

**FROM ATTACHMENT DISORDER TO  
PERPETRATION: A PSYCHOANALYTICAL  
STUDY OF NARRATIVE IDENTITY IN  
NETFLIX ORIGINAL *YOU* AND *13 REASONS  
WHY***

**BY**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

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**From Attachment Disorder to Perpetration: A  
Psychoanalytical Study of Narrative Identity in Netflix  
Original *You* And *13 Reasons Why***

By

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## THESIS AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Title: From Attachment Disorder to Perpetration: A Psychoanalytical Study of Narrative Identity in Netflix Original *You* and *13 Reasons Why***

This thesis examines the concept of Narrative Identity and its relationship to individuals who engage in harmful behaviors, the perpetrators. It focuses on the characters Joe Goldberg from the series "*You*" and Bryce Walker from "*13 Reasons Why*" to investigate the influence of Reactive Attachment Disorder on their actions. By integrating micro-level perpetration experiences into their narrative identities, the study aims to understand the complexities of their behaviors and moral development. Drawing on Finkel and Straus' categorization of perpetration, McAdams and McLean's theory of narrative identity, and Freud's concept of the unconscious mind, the research explores how attachment disorders in early childhood overshadow the identity development of perpetrators in the selected texts. Furthermore, it observes the changes in the behaviors of Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker throughout the series. Additionally, the study examines the differences in the treatment of the perpetrators and the focus on their lives between the novels and their visual adaptations.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my beloved father, Nadeem Abdullah Aamir

Although You are no longer with me, your love, wisdom, and guidance will remain with me forever. This thesis is dedicated to You, in loving memory of your life and legacy.

I'll always be grateful to you, for you are more in me than I am.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview of the Study

Narrative Identity refers to a person's life story which links their past to their future. The events that individuals witnessed in their past, as well as the experiences they endured, have a profound impact on shaping their futures. These incidents provide them with a unique perspective that influences their life choices and actions. People construct and share their personal stories to express their ownership of these experiences. By providing intricate details and sharing their perspectives, they communicate the significance of certain events in their lives and how these stories have influenced their personal development. Each memory holds a specific purpose and contributes to the overall significance of their life's journey. These memories serve as guiding principles, imparting meaning to their existence that may have been absent had they not encountered certain situations. Through the concept of Narrative Identity, individuals are empowered to share their life experiences, define their true selves, and establish a roadmap for their future endeavours.

The psychoanalytical aspect of Narrative Identity involves analysing how stories are perceived by individuals and the subsequent impact these stories have on their lives. This analysis explores how people interpret and make meaning of their own narratives, as well as the effects these narratives have on their personal experiences and outcomes. In studies, the participants are made to narrate the stories that are significant to them. While doing this, they tell their perspective of the story and give the listener facts which they remember happening. This remembrance is significant because people generally remember things that have a profound effect on them. I studied their lives and map out the outcomes of the significant incidents narrated by the participants.

Attachment Disorder related to childhood trauma is a common factor in both the cases that are being discussed in the research with different circumstances and situations and entirely different outcomes. The outcomes in both cases made the perpetrators of the selected series according to the basic definition which states that a perpetrator is someone who has a hand, directly or indirectly, in the physical

destruction of an individual. Both perpetrators went through different circumstances during their childhoods so the outcomes were different as well.

To get a better understanding of the disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder has been used to get a better understanding of the lack of a deeper connection being built between a child and his parents. It has been derived that with this disorder, the children are unable to develop the ability to express certain emotions and are also unable to build meaningful relationships with people, and even if they end up having a relationship, it is overshadowed by their past experiences. This results in them always wanting to be in control of the relationships they are in which might lead to abuse, sexual and psychological, and sometimes even physical.

Sigmund Freud's Theory about the Unconscious Mind is used to umbrella the theories being applied in this research. Freud was the founding father of psychoanalysis, which is a method of treating mental illnesses where human behavior is also explained. He believes that the events that a person goes through in his or her childhood have a significant influence on their adult lives. These events shape the personalities of the people which, later on, cause problems during adulthood.

To narrow down the perpetrator theory, the three levels of perpetration by Finkel and Straus is used. The concept of Micro Level Perpetration represents the actions of individuals who, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause harm to others. These micro-level perpetrators operate independently, without the influence or direction of a group or external authority. They have their own motivations and life experiences that shape their behavior. While their motivations may evolve over time, their actions are consistently influenced by the experiences they had in their formative years.

Bryce Walker from the series "*13 Reasons Why*" and Joe Goldberg from the series "*You*" have been portrayed as perpetrators of heinous crimes. Bryce has been labelled as a rapist, while Joe has resorted to extreme measures, including assuming different identities, to evade accountability for his crimes. These characters, depicted in Netflix originals, exhibit an inhumane nature, seemingly devoid of empathy for the pain inflicted upon their victims. Their actions, which involve crimes such as kidnapping, murder, and rape, would certainly warrant legal consequences.



However, it is important to note that while their crimes have caused immense suffering, research rarely delves into the underlying reasons for their actions. In doing so, we often overlook the fact that, as humans, these individuals are capable of experiencing emotions, even if not the exact pain they have inflicted upon others.

The purpose of the present study is to explore the lives of Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg. This aims to understand the motivations behind their behavior and the factors that have led them to intentionally harm others, making them perpetrators of these crimes.

It is crucial to clarify that this study does not seek to excuse or justify their actions, which involve stalking, abuse, rape, and murder. Instead, the focus is on investigating the circumstances and events that have contributed to their current state, as well as any observed changes in their behavior towards others.

## **1.2 Thesis Statement**

The Netflix originals, *You* and *13 Reasons Why* have perpetrators, Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker. Both of them actively engage themselves in crimes without facing any consequence whatsoever. The research studies the lives of both the perpetrators, developing an understanding of how did they go from having Attachment Disorder in their childhoods which made them perpetrators. The integration of Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean's individual's narrative identity, informed by Finkel and Straus' categorization of perpetration, and Sigmund Freud's concept of the unconscious mind, shows their personal growth, moral development, and a deeper understanding of the complexities of their behaviors, whilst still having several differences amongst the similarity of their case.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The proposed study is to delve into the backgrounds of the defined perpetrators based on data from the series and the books. Research into the perpetrators' backgrounds has focused on the role that Attachment Disorder had in the development of their identity. The focus is also brought on how the depiction of the characters in the books and the series.

The questions are as follows:

1. How is the identity development of perpetrators in the selected texts overshadowed by the attachment disorders in the early years of their lives?
2. What changes in the behaviours of Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker were observed throughout the series?
3. How different was the treatment of the perpetrators in the novels and the visual adaptation of the perpetrators as well as the focus on their lives?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Recognizing that social, cultural, and historical factors underlie many forms of harm and violence has led to a greater focus on perpetrator theory. Understanding these elements helps create more effective harm prevention techniques. Studying perpetrators can also question the concept that harmful behavior is simply the result of individual deviance. Instead, perpetrator theory acknowledges that gender, power, and social norms influence harmful behavior. Perpetrator theory recognizes that prevention must target both victims and perpetrators. We can improve perpetration prevention and intervention by knowing the causes.

Perpetrator theory can also shift attention from punishment to rehabilitation and accountability. Understanding the various dynamics that generate harmful behavior allows designing more sophisticated and effective methods for holding abusers accountable and addressing the root causes. By depicting perpetrators as living, breathing, feeling beings, this research aims to show that perpetration is not a game. There's a reason perpetrators lose control over this part of themselves and lose their humanity. Psychological and emotional goals cause perpetration. The study seeks to comprehend their histories and identify the criminals' breaking points.

Perpetrator studies and Freud's notion of the unconscious mind can help understand Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker's motivations and deeds. This knowledge can improve violence prevention and trauma support.

#### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

The current study is delimited to two Netflix Original Series, *You* and *13 Reasons Why*. *You* is a fictional series based on books by Caroline Kepnes, named *You*, *Hidden Bodies* and *You Love Me*. *13 Reasons Why* is based on a book by Jay Asher, by the same name, however, the book is entirely covered in the first season of

the series while the remaining 3 seasons are not based on the happenings mentioned in the book and are based on the life of the characters after the first season ends. The first two seasons of *You* are based on the books while the third season and the third book are entirely different. The books, *You*, *Hidden Bodies*, *You Love Me* and *13 Reasons Why*, were also a part of the research, in addition to the Netflix series.

## **1.6 Chapter Breakdown**

In this chapter breakdown section, a comprehensive overview of the chapters or sections that make up this document is provided, including a brief description of the key topics covered in each chapter. This breakdown serves as a helpful guide for readers, providing them with a clear roadmap of what to expect from the document and helping them to better navigate and engage with its contents.

### **1.6.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the background and context of the topic being discussed, including a brief history and key concepts. It also outlines the purpose and objectives of the document and provide an overview of the chapters or sections that follow.

### **1.6.2 Literature Review**

This chapter provides an overview and critical analysis of the existing literature and research related to the topic being discussed. It identifies gaps in the literature, highlight key debates and trends, and provide a theoretical framework for the document.

### **1.6.3 Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology**

This chapter provides an explanation of the theoretical framework that underpins the document. It describes the key concepts, variables, and relationships used to develop the framework, and explain how it relates to the research or analysis. It also provides a detailed explanation of the research methodology used in the document. It describes the research design, data collection, sampling, and data analysis techniques used to gather and analyze data.

### **1.6.4 Exploring the Connection between Reactive Attachment Disorder and Identity Development of Perpetrators**

This chapter examines the existing literature and research related to the connection between reactive attachment disorder and the identity development of individuals who engage in perpetration behavior. It provides an overview and critical analysis of the literature, identify gaps in the research, and propose a theoretical framework to guide the research.

### **Transition 1.6.5 From Flaws to Growth: Analysis of Joe and Bryce in**

This chapter analyzes the personal growth and development of two individuals, Joe and Bryce, as they navigate a period of transition in their lives. It provides an overview of the challenges they faced and the strategies they used to overcome them, and examine the ways in which they developed greater self-awareness, resilience, and emotional intelligence.

### **1.6.6 Comparing the Treatment and Portrayal of Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg in the Novels and their Visual Adaptation: Differences in Focus on their Lives and Behaviors**

This chapter analyzes the differences in the treatment and portrayal of two fictional characters, Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg, in the original novels and their visual adaptations. It compares and contrast the focus on their lives, behaviors, and motivations, and examine the ways in which the adaptations emphasized or omitted certain aspects of their characters.

### **1.6.7 Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings and conclusions from the preceding chapters, and offer recommendations for future research or practical applications of the research. It synthesizes the key themes and insights from the study, and discuss their implications for the broader field of inquiry.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter situates the study in the literature and identifies the research gap. This study intends to fill the research gap by conducting a complete literature analysis on Narrative Identity Analysis, Perpetration theories, and Attachment disorder. The literature review helps the research focus on the intricacies of perpetration in different circumstances.

#### **2.1 Psychological Thrillers and Crime Dramas**

Drama includes psychological thrillers and criminal plays. Due to their complex plots and character development, these series have grown in popularity. This literature review examines psychological thrillers and criminal dramas in drama television. We also analyze viewer attraction and psychological repercussions.

Psychological thrillers are dramas that focus on character psychology and interactions. They are suspenseful, unpredictable, and intricate. These shows generally address mental illness, trauma, and personal challenges. They can evoke strong emotions and mental stimulation. (Abdullah)

Another popular drama subgenre is crime dramas, which investigate and solve crimes. They usually include detectives or law enforcement solving a crime. Dramatic tension and meticulous investigation are hallmarks of these shows. Justice, morality, and criminal repercussions are common topics. (Franks)

Crime and psychological thrillers are popular for several reasons. Many enjoy the tension and unusual plotlines. These series' characters have extensive backstories and personalities, making them more sympathetic and engaging. The crime's resolution or the character's psychological battle might also bring viewers closure. (Bailey)

Psychological thrillers and crime dramas are interesting and engaging, but they can also affect viewers psychologically. Some researchers suggest these performances can enhance viewer anxiety and terror, particularly among children and teenagers. (Dolnicar). Additionally, exposure to violent or disturbing content can desensitize viewers to real-world violence and increase aggression (Bushman).

Psychological thrillers and crime dramas are popular drama subgenres that provide escapism and compelling plots. However, these shows may have psychological impacts. Viewing habits affect psychological well-being, especially in susceptible populations like children and teenagers. (Abrams)

## **2.2 Perpetrator Theory**

Perpetration behavior is a complex phenomenon. These theories try to explain perpetration behavior, identity, and factors. Psychology, sociology, criminology, and anthropology have examined perpetration, a complicated phenomenon. Perpetration theories explain why people hurt others and how to stop it. This literature review examines perpetration theories, focusing on Finkel and Straus' levels and topologies. (S. Finkel)

One of the most widely studied theories of perpetration is social learning theory. This theory suggests that individuals learn aggressive and violent behaviors through observation and imitation of others, particularly in the context of family and peer relationships (Bandura). Social learning theory has been used to explain various forms of perpetration, including intimate partner violence (Langhinrichsen-Rohling) and child maltreatment (DePanfilis).

Another influential theory of perpetration is power and control theory. This theory suggests that abusive behaviors are driven by a desire to gain and maintain power and control over another person (M. P. Johnson). Power and control theory has been used to explain various forms of interpersonal violence, including intimate partner violence and child abuse (Dutton).

Feminist theory has also contributed to our understanding of perpetration, particularly in the context of gender-based violence. Feminist theorists argue that patriarchal power structures and gender inequality contribute to the perpetration of violence against women. Feminist theory has been used to explain various forms of gender-based violence, including sexual assault and harassment (Burt).

Finkel and Straus developed a framework for understanding the different levels of perpetration, which includes verbal aggression, physical aggression, and severe violence. This framework emphasizes the importance of recognizing that perpetration exists on a continuum, with different levels of severity requiring different

interventions. (Intimate Violence: The Causes and Consequences of Abuse in the American Family)

Another useful framework for understanding perpetration is the topologies of perpetration, which was developed by Websdale. This framework suggests that perpetration can be understood in terms of four different types: situational, dispositional, ideological, and institutional. Each of these types represents a different level of analysis and can help to identify different factors that contribute to perpetration (Websdale).

### **2.3 Perpetration in English Literature**

Perpetration is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been explored in various fields, including psychology, sociology, criminology, and law. However, literature has also offered insightful perspectives on perpetration by showing perpetrators and their actions in various ways. This literature review aims to explore the portrayal of perpetration in English literature and its contribution to our understanding of the topic.

English literature depicts domestic brutality, sexual abuse, murder, and genocide. These depictions generally emphasize on perpetration's psychological and emotional components, revealing offenders' minds and motivations. *Wuthering Heights'* Heathcliff represents perpetration's psychological intricacies. He abuses Catherine and others out of obsession. The novel examines his childhood, social rank, and harmful activities.

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Alec d'Urberville epitomizes sexual assault against women. The novel examines power dynamics and gender norms that permit such violence and its effects on the victim and those around her. Modern literature depicts perpetration more complexly. Ian McEwan's *Atonement* depicts the catastrophic effects of a false rape accusation on the victim and the accused. The novel also explores memory and storytelling, showing how reality is subjective and affects perpetration.

English literature provides psychological and emotional insights into perpetration. Literature illuminates perpetration's complexity by examining perpetrators' motives, acts, and repercussions. Literature also emphasizes power relations, gender roles, and social standards in perpetration.

## **2.4 Perpetration in TV Shows and Series**

TV shows and series have become a significant part of popular culture, with millions of viewers tuning in to watch their favorite programs. Among these shows, many feature storylines involving perpetration, which can be defined as the act of committing harm, abuse, or violence against another person. Understanding how perpetration is portrayed in TV shows and series can provide insight into how it is viewed and understood by audiences. This literature review explores the portrayal of perpetration in TV shows and series, and the implications it may have on viewers.

Psychological thrillers and criminal dramas often feature perpetration. These shows have intricate plots and characters, and the perpetration is crucial. In *Breaking Bad*, a high school chemistry teacher makes and sells methamphetamine to support his family. The show's representation of perpetration is subtle and realistic, revealing the main character's actions' effects on himself, his family, and his community.

*The Sopranos* follows a New Jersey mobster and his family. This show depicts severe violence and abuse by the main character. Some viewers say the show glorifies violence, while others say it properly portrays organized crime.

TV episodes and series that depict perpetration might affect viewers, especially those who are prone to violence or abuse. Media violence increases the probability of aggression in viewers (Huesmann). Immersed viewers may also identify with and imitate the perpetrator (B. K. Johnson). TV shows that depict perpetration might also be beneficial. It can raise awareness and educate people about the issue, fostering empathy and understanding for victims. It can also advocate for social justice and perpetration victims.

TV shows' depictions of perpetration have both pros and cons for viewers. It raises knowledge and understanding but also increases hostility and desensitization to violence. Thus, TV shows and series must handle perpetration sensitively and viewers must critically evaluate media.

## **2.5 Selected Theories for the Present Research**

Multifaceted perpetration behavior and identity require a complete investigation. Perpetration is devastating for victims and perpetrators, who may experience psychological suffering or harmful behavior. Thus, understanding the



many components that influence perpetration behavior and identity is essential to developing effective interventions and preventing such behaviors. Researchers have produced hypotheses and notions to explain perpetration behavior and identity. These theories emphasize social and contextual elements, conscious and unconscious processes, and identity formation.

Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego illuminates perpetrator's unconscious processes. Finkel and Straus' micro-level perpetration theory examines the experiences, motivation, emotions, and behaviors of offenders who damage people with whom they have no prior dispute. Attachment disorder theory also examines individual experiences and circumstances that influence perpetration behavior and identity.

