

## #thrillerchat January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Transcript

7:08 am [Selorian](#): The suspense is building. The clock is ticking. Just 1 hour left. [#thrillerchat](#) 8PM EST.

Topic: The Elements of a Thriller. [#writing](#)

7:50 pm [Selorian](#): Just a few minutes until [#thrillerchat](#). TOPIC: The elements of a thriller. What elements are necessary to turn a novel into a thriller?

7:52 pm [Selorian](#): My first time moderating a chat, so forgive me if I make mistakes. Don't be scared to make suggestions on where I can improve. [#thrillerchat](#)

7:54 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) i'll be listening in the background [#thrillerchat](#)

7:54 pm [thebookjournal](#): RT @[Selorian](#): Just a few minutes until [#thrillerchat](#). TOPIC: The elements of a thriller. What elements are necessary to turn a novel int ...

7:54 pm [Selorian](#): First time using TweetChat as well. Looks like a nice way to do chats. [#thrillerchat](#)

7:55 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) Glad to have you! [#thrillerchat](#)

7:57 pm [Selorian](#): A transcript of the chat will be available for anyone unable to make it. [#thrillerchat](#)

7:58 pm [jessrosenbooks](#): Evening, everyone. Looking forward to learning at [#thrillerchat](#).

7:59 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[jessrosenbooks](#) hi [#thrillerchat](#)

7:59 pm [Selorian](#): @[jessrosenbooks](#) Hello. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:00 pm [Selorian](#): Welcome everyone. Tonights chat topic: The elements of a thriller. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:02 pm [Selorian](#): The reason behind my doing this chat is that I wanted to learn about thrillers from others through a chat like [#writechat](#). [#thrillerchat](#)

8:04 pm [Selorian](#): I figured if I did and couldn't find one, others may like one as well. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:05 pm [Selorian](#): I decided the first topic to cover may be exactly what elements it takes to make a thriller. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:05 pm [katirra](#): Thanks for hosting it. Using tweetchat for the first time too. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:06 pm [jessrosenbooks](#): I stumbled into adding thriller elements to my novels. One minute it's a fantasy romance, next minute the heroine's poisoned. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:06 pm [Selorian](#): @[katirra](#) I'm glad I'm not alone. It seems to work good. I miss Tweetdeck though. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:07 pm [Selorian](#): @[jessrosenbooks](#) I think that is the interesting aspect of a thriller. They can fall within so many other genres. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:07 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) does thriller have to have a certain amount of shock in it? [#thrillerchat](#)

8:09 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) I think they have to have a certain amount of suspense to them, definitely. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:10 pm [Selorian](#): Fast pacing, frequent action, and resourceful heroes who must thwart the plans of more-powerful and better-equipped villains.. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:11 pm [Selorian](#): That is how thrillers are defined on Wikipedia. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:11 pm [Selorian](#): Join me for a [#thrillerchat](#) TweetChat at: <http://tweetchat.com/room/thrillerchat> [#thrillerchat](#)

8:12 pm [katirra](#): What you consider a good example of a thriller? [#thrillerchat](#)

8:12 pm [Selorian](#): Here is the link to the Wikipedia

page...[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thriller\\_%28genre%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thriller_%28genre%29) [#thrillerchat](#)

8:12 pm [jessrosenbooks](#): [#thrillerchat](#) I think there's a difference between suspense and shock, though. Suspense for reader, but shock gives chars arc-material.

8:14 pm [Selorian](#): When I think thriller, one of the first authors that comes to mind is James Rollins. Alter of Eden is his latest book. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:14 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [#thrillerchat](#) wow! hi all - just writing a post on [@jamesrollins](#) Great thriller writer on lessons learned - fast paced, starts with a bang,

8:15 pm [Selorian](#): [@jessrosenbooks](#) That's true. In a Horror thriller you may have shock, but even then, it doesn't always equal suspense. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:16 pm [Selorian](#): I'm not a real fast typer, so forgive me for slow replies. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:16 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [#thrillerchat](#) Thrillers also need high body count and a real reason to care e.g. end of the world scenario

8:17 pm [Selorian](#): [@thecreativepenn](#) Exactly. The stakes are elevated a great deal from normal novels. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:17 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [@Selorian](#) [#thrillerchat](#) Great minds! James Rollins definitely up there - [@jchutchins](#) for techno-thriller

8:17 pm [thebookjournal](#): [@thecreativepenn](#) I disagree. You can have a thriller with as little as two characters [#thrillerchat](#)

8:18 pm [Selorian](#): For me, I think of it as almost over-exaggerated elements. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:19 pm [Selorian](#): [@thecreativepenn](#) Yes, 7th Son is an excellent example. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:19 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [@thebookjournal](#) [#thrillerchat](#) Do either of them get killed?! :) Seriously, don't you need body count?

