

Kay Scarpetta vs. Annika Bengtzon

- a Study of Differences and Similarities in Two Fictional Characters

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Introduction

A genuine interest in literature in general and crime literature in specific is the foundation of this essay. This essay will study the similarities and differences between two female fictional characters created by American author Patricia Cornwell and Swedish author Liza Marklund. In order to fulfil the purpose with this essay, to study two female fictional characters, I will use three texts from each author as primary sources. The texts are part of a series and are chosen to fit the purpose of this essay, however the other books in the series are suitable for comparison as well, but the primary sources had to be limited into a manageable amount. Furthermore, the purpose is to provide a reasonable analysis on the findings in the texts and suitable literature and internet sources will be used as secondary sources.

The choice to analyse the fictional characters, Kay Scarpetta created by Patricia Cornwell, and Annika Bengtzon created by Liza Marklund is due to the fact that the authors share lots of components in their works and are celebrated for their authorship, their books have been translated into several languages, and are sold in millions of copies. The books are easy to get hold of: you can buy them in the supermarket, borrow them at your local library and if you go to London, borrow the books at a library there.¹

An autobiographical note provides adequate information and background on the authors and their work. Chapter 1 will give a definition on the genre crime fiction and sub genres as well as give a historical perspective and background to the rising of crime literature through time. Chapter 2 examine the fictional characters, Kay Scarpetta and Annika Bengtzon in areas of work and relationships and will be compared and analysed in Chapter 3. The focus in the discussion is on differences and similarities in the characters in terms of work, relationships, family, personalities and events happening in their lives.

¹ www.londonlibraries.org

Autobiographical note on the authors - Patricia Cornwell and Liza

Marklund

Patricia Cornwell

Patricia Cornwell was born on June 9, 1956, in Miami, Florida, and grew up in Montreat, North Carolina. In 1979 she graduated from Davidson College and began to work at the *Charlotte Observer*. She started out by listing television programmes and advanced to writing feature articles covering the police beat. She won an investigative reporting award from the North Carolina Press Association, and gained the award for writing a series of articles on prostitution and crime. From 1984 to 1990 Cornwell worked as a technical writer and a computer analyst at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Richmond, Virginia.

Cornwell has written sixteen forensic science novels with *Kay Scarpetta* as the main character, and this essay will look into three of those texts; *Black Notice* (1999), *The Last Precinct* (2000) and *Blow Fly* (2003). She has also written another series of books starring the main character *Andy Brazil*, and some non-fictional books, one about the serial killer *Jack The Ripper*, and two cookbooks in the name of *Kay Scarpetta*.

Patricia Cornwell co-wrote and co-produced the movie *ATF* for ABC, and she is often interviewed on national television as a forensic consultant. She helped found the Virginia Institute of Forensic Science and Medicine and is the former Director of Applied Forensic Science at the National Forensic Academy.

In May 2007 she was awarded an honorary doctorate of letters by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, where she is a Senior Fellow at its International Crime Scene Academy. In the citation for her honorary degree, she was praised for “enlightening society through commitment to the principles of academic excellence and understanding for all.” She is also a member of the Harvard-affiliated McLean Hospital’s National Council, where she is an advocate for psychiatric research. Her work is translated into thirty-two languages across more than thirty-five countries, and she is regarded as one of the major international best-selling authors. Cornwell is also well known for her philanthropic efforts in animal rescue, college scholarships, literacy, and criminal justice.²

² www.patriciacornwell.com

Although Cornwell is not Scarpetta, the similarities are striking. Cornwell like her character, Scarpetta has attended thousands of autopsies, learned to scuba dive and kept up with trends and advancements in forensic science as well as law enforcement. Scarpetta's niece, Lucy Farinelli rides motorcycles, flies helicopters and shoot guns and Cornwell learned to do all these things too. There is a lot of Cornwell in Scarpetta and a lot of Scarpetta in Cornwell.³ Apart from the three novels under discussion in this essay she has also published texts such as *All That Remains* (1992), *Cause of Death* (1996) and *Trace* (2004).

