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Kasdi Merbah Ouargla University

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Letters and English Language



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The thin line between sanity and chaos within the characters of the
vampire diaries by L.J Smith

Presented and publicly defended by

Rihab Labidi

Supervised by

Prof. Mohammed Seghir Halimi

Jury

Samira Sayeh Lembarak	Univ of Ouargla	Chair Person
Mohammed Seghir Halimi	Univ of Ouargla	Supervisor
Ahmed Nouredine Belarbi	Univ of Ouargla	Examiner

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Dedication

- ✓ **To my mother who has always been my support system along my journey in life.**
- ✓ **To my grandparents who always make life easier**
- ✓ **To my siblings who were cheering for me.**
- ✓ **To all those people who are struggling with mental health. I simply tell them: “if I could do it, you can too”.**
- ✓ **To myself for never giving up and picking myself up after every fall and setback.**

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Abstract

The vampire diaries series is not just about bloodthirsty vampires killing humans. The story contains all the themes found in a gothic piece of literature and more, it contains hate and love, horror and safety, friends and enemies, but most importantly, the role of families in all of this.

As the story unfolds, an obvious battle between madness and sanity puts the characters and the audience in a whirlwind of emotions. The story was more than just fun, it showed how family always protects each other, it showed that love changes you as a person and that sacrifice is better than watching a friend in pain.

Throughout the story, my mind and heart sympathized with the deranged, the villains who terrorize civilians. Through my research on them, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, I proved what I knew to be the truth, that they are just scared, lost and broken children who got the power they needed to be safe, to defend themselves and their loved ones. Their childhood was devastating, the abuse they suffered was not the biggest part, the cruelest part of it all was the "nothing" their mothers did when they needed them most.

Scientifically, a diamond is only formed at high pressure in the darkness of an active volcano, from simple carbon, to kimberlite, to a diamond worth millions of dollars. Broken souls are diamonds, which are worth only to an ambitious and patient digger.

Résumé

La série "The vampire Diaries" ne se résume pas à des vampires assoiffés de sang qui tuent des humains. L'histoire contient tous les thèmes que l'on trouve dans une pièce littéraire gothique et plus encore, elle contient la haine et l'amour, l'horreur et la sécurité, les amis et les ennemis, mais surtout, le rôle des familles dans tout cela.

Au fur et à mesure que l'histoire se déroule, une bataille évidente entre la folie et la raison met les personnages et le public dans la tourmente, un tourbillon d'émotions. L'histoire était plus qu'un simple amusement, elle a montré comment la famille se protège toujours les uns les autres, elle a montré que l'amour vous change en tant que personne et que le sacrifice est meilleur que de regarder un ami en souffrance.

Tout au long de l'histoire, mon esprit et mon cœur ont sympathisé avec les détraqués, les méchants qui terrorisent les civils. Grâce à mes recherches sur ces derniers, en utilisant la théorie psychanalytique de Sigmund Freud, j'ai prouvé ce que je savais être la vérité, à savoir qu'ils ne sont que des enfants effrayés, perdus et brisés qui ont obtenu le pouvoir dont ils avaient besoin pour être en sécurité, pour se défendre et pour protéger leurs proches. Leur enfance a été dévastatrice, l'abus qu'ils ont subi n'était pas la plus grande partie, la partie la plus cruelle de tout cela était le "rien" que leurs mères leur ont donné quand ils en avaient le plus besoin d'elles.

Scientifiquement, un diamant ne se forme qu'à une pression élevée dans l'obscurité d'un volcan actif, du simple carbone, aux kimberlites, et après aux

diamants valant des millions de dollars. Les âmes brisées sont des diamants,
qui ne valent que pour un creuseur ambitieux et patient.

ملخص

سلسلة مذكرات مصاصي الدماء ليست عن متعطشي الدماء و قاتلي الأرواح فقط، بل هي تحتوي على كل أنماط المواضيع الموجودة في قطعة ادبية قوطية. تحتوي على الحب و الكراهية، الرعب و الطمأنينة، الأصدقاء و الاعداء، و لكن الأهم من ذلك كله هو دور العائلة في كل هذا

مع تطور القصة يحدث نزاع واضح بين العقلانية و الخروج عن السيطرة الذي يضع الشخصيات و الجمهور في دوامة من المشاعر، القصة لم تكن مجرد متعة و حسب، بل اظهرت كيف أن العائلة دائما تحمي بعضها البعض، و كيف للحب أن يغير من شخصيتك، و أن التضحية هي أهون عليك من ان ترى صديقك في ألم

طوال أحداث القصة تعاطفت مع المضطربين و كذا رق قلبي مع الأشرار الذين يرهبون المدنيين، بعدما اجريت بحثا عنهم باستعمال نظرية التحليل النفسي لسليغمونند فرويد أثبت ما كنت اعرف حقيقتها منذ البداية، انهم مجرد اطفال خائفون، تائهون و محطمون، اذ اكتسبوا القوة التي لا طالما احتاجو اليها للبقاء آمنين و ليحموا انفسهم و احبائهم. طفولتهم كانت مروعة لكن الإعتداء الذي تعرضو له لم يكن الجزء الأكبر، الجزء القاسي كان " اللاشيئ" الذي فعلته امهاتهم لهم عندما كانوا في امس الحاجة اليهن

علميا الألماسة تكون الا تحت ضغط عالي في اقصى ظلمات بركان نشط، من كربون بسيط ثم الى كيمبرلايت و من بعد ذلك تكون ألماسة تقدر بالملايين من الدولارات، كذلك الأرواح المحطمة عبارة عن ألماسة لا تستحق إلا لمنقب شغوف و صبور

Keywords

Vampire, psychoanalysis, the originals, reader response, film adaptation, trauma, villain, family, love.

Introduction

“The vampire diaries” is an American supernatural teen drama series written by **L.J smith** from 1991 to 23 October 2012. Adapted to a TV series developed by **Kevin Williamson & Julie Plec**, premiered on the **CW** on September 10 2009 and concluded on march 10 2017, having aired 171 episodes over eight seasons.

The vampire diaries is set in the fictional town of mystic falls, Virginia, a town withholding many mysteries of the supernatural where a teen lives there by the name of **Elena Gilbert**, later on met with the **Salvatore** vampires **Stefan** and his older brother **Damon** where it starts by Stefan and Elena falling for each other and Damon surprised of how Elena is the total incarnation of Katherine his past lover that he is still determined to find, from there on starts the discovery of the supernatural through flashbacks as the series goes on.

Rational

It took me many days of thinking and doubting my choice for choosing “the vampire diaries” because Gothic literature contains a lot of great very known works I could’ve chosen from, but then, I remembered the effect that this series had on me. While watching it, I felt like I belong, which is something I battle with a lot. I don’t belong to the romance, but what is hidden behind all of that. I believe motivation comes from relating to something, being a part of it and feeling it, rather than doing it just for academic purposes.

The vampire diaries series has many themes and issues that one can choose from. I chose the three characters that in my eye represent the thin line between sanity and chaos. Two of the characters are known to be villains, amongst some and kind lovers amongst others. What fascinates me is

the truth behind those villains, the reason behind it all, because I believe, no villain was born that way.

After watching the series, I wondered if the books are the same story. To my surprise, the story in the books was different. Many the vampire diaries series fans expressed their hatred to the books, the characters in it and the style it was written in. I didn't share the same opinion, because to me, I believe that when reading a story, someone has to go back to the time it was written in and try to feel through the style and choice of words of the writer. A story as such written in the 90s shouldn't be perceived from modern lenses.

The differences between the past world of literature and the modern one, in my opinion, is what makes it interesting to dive in. as someone fond of literature, not loving both would be considered a felony. Watching the series and ignoring where it originated from is just missing out on all its charm.

With all the supernatural beings, it is clear that the vampire diaries fall within the Gothic genre. The genre isn't only about a scary atmosphere, it's about the expression of all that is hidden in our souls, the hurt, the disbelief, the misery and the anger. Most people would prefer to read a romantic story with a happy ending, I on the other hand want to feel that I'm not alone, that what I'm living and feeling is real. Through Gothic literature, I understood others and myself better.

All in all, my motivation came from a place of pain and suffering, a place that found a safe home between the villains. Only a survivor would understand the struggle of fighting and standing till the end and if we are villains in people's eyes, only we know our true value.

Research questions

How was the vampire diaries fans' reaction to the film adaptation and what may have caused it?

The Salvatore brother's bond, Stefan presenting light and Damon darkness. What's the truth behind those titles?

Klaus Michelson, the most feared villain of all, what can be causing his insanity and cruelty towards others and his own family?

The three vampires' battles are different, a battle for sanity, a battle for revenge and a battle for power. How do these battles relate to our daily lives?

Hypothesis

The villains are always seen as selfish and cruel towards others and most people are rather drawn to heroes, but there's a group of people that prefer the villains just like me. I believe that we are born as kind and loving, but once we start growing up, our surroundings are what affects our actions and has a toll on us to become either the hero or the villain, sometimes we are both depending on who's telling the story. To be fair this situation shouldn't be seen as black and white and what determines which is which can be the psychoanalysis of the characters themselves and the audience.