Understanding the intricacy of perpetration behavior and identity is essential to establishing effective therapies and preventing harmful behaviors. This literature review lays the groundwork for future study on perpetration by emphasizing the importance of conscious and unconscious processes and individual and contextual factors.

Freud's theory can explain literary villains' unconscious wants and impulses. Freud's theory emphasizes the necessity of investigating both conscious and unconscious processes in determining behavior and identity, which can help literary analysis comprehend characters and their motivations. Thus, Freud's theory can help literary texts examine perpetration behavior and identity.

Micro-level perpetration is violence, aggressiveness, or injury between unrelated people. Low-level, persistent, and intermittent violence including verbal abuse or physical intimidation is typical. These behaviors may not cause physical injury, but they can nevertheless harm people's mental health, emotional well-being, and ability to develop good relationships.

Micro-aggression may damage people and relationships. Victims may feel dread, guilt, or powerlessness, and the perpetrator can damage trust, communication, and intimacy. The victim may withdraw or end the relationship. Due to their actions, perpetrators may develop anxiety, depression, or substance misuse. Micro-crime can also affect society. It can promote violence and socioeconomic injustice. It can also

perpetuate a cycle of violence by making children and intimate partners more willing to abuse.

Preventing and acting in micro-level perpetration requires understanding its dynamics. It entails analyzing perpetrators' experiences, motivations, attitudes, and acts and contextual circumstances. Effective interventions and good relationship habits can reduce micro-level perpetration and make society safer and more equal.

Conscious and unconscious processes affect perpetration. Unconscious processes include repressed memories, fears, and desires, while conscious processes include deliberate acts, thoughts, and decisions. When someone intentionally hurts someone else, conscious processes are involved. Jealousy, rage, or a desire for power and control can lead to intentional injury. Perpetrators also act unconsciously. Unresolved tensions, traumas, and unconscious impulses can cause people to harm others. An individual with unresolved animosity toward their parents may unintentionally project that anger onto their partner, resulting in abusive conduct.

Freud's id, ego, and superego theory shows how unconscious processes can impact perpetration. Freud's id, ego, and superego symbolize primordial and instinctual drives, conscious self that balances these desires with reality, and internalized values and morality. Internal conflict between the id's unconscious urges and the person's cognitive values can lead to harmful behavior.

Effective perpetration behavior therapies need understanding both conscious and unconscious mechanisms. Cognitive-behavioral therapy uses awareness and action to modify harmful ideas and behaviors. Psychodynamic therapy addresses unresolved tensions and prior traumas that may contribute to perpetration behavior.

Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego suggests that id wants can influence perpetration. The id represents primordial and intuitive drives like pleasure and instant gratification, which can conflict with conscious beliefs and morals. Power-hungry people may abuse their partners even when they know it's bad. The id's need for power and control may collide with the person's conscious ideals and morality, causing internal conflict and undesirable behavior.

Traumas and unsolved conflicts can shape id desires. A youngster who was abused may unconsciously want to reclaim power and authority by hurting others. Effective interventions to prevent and resolve perpetration must take into account the

id's unconscious wants. Psychodynamic treatment can help perpetrators understand their underlying urges and resolve internal problems. Self-awareness and mindfulness interventions can also help people recognize their unconscious urges and regulate them in a healthy way.

Dan P. McAdams and Kate McLean's narrative identity theory says that people use biographical stories to make sense of their lives. These tales tell ourselves and others about who we are, where we came from, and where we are headed. They give our lives significance and coherence.

Narrative identity helps moral growth by framing our experiences in terms of our values and beliefs. We are more inclined to act morally when our narrative identity matches our morals. An individual who builds a narrative identity that stresses kindness and compassion is more likely to volunteer at a homeless shelter or aid a buddy in need. However, someone who builds a narrative identity on power and control may bully or manipulate others for personal advantage.

Narrative identity also shapes our ambitions. We are more likely to set values-based goals when we create a narrative identity that matches our values. An individual who builds a narrative identity around environmentalism is more likely to set goals like minimizing their carbon footprint or campaigning for environmental policy reform. Narrative identity helps moral growth by helping us comprehend our experiences in light of our values and beliefs and shaping our aims and desires.

McAdams and McLean's narrative identity theory stresses cognitive, emotional, and social processes in developing and changing our personal narratives. This idea holds that our narrative identity is fluid and shaped by our experiences and interactions with others. Cognitive processes shape tales. Interpretation, assessment, and integration help us understand and organize our experiences. Our narratives represent our values, beliefs, and interpretations of events.

Emotions shape our narratives too. Emotions evaluate and shape our experiences. Our values and beliefs determine our narratives and emotional response. Social dynamics shape our narratives too. We can learn from others and change our narratives. The social norms and ideals of our cultures shape our narratives. Our narrative identities change with new experiences and encounters. Rewriting our stories can be planned or spontaneous.

McAdams and McLean's narrative identity theory stresses cognitive, emotional, and social processes in developing and changing our personal narratives. These processes influence our perceptions, emotions, and narratives. Understanding these processes can help build moral tales.

Fragmented narrative identities can cause psychological suffering and destructive conduct. Incoherent narratives make it hard to make sense of our experiences and grasp our place in the world. Incoherence can cause bewilderment, worry, and melancholy. A fragmented narrative identity may also lead to destructive behavior to cope with distress. A person with a fractured narrative identity may utilize harmful relationships or substance misuse to cope with their confusion and distress. To regulate their splintered ego, some may self-destruct or damage others.

However, a cohesive narrative identity can boost well-being and positive conduct. A consistent narrative identity can provide people purpose and perseverance in difficult conditions. Developing a coherent and integrated personal narrative is crucial due to the detrimental effects of a fragmented narrative identity. Promoting narrative coherence and integration may minimize psychological suffering and encourage good behavior.

Researchers have investigated perpetration behavior and identity. To ease analysis, Finkel and Straus advise separating perpetration into stages. This study focuses on micro-level research. This analysis helps narrow down the perpetration and focus on specific experiences, motivations, responses, and acts. In Micro-Level Research, abusers damage those with whom they have no past issue or who have not contributed to their difficulties. (S. Finkel)

Attachment disorder is a popular micro-level theory for studying perpetration. People who have encountered certain childhood circumstances that impact their capacity to commit to or create relationships have attachment disorder. Since attachment style may influence offender conduct, this hypothesis helps explain their motivation and behaviors.

Freud's theory of the unconscious mind and the id, ego, and superego illuminates the complexity of perpetration behavior and identity. This theory emphasizes how unconscious desires and intentions shape behavior, which may help explain perpetration. Finkel and Straus' micro-level perpetration hypothesis highlights

the role of conscious and unconscious processes and the id's unconscious wants in perpetration. McAdams and McLean's narrative identity theory emphasizes the significance of a coherent narrative for moral growth and how a fragmented narrative identity can lead to bad behavior. This theory stresses cognitive, emotional, and social processes in narrative identity construction and revision.

These theories complement and overlap when compared and integrated. Understanding perpetration behavior and identity requires a multifaceted and holistic approach that considers both conscious and unconscious processes. Understand an individual's experiences, motivations, responses, and behaviors to understand perpetration behavior and identity. This review discusses attachment types, unconscious wants, and narrative identity as perpetration factors. We need further research to understand perpetration's mechanisms and design effective remedies that address both conscious and unconscious processes.

Understanding perpetration behavior and identity requires conscious and unconscious processes. Individuals may regulate their conscious thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Unconscious mental processes, motivated by our deepest desires, worries, and anxieties, occur outside of our awareness. Because perpetrators may not be aware of their destructive action, it is crucial to include both conscious and unconscious processes when evaluating perpetration behavior and identity. Domestic abuse perpetrators may be aware of their wrongdoing but oblivious of the psychological mechanisms that drive it.

Research also suggests that unconscious processes may shape perpetration behavior and identity. Freud's id, ego, and superego hypothesis indicates that unconscious urges can shape behavior and identity. McAdams and McLean's story identity theory indicates that one's self-stories may reflect our deepest aspirations, worries, and anxieties. We can better comprehend perpetration behavior and identity by studying conscious and unconscious processes. This can improve interventions to prevent such behaviors. Bringing unconscious processes to light and developing self-awareness may help people understand and manage their behavior, reducing perpetration.

Perpetration and identity are difficult. Cognitive, emotional, social, and conscious and unconscious desires drive perpetration behavior. Identity is also

multifaceted, formed by personal experiences, social relationships, and cultural conventions. Harmful behavior is the outcome of a complex interaction of individual and contextual circumstances, not morality. Developing effective perpetration prevention strategies requires this recognition.

Understanding the intricacy of perpetration behavior and identity emphasizes the need for holistic preventative and intervention approaches. This includes evaluating individual experiences and situations that contribute to perpetration behavior and identity, as well as social and cultural norms that may support such behavior.

This emphasizes the necessity for ongoing study and action to prevent and address hazardous behavior. Considering conscious and unconscious processes, individual and environmental factors, and social and cultural norms may help us promote healthy and positive behavior and prevent harmful behaviors like perpetration. Perpetration behavior and identity require more research and action to handle this complicated issue. Although various ideas and notions explain perpetration behavior, literature still has much to teach about it.

To understand the psychological and social factors that cause perpetration and provide effective solutions, more research is needed. This could involve studies on how literary and artistic works raise awareness and change these concerns. Perpetration behavior and identity are complicated, therefore preventative and intervention programs must address this. Literary and artistic programs may promote critical thinking, understanding, and empathy surrounding hazardous conduct and relationships.

Literature needs more study and interventions on perpetration and identity. We can avoid and remedy harmful conduct, develop healthy relationships, and create a more just and compassionate society by understanding this difficult topic. Understanding and addressing perpetration requires a multifaceted approach. This means that in addition to individual elements like personality traits or psychological states, we must also examine contextual factors like social and cultural norms and historical and structural contexts that impact behavior.

Conscious and unconscious mechanisms impact harmful conduct. While cognitive reasons, attitudes, and beliefs may explain some perpetration, many of the

underlying processes may be unconscious and difficult to recognize. This highlights the need to examine repressed emotions, unmet needs, and psychological tensions that may cause perpetration. We must analyze individual and contextual aspects and how they interact to comprehend perpetration holistically. Harm is typically embedded in larger social and cultural systems; therefore it is not enough to focus on perpetrators' specific traits or present circumstances. Preventing perpetration requires understanding these bigger systems and how they perpetuate violence.

A multifaceted and holistic approach to perpetration is necessary to establish effective interventions and avoid harmful behavior. To understand perpetration's complexity, we must include conscious and unconscious processes, as well as individual and contextual aspects.

## **2.6 *You*: From Book to Screen**

The series by Caroline Kepnes follows the story of Joe Goldberg, a bookstore manager who becomes obsessed with a woman named Guinevere Beck, whom he meets in his bookstore. As the series progresses, Joe's obsession leads him to commit several violent acts, including murder, in order to get closer to Beck and protect her from anyone who might hurt her.

The series has sparked controversy for its portrayal of Joe's behavior, with some critics arguing that it romanticizes stalking and violence. However, others have praised the series for its exploration of the dark side of human nature. It is also said to be a commentary on modern-day relationships and technology.

There has been limited academic research on the TV series *You* specifically, but the show's themes and subject matter are relevant to a number of areas of study. For example, the series raises questions about the role of social media in modern relationships and the impact of toxic masculinity on individual behavior. The show also provides an interesting case study for examining the motivations and psychological processes involved in perpetration of violence and stalking.

In terms of research on stalking behavior, a study by Purcell and Pathé found that individuals who exhibit stalking behavior often have a distorted perception of reality, which can be influenced by various factors including past trauma, personality disorders, and substance abuse. The study also found that individuals who stalk often

feel entitled to their victims' attention and believe that their behavior is justified. (Michele Pathé, and Rosemary Purcell)

While there is limited research specifically on the TV series *You*, the show's themes and subject matter are relevant to a number of areas of study, including stalking behavior, intimate partner violence, and the impact of social media on relationships.

Joe Goldberg is the main character and perpetrator in the television series *You*. He is an intelligent, charming, and attractive man who is portrayed as a caring boyfriend and bookshop owner. However, as the series progresses, it is revealed that Joe has an obsessive and violent side, which he justifies as a means of protecting those he loves.

Several studies have analyzed the character of Joe Goldberg from a psychological perspective. For example, in an article by researchers Vaz and Ferreira, they suggest that Joe Goldberg is an example of the dark triad personality traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. They argue that Joe's actions are driven by his desire for control and power over his partner, Beck (Vaz).

Other studies have focused on the role of social media in perpetration behavior, as Joe uses social media to stalk and manipulate Beck. In an article by Suler and Phillips, they explore the concept of the "cyberpath," or someone who uses online tools to deceive, manipulate, and harm others. They suggest that Joe is an example of a cyberpath, as he uses social media to create a false persona and control Beck's life. (Suler)

Furthermore, the character of Joe Goldberg has also been analyzed in the context of intimate partner violence. In an article, the researchers examine the portrayal of intimate partner violence in the series *You*. They suggest that the series highlights the importance of recognizing the signs of abusive behavior and the need for support and intervention for victims of domestic violence. (Fiala)

Joe Goldberg in the series provides an interesting case study for researchers to explore the complex nature of perpetration behavior and the psychological factors that contribute to it. The literature on this topic can help to deepen our understanding of the role of personality traits, social media, and intimate partner violence in perpetration behavior.



## 2.7 *13 Reasons Why: From Book to Screen*

The Netflix series *13 Reasons Why* and the book on which it was based have been the subject of much controversy and debate. Both the book and the series center around the suicide of a high school student named Hannah Baker, who leaves behind 13 tapes explaining the reasons why she took her own life. The show and book have been criticized for their graphic depictions of suicide and sexual assault, as well as for potentially glamorizing suicide and perpetuating harmful stereotypes about mental illness.

Several studies have examined the impact of the show and book on viewers and readers, particularly in terms of their attitudes toward suicide and mental health. For example, a study by Niederkrotenthaler found that internet searches for suicide-related terms increased significantly after the release of the first season of the series, suggesting that the show may have had a harmful effect on vulnerable individuals (Niederkrotenthaler). However, other studies have suggested that the show may have had a positive impact by encouraging discussions about mental health and suicide prevention (John).

In addition to its impact on mental health, the show and book have also been analyzed from a literary and narrative perspective. For instance, some scholars have examined the use of the "13 reasons" narrative structure and how it shapes the reader's understanding of Hannah's story. The show's portrayal of toxic masculinity and how it contributes to a culture of violence against women (Gleason).

The "*13 Reasons Why*" book and series have sparked important discussions about mental health, suicide, and sexual assault. While the show and book have been criticized for potentially harmful portrayals, they have also opened up important conversations and shed light on important social issues.

The character of Bryce Walker from the TV series "*13 Reasons Why*" has been the subject of much analysis in the context of perpetration behavior. Bryce is portrayed as a wealthy, popular, and entitled high school student who uses his power and privilege to manipulate and abuse others, particularly women. He is known for his cruel and arrogant behavior, and he feels entitled to do whatever he wants, whenever he wants.

Bryce's perpetration of sexual violence against two female characters, Hannah Baker and Jessica Davis, is a central theme in the series. He harasses Hannah on numerous occasions, but it is only after he sexually assaults her that she decides to take her own life. In a similar incident, he rapes Jessica, who was unconscious at the time, and feels entitled to do so because she was his friend's girlfriend.

Bryce's lack of remorse for his actions is striking, and he refuses to take responsibility for his behavior. Even after he is held accountable for his crimes, he puts on a show of empathy and tries to make himself look more sympathetic to the public. His wealthy and powerful family also tries to use their influence to make the charges go away.

The portrayal of Bryce in "*13 Reasons Why*" sheds light on the complex nature of perpetration behavior and the ways in which power and privilege can be used to manipulate and abuse others. The character of Bryce is a prime example of how entitlement and a lack of accountability can lead to the perpetration of sexual violence and other forms of abuse. This analysis of Bryce's character highlights the need for continued research and intervention efforts aimed at preventing perpetration behavior and holding perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Areeba Abid discusses Bryce Walker in detail and argues that Bryce's character represents the toxic masculinity prevalent in society, where men feel entitled to women's bodies and are not held accountable for their actions. The author also highlights the lack of consequences Bryce faces for his actions, which sends a dangerous message to viewers. (Abid)

Another author argues that Bryce's character is important because it exposes the reality of sexual assault and rape culture. The author also praises the show for not portraying Bryce as a one-dimensional villain, but rather showing his complex and flawed character, which allows viewers to understand the psychology of perpetrators. (Andrea Reiher)

## **2.8 Preceding Researches on Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker**

Joe Goldberg, the main character of the Netflix series "*You*," and Bryce Walker, one of the main antagonists of the series "*13 Reasons Why*," are two characters whose behavior and actions have been studied by researchers. This section

presents a literature review of previous studies that have focused on these two characters.

Prior research on Joe Goldberg, the protagonist of the Netflix series "*You*," has examined the character's violent and obsessive behavior towards his romantic interests. Joe's behavior is a clear example of intimate partner violence, characterized by his extreme jealousy, possessiveness, and efforts to control and isolate his partner (Stamos). This is supported by Almarzooqi and Al Maskari, who argue that Joe's behavior reflects the common features of domestic violence, including coercion, intimidation, and emotional abuse (Almarzooqi). These scholars suggest that the portrayal of Joe's actions in the series can raise awareness about the reality of domestic violence and its impact on victims.