Liza Marklund

Liza Marklund was born in 1962 in a small town in the north of Sweden. She is a writer, journalist and an ambassador for UNICEF. Her authorship consists of nine novels and one factual study book. Her books have sold 7.5 million copies and are published in thirty languages. Marklund is currently writing a series of books with the character, Annika Bengtzon an investigative reporter, playing a central role. There have been eight novels published and many have achieved international success.

This essay will examine the following texts: *The Bomber* (1998), *Studio 69* (1999) and *Prime Time* (2002). Marklund took her first born daughter's name, the last name of a former boss, some of her own characteristics and created Annika Bengtzon, crime reporter. Marklund doesn't care if her heroine is liked or not. "*I wanted her to be vulnerable, to cry easily, to love her children. But also to be ambitious, clumsy, aggressive, make mistakes and get away with them. I looked everywhere in books for this kind of woman, but I couldn't find her.*"⁴ and this is why Marklund created her own character. There is a lot of Marklund in Bengtzon and a lot of Bengtzon in Marklund, but Marklund points out that they are definitely not the same person. She uses her own picture on the book covers, simply because she likes the way she looks.

³ http://www.usatoday.com/life/books/news/2008-12-01-patricia-cornwell_N.htm

⁴ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2005/jun/12/crimebooks.features>

According to Marklund herself, the novels take place in her head and she just puts them down on paper. Therefore the novels do not occur in a time line, it might be surprising to find out the background to an event after it actually happened. Some readers consider her style of language to be influenced by her career writing for the evening tabloids.⁵

Two of her novels starring Annika Bengtzon have been filmed with the well known Swedish actress Helena Bergström as Annika Bengtzon. Marklund, as well as Cornwell, started as a journalist and she was an investigative news reporter for ten years and worked as a chief editor for five years. Marklund is known, in Sweden, for her commitment to women- and children's rights. She has achieved several awards for her work as a writer as well as for her commitment in social areas. Marklund has also worked as a presenter on TV shows and in documentary films on TV. She is currently living in Spain and in Stockholm.⁶

As mentioned earlier, the series of novels starring Annika Bengtzon has not been written in the order in which the events in the novels take place, and three of them were not translated into English in January, 2009. The chronological order is as follows:

- *Studio 69* (1999) – takes place eight years before the action of *The Bomber*
- *Paradise* (2000) – a direct continuation of *Studio 69*
- *Prime time* (2002) – the action occurs between *Paradise* and *The Bomber*
- *The Bomber* (1998)
- *Den röda vargen* (2003) – an independent story which picks up from the end of *The Bomber*
- *Nobels testamente* (2006) – takes place some months after *The Red Wolf*
- *Livstid* (2007) – a direct sequel to "Nobels testamente"
- "En plats i solen" (2008) - a direct sequel to "Livstid"

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liza_Marklund

⁶ www.piratforlaget.se/forfattare/lizamarklund (own translation)

Chapter 1 - A Historical Background to Crime Novels and Forensic

Science Novels

Today access to books, TV-series and film is easy; most people have access to media and are able to participate. It is possible to buy books and DVD's at the supermarket and the cinemas are showing films several times a day. Blood, murder and crime have always fascinated readers and the genre of detective stories has been extended to crime novels and forensic science novels. The number of TV-series based on murders and crime is increasing and a new group of series based on forensic science has emerged. The TV-series *C.S.I Crime Scene Investigation Las Vegas* became popular very quickly and several spin-offs are now appearing. Real life crimes are also appealing to a large number of people and books and films are made about actual murders and alleged murderers. Jack The Ripper, a killer active in London in 1888, the Menendez' brothers, Manson, Ted Bundy and the OJ Simpson case, to mention just a few, are non-fictional crimes that fascinate people who then buy books and watch films about these real life murderers.