8:20 pm [arnonaut](#): Also isn't horror also defined by an element of fear, not just suspense. The motivation for a body count is different. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:20 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [@Selorian](#) [#thrillerchat](#) over exaggerated characters as well - almost stereotyped sometimes - tough guys and gals

8:21 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [@arnonaut](#) [#thrillerchat](#) I think the description of body count is difference - thriller not so graphic, horror very graphic detail

8:21 pm [Selorian](#): [@thebookjournal](#) Even when two characters, there has to be others in peril for them to save, imo. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:22 pm [thebookjournal](#): [@thecreativepenn](#) i dont' think you need body count. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:23 pm [Selorian](#): [@thecreativepenn](#) So true. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:24 pm [Selorian](#): Maybe the possibility of body count would be a better way to say it. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:24 pm [jkoyanagi](#): Just saw this on my TweetDeck, so I thought I'd drop in. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:25 pm [Selorian](#): [@jkoyanagi](#) Glad to have you! [#thrillerchat](#)

8:26 pm [thebookjournal](#): body count seems to be over-used. when used properly it is very powerful. if not, it's just blood and guts [#thrillerchat](#)

8:27 pm [Selorian](#): Also, depending on the exact type of thriller- horror, psychological, techno - it affects the body count issue. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:27 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [#thrillerchat](#) What about multiple locations used? seems to be a theme in thrillers? Necessary?

8:28 pm [Selorian](#): You could actually have a plane full of people destroyed and never have any blood and guts, though. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:28 pm [jkoyanagi](#): Re: body count-- As with anything else, I think it depends on what serves the story. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:29 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) i prefer minimalism in my thrillers. I want to be able to get extensively into the mind of killer or victim [#thrillerchat](#)

8:29 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) don't feel I can do that will a lot of characters and other things distracting me [#thrillerchat](#)

8:29 pm [Selorian](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) A good question. IMO they are necessary in certain types of thrillers. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:29 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) right -like a psychological thriller [#thrillerchat](#)

8:30 pm [IQXS](#): RT @[jkoyanagi](#): Re: body count-- As with anything else, I think it depends on what serves the story. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:30 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[thebookjournal](#) [#thrillerchat](#) Can you give an example of thriller author you like?

8:30 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) I think that's why there can be so many different types of thrillers. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:31 am [thecreativepenn](#): @[Selorian](#) [#thrillerchat](#) psychological thriller must still have danger/threat in some way - to sanity if not body

8:32 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [#thrillerchat](#) Would you agree tho that fast pace is critical to thriller?

8:33 pm [Selorian](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) Very true. There always has to be high stakes. No matter the body count. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:33 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) oddly most of what i consider thriller is actually classified as horror [#thrillerchat](#)

8:33 pm [jkoyanagi](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) Fast pace seems to be true of most thrillers; that said, I think high tension is more important. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:34 pm [HollyWoodward](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) The heart should beat fast but the words flow agonizingly slow. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:34 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) yeah fast pace is critical to most genres. readers get bored quickly [#thrillerchat](#)

8:35 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[thebookjournal](#) [#thrillerchat](#) What do you think of John Connolly? I consider him thriller/horror

8:36 pm [Selorian](#): I think fast paced is becoming necessary in just about any genre. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:38 pm [thecreativepenn](#): [#thrillerchat](#) Another key to me is basing it on a grain of truth but still in reality i.e. not sci-fi - what do you think?