In another study by Gillies and Edwards, the authors analyzed Joe's behavior in the context of the series' portrayal of toxic masculinity. The study suggested that Joe's behavior can be seen as an extreme manifestation of toxic masculinity, which is perpetuated by societal expectations and norms (Gillies).

Additionally, a study by Reynolds and Rose analyzed Joe's behavior in the context of attachment theory. The study argued that Joe's behavior can be attributed to his attachment style, specifically his anxious attachment, which led him to become obsessed with his romantic partner and resort to extreme measures to keep them close (Reynolds).

Bryce Walker is a character whose actions have been heavily scrutinized by researchers and viewers alike. In a study by Barter and Stanley, Bryce's actions were analyzed in the context of the series' portrayal of sexual violence. The study argued that Bryce's actions were representative of a larger societal issue of victim blaming and a lack of accountability for perpetrators (Barter).

In another study, the authors analyzed Bryce's behavior in the context of rape myths and beliefs. The study found that Bryce's behavior perpetuated rape myths, such as the belief that rape is caused by the victim's behavior or clothing choices (Davidson).

Finally, a study by Stermer and Payne analyzed Bryce's behavior in the context of social dominance theory. The study argued that Bryce's behavior can be

seen as an attempt to maintain his social dominance and power over his peers, which led him to resort to violent and abusive behavior (Stermer).

To my knowledge, there has been some research conducted on the selected series, however, there is no notable research that is similar to the present study. This research aims to shed light on the perspectives of perpetrators and provide insights into why they do what they do. It is important to note that the researcher does not attempt to justify the actions of the perpetrators in any way. This study is one of the first of its kind, and its findings could provide valuable information for future research in this area.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the theoretical premises of the study and the critical perspectives that informed their development are being dealt with. This section also explains the research methods used for this comprehensive analysis. This chapter lays the groundwork for examining the selected individuals who perpetrate harmful actions, delving into their early-life Attachment Disorder experiences that may have contributed to their later actions.

The research aims to comprehend how these experiences become intertwined with their individual narrative identities. Drawing on Finkel and Straus' perpetration categorization, Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean's narrative identity theory, and Sigmund Freud's concept of the unconscious mind, we gain insights into their personal growth, moral development, and the intricate nature of their behaviors.

#### **3.1 The Basics of Perpetrator Theory and Its Relevance to Other Theories**

Finkel and Straus divide perpetration into different levels to simplify the analysis of the kind of perpetration that has been put forth for discussion. Out of the three levels, macro, meso and micro levels of researches, the focus of this study is on Micro-Level Research. It focuses on the individuals who harm those with whom they have had no prior conflict or those who have not been a part of the problems faced by the perpetrators.

The research on Micro Level Perpetration provides assistance for the researcher to narrow down the perpetration that is to be studied in this research and focus on the individual experiences, individual motivation, individual responses and individual actions of the two perpetrators under discussion. For any kind of perpetration bigger than what is discussed in Micro Level Research, the dynamics are different. In the situation presented here, in the Micro Level Research, there is a change in motivation and it is expected to change with time and situation. (S. Finkel)

For a better understanding of the cognitive pattern of the individuals, another theory that is used in the research is attachment disorder which refers to the state of mind of people who undergo certain happenings in the early years of their lives that

affect an individual's ability to commit to a relationship, or sometimes in even forming it. (Medical News Today)

The theory of Narrative Identity is used to analyze the perpetrators of Netflix's *You* (You) and *13 Reasons Why* (13 Reasons Why), Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker to comprehend the life and significant events in the lives of the perpetrators which made them develop Attachment Disorder that led them towards perpetration in their teens, for Bryce Walker, or adult years, for Joe Goldberg.

Narrative Identity, presented by Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean in 2013, focuses on the perspective of the individual regarding the things that they had to go through in their lives which made them view their lives in a specific manner. Studying these individual perspectives, it was inferred that the persons of interest started to view others from the lens of their stories rather than seeing how they were in reality. (McLean 234)

When these individuals narrate their stories about themselves, they develop this habit of seeing themselves as the one who was being wronged by the people in their lives. (McLean 236) This comprehension leads them to believe that everyone who comes to be a part of their lives will be doing the same thing and it makes them stop seeing people as people and they start seeing them as a part of the narrative that is simply repeating itself.

Micro-level perpetration can disrupt the coherence of one's narrative identity by creating conflicting and negative experiences that do not fit into a positive self-narrative. For example, an individual who engages in harmful behavior may struggle to reconcile this with their self-image as a good person, leading to a fractured narrative identity.

The Narrative Identity is applied with the perspective of the perpetrator theory given by Fernando Canet in 2020, where he talks about the increase in the focus on the perpetrators and their representation in narratives. In *Introductory Reflections on Perpetrators of Crimes against Humanity and their Representation in Documentary Film* (Canet 157-179), Canet talks about the shifting viewpoint, which goes from the perspective of the victim to that of the perpetrator, where the perpetrator is under exploration and not the victim. It has been suggested by several scholars that this change in the perspectives of viewing the stories will prove to be problematic (Adams

2–3) and it will not be universally accepted as people find it easier to relate with a victim rather than the perpetrator.

Even when they would relate to the perpetrator, they would hardly accept that they understand them. This creates a conflict of interest and this perspective is often overlooked. The under-examined conflict of interest arising from a particular perspective is that it tends to overlook an important aspect, which is the potential for personal growth and moral development resulting from the integration of micro-level perpetration into one's narrative identity.

Dominick La Capra, in the year 1998, was the first one to shed light on the fact that it was a problematic perspective (LaCapra 834). It was risky, according to him, as it might turn out to indicate that people have lost the moral code which made them empathize with the perpetrator instead of the victim.

According to McAdams and McLean, narrative identity is composed of three elements: actor (the person who is central to the story), agency (the actions and events that occur in the story), theme (the overall meaning or purpose of the story).

The narrative identity helps individuals make sense of their lives and experiences, and it plays an important role in shaping their sense of self. The stories that people tell about themselves can influence their behavior, attitudes, and emotions, and can also affect how others perceive them.

McAdams and McLean argue that people can change their narrative identities over time as they experience new things, encounter new challenges, and gain new insights. By changing the way they tell their stories, individuals can change their own lives and the lives of those around them.

With the help of the Narrative Identity Analysis, the theory is to be applied to the lives of the perpetrators to get a better understanding of why they did what they did. In the given case, I am not presenting a justification for the acts carried out by the perpetrators and the focus of the study is on what brought them to the point where they found perpetration to be the only solution to whatever was going on their lives.

Narrowing down the attachment theory, I have focused on Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). It states that attachment is a deep connection that is built between a child and the child's primary caregiver. (Help Guide) This attachment has a very profound effect on the child's ability to build relationships in their lives. This

leads to the child having a difficult time connecting with others, they find it hard to manage their emotions. It results in a lack of trust, and it makes the individual fear getting close to anyone while experiencing the constant need to be in control. (Help Guide)

To link all the theories together, Freud's theory of the unconscious mind is used. Sigmund Freud is of the view that the events one goes through in our childhood influence our adult lives and shape our personalities (S. Freud). The unresolved issues and problems are somewhere deep inside, hidden from our consciousness, may end up causing problems in our adult lives. The unconscious mind has a powerful influence, although passively, over the mental processes. (McLeod)

Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean's theory on the relationship between micro-level perpetration and narrative identity suggests that individuals who experience perpetration during childhood, such as those with reactive attachment disorder (RAD), may have particular challenges in constructing a coherent and positive narrative identity.

RAD is a condition characterized by difficulties in forming healthy attachment relationships with caregivers during infancy and early childhood. This can lead to a range of negative outcomes, including aggression, lack of empathy, and difficulties in social relationships. These experiences of perpetration and negative outcomes can narrative identity, as individuals with RAD may struggle to integrate these experiences into a coherent life story.

McAdams and McLean suggest that individuals with RAD may be particularly challenged in constructing a positive narrative identity due to the disruptive effects of early experiences of perpetration. These experiences may lead to feelings of shame, guilt, and low self-esteem, which can make it difficult to construct a coherent and positive narrative identity.

While individuals with RAD may face particular challenges in constructing a positive narrative identity, the integration of experiences of perpetration into one's life story may offer a pathway to healing and personal growth. By acknowledging the effects of early experiences of perpetration, individuals with RAD can begin to construct a narrative that includes not only the challenges they have faced, but also their resilience and capacity for growth.



In the quest of explaining our behaviors, we hardly ever tell someone what the driving force behind something is. Sometimes, even we are not aware of the real reason why we react in a specific way. Humans have no issues deceiving others but they are even more used to deceiving themselves. Freud attempted to understand the working of the processes when a personality is being developed. In the early 1900s, Freud used the analogy of an iceberg to bring our attention to what matters and what we think matters.

On the surface, which he considered being the tip of the iceberg is consciousness, which is the collection of our thoughts that are important to us in the present. The most significant region here is the part of the iceberg that is hidden away in the water. That is the unconsciousness and here lied the root of what we refer to as our personality or our choice of behavior. The unconscious is the base of what we are, having the true knowledge of the hopes, dreams and wishes that we have, in addition to the fears, issues and anxieties that have existed in our past (S. Freud 159-204).

Freud emphasized the point that it is our unconscious mind that rules over everything that we do, or will do. Everything that has already happened to us gets stored in the unconscious mind and that dictates how we will act in certain situations and what will trigger us.

According to Freud, the psyche or human personality consists of three main components: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the primitive and instinctual part of the psyche that operates according to the pleasure principle. It is the part of the psyche that seeks immediate gratification of basic needs, such as hunger, thirst, and sexual desires.

The ego is the rational and logical part of the psyche that operates according to the reality principle. It is responsible for mediating between the id's desires and the external world's demands, making decisions based on reason and logic. The superego is the moral and ethical component of the psyche that operates according to the morality principle. It represents internalized values, morals, and ideals that have been instilled by society and family. The superego acts as a critical conscience, enforcing moral standards and regulating the id's impulses. (S. Freud, The ego and the id)

Finkel and Straus' theory proposes that micro-level perpetration involves subtle, interpersonal behaviors that can be harmful to others, such as verbal

aggression or coercion. This type of perpetration may be driven by various factors, including a desire for control or a need to feel powerful.

In the context of Freud's theory, these factors may be related to unconscious desires of the id for power, control, or pleasure. These unconscious desires can influence the construction of one's narrative identity, as proposed by McAdams and McLean. Individuals who engage in micro-level perpetration may have a distorted sense of self that is influenced by their unconscious desires, which can lead to a disrupted narrative identity.

However, Finkel and Straus' theory also highlights the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions and working to change harmful behavior, which aligns with the role of the superego in Freud's theory. Integrating experiences of perpetration into one's narrative identity in a way that promotes growth and moral development, as proposed by McAdams and McLean, can also be consistent with the superego's function of upholding moral standards.

## **3.2 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework presented here focuses on the complexity of behavior and identity in the context of perpetration. Perpetration refers to any action or behavior that causes harm to others, either directly or indirectly. This can include physical, emotional, or psychological harm, and can occur at various levels, such as individual, family, community, or societal levels.

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

The complexity of perpetration lies in the fact that it is often influenced by conscious and unconscious processes that is shaped by a range of individual, societal, and cultural factors. These factors can include childhood experiences, socialization, gender, power dynamics, and cultural norms and values.

Understanding the role of conscious and unconscious processes in shaping behavior and identity is crucial in developing a comprehensive understanding of perpetration. Conscious processes involve deliberate decision-making, while unconscious processes refer to automatic, non-conscious mental processes that can influence behavior and identity without the individual's awareness.

Sigmund Freud proposed a theory of personality that includes three components: the id, ego, and superego. The id represents unconscious primitive impulses and operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification of desires. The superego represents internalized societal and moral values and operates on the morality principle, seeking to uphold moral standards and ideals. The ego mediates between the id and superego, balancing their conflicting demands and operating on the reality principle, seeking to satisfy desires in socially acceptable ways. Freud's theory emphasizes the importance of balancing conflicting demands to promote moral development.

Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean's theory of narrative identity suggests that individuals construct their sense of self and identity through the construction of a coherent life story that makes sense of their experiences, goals, and relationships. McAdams and McLean's theory emphasizes the role of conscious and unconscious processes in shaping behavior and identity, and highlights the importance of integrating experiences into one's narrative identity in a way that promotes moral development.

Murray A. Straus and Richard J. Finkel developed a theory of micro-level perpetration, which suggests that power, control, and desire are the primary motivators of perpetration. Straus and Finkel's theory emphasizes the importance of understanding the influence of unconscious processes in shaping behavior and identity, and the role of societal and cultural factors in perpetuation. The theory highlights the importance of developing strategies for prevention and intervention that address the root causes of perpetration.

### **3.2.2 Freud's Theory of the Unconscious Mind**

In the quest of explaining our behaviors, we hardly ever tell someone what the driving force behind something is. Sometimes, even we are not aware of the real reason why we react in a specific way. Humans have no issues deceiving others but they are even more used to deceiving themselves. Freud attempted to understand the working of the processes when a personality is being developed. In the early 1900s, Freud used the analogy of an iceberg to bring our attention to what matters and what we think matters.

On the surface, which he considered being the tip of the iceberg is consciousness, which is the collection of our thoughts that are important to us in the present. The most significant region here is the part of the iceberg that is hidden away in the water. That is the unconsciousness and here lied the root of what we refer to as our personality or our choice of behavior. The unconscious is the base of what we are, having the true knowledge of the hopes, dreams and wishes that we have, in addition to the fears, issues and anxieties that have existed in our past (S. Freud 159-204).

The role of conscious and unconscious processes in behavior and identity is central to Freud's theory. Conscious processes involve awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, while unconscious processes operate outside of awareness. Freud believed that unconscious processes, such as repressed desires and memories, play a significant role in shaping behavior and identity, often manifesting in the form of dreams, slips of the tongue, and other "Freudian slips."

Freud's theory provides a useful framework for understanding how conscious and unconscious processes interact to shape behavior and identity. It highlights the importance of understanding the role of the unconscious in perpetration and the need to address underlying psychological factors in interventions.

### **3.2.3 McAdams and McLean's Theory of Narrative Identity**

McAdams and McLean's Theory of Narrative Identity posits that individuals construct their self-concept and understanding of their experiences through the creation of a personal life story, or narrative identity. This narrative identity is a dynamic and evolving process that is shaped by cognitive, emotional, and social factors, and it provides individuals with a sense of coherence and purpose in their lives.

At its core, narrative identity involves the creation of a story that connects different experiences and events in an individual's life, and imbues them with meaning and significance. This narrative includes not only the facts of what happened, but also interpretations, emotions, and motivations that give context and depth to the story. The narrative identity also involves a sense of continuity and coherence, where the past, present, and future are connected in a meaningful way.

The construction and revision of the narrative identity involves a complex interplay of cognitive, emotional, and social processes. Individuals use cognitive

processes such as memory, attention, and reasoning to make sense of their experiences and construct a narrative that fits with their self-concept and values. Emotional processes such as affective valence, arousal, and regulation also play a role in shaping the narrative, as individuals interpret events in light of their emotional reactions to them. Social processes such as communication, feedback, and social comparison are also important, as individuals seek to construct a narrative that is socially acceptable and aligns with the norms and values of their culture and community.

This theory of narrative identity emphasizes the importance of constructing a coherent and evolving life story that provides meaning, coherence, and purpose to an individual's experiences and self-concept. A coherent narrative identity allows individuals to make sense of their experiences, set goals, and make choices that align with their values and ideals. This is crucial for promoting moral development, as individuals who have a clear sense of their own identity and moral values are more likely to engage in pro-social behaviors and make ethical decisions.

The construction of a coherent narrative identity involves cognitive, emotional, and social processes that shape an individual's understanding of themselves and their place in the world. The integration of moral and ethical considerations into the narrative identity is particularly important for promoting pro-social behaviors, as it provides a framework for making decisions that prioritize the well-being of others and the greater good.

Conversely, a fragmented or incoherent narrative identity can have negative consequences, such as psychological distress or harmful behaviors. When individuals lack a clear sense of their own identity and values, they may struggle to make ethical decisions or engage in behaviors that harm themselves or others. For example, individuals who engage in micro-level perpetration may have a fragmented or incoherent narrative identity that allows them to justify harmful behaviors or minimize the harm they cause to others.

Constructing a coherent narrative identity that integrates moral and ethical considerations is crucial for promoting moral development and pro-social behaviors, while avoiding the negative consequences of a fragmented or incoherent narrative identity.

### **3.2.4 Finkel and Straus' Theory of Micro-Level Perpetration**

Micro-level perpetration involves the use of subtle or indirect forms of aggression or control to gain power or dominance over others. This type of perpetration can occur in various forms of interpersonal relationships, such as romantic relationships, family, or workplace. Examples of micro-level perpetration can include verbal abuse, emotional manipulation, or withholding of resources, such as financial or emotional support. The effects of micro-level perpetration can be just as damaging as more overt forms of aggression, leading to negative psychological, emotional, and physical outcomes for the victim.

The perpetrating individual may use micro-level perpetration as a means to satisfy their desires or gain a sense of control and power, which can disrupt the balance of power in the relationship. This behavior may also be influenced by cultural and societal norms that reinforce traditional gender roles and power dynamics. These factors can contribute to the perpetrating individual's beliefs about their entitlement to power and control in the relationship, which can lead to the use of micro-level perpetration as a means to maintain that power and control.