Crime Fiction (2005)⁷ by John Scaggs, presents a historical perspective on crime in literature. Scaggs is a Lecturer in the Department of English at Mary Immaculate College in Limerick, Ireland. This text is a comprehensive overview and an essential guide for all who are studying crime fiction. The book provides a survey and description of crime literature and its characteristics.

Literary critics have been eager to give Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849) credit for the rise of detective stories, a genre that has been extended into several subgenres such as crime novels and forensic science novels. However, some critics claim that crime in literature emerged much earlier, that it in fact began as early as in the Bible, in the Book of Daniel among other stories.⁸ This essay will mainly discuss modern literature and female authors, but will also provide a historical perspective leading up to present day representations.

⁷ John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*. (New York: Rutledge, 2005)

⁸ --- 7-8

In *Crime Fiction*, Scaggs gives a detailed description of the genre crime fiction. He claims that the genre includes the following sub-genres and characteristics.

- Country –house mystery: a sub genre, in which a crime takes place in a restricted area, a country-house, a ship or trains.
- Detective fiction: has a focus on detection and a detective who follows a particular method.
- Gothic fiction: closely resembles crime fiction, its characteristics are castles, desolate landscapes, dark tales of mystery, horror and the supernatural.
- Hard-boiled fiction: the style is terse, tough and cynical and the story is often one of violence, sex and/or betrayal.
- Historical crime fiction: a sub genre set in a distinct historical period but was not written at that time.
- Locked-room mystery: a mystery murder takes place in a locked and sealed room.
- Police procedural: focus on the police work, investigations and forensic technology and often has a number of policemen working on several crimes.

The early modern crime novels were often written about mystery and murders and had a male detective hero that saved the day. Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* and Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot* are known characters in detective stories in which solving the crime was the essential task. Agatha Christie also wrote detective stories about *Miss Marple*, a female heroine that solves the crime and saves the day. These detective stories can also be referred to as puzzle stories as the reader has to pay attention to the storyline and has to put the pieces together in order to find out who the murderer is.

When society evolves the crimes evolve and the need for law and order and a large police force grows. These phenomena are reflected in literature as well and the hard-boiled detectives turn into more sophisticated policemen of various rank and social status, although, still hard-boiled. The American author Elisabeth George's main character Detective Inspector *Thomas Lynley* and the American author Michael Connelly's homicide Detective *Harry Bosch* are examples of these slightly different types of characters in crime literature

where personal life and everyday life is part of the story as well as the crime and crime solving.

The fascination with reality forces creators- authors and film makers to make authentic books and films. Science evolves constantly and today it is possible to solve crimes in a laboratory. The rise of the forensic science novel follows the evolution in the society and in science. The American author Patricia Cornwell's main character, *Kay Scarpetta*, a medical examiner, is a very popular character in this genre and Cornwell's books have been translated into several languages. As mentioned earlier, there are numerous TV-series based on forensic science, for example: *C.S.I* and its spin-offs, *Crossing Jordan* and *Navy C.I.S.* just to mention a few.

Detective Fiction and The Rise of Forensic Science (1999)⁹ by Ronald R. Thomas, gives a description of the forensic science literary genre and its development. The book mainly discusses already known literary works rather than the genre in particular. The forensic science genre is not that different to crime fiction; however there are some characteristic features that are somewhat different. Crimes and murders are solved by dedicated detectives in crime fiction.¹⁰ They work day and night and do not rest until the crimes are solved and the suspects are behind bars. In forensic science novels, the crimes are solved mainly in laboratories. DNA profiles, fingerprints and autopsy results are analysed by dedicated scientists and medical examiners that solve the crimes side by side with the police force.¹¹ This is something of a generalisation but describes the main differences between the genres. The next chapter will present the literary characters that are this essay's topic of discussion.

⁹ Ronald R. Thomas *Detective Fiction and The Rise of Forensic Science* (Cambridge:UK, 1999)

¹⁰ John Scaggs.

¹¹ Ronald R.Thomas.

