

Interview With Dean Koontz

Interview with Dean Koontz (www.deankoontz.com) taken from *The New Yorker* Magazine (page 82, June 12, 2006).

Question: You said that books “saved you,” as a child. How, and from what?

Answer: *As a lonely kid growing up in poverty and in the shadow of a violent alcoholic father (who last later diagnosed as sociopath), I found peace in books. So storytellers became my heroes because they provided escape, because their characters made me feel less isolated, more connected with the human experience, and because they brought joy and wonder into my life.*

Question: The first thing said about your books is that they’re compelling and suspenseful, but perhaps the second is that these stories inspire hope in readers. Are you an incorrigible optimist?

Answer: *I think of myself as a realist. (You’re thinking, yes and Donald Duck might think of himself as a serene Zen master. So what?) Well, I know it’s hip to be hopeless, romantic to be alienated and cynical – but what is hip and romantic is not always intelligent or rational. Life can be hard and fate can seem cruel, but happiness is always an option. During a childhood of fear and deprivation, I realized that happiness was still a choice, and I chose it. Whatever happens to my characters—sometimes terrible things—their stories support the contention that life has meaning and that hope is the essential foundation for sanity.*

Note from your instructor:

THIS INTERVIEW SPEAKS TO ME AND MY PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP –

IT IS ALWAYS AN OPTION TO BE POSITIVE AND HOPEFUL. I BELIEVE THAT HOPE IS THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION FOR LEADERSHIP.

IT IS HIP TO BE HOPELESS – BUT IT IS INTELLIGENT AND RATIONAL TO EXERCISE LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP REQUIRES HOPE.

BLESSINGS, HELEN ECKMANN