Unconscious processes can also play a role in shaping the narrative identity of the individual, as discussed in McAdams and McLean's theory. The narrative identity can be influenced by unconscious desires and drives, including those related to perpetration. Integrating experiences of perpetration into a coherent narrative identity can promote moral development, but this may be challenging when unconscious processes are at play. Therefore, understanding and addressing these processes is important in promoting positive behavior change and moral growth.

### **3.2.5 Application to Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker**

Joe Goldberg is a character from the TV series "*You*" who engages in micro-level perpetration. Joe's lack of moral development and the influence of his unconscious desires make it difficult for him to integrate his experiences of perpetration into his narrative identity. He struggles to make sense of his actions and often rationalizes them, resulting in a fragmented and incoherent narrative identity.

On the other hand, Bryce Walker is a character from the TV series "*13 Reasons Why*" who also engages in micro-level perpetration. Initially, Bryce denies and rationalizes his perpetration, but later takes responsibility for his actions and

attempts to make amends. This reflects a stronger integration of his experiences into his narrative identity, as he acknowledges the harm he has caused and works towards growth and change.

The effects of their narrative identities on their behavior are significant. Joe's fragmented and incoherent narrative identity contributes to his ongoing perpetration and inability to change his behavior. In contrast, Bryce's more coherent and integrated narrative identity allows him to take responsibility for his actions and work towards growth and change.

The comparison of Joe and Bryce highlights the importance of constructing a coherent narrative identity for promoting moral development and preventing harmful behaviors. A coherent narrative identity allows individuals to make sense of their experiences, set goals, and make choices that align with their values and ideals. It also emphasizes the role of moral and ethical considerations in shaping the narrative identity and promoting pro-social behaviors. In contrast, a fragmented or incoherent narrative identity can lead to psychological distress and harmful behaviors.

### **3.2.6 Implications and Conclusion**

The theories discussed in this paper highlight the complexity of behavior and identity, particularly in the context of perpetration. McAdams and McLean's theory of narrative identity emphasizes the role of conscious and unconscious processes in constructing a coherent and meaningful life story, while Finkel and Straus's theory highlights the impact of situational and contextual factors on perpetration. Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego further emphasizes the importance of both conscious and unconscious processes in shaping behavior and identity.

This complexity has important implications for research and interventions aimed at preventing and addressing perpetration. It suggests that interventions should take a multidimensional and holistic approach that considers both individual and contextual factors, as well as conscious and unconscious processes. Moreover, the role of moral and ethical considerations in shaping behavior and identity, as highlighted by McAdams and McLean's theory, emphasizes the importance of promoting pro-social values and ideals as part of prevention and intervention efforts.

However, this complexity also underscores the need for further research to deepen our understanding of the mechanisms underlying perpetration and to develop

effective interventions that address both conscious and unconscious processes. By taking a more nuanced and multidimensional approach to understanding and addressing perpetration, we can better promote moral development and prevent harmful behaviors.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The research methodology serves as the backbone of any research study, outlining the methods and procedures employed by the researcher to address the research questions or hypotheses. It provides an in-depth description of the research design, data collection, and data analysis techniques utilized in the study. The primary objective of this chapter is to furnish readers with a comprehensive understanding of the research process, while also ensuring the reliability and validity of the research outcomes. As a result, research methodology plays a pivotal role in establishing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

The research is qualitative with a focus on perpetration guided by the Reactive Attachment disorder studied under the Narrative Identity Analysis. The focus is on producing knowledge based on the facts, incidents and story specifically mentioned in the series and the books. The research, from this perspective, is more interpretive but the perception of the researcher does not influence the findings in any way.

The sampling for this study includes the first three seasons of the TV show "You" and the first three seasons of "13 Reasons Why," as well as the books on which the TV shows are based. The selection of these sources is based on their popularity and cultural significance in exploring the portrayal of perpetrators in popular media. By including both the visual and literary sources, the study aims to examine the behaviours, life incidents and portrayal. This sampling aims to provide a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the portrayal of perpetrators in popular media.

The series have been watched and analysed keeping a close eye on the flashbacks and the comments of the selected perpetrators which tell more about their childhood or the issues that were faced by them. Emphasis is on gaining an understanding of the perpetrator, their actions and their motivations.

The narrative identity analysis has been used, as the researcher got to know more about the perpetrators, focusing on their words, their surroundings and the things they had to go through and witness. The concept of micro level perpetration



and Reactive Attachment Disorder help in narrowing down the research, specifying the points which were useful in the conduction of the research. Micro level perpetration specifies the kind of perpetration that is to be focused on, keeping in mind the points and the acts of perpetration that are to be discussed. Reactive Attachment Disorder specifies the symptoms and the reasons for the disorder that are to be looked for in the perpetrators I am attempting to study.

Freud's theory of the Unconscious Mind is linking all the other theories together, mapping out how a person is influenced by the experiences that they undergo in the early years of their lives. He is of the view that the unconscious mind is more powerful than the conscious mind and it dictates what a person does in their adult life.

The data for the present research was collected from the two series which are available on Netflix, while being the passive observer. The material that has been analyzed was picked from the series based on relevance to the childhood of the perpetrators and their actions as an adult. In addition to the visual adaptation, the novels, in this case, four, have also been thoroughly studied to get a better understanding of the situations and the perpetrators the researcher is attempting to study.

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

The research has been conducted keeping in mind that the result cannot be generalized beyond the two perpetrators picked for the conduction of this research but it can be used for getting a better understanding of the perpetrators, their emotions and their motivations.

**CHAPTER 4**

**EXPLORING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN REACTIVE ATTACHMENT DISORDER AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF PERPETRATORS**

Children are naturally prone to responding to the familiar loving expressions of their primary caregivers and they give a different response when they interact with strangers or people they are not familiar with. In the first three years of their lives, children develop a particular fondness for those who are around them and those who take care of them. This is where the bonds of pure love and affection are built. From this point beyond, children start using verbal form communication and hence lose the emotional connection they had been able to make prior to talking. These are the early stages which can be termed as developmental where the child is known to see themselves as individuals who are worthy of attention, love, praise and care. This realization takes them to the point where they are able to hold their feet strong in the future while developing strong bonds, pure love and healthy relationships.

Similarly when children are maltreated or move from one care giver to the next during the formative years of their lives, they are at a risk of being unable to feel positively for someone since the tendency to do so develops from the very beginning and they develop the inability to engage in social relationships or forming stable attachments and relationships with others. These children are then led to the point where they are unable to control their emotions, portray lack of trust and self-worth. These children are scared to get too close to anyone since every adult or caregiver they had left. This also develops in them the tendency to be aggressive, angry and make them want to be in control. Undergoing such circumstances, these children are led to have the Reactive Attachment Disorder.

Reactive Attachment Disorder causes attachments to be disrupted. It is mainly caused due to the disregard for the child's basic needs. These basic needs include emotional availability; comfort, affection and the need to have someone take care of the basic human needs in childhood. This someone mentioned here is often the mother. If there is no parental figure present, then this care giver is a repeatedly changed, which further increases the chances of having reactive attachment disorder. The instability caused due to these reasons is primary cause for the disorder. (Corbin)

#### **4.1 The Troubled Childhood of Bryce Walker**

In case of Bryce Walker, his parents were shown to be missing all through his childhood. During the second season of the series, his life was constantly shown to the audience in the form of flashbacks. Episode 11 revealed that Bryce talked to Hannah a number of times and these instances were not mentioned in his tape. Bryce narrated a different story while he was testifying on the stand and a different version was being shown through visuals.

He was seen talking to Hannah after a game, in which she was merely observing the victorious team while Bryce was looking for his parents. Hannah asked him if he was looking for someone and he said his parents but he assumed they must be on vacation somewhere. He was left alone by Hannah and was praised by Zack Dempsy's father. He was getting praise while his parents were nowhere to be found. He had a cook, who must have been his care giver during the early years of his life. This is derived from him using the same name of the caregiver in season 1, when he was in high school and season 2, when he is shown to be a little boy.

In addition to this, in season 1, Justin Foley, while he was hiding out at Bryce's, is seen roaming around the house, which is empty. It is shown to be a magnificent house, with trophies and family portraits and the luxuries one can possibly imagine. Even while Bryce was shown in the house, it was empty most of the time. Bryce also keeps referring to his parents being away, time and time again and he also tells his mother that she gets to keep up her tan all through the year, which also is a reference to her being away all the time. Furthermore, in season 3, Bryce's father divorces his mother and moves to the house he had already bought prior to the divorce with his new wife and his illegitimate daughter. Bryce goes to destroy the house out of envy that his father already had another family and went out on lunches with them when he had a family he could have been with.

#### **4.2 The Troubled Childhood of Joe Goldberg**

For Joe Goldberg, we do not see much of his childhood with his parents in the first season. The first season flashbacks are solely related to Mr. Mooney, his employer. He is seen having Joe read while locked up in a plexiglass vault, tortured, pulled, pushed and treated badly. Joe tells Beck that Mr. Mooney took him in while he was small and had nowhere to go.

Later on, in season 2, we come to learn of Joe's mother. Episode 1 flashback shows the audience an extremely confused and scared Joe, who is around 7 or 8, looking for his mother. On seeing her, he expresses his fear of her leaving him. She tells him that she will not and then ends up leaving him. The season further shows his mother leaving him to go off to see another man. His father burns him with cigarettes and he beats him and his mother. Joe is also shown pleading his mother to not leave him and to stay with him while she was getting in a car with another man after Joe killed his father to stop him from hurting his mother.

In the third season flashbacks, Joe is seen in an orphanage. He has a crush on his nurse and he looks out for her. He just sees her from a distance, inquires if anything was wrong when he saw her scared or upset and ends up pushing her abusive boyfriend down a flight of stairs. Later on, towards the end of the third season, we see Joe's mother taking care of another child. Joe went up to her to ask why could she not take care of him.

Joe never had anyone to take care of him, regardless of where he was and who he was with. He is shown with three different caregivers but neither one was affectionate towards him. He kept moving from caregiver to caregiver and from place to place to find a home but he was unable to do so.

Joe and Bryce, both, looked after themselves when they were young. Bryce had money but Joe did not have that as well. Bryce stayed in a house with a cook and Joe was forced by a random adult, who took him in, to read and like books.

The life histories of these two characters lead the audience to believe that the things they went through caused them to have a defect in their personalities. This defect implies that these characters have extreme difficulty when it comes to their dealings in their lives. This is further complicated when they are in different situations and around different people. Their life brings them to the point where their defective personalities stand in the way of them being a normal human having normal relationships and where they stand with a passive attitude.

The audience is lead to believe that these two characters have personality defects because of their life stories. This deficiency signifies that these personalities are extremely immature in life. In different contexts and with different people, this

becomes more complicated. Their life brings them to the point where their flawed personalities prevent them from having normal interactions and a submissive attitude.

### **4.3 Understanding Joe and Bryce with Reactive Attachment Disorder's Inhibited and Disinhibited Variants**

To understand RAD better, it initially got divided into two sub categories. This was done to acknowledge the differences in the symptoms and the outcomes and to understand the sufferers better. According to James R. Corbin, there are two types of reactive attachment disorder. Inhibited and disinhibited, each one will sit perfectly for Joe and Bryce respectively.

#### **4.3.1 Disinhibited Attachment Disorder and Bryce Walker**

Disinhibited attachment disorder (DAD) is a condition that is characterized by a lack of appropriate fear and caution around strangers, and indiscriminate, overly trusting behavior towards them. This disorder is thought to result from early childhood experiences of neglect or abuse, in which children learn that adults cannot be relied upon for protection and support. In the TV series "*13 Reasons Why*", Bryce Walker's character can be analyzed in the context of disinhibited attachment disorder.

Bryce's behavior towards women is often characterized by a lack of boundaries and disregard for their feelings and consent. This behavior may be linked to a lack of appropriate attachment to his primary caregivers during his childhood. Finkel and Straus' micro level perpetration has shown that children who experience neglect or abuse in their early years may develop a lack of inhibition in their social interactions.

Throughout the series, Bryce demonstrates a pattern of inappropriate and often aggressive behavior towards others. He seems to lack empathy and often engages in manipulative and controlling behavior towards his peers. For example, he sexually assaults multiple girls in the series and tries to control the narrative around those incidents to avoid facing consequences. This behavior could be interpreted as a manifestation of the lack of appropriate attachment behaviors that characterizes DAD. (Humphreys)

Several key features of DAD, including a lack of selectivity in choosing attachment figures, a lack of ability to regulate proximity-seeking behavior, and an

inability to exhibit appropriate caution around strangers. Bryce's behavior could be interpreted as evidence of these features of DAD.

Bryce is shown to have a large circle of friends and acquaintances, but he does not seem to have deep connections with any of them. He also engages in sexual relationships with multiple partners without developing meaningful emotional connections. This suggests that he may have difficulty forming deep, meaningful attachments.

In addition to this, Bryce is known for his outgoing behavior and partying and his willingness to engage in risky behavior. This can be interpreted as an inability to regulate his own behavior. He also frequently seeks out sexual encounters with multiple partners without showing concern for their, consent or emotional and physical well-being.

In Bryce's case, his early experiences with his parents may have contributed to the development of disinhibited attachment disorder. His parents are depicted as being emotionally distant and neglectful, leaving Bryce to fend for himself. This lack of appropriate attachment to his primary caregivers may have led him to develop an overly trusting attitude towards others and a lack of concern for their boundaries and feelings.

Additionally, Bryce's behavior towards women may be linked to a desire for control and power. Children who experience neglect or abuse in their early years may feel powerless and vulnerable, leading them to seek out ways to assert their dominance and control over others. This behavior may be an attempt to compensate for the feelings of powerlessness that Bryce may have experienced during his childhood.

#### **4.3.2 Inhibited Attachment Disorder and Joe Goldberg**

Reactive attachment disorder sufferers with Inhibited Attachment Disorder (IAD) have troubled relationships. They have improper social relations. Hypervigilant people may notice things that others do not. Their actions contradict their words. These people are withdrawn, emotionally detached, and averse to comfort. This prevents them from reacting. Since they are hypervigilant towards others, they observe effectively. They become alienated and push people away when they observe

slight behavioral changes. They isolate themselves and become angry in their loneliness.

They feel empty and lose their sense of belongingness in maturity. They are impulsive and suspicious. They avoid their former friends. Adults are unable to display tenderness and resist love. They are dominant and angry, trying to make others' decisions for them. (Corbin) Before the first season, Joe Goldberg had already killed Candace, his ex-girlfriend. Joe killed her because she cheated on him with Elijah, her coworker. Joe killed her and Elijah since she called it business but he had seen her get intimate with Elijah. He had two options for the recipients of his obsessions. They had to be honest and faithful to him or die. They could not wrong Joe and live.

Season 1 Joe obsessed over Guinevere Beck. He liked her immediately when she entered his bookstore. He stalked her home and literally everywhere she went. He saved her life once, which he came across while stalking and took her phone. He monitored her via her phone while she texted and emailed her friends. Joe kept Beck's lover Benji in a plexiglass vault in his bookshop's basement. He also pretended to be Benji and posted online that he was having fun.

He kept Benji alive until he was convinced Beck needed him. On interrogating Benji, Joe learned Benji was allergic to peanuts and how to get closer to Beck. Joe added peanut oil to Benji's coffee as he brought him food and drinks. Joe watched Benji die and had no regrets and nonchalantly stated that Benji had not lied about the peanut allergy.

Joe later discovered Peach Salinger's hold on Beck. Joe followed Peach to investigate her life. He stole her laptop, snooped around her house, stalked her, and looked for anything to make Beck quit being friends with Peach. Since he had access to Beck's messages and emails, Joe knew what Peach thought of him, but it was not enough to approach Beck about her toxic friendship with beach. Joe discovers years-old Beck photos on Peach's laptop. Joe knew Peach loved 'his' Beck.

When Peach tried to overwhelm Beck by giving financial support and taking her to Paris away from Joe, things went bad. Joe followed Peach to her second home outside the city. Joe watched what happened while Beck was away. Peach invited a

friend and made that hangout sensual, where the three of them had sexual activity, which incited Joe. Joe realized that Peach would always keep Beck from him.

Beck left the next morning, and Peach, armed, saw Joe loitering around the house. After arguing, Joe shot Peach with her gun. Beck saw a therapist after Peach's suicide, but Joe was pleased to have her all to himself. He stopped checking her phone and started loving her. While loving Beck, he noticed some behavioral changes. He became hypervigilant and relapsed.

A flashback shows the audience the two killings that had occurred prior to the first season, of Candace and Elijah. And now, two killings had already occurred after Joe became obsessed with Beck, and Beck was alive, for now. But then, Joe noticed something was amiss with her and Dr. Nikki, the therapist. He refrained from asking Beck. Instead, he met Dr. Nikki under a pseudonym. He tried to assassinate Dr. Nikki after discovering Beck was cheating on him, but he stopped and returned home.

Beck found Joe's box of stolen paraphernalia. The box contained her old phone, a used tampon, underwear and a few other items. She found Peach's, Benji's, and Candace's phones, watches, necklaces, and teeth. This made Joe put her in his bookstore's subterranean plexiglass vault after discovering what she had found. Joe killed her soon after as she had tried to flee. He then pinned it all on Dr. Nikki. Police arrested Dr. Nikki for Beck's murder. Joe left his bookstore and life for Los Angeles. He meets Love Quinn, the next recipient for his obsession.

Season 2 begins with Joe in Los Angeles after escaping New York, using a new identity, as Will Bettelheim. Joe moves to L.A. and works at Anavrin, a fancy grocery store, and meets Love Quinn. Joe obsesses over Love and imagines a life with her throughout the season. Jasper, a man seeking Will, threatens Joe if he does not pay him the money the real Will owed him. Joe lures Jasper to his storage unit where he kept Will in his plexiglass cage and murders him.