Chapter 2 - Meet Kay Scarpetta and Annika Bengtson

Kay Scarpetta:

Dr. Kay Scarpetta was born in Florida. She is of Italian descent, blonde and is always dressing sharp, smart and comfortable. She loves to cook Italian food and she makes everything from scratch. She made the blueprints to the house of her dreams and put a custom-built restaurant kitchen in the heart of the house. Scarpetta is a perfectionist, a hard worker and completely absorbed by her work. She works close to death everyday and her choice of profession comes from her experiences as child when she saw her father die slowly from leukaemia. In the early novels, Scarpetta is working as the Chief Medical Examiner for the state of Virginia and live and work in Richmond.

Significant and recurrent persons in Scarpetta's life:

Lucy Farinelli:

Lucy is Scarpetta's niece, the only child of her irresponsible and self-absorbed sister. The Scarpetta sisters' relationship gives Lucy and Kay a special bond and she is the only family-member that Dr. Scarpetta actually has a relationship with. Lucy is a genius with a remarkably high IQ. She has a natural gift for working with computers and she becomes an FBI agent and learns to fly helicopters, scuba dive and shoot guns. She is a self-made millionaire by the time she is twenty-five and she likes to live her life on the edge and often ends up in dangerous situations.

Peter (Pete) Marino:

Pete Marino works as a homicide detective for the Richmond police department. He is a big and heavy man with high blood pressure, has a drinking problem and is also a heavy smoker. He has issues with women and only likes Lucy and secretly loves Kay Scarpetta. They have worked together for a long time and are in some ways best friends.

Benton Wesley:

Benton works as an FBI profiler. He and Scarpetta work together on many cases, at first on a strictly professional level. They end up having an affair and Benton eventually divorces his wife and Scarpetta and Benton are having an on and off relationship.

Scarpetta at work:

Kay Scarpetta is The Chief of Medical Examiner and works mainly with men and often gets her abilities questioned, as being a woman in a high position. She is confident and really good at her work in many ways because she wants to show the world that a woman is just as capable as a man. Scarpetta does not back down and keeps on working and she is kind of a stagnant character, she does not change in her role at work. In *Black Notice* she faces a new kind of challenge; she meets a criminal who is out to get her. A body is found in a container shipped from Belgium and evidence takes Scarpetta and Marino to Paris via European Interpol. In Paris, they learn that the body is a deceased member of a very rich and prominent family. One of the sons in the family is suffering from an unusual condition that makes him look, and in some ways behave, like a werewolf. The situation ends with the werewolf attacking Scarpetta in her much loved home, he tricks her to get in and they engage in a physical struggle.

“Police,” a male voice said from outside as he rapped again with something hard like a nightstick or blackjack. “I didn’t call the police,” I said through the door. “Ma’am, we’ve gotten a call about a suspicious person on your property,” he said. “Are you alright?” “Yes, yes,” I said as I turned off the alarm and opened the door to let him in. My porch light was out, and it had never occurred to me that he might be able to speak without a French accent, and I smelled that dirty, wet doglike smell as he pushed his way in and shut the door with a back-kick. I choked on the scream in my throat as he smiled his hideous smile and reached out a hairy hand to touch my cheek, as if his feelings for me were tender.¹²

Lucy, Marino and the police arrive and Scarpetta gets away with some bruises, cuts and a broken elbow. Scarpetta survives but the event has broken her will and she does not want to live in her house any more, she does not feel safe. Lots of people around her, the men she works with, now see her as a person, a human being and a woman and she gets a higher status among them.

¹² Patricia Cornwell. *Black Notice*. (USA: Penguin Inc. 1999) 411-412

Scarpetta's Relationships:

Dr. Kay Scarpetta is an extraordinary woman; she is beautiful, good at her job as the Chief Medical Examiner. She experienced her father's death when she was a child and her relationship with her mother has never recovered from the event. She is a private person and solves most of her problems by herself. Men get intimated and at the same time fascinated by her. Women dislike her for being too perfect, in their eyes, and she has, therefore no female friends. Scarpetta's only sincere relationship is the one with her niece; Lucy Farinelli. Lucy is the daughter Scarpetta never had or the younger sister she misses. "She is your niece but you've always been more like her mother [...]",¹³ says Pete Marino in a conversation regarding Lucy. She considers her sister, Lucy's mother, to be irresponsible and they do not have much of a relationship.

