

PROTAGONIST'S ROUND CHARACTERS IN JOHN GREEN'S NOVEL *PAPER TOWNS*

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Abstract

This research was aimed at seeing the protagonist's characters portrayed in the novel *Paper Towns* by John Green. The research applied the theory of Flat and Round Character proposed by E. M. Forster (1993). This research follows qualitative descriptive method proposed by Creswell (2003), an effective model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from being highly involved in the actual experiences. The result of the analysis shows that the significant protagonist's characters in the novel are distinctive self-disclosure, great ambition and affection. All the distinctive characters drive the protagonist to break the string with the people around her and bring a conflict with her parents.

Keywords: protagonist, character, self-disclosure, ambition, affection

1. Introduction

Paper Towns is the novel where the writer wants to discuss one of the contents in it. It is written by John Green, especially for young adult readers, and published on October 16, 2008, by Dutton Books. This novel is an author's idea to describe an imaginative place in the world called Paper Towns. It is not a real place, but a place name on the map. It is thought to create something that others want to make real. The author of the novel gives an idea that someone must try to understand a person for who they really are rather than who others believe they can.

John Michael Green is an American author and YouTube content creator. After graduating from college, Green spent five months working as a student chaplain at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, while enrolled at the University of Chicago Divinity School (although he never actually attended the school). He intended to become an Episcopal priest, but his experiences of working in a hospital with children suffering from life-threatening illnesses inspired him to become an author, and later to write *The Fault in Our Stars*. Becoming an author, he won the 2006 Printz Award for his debut novel, *Looking for Alaska*, and his fourth solo novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*, debuted at number one on *The New York Times* Best Seller list in January 2012. The 2014 film adaptation opened at number one at the box office. In 2014, Green was included in *Time* magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential People in the World. Another film based on a Green novel, *Paper Towns*, was released on July 24, 2015.

Character, as one of the intrinsic elements, has an important role in building a fictional story. At this point, character will be able to answer the questions about "who" in the plot. In fact, according to Nurgiyantoro (2010: 164), a discussion about the character along with its

characterization is more interesting for people than one about the plot. In case of fiction, character is a representation of human being, or occasionally another creature, is represented in a form of text. The character directly supports and creates the story as the player in the story itself.

Abrams (1993:32) says characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it-the dialogue-and from what they do-the action. Character is the person in the story and refers to the people, which has authoritarian through the utterance and the action.

2. Literary Review

2.1 Character

Character belong to people in a story that is created to make story alive. Character has to be suitable with the story situation happen in it, and the character will be just changed if there is something, which cause it. Character makes work increase with various depictions. With different depicting characters, it makes interesting work even some characters make it loved or dislike by the public.

Henderson (2006) defines character refers to the people authors create to inhabit their stories. Character should be believable and consistent. Being believable means not that all characters are like people we have known but they are believable in the context of the story. Consistently, it does not requires that the characters remain exactly the same, but that any change in character be sufficiently by what happen to them in a story.

2.2 Types of Character

The essential function of character is to make the story in the novel meaningful. Therefore, characterization plays important role in giving the main or peripheral character selected behavior or typical of personality. In his book "Aspect of the Novel", Forster defines two basic types of characters, their qualities, functions, and importance for the development of the novel: flat characters and around characters. According to Forster, the definition about flat character describes below Forster's most important contribution to the aesthetic of the novel; the distinction between 'flat' and 'round' characters.

"Flat characters are constructed round a single idea or quality and can be expressed in a single sentence, round characters are multi-faceted and unpredictable. For foster, the test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in convincing way both flat and round characters can coexist in the some novel. Flat characters have advantage of being easily recognized and convenient for their creators"

(E.M. Foster, 1993:47:54)

Based on the theories proposed by E.M. Forster (1993), it can be said that flat characters have two basic personalities and they do not make any significant surprise in the story of the novel. The personalities do not make any significant surprise in the story of the novel. The personality mind, behavior and motivation of flat character can be easily known in a period time of story. Even though this kind of character is plain and has tendency to be monotone, it can make memorable impression into the reader's mind by the hands of an expert author through individualizing detail of appearance, gesture or speech.