Methodology

The story used in this research is "the vampire diaries" as a primary source and "the originals" as a second resource.

For further understanding of the situation, critical articles, comments and YouTube videos were used.

The primary theory concerned with this research is Freud's psychoanalytic theory and other secondary theories presented in the thesis to explore the characters psyche and the audience's response.

The overall stylistic review on this work and its relativity to gothic literature as well as reader response and reception theory.

Objectives

I believe that every villain had a breaking point that pushed them to be that way and by psychoanalyzing these characters I intend to show readers that we're not so different from them, that there's more than one side to a story, more information that does not meet the eye and lastly, more secrets that one should seek.

Conclusion

The psyche of a person plays a major role in their essence and behavior, considering psycho-analyzing a literary text or the people in our lives, helps us get a better understanding of the person/character and the situation they're in. the concept is to instead of judging, there should be an objective analysis, patience and acceptance of the other and not let our preferences fog our judgment. Relating to a villain through common trauma might make someone either sympathize with them and excuse their cruelty, or have strong hatred towards them and neglect their pain. Either way, every opinion and approach is valid, yet needs a bit more of digging to enjoy the full experience of the literary work.

Corpus

The vampire diaries by L.J Smith (1991_2012)

The originals by Julie Plec (2013_2018)

Literary review

The vampire diaries series isn't worked on as much as other vampire series, but lately, there have been some works interested in the film adaptation like the work of UMDATUL MILLAH where she presented a comparative study between the novel and the series, lining down each and every detail of the character's appearances and personalities by also showing the meaning and effects of each one. The thesis of Fenicchtia, Lindsey M. about The Modern Vampire as Romantic Hero: Acceptance, Love and Self-Control, where she included the main character Stefan from the vampire diaries as a romantic vampire hero.

There were other research papers related to the series, a psychoanalysis of Damon Salvatore in several websites; study mode research (better essays), the character therapist and the new heroines. Another research paper on the psychoanalysis of Klaus by Khushi Khan.

Chapter One

The vampire diaries film adaptation

I.1. Love, revenge and hunger for power

The vampire diaries series revolves around Elena Gilbert, a teenage girl that has just lost her parents to a car accident. The story happens in the town of mystic falls, a home to two vampire brothers that were heartbroken by their past lover **Katherine Pierce**, only to meet her doppelganger and fall in love, all over again. Elena Gilbert finds herself in a love triangle between the two, she made the choice to persuade her feelings and that only got her through a complicated path, full of tension and loss, bargaining lives and discovering more and more about the mysteries of the supernatural town she lived in.

The story contains more than just romance, it is filled with horror, revenge, melancholy and chaos. Where more supernatural beings appear, in a fight for love, power, family and title. It's eventful and full of plot twists that it becomes hard to catch up sometimes, but along the road, when you get too invested in the story and you think that now you can predict what's next, it proves you wrong.

These events are narrated by different characters, mostly the main characters. The mention and appearance of a diary throughout the series is frequent, so I believe, it has a huge importance to the flow of the story.

According to my observation on social media, the show was a rollercoaster of emotions, you start to like a character, then you hate them or vice versa. Some characters had a love hate effect; these characters are the ones I'm invested in. Stefan Salvatore, Damon Salvatore and Klaus Michelson.

I.2. The vampire Diaries film adaptation

The producer Julie Plec used the novel more as a referent than a signified, the story was different than the show in the characters appearance and character, the plot, names and ending. Some of the changes were minor and don't matter to the story so much, like names and appearances. On the other hand, the major charac-

ter and plot changes are what surprised the fans, some of these changes according to my observation and the help of Milah's comparative study thesis, are as follows:

I.2.1. Character

Main characters	Novel	Tv show
Elena gilbert	Mean and selfish	Kind and selfless
Stefan Salvatore	Lacks confidence	Initiative
Damon Salvatore	Temperamental	Cocky and helpful
Katherine pierce	Kind and naive	Evil and sneaky
Bonnie bennet	Needs protection	Brave and strong
Caroline Forbes	Elena's enemy	Very kind
Klaus Mickelson	Mad killer	Not always evil

I.2.1.1. Elena Gilbert

1. Elena in the novel was described to be a popular selfish girl that cared only about herself and her popularity, she put more effort in her outfits and overall look, ever after the death of her parents she acted like she was okay just to keep her title as the powerful girl that every girl wanted to be and every guy wanted to be with. What interested her about Stefan wasn't his personality, nor his affection, because Stefan in the books avoided her as much as he could, that hurt her ego and she starting chasing him more fiercely, doing anything in her power for him to notice. She was basically the mean girl and not many liked her.

2. Elena in the tv series was the total opposite when it comes to personality. Appearance wise she was different but still a pretty face with a nice slim body, but she wasn't obsessed with herself and her looks, she mourned her parents and didn't care about her popularity. Elena was kind and selfless, she cared about everyone, even the ones that hurt her, she would always make sure that everyone around her is okay, even if she isn't. Unlike in the novel, she was loved by many due to her heart.

I.2.1.2. Stefan Salvatore

1. Stefan in the novel, lacked a lot of confidence and was too mysterious, always avoiding Elena for the fact that he was a vampire, he didn't embrace his vampirism and always felt inferior.
2. Stefan's character had a development in the film adaptation, he was initiative and confident and embraced his powers.

I.2.1.3. Damon Salvatore

1. Damon in the novels was a temperamental killer, he had no mercy and no care for anyone, he torments people for fun and super aggressive.
2. Damon in the series was confident, cocky and cold, he was impulsive but also strategic and he had a soft side for his brother, lover and friends.

I.2.1.4. Katherine Pierce

1. Katherine's character was beautiful, she was kind and loving, caring and selfless and down to earth. The total opposite of novel Elena.
2. In the series she was ruthless, to survive she would do anything, ready to sacrifice anyone. She was bitter and manipulative.

I.2.1.5. Bonnie Bennet

1. Bonnie was a whiny girl, a sucker for attention, victimizing herself that she couldn't be kept alone, someone always had to save her.
2. Bonnie in the series was a very powerful psychic/witch, she was the hero of all her friends and a selfless caring girl that she would sacrifice herself several times for the sake of whom she loved.

I.2.1.6. Caroline Forbes

1. Caroline in the novels was the enemy and rival of Elena Gilbert, she was a beauty without a brain. All she cared about was herself and popularity.
2. Caroline in the series became the best friend of Bonnie and Elena, she was a light bringer and always positive, caring and loving.

I.2.1.7 Klaus Michelson

1. Klaus was a mad killer, his hunger for power drove him to madness. He was a true villain.
2. Klaus was still ruthless and powerful in the series, but instead of mad destruction, he preferred strategic plans, his weapon was his mind not his fangs. He had a caring and loving side for special chosen ones.

(Millah, 2021)

I.2.2. Plot

The change in character has affected the story in some ways, but not as much as the change of the plot itself. In the novels, Elena and Katherine are half-sisters, but in the TV show, Katherine is Elena's ancestor and Elena's her doppelganger.

As for Elena's friends, in the novel her best friends were Meredith and Bonnie, but in the TV show, Meredith is another character that has no relation to Elena's best friend in the book except for the name and the fact that they dated

Alaric Saltzman, a vampire heart that soon becomes an ally and the best friend of Damon. Her best friends were Bonnie and Caroline that was her enemy in the novel.

Unlike the novel, Elena didn't have a litter sister, she had an adopted brother named Jeremy who played a big role in the story by being a chosen vampire hunter.

Jeremy struggled a lot after the death of his parents and as predicted of a teenager, he was full of anger and rebelled, used substances to cope and isolated himself from his sister. After he killed a vampire for the first time, a tattoo magically appeared on his arm, turning him into a chosen vampire hunter by the brotherhood of the five, the brotherhood of the five is a group of hunters that pledged to get rid of vampires centuries ago. This hunter tattoo gives supernatural power to its owner and make them despise vampires and hunt them down by instinct.

At the time he became a hunter, Elena was already a vampire which created a huge issue, he couldn't stop himself from trying to kill her even when he wanted to. Elena and her friends alongside the Salvatore brothers found a way to help Jeremy take back control of his own body and Damon was a big part of it, despite his dislike for Jeremy, he did it only for Elena.

In the novel, Elena ended up with Stefan, her true soulmate and Damon ended up with Bonnie. In the TV show, Elena ended up with Damon and Stefan with Caroline, as for Bonnie, every time she lets herself love, it gets taken away from her by a tragic death, again and again until the end of the story.

The Salvatore brothers in the novel had vampire blood in their system from Katherine, then fought each other for her love to death which resulted in them despising each other, but in the TV show they were killed by their father for trying to save their vampire lover while her blood was still in their system. To transition from a dead human to a vampire, one must drink human blood or die

within hours. Stefan drank the human blood when he went to see his father whom rejected him and tried to dagger him, out of instinct he immediately attacked and drank from all his family until the last drop. Damon didn't want to do it, afraid of staying alive without his brother, Stefan forced him to turn and that was the reason these brothers weren't getting along, his brother resented him for killing their family and pushed him to be an immortal that would live centuries without his lover. As the story develops, the Salvatore brothers got along more and more and through it all, their brotherhood was unbreakable that even the family of the original vampires was jealous from.