Ellie Alves, Joe's adolescent neighbor, helps him build a social media profile to impress Love. Joe also gets acquainted with Ellie's older sister Delilah, the building manager who was assaulted by Henderson a few years back. Joe began hanging around Henderson to keep Ellie away from him, fearing Henderson might assault her. Henderson plans to drug Ellie, but Joe drugs him instead. Joe drugs, confronts, and



kills him while Ellie is in Henderson's home. He uses Henderson's phone to texts Ellie, who leaves. He then makes the murder look like a suicide.

After obsessing over Love, Joe plotted and placed himself in her life. Meeting her at the Anavrin was no coincidence. He had planned everything. Joe learns that Love killed her younger brother's babysitter who was trying to get physical with a minor. Joe discovers this after Love had killed Delilah and Candace. He was going to kill Love when she tells him that she is pregnant. Joe is overcome by the realization that Love may be his perfect match, and the season finishes with him admitting his true identity to her and promising to do anything for her.

The stress of caring for their newborn son, Henry, puts a strain on Love and Joe's relationship in season 3. While Joe has difficulty connecting with Henry, he develops feelings for Natalie Engler, the real estate agent next door and the wife of a wealthy computer entrepreneur. In an effort to blend in with Madre Linda's crowd, Love becomes friends with Sherry Conrad, a local Instagram celebrity. Natalie senses Joe's attraction and invites him out for wine. Joe had second thoughts after the kiss and heads back home to finally get intimate with Love after a few months.

The next night, they go to a party that Sherry is hosting, and Love overhears her talking trash about her family and the recent passing of her brother, Forty. After a short talk with Natalie, Love accuses Joe of being obsessed with her, a charge Joe vigorously refutes. Love murders Natalie in the basement of the property after discovering the box of paraphernalia Joe took from her after she showed him a vacant business where she planned to launch a bakery.

Joe and Love go to marriage counseling to work on their problems as a couple. Meanwhile, they devise a plan to hide Natalie's corpse in a neighboring forest and fabricate a plausible explanation for her abduction. Love meets Theo, a college student, by chance in the grocery store, while Joe makes friends with Madre Linda's librarian, Marianne, which gives him the opportunity to fix rare books to sell for money to put toward Ellie.

After learning at the Conrad kids' birthday party that everyone in Madre Linda wears a biosensor designed by Matthew on their rings, Joe and Love dig up Natalie's body, take off her ring, and rebury her beneath the footings of a construction site. After talking things over, they decide to stop killing. After finding out that Theo is

actually Matthew's stepson, Love creates a bakery she calls "A Fresh Tart" and constructs a new plexiglass cage underneath it with Joe.

Joe and Love, sensing media interest in Natalie's disappearance, scheme to get Matthew framed for her murder by leaving a bloodstained scarf at his house. Henry comes down with measles and needs emergency medical treatment. When Joe collapses while breaking into the Engler house, he finds out he, too, has measles. Matthew nurses him back to health and, at a vigil for Natalie, issues a statement to the press to clear his name. Theo starts flirting with Love, but she rejects him at first.

Eventually, the two of them get close in the hospital, where they share their struggles with Theo's stepfather. Dottie's announcement that she and Love's dad are splitting up throws the family's financial situation into disarray. Joe and Love watch Henry get well and decide against framing Matthew and instead burn the scarf. The authorities find Natalie's lost ring. Gil, a neighbor, tells Love in her bakery the next day that Henry contracted measles from his unvaccinated girls. Love, infuriated, bludgeons him to unconsciousness as he walks away.

They put Gil in the bakery's plexiglass vault. Joe and Love realize they cannot free Gil until they have his word that he will not tell anybody about the assault, so they start looking for evidence against him to use as bargaining chips. After hiring a private investigator, Love learns that Gil's kid is a sexual predator who may be responsible for a recent incident on a college campus. Gil hangs himself within the cage after learning that his son had resumed his nasty conduct.

They frame Gil for Natalie's murder by placing the murder weapon bearing Gil's fingerprints in the forest where Sherry has organized a community search for Natalie and then having Joe bring Gil's body back to his house, where he will then create a fake suicide note in which Gil admits to killing Natalie before taking his own life. The ploy succeeds, and six tranquil months pass. After a deeply moving talk, Theo kisses Love, while Joe becomes increasingly obsessed with Marianne.

Joe and Love's therapist recommends that Joe meet new people, so he goes on a hunting trip with Sherry's husband, Cary, a self-help guru. Joe finds out that Love has been footing the bill for Theo's Uber rides and confronts her about it. Love laments that nobody is looking out for Theo and admits that Theo kissed her at the

bakery. During the retreat, Cary takes Joe out for a night hunt in an attempt to pick a fight with him; Joe ends up pushing Cary off a cliff and knocking him unconscious.

Joe returns to camp with Cary, who is comatose, and Cary says he has helped Joe recover his strength. Joe sobs his problems away and clings to his new pals. Following his arrest for drunkenly operating an electric scooter, Theo contacts Love from jail. While on the scooter, the two engage in sexual activity. When Dottie returns home, she learns the truth about what Love has done, and Love decides to end their relationship. Joe uses the alarm at the bakery as a pretext to sneak out of the house and continue stalking Marianne.

Joe starts investigating Marianne's personal life and finds out she is a recovered addict in the midst of a nasty custody dispute with her ex-husband, local news reporter Ryan Goodwin. The two get into a dispute at the library, and he tries to break it up, but Marianne scolds him. When the sprinkler system at the library unexpectedly breaks down, Joe stays up all night to help Marianne rescue books; during this time, they share a passionate kiss and she speaks up about her troubles.

Love, still grieving Forty's loss, mistook her period for pregnancy and told Theo he was going to be a father. After a disagreement with her mother, she drinks heavily and hallucinates that Forty is with her, which eases her pain of loss. Theo learns that Matthew has been conducting illegal surveillance on the people of Madre Linda in an effort to identify Natalie's real killer and issues a warning to Love. Both Joe and Love think that Love should retain Theo around to use as a source in his study into Matthew.

Marianne makes the moral decision to ignore her love for Joe. To break into Madre Linda's security systems, Matthew recruits a seasoned programmer from his firm. Later, Love gets intimate with Theo again after attempting foreplay with Joe, who is now only interested in Marianne. For the library's big fundraiser, Sherry asks Love for some catering help. Joe plans to bring Ryan down by causing a relapse, but when a seemingly healthy Ryan confronts Joe at the charity event, he realizes that Joe has been following him the whole time.

At the party, Love and Marianne strike up a conversation, and later, Sherry approaches Love to tell her that she and Cary would like to try swinging with Love and Joe. Dottie kidnaps Henry and burns down her vineyard because she is so upset

over losing Anavrin and her business in the divorce settlement. She is required to enter rehabilitation, and as a result, Love no longer communicates with her. Dottie tells Joe that she believes Love is responsible for the death of her first husband, James.

Joe agrees to go out on a limb with Love and swing with the Conrads so that he might win Marianne over and end their marriage. Joe testifies at Marianne's custody court for her and Ryan's daughter at her request, but later, Marianne phones Joe and tells him, through her tears, that Ryan had made public the sexually graphic images she had sent him. Joe finds out that Ryan knows the judge presiding over their case.

Matthew suspects Love in Natalie's disappearance after Theo breaks into his office and finds his database of Madre Linda's security feeds. Love, while getting intimate with the Conrads, overhears Joe having an affair with another woman and confronts him in private, reminding him loudly that she murdered Natalie because she was committed to her marriage to Joe. Joe and Love stop the Conrads from fleeing the house after they overhear the altercation and lock them in the plexiglass cage. After discovering that violence stimulates them sexually, the two get intensely intimate.

When he tracks down a downcast Marianne, she's telling him that Ryan is taking their daughter to New Jersey. Joe tells her she should never give up on her daughter. Ryan eventually finds out that Joe has been following him, which leads to a fight, which ultimately results in Ryan's death at Joe's hands. Sherry wants to break free from Matthew's illegal surveillance of her and Cary, so she recommends that Love write about it on Sherry's lifestyle blog. In an attempt to create a murder-suicide, Love gives them Cary's gun and offers to liberate one of them in exchange for the other's death.

After seeing a video of an argument between Love and Joe, Theo offers to get a copy of Matthew's security tape because he thinks Love is a victim of domestic abuse at the hands of Joe. Matthew's legal team orders him to destroy his footage, and he complies—but only after Theo has retrieved a copy of the information from a backup. Theo examines the camera and sees Joe driving away from the bakery in Natalie's car. He tries to notify Love at the bakery, but upon his arrival he discovers

the Conrads locked inside. On his way out, he runs into Love, who hits him over the head with a fire extinguisher.

Love confesses to Joe that she assaulted Theo and abandoned him in the basement, and she advises that they have another child. Joe learns Theo is still alive and rushes him to the emergency room. Love discovers Joe's obsession with Marianne when she discovers his blood-stained, abandoned clothing. At supper, she confronts him, and he proposes divorce. Love poisons Joe with aconite. This is the same drug she admits to using to murder James by accident. Then, Love lures Marianne to the house with the intention of killing her.

After Marianne leaves, Love plans to kill Joe, but instead he injects her with a fatal dosage of aconite, having already researched the poison and procured an antidote. Joe sets fire to the house and leaves a message implicating Love with the deaths at Madre Linda. The Conrads save themselves and their marriage by using Love's extra key, which they find within the cage. With Theo's health improving, Matthew and Theo become closer. Joe entrusts Henry to Dante, a coworker at the library, for the day. Then he goes undercover and makes his way to Paris, where he hopes to find Marianne, under an entirely new identity.

Joe pursues many ladies throughout the series. In RAD, people may become too attached to others to feel secure. He often misinterprets women he likes. This idealization can help attachment disorder sufferers build healthy, realistic connections. When rejected, Joe reacts violently. Attachment disorder sufferers may have trouble regulating their emotions and feel tremendous fear or anxiety when they lose someone they care about.

#### **4.4 Neglect and Maltreatment**

Early childhood neglect or maltreatment promotes reactive attachment disorder (RAD). Abuse, neglect, and abandonment are common in RAD children. Traumatic experiences can impair the growing brain and make healthy interactions with caregivers and others challenging.

Child neglect includes not providing food, shelter, medical treatment, or emotional support. Poverty, substance addiction, mental illness, and a lack of parenting skills can lead to purposeful or inadvertent neglect. Physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse is abuse. Sexual abuse comprises any sexual contact with a kid,

whereas physical abuse entails bodily harm. Belittling, rejecting, or neglecting a child is emotional abuse. Early childhood neglect or abuse can affect a child's development and later relationships. These kids may struggle with emotional management, trusting others, and self-esteem (Zeanah).

Research has shown that children who experience multiple caregivers or frequent changes in caregivers are at an increased risk of developing attachment disorders such as RAD. Therefore, it is important for children with RAD to receive consistent and specialized care, often with the support of mental health professionals. (Hanson)

#### **4.4.1 Neglect in the Life of Bryce Walker**

Bryce's father, Barry Walker, was a successful businessman who was often absent from home due to work obligations. Bryce's mother, Nora Walker, was a socialite who prioritized her status and image over her children's emotional needs. As a result, both parents neglected Bryce throughout his childhood.

In addition to his parents, Bryce had other caregivers who also failed to provide him with the emotional support and guidance he needed. Bryce's neglectful and abusive upbringing had a profound impact on his behavior and relationships throughout the series. He struggled to connect with others on an emotional level, often resorting to manipulation and coercion to get what he wanted. He also struggled with addiction and exhibited violent behavior towards women, which ultimately led to his downfall.

Bryce's multiple caregivers failed to provide him with the love and support he needed to thrive emotionally and psychologically. This highlights the importance of nurturing children's emotional needs and providing them with stable and supportive environments to grow and develop (Kevin Dowling).

#### **4.4.2 Neglect in the Life of Joe Goldberg**

Sandy, Joe's mother, thought she could not raise him alone and wanted him to have a masculine role model. Sandy's life improved after Joe left, and she moved into a nice neighborhood with a new partner and had another son, Jacob. Years later, Joe finds Sandy with Jacob, leaving him astonished and heartbroken that his younger half-brother had replaced him. Joe confronts her, asking if he was responsible for her

giving him up since he had killed his father. Sandy admits to many faults and needs a fresh start, leaving Joe alone again.

Fiona was Joe's only supporter at the Irving Group Home for Boys. Travis, Fiona's boyfriend, abused her physically. Travis injured Fiona and Fiona stayed with him, making Joe furious. He warns her he would always hurt her, forcing Fiona to break up with him.

Mr. Mooney eventually adopted Joe. Mr. Mooney loved Joe but would lock him in a glass cage in the basement as punishment for numerous transgressions. He claimed that he did it out of love. Mr. Mooney disposes of Joe's clothes after he confesses to pushing Elijah off a roof for having an affair with Candace. Mr. Mooney justifies the murder, saying that some people deserve to die.

Joe Goldberg likewise suffered childhood neglect and abuse. The show shows flashbacks to his upbringing, which was unstable. Joe's father beat him and his mother and left them alone, as shown in one episode.

The show shows that Sandy, Joe's mother, was in an abusive relationship with a guy during his adolescence, but it is unknown if the abuser is his biological father. Young Joe strives to protect his mother as Sandy's abuse injuries worsen over the season. In a flashback, Sandy warns nine-year-old Joe that a closet panel hides a gun. Later, Joe shoots Sandy's boyfriend while he was being abusive towards his mother.

Joe's season-long flashbacks center on this experience. Sandy's reaction to the shooting shapes Joe's mature delusional explanation of his misdeeds. Sandy initially tells Joe he "shouldn't have done that," but she later tells him he was defending her and is a good guy who would never hurt anyone. Joe utilizes these reasons for his murders later in the season. The rest of the season's flashbacks explain how Joe ended up with Mr. Mooney in the bookstore and its cage. Sandy tells Joe he needs a "genuine father" at the end. Sandy tells Joe that the CPS man in the living room will only be gone for a short time and that this is best considering what happened.

These early neglect and maltreatment may have influenced Joe's obsessive and possessive behavior toward women. The show suggests that Joe's behavior is rooted in his desire for control and security, possibly due to his childhood lack of these things, which made him grow up with the angelic convention that when he kills people, it's for a good cause and he almost always justifies his actions. The impact of

early childhood trauma and abuse can manifest in a variety of ways, including attachment difficulties, difficulties regulating emotions and behavior, and social problems. These impacts can further contribute to the development of RAD in children who have been exposed to early childhood neglect and abuse. (Van der Kolk).

Early neglect causes persistent stress in children with Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). This might cause developmental delays, anxiety, depression, anger, and trouble making friends.

#### **4.5 Reactive Attachment Disorder**

RAD youngsters can alter brain structure and function. RAD can disrupt the prefrontal cortex, which controls decision-making and impulse control. This can make controlling emotions and maintaining healthy relationships challenging. RAD can affect RAD children's physical, emotional, and behavioral health for years. Early intervention and supportive caregiving can reduce RAD and promote healthy development (Reactive Attachment Disorder).

##### **4.5.1 Bryce Walker and Reactive Attachment Disorder**

In season 3 of *13 Reasons Why*, it is evident that Bryce Walker experiences RAD due to the aftermath of his actions and the pressure he faces from his family, peers, and legal system. Bryce's reputation as a rapist has tarnished his image and made him a social pariah. He struggles to gain acceptance from his peers and his father, who is more concerned with protecting his business and reputation than his son's well-being.

Bryce's RAD is also exacerbated by the legal proceedings against him. He is placed on probation and required to attend therapy sessions as part of his plea deal. The constant scrutiny and legal requirements take a toll on Bryce's mental and emotional well-being. He struggles to come to terms with the consequences of his actions and the reality of his situation.

Furthermore, Bryce's lack of a stable support system and his history of neglect and abuse may also contribute to his RAD. As mentioned earlier, his parents are absent and often prioritize their own interests over their son's. This lack of consistent support and care may have left Bryce feeling emotionally and socially isolated, which can further exacerbate RAD (Kevin Dowling).



#### 4.5.2 Joe and Reactive Attachment Disorder

In the case of Joe Goldberg from the Netflix series "*You*," there is evidence to suggest that he experienced RAD throughout his life. From a young age, Joe was exposed to violence and abuse in his household. His mother was in an abusive relationship, which resulted in her being physically injured and emotionally traumatized. Joe witnessed this abuse and was powerless to stop it, which likely caused him significant stress and anxiety.

Later in life, Joe also experienced significant stress as a result of his job as a bookstore manager. He was responsible for running the store, managing employees, and dealing with difficult customers, all of which could be highly stressful. Joe's RAD may have been exacerbated by his underlying psychological issues, including his obsessive tendencies and his history of trauma. These issues could have made it difficult for Joe to cope with stress in a healthy way, leading to ongoing feelings of anxiety and tension.

RAD is a condition that may manifest in children who have undergone severe disruptions during early childhood such as extended institutional care, neglect, or frequent changes in caregivers. Children with RAD may experience difficulty in developing emotional connections with caregivers and may exhibit emotionally distant or withdrawn behavior. They may also display aggressive or destructive tendencies.

Bryce's childhood experiences of neglect and abuse, coupled with an emotionally distant father and an absent mother, may have contributed to his inclination towards manipulative and abusive behavior and difficulty in developing healthy relationships. The series portrays Bryce as lacking empathy towards his victims, disregarding their feelings and well-being. His behavior also suggests impulsiveness and recklessness, both of which are associated with RAD.