2.2.1 Flat Character

A flat character is usually more fully developed, while a static usually at the end of the story. According to Henderson (2006) *"Flat character: we see only one aspect of their personalities, presumably because the author does not to reveal more about them for the purpose of the story. Flat character is usually a static character: that means they do not change"*. In other words, flat characters are figures that have only one major personality.

Perrine and Thomas (1988) define flat character are characterized by one or two traits; they can be summed in a sentence. It can be known that flat character has more than one personality. This character can be also understood only in a single sentence because the character just has one or two personalities.

This character has two dimensional characters or two dominant personalities. The character is simple and predictable. The viewer or the reader can predict what will happen with this character during the story. Simple means the character is not complicated and easy to be understood.

2.2.2 Round Character

Round character is a greater achievement than a flat character, round characters change, grow, and possess a credible personality. According to Perrine and Thomas (1988), "Round characters are complex and many sided; they might on essay for full analysis. This explanation means that round character is a figure who has many character traits. It also needs further analysis to know her or his character.

Pickering and Hooper (1962) state, "Round are just the opposite. They a number of qualities and traits and are complex multidimensional characters of considerable intellectual depth who have capacity to grow and change. In other words, round character according to his definition is the opposite of flat character. This type of character has many character and complexities. It is not only about intelligence of the character, but also about the character's emotion that can undergo change during the story. This character is able to make the reader pay attention to her or him.

The definition above inform that round character is a character that has multidimensional character. This character is more complex because it has many side characters than flat character. It also need more analysis to reveal its character. The character portrayed in the novel belongs to the round characters, they are self-disclosure, ambitious person and great affection.

2.2.2.1 Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is a process of communication by which one person reveals information about himself or herself to another. The information can be descriptive or evaluative, and can include thoughts, feelings, aspirations, goals, failures, successes, fears, and dreams, as well as one's likes, dislikes, and favorites. Self-disclosure is seen as a useful strategy for information with others (Greene, 2006). By sharing information, we become more intimate with other people and our interpersonal relationships are strengthened. According to Devito (1997) Self-disclosure is not simply providing information to another person. Instead, scholars define self-disclosure as sharing information with others that they would not normally know or discover that self-disclosure involves risk and vulnerability on the part of the person sharing the information.

A useful way to viewing self-disclosure is to use The Johan Window. The Johan Window theory is a way of showing how much information you know about yourself and how many others know about you. The window contains four panes, as shown below;

1. Open Pane includes what everyone can see: your physical looks, attitude, motivation, value, and way of live.
2. Blind Pane includes information that others can see in you, that you cannot see: imagine to be true, shortcoming, talents, faults.
3. Hidden Pane contains information you wish to keep private, secrets, hopes, fantasy.
4. Unknown Pane includes information that nobody yet knows: untapped potential, undiscovered interests.

The four quadrant panes represent various ways information that can be seen and observed, both by yourself and by others. Through self-disclosure, we open and close the panes, so we can become more intimate with others.

2.2.2.2 Ambitious

Ambition is one of those traits many of us do not have enough of, If at all. You cannot blame the majority of people for not having any either, though it's not an excuse, Through out our childhood, we are encouraged to get an education, get a job, and "just" get by. We are encouraged to "just" have enough, do enough, and achieve an average amount. But there is no ambition in achieving an "average" amount.

Ambition is about thinking massive, and having an insane amount of drive to push you towards those goals. Any ambition we have as kids gets sucked out of us by the education system, not to mention our parents and those around us who lack ambition.

Being ambitious is a very respectable quality in today's society. People with this personality trait are proven to achieve higher business, family or even hobby-related goals. By definition, it means being persistent and generally striving for success, attainment, and accomplishment.