Klaus's relationship with the doppelgangers is another story, in the novel Elena's blood caused the death of the original, however, in the TV show, it was an essential item for him to become a hybrid and create other sired hybrids.

In the novel, most of the characters backgrounds were rather unfitting or had gaps. In the TV show however, the backgrounds were carefully made and each event flows into the other with complete consistency and harmony.

As it is stated above, it's clear that the whole plot was changed, pointing out every change would take several pages to write. In so many movie adaptations, a lot of people have different opinions, but the one thing that TVD fans have in common is the agreement of most that the series is better than the books.

I.3. TVD books vs show reviews

Novels had been made into films throughout the years, for a novel to be turned into a movie it must have a special aesthetic that makes it intriguing to producers. The producer looks at the novel with a creative eye and that might not be everybody's cup of tea, the edits done in the process of the film adaptation becomes a new art piece that belongs to the producer (s). fans don't always approve of adaptations because of the reputation that sometimes producers ruin great stories by adapting them but also some others make it better, the vampire diaries is no different.

I.3.1. TVD book fans' reaction to the adaptation: the first opinion

Even though the show had a lot of success, some fans that read the books first weren't so thrilled about it. Since it had a lot of modifications and the story changed, they preferred to stop watching it to avoid confusion. Some people can't handle the change, they get too invested in the story to just accept an adaptation that only uses 20% of the whole story. Literary works affect some more than others, the novel for these people had a special place in their hearts and nothing can replace it.

I.3.2. TVD book fans' reaction to the adaptation: the second opinion

Other TVD book fans were excited to hear there was an adaptation coming, it was so different from the books, yet, it wasn't such a bad revamp. They fell in love with the characters and the plot. Even after liking the show, these fans still appreciated the art and the beauty of the books. Having an adaptation that looked nothing like the novel wasn't to be mad about, on the contrary, it was a new story to unravel, characters in another more modern dimension that these fans loved discovering.

I.3.3. TVD book fans' reaction to the adaptation: the third opinion

This third group of fans believed that the show was way better. The characters had more meaning and the plot as well, the show was so great that they forgot about the books. The adaptation aligning with modern times had a success in capturing the attention of these fans, making them say that the adaptation version is an upgrade from the novel.¹

¹ For further information see appendice (1)

I.3.4. TVD show fan's reaction to the books: the first opinion

The first group of fans thought that even though the books are far from the show, yet, they deserve to be read and explored. For some adventurous readers, literature is art and reading books that are different from their show is just a new journey to aspire to.

I.3.5. TVD show fans' reaction to the books: the second opinion

The second group of fans didn't like the books at all and thought of it as a waste of time. Most of these fans are the teenagers of this generation, saying that the style was too old and too "cringy". They were not happy with Elena's character nor with the fact that her and Damon didn't end up together. The youtuber "ava" expressed this and many more on a video in her YouTube channel "avasromancebooks" in her ((199) *THE VAMPIRE DIARIES | BOOKS & TV SHOW - YouTube*, n.d.).

I.3.6. TVD show fans' reaction to the books: the third opinion

The third group of fans agreed somewhat with the first two groups. After reading the books, most of them preferred only the first four books. The rest of the books were boring in their opinion. They believe that the novel should've stopped at the fourth book, arguing that the rest felt forced and had no lineage to the first ones.

I.3.7. TVD show fans' reaction to the books: the fourth opinion

A few people had a different opinion than the first three groups. They believed that the books were better than the actual show and that it had ruined the show for them. These fans preferred the novel for its interesting content.²

² For further information see appendice (2)

I.4. The inconsistency

As expressed above, some of the fans agreed that the first books were great and wished it had stopped at that. For the fans, the books after were not really worth reading and there are two major reasons that might have caused this audience to have such an opinion.

First, there was a huge difference in style and plot, because there was a 10 years gap in between.

According to Salt Lake magazine that had an interview with LJ Smith, the first four books were written by her by the year of 1992. After that, she stopped writing to take care of family business.

When Stephanie Meyer's twilight hit the shelves, TVD was suddenly back on sales, so, LJ Smith wrote 3 more books and was asked to write another trilogy.

Second, When the TV series started, Alloy entertainment INC hired a ghost writer to write shorter books that fit the TV series better.

When LJ Smith was asked by the interviewer on the reason she stopped writing TVD, she replied:

"When they sent the contract, it said it was a work for hire. What it meant was I was giving up basically all the rights I'd have as a normal writer, including the right to continue writing my books. And Alloy Entertainment decided they wanted shorter books that were promoting the television series, and they simply informed me, even though I had already written a book called Phantom for them and given them all the information for that book and the next book, Moon song, that my services were no longer required."

LJ Smith stated that she never read her books after writing them; her fans that have read the books over and over again, point out the gaps and mistakes in her storyline. She stated:

Oh yes. They say things like 'In this book, the librarian is this person, and then you said it was this person.' I could have a whole encyclopedia of inconsistencies that fans have pointed out. (p.3333333)

(Q&A: The Vampire Diaries Creator L.J. Smith on Writing and Losing the Series • Salt Lake Magazine, n.d.).

This somewhat explains the reason why some TVD show fans didn't like the books. While reading a novel, literature student or not, it's easy to notice when the style or storyline changes and especially four books in. A lot can change in 10 years, just like how the snake keeps changing skin, we do too and I believe, LJ Smith did too. It's only natural that the following books would be different.

The last books were written by another person, this also explains the change. Being a loyal fan to LJ Smith and her way of writing, it's hard to accept the words of someone else that didn't start the story. No matter how much someone is skilled, finishing a story that didn't originate from you, can never feel the same.

I.5. mirroring

My fascination over the show pushed me to read the books, as a fan, I see where the opinions of the fans came from and I understand why. All reactions and opinions are valid to me, I do *agree though only with the second group, I love literature and all works of literature, especially the gothic related ones. I believe each work tells more than the story itself, rather the hidden emotions of the writer.

I wrote some short stories and poems myself; I can't compare myself to LJ Smith, but I believe, what inspired me to write, were the painful emotions that I had no way of expressing. When people read my writings, they found them as gloomy as Edgar Allan Poe's works, that's how one of my dearest university

teachers called it. I loved the books because they contain raw emotions. The beauty coming from a background, from history and not just words. I found the books just as beautiful as the show.

As I expressed above, I can't compare my beginner self to a famous writer, but I'm confident to say that I understand the struggle. I understand how hard it becomes to stay consistent, writers don't write to write, they get inspired to do so. Some of the struggles we go through are; losing inspiration, losing motivation, writer's blockage and it drives us crazy. I might understand the difficulties of writing, but a famous writer suffers from something worse; the pressure of the fans. Fans can be too much sometimes, asking for more and more in a speed almost impossible for a human being.

Once I wrote a poem and lost inspiration in the middle, losing inspiration is easier than keeping it. I wanted to finish writing it a day after, the style and vibe were different. So, it's only logical how the story and style changed bearing in mind that her gap was 10 years, not just a day.

Even though I'm glad the show was made, I don't appreciate that LJ Smith had to stop writing her books. To lose her right to her story and have it changed in such a drastic way is unfair, I know I wouldn't have liked it done to me. Also, we as humans keep changing and developing our ideas, so, it's a no brainer that the style would be different. As LJ Smith expressed in her interview with Salt Lake, she read mostly science in her saying;

"I read the YA books that I enjoyed when I was younger – classic books like David Copperfield, Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. But honestly, I don't read a lot of fiction. I read a lot of non-fictions to do research for my own books and that takes up a lot of time. And I have a huge interest in science, so I read a lot of science. I don't even read my own books after I've written them." This is another factor why her books were based more on science fiction.

I.6. Validation of differences

One thing I'm sure of, is that people always have several opinions to one literary work., These opinions come from the background and experiences of a person, some people can even like something the first time, but have second thoughts at the second or third reading.

I like to believe in the reader response theory and agree that every opinion is valid, there isn't just one approach to a literary work, The creativity of one's mind adds much more to the meaning of the work. A quote that beautifully represents the reader response theory by William Golding, a British novelist awarded the Nobel prize of literature in 1983 on how people should interpret his novel "lord of the flies"

"There have been so many interpretations of the story that I'm not going to choose between them. Make your own choice. They contradict each other, the various choices. The only choice that really matters, the only interpretation of the story, if you want one, is your own. Not your teacher's, not your professor's, not mine, not a critic's, not some authority's. The only thing that matters is, first, the experience of being in the story, moving through it. Then any interpretation you like. If it's yours, then that's the right one, because what's in a book is not what an author thought he put into it, it's what the reader gets out of it." — William Golding, Lord of the Flies (A Quote from Lord of the Flies, n.d.).

I.7. Readers' reaction and Norman Holland's psychological approach

Reader response theory has many approaches, and what I believe is the most relevant to my research is the psychological approach.

