Feminist Theory in James Patterson and Andrew Gross's 3rd Degree

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ABSTRACT

For ages, we know that feminism is just struggling hard to establish an equity status of the sexes regarding the acclaimed beliefs such as socio-economic and political. In simple, it is all about genders having equality-equal rights and opportunities in all sectors of rational existence that is the society in which we live. This paper propounds on highlighting this select detective novel which is a subgenre of crime fiction, and it is one of the acclaimed works of Patterson under his Women Murder Club Series with perspectives of feminism and expansionist theory of Barnett and Hyde. James Patterson is a bestselling American author who introduced this series along with Andrew Gross. The researcher through deep study and association principle identifies that Barnett and Hyde's theory and feminist perspectives can be brought to light and its employment with concrete references, making the detective police procedural to peek and approach through a different lens. It unveils the language-literature boundaries touching the universal women; exhibiting the power and struggle of women in postmillennial times divulging the status through this select novel.

KEY WORDS: FEMINISM, EQUALITY, SOCIO- ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, EXPANSIONIST THEORY.

INTRODUCTION

James Patterson (1947-) is America's one of the best-known and biggest selling writers of all time. He is known for his most popular series of the past two decades: the Alex Cross series, women's murder club series, and maximum ride and very popular for his bestsellers including romance novels and stand-alone thrillers. This particular novel he has collaborated with Andrew Gross (1952), is an American thriller novel writer. He is known for his beautiful portrayal of close family bonds, relationships with characterization by loss or betrayal and high resonance of emotions which help to bring crimes of all forms to focus and cover-ups.

Feminism as said above is just the belief to give all things common between the sexes. According to Political ideology, Feminism involves political, sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference and remarked ably known for its

various movements that come under political, cultural or economic manifestations aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. To challenge the systemic inequalities that women face in daily basis is the goal of feminism. It is often divided in to three main traditions or perspectives usually called liberal, radical and socialist/Marxist feminism known as the Big three schools of feminist thought.

The history of Feminism accounted the movements and ideologies that works to bring the equal rights and to make them in to laws. Although initially it was obtaining the rights alone such as woman's suffrage, better working conditions and abolition of gender double standards (first wave), followed by ending gender discrimination (second wave) politically later, it made very particular in bringing the voice of female writers to write about them, a post-structuralism kind of evolving thing of interpretation of gender and sexuality and focusing on different feminist debates as whether gender roles are based upon social conditioning. Thus the basic modern western history of feminism insinuates the high tension of the times symbolically split in to three waves as famously called with distinct scope which is progressive in nature. These tenets had become a new discipline in formation called the women studies supporting the empowerment of women

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and in English Literature including various literatures of contemporary talk about the power of women.

More specifically this paper wants to take the notion of the third wave as it is credited to Rebecca Walker, who responded to Clarence Thomas, Supreme Court Justice (who is confirmed in harassing Anita Hill during his assistance in education department,) with an article in Ms. Magazine, "Becoming the Third Wave" (1992). Feminist, author and social activist Bell Hooks (b. 1952) wrote as: So I write this as a plea to all women, especially women of my generation: Let Thomas' confirmation serve to remind you, as it did me that the fight is far from over. Let this dismissal of a woman's experience move you to anger. Turn that outrage into political power. Do not vote for them unless they work for us. Do not have sex with them, do not break bread with them, and do not nurture them if they don't prioritize our freedom to control our bodies and our lives. I am not a post-feminism feminist. I am the Third Wave.

She personifies herself by her acclimatizing verse as the representative of Third-Wave. Here in this select novel Jill is muted, she remains as a silent protester and finally silenced forever. Even Third-wave feminism also sought to challenge or avoid what it deemed the second wave's essentialist definitions of femininity, which, third-wave feminists argued, over-emphasized the experiences of upper middle-class white women and failed to speak of non-white female thereby negotiating a space creation within feminist perceptivities' encouraging race-related divisions. Third-wave feminists often focused on "micro-politics". Recently, Standpoint theory a feminist theory views a person's social position influencing their knowledge. This perspective argues that research and theory treat women and the feminist movement as insignificant and refuses to see traditional science as unbiased since 1980s, standpoint feminists have argued that the feminist movement should address global issues (such as rape, incest, and prostitution) and culturally specific issues (such as female genital mutilation in some parts of Africa and Arab societies, as well as glass ceiling practices that impede women's advancement in developed economies) in order to understand how gender inequality interacts with racism, homophobia, classism and colonization in a "matrix of domination".(Wikipedia.org). Lindsay Boxer the central character of this novel is an epitome of practicing this particular ideology- sexual liberation as always voiced out by third wave feminists to be free from all rebukes for having multiple partners if desired including for pleasure seeking. Thus Feminism has made in to being in to a distinct discipline called Women studies giving language to women.

Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical fields. It encompasses work in a variety of disciplines. To understand gender inequality and focusing on gender politics, power relations, and sexuality along with the promotion of women's rights and interests. Themes explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy. Elaine

Showalter's description about feminist theory which has three phases. The first one: "feminist critique", in which the feminist reader examines the ideologies behind literary phenomena; the second one: "gynocriticism", in which the "woman is producer of textual meaning". The last phase: "gender theory", in which the "ideological inscription and the literary effects of the sex/gender system are explored".

Affirming female sexual autonomy and domestic violence are oxymoron in this particular research paper. We know the former is the strategic issue of the feminist voice and they place that women have little control over their bodies and men are superiorly acting; they take women as granted only as an object without feelings and are slaves to be responding whatever men commands. Similarly, the Expansionist theory which is given by Barnett and Hyde shows that the multiple roles bridge the gender gap. Gerson in his article has used this theory and made a case study in which both the sexes have accepted to take the multiple role, inclusive of child care and even the cuisine part, only some men opting for outdoor work but in the case of women shouldering both, and this case study experimentation Gerson made an implication that soon a new policy is made taking in view to adapt shifts.

Lindsay Baxter: Heroine: In Kathleen Gregory Klein's "The Women Detective: Gender and Genre" (1988), we come to see how they struggled hard in framing the sleuth to be a women detective from 1864 till 1987. She opines that there are various struggles, many intriguing situations which showcased the Victorian detective fiction in framing the women detectives'. Even in the postmillennial times it is very challenging to create a woman detective such a dynamic and sound woman. And James Patterson has justified through the character of Lindsay. The main protagonist of the novel series is Lindsay Boxer, the heroine of this novel. The particular novel for the study is the third of the series. In the start of the novel she is introduced as 34 year old divorced San Francisco Police Inspector, living in an apartment all alone, in the Portrero Hill Neighborhood of San Francisco with her dog, Martha.

She was married for three years to her boyfriend – college sweetheart later they parted ways she would call him as the brother as she had neither. Her early life accounts to be a worn-out family her mother died of cancer when she was twenty four; her father left the family when she was thirteen and rarely visits them but so far two times he has come as of the series till 11th novel. She has only one sister named Cat and two nieces Brigid and Meredith. Lindsay happily lives her independent life and has a commanding spirit in her career which is her service to people. She is always busy solving cases and now she has earned a higher position as the Lieutenant for San Francisco Homicide Department. Her attention to cases, her solving techniques and skills keeps her renowned tough woman. She occupies a strong demeanor but being persistent in her work made her love life to be in vacuum.

Though she has love affairs she doesn't end in a happy marriage life. In the previous series, we could see she is married but in the select novel she remains as a divorced woman. In spite of being a workaholic she still has time for her friends and her hobbies. Her friends collectively called as the Women Murder Club Series who aid Lindsay by contributing their subject knowledge, and that is the way they help each other in solving the mystery cum murder cases. In Munt's "Murder by the book" the chapter eight gives a detailed critical analysis, titled as 'An unsuitable genre for a woman?' on the critique of male writers for calling parody as the woman private detective. But Klein advocates realism mode is perfect for feminist crime fiction. Consigning it as parody is ignored by Klein or any such feminist, the heroic element is not only restricted for gender. And thus Patterson makes Lindsay a heroic character, a persistent fighter who brings back a peaceful aura.

Character Sketch of three Women- Members of the Club: Claire Washburn, Cindy Thomas and Jill Bernhardt are the three womenfolk who complete this club as they are the great supporters of Lindsay, the buddies of the detective friend. Starting with Cindy Washburn, she is the San Francisco's Chief Medical Officer; she is well settled in life, married happily with her husband. She is active, down to earth personality, her husband supports her greatly and her introduction begins with her emotional recollections of her old cello which she used to play in her high school days: "Her old cello smiled at the memory" (16). She thinks all the good memories playing the first note and when she plays the second note her husband hums in background in sync with her music, wearing his pyjamas in a half awoken state.

Then they involve in a small challenge and they enjoy the moment: "So you think you can finish off the next passage? That's the tricky part' Is that a dare, Maestro Washburn? (18,3rd D)". Her husband treats her like a friend and he is an epitome of an ideal life partner; respecting her equally and sharing their duties equably. He worries for Claire when she is called to attend a case even on her holidays, and goes little brooding over her seniors for making a call, this shows how he misses her presence badly and cares about her health. Dr. Claire is Boxer's Pal, always for her, even after the blast when she hears Boxer is in danger she comes to the spot and helps in tracing out the cause of death which takes the crime story to be handled in different way.