Joe Goldberg's character is depicted as having experienced severe childhood trauma, including abandonment by his mother and abuse by his father. These early experiences can contribute to the development of RAD.

Throughout the show, Joe exhibits behavior consistent with RAD, such as difficulty forming healthy relationships, impulsiveness, and emotional detachment. He struggles to form genuine emotional connections with others and often becomes

obsessive and possessive towards the people he does form attachments to. Additionally, Joe's experiences with abuse and neglect have contributed to his RAD and anxiety, which can further exacerbate symptoms of RAD.

While Joe's and Bryce's characters in the shows have not explicitly been diagnosed with RAD, his behaviors and experiences align with the symptoms and risk factors associated with the disorder. Regardless of where they were, where they went and what they did throughout their lives, they were under the shadow of the events that took place in the early years of their lives. Regardless of what happened, the two characters faced the consequences of the events over which they had no control.

#### **4.6 Freudian Perspective on the Unconscious Mind**

Freud's theory of the unconscious mind suggests that people are not always aware of the true reasons behind their actions and that many of these reasons lie hidden in the unconscious mind. In this context, Joe's character can be analyzed through the lens of Freud's theory.

##### **4.6.1 Joe Goldberg and His Unconscious Mind**

One of the main features of Joe's personality is his obsessive behavior towards the women he becomes involved with. Freud's theory suggests that such behavior can be linked to unresolved issues from Joe's past or a need for control and domination. His early experiences with his mother may have influenced his attachment style, leading him to seek out relationships with women that mimic the nurturing and comforting role his mother played in his life. Alternatively, his need for control may stem from feelings of powerlessness or inadequacy in other areas of his life.

Joe's behavior can also be interpreted as an attempt to satisfy unconscious desires. Freud believed that the unconscious mind is responsible for repressed desires, such as sexual and aggressive impulses, which can manifest themselves in unexpected ways. For example, Joe's desire for companionship and love may be linked to his need for acceptance and validation, which he seeks through his relationships with women. His darker impulses, such as his violent tendencies, may stem from repressed anger or frustration that he is unable to express in healthier ways.

Joe Goldberg's character can be seen as an example of the complex interplay between conscious and unconscious motivations. While his conscious mind may tell him that he is seeking love and companionship, his unconscious desires and

unresolved issues drive him to behave in ways that are often harmful to himself and others.

From a Freudian perspective, Joe Goldberg's behavior can also be seen as motivated by unconscious desires and drives. Throughout the series, Joe exhibits a pattern of obsessive and possessive behavior towards his romantic partners, which could be seen as a manifestation of his unconscious desires for control and intimacy.

Joe's past trauma, including neglect and abandonment, may have contributed to the development of these unconscious desires and drives. His need for control and possessiveness over his partners can be seen as an attempt to compensate for the lack of control he experienced as a child. Additionally, Joe's inner conflicts can also be interpreted through a Freudian lens. His actions and thoughts often contradict each other, and he struggles with guilt and shame. This could be seen as a result of his unconscious desires conflicting with his conscious beliefs and values.

#### **4.6.2 Bryce Walker and His Unconscious Mind**

Freud believed that human behavior is motivated by unconscious desires and drives that are often repressed or hidden from conscious awareness. In this context, Bryce's character can be seen as a manifestation of these unconscious forces.

One of the key features of Bryce's personality is his sense of entitlement and disregard for others' feelings and boundaries. This behavior may be linked to unresolved issues from his past or repressed desires that he is unable to control. His sense of entitlement stems from his early childhood experiences in which he was given everything he wanted, as long as it did not concern emotional support or love from his parents, leading him to believe that he is entitled to whatever he desires. Alternatively, his disregard for others' boundaries may be linked to repressed sexual desires that he is unable to control.

Freud also believed that aggressive impulses are a fundamental part of the human psyche and that these impulses can be redirected towards socially acceptable behaviors or repressed and expressed in harmful ways. Bryce's aggressive behavior towards women, which includes rape and sexual assault, may be seen as a manifestation of repressed sexual desires or a need for power and control. His behavior may also be linked to feelings of inadequacy or a desire to assert his dominance over others.

Bryce Walker's character is an example of the complex interplay between conscious and unconscious motivations. While his conscious mind may tell him that he is entitled to whatever he desires or that his aggressive behavior is acceptable, his unconscious desires and impulses drive him to behave in ways that are often harmful to himself and others. In this way, Freud's theory of the unconscious mind provides a useful framework for understanding the motivations and actions of complex characters like Bryce.

## CHAPTER 5

### FROM FLAWS TO GROWTH: ANALYSIS OF JOE AND BRYCE IN TRANSITION

#### 5.1 Transformation of Bryce Walker

Bryce is initially portrayed as a popular and charismatic jock. He is termed to be a friend to all. Bryce comes from a wealthy and privileged background, which further enhances his social status. He uses his charm and confidence to gain popularity and exert control over others, making him appear untouchable.

As the series progresses and the story unfolds, we witness a significant change in Bryce's character. The darker aspects of his personality come to light, revealing a deeply troubling and disturbing side. It is revealed that Bryce has committed sexual assault against both Hannah Baker and Jessica Davis. These acts expose his capacity for cruelty, manipulation, and lack of empathy.

However, as the season progresses, Bryce's actions are exposed and his reputation begins to suffer. He loses the respect and loyalty of his friends, and even his girlfriend breaks up with him. By the end of the season, he is left alone and ostracized by those around him. Bryce is shown to be unhappy and alone due to the consequences of his actions. While he may have once been able to use his privilege and power to shield himself from the repercussions of his behavior, he is now facing the reality of his actions and the damage they have caused.

In Season 2 of *13 Reasons Why*, Bryce Walker's behavior continues to be manipulative and entitled. Bryce is still portrayed as a serial rapist, having assaulted multiple girls including Hannah and Jessica. However, he is also shown to be facing the consequences of his behavior, particularly after it is revealed that his girlfriend Chloe was also raped by him.

Throughout the season, Bryce struggles to come to terms with the severity of his actions and the harm he has caused. He attends therapy sessions, where he talks about his past behavior and expresses some remorse for his actions. He also tries to make amends by apologizing to Jessica and attempting to make things right with her.

However, despite these efforts, Bryce's behavior is still often manipulative and self-serving. He tries to maintain his reputation and influence, and continues to use his

wealth and power to try and control those around him. He is also shown to be abusive towards Chloe, further highlighting the abusive and predatory nature of his behavior.

Bryce's relationships did not get better over time, as his actions throughout the series were consistently harmful and damaging to those around him. While he does show some moments of growth and remorse for his past behavior, these are interspersed with scenes of him continuing to exhibit problematic behavior, such as manipulating and gaslighting Jessica or making inappropriate comments towards women.

### **5.1.1 Transition in Bryce's Relationship with His Mother**

Bryce's relationship with his mother is a complex one that is fraught with tension and conflict throughout the series. While there are moments where the two of them appear to have a close bond, these are often overshadowed by Bryce's problematic behavior and his mother's complicity in enabling his actions.

One of the most notable aspects of Bryce's relationship with his mother is the way in which she consistently putting Bryce at his place once he starts living with her in season 3. Although she keeps reminding the daughter of the nurse that she should be careful when Bryce is around. She also keeps telling Bryce to stay away from her, Ani.

However, as the series progresses, we do see some moments where Bryce's relationship with his mother becomes much better. After reaching out to Mr. Porter, the high school counselor, Bryce is able to erase most of his mother's hostility towards him. They are seen having genuine conversations and painting the house while having fun. Bryce is also seen being taught yoga by his mother where he simply starts crying like a child.

In Season 3, Bryce's mother is being pressured by her father and is being told that getting married to Barry Walker was the best thing she did in her life. He is rude to her and extremely verbal in his hatred. When she expresses reluctance, he becomes angry and starts to berate her, telling her that she is letting him down and that she should have been supportive of her former husband. This behavior is emotionally abusive and controlling, and it is clear that Bryce's mother is uncomfortable with it.

Bryce, who is in the room at the time, observes this interaction and is clearly bothered by it. He stands up for his mother and tells his stepfather to back off, saying "You don't talk to her like that." This is a powerful moment, as it shows that Bryce is willing to challenge his grandfather's abusive behavior and protect his mother from emotional harm.

The scene is significant because it highlights the complex dynamics within their family, as they navigate issues of power, control, and abuse. It also demonstrates the growth that Bryce has undergone since his past actions, as he is now able to recognize and call out abusive behavior towards his mother. This is a positive step forward in their relationship, and it shows that Bryce is capable of change and redemption.

Bryce's defense of his mother is a significant moment of growth and empowerment for both of them. It shows that, despite their past conflicts, they are ultimately a family who cares for each other and are willing to support each other in times of need.

Bryce's mother attends his session with his therapist. Bryce has written a letter on what he thought she felt for him. His mother breaks down and is astonished that all he remembered from his childhood were the fancy decorations and the white carpets. She told him that she did not care about any of those things.

In response to Bryce's letter, his mother tells him that she loves him and that she wants to help him move forward in a positive way. This moment is significant because it represents a shift in their relationship, with Bryce's mother finally acknowledging the harm that she has caused and expressing a willingness to support him in making positive changes.

This conversation also reveals more about Bryce's character development throughout the series. He is finally opening up about his feelings. Attending therapy and reflecting on his past, Bryce shows a willingness to confront his flaws and work towards personal growth. The conversation between Bryce and his mother in episode 3 is a powerful moment of reconciliation and growth, both for Bryce as an individual and for his relationship with his mother. It represents a significant shift in their dynamic towards a more positive and supportive relationship.

In another instance, Bryce walks in on his mother painting a room a bright shade of green. He comes talk to her and tries to help her. While doing so, he spills some paint and gets upset, apparently because he keeps making mistakes and nothing ever goes right for him. But then his mother also spills paint and sprinkles some towards him as well. Bryce slips and falls and she ends up painting his shirt. This moment shows the bond they were able to create during their time together in the last days of his life. This gives them the closure that they required.

After Nora's yoga institute is inaugurated, Bryce comes to see her. She gets him to do a bit of yoga. They are shown sharing an awkward moment but it is still a great way for them to bond. While doing yoga, Bryce breaks down crying and his mother comforts him. This shows that even after having committed such crimes, Bryce was ultimately a young boy.

### **5.1.2 Bryce's Intimate Relationships**

Bryce Walker was a rapist and according to him, while having conversations about his sexual partners, he was unable to love someone. He also was of the view that he wanted to force himself on his female partners. Bryce's relationship with Ani was complex and fraught with conflict, given the history between Bryce and the other characters, particularly the fact that he had raped Jessica and Hannah and several other girls. However, over the course of Season 3, Ani and Bryce begin to develop a relationship, and the show explores their dynamic in more detail.

Ani is initially wary of Bryce, but she also sees potential in him, believing that he is capable of changing and becoming a better person. As she spends more time with him, she becomes more sympathetic towards him, and they begin to develop a genuine connection. Their relationship is also complicated by the fact that Ani is friends with many of the people that Bryce has hurt, including Jessica and Clay. This creates tension between Ani and her friends, and she finds herself caught in the middle of conflicting loyalties.

Bryce's relationship with Ani is a reflection of the show's exploration of the complexities of human behavior and relationships. While Bryce's past actions are reprehensible, the show suggests that even those who have done terrible things are still capable of growth and redemption, and that it is important to approach each person as an individual, rather than simply defining them by their mistakes.



While it is true that Bryce's relationship with Ani can be seen as manipulative and controlling, it is important to recognize that their dynamic is complex and multifaceted. It is true that Bryce has a history of using his power and influence to control and manipulate those around him, particularly women. This is evident in his past actions towards Jessica and Hannah, and his attempts to silence them and cover up his crimes.

In his relationship with Ani, Bryce is cautious and tries his best to not let his rapist instincts take over. This becomes relatively easy for him since Ani is always in the position of control. He is never able to force her into anything and feels safe with her. He tells her that he has never felt anything like that before and is seen to be honest and caring in the relationship.

While Bryce's relationship with Ani may be seen as problematic, it is also a reflection of the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of human relationships, and the ways in which even the most flawed and damaged individuals are capable of growth and change.

### **5.1.3 Bryce in his Friendships**

Bryce was loved by all before Hannah's tapes were released and Jessica had given her statement against him. He had a lot of friends and was extremely popular. However, when all his deeds were let out in the open, he faced the consequences of his actions in the worst possible way. He had to move to another school and was bullied there. He had no friends and no one would speak to him.

Owing to this, he started to reach out to his old friends and school mates. He helped out Justin Foley by paying off Seth, the drug dealer Justin owed money to and further gave the dealer extra money to ensure that he would leave Justin alone. He figured out that Justin was addicted to heroin and gave him oxy, a supplement for the drug. He did this to make sure that Justin would not overdose on heroin.

He helped Alex Standall when he had lost control over his body and needed sexual stimulation to regain that control. This may seem like a small thing but it was a big deal for Alex. This was supposed to be a secret and Bryce never told anyone. This was mentioned only when Alex confessed to this act.

Bryce helped Tyler Down the most. Tyler was sexually assaulted by Montgomery De La Cruz. When Tyler went to make him apologize for his heinous

act, Montgomery told him that he did it on Bryce's orders. Agitated, Tyler went to Bryce with a gun, with the intentions of killing him. Bryce calmed him down and asked him what Montgomery had done. On learning what had happened, Bryce told Tyler that he had nothing to do with it, and promised to handle it. Bryce, on the night of his death, sent Tyler a voice note saying that he had taken care of it.

## **5.2 Transformation of Joe Goldberg**

### **5.2.1 Joe Goldberg in Season 1**

In season one, Joe's behavior is initially portrayed as charming and thoughtful towards his love interest, Guinevere Beck. However, as the series progresses, it becomes apparent that Joe's behavior is actually obsessive, possessive, and even violent.

Joe develops an unhealthy obsession with Beck, stalking her both online and in real life, and becoming jealous and possessive when she spends time with other men. He also engages in manipulation and lying to get closer to her, including breaking into her apartment and stealing personal items to learn more about her.

Furthermore, Joe is shown to be willing to resort to extreme measures to protect his relationship with Beck, including murder. He kills both Beck's boyfriend and her best friend, among others, in order to eliminate any obstacles to their relationship.

Joe's behavior in season one is characterized by a dangerous and unhealthy obsession with his love interest, as well as a willingness to engage in manipulation, lying, and violence to achieve his goals. Joe's obsession with Beck leads him to stalk her both in person and online. He even follows her to her apartment building, where he secretly watches her through the windows. Joe follows Beck around the city and even goes as far as to break into her apartment to steal a pair of her underwear.

Joe becomes increasingly possessive of Beck as their relationship progresses. He becomes jealous when she spends time with other men, including her ex-boyfriend Benji and her friend Peach. He even goes so far as to sabotage her relationships with these people in order to eliminate the competition.

Joe gets jealous when Beck spends time texting her ex-boyfriend, Benji, and becomes obsessive in trying to find dirt on him to make him seem like a bad person.

He even goes so far as to kidnap and torture Benji in the basement of the bookstore. Joe becomes territorial over Beck and tries to isolate her from her friends and family. He is upset when she spends time with someone else instead of him.

In order to get closer to Beck, Joe engages in manipulation and lying. He pretends to share her interests and values. He also lies to her about his past and his intentions, hiding his darker tendencies from her. Joe manipulates Beck into breaking up with her boyfriend Benji. He then convinces Beck that Benji is a drug addict and that he needs help. Joe lies to Beck about his past, including his relationships and family history. He creates a false persona to appear more attractive to her. Joe stole Beck's phone to monitor her activities and gain information about her. Joe manipulates Beck into thinking that her friend Peach is dangerous and unstable, when in reality Joe was equally obsessed with Beck and jealous of Peach's close relationship with her.

Joe is willing to use violence to eliminate anyone who poses a threat to his relationship with Beck. Joe follows Benji and keeps him captive in his plexiglass vault. He ends up killing Benji by putting peanut oil in his coffee. Joe becomes angry with Peach after she insinuates that Beck is better off without him. He confronts her in Central Park and hits her over the head with a rock, causing her to fall into the water. She survives, but Joe later returns to finish the job at her house by shooting her with her own gun and frames her death as a suicide. Later on when Beck finds his box of stolen paraphernalia, he locks her up in the vault and when she fails to see how wonderful he is, he ends up killing Beck. He framed her therapist, Dr. Nikki, for it.

Throughout the season, Joe justifies his behavior to himself by framing it as a form of protection for Beck. He believes that he knows what's best for her and is willing to do whatever it takes to keep her safe, even if that means resorting to extreme measures. Joe often justifies his actions in Season 1 by believing that his obsession and violent behavior towards Beck is a manifestation of his love for her. He sees himself as her protector and the only one who truly understands her, believing that his actions are ultimately for her own good.

When he kidnaps her ex-boyfriend Benji and locks him in the basement, he rationalizes it by thinking that Benji is a bad influence on Beck and that he needs to be removed from her life in order to protect her. Similarly, when he kills Beck's best

friend Peach, he believes that Peach is trying to come between him and Beck and that he needs to eliminate the threat in order to be with Beck.

Joe also justifies his behavior by believing that other people, such as Beck's friends and family, are standing in the way of their relationship and that he needs to take extreme measures to remove them. In his mind, his actions are necessary in order to be with Beck, whom he sees as his soulmate. Joe's behavior in season one of "*You*" is characterized by a pattern of stalking, possessiveness, manipulation, and violence, all driven by an obsessive and dangerous love for Beck. And the same thing continues in season 2.