Norman N. Holland believes that the psyche of a person plays a large role in their interpretation of the text. "Holland calls the pattern of our psychological conflicts and coping strategies our identity theme. He believes that in our daily

lives we project that identity theme onto every situation we encounter and thus perceive the world through the lens of our psychological experience.”

(Mambrol, 2016)

Using the psychoanalytical criticism, Norman Holland created a tool called the DEFT (defense, expectations, fantasy and transformation) that explains the process of the reader.

Defense, means that they interpret a text or character according to their experience of likes and dislikes as well as their traumatic experiences, it can push them to hate a certain character (the abuser), or sympathies with another (the victim). The expectation is their initial approach and theory before reading the text. The fantasy stage is the way they read selectively, searching for their desires and wishes in a text to minimize the defense, finding the light in the dark describes it best. transformation, is how they extract themes and meaning from the fantasy with what resonates with their personality.

The meaning overall, is that we project our psychological experiences into the text and our view on it reflects it back to us.

Norman Holland used what James Joyce pointed out that beautifully explains the process:

“We walk through ourselves meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-law. But, always meeting ourselves”

(p. 113). (Grujicic-Alatriste, 2013)

I.8. Film adaptation theory

When literary works have a specific aesthetic, producers see an opportunity of expanding the aesthetic to reach a bigger audience. Depending on the vision of the producer, works can vary and the percentage of altering as well. Adaptation theory gives the green light to go as far as it is seen fit, it's possible to keep the

whole text, as it's possible to either add or remove. The producer is free to either use the novel as a signified or referent, staying loyal to a certain text and working on it makes the novel become signified, on the other hand, when being inspired by a work of art and creating something out of it, the text becomes referent. The change these producers make projects themselves in it.

1.9. the asymmetrical reflection

TVD fans had several responses to the novel and the film adaptation. Seeing their responses to the show gave me the idea to combine between Norman Holland's DEFT tool and Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Not only do I believe it has a huge effect on the fan's reaction, but also, affected the producer Julie Plec in altering some parts of the vampire diaries novel.

I.9.1. Digging for secrets

My reaction as a fan was driven by my psyche the most; My experiences, values and preferences were a huge factor in my interpretation of TVD. There's a term that fans use a lot while discussing a series called "the comfort character", the character that we project ourselves into and sometimes, even take them as a source of safety and motivation when life gets difficult. A comfort character doesn't always mean kind, loving, naive and friendly. It can actually vary from a person to another, one's comfort character can be the predator or the prey.

By using Norman Holland's tool, it outlines the possible theories of one's perception. The use of this too can be presented this way:

I.9.1.1. Defense

The tendency to turn to defense comes from a place of fear, it doesn't always have to be abuse or a traumatic event, it can be mere things; like a blonde girl that accidentally popped your balloon as a child and now you're hating the character Caroline for having the same hair and without your knowledge.

I.9.1.2. Expectation

Based on our experiences and being exposed to vampires that are evil and merciless, can give us the idea that the next story including vampires would be just the same, when those expectations get contrasted, we either like it or not depending on our previous view.

I.9.1.3. Fantasy

While reading a novel, a sacred bond forms between the person and the story. Fantasizing is a term we use for the imagination of wanted secretive desires, while met with those desires while reading, it takes the objectivity of reading and creates that bond that makes the reader start reading selectively and taking only what their heart desires.

I.9.1.4. Transformation

After going through the process of the fantasy, comes the step the most important; which is to select the themes, meanings and valuable pieces of advice that resonate with your comfort zone. Sometimes we even neglect things that might help us, for the reason that we're not ready to accept it. Transformation is all about our process and our unconscious thoughts, that's why this tool fits perfectly with Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

Freud's psychoanalysis theory projects the effect of The unconscious part of the mind where all the data is stored. In a way or another, our unconsciousness alters our opinions, some fans might not like Elena so much because of her popularity, she might have reminded them of a time at school where they were considered an "outcast" or bullied by a popular girl.

I.9.2. Freud's psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud believes that the unconscious part of the brain is the mastermind, what we do, say, feel or how we react is affected by it in a form of letting out repressed unwanted memories.

Freud expressed this dynamic of hidden signs behind actions as "The dream-thoughts which we first come across as we proceed with our analysis often strike us by the unusual form in which they are expressed; they are not

clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts, but are on the contrary represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors, in images resembling those of poetic speech" (26). (*Psychoanalytic Criticism*, n.d.)

All in all, these three theories combined, give off important answers, as to why a person reacts in the way that they do while reading a novel, or watching a film. It's a complementary relationship between the reader and the text. With psychoanalysis, the reader understands more about a certain character and I, understand more on the reader's reaction through the text and what triggers them in it.

Putting myself in the loop of analyzation, a lot of my past trauma and experiences influenced my attachment to the vampire diaries, as well as my fascination of my two comfort characters that I will be psychoanalyzing and highlighting my relation to it in the upcoming chapters.

The series had tons of characters that were all special in their own way, it is safe to say that there was a comfort character for each human being no matter the opinion, background or preferences, it had it all.

To sum it all up, linking the fans' reactions to Freud's psychoanalytical theory and Norman Holland's reader response psychoanalytical approach, in my opinion was the most relatable way understand their view, it's only natural to consider the source of it all coming from the brain that collects all data without mistake, whether be it remembered or not, known or not by the viewer, their psyche definitely plays the big role in it all.

Literary works in any form represents a mirror to its consumer, the exposé to different themes and characters and the feedback it gets narrows down the lying secrets beneath the surface that one can unfold while psychoanalyzing.

Chapter two

The Salvatore brothers

II.1 The doppelgangers diametrical opposed outcome

Throughout my observation of the Salvatore brothers, I noticed how their bond gets thicker and stronger over the series. The brothers went through ups and downs, hatred and love, all caused by one face but different souls.

The brothers grew up in mystic falls to be best friends who got each other's backs, since Damon was the older brother, he always protected his little brother and Stefan aspired to be like his older brother. That all changed when she appeared.

II.1.1. The survivor

Katherine's story began, when the original vampire Klaus that was a hybrid, had been hosting her and getting her to trust him. She was the human doppelganger that was a key to break the curse, the curse that his mother Esther casted on him to suppress his werewolf side, it was made with a moonstone, a sacrifice of a vampire and a werewolf and a doppelganger's human blood. She heard of the plans that were conspiring against her so she did her best to run and hide, but it wasn't enough to keep an original away, so she tricked a Vampire to heal her with her blood, then hung herself, leading to her dying and rising as a vampire. In that case, her blood became irrelevant to the original, she ran away afraid of what might he do to her because of what she did. She ran from him her whole life and as a vampire, that's a really long time.

When Katherine arrived to the Salvatore house, she was a vampire already, she got closer with both brothers and had an intimate relationship with them, without their awareness. The boys fell hard for her, Damon started drinking her blood willingly and allowed her to drink from him, Stefan let her drink too, but she had to compel him to drink from her.

Her identity was being kept a secret, because at the time, there was a special council of the founders of mystic falls, they specialized in keeping the peace and safety of their town, haunting and killing supernatural beings hovering around

without mercy. Giuseppe Salvatore, the brother's father, haunted vampires and believed there is no good in them because they drink out of humans, Stefan being in love with Katherine, tried to speak to his father that maybe not all vampires are bad, there might be good hearted vampires. His father didn't take it well and suspected that his son is meeting with a vampire, he spiked his drink with vervain to find out who it was. The night came and Katherine started drinking from Stefan but was soon hurt by the vervain and fell on the floor. Giuseppe heard the noise and barged in the room and took her to be executed.

The council were marching towards a church to put the vampires in and burn them to ashes, they were interrupted by the brothers, trying to free their lover, they were shot by their own father and soon rose back up again as they had vampire blood in their system. Their rising from the dead was too slow though, the church was already in flames. The brothers then discovered that Katherine had been intimate with both at the same time, loving her made them neglect that matter.

Vampire blood in a human's system when they die, turns them into soon to be vampires. To be a full vampire one has to drink human blood to finish up the process, if not they would die of defamation. The brothers reacted to the events differently, Stefan embraced his new reality and was excited to be a powerful immortal. Damon however, was devastated by his lover's death and his father's action that he wanted nothing to do with life anymore, he refused to drink human blood and preferred dying instead.

Stefan couldn't bear the thought of living an immortal life without his precious brother on his side, so he forced Damon to drink human blood and that made his older brother furious. He promised his brother then, an eternity of misery.

It has been established that the arrival of Katherine, changed their lives drastically and created hatred between the two. The brothers got separated because of her.

II.1.2. The healer

Elena Gilbert had lost her parents in a car accident and she was the only survivor, it seemed like a miracle that she did because the crash was intense, but it was no miracle, but Stefan who saved her. After that Stefan took a deep interest in her and kept an eye on her from afar, until one day he decided to enroll in the same high school as she is to get closer to her. Damon on the other hand had met her too, he thought she was Katherine but she explained to him that she's not and that's when he realized that she's her doppelganger.

