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**Psychopathic Behaviours and Power: Investigating Psychopathy,
Sadism, and Insanity in Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's
Nest.***

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Dedication

To my family,

I can never thank you enough.

Abstract

Mental illness has been on the agenda of numerous researchers for several years. It is considered as an ambiguous subject, especially in literary studies. Psychopathic behaviour, sadism, and insanity for instance, have been classified as severe mental illnesses and were only tackled as a personality trait but they have not been analyzed as state behaviours. Namely, understanding what triggers such behaviours in literary characters is but an attempt to mirror the current studies done on the concepts of psychopathy, sadism, and insanity. In this light, this thesis examines the three psychopathic behaviours and their link to power in the novel of the American novelist Ken Kesey *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962). It is based on a descriptive and analytical method in order to demonstrate how these behaviours are represented as a state in selected characters: Chief Bromden, Nurse Ratched, and Randle McMurphy. Additionally, characters with such behaviours feel a sense of domination and control over what they consider weaker subjects. In this regard, this research is theoretically framed by Freud, Lacan, and Foucault to decipher how these behaviours are exhibited in the novel. This dissertation concludes that psychopathy, sadism, and insanity have a parallel link with the discourse of power.

Key words: Psychopathy, sadism, insanity, power.

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General Introduction

The representation of mental illnesses in literature has been through many changes throughout the years. In fact, the aim behind this representation transitioned due to the changes societies went through which altered the way mental illness is viewed. To illustrate, Ancient Greeks were the first ones who included mental illness in their plays, according to Longrigg in his book *Greek Medicine from the Heroic to the Hellenistic Age* (1998), he claimed that many believed that mental illness was a direct response from the angry gods.

Furthermore, monotheist societies in general often link psychopathic behaviours and personality troubles to supernatural and religious frameworks. It is believed that if someone suffers from personality troubles, such as psychopathy, is due to the fact that they strayed away from God. It is observed that societies do not tackle psychopathic behaviours because there is a stigma around the topic and they're viewed as taboo, they link it to their own interpretation of the holy books. In an article by Forcén, he claimed that during the Middle Ages, behaviours such as psychopathic were viewed as demon possessions. Hence, people who exhibited strange behaviours were often projected to severe exorcism which led to death many times.

From that point, Famous playwrights like Homer, Sophocles and Euripides also justified the reasons behind psychopathic behaviours were either punishment from the divine or social circumstances. In this regard, Greek mythology was reflected in the medieval ages in which plays were heavily religious and preached only Christianity through drama and portrayed characters who commit sins, such as sexual acts, will eventually lose their sanity as a punishment from God. Its playwrights included psychopathic behaviours in their plays as a way to teach people that those who digress away from the church and God will be punished. Therefore, the reoccurrence of female characters who live a miserable life due to psychopathic behaviours was a way to discourage women from having sexual intercourse outside of marriage. The idea of mental illness

and psychopathic behaviours kept on a changing from one period to another until modernity took over. In this light, it is observed that modernism reflects the idea of progress and development of psychoanalysis that was introduced by Freud and Janet, which led people to question their mental state as well others'. Ultimately, the stigmatization around the topic of mental illness was slowly getting reduced and was arguably dropped as postmodernism occupied the world. In other words, consciousness was introduced and mental instabilities like psychopathic behaviours were the endeavors of many psychiatrists.

This research investigates, explores, and uncovers the psychopathic behaviours in the postmodern novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey. However, even though the psychopathic behaviours are to some extent challenging to decipher in literary works due to their complex nature, this research will focus on three elements namely psychopathy, sadism, and insanity. Throughout this thesis, we will further attempt to find what relate the above mentioned elements to the discourse of power.

The aim of this research is to elaborate and provide a good understanding of the link between three psychopathic behaviours like psychopathy, sadism, and insanity and their relationship to the discourse of power. Furthermore, it will attempt to explain how these behaviours are the outcome of the abuse of power, as well as how the misuse of power ultimately leads to psychopathy, sadism and insanity. The research focuses on Ken Kesey's novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* as an example to answer the following research questions: How are psychopathy, sadism, and insanity linked to power? This question triggers other sub-questions which are: How did Kesey integrate psychopathic behaviours in his novel? To what extent do Kesey's characters exhibit psychopathic behaviours? How can the misuse of power lead to psychopathy, sadism, and insanity?

In light of what has been said, and in order to generate logical answers to the research questions, we hypothesize: first, to find if there is a relation between psychopathic behaviours and power, and how it is represented in literature. Second, the novel of Ken Kesey's would provide a good understanding of these concepts for the characters are a good example on how psychopathic behaviours such as psychopathy, sadism and insanity are the outcome of the misuse of power.

The motivation behind choosing this topic is to shed the light on psychopathy, sadism, and insanity and attempt to explain the reasons behind them since it is often believed that psychopathic behaviours are the outcome of bad childhoods. Hence, this topic focuses on other possibilities and reasons behind these behaviours. Moreover, it tackles the concept of power and how its misuse can lead to psychopathy and insanity, and/or enhance sadism.

This research will focus on the relationship between the three psychopathic behaviours: psychopathy, sadism, insanity and power with the help of the major characters from Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Furthermore, when tackling sadism, it will only focus on the first part of definition of sadism which is inflicting pain on others, it will leave out the sexual drives behind this trait and highlight the way individuals have sadist tendencies and hurt others in order to achieve power over them. It will also explore the way in which characters slowly lose sanity due to the psychological tortures and how the abuse of power leads to insanity.

A variety of studies have been done on this topic. A thesis by Dryden titled "Prankster Narrative in Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*" tackled the novel within a Fanonian context. He analysed the novel with the help of some of the postcolonial theories and related the characters to colonised individuals, entailing their journey of suffering in the mental institution

the same way colonized people suffered from the colonizers. Similarly, Boo in her thesis “A Destructive Myth of Masculinity” viewed the novel from a men’s studies perspective. The researcher argued that Kesey’s novel was trying to bring out the masculinity that post-war Americans lost during the war. Moreover, another thesis by Chichester deals with a comparative work between three novels *The Haunting of Hill House*, by Shirley Jackson and John Kennedy Toole’s *A Confederacy of Dunces* and Kesey’s *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, examining the mistreatment of disturbed patients in mental institutions.

In an article by Anderson and Kiehel called “Psychopathy: Developmental Perspectives and their Implications for Treatment”, they argued that psychopathy is a disorder that is related to a bad emotional response. For this reason they attempted to look into the brain of psychopaths in order to further understand how and why they behave in such ways. On the other hand, Hoffman and Kiehl in their article “The criminal psychopathy”, they claimed that psychopaths are criminals who preserve themselves from getting caught. Moreover, they attempt to understand the impulse behind their criminal behaviours.

On another note, sadism has been reviewed by Foulkes as a mere behavior that is characterized by harming people to achieve sexual gratification. Similarly, Stekel’s book *Sadism and Masochism* describes sexual perversion and fetishes that individuals have. He claimed that sadism and masochism go hand in hand. In addition to that, it is believed that sadism can lead to insanity.

Furthermore, on the concept of insanity, Belkin explained it as the outcome of the obsession with religion whereas Fullindwider argued that insanity is the outcome of patients who spent too much time in mental institutions and the bad treatment they are projected to. Moreover,

Levi's argument was for a differential diagnosis between monomania and insanity. The former affects the sufferer with a blind, automatic impulse, sometimes against the person's conscience with committing an action, whereas insanity affects the person with committing immoral, wicked and cruel acts as a result of an actual paralysis of the moral sense, which renders the intellect blind to the idea of good and evil and dull to the feeling of shame and remorse; only seeking out to fulfill the need to be the one in control.

Additionally, it is found that the obsession with power often leads to psychopathy, psychopaths seek to have power whether on their victims or in their daily life. They like that feeling of control over everything. Babiank and Hare in their book *Snakes in suits: When psychopaths go to work* demonstrate how psychopaths operate in workplaces. Further, the authors made an observation on the world leaders and they found that they all share some qualities with psychopaths.

Although there are a number of studies that have tackled this topic, the analysis of psychopathic behaviours and power within the chosen novel is what is missing. In other words, studies did not direct much attention on analysing how power can lead its practitioner to developing sadistic and psychopathic behaviours towards the others, or how the misuse of power leads to insanity. In this light, the significance of this research is to draw a link between psychopathy, sadism, insanity and power. In other words, these behaviours' representation in Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* will further highlight the interchangeable relationship between power and the traits, as well as how power and its effects lead to the psychopathic traits.

This research is based on an analytical method along with a descriptive one, therefore relying on the works of Freud and Lacan since this method would be appropriate to help psychoanalyze the major characters. Moreover, it heavily relies on Foucault's theories about power. In this regard, this research relies on qualitative data along with the postmodernist approach in order to achieve the needed aim.

The work is composed of three chapters. The first chapter will be dedicated to the theoretical framework in which the concepts of the study namely psychopathy, sadism, insanity, and power are presented and explained with the ideas of Freud, Lacan, and Foucault. The second chapter will offer an analysis of Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* within the postmodern context. The third chapter will deal with the concept of power and its relation to the three psychopathic behaviours within the novel.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Framework.

Introduction

One cannot deny feeling frightened when they hear the word ‘psychopath’, for it is a known fact that psychopathic individuals lack empathy and remorse (Hare 1). Their lack of conscience makes them the most feared individuals in society as they are known for committing a variety of horrendous crimes such as vicious murders and torturing their victims. This behaviour is argued to be the cause to fulfill their obsessive need to obtain power. For this reason, many people find the impulse and behaviour of psychopathic individuals a mystery.

Therefore, in this chapter, the focus will be directed to only three psychopathic behaviours which are: psychopathy, sadism, and insanity to explain the reasons behind them. After introducing the traits, we will rely on Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan’s insights on the three traits for further explanation. Additionally, when tackling the concept of power, the views of Michel Foucault will be of a relevant importance in conducting the research of the present chapter. Afterwards, there will be a parallel link to hold between the three psychopathic behaviours with power while adopting the analytical method.