8:40 pm [egtalbot](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) there is only 1 key to thrillers - make the reader NEED to turn the page. No rules other than that. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:40 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) I'm into Little and Laymon types [#thrillerchat](#)

8:41 pm [Selorian](#): Again, just my opinion, but I think it has to be based on a bit of reality that works within the world created. [#thrillerchat](#)

8:41 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) completely agree. there can be sci-fi thrillers, but i like the reality skewed better [#thrillerchat](#)

8:42 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[egtalbot](#) [#thrillerchat](#) Don't all books need to make the reader turn the page? Thrillers turn faster! [#thrillerchat](#)

8:42 pm [Selorian](#): @[egtalbot](#) Agreed, but isn't there certain elements specific to thrillers that accomplish that? #[thrillerchat](#)

8:42 pm [thecreativepenn](#): #[thrillerchat](#) So is thriller a genre or sub-genre - like sci-thriller or adventure thriller? #[thrillerchat](#)

8:43 pm [jkoyanagi](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) I'm more inclined to read thrillers with sci-fi elements myself. It's pretty subjective. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:44 pm [Selorian](#): Thriller is a genre, but broad with sub-categories that can overlap. Like many other genres. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:45 pm [Selorian](#): I was just looking up some links. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:46 pm [AlanBaxter](#): My novels are dark fantasy/horror primarily but also thrillers. I usually refer to them as dark fantasy thrillers. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:47 pm [AlanBaxter](#): So I guess thriller is both a genre and a sub-genre in my mind. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:47 pm [KateLondon1](#): I think just about every novel now has to have some thriller/mystery elements in it to keep reader interest high. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:47 pm [Selorian](#): A list of some of the Thriller sub-categories -

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thriller\\_%28genre%29#Sub-genres](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thriller_%28genre%29#Sub-genres) #[thrillerchat](#)

8:48 pm [thecreativepenn](#): #[thrillerchat](#) Thrillers favour plot over character development - true?

8:48 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[AlanBaxter](#) #[thrillerchat](#) oh, you're just trying to get on all the genre lists :) supernatural as well!

8:49 am [thebookjournal](#): @[KateLondon1](#) I agree. My favourite types of books to read are memoirs and intense psych thrillers. love the human mind #[thrillerchat](#)

8:49 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) i like HUGE character development in my thrillers. or else why care if they die or get hurt #[thrillerchat](#)

8:50 pm [KateLondon1](#): #[thrillerchat](#) Yep, I think plot is more important than characters in thrillers @[thecreativepenn](#)

8:51 pm [Selorian](#): Is caring what happens to a character same as character development, though? I think it can be, but not exclusively linked. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:51 pm [CascadeLily](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) #[thrillerchat](#) Definitely true if you're Dan Brown or writing airport thrillers...but they can be more cerebral, no?

8:52 pm [CascadeLily](#): Sorry to just jump in on #[thrillerchat](#), but you guys are filling up my screen :D

8:52 pm [AlanBaxter](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) Dark fantasy supernatural thrillers? I'll take that. :) #[thrillerchat](#)

8:52 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) well if you don't develop the character why would i care about the fact he is hurt or dead. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:52 pm [rijadya](#): #[thrillerchat](#) I don't think plot is more important. we need to have enough information to care or hate them to read

8:52 pm [AlanBaxter](#): I think character development is essential in any writing. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:52 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) and I can't care about a character I don't know enough about.. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:54 pm [Selorian](#): Here is a link to a post about writing action scenes in thrillers...<http://www.fmwriters.com/Visionback/Issue32/thriller.htm> #[thrillerchat](#)

8:54 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) having the town jock killed doesn't matter to me. he wasn't MY town jock. make me KNOW him and i will care #[thrillerchat](#)

8:54 pm [KateLondon1](#): Great comment @[thebookjournal](#) The best memoirs are intense psyc thrillers cause human mind is so interesting #[thrillerchat](#)

8:55 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) same thing as news. people keep watching a story because they make the dead relatable not just another person #[thrillerchat](#)

8:55 pm [Selorian](#): Any story should have character development, but the level can vary & I don't believe it has to be a huge amount of growth. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:55 pm [CascadeLily](#): RT @[AlanBaxter](#): I think character development is essential in any writing. #[thrillerchat](#) <-- a truism for sure.