Elena started to notice Stefan and was drawn to him immediately, they started getting closer and falling for each other. Once Damon noticed that, he came again following his brother and getting closer to Elena to get under his brother's skin. A rivalry between them started, Stefan trying to protect her and Damon sabotaging their relationship. Bit by bit, Damon started to fall in love with Elena, but her heart was already with Stefan, yet he didn't give up on always showing her his feelings.

The brothers started getting closer to each other when Elena started being in danger, their love for her and will to protect her put them in the same path. Even though they still despised each other and Damon still pulled some bad tricks on his brother, when it came to someone else hurting his little brother, he was always there to protect him and even ready to die for him. Throughout the events, Damon did die for his brother, and Stefan was devastated.

Damon was good and evil, mostly evil, but when he died, no one could bear the reality of him dying, so he tried his best to bring him back and find a loophole with a spell, after that was successful and they were reunited, Stefan and Damon hugged for the first time since they became vampires.

Elena made Damon a better man and was able to restore the humanity left in him even when his own brother believed it was gone. Just like Katherine, Elena loved them both, she loved Stefan because he made her feel safe and was a knight in

shining armor, also loved Damon because even with all his flaws, he had a beautiful heart and she was the only one who could see it.

Elena had to die and became a vampire to save her human friend Matt, after she became a vampire, her feelings intensified and she realized how much she was in love with Damon, it took her a time to admit it to herself, but at the end she did and chose to be with Damon instead, she even made him want to give up his vampire life and become human with her.

Even with Elena choosing Damon over Stefan while he was still in love with her, their brotherly bond was not shaken, it got better and better and for her, Damon got better, it is safe to say that Elena healed their trauma from their relationship with Katherine, she was kind and considerate of their feelings more, she was the better woman.

Stefan was hurt when she chose Damon over him, there's no denying in that, but he was still happy for his brother and Elena, to be with as he called him "the better man" the brother that was always there to protect him, In his saying;

"Tonight, I saw a side of Damon I hadn't seen in a while, the older brother I looked up to. The son who enlisted in the civil war to please his father. The Damon I knew when I was a boy. I wanted that Damon to live and I wanted you to have an opportunity to get to know him. He's the better man." — Stefan about Damon in *I Was Feeling Epic*. (*Stefan and Damon*, n.d.)

II.2. the chosen one

The common factor between Katherine and Elena, is that they both loved the Salvatore brothers and they both dated them. The difference was that at the end, they chose differently. When the brothers were in transition, Stefan embraced his powers, he was excited to live a different life, a new life and immediately forgot about Katherine with the rush of power, women and blood. Damon on the other hand, wanted to die, he believed there was no life after Katherine's alleged death,

he lost who he was as a person and filled his time with drinks and women, as a way to forget his pain.

After Katherine came back in their lives, she made sure to tell Damon that it has always been Stefan she loved while he was just an amusement.

They fall in love again with the same girl, Katherine's doppelganger Elena, she chose Stefan at first and even with all the confessions of Damon, she still chose Stefan, but still had feelings for Damon, it was just easier to be with Stefan because that's all she ever knew. Time and events later, she chose Damon after he had helped her with her vampirism, after the transition, she embraced a new self that was buried, Stefan loved who she was as a human and couldn't quite get over her, Damon just loved all of her and she noticed, that human her did choose Stefan, but vampire her longed-for Damon.

II.3. A trip to the child within:

It is a common saying that the baby of the family, is always favored by his parents and that was the case with Stefan. Damon had to work harder for his parent's validation, while his little brother had it easy.

II.3.1. the golden boy

Stefan as a child was kind and loving, he spent a lot of time with his mother. When his mother got sick, he started avoiding being with her, it hurt him too much to see her like that. Instead, he was collecting her favorite flowers and herbs to help create a remedy for her sickness. His mother was sent to a TB ward where she ended up dying, Stefan then regretted not spending more time with her, he would've given anything to be with her just for one more day. Her passing was really hard on him, due to his close bond with her. Growing up after that, he became best friends with his brother and preferred to spend time with him over his friends. He became also close with his father; he was his father's golden boy. (*Stefan Salvatore, n.d.*)

II.3.2. The disappointment

Damon's childhood was more difficult than his brother's, his mother used to steal money from his father, she wanted to run away from his grip and take her kids with her. One time at dinner, his father forced him to eat his pet turkey, he looked at his mom hoping she would do something, but she just told him to listen to his father. He then confronted him for stealing and punished him by burning his hand with his cigar, while his brother watched. Damon chose to take the punishment to protect his brother. It was easier to believe that he did it considering his personality, Damon was rebellious and opinionated, he goes against his father's and town's laws. His father didn't fail to express how disappointed he is of him, because of that Damon decided to go to the civil war to please his father. His mother's death caused him pain as well, the day of her funeral, he was fixing his brother's tie and Stefan told him that their father asked them not to cry, but Damon encouraged him to express himself and cry as much as he wants, even though he wasn't able of doing it himself, his brother told him that he wouldn't cry, because the angel of his mother visited him the night before and told him, that everything will be alright. He was supposed to write her a speech at her funeral, but he didn't find the words, so he missed it.

While Stefan had freedom in expressing his feelings, Damon didn't, even when he felt hurt, abandoned, misunderstood, he just acted like he doesn't feel anything. He suppressed a lot of emotions inside.

Their mother was not dead as they thought, she was turned into a vampire, that explains why young Stefan thought he saw her angel. After them finding out, they were mad that she didn't come for them after she was turned. Stefan was the first to forgive, he was closer to her and just wanted his mother back. Damon was fueled with hatred, he slowly started finding out the truth, his mother stole the money and stayed still while he was punished, she visited Stefan after her death

but she didn't visit him. It was clear for him that he wasn't loved by her and she only cared about Stefan.

There was a huntress with a sword that kills vampires and send their souls to their hell, repeating their guilt in a loop over and over again, until they find a way out. Damon was stabbed by the sword, sacrificing himself again instead of his brother. His hell was watching his mother die over and over again, begging him to help and save her, but his pain didn't allow him to. After many times of her dying, he finally broke and started crying, telling her he's sorry and wishing that he had given her the chance to love him. She died after hearing him forgive her, he screamed and cried more, but that was what saved him from that hell, he finally dealt with his guilt. (*Damon Salvatore*, n.d.)

II.4. the villain's true essence

It is easy to judge a book by it's cover, it's less work and trouble though these characters are worth digging for. No matter how much people think they know us, no one actually does except ourselves and our decision to show ourselves or not, comes down to weather we feel safe enough or not.

II.4.1. The Butterfly Effect

The butterfly effect is a metaphor used to demonstrate the chaos theory, the theory suggests that every small event, can result in a bigger more complex event. A butterfly wings flying can have an effect on the weather, or even create a tornado in another state. This theory gives importance to the little things, claiming that not only big events lead to big events, small ones can too and someone should always expect the unexpected.

II.4.2. Childhood trauma

Childhood trauma is an event that happens to a child and cause fear, it can be a direct abuse to the child, like sexual or physical abuse, or bullying and domestic violence. It can also be an indirect one, like watching a loved one struggle with an

illness, watching a loved one being abused, or just being neglected. Untreated trauma leads to the child having issues at school as they grow up, having trouble making friends, or have issues building a future as an adult. The action done to a child or in front of them, has an effect later on, even though many would say “he was too young when it happened, he wouldn’t remember” but even if they don’t remember, it still affected them when it happened, consciously they wouldn’t know it, but unconsciously, it’s there. There are no clear results for how an event affects the child, but over the years, psychology had narrowed down the most common results, a childhood trauma can lead to.

PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder); up to 15% of girls and 6% of boys, develop this disorder after a traumatic event. This disorder might keep experiencing the event in their minds, avoid anything that triggers their memory of the event, or relive the event in their daily life without their awareness. Some of the issues are:

- Increased anger and aggression.
- Inability to be affectionate with others.
- Seem detached, numb or non-responsive.
- Engaging in high-risk behaviors.
- Lack of impulse control.

II.5. Lost vampires

The Salvatore brothers lost their essence after the transition. Everything intensified when they became a vampire, speed, power and emotions.

II.5.1. acceptance

Stefan went to see his father after becoming a vampire, his father tried to kill him, that triggered him and made him suck the life out of his father, he turned to a ripper, driven by bloodlust and power, he wasn’t the kind and caring Stefan an-

ymore. He killed their whole family and after that, he switched off his emotions. He filled his time with women and blood, leaving a trail of bodies behind him. He was then found by a vampire named "Lexi" she helped him control his lust and drink animal blood instead. Damon was still following him and finding new ways to make his life miserable, he succeeded into convincing him to drink human blood. The second ripper phase made him worse, he drinks his victims until the last drops, he takes their head off their bodies while doing so and then write their names the wall of his apartment. after a lot of struggling, he managed to control himself and stop human blood. His stay in mystic falls and the company of Elena made him feel human again, he just wanted a normal human life, he wanted to be loved and accepted. He went back to being the caring, responsible gentleman. His only issue was human blood, without it he's a good man. (*Stefan Salvatore*, n.d.)