1.1. Conceptualization of the Modern American Life During the 1960s-70

The era of the 1960s in America was made by the sudden need of radical change in the culture. What was seen as traditional and normal was becoming old-fashioned since the youth had very different tastes and ambitions in fashion and music than those of their parents. Moreover, the outburst of rock and roll music paved the way to other genres to be adopted such as the African American Jazz music, which was also revolutionizing cinematography since it was depicted in such movies as Rebel without a Cause and The Wild One. These movies contributed

in the making of Hollywood stars such as James Dean and Marlon Brando, whose rebellious images appealed to the young (Gair 4).

In this view, what shaped America back then was rebelling against what was seen as social norms. The youth no longer followed their parents' footsteps such as working at a young age in order to get married and have a family. Therefore the sudden change in appearance and adoption of jeans and colorful tops instead of suits was a form of rejecting the traditional way of dress. Women were dressing in shorter dresses and skirts instead of long ones under the name of feminism and sexual liberty, which was seen as taboo.

Another notable factor that was created as a rejection of the deep rooted conservatism was the Beat generation, whose founding fathers were Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs. They preached for sexual liberty and civil rights movements, exploring mystic religions, and experimenting with psychoactive drugs¹ (Brauntein and Doyle 8).

1.2. The Outburst of Psychopathic behaviours

What began as breaking away from traditions and living freely, changed into living in fear by the late 60s. An example of this change is Charles Manson and his cult that started around the 1967's Summer of Love, and closed the decade with the brutal murders of the actress Sharon Tate and six others (McKie).

Ted Bundy's crimes made the general public wonder about deeper intentions of the killings as he only targeted young women that all shared dark, shoulder-length hair (Philbin 36). Hence,

¹ Psychoactive drugs are chemical substances that target the nervous system function and leads to alternations in perception, mood, consciousness and behaviour. They include: cocaine, methylphenidate, ephedrine, MDMA (ecstasy), LSD, cannabis, codeine... etc

people realised that there must be something wrong with the brains of the offenders. Especially with Bundy, for his charm and charisma made it almost impossible to suspect him, also the fact that he studied to be a lawyer. For this reason, psychiatrists began analysing serial killers and offenders to see if they share some qualities, and they reached that most, if not all were psychopaths.

1.3.Psychopathic Traits

Arguably, it is believed that all criminals and serial killers are psychopaths, or at least they all share some psychopathic traits. For this reason, the researcher chose three main traits which are: psychopathy, sadism, and insanity as one finds that they are the most shared qualities between all psychopaths.

1.3.1.Psychopathy

The term psychopathy is still going under the attempt to be defined properly. It is a disturbing topic to many; a mystery that is finally beginning to unravel after centuries of speculations and decades of empirical research. Its symptoms include shallow affect; lack of empathy, guilt and remorse; irresponsibility; impulsivity; and poor planning and decision-making (Kiehl and Hoffman).

On the same note, Kiehl and Hoffman elaborated that Philippe Pinel, the founding father of modern psychiatry, is the one who first brought to light psychopathic traits in a group of patients. He noticed that they had no troubles with their intellect but rather a profound deficit in their behaviour, marked by cruelty, antisocial acts, alcohol and drug abuse, irresponsibility and immorality. He afflicted these individuals with *Mania Sans Délire* “insanity without delirium” (Kiehl and Hoffman).

Accordingly, it was J.L.A. Koch who first introduced the term *psychopastiche*, or psychopath in 1888. He argued that psychopathy was something existing in the brain since birth (Kiehl and Hoffman). Koch's *psychopastiche* was more focused on "moral insanity", it still lacked a lot to make a distinct definition between personality disorders and psychopathy. *Psychopastiche* was only related to those who attempted to harm themselves, in other words, commit suicide. Hence, by the 1920s, psychiatry was using the term psychopath to describe those who suffered from depression, or those who were extremely shy and insecure—to sum up, the term was associated to abnormal psychology.

The Mask of Sanity (1941), a book by Hervey Cleckly, brought attention to psychopathy as he interviewed individuals who exhibited psychopathic traits. He described them as charming, callous and superficial (Cleckley 428). The title represents how psychopaths wear a mask of a normal healthy individual to hide their lack of conscience and genuine dysfunctional feelings (428).

Similarly, Robert Hare in his book *Without Conscience* (1993) demonstrated how psychopaths manipulate individuals around them with any way possible in order to get what they want. Hare claimed that:

Psychopaths are social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their way through life, leaving a broad trail of broken hearts, shattered expectations, and empty wallets. Completely lacking in conscience and in feelings for others, they selfishly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of guilt or regret. (1)

In this quotation, Hare explains that even though it is true that psychopaths are most likely to be criminals and commit crimes and go against the social norms, they also use their chameleon-like personality that is full of charm and charisma to live as normal individuals, which makes them hard to be captured or recognized.

Throughout the years, psychiatrists were able to connect some dots that would explain the behaviours of psychopaths. It is still being questioned whether psychopaths are born that way or rather made. Some vouch for the latter, claiming that most psychopaths, if not all suffer from a traumatic troubled childhood; whether it is being projected to abuse from the parents or the fact that they get tossed around between orphanages. One has to acknowledge the existence of the unconscious in order to understand how childhood contributes in the making of vicious psychopaths.

Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis suggests that past experiences, especially in early childhood are all stored in the unconscious, and they shape and controls how the person behaves throughout his life (Stangor and Walinga 395). Hence, when a child is being abused by one or both of the parents, the anger and fear are stored in the unconscious. If the child does not find love and affection in their household, and instead lives in constant fear in the place that is supposedly to be warm and safe, a terrible feeling is being stored in the unconscious (Philbin and Philbin 5).

This results in the child fantasizing about being powerful and controlling over smaller subjects. Then the child begins creating scenarios and acting out based on these scenarios. The child would show mastery over animals by abusing or killing them; or lighting certain objects on fire to feel in control. Once the household that is supposed to be comforting and warm is

shattered and instead is full of abuse and fear, the child's mindset is also shattered. An example would be Edmund Kemper, whose parents forced him kill his pet chicken and eat it for dinner (Philbin and Philbin 5).

1.3.2.Sadism

The general definition and understanding of sadism is summed up by what Viktor Nell (qtd. in Chester et. al) claimed. It is the intentional infliction of pain on innocent individuals for the sake of enjoyment (227). Therefore, sadists obtain satisfaction and pleasure from the outcome of others' pain (Chester et.al 2). It can be argued that sadism is usually done for the purpose of fulfilling some sexual needs; hence many relate it to masochism. Krafft-Ebing in his work *Psychopathia Sexuali* (1882) introduced both sadism and masochism as syndromes into psychiatric literature. He derived his data mainly from prostitutes who personally dealt with sadomasochistic clients.

The term "sadism" was borrowed from the French novelists who linked it with the association of sex and cruelty. Krafft-Ebing (qtd. in Bieber) claims that:

The experience of sexually pleasurable sensations... produced by acts of cruelty, bodily punishment, inflicted by one's own person, or when witnessed in others, be they animals or human beings. It may also consist of an innate desire to humiliate, hurt, wound, or even destroy others in order thereby to create sexual pleasure in oneself. (5)

According to the Krafft-Ebing (qtd. in Bieber), causing pain, whether done by the sadism or just observe it being done, it doesn't matter if it's done to a person or an animal, is all in the favour of achieving sexual pleasure. The sadist is ready to humiliate and even kill if that means it will help

him obtain what he needs (5). Furthermore, Millon (qtd. in Howell) claims that sadists “exhibit a social vindictiveness to enjoy and gain particular satisfaction when derogating and humiliating others” (183).

In Irvin Bieber’s book *Sadism and Masochism*, he explained sadism as “a maladaptive response to threat; it is a paranoid constellation in which the victim is a personified representative of a variety of irrationally perceived threats” (10). He further explains that to the sadist, the victim may represent an abusive parent, or a person with unacceptable characteristics that he does not like (10). Hence the sadist must destroy and harm the victim because the sadist sees the victim as a threat.

The author added that the sexual behaviour related to sadism is a “complex of rage, anxiety, relief, vengeance, and frenetic ecstasy accompanying a sense of triumph in subjugating an enemy or otherwise extinguishing a threat “(10). Therefore, when the victim who projects threat to the sadist is destroyed, the sadist overcomes that complex that he confuses with sexual excitation.

In an article by Elizabeth F. Howell entitled “Dissociation in Masochism and Psychopathic sadism” argues that sadist views himself as a victim and therefore “splits the self-state of victim – by having externalized it” (427). She believes that sadism is a cause of dissociation in the brain that makes the sadist believe that he is the victim he is abusing. To illustrate, the sadist sees himself in the victims he chooses, and by punishing that victim he is proving that he is the one in control (440). For this reason, sadistic behaviours are the outcome of the need to elevate above the victims and maintain power over them by devaluating them.

Miller (qtd. in Howell) describes how children are supposed to submit when being abused. These children as adults will attempt to destroy that weak and vulnerable child within themselves

by projecting it on their own children (91). She further claims that if there are no children, then the sadist will project it on other defenceless people. It is all caused by the trauma of being abused as a child. In the same light, Miller (qtd. in Howell) her psychological account of “Hitler’s childhood” presents evidence that Hitler he was abused as a child; hence that trauma has to be passed on in the same way. Claiming that each time they sent a Jewish child to the gas ovens, it was in the essence of murdering the child inside (87).

1.3.3.Insanity

The definition of insanity can be traced back to the early 1800s. Psychiatrists of that period began paying attention on individuals who exhibited cruel and violent aspects of behaviour without displaying signs of mental pathology (Loretto 2).

In 1809, Philippe Pinel (qtd. in Loretto) used the term ‘mania without delirium’ (*Manie Sans Délire*) to explain a condition where “no sensible alteration of the intellect . . . or memory is observed, but there is a perversion of the affective functions, a blind impulse to violent acts . . . where it is not possible to identify any dominant idea or illusion of the imagination as a determining cause of this baleful trend.” Pinel (qtd in Loretto) attempts to denote the condition of a person who behaves in a violent way without showing signs of hallucinations or a mental deficiency.