8:56 pm [Selorian](#): I look at character development as growth through the course of the story. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:56 pm [Selorian](#): Join me for a #[thrillerchat](#) TweetChat at: <http://tweetchat.com/room/thrillerchat> #[thrillerchat](#)

8:57 pm [Selorian](#): Developed characters and character development, for me, are two different things. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:58 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) I was just stating what I like. Again, I like diving in2 the minds of the chars. I need the intense connection #[thrillerchat](#)

8:59 pm [Selorian](#): The hero realizing he loves the heroine and saves her at all cost can be the extent of character development. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:59 pm [KateLondon1](#): I always feel the best thrillers show character development THRU plot twists so if you can do both well you have a GREAT story #[thrillerchat](#)

8:59 pm [jkoyanagi](#): @[thebookjournal](#) I need that connection too. #[thrillerchat](#)

8:59 pm [Selorian](#): @[KateLondon1](#) So true. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:00 pm [thecreativepenn](#): #[thrillerchat](#) I point to Matthew Reilly as having little character dev, high body count that works in the fast paced book e.g. Scarecrow

9:00 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) yeah, but there are so many stories out there like that. through dev. is how readers form attachment (cont) #[thrillerchat](#)

9:00 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) and how series are built #[thrillerchat](#)

9:02 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[Selorian](#) #[thrillerchat](#) The heroine can also save the hero ... and the world these days

9:02 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) I'll agree with that. But we're talking over many books with series. How much growth in each individual book? #[thrillerchat](#)

9:02 pm [jkoyanagi](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) I love female-driven thrillers. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:03 pm [thecreativepenn](#): #[thrillerchat](#) Does anyone mind if I put some of these comments on my blog post on thriller writing? links to all profiles quoted

9:03 pm [Selorian](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) Hehe, true true. That sounded chauvinistic, didn't it? I didn't mean to. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:04 pm [Selorian](#): @[jkoyanagi](#) So do I. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:04 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) just enough to make me think that in the next one he is going to flip out #[thrillerchat](#)

9:04 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) or if written in the POV of victim enough to think that maybe oh just maybe he will figure out a way out #[thrillerchat](#)

9:05 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) nope go for it! please send link so I can see it as well please. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:06 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[thebookjournal](#) #[thrillerchat](#) It will go out next week - I'll hashtag it when I tweet link - thanks for all ideas!

9:06 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) True. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:07 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) thanks for hosting this. Next time you have one let me know! #[thrillerchat](#)

9:07 pm [Selorian](#): I think the most important element, imo, is stakes. They have to be high, no matter what. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:07 pm [Selorian](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) That sounds great. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:08 pm [jkoyanagi](#): RT @[Selorian](#): I think the most important element, imo, is stakes. They have to be high, no matter what. << Absolutely. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:08 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) You're welcome. Maybe I'll be more use to it next time. ;-)  
#[thrillerchat](#)

9:10 pm [thecreativepenn](#): @[Selorian](#) #[thrillerchat](#) See you next time :) Thanks for organising - can we use for help on WIP?!

9:10 pm [Selorian](#): Another quick link... <http://writersdigest.com/article/how-to-make-your-novel-a-page-turner/> #[thrillerchat](#)

9:12 pm [Selorian](#): @[thecreativepenn](#) My pleasure. I did it as much for me as for others. I know I'll be using it for my WIP. I have a lot to learn. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:13 am [Selorian](#): Any suggestions for topics or how the chat can be improved to be more helpful, please pass them along. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:14 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) you did great! #[thrillerchat](#)

9:15 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) i think it's quite impressive that you would ask readers their opinions and take the best #[thrillerchat](#)

9:15 pm [Selorian](#): A transcript of the chat can be gotten at What the Hashtag--  
<http://wthashtag.com/Thrillerchat> #[thrillerchat](#)

9:16 pm [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) and even if you don't use any of our opinions it was still fun #[thrillerchat](#)

9:16 pm [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) Thank you. I have hardly even participated in chats, much less run one, so suggestions are imperative. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:17 pm [Selorian](#): I will also post the transcript on my site and tweet a link once I do. #[thrillerchat](#)

9:18 pm [Selorian](#): Thanks to everyone for coming. Same time next week! #[thrillerchat](#)