
(episode 3)*



Picture1. Alex thrown himself to the pool.

Source:<https://id.pinterest.com/pin/775463629576995667/>

b. Feel guilty

Another factor that caused a change in Alex's psychological condition is guilty. Based on existential psychology (Hall & Lindzey, 1993) guilt is an existential understanding that is centered on the individual who has it responsibility for actions that are free which means a feature fundamental of human design or ability in its existence or ability to settle and make sense of his life. Therefore, it can be concluded that taste guilty of how humans interpret their lives so that no mistakes occur. Good

Therapy (2019) defines guilt as a sense of regret or responsibility that relates to actions taken. People may feel guilt over things they actually did wrong, things they believe were their fault, or things they had no responsibility for. Alex is desperately ashamed and regret for what he did to Hannah. He blamed himself for the death of his former friend. Alex is haunted by his guilt. He had given up on what would happen to him later. All he can do is regretting what he had done to Hannah Baker.

c. Anger

The next factor that caused a change in Alex Standall's psychological condition is anger. Chaplin (1985) defined anger as "an acute emotional reaction elicited by any of a number of stimulating situations, including threat, overt aggression, restraint, verbal attack, disappointment, or frustration" (p. 27). According to American Psychological Association (2019) **anger** is an emotion characterized by antagonism toward someone or something you feel has deliberately done you wrong. In this case, Alex felt angry because he was fed up with the people that Hannah mentioned on the tapes who tried to cover up their mistakes and instead blamed Hannah. His anger peaked one day before the people on the tape were summoned by the court to be questioned about their relationship with Hannah Baker. Alex wanted to reveal that what Hannah said was all true, this was shown in episode 12 when they gathered together to talk about the lies they would say to cover up their mistakes. Alex told the truth about the things that Hannah told the tapes with feelings of anger, resentment and disappointment.

3. Alex Finally Committee Suicide

Durkheim (2005) defined suicide as "death resulting directly or indirectly from a

positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result" (p. 44). World Health Organization (WHO) states that suicide is the act of deliberately killing oneself. Risk factors for suicide include mental disorder, especially depression, and neurological disorders, cancer and HIV infection. Alex finally decided to commit suicide because he can't take his problems any longer. He feels depressed, stressed, guilty and angry to what happened to him. He shot himself the night right before he will go to the court as a witness of the death of Hannah Baker. This is known in the last episode when Mr. Steven told Mr.

Porter that Alex is in a critical condition because he shot his head.

CONCLUSION

Through the data that has been acquired and has been described in the previous chapter, the researcher can conclude:

- a. First, the factor that influenced Alex Standall to do bad things to Hannah Baker initially was not as expected as what had happened to her. Alex at the first time wanted to revenge on his ex-girlfriend, Jessica Davis who is also a former as a close friend of Hannah. The result of Alex's actions was a misunderstanding between Hannah and Jessica. Then, it dragged on to become a serious problem for Hannah.
- b. Second, Alex Standall's psychological conditions after making mistake to Hannah Baker was quite tragic. After Hannah's death and her tapes were spread, Alex experienced a pretty severe depression, the things he talked about were only about suicide and ending his life. He also felt guilty for the mistakes that he had made, he did not mean to hurt Hannah, but the situation was not as he had expected. Alex's depression and guilt made him angry, his emotions were easily provoked. He argued the number

of times and even he fought with his classmates. Alex also felt angry because the people who mentioned in the tapes did not want to admit their mistakes. Alex was angry because if it were not for him and those people, Hannah would still be alive now.

- c. Third, Alex finally decided to commit suicide because he felt he is one of the causes of Hannah Baker's death. In several episodes in this series, Alex said a few times about suicide. In one episode he tried to drown himself in his friend's pool. Until finally the night before the trial over the demands of Hannah Baker's death, Alex tried to end his life by shooting his head.

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