Insanity and mental illnesses in general were explained within the framework of religious ideas (Huneman 2). Pinel’s Treatise on insanity (qtd. in Huneman) he examined a number of cases where individuals exhibited obsession with religion to the point of delirium (2). In the same light, Esquirol (qtd. in Huneman) in his *On Mental Diseases* claimed that cases suffering from the madness of religious delirium “are rarely curable” (115).

The definitions of insanity later on relied on Pinel and Esquirol's works. James Cowles Prichard, who was heavily influenced by the two, used the term "moral insanity" to denote affective disorder and not unethical behaviour. His usage of the term caused confusion as it was associated with ethics. On the other hand, Walk and Craft (qtd in. Whitlock) explained how the term was used in three ways: as psychological, in moral treatment; as affective or emotional as opposed to intellectual or rational; and in the ethical sense of right and wrong. Hence, they associated the term 'moral insanity' in Prichard's work with cases of insanity whose emotional and affective faculties were disturbed (Whitlock 57).

With the reliance of Pinel's *Manie Sans Délire*, Prichard (qtd. in Whitlock) described patients with affective 'moral' disturbances without "any remarkable disorder or defect of the intellect, of knowing and reasoning faculties, and particularly without any insane illusions or hallucination" (57). He further explains that if patients with moral insanity experience a delusional idea, the case becomes one of monomania. He classified monomania as "the actual supervention of erroneous belief or illusion on a previously existing moral insanity was clearly marked and admitted of no doubt" (Whitlock 58).

Although insanity was and is still considered as a legal term, it does not apply on Prichard's definition as his goal was, like Pinel before him, to show the possibility of the existence of mental illness without exhibiting symptoms of hallucinations or delirium. Zillborg and Gough (qtd. in Whitlock) supported Prichard's definition of moral insanity existing in psychopaths as the latter claimed "moral insanity or moral imbecility referred to aberration of the conative and emotional area; cases were discussed under this heading which may be taken as prototypes of the psychopath as known today" (57).

His concept of moral insanity challenged the ideas of the authors who believed that insanity and psychopathic disorders resulted from hereditary degenerations. They exemplified with a child whose parents experienced or had sexual excess, syphilis and alcoholism, would suffer in his adult life; claiming that these contributions affected the behaviour and brain (Whitlock 77).

1.4.Freud and Lacan’s Insights on Psychopathic Behaviours

Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan’s contributions to psychology are still relied upon. They both suggested theories demonstrating the reasons behind human behaviours. In this light, the researcher depends on Freud and Lacan’s insights to define and explain psychopathy, sadism, and insanity.

1.4.1.Freudian View on Psychopathy

If one were to look for Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)’s view on psychopathy, one might find it troubling since he did not address it directly. However, Freud (qtd. in Meloy) described criminals as having two traits which are “essential: boundless egoism and a strong destructive urge...a necessary condition for their expression is absence of love, lack of emotional appreciation of human objects” (178). This definition would become the basic definition of psychopaths years later as it is seen in Hare’s definition in his book *Without Conscience*. He argued that even though most psychopaths are criminals, many others remain out of prison, relying on their charisma and charm to live as normal individuals in society (2). Therefore, one sees that Freud’s definition of criminals aligns with that of psychopaths (Meloy 1).

For better understanding, Kapustin clarified in his article “An existential criterion for normal and abnormal personality in the works of Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adlerthat” that one

can analyse Freud's theory of personality and afterwards relate it to psychopathic personality to properly define and understand psychopaths. Freud (qtd. in Kapustin) outlined three main elements that are essential in defining human behaviour, which are the Superego, the Id, and the Ego (Kapustin 6).

Freud (qtd. in Kapustin) built three main characteristics of the Superego: ideal, self-observation, and conscience. First, the ideal would be characterized by one's system of moral values. These values are ways how one must behave that align with social and cultural demands. Second, the self-observation performed by the superego is to monitor how one's behaviour meets the ideal. Finally, the Superego performs judgment over one's feelings, thoughts and actions, which are known as conscience (Kapustin 6). The Superego is governed by the fact that if one's feelings, thoughts and actions comply with its characteristics, one experiences moral satisfaction, which is an important factor in defining the Id.

The Id to Freud (qtd. in Kapustin) thrives on satisfaction and pleasure. The Id is the instinctive drives that stimulate human behaviour to achieve a pleasurable feeling. Additionally, Freud referred the main principle that pilots the id drives as the pleasure principle. He gave great emphasis on the sex drive among many instinctive drives, as the one related to the problem of normal and abnormal personality, that eventually lead to the function of the Ego (Kapustin 8).

Freud (qtd. in Kapustin) explained the Ego as the part of personality which has direct contact with the outside world, unlike the Superego and Id which are internal. Accordingly, the Ego "represents the rational, sensible element of human beings." It has two main functions: the cognitive and regulatory functions. First, the cognitive function works to build an image of the outside world to its objective properties. Second, the regulatory functions balance the Id drives

demands and the moral claims of the Superego to the outside world (7) Thus, when these three elements are balanced, one's personality is also balanced; in other words, the personality is normal and vice versa.

One's personality is called abnormal if there is a conflict between the Superego and the Id. This conflict is defined by the strength of sexual drives, which would affect the moral limitations of the Superego. Additionally, the position of the Ego would only respond to the needs of the Superego, since there is a conflict between the latter and the Id, it means the Ego is also in conflict with the Id. Therefore, all three elements are in conflict with one another, and each element tries to dominate the other, which lead to an abnormal personality (Kapustin 8).

Based on these analyses, if one's Superego is weak, their Id dominates and they are more likely to be a psychopath (Freud 2). Moreover, one sees that psychopaths are driven by sexual tendencies, which often leads them to rape and assault individuals; as they tend to relate love with sexual arousal (Hare 52).

1.4.2.Sadism from Freudian Lens

Ehrmann in her article "Sadomasochism According to Freud's Psychosexual Stages of Development Theory", she elaborated that according to Freud, sadism is traced back to childhood. The act of spanking or beating in a one's childhood is believed to later manifest itself into something sexual in the adult life which would lead to a life of sadism (1). He later developed his idea and related sadism to aggression.

In Freud's view (qtd. in Grimwade), there are two basic instincts, sex and aggression. Therefore he deduced that since sadism involves sexual acts, it is related to aggression. He claimed:

The sexuality of most male human beings contains an element of aggressiveness – a desire to subjugate; the biological significance of it seems to lie in the need for overcoming the resistance of the sexual object by means other than the process of wooing. Thus sadism would correspond to an aggressive component of the sexual instinct which has become independent and exaggerated and, by displacement, has usurped the leading position. (Freud 156–7)

Freud explains the sadist as someone who is willing to dominate; hence he will exhibit or behave in an aggressive manner in order to achieve what he wants. Moreover, he combined his theory of sexuality with his theory of neuroses in the Three Essays on “the Theory of Sexuality” to give more insights for further understanding the aim of sadism (Grimwade 157).

The aim for Freud (qtd. in Grimwade) is one of the dimensions of the drive, it is “the act to which the drive is driven” (192). The second dimension is the object, which is the person, thing, animal, which is subjected to the drive. Additionally, the aim of the sadist would inflict pain in order to prove his acts of mastery towards the object (Gimwade 157).

1.4.3. Freud on Insanity

Insanity according to Freud (qtd. in Berthold-bond) is a response to the mind’s encounter with an experience of pain that it cannot cope with. He related insanity to rationality, claiming that all minds seek to obtain a unity between the inner and outer worlds. Freud (qtd. in Berthold-bond) argues that insanity is “the neglect of the distinction between [reality] and phantasy” (368). Therefore, if one’s attempt in achieving unity between the inner and outer worlds is irrupted, the mind is ultimately disturbed.

1.4.4.Lacanian Understanding of Psychopathy

According to Lacan (qtd. in Mallon), psychopathy is generated from a malformation in the development of the ego, which he related it to aggressiveness towards one's self (Mallon 59). In other words, he claimed that "both identification with the imago of one's semblable and the drama of primordial jealousy" (79). A brief definition of the "imago" would be the image in which the ego of the individual is brought up by identification. Moreover, the imago occurs in his mirror stage theory.

Lacan located the origins of the ego at the mirror stage (Mallon 60). Lacan (qtd. in Mallon) argued that the "individual fixates on an image that alienates him from himself" (92). Therefore, the ego is developed from the act of looking into the mirror. Subsequently, the individual looks at the image reflecting from the mirror not as himself, but rather as 'other' (Mallon 60). Moreover, the relationship between the said individual and the 'other' is based on jealousy which would later manifest itself in aggressiveness.

The aggressiveness generated at the mirror stage is either reduced or strengthened as the individual grows. Mallon found that Lacan related psychopathic personalities with high aggressiveness to failure in the paternal function (65). In *Seminar III* Lacan argues that when there is a dysfunction in the relationship between the father and the son, the latter will become the shadow of the monstrous father (Mallon 66). Lacan (qtd. in Mallon) claims that "a psychopathic personality...is produced in such a situation."

1.4.5.Lacan on Sadism

Hendrickx in his research claimed that Lacan did not explore sadism explicitly, but rather he related it to a primitive kind of aggressiveness (95). He connected this aggressiveness to kids as it is mentioned before, however he clarifies that it is not sexual at first, but would later develop into sexual and that would lead to sadism.

Sadism for Lacan (qtd. in Hendrickx) has an inter-subjective relationship. He claims that the latter includes a sense of consent, elaborating:

The sadistic relation can only be sustained in so far as the other is on the verge of still remaining a subject. If he is no longer anything more than reacting flesh, a kind of mollusk whose edges one titillates and which palpitates, the sadistic relation no longer exists. The subject in sadism will stop there, suddenly encountering a void, a gap, a hollow. The sadistic relation implies, in fact, that the partner's consent has been secured – his freedom, his confession, his humiliation (214-215).

Moreover, this relationship gives power to the sadist as the subject is giving consent in being treated as a subject. In other words, the sadist is playing on the fear of the other, with pressure or with threat; all the while the subject acknowledges and accepts that (Hendrickx 214).

1.4.6.Lacanian Views on Insanity

In *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function*, Lacan explains the function of the ego. He proposes that “the subject's capture by his situation gives us the most general formulation of madness” (80). Moreover, he reveals that there is a relation between subjectivity and madness.