The next member is Cindy Thomas, who is the youngest of all three. She is a dynamic chronicler especially dealing with crime news for the fictional San Francisco Register – Chronicle though earlier in the series she had worked in the metro section. In the select novel she discusses with Lindsay of the anonymous mail stating all the political tragic events a revolt that happen simply branded with August Spies but in her mail direct contact is made to her. Cindy is separated from Aaron some four months ago and now she is successfully leading her life engaged with her busy work. She is perhaps the trump card for the crime doers who inform to her their intentions. The

reason for choosing her is really astonishing she is an honest reporter and is put under examination whether she still remains the same. So far her life goes smooth until the intervention of these outrageous murderers contacting her. Her support to Lindsay is remarkably appreciated in finding the culprit. She is found to have eidetic memory which only few adults have; this too helps a lot in this case.

Jill Bernhardt is the Deputy District Attorney of San Francisco works in the city hall. She is married to Rick Bernhardt, but she is not happily living even though it was a love marriage. Earlier in the novel Lindsay encounters Jill in a jogging, enjoying her comeback of having lost her five month baby due to Rick's abusive attitude. They both laugh and enjoy their short time coz Jill didn't even have time for a coffee with boxer as she always thinks of Rick. Just then when they depart Boxer sees her sweatshirt the dark bruises, like fingermarks (023rdD). As the story progresses his abusing activities take an upstand where Lindsay goes and questions Rick: "I saw the bruises. Jill told us what's been going on" (114). Her domestic life is a total mess but in her career she is the queen, sound and sharpest girl in the city. Her prosecuting skill usurps any opposing person but she is always for the good side that attitude shows her sincere and honest nature. She helps Lindsay in getting the files suited in the court.

Feminist Perspectives And Expansionist Theory: The Language –Literature studies as the theme suggests, an interdisciplinary field which gives the nuances or skills to analytically understand any literary work of text or art. Feminist or feministic perspectives nowadays have begotten the universal common language – a voice. No matter of all the feminist movements earlier, even after the uprising of fourth wave various short waves are rising then and there , a perfect example supporting this is the Me Too movement, which gained popularity some two years ago. This improvement on women stand is really appreciating but still there is always some lacunae, the heroines in our select novel are the illustrious to this statement. Some can decide their life and live peacefully but some have no mental peace and even physical space. So Jill, like character succumbs to male chauvinism, and similarly Cindy and Lindsay lack true emotional support but Dr. Claire is complete in the version of feminism.

The Expansionist theory given in American Psychologist on October 2001 by Rosalind Chait Barnett and Janet Shibley Hyde tell the versions of all theories associated with gender work and family – the common theories such as Freudian psychoanalytic theory, sociological and evolutionary approaches considering all this Barnett and Hyde culminated the Expansionist theory an inductive version sufficing that multiple roles are beneficial to both sexes, similarly the gender differences is not wide unless it is duplicated by cultural norms as designed by the upper hand. The multiple roles make them to gain social support and good health outcomes, breaking the gender role ideology the solution to this select novel as well as to the universal woman.

If Rick has seen Jill's sacrifice he wouldn't behave in this abusive manner and rely on her even on small works ; being assertive by loading all his duties to her, similarly in the case of Lindsay and Cindy had their love partners understood them they would not leave them simply for the cause of their job. Thus Feminism is evolutionary, a continuing flux keeps on banging and in support of the new theories like Expansionist theory we could draw up the solution and put an end card to domestic violence and crimes against women. This club succeeds in cracking down the real culprit who has been murdering all the political leaders in turns accidentally Jill too gets killed in a unutterable way, the reason behind is irrational in order to seek revenge on his brother's death who is a soldier was branded as terrorist by the political corrupted great men, his professor brother turns in to real terrorism group.

Summing Up: In contemporary times of us, fourth – wave feminism is “defined by technology” combining politics, psychology and spirituality in an all-embracing visualization of revolution. All social media are focusing in Feministing to challenge misogyny and further gender inequality like advertising. Though many awareness campaigns and fasting movements happen in focusing on street and workplace harassment, campus sexual assault and rape culture, scandals involving harassment, abuse, and murder of women and girls have galvanized the movement but still the result is not so fruitful still crime against is prevailing like a wildfire. Feminists have had and are working to ensure access to legal abortions and social integration, and to protect women and girls from rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence, but still these things are unceasing as in the case of Jill Bernhardt's life in this novel. Even changes in female dress standards and acceptable physical activities for females have often been part of feminist movements. The researcher has taken a crime novel and viewed through the glass of feminism, which surpasses the language literature barriers touching our hearts.

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