2.2.2.3 Affection

Affection, attraction, infatuation, or fondness is a "disposition or state of mind or body" that is often associated with a feeling or type of love. It has given rise to a number of branches of philosophy and psychology concerning, emotion, disease, influence, and state of being. "Affection" is popularly used to denote a feeling or type of love, amounting to more than goodwill or friendship. Even a very simple demonstration of affection can have a broad variety of emotional reactions, from embarrassment to disgust to pleasure and annoyance. It also has a different physical effect the giver and the receiver.

Affection is compared with passion. However, on various grounds that it does not involve anxiety or excitement and that it is comparatively inert and compatible with the entire absence of the sensuous element, it is generally and usefully distinguished from passion [clarification needed]. In this narrower sense, the word has played a great part in ethical systems, which have spoken of the social or parental affections as in some sense a part of moral obligation. For a consideration of these and similar problems, which depend ultimately on the degree in which the affections are regarded as voluntary,

Affection can be communicated by looks, words, gestures, or touches. Affectionate behavior may have evolved from parental nurturing behavior due to its associations with hormonal rewards. Such affection has been shown to influence brain development in infants,

Expressions of affection can be unwelcome if they pose implied threats to one's well being. If welcomed, affectionate behavior may be associated with various health benefits. It has been proposed that positive sentiment increases the propensity of people to interact and that familiarity gained through affection increases positive sentiment among them.

3. Research Method

This paper is a qualitative research method which helps analyzing this research. Creswell (2003) defines qualitative research can also be described as an effective model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from being highly involved in the actual experiences. It could be said that descriptive qualitative research is a research method in which the qualitative data collected would be analyzed and interpreted descriptively.

There are some ways to collect the research data. Based on the prescribed procedures, there must be some steps to collect the data were conducted: (1) reading the novel along with identifying any data from the study that are categorized as the subject matter of the analysis, (2) finding some passages and dialogues related to the theories of analysis, (3) collecting some passages and dialogues related to the analysis, (4) classifying the data into some points which are include as the subject matter of the analysis.

4. Discussion

In the discussion, the writer presents the analysis of the data that available in the novel *PAPER TOWNS* by John Green. The analysis is presented mostly about the characters of the protagonist in the following: distinctive self-disclosure, ambition, and great affection.

4.1 Distinctive Self-Disclosure

The protagonist has a different way to open herself with others. A type of communication where individuals reveal information about themselves that is usually hidden or not shared with others. The term self-disclosure refers to the conscious disclosure of information Devito (2011). In the Paper Towns novel, the protagonist tells the secret or fact about her that previously no one knew what she wanted to do as seen below;

“You can’t divorce Margo the person from Margo the body. You can’t see one without seeing the other. You looked at Margo’s eye send you saw both their blueness and their Margo-ness. In the end, you could not say that Margo Roth Spiegelman was fat, or that she was skinny, any more than you can say that the Eiffel Tower is or is not lonely. Margo’s beauty was a kind of sealed vessel of perfection....” (Green, 2010: 50)

The quotation above is delivered to Margo’s friend, Quentin. According to him, Margo is a good looking person, even though she is pretty but there is something more beautiful. Her features are different from the other girls. She has blue eyes and long brown hair. She likes an Eiffel Tower that makes us wonder. A huge number of people visit Eiffel Tower, but when we just enjoy from a distance it is like lonely. It is almost the same as Margo’s sweetness, if we look in the distance we never know how she looks.

Margo always conveys something in her action. This is proof that she indirectly reveals herself. The goal is always done through code even though not everyone understands its meaning. The purpose of the information provided is clear enough and proves Margo’s original identity. For example, when Margo does a revenge mission, she always leaves the initials “M”.

In an elegant motion – the kind you associate with calligraphy or Zorro – she spray-painted the letter M onto the wall above the desk. (Green, 2010: 52)

And then, just because she's Margo Roth Spiegelman, she took a moment to carefully spray-paint a lovely M on the part of the window that wasn't shattered. (Green, 2010: 59)

I damn near landed on Margo, who was spray-painting an M on to the vinyl siding of Chuck's house, and then we both grabbed our shoes and hauled ass to the minivan. (Green, 2010; 79)

The Margo's initial tries to show information about herself to the victims. Generally, some smugglers will never show who they are, unless there is a specific purpose. In this case, Margo tries to prove she could disappoint others. She tries to makes her boyfriend and her friend upset her. Margo make them irritated so they know how upset Margo was with them. It can be seen that Margo is a vengeful. She will hate people who hurt her even she can take revenge on them.