Furthermore, he claims that there is a split in the subjectivity between ‘being’ and believing as he explains that “the madman believes he is different than he is” and “the kind who really things he is a king” (139). In this light, this split exhibits that Lacan views madness as the “permanent virtuality of a gap opened in his essence... madness is freedom’s most faithful companion, following its every move like a shadow” (144). Therefore, one sees that madness is related to subjectivity.

1.5. The Discourse of Power

The concept of power has evolved through history from the exercise of domination over subjects through oppression to disciplinary power that produces useful and docile bodies (Valinezhad and Abootalebi 2). According to Foucault (qtd. in Rose), the difference between the old system of power and disciplinary power is that the former’s target was the physical body, while the latter’s target is the ‘soul’ and its capacities.

Foucault’s interpretation of the ‘soul’ is the human psyche, consciousness and personality. These components are controlled and mobilised by disciplinary power through a set of standards and values that individuals must maintain (Ransom, 1997). Therefore, Foucault explains that “disciplines characterise, classify, specialise, they distribute along scales around a norm, hierarchies individuals in relation to one another and, if necessary disqualify and invalidate” (223). In other words, he argues that disciplinary power encourages people to correct and evaluate themselves against standards or norms (David Marsden, 2001).

Foucault is one of the first thinkers who dared to challenge the idea of power being only viewed in a negative or repressive thing that forces individuals to do stuff against their wishes (Gaventa 2). He argued that it is rather a necessary and positive force in society:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effect of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domain of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (Foucault 194)

It is understood that Foucault tries to highlight the fact that disciplinary power does not work by making individuals do something that someone else wants them to do, but rather it makes them want to do it for themselves and do it as others want them to (Allen). Additionally, disciplinary power is achieved through mind control and perpetual surveillance.

In order for disciplinary power to be successful, perpetual surveillance must be attained. Foucault notes that individuals are to be observed and watched as a mean of exercising power. That is why there is separation in classes; it is in order to be easily controlled and constantly watched (138). Furthermore, it is argued that some of those who exercise disciplinary power are psychopaths.

1.6.Drawing the Link between Power and Psychopathic Behaviours

The purpose for this research is to find the link between power and psychopathy, sadism, and insanity. Hence the attempt to link between the three psychopathic behaviours: psychopathy, sadism, and insanity with the concept of power.

1.6.1.Psychopathy and Power

Ever since the beginning of civilization, people have had the need to obtain power over others, in order to lead and guide them. However, for psychopaths, they need power to have

control over people, not to guide or lead, but rather to feel superior and feed their fascination with power (Hare 38). Moreover, psychopaths love to have power and control over people and they genuinely believe that other people's opinions and feelings are invalid compared to theirs (38). Hence the need to dominate and hurt their victims is completely justified for them.

Psychopaths are known to need to have control. Therefore, once they are in their twenties, their sexual drives become strong and are only fed by inflicting pain and fear over others. Further, they move from hurting and abusing animals to hurting people. They project the buried fear that is stored in their unconscious on their victims in order to fulfill their need of power.

Notably, Ted Bundy claimed that "you feel the last bit of breath leaving their body. You're looking into their eyes. A person in that situation is God!" (Philbin 6). It is understood that a psychopath only needs to feed the hunger of control and killing mercilessly help them achieve that.

1.6.2.Sadism and Power

To the sadistic psychopath, the interaction of sadistic forces those of dominance and submission is an addictive need for power over the lives of others. Further, these sadistic psychopaths have to continually punish and torment their victims to prove to themselves, rather than their victims, that they are the ones in control (Howell).

Howell gave the example of the vampire metaphor in order to elaborate the relationship between power and the sadistic psychopath (441). She claimed that the sadist, like the vampire have the addictive need for power over humans (442). Therefore, it is seen that to sadists, they must have power in order to dominate their victims.

1.6.3. Insanity and Power

Having power can lead to losing touch with reality Coleman argues. One simply thinks that with his powerful position, everything is possible regardless of what others think. Those who have power are known to lack empathy and conscience; in addition to that, they perceive other people's feelings and opinions invalid (Coleman). Therefore, those who have power are known to not have the same perspectives as others, if for instance, their power was taken away, they would simply lose their sanity.

Conclusion

To conclude, the three psychopathic behaviours psychopathy, sadism, and insanity are explained. Furthermore, the insights Freud and Lacan's are relied upon to further demonstrate the impulse behind these psychopathic traits. It is seen that Freud did not explicitly tackle psychopathy but rather he spoke about traits existing in criminals, which later on would be found in psychopaths.

Similarly, we depend on Freud's theory of the Superego, Id, and Ego to shed the light on the reasons that lead to psychopathy. On the same note, Lacan's definition of psychopathy is related to a malfunction in the ego. Additionally, Lacan relied on his Mirror Stage theory to explain the term. Consequently, Freud and Lacan both claimed that insanity is caused by the deviation of the mind after not being able to distinct between reality and fantasy. Furthermore, the concept of power is tackled and explained by the help of Michel Foucault. We afterwards make the link between psychopathy, sadism, and insanity with power.

Chapter Two:

A Postmodern Analysis of Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Introduction

Following a descriptive and analytical method, this chapter will start by giving a brief background of postmodernism in American literature during the 60s and 70s. It will shed the light on how Ken Kesey's life is reflected in his works and what led him to write his famous novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Additionally, a brief introduction of the novel will be displayed to highlight the postmodern traits within theme, setting and characters.

This section will also investigate psychopathic behaviours within the three major characters through a postmodernist lens. Namely, it will analyse psychopathy in McMurphy, then it will examine sadism in Nurse Ratched and insanity in Chief Bromden; while simultaneously highlighting a few of the postmodern techniques among which black humour, irony, and paranoia.

2.1.American Postmodernism of the 1960s-1970s

Postmodernism is known to be the movement that followed modernism. It described the development of philosophy, art, architecture and criticism. It was the rejection of the extravagant past tendencies that was associated with modernism as it defined scepticism and irony and focused on individualism and self-consciousness (Nuyen 183-194).

Arguably, postmodernism began by the 1940s, and reached its peak after the Second World War as it swiped the American country during the 1960s (Huysen and Andreas 188). In literature, novelists and artists aimed at being self-conscious, ironic and experimental (Gale 615). Accordingly, this period was characterised with numerous source of experiments of animals as well as humans. One of the major experiments practiced especially by youth was the

psychoactive drugs .In this light, the use of substance was a way of being self-conscious as consumers believed that drugs helped them discover the spiritual self (Joe-Laider). Moreover, all what happened during this era was projected in literature of that period as well.

As an illustration, Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* was a monumental novel in countercultural canon. It is considered as a semi autobiography novel as it reflected the experience of the author in a fictitious way. Although he relied on the modern techniques stream of consciousness, he used it in a way that answers the postmodern view to reflect the intrinsic connection between space and the mind. Furthermore, sex, jazz and drugs were the themes that shaped this novel as well as this era.

Narratives during this era can be summed up by what Bradbury described: “distinctive, dissenting voice of postwar alienation” (767). Another author that heavily influenced this period's literature is Ken Kesey who notably was influenced by Jack Kerouac. With this in mind, Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* is considered to be one of his important novels because it not only portrayed the reality of his era, but it also was an important literary production that echoed with postmodernist ideals.

2.2.The Influence of Ken Kesey's Experience on his Novel

Ken Kesey (1935-2001) is an important counterculture figure. He lived an eventful life which was reflected in his writing. Kesey was fascinated by the beat generation which made him read works by William S. Burroughs and Jack Kerouac whom influenced both his writings, as well as his life. He began experimenting with marijuana and writing a second novel entitled *Zoo*, which captured the height of the Beat culture (Gale 2).

Kesey went through a radical transformation when his friend, Vik Lovell, introduced him to a drug study going on in the hospital he worked at. Lovell told Kesey that he would be paid for allowing doctors at the Veterans' Hospital in Menlo Park to monitor his behaviour after ingesting psychedelic drugs² (Fradkin and Stegner 133). He was given LSD³ multiple times and became fascinated by how the substance gave him new visions and changed his state of thought. He believed that LSD had the ability to enhance creativity (Farber 24).

After his participation in the drug study, he was granted the opportunity to work the night shift in that same hospital⁴ as an aide on the psychiatric ward. While on duty, Kesey continued the use of LSD that he smuggled out of the lab, and began writing. He believed that the psychedelic granted him the ability to see inside the doctors' minds. He claimed that "after I took LSD, I suddenly saw it. I saw it all. I listened to them and watched them, and I saw that what they were saying and doing was not so crazy after all" (Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain 119).

Similarly, Kesey began writing after finishing his chores in the psychiatric ward, he would take LSD as he viewed it gave him "a different perspective of the people in the mental hospital, a sense that maybe they were not so crazy or as bad as the sterile environment they were living in" (Faggen). Kesey came to believe that LSD evoked the traditional thinking about patients submitted to psychiatrists. This notion would be further illustrated in his novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* 1962 that emerged after ten months of working in the hospital.

² Psychedelic drugs are an alternative name to psychoactive drugs.

³ Lysergic Acid Diethylamide which is a hallucinogenic drug that causes altered thoughts, feelings, and awareness of the surroundings.

⁴ The Veterans' Hospital in Menlo Park.

2.3.A Brief Introduction to Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Kesey started his novel with an epigraph "... one flew east, one flew west, One flew over the cuckoo's nest" in fact, this epigraph is a nursery rhyme that his grandmother used to sing for him. The title of the novel insinuates that someone is escaping a mental institution as the phrase 'cuckoo's nest' is an informal expression that means 'psychiatric institution'. (Tanner 5). Remarkably, on the first page of the novel he dedicated his work to Vik Lovell introduced him to LSD, "To Vik Lovell, who told me dragons did not exist, then led me to their lairs."