### **5.2.2 Joe Goldberg in Season 2**

As in the first season, Joe's obsession and stalking behavior continues to escalate. He becomes fixated on a new love interest named Love Quinn, and goes to extreme lengths to insert himself into her life, including lying about his identity and breaking into her house to steal personal items. Joe also begins stalking Love's friends and family members, using their social media accounts and personal information to gather more information about her. He becomes possessive and jealous, and tries to control Love's relationships with other men.

Joe's behavior in season 2 is even more dangerous than in season 1, as he becomes increasingly violent and willing to harm those who get in the way of his obsession with Love. His justifications for his actions become more twisted and delusional, as he convinces himself that he is doing what is necessary to protect and preserve his relationship with Love.

Joe manipulates Love and those around her to keep her close to him, including her brother Forty and his close friend, Delilah. He often uses his charm and manipulative tactics to deceive and control them. He learns that Love's brother Forty is the one who killed their au pair years ago. Joe initially plans to use this information to get closer to Love, but he ends up keeping it a secret from her to protect her feelings. He continues to manipulate her by trying to control the narrative of the situation and make himself the hero. He does the same when he started looking after Ellie and tried to take revenge for Delilah by killing the comedian, Henderson.

Joe becomes more violent in Season 2, committing several murders in order to protect Love and cover up his own actions. He also becomes more reckless, putting

himself and others in danger in order to achieve his goals. In season 2 of *You*, Joe took on the identity of Will Bettelheim, whom he had trapped in his plexiglass cage.

However, he faced a complication in the form of Jasper, a man who was owed \$50,000 by the real Will. In order to protect his own identity and maintain his new persona, Joe ended up stabbing and killing Jasper. He then dismembered the body and ran the remains through Anavrin's meat processor, in an effort to dispose of the evidence.

Throughout the season, Joe continues to rationalize his behavior, seeing himself as a hero and protector rather than a dangerous stalker and murderer. He often justifies his actions to himself by believing that he is doing what is best for Love and those he cares about. He believes that his actions, such as killing Jasper and attempting to expose Henderson's crimes, are justified because he is protecting Love and her family from harm. Joe also convinces himself that he is different from other killers and abusers because he believes he is doing it for a noble cause, rather than for his own pleasure or satisfaction. He often justifies his actions as necessary and thinks that he is the hero of his own story. However, this rationalization is flawed, as his actions are often selfish and harmful to those around him, leading to tragic consequences.

Despite the harm he causes to those around him, Joe shows little to no remorse for his actions throughout the season, instead justifying them and believing that he is doing what is necessary to protect those he loves. In the second season of "*You*," Joe exhibits a disturbing lack of remorse for his actions, which is a common trait of psychopathic individuals. Despite the harm he inflicts on others, Joe justifies his behavior to himself and often sees himself as the hero of his own story.

For example, when Joe kills Jasper, he shows no remorse and instead views it as a necessary action to protect himself and Love. He rationalizes his behavior by telling himself that he had no choice but to kill Jasper, as he was a threat to his safety and Love's safety.

Similarly, when Joe pushes Henderson down the stairs and kills him, he again justifies his actions by telling himself that he was protecting the young girls who were being abused by Henderson. He sees himself as a vigilante who is doing the right thing by taking matters into his own hands. Joe's lack of remorse for his violent

actions is a troubling characteristic that highlights his dangerous and sociopathic tendencies. He fails to take responsibility for his actions and instead continues to see himself as the hero of his own story, regardless of the harm he causes to others.

### **5.2.3 Joe Goldberg in Season 3**

Joe's behavior in season 3 is marked by his ongoing struggles with control, violence, and self-delusion. Despite his past violent behavior and obsession with women, Joe convinces himself that he is a changed man and capable of being a good husband and father. He tries to create the perfect life for his family by moving to a suburban neighborhood, finding a new job, and enrolling his daughter in a prestigious school, which turned out not to be the case and they had a baby boy instead.

Joe Goldberg moves to a new town with his partner, Love Quinn, and their infant son, Henry. Joe attempts to start a new life, with Love pushing him to make connections in the community. However, as Joe struggles with his own internal demons and desires, he finds himself once again spiraling out of control.

One of the central themes of Joe's behavior in season 3 is his obsession with control. Throughout the season, Joe repeatedly tries to manipulate and control those around him, including his wife Love and their neighbor, a young girl named Natalie. Joe's behavior becomes increasingly erratic and dangerous as he becomes more fixated on Natalie. Joe's need for control also leads him to make impulsive and dangerous decisions.

Another aspect of Joe's behavior in season 3 is his tendency towards self-delusion and denial. Despite his many flaws and the harm he has caused, Joe continues to justify his actions to himself, often painting himself as the victim or the hero in his own story. He struggles to confront the darker aspects of his personality and his past, and instead chooses to repress them or project them onto others.

However, Joe's inner turmoil and the desire to control his surroundings lead him down a dangerous path once again. He becomes obsessed with his neighbor, Natalie, and tries to insert himself into her life by becoming friends with her. He starts stalking her and gathering information about her personal life, which ultimately leads to her death at Love's hands.

Throughout the season, Joe justifies his action of disposing off Natalie's body to himself by convincing himself that he is protecting his family and that Natalie was

a threat to their perfect life. He also believes that he can make things right by framing someone else for the murder. This delusional thinking leads him to make dangerous decisions and put his loved ones in harm's way.

Thinking that he was making things safe for himself and his family, he helped Love with the capture of their neighbor, Gil, and then the Conrads. He kept thinking to himself that he did what he did out of love and care. When he became obsessed with Marianne, he killed her former partner, and convinced himself that now she was safe. He knew that with him gone, she would not need to leave the area and certainly not stay away from him.

In some ways, Joe's behavior in the later seasons of the show becomes even more extreme than it was in the earlier seasons. He becomes increasingly delusional and erratic, and his actions become more violent and unpredictable. He also becomes more obsessed with the idea of protecting his family, which leads him to take extreme measures to keep them safe, including committing murder and engaging in other criminal activities. While Joe may experience moments of self-reflection and regret, he ultimately fails to change his behavior or become a better person, and instead continues to harm those around him.

Joe Goldberg can be defined as a serial killer, as he has a pattern of premeditated murder and a compulsion to kill. He is depicted as a fictional character in the TV series *You*, and has been shown to have killed several people across the three seasons of the show.

According to the FBI, a serial killer is someone who has killed three or more people with a "cooling off" period in between murders. Joe fits this definition, as he has killed multiple people over a span of time, often with a calculated approach.

In season 1, he kills Beck's ex-boyfriend, Benji, and her best friend, Peach, among others. In season 2, he kills Henderson, Delilah, and Jasper, while in season 3, he kills Natalie and his neighbor, Gil, who he sees as a threat to his family and Marianne's former partner. Joe's killings are premeditated, as he plans out his victims' deaths and often stalks them before making a move. He also shows a lack of empathy for his victims, as he justifies his actions by believing that he is doing what is necessary to protect those he cares about.

E. W. Hickey defined serial killers as "any person who has killed three or more people over a period of more than a month, with a cooling-off period between murders" (Hickey). This definition has been widely cited in the academic literature and has been used by law enforcement agencies in the United States and other countries. Therefore, based on his actions and patterns of behavior, it can be argued that Joe Goldberg is a serial killer.

Joe thinks about his victims as if they are a pawn who can easily be disposed of. He does not care about them. He waits for that emotional push that would drive him to the point where he will want to kill again. Along with this, he always creates an illusion for himself where he is the righteous one and the people he kill are the ones to blame where they take him to the point where he can successfully justify that he can kill them.

### **5.3 Behavioral Development**

In the case of Joe Goldberg in "*You*," his behavior develops in some ways from season to season. He initially starts out as a stalker with a distorted view of love, but as the series progresses, he begins to show weird twisted way of protecting his loved ones. This is present even when the individuals do not even want to be protected. Joe's violent and manipulative tendencies persist, showing that he has not fully overcome his harmful behaviors.

In the case of Bryce Walker in "*13 Reasons Why*," his character undergoes a more complex development throughout the series. Initially portrayed as a popular, entitled jock with a history of sexual assault, he eventually shows moments of introspection and attempts at redemption in the third seasons, such as his apology to Jessica and his willingness to testify against Monty. However, ultimately, he is still unable to fully confront and take responsibility for his actions, leading to his tragic demise in season 3.

While both characters display some signs of behavioral development throughout their respective series, they ultimately remain deeply flawed and unable to fully escape the consequences of their actions. Although Bryce had progressed more as opposed to Joe, he was not able to achieve the level of redemption he had hoped for before his untimely death.



## CHAPTER 6

### COMPARING THE TREATMENT AND PORTRAYAL OF BRYCE WALKER AND JOE GOLDBERG IN THE NOVELS AND THEIR VISUAL ADAPTATIONS: DIFFERENCES IN FOCUS ON THEIR LIVES AND BEHAVIORS

In the novels, both Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg are depicted in a similar manner as in the TV adaptations, but there are some differences in their characterizations and the way their stories are told. For example, in the novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher, Bryce is not as prominently featured as he is in the TV show, and his actions are described more in the past tense. In the novel "You" by Caroline Kepnes, Joe's character is also similar to the TV adaptation, but there are some differences in his backstory and the details of his stalking and violent behavior.

In terms of the treatment of the perpetrators, both novels and TV adaptations focus on their lives and perspectives, but the TV shows tend to delve deeper into their backstories and motivations. This allows for a more complex and nuanced portrayal of the characters, but also runs the risk of sympathizing with or normalizing their behavior. Ultimately, the treatment of the perpetrators in both mediums depends on the specific narrative choices of the authors and showrunners.

#### **6.1 Bryce Walker: Book Vs. Series**

Bryce is a character whose actions are clearly immoral, and he is depicted as a villainous character. He repeatedly sexually assaults and harasses female characters throughout the series, demonstrating a complete disregard for their consent and well-being. Despite his actions being illegal, Bryce is never held accountable for them in a meaningful way. The justice system fails to properly punish him, and he continues to live his life without facing any significant repercussions.

Some viewers have criticized the way the show portrays Bryce, arguing that it romanticizes his character and fails to fully explore the impact of his actions on his victims. Others argue that his character serves as an important reminder of the prevalence of sexual assault and the need for survivors to speak out and seek justice. While Bryce is primarily portrayed as a one-dimensional villain, there are moments in the series where he is given more depth and complexity. For example, his interactions with his mother and his struggles with his own identity and sense of morality suggest

that he is more than just a "bad guy" archetype. The character of Bryce Walker is a complex and controversial figure. While his actions are undeniably heinous, the way the show portrays him raises important questions about the nature of justice, representation, and the impact of sexual assault on survivors.

In the book, Bryce is portrayed more as a stereotypical jock and bully, and his sexual assaults are not as graphically depicted as they are in the TV series. The book also focuses more on the aftermath of Hannah Baker's suicide and how it affects the other characters, while the TV series expands on the story and devotes more time to the individual experiences of the characters, including Bryce.

The book only briefly mentions that Bryce is a rapist, while the TV series devotes more time to exploring his character and his actions. This allows the TV series to delve deeper into the issues of consent and sexual assault, and to explore the impact of these actions on the victims and their communities.

The book and TV series have different audiences and different mediums. The TV series is able to reach a wider audience and has the ability to visually depict events and emotions in a way that the book cannot. This may have influenced the creators of the TV series to make different creative decisions in the way they portrayed Bryce and other characters.

In the book, Bryce is one of the reasons that lead to Hannah Baker's suicide. While his sexual assaults are mentioned in the book, they are not graphically depicted, and the character is not explored in great depth. The book focuses on his toxic masculinity and his role in Hannah's death, but he is not presented as a fully formed character with complex motivations and relationships.

In contrast, the TV series expands on Bryce's character and actions. It portrays him as a more complex character with a troubled family background and a sense of entitlement that allows him to get away with his harmful behavior. The TV series provides more detail about his character, including his relationships with other characters and the impact of his actions on them.

Moreover, the TV series depicts his sexual assaults more graphically than in the book, which serves to emphasize the issue of consent and sexual assault in the show. The series also provides a more comprehensive portrayal of the impact of

sexual assault on the victims and their communities, particularly through the character of Jessica, who is one of Bryce's victims.

The TV series also places more emphasis on Bryce's relationships with other characters, including his on-again, off-again relationship with his girlfriend Chloe and his interactions with other male characters. This allows for a more nuanced exploration of his character and the impact he has on those around him.

The portrayal of Bryce Walker in the TV series is more fleshed out and multidimensional than in the book, with a stronger emphasis on his toxic behavior and the harm he causes to others. The TV series provides a more comprehensive exploration of the issue of sexual assault and its impact on victims and their communities, and it portrays Bryce as a more fully formed character with complex motivations and relationships.

In the "*13 Reasons Why*" book, Bryce Walker is portrayed as a wealthy, popular jock who sexually assaults both Hannah Baker and Jessica Davis. His character is depicted as a manipulative and entitled person who believes he can get away with anything because of his social status and wealth.

In the TV series adaptation, Bryce's character is also depicted as a wealthy, popular jock who sexually assaults Hannah and Jessica. However, the show delves deeper into his backstory, exploring his troubled relationship with his parents and his own struggles with mental health. Additionally, the series portrays Bryce as more remorseful for his actions and attempts to make amends, although his attempts are ultimately unsuccessful.

The portrayal of Bryce Walker in the "*13 Reasons Why*" TV series has been a subject of controversy, as some argue that the show glorifies his acts and encourages sympathy for his character. However, it is important to note that the show does not condone or excuse Bryce's actions, but rather portrays the consequences of his behavior and the impact it has on those around him.

That being said, some viewers may interpret the show's exploration of Bryce's backstory and mental health struggles as an attempt to humanize him and elicit sympathy from the audience. This can be concerning, as it can send the message that sexual assault can be excused or justified based on the perpetrator's personal struggles.

There are some aspects of the show that could be perceived as glorifying Bryce's character. For example, the show explores his backstory and struggles with mental health, which could potentially be interpreted as an attempt to explain or justify his actions. Additionally, some of the scenes in which Bryce is shown engaging in sexual activity with women are shot in a way that could be seen as sexualizing or glorifying his behavior.

Furthermore, some viewers may argue that the show's treatment of Bryce's character in the final season could be seen as glorifying him. In the final season, Bryce's murder is investigated, and his character is portrayed in a sympathetic light through flashbacks and scenes in which his friends mourn his loss.

It is important to remember that while mental health issues may contribute to a person's behavior, it does not excuse or justify harmful actions such as sexual assault. It is possible to empathize with a character's struggles while still holding them accountable for their actions. The portrayal of Bryce Walker in the series should be seen with a critical and discerning eye, recognizing the complex and nuanced nature of the show's depiction of his character.

The transition from the book to the television series of "13 Reasons Why" encompasses a conversion of the narrative from a written format to a visual and auditory one. This shift enables the exploration of settings, facial expressions, body language, and other visual elements, presenting these aspects in ways that might differ or elaborate upon the book's descriptions. Character portrayal within the series involves the selection of actors who breathe life into their interpretations of the characters, potentially altering or expanding upon the mental images readers have formed from the book's descriptions. These adaptations form an intersemiotic exchange between textual depictions and visual representation.

The series, known for its expanded storylines, diverges or broadens from the original plotlines in the book, incorporating additional scenes, subplots, or character developments not explicitly detailed in the literary work. Employing various cinematic techniques such as lighting, camera angles, soundtrack, and editing, the series creates emotional resonance and storytelling distinct from the textual representations found in the book. The visual and auditory elements, including music, facial expressions, and tone of voice, evoke emotions in a manner distinct from the

written word, illustrating the intersemiotic nature by which emotions are conveyed and experienced through these mediums. As the book and the series present the story differently, they attract distinct audiences and evoke varied responses, showcasing an intersemiotic exchange wherein viewers' preconceptions from the book influence their interpretation and experience of the series. Understanding the intersemiotic nature of "13 Reasons Why" involves recognizing the translation of narrative, characters, emotions, and storytelling techniques from a literary format to a visual and auditory one, each medium offering its own unique nuances and interpretations of the story and its elements.

## **6.2 Joe Goldberg: Book Vs. Series**

With the opening of the series, Joe is conventional book seller who becomes infatuated with multiple people, and his actions towards them and others around them demonstrate a complete disregard for their autonomy and well-being. The way the show portrays his actions can make it easy for viewers to sympathize with him, which raises concerns about the messaging surrounding stalking and violence.

While Joe is held accountable for his actions to some extent, the show leaves open the possibility of him causing further harm. Some viewers have criticized the show for romanticizing Joe and his behavior, while others argue that it is a commentary on toxic masculinity and the dangers of idealizing romantic relationships.

Joe is a complex character, with a backstory that explores his motivations and traumas. The show's first-person perspective also allows viewers to glimpse into his thoughts and emotions. However, this complexity can also make it easier for viewers to overlook the harm he causes and empathize with him. Overall, the character of Joe Goldberg raises important questions about the representation of harmful behavior in media and the dangers of toxic masculinity.

The portrayal of Joe Goldberg in the TV series "You" is generally considered to be faithful to the character as depicted in the novel of the same name by Caroline Kepnes. However, the TV series places a greater emphasis on Joe's past traumas and personal demons, which may make him a more sympathetic and complex character than in the book. The TV series also spends more time exploring Joe's inner thoughts and motivations, which allows viewers to better understand his actions and emotions.

The book focuses more on Joe's internal monologue, while the TV series shows more of his interactions with other characters, which allows for more nuanced portrayals of his relationships and interactions.