"Interesting," I said. Margo's had said that Margo's clues never led anywhere, but I knew now that Margo had created a chain of clues – and she had seemingly made them for me. I immediately thought of her in the SunTrust Building, telling me I was better when I showed confidence. (Green, 2010: 130)

Margo has devised a plan to travel forever. She has made a few instructions that would be left as a message. Quentin is the person who is trusted to accept Margo's instructions. When the revenge mission is carried out together, there is a trust that is built between Margo and Quentin. In this case, Quentin and non-verbal communication will lock intense. In all factors that affect interpersonal communication, this is the most important factor. When someone believes in someone, it is easier to open or do self-disclosure. This trust determines the effectiveness of communication.

Margo thinks that the only person who could guess the instructions is Quentin. Margo left the clues when she left from home, there were; Poster from singer Woody Gotrie, a poem titled own song by Walt Whitman, a subdivision, map and city called These instructions are indirectly conveying information about Margo. Some of these instructions are Margo's openness to Quentin.

4.2 Ambitious Girl

Ambition as a person's desire for recognition and importance is realized in various spheres of human activity, manifested in certain personality traits and characteristics of behavior, specified in other motives and goals of person, interrelated with other psychological characteristics of person.

Margo has planned several things to revenge. Margo has eleven plans that have been drawn up before she asks to Quentin for helping her mission.

"So like I said, I need a car. Also, I need you to drive it, because I have to do eleven things tonight, and at least five of them involve a get away man," (Green, 2010: 26)

The plans are well structured. It proves how smart and creative she is. She led the plan and directed how Quentin should act. She should take advantage of its ability to something better and not just for Some of the plans are:

"Sir, I think you should know that your daughter is currently having sex with Jason Worthington in your basement." And then I hung up. Part Two: accompli. (Green, 2010: 40)

The quotation above is one of Margo's plans. This one becomes the second plan of her plans. This plan is called Becca, Jase's cheating girl. Margo informs Becca's parents about their daughter who was having sex with Jase in the basement of his home. It means that Margo's revenge for Becca is to tell her bad attitude to her parents.

Becca's parents heads to the basement of his house to check the truth that Margo says. Not long, Jase looks bare-chested using only underwear squirming out of the window from the basement window and running fast to the yard.

"Here he comes," Margo whispered, and I didn't know what she meant until, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a shirtless Jason Worthington wiggling out of the basement window. He took off sprinting across the lawn, naked but for his boxer shorts, and as he approached I jumped up and took a picture of him, completing Part Three. (Green, 2010: 50)

The above quotation shows her the next plans. The plan is to capture photographed Jase fleeing from Becca's basement wearing only underwear. This was done by Margo to embarrass Jase to their schoolmates because he was caught having sex with his cheating parents.

4.3 Great Affection

The other Margo's character in the novel is about her great affection. The first Margo's great affection is about her way of life. Margo is a "Yolo" believer. Yolo means you only live once. Margo ford that she is still alive, but overall, it is not permanent. Every choice she makes big or small affects what happens in her life and sometimes other people. If she makes a bad decision, it can hurt others and her too. You only live when you die you cannot live that life anymore. Another way to see it is that "You only live once" just go live. She tries to tell someone that they must try to experience all the pleasures the world has to offer them and not let anything prevent anything prevent you from enjoying the life you have now. You only have one life so if you do not enjoy it, then you don't get another chance.

"...but the whole allure of a life rightly lived – college and job and husband and babies and all that bullshit". (Green, 2010: 295)

From the quotation above, Margo believes that normal life is boring. Someone feels happy when graduating from school or getting a job with enough salary, but not for her. She does not need to graduate or then work and then marry and have children and educate their children. It is not free for adventure. Happiness for her is not created by things like that, but how to enjoy a life full of challenges. She planned something and executed it perfectly. She always thinks about what will happen as soon as she runs her plan. She always thinks about what will happen after the plan ends. Margo is someone who is always received as a result of a well.