To begin with, the plot of the novel revolves around three major characters: Chief Bromden, Nurse Ratched, and Randle McMurphy. The events of the story are narrated by Chief Bromden, who is a patient in a mental hospital, along with many others. Bromden is a "half-breed Indian" (Kesey 10), who pretends to be deaf and mute in order to stay away from trouble and questioning. He poses no threat to anyone despite of his big figure. His reason for staying in the hospital is unknown throughout the story. However the reader can sense a hint of schizophrenia hidden under Bromden's way of viewing and portraying things. For example, he believes that the hospital has fog machines that affect his vision and cloud his mind, and only "when the fog clears" he "can see" (Kesey 14).

To Bromden, the fog controls the patients' minds and cause confusion, and that he is the only one who seems to notice it, Bromden believes that "the fog affects their memory some way it doesn't affect mine" (Kesey 127). He believes that the fog machine is controlled by a nurse called Nurse Ratched as she is the one who is in control of the psychiatric ward.

Nurse Ratched is the antagonist in this novel. She is the head nurse that controls everything in the ward, including the patients there, and she is feared by everyone in there as well. Nurse

Ratched is described as a cold, power-maniac, controlling woman. Moreover, Bromden often relates her to machinery, which is associated with power, and not a human being, especially when she is displeased with something, noting that “she really lets herself go and her painted smile twits, stretches to an open snarl, and she blows up bigger and bigger, big as a tractor, so big I can smell the machinery inside the way you smell a motor pulling too big a load” (Kesey 10). Nurse Ratched maintains a well organized ward where she is respected and feared, until McMurphy arrives.

Randle McMurphy is portrayed by Kesey as the saviour in this novel. The patients who were intimidated by his arrival soon became his friends. McMurphy makes sure to be heard before seen, which is the case when he entered the ward. The patients heard his voice and laughter before seeing his face “I hear him coming down the hall, and he sounds big in the way he walks, and he sure don’t slide; he’s got iron on his heels and he rings it on the floor like horseshoes (Kesey 16). Additionally, he is a gambler and eventually teaches the patients to gamble with him and after seeing how the Big Nurse runs the ward, he bets the patients that he would break her and defy her rules.

The story wraps itself by McMurphy stripping the Big Nurse’s power away. After having a party and inviting some women over, nudging one of the patients to have sexual intercourse with one of the women, the next morning the Big Nurse came and caught the patient with the woman. She threatened to tell his mother as she knew that would destroy him. Moreover, the patient committed suicide the same day, and that pushed McMurphy over the end as he became close to all of the patients; he physically attacked the Big Nurse and he almost choked her to death. Consequently, after that incident the Big Nurse never had “her ward back into shape . . . she couldn’t rule with her old power anymore” (Kesey 338).

2.4. Demonstrating Psychopathic Behaviours through Postmodern Techniques in Kesey's

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest

One believes that Ken Kesey fits in the postmodern spectrum as he used some of its techniques while writing *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. He portrayed his novel as reflection of the reality of his time. On the same note, his work in the psychiatric ward was the reason behind focusing the setting of the novel in a mental hospital. While being there and observing traits like psychopathy sadism and insanity, he instantly translated to his novel. To do so, he employed postmodern techniques such as irony, black humour and paranoia. Accordingly, one will analyse the three major characters of the novel to unravel the forth mentioned behaviours and how they are represented within the postmodern novel.

2.4.1. Psychopathy in the character of McMurphy

If one takes Robert Hare's definition of psychopathy, one can see that it fits McMurphy. He noted that "psychopaths are social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their ways through life" (1). In this light, McMurphy has a charming personality that was used to manipulate the patients numerous times into doing things with him. He encouraged one patient to sleep with a woman, whom he brought in the ward, and prove that he is a man, even though they all knew it was against the rules. After the patient showed hesitation, McMurphy told him that it was "too late to back out now. You'll pull through" (Kesey 313). One can see that McMurphy does not care about what others say, as long as it does not interfere with what he wants.

The reason behind McMurphy's presence in the ward was because "the court ruled that [he is] a psychopath" (Kesey 19). He claims that he did not argue with the court as the decision benefitted him to get out of the pea fields where he was serving time for some crimes he

committed. He continues “be it a psychopath or mad dog or werewolf, because I don’t care if I never see another weedin’ hoe to my dying day” (Kesey 19).

According to Kiehl and Hoffman, the symptoms of psychopathy include shallow affect, lack of empathy and remorse irresponsibility and promiscuousness. McMurphy checks all of the criteria. Accordingly, McMurphy has been going to jail for multiple of crimes including sexual assault; however he was sentenced to six months for statutory rape of a fifteen year old girl. However, he argues that the girl led him on and that it was not his fault for she lied and “said she was seventeen . . . and she was *plenty* willin’ ” (Kesey 51). One can notice that McMurphy refuses to take responsibility for his actions, and rather always blames someone else, much like psychopaths.

McMurphy is also known for his black humour. Ken Kesey highlighted this postmodern element because it denotes feelings of discomfort in a humorous way. This is the case with the patient explaining to McMurphy how they are “rabbits” and Nurse Ratched is a “wolf”, demonstrating that “this world... belongs to the strong . . . The ritual of our existence is based on the strong getting stronger by devouring the weak . . . the rabbits accept their role in the ritual and recognize the wolf as the strong” (Kesey 72).

Additionally, the reader can sense the element of black humour when McMurphy carefully chooses his words, calling Nurse Ratched a “ball cutter” (67), describing how she psychologically emasculate the patients so they become “weak” and “live like [she] want[s] you to” (Kesey 67).

2.4.2.Sadism in the Character of Nurse Ratched

According to Victor Nell's explanation of sadism, it is the intentional infliction of pain on innocent individuals for the sake of enjoyment (227). In this light, one can see Nurse Ratched as a sadistic person while examining the novel. Nurse Ratched feeds on the pain of the patients because to her, it strengthens her powerful position. To elaborate, this is seen when she assembles a Group Therapy session and encourages the patients to spill their darkest secrets, or even tell on each other. However, if they do not do it, she acts annoyed which would make them obey her out of fear. Additionally, every single patient on the ward fears her and knows that she "gets real put out if anything keeps her outfit running smooth" (Kesey 47). Moreover, one can see that Nurse Ratched is not a sadist in the sexual sense.

Hurting and humiliating the patients does not give her sexual pleasure, but rather it gives her power. She fits in the definition of Theodore Millon's definition of sadism: "the sadist exhibits a social vindictiveness to enjoy and gain particular satisfaction when derogating and humiliating others" (183). Furthermore, the Nurse's sadist tendencies heighten with McMurphy's arrival, as she sees he is trying to disrupt her ward's order. According to Irvin Bieber's explanation of the sadism as a "maladaptive response to threat" (10), for this reason one understands that McMurphy represents threat to Nurse Ratched, hence her sadistic behaviour is a response to attempt and eliminate that threat.

Bromden calls her the "Big Nurse" (Kesey 8) throughout the novel. His choice of the word Big can be related to George Orwell's dystopian novel 1984's Big Brother, which can be understood as a parody. In this view, Both Big Nurse and Big Brother watch their people and have total control over the milieu they exist in. Ironically, Bromden describes her face as

“smooth, calculated, and precision-made, like an expensive baby doll, skin like flesh-coloured enamel, blend of white and cream and baby-blue eyes, small nose, pink little nostrils everything working together” (Kesey 10-11).

Furthermore, The Nurse’s sadistic tendencies are shown when she manipulates the patients into thinking that her mind games and torture methods are for their benefits as one patient claims “I was born a rabbit. Just look at me. I simply need the nurse to make me happy with my role” (Kesey 72). This aligns with Lacan’s psychoanalysis of sadism, “the sadistic relation can only be sustained in so far as the other is on the verge of still remaining a subject” (214-215). This explanation demonstrates that the victim gives consent to the sadist after being projected to manipulation from him.

At Nurse Ratched’s side are the three black orderlies and the doctor. The doctor has no authority over the Nurse; however it is quite the opposite as one of the patients explains “Doctor Spivey... is exactly like the rest of us. . . [He] doesn’t hold the power of hiring and firing. That power goes to the supervisor, and the supervisor is a woman, a deaf old friend of Miss Ratched’s; they were Army nurses together in the thirties” (Kesey 70). From this passage, one can notice the irony employed since usually the doctor, who is at a higher rank than the nurse, should be the one in control of who to hire and fire, and yet this is not the case.

Additionally, Nurse Ratched allows the three black boys do whatever they want to the patients with her approval. Bromden notes that while someone new comes to the hospital, the Nurse orders the three black boys to wash the new patient, yet they explicitly sexually harass the new comer with her knowledge and approval:

The black boys come sign for him and take him into the shower room, where they strip him and leave him shivering with the door open while they all three run grinning up and down the halls looking for the Vaseline. “We need that Vaseline,” they’ll tell the Big Nurse, “for the thermometer.” She looks from one to the other: “I’m sure you do,” and hands them a jar holds at least a gallon, “but mind you boys don’t group in there.” . . . [They] croon, “That’s right, mothah, that’s right,” (Kesey 15)

The Nurse allows sexual assault as a way to show who is in power. She makes sure that all of the patients know it too, so no one dares to mess up her order; and no one tries to defy her.

Furthermore, after the Big Nurse catches a patient with a woman, she starts tormenting him by threatening to tell his mother. She knew that the patient’s fear is disappointing his mother, and yet she continued in threatening him:

“What worries me, Billy,” she said- and I could hear the change in her voice- “is how your poor mother is going to take this.” She got the response she was after. Billy flinched and out his hand to his cheek like he’d been burned with acid. “Mrs. Bibbit’s always been proud of your discretion. I know she has. This is going to disturb her terribly . . . she always spoke so proudly of you.” (Kesey 332)

Notably, Nurse Ratched did not stop taunting the patient until he broke down right in front of her eyes. She watched him “folding into the floor, head going back, knees coming forward. . . He was shaking his head in panic” (Kesey 332). Eventually the patient killed himself and the Nurse knows it was because of her, and yet she put the blame on McMurphy. Moreover, the incident made McMurphy physically attack her and almost killing her, and yet she was waiting for that reaction from him, to finally have a good reason to destroy him.