II.5.2. resistance

Damon didn't want to be a vampire, his brother forced him to by bringing him a woman and biting her neck, the smell of the blood made it hard for him to stay controlled, after that, he decided to leave Stefan and promised him an eternity of misery. Damon later was captured and tortured by the Augustine society, they experimented on him and another vampire "Enzo" they became best friends and plotted for a way out, the plan failed at a critical moment and a fire started while Enzo was in a chained locked cell, Damon saved himself and left his friend behind. Damon thinking that his friend burned to death, he switched of his humanity and started killing the Augustine family one by one. Later on, he did his best to find the tomb where Katherine is and open it, he was disappointed to find that she was not inside, after her appearance he confessed to her that he still loves her but she rejected him, she told him she only loved Stefan. Damon's love for Elena made him be a better man, even sacrificing his life twice for her, his brother and his friends. Damon cared only about the lives of those he loved, he would kill and torture anyone if it means keeping his loved ones safe. He was selfish when it

came to Elena especially, he would do anything for her, his mother punished him by doing a spell on Elena to be in a coma and only wake up once her best friend Bonnie dies. At the time, Bonnie had become his best friend too, aside from Elena and Stefan, she was the only one whom he cared about too much to hurt. Unable to live without Elena, he decided to sleep in a tomb next to her until she wakes up, but that didn't last long, when his brother needed him again, once again he did his best to keep everyone safe and sacrificed himself instead. At the end he drank the cure and became human with Elena. (*Damon Salvatore*, n.d.)

Both brothers suffered, in childhood and as vampires, but it's clear that Damon has gone through worse. Because everybody perceived him as the bad guy, he acted like one.

II.6. diving in

Children start learning at a very young age, even without the ability to speak. We learn through our surroundings experiences and our own. Sometimes we make mistakes and get hurt in the process, but since it's still new to us, we'd rather close ourselves up, created a barrier and even sting in fear of getting stung first. These brothers' experiences though different, yet follow the same path.

II.6.I. Love interest

the Salvatore brothers acted on their sibling rivalry, one of the sibling traits; is that they're always competing for who is better. Stefan and Damon kept competing for Katherine's heart. Again ironically, they fall in love with Katherine's descendant that looks exactly like her. Following the fact that one of the traumatic responses is reliving the trauma unintentionally, I find that Stefan's reason for falling for Elena wasn't only because of her different personality, he was already interested in her as soon as he saw the resemblance. I believe that him wanting Elena unconsciously gave him hope that she wouldn't leave him like Katherine did, trying to change the past that had hurt him. Damon falling for the same girl again, Damon didn't have his parent's love, nor his past lover. Even though Elena was

his brother's girlfriend, he still confessed to her and kept making moves on her, competing with his brother again. His determination for her affection came from his past trauma, where he had to work harder than Stefan for approval and validation. When he had her, she was the one thing he has always longed for, for someone to choose him over his brother and give him affection. He clings on to her as a drug.

the two vampires had both been through ups and downs, but according to my observation, Damon was the one who had a lot of personality change throughout the seasons. Stefan was seen as the good guy while his brother was the bad guy, the evil one with no mercy, even though, Damon was always honest, yet Stefan always lied. Both brothers have killed, any vampire did, even the sweet kind angelic Elena killed as a vampire, but between the three, Stefan had the most kills as a ripper, even the original vampire/hybrid Klaus was astonished by his killings.

II.6.2. The scape goat

I chose the scape goat as a nickname for Damon, because he was always the one that has to sacrifice or be sacrificed, always the one to call for a bloody work. The thick villain skin that he covered himself with made everyone believe that there's no humanity in him, even his brother Stefan thought so. Until Elena cracked him open and started to see the good in him and encouraged him to show that side more with others, he refused that saying:

Elena Gilbert: Why don't you let people see the good in you?

Damon Salvatore: Because when people see good, they expect good. And I don't want to have to live up to anyone's expectations.

("The Vampire Diaries" Heart of Darkness (TV Episode 2012) - IMDb, n.d.)

This shows another factor of PTSD, avoiding anything that reminds them of the trauma, he's avoiding the time where no matter what he did, his father was still disappointed in him. He doesn't want to live up to anyone's expectation in fear

that he's be rejected, making others disappointed once again. It was easier being the bad guy, easier than trying to please others.

There's a blog online called "the character therapist" where characters are being put in the couch for analysis. This analyzer suggested that Damon suffered from antisocial personality disorder. Following the symptoms and criteria of APD and matching it with Damon's behavior, shows that he had this issue growing up, before he turned to a vampire. Turning to a vampire made the signs just clearer than before. (Lmft, 2012)

Antisocial personality disorder, sometimes called sociopathy, is a mental disorder in which a person consistently shows no regard for right and wrong and ignores the rights and feelings of others. People with antisocial personality disorder tend to antagonize, manipulate or treat others harshly or with callous indifference. They show no guilt or remorse for their behavior. Individuals with antisocial personality disorder often violate the law, becoming criminals. They may lie, behave violently or impulsively, and have problems with drug and alcohol use. Because of these characteristics, people with this disorder typically can't fulfill responsibilities related to family, work or school. (*Antisocial Personality Disorder - Symptoms and Causes*, n.d.) as it is seen throughout the series, Damon wasn't so compatible with his family, nor was he responsible enough to work or rely on, unless it involved the ones he really cared about.

I wouldn't really say that he was a full-on sociopath, he cared deeply and did good deeds for the sake of the ones he loved, not just Elena and Stefan, he also became friends with Bonnie, Caroline and Alaric Saltzman. He cared about these people deeply, after killing them over and over again. All the ones that care about him and whom he cares about had been either dead, or tortured by him before.

That's a defense mechanism he uses, to hurt before getting hurt, leave before getting abandoned. It was easier that way, to avoid getting hurt by others. Never

giving the chance for someone to have any power over him, he'd even care about you and hurt you, if it meant proving that he's in control.

As a child, his father abused him which resulted in his bad boy behavior. His mother on the other hand did nothing and that's the issue, you would think that wouldn't have an effect on someone, on the contrary, this is where the butterfly effect happens, no one would think that doing nothing could have a toll on someone, it's unexpected, yet she was also one of the reasons he was so broken, knowing that she didn't care enough about him to give him attention and love affects him on a deep level. Growing up neglected and seeing your other sibling can make even the most confident, start having insecurities and thinking it's their fault that they're being treated that way.

Children sometimes throw tantrums and act against what their parents tell them, that isn't accidental and it's not the child being disrespectful. These neglected children just want attention from their caregivers, they didn't get it when they did good, so they do bad instead, because that way they can catch their attention. That was clearly the case for Damon, he was rebellious and his father taught him that emotions are for the weak. How can a vampire not be damaged mentally after living with an abusive father and a neglective mother, being the disappointment of his family and society; just for being himself.

Inside all that big bad vampire, hides a scared broken child. He was given the power and he used it to protect himself, making himself be seen, heard and feared. Even though he's more than 100 years old, he froze at the time he was turned, at 17, and through it all, he stayed that broken teenager, that longs for his mother's love that he never had.

One of the signs of healing from a trauma, is when you don't have hatred for the people that hurt you anymore, Damon didn't forget nor forgive. Elena was the one who cracked his façade, she gave him a safe space to express himself and be that kind loving man that he was.

I can't consider him a villain, he's not all that good of a person but he was pushed to be that way, it's only an instinct, to do whatever it takes to protect your inner child. The villains of the story are his parents, selfish beings that only care about themselves, a father who gives excuses for himself for torturing and killing vampires. A mother that abandoned her children the moment she had a chance and never looked back. Vampires are a different species, but not all of them are monsters. Vampirism only intensifies feelings and desires, it doesn't create a new personality, that's why Stefan and Damon kept their essence. Their parents were human yet they were the definition of monsters.

You might be wondering, how I'm so certain about this and I'm not even a psychologist, I'm just a literature student, my knowledge about the matter comes from experience, I might not be a vampire, but figuratively, I was one at some point, a victim to an abusive father, I've always had to fight my demons, my vampirism, searching for my identity within the ashes of my memories, it's not an easy fight I can assure you. Winning the fight comes with great patience and courage, it comes when a person either friend or lover, sees past your vampire fangs, makes you feel wanted and safe to be you, the real you. Most of us don't have that luxury, of having a support system, some might create their own support system, and others would rather end it all instead.

Between Stefan and Damon, I'm most proud of Damon, he's gone a long way, he may have lost battles but he won the war.

Even though Stefan had a great childhood, yet he struggled with staying sane, the golden boy lacked control more than his brother and turned out to be way more twisted than one might expect, but unlike Damon, he always got the benefit of the doubt and no matter what he did, he was always seen as the good guy.

Damon on the other hand, in my opinion was the better brother, the one to take action when it's most needed, the one that deeply cares but struggles to show affection due to him never being exposed to such emotions.

While Stefan prospered and made friends and lovers, Damon stayed a loner for years, hiding in his shell, still hurt and broken which made him my favorite character on the show, he had suffered a lot but still fought like the warrior he is and came out a winner, a survivor.