The second of Margo's character about great affection is about her family. Margo never realizes how the people around her take care of her. Margo is a selfish girl. She always does

what she thinks is right and never cares about others. She thinks what she is doing is right and she does not need to listen to others arguing or advising her.

“But God, these days, it’s like living in a fascist dictatorship.” (Green, 2010: 39)

The quotation above proves how Margo hates herself. She does not approve the rules of life. The official rules of her parents are considered as dictators of her life. This is why she cannot stand at home. Running is the best way for Margo to recycle her mind.

“Hey, it’s Margo. . . . I’m in Agloe, New York, with Quentin. . . .Uh. . . .well, no, Mom, I’m just trying to think of a way to answer your question honestly. . . .Mom, come on,I don’t know, Mom. . . I decided to move to a fictitious place. That’s what happened. . . Yeah, well, I don’t think I’m headed that way, regardless. . . . Can I talk to Ruthie? . . . Hey, buddy. . . . Yeah, well, I loved you first. . . . Yeah, I’m sorry. It was a mistake. I thought – I don’t know what I thought, Ruthie, but anyway it was a mistake and I’ll call now. I may not call Mom, but I’ll call you. . . . Wednesday?. . . . You’re busy on Wednesday. Hmm. Okay. What’s a good day for you?. . . . Tuesday it is. . . . Yeah, every Tuesday. . . .Yeah, including this Tuesday. I Margo closes her eyes tight, her teeth clenched. (Green, 2010: 168)

Margo loves her sister more than the parents. It is evident that she was just going to call her sister rather than his mother. It could be because Margo has more confidence with her sister than with her mother. Ruthie, Margo's sister never forbids any Margo does. A sister who always does what her sister says.

The last Margo's affection is Quentin. In other words, she loves Quentin very much, and it is proven by the secret. Margo has a secret that has been stored for ten years. This is the story of her and Quentin. It is written in her black journal.

This goes back a long way. When I was in, like, fourth grade, I started writing a story in this notebook. It was kind of a detective story. (Green, 2010: 289)

She goes distressed, and Quentin becomes a heroic man. They, along with Myma Mountweazel, go to face a murderer. She finishes the story in fifth grade elementary school. She does not tell the story until she moves to New York. She waits ten years.

Margo always hopes to have a friend for that adventure. She always hopes there is someone who has the same thoughts with her. Someone who always wants to accompany her is Quentin Jackobsen. When they were 9 years old, they found a dead man lying under a tree, Margo hoped to investigate with Quentin and find out who the killer was and why he killed. However, Quentin prefers to be someone who is not adventurous. He does not want to be involved in problems that should not be faced.

As dashed-together escape plans replete with clues I thought it was pretty impressive. But mostly I was surprised that she'd wanted me involved in her original plan, too. (Green, 2010: 288)

From the quotation above, when Quentin finds Margo in she still has hope for Quentin be with her. Margo hopes Quentin will be interested after she showed how absorbed the adventure. She carries out the mission of revenge that very adrenaline and giving clues that are difficult to be solved by him.

5. Conclusion

After analyzing the topic in Paper Towns novel by John Green, Margo Roth Spiegelman is the protagonist who has a good character and tries to show who she really is seen from her characters. She is an ambitious girl and has a unique way of expressing who she is. The writer can also conclude that Margo describes a unique character but still has an affection for people and for her way of life. She is mysterious and contrasts with others. She is a special girl who believes in Yolo. Yolo means you only live once. She does not want anyone to organize her life. On the other hand, Margo's ego can be seen when she tries to carry out all the plans she made, starting to the plan of revenge and the plan to leave home. Margo wants freedom but she also does not want to hurt others with her attitude. Her pleasure is superiority rather than making others happy. This research also found some of Margo's characteristics to show how she really was. She has many secret of her characteristics that no one has ever known. She proves to the people that she could do anything without them. She can be whatever she wants.

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