Nurse Ratched's appearance opposes her behaviour as a typical woman. To elaborate, Bromden noted that she always carries her wicker bag with her, and yet "there's no compact or lipstick or woman stuff" (Kesey 9). The irony lies behind the fact that despite her looking like a typical soft woman, she does not act or behaves like one. Furthermore, another ironic feature that Kesey planted in his novel is her name. One always sees nurses as tender and nice individuals, who always help those injured and in need, and yet Nurse Ratched is nothing of that sort.

Therefore, Nurse Ratched is a sadistic Nurse whose aim is to rule the ward the way she sees fit; and does everything to maintain her powerful position. She enjoys terrorising the patients and often uses their weaknesses against them as an act of authority to prove that she is the one who dominates them.

2.4.3. Insanity in the Character of Chief Bromden

If one takes Freud's definition of insanity: "it is the neglect of the distinction between [reality] and phantasy" (IL368), one will see that it perfectly fits the character Chief Bromden. While reading the novel, the reader cannot help but notice Bromden's delusional thoughts, he believes that there is a fog machine, controlled by the Big Nurse, to confuse the patients and control them; and somehow no one seems to notice the fog but Bromden. He is conflicted by it throughout the novel, claiming that giving up to the fog makes him and the others feel "safe" (Kesey 123).

The fog reoccurs many times throughout the story, and Bromden is always conflicted about it. It can be interpreted as the fog is related to the character's feelings. To elaborate, in chapter nine, the patients decided to vote on the matter of watching the World Series, however they lost against the Nurse and Bromden is saddened by their loss and suddenly the fog appears. He

believes that the Nurse is in control of the fog machine claiming “right now she’s got the fog machine switched on, and it’s rolling in so fast I can’t see a thing but her face, rolling in thicker and thicker, and I feel as hopeless and dead as I felt happy a minute ago” (Kesey 123). One can see that once he became agonised by the fact that she had won, the fog started. Additionally, his sadness is dependent on her hence the reason why she is in control of the fog machine.

His confliction is shown later in accepting his fate and viewing that surrendering to the fog makes him safe, thinking that the reason why everyone else is not aware of the fog is because they embraced and accepted it for their safety. This is understood when Bromden said that “the more I think about how nothing can be helped, the faster the fog rolls in. And I’m glad when it gets thick enough you’re lost in it and can let go, and be safe again” (Kesey 123).

Bromden’s insanity can lie under the fact that he is paranoid and terrified by the Big Nurse. He pretends to be deaf and mute so he stays away from trouble and acts stupid while observing and hearing everything going on in the ward. Moreover, Freud explained the reason behind insanity is not being able to cope with pain. In this view, Bromden is constantly pained by the fact that he cannot both cope with the change going on in the outside world, or with accepting the terror of living under Nurse Ratched’s rule.

Furthermore, Bromden believes that the Nurse is constantly spying on the patients with wires. To illustrate, when a patient was talking with McMurphy about how evil the Nurse is, Bromden noted that “I don’t hear anything but a faint reeling rhythm, what I figure is a tape recorder somewhere getting all of this” (Kesey 69). Additionally, he claims that the nurse controls the time in the ward, to mess with the sanity of the patients and that he is the only one who seems to notice that:

Nurse Ratched is able to set the wall clock at whatever speed she wants by just turning one of those dials in the steel doors; she takes a notion to hurry things up, she turns the speed up, and those hands whip around that disk like spokes in a wheel. The scene in the picture-screen windows goes through rapid changes of light to show morning, noon, and night- throbs off and on furiously with day and dark, and everybody is driven like mad to keep up with that passing of fake time. (Kesey 84)

Bromden explains that the Big Nurse is in control of everything, even the time. He claims that she is able to switch the day to night and night to day, all to her pleasure and to drive them insane. Therefore, one can conclude that Bromden's stay in the mental hospital affected him deeply to the point where he believes that he is the only one who is aware of the truth, and that all of the other patients are under the spell of Nurse Ratched.

Accordingly, paranoia is heavily represented in the character Bromden. The narrator is always on edge thinking that he is going to be harmed by a bigger force, which is Nurse Ratched. Bromden's paranoia lies under the fact that he cannot see things clearly from an everyday perspective, "I been silent so long now it's gonna roar and of me like floodwaters and you think the guy telling this is ranting and raving . . . It's still hard for me to have a clear mind thinking on it. But it's the truth even if it didn't happen" (Kesey 13).

2.5. Themes of Masculinity and Dehumanization

Numerous themes were employed in Ken Kesey's novel. The two prominent ones are the themes of masculinity, dehumanization. The researcher chose these two to first demonstrate how Nurse Ratched tries to eliminate masculinity by projecting psychologically torture on the patients, while McMurphy uses his masculinity to exercise power over them. Moreover, the theme of

dehumanization was chosen to show how Nurse Ratched dehumanized the patients from basic human emotions to the point where they find McMurphy's laughter strange and foreign.

2.5.1.Masculinity

Throughout the novel, masculinity is being threatened by Nurse Ratched. While the Big Nurse tries to destroy the patients' masculinity, McMurphy uses it to dominate the patients, at the same time, he tries to help them regain it since he is viewed by Bromden and the rest of the patients as the embodiment of masculinity, "he's board . . . board across the jaw and shoulders and chest . . . a seam runs across his nose and one cheekbone where somebody laid him a good one in a fight, and the stitches are still in the seam" (Kesey 17).

Upon his arrival, McMurphy sees how the Big Nurse controls the ward and how everyone is terrified by her. After the Group Therapy session, he sees how the Big Nurse waited for the patients to turn against each other, and when they did she was pleased. Further, he confronted one of the patients and explained how the Nurse is not helping them but rather she is psychologically emasculating them, claiming she is one of the "people who try to make you weak so they can get you to toe the line, to follow their rules, to live like the want you to. And the best way to do this, to get you to knuckle under, is to weaken you by gettin' you where it hurts the worst" (Kesey 67).

Another point that McMurphy notices is that the Big Nurse terrorised the patients to the point where they know they cannot win against her. One patient says:

The world... belongs to the strong my friend! The ritual of our existence is based on the strong getting stronger by devouring the weak. We must face up to this. No more than right that it should be this way. We must learn to accept it as a law of the natural world.

The rabbits accept their role in the ritual and recognize the world as the strong. In defense, the rabbit becomes sly and frightened and elusive and he digs holes and hides when the wolf is about. And he endures, he goes on. He knows his place. He most certainly doesn't challenge the world to combat. Now, would that be wise? Would it? (Kesey 72)

One might understand that the patient is associating himself, along with the other patients, as the rabbit in his speech; he also associated Nurse Ratched as the wolf, claiming that they cannot defeat her, that it would be unnatural and impossible to defeat her, as it is unnatural and impossible for the rabbit to defeat the wolf. In this view, McMurphy argues with the patient "you're talking like a fool. You mean to tell me that you're gonna sit back and let some old blue-haired woman talk you into being a rabbit?" (Kesey 72)

Later on, after the same patient continues his conversation with McMurphy, he tells him "friend...you...may be a wolf" (Kesey 75). The reader sees that the patients notice how different McMurphy is from them, and that makes them believe that he has the same amount of power as the Big Nurse, enough to defy her.

Therefore, McMurphy understands that as long as he is not caught breaking the rules, he is safe from her as she has no explicit reason to punish him. He becomes intrigued to "beat her at her own game" (Kesey 81). Moreover, he makes a bet with the inmates claiming that he will defeat the Big Nurse.

McMurphy's masculinity has a big effect on the other patients as a means of power as they are weak they look up to him to the point of picking up his habits such as "rubbing hands together like McMurphy does" (Kesey 82). He teaches them to laugh, gamble and fish; he even brought

women to party with them and introduced a prostitute to one of the patients and encouraged him to have sexual intercourse with her to enhance his masculinity. However, McMurphy commits one last masculine act that would lead to his end, which is physically attack Nurse Ratched and strips her down from her clothes, which one can understand that he raped her, “he grabbed for her and ripped her uniform all the way down the front” (Kesey 336).

This incident made the patients see that she is no longer as powerful as they once believed. Later on, when some patients approached her and she “jumped back two steps” (Kesey 337). Bromden notes that she was given a her new uniform that “no longer concealed the fact that was a woman” (Kesey 338), implying that her terrifying facade she tried so hard to maintain has finally shattered, thus they were finally able to see her for who she really is. However, this action led to McMurphy being lobotomized, which was the “chopping away the brain, frontal-lobe castration” (Kesey 202). Hence, he became disabled and no longer the strong, masculine McMurphy.

2.5.2. Dehumanization

Dehumanization is defined as the process of depriving individuals from having human qualities. In this light, one can argue that Nurse Ratched dehumanized and oppressed the patients to the point of finding the sound of laughter alien. To elaborate, Bromden’s first impression of McMurphy was amazement; he was surprised by the fact that he laughs a lot:

nobody can tell exactly why he laughs; there’s nothing funny going on . . . it’s free and loud and it comes out of his wide grinning mouth and spreads in rings bigger and bigger till it’s lapping against the walls over the ward . . . this sounds real. I realize all of a sudden it’s the first laugh I’ve heard in years. (Kesey 17)

One might find it strange that Bromden claimed that it was the first laugh he has heard in years. He said in the beginning of the novel that he is amongst the first ones who arrived in the ward, in this light, it can be understood that the Big Nurse had oppressed all of the patients to the point of forgetting how to laugh. It can be said that the Nurse stripped them from the basic human emotions.

Furthermore, McMurphy notices how the patients and even the staff are “stunned dumb by him and his laughing” (Kesey 17). He always sees how the patients are afraid to laugh; he comments “I haven’t heard a real laugh since I came through that door. . . Man, when you lose your laugh you lose your footing” (Kesey 78).

In this light, one can see that McMurphy brought out the sense of community in the patients who were once afraid to let out a laugh and made them feel free. Their laughter shows that he changed the order of the Big Nurse in the ward by simply ignoring her sly tactics, which eventually led to the patients to follow his steps.

Conclusion

To conclude with, one might say that *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest* is filled with literary layers. Ken Kesey’s literary innovation could take the reader inside the psychiatric ward and make him feel a mixture of emotions including fear, excitement, joy and everything with the characters.