Chapter three

The original hybrid

III.1. The birth

Mikael and Esther, the parents of 7 children, were living in a world where werewolves rule, they were living a normal life, trying to survive and live happily. Esther was a witch and her husband was a Viking warrior, she didn't have the ability to bore kids, so she turned to her sister to perform a spell that helps her have kids. The spell was with a price that she would take her first born and the first born of her children and their children as long as Esther's line continued. Esther paid the price with her first born, after her husband came back from war, she told him that she died from the plague.

Esther's best friend Ayana told her about a safe land where healthy people reside and they can live with no threat. The new world town was named later mystic falls. The family went there and Esther bore more children, one of which was Nikolaus. For no apparent reason, Mikael was always too hard on him. One day Klaus sneaked out with his little brother Henrik to watch the werewolves turn in the full moon, Henrik was attacked by a werewolf and ended up dead. Mikael resented Klaus even more after that. Klaus always carried the guilt of not being strong enough to save his brother.

Mikael decided to do something that would make him and his kids stronger, he asked his wife to perform a spell that would give them supernatural powers. Esther did as she was told, using the power of the sun, the blood of the first Petrova doppelganger that descended from the first immortal Amara and the white oak tree that represented a long life. Mikael gave his kids a cup of wine laced with the blood, after they drank it, he drove a dagger into their hearts to wake up later in transition. While in transition, he brought them a village girl to feed from to finish the transition. They became the original first vampires to ever exist.

After Klaus had his first kill, it triggered his wolf, then his father found out about the affair that Esther had with the chief werewolf of mystic falls, the same clan

that killed Henrik. His mother decided to cast a curse on him to dormant his werewolf in fear of messing with the nature's balance even more. Mikael driven by anger, killed the whole clan and Klaus's father. The resentment for Klaus grew even more and he decided to kill him.

The spell made them immortal and gifted them with supernatural powers; speed, agility, strength and healing. This spell messed with the balance of the nature, so it gave them weaknesses made from the ingredients of the spell; the sun burned their skin and the hunger for blood can't be controlled, the way to kill them would be by staking the white oak tree's wood in the heart, the flower of vervain that grew at the base of the white oak tree weaken them and protect humans from their compulsion when possessed and the inability to enter homes unless they were invited in., they burned the white oak tree to prevent the threat, but their father has already made a white oak dagger that made him feared by his children. Klaus killed his mother for the curse she had put on him and blamed it on his step farther.

To neutralize a vampire, one needs a silver dagger enchanted by the witch of the brotherhood of the five, dipped in the ash of the white oak tree. Since Klaus is a hybrid, the silver doesn't affect him because werewolves heal from silver, so the way to neutralize him is with a golden dagger. After Esther's death, Rebecca and Elijah swore to stick with Niklaus promising "always and forever" , that didn't stick for too long as Klaus started to use the daggers to put his siblings to sleep when they try to interfere in his life. Elijah was the only one that wasn't staked at the time, Klaus had told him that he put his siblings in coffins and threw them in the deep sea, Elijah was furious and started a revenge against him, until a time where he was almost killing him that Klaus revealed that his siblings are in a safe place and that he would take him to them. The difference between Elijah and Klaus was that one was noble and keeps his word and the other is a manipulator.

Klaus's goal was to find the spell that can lift his curse. (*Mikaelson Family*, n.d.)

III.2. Tragedy

Klaus as a child was reckless, adventurous, risk taking and impulsive which made his father always disappointed in him. He was constantly abused by Mikael physically and emotionally, even though little Klaus was a kind loving child that only wanted to receive the same love he gives. His father was so hard on him claiming that he's teaching him to be stronger, but he didn't deserve that.

Once, Elijah was teaching Klaus how to hunt, encouraging him to practice more and that his aiming is getting better. Mikael interfered taking the bow from Klaus and calling him "not man enough to hold a weapon" then started kicking him, Elijah tried to stop his father but then backed down when his father threatened him to be next.

One time he was beaten half to death, his father had missing daggers and believed it was Klaus who took them. Klaus being afraid of his father, didn't want to join him for the hunt, his mother found him hiding in the woods, she gave him a necklace and told him that it will protect him. One time wearing the necklace, he decided to pick a fight with his father in the woods, thinking that if he beat him, he would receive his respect. The fight didn't end well for Klaus and he was deeply injured. Klaus later found out that the necklace didn't protect him, it made him weaker and his mom gave it to him to prevent him from killing anyone, afraid that his wolf would be triggered and Mikael would find out.

Klaus and Elijah were in love with the same woman, they competed for her love, after centuries, she chose to be with Elijah instead. He ended up killing her and Klaus was furious with him, yet he forgave him as his brother.

Once again, he was beaten almost to death by Mikael for using his knife to carve some pieces of cheese. His brother Elijah and his sister Rebecca intervened; Rebecca threatened her father with a sword to leave Niklaus alone.

Klaus started thinking that he was doomed to stay alone, his father abused him and never gave him approval unlike his other children and his mother did nothing to stop the abuse, she even weakened him which made him more vulnerable to Mikael. This factor changed his personality completely.

Klaus was always frightened by his father, he constantly his and ran away from him. His mother as well came back from life and wanted to kill him alongside his siblings. (*Niklaus Mikaelson, n.d.*)

III.3. Determination

Klaus as a vampire became merciless and cruel, he believed that he was alone, even with Rebecca and Elijah by his side. His only goal was to find the ingredients to perform the spell that lifts his curse. He was so close once, when he found the doppelganger Katerina Petrova (Katherine pierce), as soon as she discovered that she was going to be sacrificed, she fled from him, but she couldn't keep up, he was too powerful and sent powerful vampires after her. When she saw that there's no running away from him, she injured herself, fooled a vampire to heal her with their blood, then hang herself resulting in her becoming a vampire. Her blood wasn't pure anymore for the ritual. Klaus followed her and tormented her for 500 years for messing up his chance, he always punishes the ones who wronged him, no matter the majors he had to go to. His search for another doppelganger continued.

His determination to lift the curse wasn't only for power, he wanted to be a hybrid and create a line of hybrids sired to him, a family he didn't have as a child, or so he believed.

Klaus didn't care much about a human life, he would kill anyone that's a part of his plan, he was the terror of humans and supernatural beings. He wasn't just a strong body without a brain, on the contrary, he was the smartest between his

siblings. He was always one step ahead of everyone. His plans and strategies were well measured, he always had backup plans and always got what he wanted. He compelled the ones that can be compelled and manipulated the ones he was unable to compel, He was unstoppable.

He was met with the Salvatore brothers when he was trying to take Elena as a sacrifice. No matter what they did or how much they fought, ruining his plans, taking away the key objects of the spell, he was always ahead and succeeded. After becoming a hybrid, he bit Damon, forcing his brother to make a deal to save his brother and that's exactly what Klaus wanted. He wanted to bring back the ripper in Stefan, he forced him to drink human blood and be his companion, for exchange of his brother's life.

Damon and his friends were once close to killing him, he was ahead of them again, he possessed the body of Damon's best friend Alaric, he spied on them. They thought he was finally dead, but it's not that easy to kill Klaus, no matter how much they tried. (*Niklaus Mikaelson*, n.d.)

III.4. The other side

1. Under all the cruelty, Klaus still had a heart to fall in love. He was interested in Caroline, Elena's best friend. He loved how fierce she was and developed deep feelings for her, but she rejected him. Tyler Lockwood was the first hybrid he sired; he was Caroline's boyfriend at the time. Tyler broke the sire bond and conspired with the other hybrid against Klaus, when Klaus found out he killed all of them, except for Tyler. Upon Caroline's request, he let him have a head start to run from him, he's shown his affection for her even when she kept rejecting him and hurting his feelings. If Caroline asked, he delivers, even if it means going against his own rules. Over the years, Caroline did develop feelings for him, but she decided to suppress those feelings because he was dangerous. After she wronged him

several times and went on a date just to distract him from her friends, he still loved her deeply. They ended up being intimate once and that was it for them, nothing happened after, because Klaus had promised her that if she confesses her honest feelings he'd leave and he left.

2. When he was in New Orleans, Camille caught his eye, she was a bartender that served him drinks. One time, they were watching a painting and she started analyzing it, giving it a backstory and calling the painter "lonely" not knowing it was his painting. He was impressed by her intelligence and started being more open with her. She brought his human side out of him when together. They got closer and closer, she became his comfort, the girl he knows would always be willing to hear his problems and help him deal with it. Klaus had a one-night stand before meeting Camille, it resulted with getting the woman pregnant, because she was a werewolf and he was a hybrid. When he heard of the child, he was willing to let it die, but talking with Camille made him change his mind, have hope that his unborn child would bring him stability. They shared a kiss once, they both developed feelings toward each other, until a day came where Camille was turned into a vampire and was taken away from him.

Klaus didn't have any emotional connection to Hayley, the mother of his child, but for the sake of his child, he always protected her. At the end, he created the family he always wanted, he became caring and thoughtful, an amazing father to his daughter "hope". Alongside Rebecca, Elijah and Hayley, he was happy, for the first time in centuries. He was ruthless when it came to his family's safety. He loved his family, so he decided to sacrifice himself, for his family to have a chance of living and he died happy, knowing that he left behind an amazing child with a strong family to protect her. (*Niklaus Mikaelson*, n.d.)