She does get involved with men, in romantic relationships, but she never lets her guard down. She was married once, to Tony Benedetti; they divorced about 6 years before the beginning of the first novel *Postmortem* (1990). Since then she had one serious relationship with Mark James, who dies in a bombing at a London tube station in the novel *Cruel and Unusual* (1993). Scarpetta and James were in London together and she never understood why he was at the tube station. Years later, she learns that he had gone off to a secret meeting with his mistress who was also in London at the time. Benton Wesley and Mark James were friends and she feels guilty for having an affair with Benton and that is why he feels obligated to tell her the truth. They continue their relationship but they are not close and when Benton Wesley's divorce finally comes through, their relationship becomes shaky. Her relationship with Pete Marino is professional but they also share a unique friendship. As a result of the tragic event that took place in Scarpetta's home, she gets framed and is facing a murder charge. It is just before Christmas, they are together for the holiday and they are all determent to celebrate a nice Christmas. "*The Tlip file is a black hole, still in the bag of presents, ironically under the Christmas tree. Marino knows what's in that file, but I don't ask him. Nobody does. Lucy begins getting out ingredients for chocolate-chip cookies and two pies-one peanut butter, the other key-lime as if we are feeding the entire city.*"¹⁴ The murder charge and all the other problems will be solved later on, her friends are there for her and they are all trying to forget about the case and have a normal Christmas.

¹³ --- 392

¹⁴ Patricia Cornwell. *The Last Precinct*. (USA: Penguin Inc. 2000) 367

Annika Bengtson:

Annika Bengtson lives in Stockholm, Sweden and works as a crime reporter at a busy tabloid called *Kvällspressen*. She is thin, almost skinny, and blonde, blessed with a body and hair that turns heads. Men's, because they think she is beautiful and sexy and women's, because they are jealous of her. Annika is not fully aware of her attraction or her effect on people. She tries very hard to make her voice heard, and for people to take her seriously as a mother and a career woman. She cries easily and does not think before she acts, she has got a problem with taking orders and often gets into trouble for not listening to other people.

Bengtson at work:

The series of books starring Annika Bengtson is not edited in a chronological order and she is the editor in chief in *The Bomber* but a struggling rookie in *Studio 69*. Bengtson is very ambitious and has problems with following orders. She goes her own ways and does not make many friends along the way.¹⁵ Bengtson is torn between work, building a career and her family and in *Prime Time* (2002) it becomes obvious to her that it might not be possible to do both, that is when her best and only friend Anne becomes a murder suspect.¹⁶ She is away from home a lot and Thomas is upset when she leaves him alone with their two children time after time. "Annika hung up and met his gaze. 'No', he said. 'I don't want to hear it. Not another fucking assignment, not today.' 'Michelle Carlsson's dead,' Annika said, feeling incredibly empty."¹⁷ Bengtson fights hard for her job and her friend Anne who is one of the suspects for the murder of Michelle Carlsson, and at the end of the day she becomes editor in chief.¹⁸ Several of her co-workers are men, older than her and they are not happy with their new boss and try to get her fired. In *The Bomber* she faces a challenge that almost ends up killing her. She is her usual stubborn self, not listening to others and is suddenly captured by a

¹⁵ Liza Marklund. *Studio 69*. (New York: Simon&Schuster Inc. 2002)

¹⁶ Liza Marklund. *Prime Time*. (New York: Simon&Schuster Inc. 2006)

¹⁷ --- 5

¹⁸ Liza Marklund. *The Bomber*. (New York: Simon&Schuster, Inc. 2005)

disturbed woman that recently has blown the Olympic arena in Stockholm to pieces. Bengtzon is investigating the attack since the police have found a body in what is left of the arena. When she is prying around, she gets captured, and is held in a tunnel nearby the arena. She survives because she pretends to care about the Bomber. “*Annika breathed rapidly and with her mouth slightly open. Calm down, talk to her, come on, talk to her, buy time.*”¹⁹ She manages to make a call on her cell phone to her office and she gets out alive but bruised.