Ken Kesey employed some of the postmodern characteristics in his novel one of which was experiencing the novel with the first-narrative point of view. We rely on Chief Bromdon to be the sole truth teller in this story. Moreover, the author uses black humour which makes the reader

simultaneously feel discomfort and humour while reading some parts. Additionally, irony and paranoia are heavily employed to show how the period affected everyone. Ken Kesey delivers multiple characters to show how diversity was the theme of 1960-70s. He made the female character have absolute power over men; she controlled everything in the psychiatric ward, including the patients; that is until a new comer enters the ward, and disrupts her order.

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest had many themes, but we did not tackle them all, only masculinity and dehumanization as they are the prominent ones.

3. Chapter Three:

The Concept of Power in Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

Introduction

According to Michel Foucault, the concept of power developed through the years, he claims that it went from targeting the physical body to targeting the psyche of individuals. In this light, this chapter will tackle the concept of power existing in the novel, specifically the characters Nurse Ratched and Randle McMurphy.

In this chapter, Nurse Ratched will be presented as the manipulator of power as she owns the psychiatric ward, as well as the patients and workers in it. On the same note, we will highlight how there is a struggle of power between the characters Nurse Ratched and Randle McMurphy for they are both seeking to dominate the ward. Moreover, this section will present how Ken Kesey defeated the norm as he gave Nurse Ratched motherly qualities but in a negative way. Therefore, we will rely on Freud's Oedipus complex theory while exploring this theme. Additionally, this chapter will show how power is linked to psychopathy, sadism, and insanity.

3.1 Nurse Ratched as the Manipulator of Power

One finds her/himself intrigued with Nurse Ratched's obsession with power while reading *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Ken Kesey challenged the writing canon when he made Nurse Ratched; he did not make her a soft feminine woman that falls in love and tries to fight the world to prove her worth, instead he made her into a manipulator, a cold hearted power hungry authoritarian. It is seen through the novel how she abuses her power as she controls the ward and the patients in it.

According to Foucault's definition of power, it is "something that is acquired, seized, or shared; something that one holds onto or allows to slip away; power is exercised from

innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations” (94). Based on this definition, it is understood that Nurse Ratched is the one who acquires power in the ward. She ensured that she has power over every single person in the ward, whether workers there or patients. It is understood that not even the doctor has power over her, but rather it is the opposite:

Doctor Spivey... is exactly like the rest of us . . . He’s frightened, desperate, ineffectual little rabbit, totally incapable of running this ward without our Miss Ratched’s help, and he knows it. And, worse, she *knows* he knows it and reminds him every chance she gets. (Kesey 70)

The quotation above explains how Nurse Ratched is the one running the ward, and not the doctor. Additionally, she makes sure that everyone in the ward knows that she is the one in charge.

It is seen that from the moment she enters the ward, she owns the place. Bromden, the narrator, describes her entrance followed by a “gust of cold” (Kesey 8). Bromden is a representation of all of the other patients; hence his fear of Nurse Ratched alludes that this is a shared feeling between all of the patients. As a matter of a fact, the Nurse thrives from their fear, as it secures her power over them.

Furthermore, a patient explains later on to McMurphy that the doctor is not the one in charge of firing and hiring the staff, but rather it is the supervisor, who is a woman and “a dear friend of Miss Ratched’s” (Kesey 70). This is evidence that no one can threaten Nurse Ratched’s position, not even the doctor whose rank is higher than her. Moreover, the Nurse knows that the doctor is addicted to Demerol, and it is believed that the reason why he obeys the Nurse is because she can call the supervisor and have him removed.

Nurse Ratched's manipulation of power lies in the fact that she has the patients divided into groups, and she makes all patients spy on each other and write everything in a "log book" (Kesey 23). The division of the patients can be viewed as a way to control them easily, in addition to that, it is to ensure that they would not join together and turn against her.

Similarly, the reason why no one in the ward questions her authority is due to the fact that she claims she is doing everything for their benefits. As a matter of fact, the patients believe that the Nurse is a good nurse who is just doing her job to help them become better people. To illustrate, when McMurphy asks one of the patients why they allow Nurse Ratched to have power over them without questioning her, the patient replies with:

You completely disregard, completely overlook and disregard the fact that what the fellows were doing today was for my own benefit? That any question or discussion raised by Miss Ratched or the rest of the staff is done solely for therapeutic reasons . . . [S]he is a highly regarded psychiatric nurse with twenty years in the field . . . What other reason would we have for submitting ourselves to it. The staff desires our cure as much as we do. They aren't monsters. Miss Ratched may be a strict middle-aged lady, but she's not some kind of giant monster. (Kesey 67)

One can comprehend that the Nurse has brainwashed the patients to the point where they accept being psychologically tortured believing it is for their own good. Moreover, when McMurphy tells them that she would not be able to force them to answer or spy on each other, one patient claims that "if you d-don't answer she just smiles and m-makes a note in her little book and then she- she- oh, *hell!*" (Kesey 76) The stuttering shows how scared the patient is of the Nurse, he,

and all of the other patients believe that her smile is not a comforting or a loving one, but one with hidden meaning.

Further, one can interpret the smile of the Nurse as a smile that would insinuate punishment later. Additionally, when a patient refuses to take his medicines, she dismisses him but later orders the three black boys to hold him as she injects him, and allows them to sexually assault that patient. One can see that Nurse Ratched never explicitly gives orders of such things, however if anyone goes against her orders, she would not let him go unpunished.

Nurse Ratched pretends that her priority is the order of the ward and the well-being of the patients. An example would be when McMurphy asked her to turn down the loud volume of the song that was playing, she accused him of selfishness, and “there are old men here who couldn’t hear the radio at all if it were lower” (Kesey 115); she chose her words carefully knowing that it would make him feel guilty.

Additionally, Nurse Ratched has the power to send anyone who dares to stand against her to the Electro-Shock Therapy unit, where they would receive shock treatment which is a procedure that “does the work of the sleeping pill, the electric chair, *and* the torture rack” (Kesey 77). The Electro-Shop Therapy unit is seen as a warning, as there is another procedure which is worse: lobotomy. Hence the patients listen to her orders and obey without second thoughts.

Therefore, the patients are always manipulated in thinking that she is a good considerate person who would only punish those who defy her, for their own good. They do not question her behaviour and instead believe that she is a “sweet, smiling, tender angel of mercy” (Kesey 68). She maintains her power by wearing a smiling mask and making sure that everyone in the ward fears and listens to her.

3.2. Power Domination and/or Domination of Power between Nurse Ratched and Randle

McMurphy

One has to make the distinction between power domination and domination of power. The latter is characterized by the fact that power comes from above, it has a distinct relationship between those who dominate and those who are dominated. On the other hand, power of domination can be viewed exercising power with the purpose to dominate a subject (Caillé). In this light, one notices that there is a tension between Nurse Ratched and McMurphy as they both share the need to dominate the patients.

Nurse Ratched has been exercising her power over the ward for years; no one dared stand against her as she embedded fear inside each patient. She ran the ward the way she wanted, controlling the patients in the way she sees fit. In addition to that, she controlled their eating and sleeping time, as well as their showering and watching the television time. Moreover, none of the staff or the patients could ever question her authority, until the arrival of Randle McMurphy.

From the moment McMurphy sets foot inside the ward, Nurse Ratched recognizes that he is not like the other patients, even the other patients know that he is not like them. In this view, Bromden notes that McMurphy is unlike the usual new comers; he does not “creep in the door and slide along the wall and stand scared” (Kesey 15), instead he claims that he “know[s] he’s no ordinary Admission. I don’t hear him slide scared along the wall” (15).

Foucault viewed power relationships the same as any other types of relationships. He demonstrated that they are “the immediate consequences of the divisions, disequilibrium, and inequalities that happen . . . In other words, relations of power become —a capability of getting others to do something they would not otherwise do” (94). One can see that this fits both

McMurphy and Nurse Ratched. She forces the patients to do activities she claims that are for their benefits, while McMurphy forces them into doing things to defy the Nurse and regain their masculinity.

Additionally, when a nurse asks Nurse Ratched of her opinion about McMurphy, she notes that “he is what we call a ‘manipulator,’ Miss Flinn, a man who will use everyone and everything to his own ends” (Kesey 32). One can see the irony in her description of McMurphy, even though she has not talked to him yet, she has been only observing the way he was talking to the other patients. After the nurse asks her what he would gain from manipulating the other patients, Nurse Ratched says:

Comfort and an easy life, for instance; the feeling of power and respect; perhaps; monetary gain—perhaps all of these things. Sometimes a manipulator’s own ends are simply the actual *disruption* of the ward for the sake of disruption. There are such people in our society. A manipulator can influence the other patients and disrupt them to such an extent that it may months to get everything running smooth once more. With the present permissive philosophy in mental hospitals, it’s easy for them to get away with it. (Kesey 32)

One can find it quite ironic what the Nurse is saying, as she seems to be describing herself. However, it is known that it takes a manipulator to know a manipulator; also she felt that McMurphy is going to be causing disruption in her ward, which can be interpreted as a threat to her years of domination.

Furthermore, one can sense the tension rising between Nurse Ratched and McMurphy when they are in a group therapy session and she deliberately calls him “Mr. –ah–McMurry” (Kesey

50), doing so to intimidate him, as it is known that one's name is his identity, hence the fact that she gives him another name, is to mess up his identity as a result of ensuring her dominance and power. She continues humiliating him by calling out his crime of raping a girl in front of all patients, as a way to show that he is not a good person.

McMurphy notices the hold the Nurse has on the patients after seeing how they spy on each other and write down the information they find in the log book, only for her to read later and choose one of the patients to humiliate while the others join her, all under the name of therapy. McMurphy calls this a "pecking party" (Kesey 64), explaining to a patient that she does it to degrade them and have control over them, so they do not become one group and defy her.

McMurphy refuses to fall victim to Nurse Ratched's rules, and tries to defy her. He starts with charming the patients and makes them all friends. He teaches them how to gamble and even bet them that he would destroy Nurse Ratched, which they all took the bet. Later on, he even could persuade the doctor to have a carnival on the ward, which the Nurse does not find pleasing.