III.5. insanity

Following Freud's psychoanalytic theory, where there's always an identity crisis, travelling through the id, ego and super ego. Freud believed that humans are driven by life instincts and death instincts; meaning that humans act on survival and enjoy what life gives, like food, shelter and love. Death instincts are shown in the constant self-destructive human behavior that might be seen as their unconscious wish to die.

Freud divides the brain to two parts, the conscious and the unconscious. The conscious is; the things we are aware of and able to bring to the surface. The unconscious is; suppressed feelings and memories that our conscious couldn't handle, hidden urges and desires, the things that we are not aware of, but influence our behavior. As Freud explains it, the human brain is like an iceberg, the tip of the iceberg is the conscious part, a small portion of the mind. The rest of the iceberg hidden under, is the unconscious.

He divides personality to three factors, the id, ego and super ego. The id is the part responsible for our casual urges, it is unconsciously the source of our libidinal energy. The ego is the one responsible of dealing with reality and satisfying the urges of the id in a way that is safe and realistic. The superego is the values and morals that one acquires from family and friends. (*Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theories in Psychology*, n.d.)

III.6. Survival

When one develops trauma and anxiety, the ego creates defense mechanisms to protect itself, it's a natural process that develops our psyche, without our consciousness. Defense mechanisms vary, some of them are:

1. Denial: not accepting reality, nor dealing with painful feelings and events.
2. Repression: choosing to hide feelings and memories in hoped they'd be forgotten, but they come back as unexplainable behaviors.
3. Displacement: placing your painful feelings onto a person or an object.
4. Rationalization: making excuses for unaccepted behaviors solely on personal altering.

5. Reaction formation: acting against feelings or instincts. (Top 10 Defense Mechanisms and Why We Use Them, 2019)

Putting two and two together, shows that klaus's actions were out of his survival instinct that he developed during his father's abuse. He had clear trust issues and it showed when he kept daggering his siblings. It took him a lot, to open up and show his vulnerable side, all his childhood he's been called a weekling, because he had emotions. As a contrastive behavior, he became cruel, that was the only way for him to feel approved. He was only able to let it all go when his daughter was born, she melted his frozen heart.

III.7. Fallen angels

Despite the different backgrounds of klaus and damon, they were still the same. Abused by their father, neglected by their mother, no one was there to help them and no lover ever chose them. Klaus's case was worse and that's why the result was more damaging. It is a commonly known factor amongst people who know psychology, that the thing you hate the most, you will end up becoming. Like damon and klaus became as cruel and vulgar as their fathers, hinting that their approval still mattered to them, but they wouldn't know that consciously.

Both families had each other's backs, even after all the hurt and betrayal each caused. Rebecca was always jealous of the salvatore brother's bond saying:

" the salvatore brothers might fight like dogs, but in the end, they'd die for eachother" to klaus in the murder of one.

Vamperism and the darkness surrounding it, was a salvation for these broken souls, it was what gave them a tough shell, it protected them. We are no different, we might not suck people's blood, nor have supernatural powers, but we also turn into vampires, believed to be the villains, while we are just lost as a result of being raised by the true villains.

III.8. home

As promised above, it's my turn to explain my relativeness to these characters and how I belong. For me these characters demonstrate the stages of life that a broken soul goes through, I believe we are all somewhat mentally unstable as it can be unnoticed by some, for others like me; plays a major role in our developments and journey. It affects how we see the world and ourselves, it makes us over critical of our flaws and seeking perfection, but no matter how much we succeed, there's always a void within. Even though we're so hard on ourselves, yet we people please and accept everyone for who they are, give not only second chances, but millions which always gets us more damage than there already is. Damon and Klaus made me feel at home in their presence, as I see myself in them and it gives me comfort, the way they deal with life isn't the greatest, but the courage and will they have to slowly let go of the past and start healing and learning things that they weren't accustomed to. Step by step they let themselves love and be loved, sane people find it ridiculous for someone to be scared of love and emotion, not finding the ability to love themselves, for us it's a much difficult task to do. It takes courage to let go and dive into the most horrible memories and wounds, to put ourselves again in the moments that traumatized us the most just to convince our inner child that it's safe and there's no reason to feel scared anymore. Turning from human to a vampire is an easy way to seek protection and hide the fact that we're hurt and scared because someone along the way taught us that emotions make you weak, healing from the vampirism though is a war that not many win unfortunately, but the ones who do thrive and conquer are rewarded by an amazing personality and a warrior spirit that accompanies them to live up to their dreams, yes their start might be late but their end is far more fruitful than the ones that had a good life and a head start.

Conclusion

Upon consideration of the facts discussed, the viewers of the vampire diaries series' different opinions were mostly an expression of their exposure to various events and people in life, since we are different people and have different backgrounds, it is natural to accept all likes and dislikes as long as our minds are not one. The series' several characters and stories made the show likeable for everyone, because we all found comfort in the characters, we saw ourselves in. by digging deep within ourselves and putting the loop on our behaviors and opinions, things start making sense to why we do what we do and how our childhood is connected to it and an indirect cause for it. Despite the fact that we can analyze ourselves and others, not many would like going through with it, afraid of what they might find along the way and their inability to accept it.

The Salvatore brothers took the spotlight from the whole show characters, their character was heavy with emotions and stories. These brothers represent a lot of people in real life, they made the vampires feel like real creatures, they gave life and depth to the meaning of vampirism. Both of them spilled blood of hundreds of people, yet they made us sympathize with them and not care much about their wrong doings, but about their soft side and the pain they've been through.

Vampirism is just another word for defense, the common way of protection that someone in fear uses is to attack and that was the case for these brothers. Tasting the desperation and then having power is a dangerous combination, nobody would want to get on their bad side and this case most won't be even on their side or in an approachable distance. Through their suffering and

character developing, it became rather clear that all the bad they've been doing was just a result of being raised by the actual devil and a selfish woman; because those women weren't worthy of the title of a mother.

Slowly these brothers were met by people who understood the struggle and fought to break those barriers because they believed in their true essence that is of kind, loving and caring brothers. Their brotherhood is a bond to be jealous of and wish for, none of those other characters had what they had and yet they were perceived as the villains, at least not by all because I and people like me were interested enough to dig deeper behind those masks, we knew they've just been fighting an unfair fight and maybe; we've seen the reflection of ourselves in them.

The original vampires didn't have it easy either, they actually had the most miserable life of all, being the first immortal beings to exist, forced into a life they didn't want then chased by their own parents; wanting to eliminate them while they were the ones who created them. Klaus was not only an original but a hybrid. Although it wasn't his fault that his mother cheated, his step dad brought it into himself to kill his father and his whole family to then chase him around the world to finish him too. The poor man was always on edge and whenever he let his guard down, he gets betrayed. No love interest ever chose him which is sad because he rarely opens his heart to anyone.

Psychoanalyzing him made a lot of his actions understandable, I actually loves his character since his first appearance, i felt home whenever I watched him, he was a reflection of mine and his strength made me feel motivated to discover mine, and at the end, his character development only made me realize the even the most wicked just need a little push to hold on and move on.

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Appendice

+



[miznicky](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

i read the books first then tried the tv show and to my surprise they are so totally different so ikindastopd-watchn..ithnk since u startdwit the tv show jus cntinue b4 u cnfusyourslfbt u cn try the books tho,thy r gud...

posted over a year ago



[dragon3](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

it depends, because the t.v.show is different from the books. I would read the books or watch the t.v.showseperately. Form an opinion then continue. Alot of people don't like to do both, I do enjoy both, but do them seperately(Read and watch the Series.

posted over a year ago

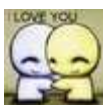


[anna_tvđ](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

the show is definitely better than the books. the characters have way more dynamic on the show. they're multi-dimensional and actually have personalities. just my opinion :)

posted over a year ago



[VanillaDream79](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

well, Ipersonally think that even though there's a LOT of

differences with the show and original books, the books r still pretty good. I totally loved the first 2 books, but the next two were borderline sci-fi in my opinion, so i didn't like the newer ones. Still really awesome anyway :P

posted over a year ago



[joisyhearts](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

I definitely thought the TV show is better than the book in my opinion. If you really like the relationships that happen in the series besides the main love triangle of damon/stefan/elena, you won't like the books because they focus mainly on that love triangle. the books get boring fast, but if you are stelena you should consider reading the first book but i wouldn't go beyond that :)

posted over a year ago



[Mintyllama](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

I loved the books up until Dark Reunion. I really wish they'd ended there. I LOVE L.J. Smith's novels, but in the new books Elena is becoming a slight Mary-Sue :/ . Though I'm not going to stop reading the books because of the main character. The supporting characters are great in the series (∴ This all being said, I liked the show slightly more.

posted over a year ago



[Damon-Bamon12](#) said:

vote as
best
answer

Better than the show, for me they officialy ruined the

show. :D

posted over a year ago

(What's Your Opinion about the Books? - Vampire Diaries Answers - Fanpop, n.d.)