Bengtson’s Relationships:

During the series, she goes from being single and living alone, to being unhappy, living with a partner to whom she will be married later on and with two children. In the first book she has met her husband Thomas and given birth to her two children.²⁰ But, in *Studio 69* she is recovering from an abusive relationship that ends when she accidentally kills her boyfriend in a fight. It was in self-defence but she has a hard time coping with the event and does not trust anybody but her grandmother.²¹ She buries herself in work and moves to Stockholm permanently. Her only confidante is Anne. She does not have a problem with connecting to other people, but her past in the abusive relationship makes her careful and she does not trust anyone with her feelings. It takes her some time to trust Thomas and although she loves him, her true love is the one to her children and her job.

‘Do you know what time it is?’ Thomas asked. Annika drank without answering him. ‘So, you figured it was time to come home now, did you? Do you have any idea how rough it’s been taking care of everything around here? You’ve got a lot of nerve, leaving all this to me.’ ‘Stop it,’ she said, her voice devoid of emotion. ‘Stop what?’ he said as he downed the rest of his brandy, choking on it. ‘Exactly what should I stop doing? Taking care of your kids? Your apartment? Your dirty laundry?’²²

¹⁹ Liza Marklund. *The Bomber*. 18

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²¹ Liza Marklund. *Studio 69*

²² Liza Marklund. *Prime Time*. 342-343

Chapter 3 - Scarpetta vs. Bengtson - Similarities and Differences

Similarities:

Kay Scarpetta and Annika Bengtson are powerful, beautiful, competent women. They are both working and managing a staff of unhappy men that consider themselves as more competent for the job simply because they are men.

Scarpetta and Bengtson are both having issues and bad relationships with their mothers and sisters although this depends on different causes. Scarpetta was always a daddy's girl and her mother was jealous of their relationship. Scarpetta and her mother's relationship never recovered from the father's death and the whole family suffer and falls apart. The Scarpetta sister's relationship is working badly because they are nothing like each other. Kay is a responsible perfectionist and got good grades in school while her sister is more of a free spirit, and therefore they do not get along.

Bengtson had a great relationship with her grandmother when she was alive, which made her mother feel inadequate. Bengtson's "career dreams" are not shared by her sister who feels left out and is jealous of Annika and her ambitions, she herself seems to be stuck in her old ways and does not seem to be able to leave their small and boring home-town. Although both women are successful at their job, they have issues with their employees and co-workers because they are women and they have to prove themselves time after time.

Scarpetta and Bengtson have each lost a boyfriend in an accident and are therefore having intimacy problems and a hard time trusting another person with their heart and feelings. However, the fact that they both have been captured and abused by a criminal person that they were chasing after, is the most interesting similarity found in the texts starring Scarpetta and Bengtson. Scarpetta was attacked in her home and Bengtson when she was out looking for a scoop. The situation at the Scarpetta home was over in a matter of minutes, the situation with Bengtson and her attacker took place next to the remains of the Olympic arena, and Bengtson was held there against her will for a long time.

Differences:

Scarpetta does not have children; she has been taking care of her niece Lucy for most of Lucy's life and they share a special bond not unlike the one between most mothers and their children. Bengtzon gives birth to two children, one boy and one girl, and her situation changes a lot after these experiences and her job is no longer the most important thing in her life.

Losing a boyfriend in an accident creates different kinds of grief and misery in Scarpetta's and Bengtzon's lives. Scarpetta's boyfriend dies in a tragic accident in London caused by a bomb and she is devastated and very sad and cannot seem to find inner peace; the question of why he was there by the tube station in the first place is bothering her. She goes on with her life and gets involved with the boyfriend's friend, Benton Wesley and feels guiltier than ever for moving on and betraying Mark. When she subsequently learns that Mark had a mistress and betrayed her, she can finally get on with her life but she is careful and does not give her heart away completely.

