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Presentation

Workshop

Male / Female / Diverse

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Suicidal Behavior in Modern Literature

Abstract text up to 15 lines in English:

Introduction : Suicidal behavior has been a recurrent theme in literature throughout history, reflecting the profound psychological and social complexities that surround this topic. In modern literature, authors often use this theme to explore the inner turmoil and societal pressures faced by individuals. This essay will delve into the portrayal of suicidal behavior in modern literature, examining the methods used, the results portrayed, and the underlying messages conveyed.

Method : The analysis of modern literature's portrayal of suicidal behavior involves a thorough examination of select works from the 20th and 21st centuries. We will explore how different authors represent this sensitive subject, focusing on their literary techniques, character development, and thematic choices. The chosen works include Sylvia Plath's "The Bell Jar," David Foster Wallace's "Infinite Jest," Jay Asher's "Thirteen Reasons Why," J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye," and Jonathan Franzen's "The Corrections."

Results : Sylvia Plath's "The Bell Jar": In this semi-autobiographical novel, Plath's protagonist, Esther Greenwood, navigates the throes of clinical depression and suicidal ideation. Through Plath's use of vivid, confessional prose, readers are offered an intimate perspective into the relentless struggle of a young woman battling inner demons. The novel captures the hopelessness and isolation that can drive individuals to contemplate self-destruction, making it a quintessential work in the depiction of suicide in modern literature. David Foster Wallace's "Infinite Jest": While addiction takes center stage in this complex narrative, Wallace's exploration extends to the interconnectedness of addiction and suicidal tendencies. Through a multifaceted narrative structure and a wide array of characters, he illuminates the desperation that can lead individuals to self-destructive choices. The work underscores the bleakness of human existence, adding a layer of depth to the portrayal of suicide. Jay Asher's "Thirteen Reasons Why": This young adult novel adopts a unique approach by narrating the reasons behind Hannah Baker's suicide in her own voice. Asher's work not only explores the aftermath of suicide but also raises questions about the societal factors that contribute to it, such as bullying and social isolation. The book encourages readers to consider the impact of their actions on the mental health of others. J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye": A classic in the realm of literary works that grapple with adolescent despair, Salinger's novel follows the teenage protagonist, Holden Caulfield, as he grapples with feelings of alienation and disillusionment. Though not explicit in its depiction of suicidal thoughts, the novel delves into Holden's mental and emotional turmoil, capturing the uncertainty and confusion that can lead to a sense of hopelessness. Jonathan Franzen's "The Corrections": Franzen's work provides a family-centric perspective on the theme of suicide. Alfred Lambert's struggle with Parkinson's disease and his eventual decision to end his own life presents a complex portrayal of the intersection between physical illness and mental anguish, making it a poignant exploration of the subject.

Conclusion : Suicidal behavior in modern literature serves as a lens through which authors address the intricate and often stigmatized issues surrounding mental health, despair, and societal pressures. These literary works provide insight into the internal struggles of their characters, shedding light on the emotional complexities that lead to suicidal thoughts and actions. Through their stories, these authors contribute to a broader dialogue about the importance of mental health awareness and the need for support systems to help individuals facing these challenges. Modern literature continues to be a powerful platform for examining, understanding, and discussing suicidal behavior and its underlying causes, pushing us to confront these issues with empathy and compassion.