In the book, Joe is described as being somewhat unremarkable in appearance, with short hair and a nondescript wardrobe. However, in the TV series, he is played by an actor who is considered conventionally attractive and has a more distinctive appearance. This difference in physical appearance may affect the way that viewers perceive Joe's character and his actions. In the book, Joe's unremarkable appearance could make him seem more like an "everyman" character, while in the TV series, his attractiveness may contribute to the romanticization of his behavior, particularly among some viewers who have been known to glorify the character on social media.

In the book series, Joe Goldberg is depicted as a calculating and manipulative character with a disturbing lack of empathy for those around him. He becomes obsessed with Guinevere Beck, a customer at the bookstore where he works, and begins stalking her in order to make her fall in love with him. He goes to great lengths to control and manipulate her life, ultimately leading to her death.

The TV series "*You*" largely follows the same storyline, but with some notable differences. In the first season of the show, Joe is portrayed as a charming and charismatic bookstore manager who becomes obsessed with Beck after meeting her in his store. He begins stalking her and manipulating her life, but the show also delves into his backstory and childhood trauma, providing some explanation for his behavior.

In both the second season of the "*You*" TV series and the novel "*Hidden Bodies*", Joe Goldberg is portrayed as a charming and manipulative character who becomes infatuated with a new woman named Love Quinn. However, there are some notable differences in the way Joe's character is depicted in the TV series and the novel.

The show explores Joe's relationship with Love and delves into her own dark past, adding more depth and complexity to both characters. In the novel, Love's character is not as fully developed, and her relationship with Joe is not as central to the story.

Furthermore, the TV series adds new characters and plotlines that are not present in the novel, such as the character of Delilah and the subplot involving

Henderson. These additions provide more depth to the story and give Joe's character more opportunities to showcase his manipulative tendencies and moral ambiguity. The novel ends with Joe being captured by the police and sentenced to life in prison.

In the third season of the "*You*" TV series, Joe Goldberg and Love Quinn move to a new town and attempt to start a new life. The season explores the couple's troubled relationship and the consequences of their past actions, as well as introducing new characters and plotlines. In contrast, the novel "*You Love Me*" features Joe as the central character, as he moves to a new town and becomes infatuated with a new woman named Mary Kay DiMarco.

One of the key differences between the two is the focus of the story. While the novel "*You Love Me*" centers on Joe's character and his obsession with Mary Kay, the third season of the TV series focuses more on Joe and Love's relationship and the dynamics between them. The show explores the couple's struggles to maintain their marriage and trust each other, as well as their individual struggles with their past traumas and secrets.

Another difference between the two is the level of violence and darkness depicted. While the "*You Love Me*" novel contains some violent and disturbing scenes, it is generally less graphic and dark compared to the third season of the TV series. The show portrays Joe and Love as complex and morally ambiguous characters, who are capable of committing violent acts and manipulating those around them.

Furthermore, the TV series adds new characters and plotlines that are not present in the novel, such as the character of Natalie and the subplot involving the Quinn family. These additions provide more depth to the story and give Joe and Love's characters more opportunities to showcase their manipulative tendencies and moral ambiguity.

Overall, while both the "*You Love Me*" novel and the third season of the "*You*" TV series feature Joe Goldberg as the central character, the focus and tone of the two differ. The TV series explores Joe and Love's relationship and the consequences of their actions in a more complex and graphic way, while the novel focuses more on Joe's individual obsession and the dynamics between him and Mary Kay.

In "*You Love Me*", the tone is more introspective and psychological, with a focus on Joe's character and his inner thoughts and feelings. The novel delves deep into Joe's psyche, exploring his motivations and inner demons. The focus is on his obsession with Mary Kay and how it consumes him, leading him to make increasingly dangerous and reckless decisions.

In contrast, the third season of the "*You*" TV series has a more action-oriented tone, with a focus on the consequences of Joe and Love's past actions and the impact they have on their present lives. The show features more overtly violent and disturbing scenes than the novel, and focuses on the wider web of relationships and interactions between the characters.

Another difference is the level of intimacy and emotional depth portrayed in the two. In "*You Love Me*", the relationship between Joe and Mary Kay is more internal and emotional, with a focus on their shared experiences and emotional connection. In the third season of the TV series, the relationship between Joe and Love is more external and physical, with a focus on their struggles to trust each other and maintain their marriage.

In the "*You*" TV series, the addition of Paco and Ellie as characters can create the impression that Joe is a loving and caring person. Paco is a young boy who lives in the same apartment complex as Joe, and he becomes a sort of surrogate son to Joe. Throughout the first season, Joe takes on a protective role towards Paco, providing him with a safe space away from his mother's abusive boyfriend. Joe's interactions with Paco, such as helping him with his schoolwork and sharing his love of books, can be seen as a reflection of Joe's softer, more compassionate side.

Similarly, Ellie is a teenager who becomes friends with Joe in the second season. Although Joe initially befriends Ellie in order to keep an eye on her, he soon becomes genuinely invested in her well-being. Joe goes out of his way to help Ellie, such as buying her a new phone. His actions towards Ellie can be seen as evidence of his caring and nurturing nature.

However, it is important to note that Joe's actions towards both Paco and Ellie are not entirely selfless. Joe often uses these relationships as a way to justify his more dangerous and obsessive behavior. For example, Joe uses Paco's abuse as a way to justify his violent actions towards his mother's abusive boyfriend. Similarly, Joe's



relationship with Ellie becomes increasingly complicated as his obsession with her grows, and he becomes increasingly possessive and controlling towards her, to the point where she feels like Joe wants to overpower her and be intimate with her.

On the positive side, it can make the story more complex and engaging by exploring the humanity of characters who would otherwise be seen as purely evil or one-dimensional. By portraying characters like Joe Goldberg as sympathetic or relatable, the show can encourage viewers to question their assumptions about what makes someone a villain and what factors might contribute to criminal behavior.

The intersemiotic relationship between the book and series adaptation of "*You*" underscores a significant transition from written words to visual storytelling. While the book relies on the reader's imagination to construct scenes, locations, and character interactions, the series presents these elements visually, employing actors who bring forth their interpretations of characters, thereby potentially altering the audience's perception from their initial book-derived impressions. Moreover, the TV adaptation often diverges from the original plotlines, incorporating additional scenes, subplots, or character backgrounds not explicitly detailed in the book, thereby offering a distinctive narrative experience. By utilizing cinematography, music, lighting, and other visual elements, the series creates an immersive atmosphere, enhancing emotional engagement through facial expressions, tone of voice, and music, distinct from the emotional connections fostered by the book's written descriptions. This intersemiotic exchange prompts varied audience reception and engagement, with book readers possessing their own interpretations influencing their perception of the series, while viewers may perceive aspects differently based on their prior knowledge from the book, highlighting the multifaceted experience arising from the translation of narrative, characters, and emotions between written and visual mediums.

### **6.3 Reasons for the Difference in Depictions**

There are a variety of reasons why writers and producers may make changes or differences between the portrayal of a character in a book and its adaptation in a TV series or movie while acknowledging the intersemiotic relationship of both the mediums. Books and TV shows have different requirements in terms of pacing, character development, and visual representation. TV shows may need to introduce

and develop characters more quickly to keep viewers engaged, while books may have more space to explore characters in depth.

TV shows and movies often have a wider target audience than books and may need to appeal to a broader range of viewers. This can lead to changes in the portrayal of characters to make them more appealing or relatable to different demographics. Additionally, writers and producers may make changes to better fit the tone or themes of the TV show or movie adaptation. They may also be influenced by the current cultural and social climate, and make changes to reflect current social issues or norms.

However, there are also potential negative implications of making perpetrators more likeable in media. For one, it can minimize or downplay the seriousness of their actions. By creating a sense of empathy towards characters who commit violent or abusive acts, the show can make it easier for viewers to overlook the harm they cause or justify their behavior.

#### **6.4 Outcome of the Difference in Depiction**

Throughout the series, Bryce is portrayed as a charming and popular high school athlete, despite the fact that he is also a serial rapist. The series often emphasizes his good qualities, such as his charisma and his loyalty to his friends, while downplaying the severity of his crimes.

This can have several negative implications. For one, it can minimize the harm that Bryce causes and make it easier for viewers to overlook his abusive behavior. It can also send the harmful message that being popular or attractive can excuse or justify abusive behavior. Furthermore, the show's decision to humanize Bryce and explore his backstory can be seen as an attempt to create empathy for him and to explain away his actions. This can be dangerous because it can encourage viewers to overlook or minimize the harm he has caused and to justify or excuse his behavior.

Joe Goldberg is depicted as a charming and likable bookstore manager who develops an unhealthy obsession with the women he meets, leading him to engage in stalking, manipulation, and even murder. Despite his violent and abusive behavior, the show often portrays Joe as a victim of circumstance or his own psychological issues, rather than as a perpetrator of harm.

This portrayal can have several negative implications. Firstly, it can downplay the harm that Joe causes and make it easier for viewers to overlook his abusive behavior. Additionally, it can send the dangerous message that stalking, manipulation, and other forms of abuse are acceptable or even desirable in certain situations.

Furthermore, the show's decision to delve into Joe's backstory and motivations can be seen as an attempt to create empathy for him and to justify or excuse his actions. This can be problematic as it may encourage viewers to minimize the harm he has caused and to justify or excuse his behavior.

Overall, while it is important for media to explore complex and nuanced portrayals of characters, it is essential to be mindful of the potential negative implications of making perpetrators more likable. In the case of Joe Goldberg, it is crucial to recognize the severity of his crimes and the harm he has caused, rather than attempting to rationalize or minimize his actions.

While it is important for media to explore complex and nuanced portrayals of characters, it is also important to be mindful of the potential negative implications of making perpetrators more likeable. In the case of Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg, it is important to recognize the severity of the crimes and the harm they have caused, rather than trying to justify or excuse their actions.

In the book, the story is told from Joe's point of view, which allows the reader to get inside his head and understand his thought processes. This may lead to a different interpretation of his actions, as readers can see the justifications he makes for his behavior. Some readers may empathize with Joe or even view him as a sympathetic character. On the other hand, readers who have experienced abuse or have a greater awareness of unhealthy relationship dynamics may interpret Joe's behavior more critically.

In the TV show, however, the story is told from an outside perspective, and the viewer can see the consequences of Joe's actions on the people around him. This may lead to a more critical interpretation of Joe's character, as the audience can see the harm he causes to others. Additionally, the visual representation of Joe's behavior may be more impactful than reading about it, leading to a stronger emotional response from the audience.

When it comes to the character of Bryce Walker, the reception of his character differs greatly between the book and the TV series. In the book, "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher, Bryce is portrayed as a typical high school jock who is arrogant and entitled. He is the star of the school's football team and uses his popularity to his advantage. However, he is also portrayed as a manipulative and abusive person who sexually assaults both Hannah Baker and Jessica Davis.

On the other hand, in the TV series adaptation of "Thirteen Reasons Why," Bryce's character is portrayed in a more complex and sympathetic light. While he is still depicted as a jock with a sense of entitlement, the show also explores his troubled family life and the impact it has had on him. This has led some viewers to empathize with Bryce and even question his guilt in the sexual assault cases.

This difference in reception can be attributed to the nature of the two mediums. The book allows readers to delve deeper into the thoughts and emotions of the characters, while the TV series relies more on visual and audio cues to create a certain atmosphere and elicit emotions from the viewers. Additionally, the TV series has more time to explore the characters and their backstories, which allows for a more nuanced portrayal of Bryce.

The intersemiotic nature of "You" and "13 Reasons Why," as they transition from book to television series, illuminates the intricate exchange between written narrative and visual storytelling. In both adaptations, this transformation involves a multifaceted process encompassing character portrayal, expanded storylines, cinematic techniques, emotional impact, and audience engagement. The interplay between textual descriptions and visual representation alters audience perceptions, enriches the narrative experience, and offers diverse interpretations. These adaptations not only enhance the storytelling but also showcase the dynamic transformation of narratives across different mediums, emphasizing the varied and profound ways in which audiences engage with and interpret these stories. Understanding the intersemiotic nature of these adaptations extends beyond mere translation; it underscores the versatility and complexity of storytelling, highlighting the nuanced and multifaceted experiences engendered by these adaptations across literature and visual mediums.



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study is an effort to elaborate the lives of Bryce Walker and Joe Goldberg, seeing how their narrative identity led them to become perpetrators. With the help of narrative identity analysis, we can better understand the motivations behind the criminal behavior of the selected perpetrators. This research delves into the minds of criminals to find out why perpetration was the only option available to them. It also involves a close encounter with the work itself. Qualitative content analysis and textual analysis of the selected works, *You* and *13 Reasons Why* give a detailed insight into why the perpetrators did what they did. To study the complexity in the thought processes of the perpetrators, the researcher selected the characters of Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker.

In both *13 Reasons Why's* Bryce Walker and *You's* Joe Goldberg, we see villains who are heartless and unable to feel the pain that their victims go through. Criminal responsibility exists for the actions of these two protagonists from Netflix originals *You* and *13 Reasons Why*, who are responsible for kidnapping, murder, and rape. Although they have victimized many people and caused them incalculable suffering as a result of their callous actions, studies rarely examine the motivations behind such behavior.

As a result, we forget that these criminals were still human and therefore capable of feeling at least some of the suffering they inflicted. Bryce Walker has admitted to raping seven or eight women, including three who were currently or formerly his girlfriends. He seemed unconcerned, and he even had photographic evidence of himself raping one of them. Due to his privileged background, he was able to avoid serious consequences following his arrest for sexual assault by relying on his father's legal team.

On the other hand, Joe Goldberg did not benefit from the presumed wealth of his family when facing consequences for his actions. After becoming hopelessly enamored with multiple women, Joe Goldberg begins to arrange events one after the other, all with the same goal in mind: to get closer to his subjects of obsession. He

killed quite a few people while pursuing his goal, but he did not care so long as he could keep his focus on his obsessions at all times.

The findings provide more detail on the thesis statement and answers to the research questions. This overarching goal is to determine how early-life attachment disorders influence the perpetrators' later identity formation in the selected texts, how they change over time and how did the novel's treatment of the villains and the movie's visual adaptation of the villains and focus on the villains' lives differ.

## **7.1 Findings of the Study**

This study explored the relationship between attachment disorder and perpetration in individuals by examining their narrative identity as portrayed in the Netflix original series "*You*" and "*13 Reasons Why*." The study analyzed the characters' backgrounds, behaviors, and psychological characteristics in these shows to understand how their experiences with attachment in the early years of their lives influenced their actions as they develop into adulthood.

The narrative identities of Joe Goldberg and Bryce Walker offer fascinating case studies in the dynamic interplay of unconscious desires and attachment experiences. Both of these characters are guilty of perpetration, but their reactions to the consequences of their actions are very different. The fact that Bryce considers his actions and makes an effort to alter them demonstrates the potential for Bryce's moral development. Joe, on the other hand, is incapable of empathy and refuses to accept responsibility for his actions, both of which point to a lack of moral development on his part.

These cases bring to light the complexity of human behavior and the necessity of comprehending the personal and cultural elements that play a role in the development of harmful behaviors. In "*13 Reasons Why*," Bryce Walker's charming and well-liked personality is emphasized, possibly diminishing the gravity of his crimes and sending damaging messages about the acceptability of abusive behavior. Similarly, Joe Goldberg's charming and likable exterior in "*You*" may cause viewers to overlook the harm he causes and possibly justify or excuse his behavior.

Both series raise crucial questions about how we perceive and comprehend perpetrators of harm, compelling to engage critically with the complexities of their

narrative identities, unconscious desires, and attachment experiences. Rather than rationalizing or excusing their behavior based on their likability or sympathetic portrayal, it is essential to acknowledge the gravity of their actions and the harm they cause.

Goldberg and Bryce Walker are two characters that can be analyzed in the light of the selected theories. Bryce's character shows an attempt to integrate his experiences of perpetration into his narrative identity in a way that promotes moral development, while Joe's character does not show this same level of moral development. These characters highlight the complexity of the role of conscious and unconscious processes in shaping behavior and identity, and the importance of moral development in addressing perpetration.

## **7.2 Future Recommendations**

Future studies on the depiction of perpetrators in literature and media can provide valuable insights into how these depictions shape societal attitudes towards crime and punishment. While existing research has explored the impact of various factors on the portrayal of perpetrators, including the medium, the intended audience, and cultural contexts, there is still much to be learned about the nuances of these depictions. To enhance the scope of future research in this area, the following avenues can be explored:

### **7.2.1 Intersectionality**

Many perpetrators come from marginalized communities, and there is a need to understand how issues of race, gender, sexuality, and other identity markers intersect with perpetration.

### **7.2.2 Comparative Studies**

It would be interesting to compare perpetrators from different works of literature and/or from different cultural contexts to identify commonalities and differences in the factors that lead to perpetration.

### **7.2.3 Representations of Perpetration**

There is a need to examine how perpetration is represented in literature and how these representations shape public perceptions of perpetrators and their actions.



#### **7.2.4 Restorative Justice**

There is a growing interest in restorative justice practices that aim to repair harm caused by perpetration. Future studies could explore the potential for restorative justice in fictional narratives and how it can be used to challenge dominant narratives of punishment and retribution.

#### **7.2.5 Longitudinal Studies**

Studying perpetrators over time can provide valuable insights into the factors that lead to perpetration and how they change over time. Longitudinal studies could involve analyzing the development of characters over multiple works or examining how fictional characters' behaviors change as they age within a single work.

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