Bengtzon is responsible for her boyfriend's death and he was a well know person in their home-town and Annika's explanation for the accident creates lots of questions and gossip. She is declared innocent in the trial but feels more comfortable when she moves to Stockholm permanently. Bengtzon feels guilty because she caused her boyfriend's death and for feeling relieved that the relationship finally ended as she had tried to get out of it for a long time. The abusive boyfriend was in a way the reason for her ambitions; she did not want to go home.

Scarpetta is a boss, superior at her job throughout the whole series and although she moves and change jobs a few times, she is still the boss. Bengtzon on the other hand, has more than one job and different positions and the changes in her life are bigger than they are in Scarpetta's.

Scarpetta goes through adequate changes throughout the series, she gets older and her personality changes due to all that happens to her and she becomes in a way a more human character since she gets weaker and less perfect. Bengtzon also goes through changes but she does not seem to get much older, her personality traits stay the same throughout the series and her personality does not change at all. She cries all the time and makes mistakes because she does not listen to other people. Her character feels inactive and obvious.

Although both Scarpetta and Bengtzon have been through similar situations when they were attacked by a criminal, the outcome and effect on them and their lives are quite different. Scarpetta's life will never be the same again, she do not want to live in her much loved home

any more. Her sense of security is gone forever and she is broken apart, and down on her knees. Bengtson on the other hand, is hardly injured at all and goes home to her family and goes on with her life. She does not seem to be affected in the long run and that makes the character feel inactive, inhuman and is hard to relate to.

Conclusion

This essay has studied similarities and differences in two fictional characters, one created by American author Patricia Cornwell and one by Swedish author Liza Marklund. The fictional characters have been studied and analysed in three texts, a total of six texts, which are part of a series of books written by each author. The similarities in these characters are many although there are differences too. The authors have different backgrounds and education, but a theme that one can find in these characters is that the similarities between the author and her fictional heroine are striking.

Besides the similarities, there are differences and the major difference comparing these two author's books and characters is the fact that Patricia Cornwell's novels are very well written, concerning language as well as research. The events and situations are described with precision and reality and the details are accurate. Equally, Kay Scarpetta is going through adequate changes, she gets older and is affected by the things that happen to her and her loved ones. Cornwell's character is human and easy to relate to. Liza Marklund's novels are also very detailed, unfortunately not that well written and Annika Bengtzon does not even seem to be human since she is almost untouched by the tragic and life threatening situations that she goes through. The language does not have the same standard as in Cornwell's novels, Marklund uses more slang and her characters are not as well spoken as Cornwell's. Reality and the recognition factor is not high due to the fact that the characters do not seem human as well as the fact that the situations Bengtzon seems to be caught up in do feel too farfetched to be real.

The sense of recognition and real life is essential in modern literature and writing accessible novels, Cornwell and Marklund provide fictional characters that are easy to relate to. The characters go through the facts of life, get hurt on the way and learn from their mistakes although Bengtzon is a more inactive character and does not change as much as Scarpetta. Marklund's character does not go through adequate changes in contrast to the time and ageing factor as well as the personality changes that most likely would be the result after going through life threatening and tragic events.

The differences and similarities are due to several facts, and one is that the authors are from different cultures and from different parts of the world with different backgrounds and education. They are both writing about women and for women and they recognise that their characters are a lot like themselves. The most obvious differences lie within the quality, in terms of the use of language and creating trustworthy characters. Cornwell manages to give her readers everything and her characters feel human and are getting older and smarter, something one cannot say about Marklund's characters. Similarities and differences, quality and language use put aside, Kay Scarpetta and Annika Bengtzon appeals to readers all over the world and Cornwell as well as Marklund are celebrated millionaires.

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