When the World Series begin, McMurphy asks the Nurse if they will be able to watch it and she refuses, telling him that it would disrupt the order of the ward, and that they could have a vote to see if the majority wants to watch it or not, which results with only a few voting with him, the rest were too scared of the Nurse to move a muscle. One patient claims that "it's a risk. She always has the capacity to make things worse for us. A baseball game isn't worth the risk" (Kesey 131).

Nurse Ratched tries to eliminate the thread McMurphy poses on her by wanting to move him to another ward. She asks the patients "do any of you fell that Mr. McMurphy is perhaps imposing his personal desires on some of you too much? I've been thinking you might be happier

if he were moved to a different ward” (Kesey 150). However, they refuse which makes her recognize that he already won over the patients on his side, especially when he proposes for another vote for the World Series and those who did not vote the previous day vote, including Bromden.

Even though she ends up refusing again, but Bromden notes that “her smile is still there, but the back of her neck as she walks out of the day room and into the Nurses’ Station, is red and swelling like she’ll blow apart any second” he continues “she doesn’t blow up . . . not until about an hour later. Behind the glass her smile is twisted and queer, like we’ve never seen before” (Kesey 154).

She breaks down after McMurphy does not listen to her and sits in front of the television and pretends he is watching the World Series. He jumps and screams at the television as the other patients join him and start imitating him, all pretending they are watching the television. Nurse Ratched reaches her limits and begins shouting at them, Bromden draws a picture of the whole scene saying “if somebody’d of come in and took a look, men watching a blank TV, a fifty-year-old woman hollering and squealing at the back of their heads about discipline and order and recriminations, they’d of thought the whole bunch was crazy as loons” (Kesey 156).

Despite the breakdown Nurse Ratched has when the patients do not listen to her, she regains her power after McMurphy realises that she is the one in charge of how much he stays in the ward. Unlike jail, one cannot know how much they should stay inside the psychiatric ward unless the Nurse sees that the patient is good enough to face the outside world. For this reason, McMurphy’s behaviour changed towards the Nurse and he began listening to her orders, doing the “smart thing” as Bromden said:

He was giving in because it was the smartest thing to do, not because of any of other reasons . . . he didn't say so, but I knew and I told myself that it was the smart thing to do. I told myself over and over: it's safe. Like hiding. It's the smart thing to do, nobody could say any different. I know what he's doing. (Kesey 184)

Bromden noted that McMurphy's submission to Nurse Ratched was the smart thing to do as he was playing it safe. It was because she was in charge of releasing him out of the ward, so he had to submit.

The conflict between Nurse Ratched and McMurphy does not end with him submitting. When the Nurse is sure she has won, McMurphy strikes again with being loud and disobedient. He takes the patients on a fishing trip and later on has a party in the ward after the Nurse and the workers leaves. Further, he brings in prostitutes and urges one of the patients to have sexual intercourse with one of them to regain his masculinity.

The Nurse finds out and pushes the patient to commit suicide and blames it on McMurphy, which leads to him having a breakdown and physically attacking Nurse Ratched. The conflict ends with Nurse Ratched lobotomizing McMurphy, thinking she has won. However Bromden kills McMurphy so the Nurse cannot point to him whenever a new McMurphy comes in the ward and brags about how she put an end to him. In that light, McMurphy's end shows that his power transferred to Bromden as he is now brave enough to act on his own, and refuses to let his friend be a trophy to the Nurse.

Throughout the novel, the reader can see that Kesey has given both Nurse Ratched and McMurphy enough power. Nurse Ratched's power can be depicted by the way she acts like a strict mother to the patients and workers, while McMurphy's is depicted as Jesus Christ.

3.2.1. Motherhood as a tool of power in Nurse Ratched

Kesey portrayed Nurse Ratched as a mother to all of the patients in her ward, but not a typical loving mother but rather a dominating, power-maniac and destructive. Moreover, the patients see her as a “smiling flour-faced old mother” (Kesey 55), who speaks with a voice “soft and soothing and warm as a pillow” (Kesey 333). However, her behaviour opposes her well-structured facade. Instead of being warm and loving, she psychologically emasculates her patients in order to have power over them. One sees that Kesey’s portrayal of Nurse Ratched as a mother celebrates the existence of Freud’s Oedipus complex theory⁵.

In order to make the theory of Oedipus complex appropriate, one sees that the depiction of Nurse Ratched as a mother means that McMurphy plays the father figure to the patients. In this light, Kesey dramatized a variety of typical oedipal conflicts: the sons (patients) observe encounters between the mother (Nurse Ratched) and father (McMurphy). These encounters are often sexual as McMurphy sometimes talks sexually about the Nurse’s figure:

That didn’t stop him from going right ahead and acting like he always had . . . even going so far as to step up to the Big Nurse in the hall one time and ask her, if she didn’t mind tellin’, just what was the actual inch-by-inch measurement on them great big ol’ breasts that she did her best to conceal but never could. She walked right on past, ignoring him.
(Kesey 169)

⁵ The Oedipus complex theory is a concept introduced by Sigmund Freud indicating the sexual desire towards the opposite sex parent.

The passage above elaborates how McMurphy makes sexual remarks to the Nurse in front of the other patients, which supports the argument oedipal conflicts.

Furthermore, one patient sums up the system of the ward under her rule by saying “we are victims of a matriarchy here” (Kesey 70). She denies her patients masculinity and is constantly humiliating and shaming them for being men; at the same time she tries to conceal her womanhood as she sees it as weakness. Whenever one patient begins acting stubborn, she acts like a disappointed mother. To elaborate, she “talks with McMurphy, soft and patient, about the irresponsible thing he did, the childish thing, throwing a tantrum like a little boy—aren’t you *ashamed?*” (Kesey 295) Additionally, when she is upset with a patient, she calls them by their first name, like a mother would.

3.2.2. McMurphy as Jesus Christ figure

While reading the novel, the reader cannot help but see the similarities between McMurphy and Jesus Christ. He came in and found the patients submissive to the rule of Nurse Ratched without protesting or questioning it. For this reason, McMurphy began helping them find the strength to stand up against her. Moreover, when he and Bromden are about to receive shock treatment, he keeps on reassuring Bromden that it would not hurt “I’ll go first My skull’s too thick for them to hurt me and if they can’t hurt me they can’t hurt you” (Kesey 298). The table in which he is on is shaped like a cross as well and he knows that he is viewed as a Christ figure when he says “do I get a crown of thorns?” (Kesey 298)

McMurphy’s similarities with Christ are shown when he sacrifices his life to help the others and took them on a fishing trip, “McMurphy led the twelve of us towards the ocean” (Kesey 252). Moreover, McMurphy’s impact was heavy on Bromden as he is finally able to live outside

of his fears and regains his masculinity thanks to McMurphy. He demonstrates “I could see some good in the life around me. McMurphy was teaching me. I was feeling better than I’d remembered feeling since I was a kid” (Kesey 270). He also notes that even after Nurse Ratched put an end to McMurphy, he has transferred his powers to all of them, he was a hero who “doled out his life for us to live” (Kesey 272).

3.3.Psychopathy, Sadism, and Insanity as a Result of the Misuse of Power

While one is looking for psychopathic behaviours as the outcome of the misuse of power in the novel, one can find them all in Nurse Ratched, as well as the patients because of her. Nurse Ratched’s abuse of power over the patients has caused her to behave sadistically while showing psychopathic tendencies. Additionally, her misuse of power has caused her to lose her sanity in the process of trying to dominate the patients.

3.3.1.Psychopathy as the Outcome of Power Manipulation

Nurse Ratched has maintained a well-structured facade while dominating the psychiatric ward as well as the patients. She’s always “smiling and calm and cold” (Kesey 10). According to Hervey Cleckly, psychopaths wear a mask of a normal sane individual which is the case of Nurse Ratched. One can see that Nurse Ratched shows psychopathic traits since the beginning. She allows her helpers to sexually assault the patients in order to stay in control of the ward. She threatens to expel the doctor as she knows he is addicted to Demerol if he does not follow her orders.

However, her facade begins to crack with the arrival of McMurphy, who ultimately challenges her power and threatens to cause disruption in her ward, especially when McMurphy

wins over the patients to his side and they begin all disobeying her orders. Throughout the novel, she is trying to maintain her calm facade even when things do not go as she wants yet McMurphy eventually breaks that facade when he physically attacks her after she pushes a patient to kill himself and blames it on him.

3.3.2. Power Enhances Sadism

Nurse Ratched is seen as a sadistic nurse. She enjoys inflicting pain over her patients and staff as it strengthens her power over them. One can understand that Nurse Ratched's position allows her to get away with nearly everything. She allows rape and is constantly humiliating the patients as well as encouraging the patients to degrade each other in order they do not turn against her.

Additionally, Nurse Ratched is pleased when she sees the patients in distress. When McMurphy wanted to watch the World Series, she refused and claimed that it would disrupt the order of the ward, even though half of them voted to watch it. Her refusal is not for the benefit for the patients but rather it is the outcome of having power over the patients. She refused because she knew she had the last word.

3.3.3. Insanity as the Result of the Misuse of Power

Nurse Ratched's sanity begins to waver after McMurphy arrives in the ward. His charismatic and masculine personality made it easy for him to win over the patients. The patients, with McMurphy as their leader began defying Nurse Ratched's orders and disobeying her. Moreover, Nurse Ratched's first breakdown was after she refused to let the patients watch the World Series, which was unfair as the majority voted to watch it, and yet she refused just for the

sake of refusal, to deny McMurphy the victory of defying her order. McMurphy and the patients refuse to do their chores and instead sit in front of the television and pretend to watch the World Series even though it was turned off. This led to the Nurse to break down as she realised that McMurphy had more power over the patients than she did.

Additionally, Nurse Ratched loses her sanity after she pushes one patient to kill himself and blames it on McMurphy, which leads him to attack her and sexually assaults her. The Nurse never had “her ward back into shape” (Kesey 338) after she broke down in front of the patients, which was unusual since they are used to seeing her always concealed smiling facade. Therefore, this leads her to lose her sanity as she realised she could no longer rule the ward the way she used to.

Conclusion

As a summary, in this chapter we explain how the antagonist Nurse Ratched is obsessed with power, for that reason she manipulates everyone in the psychiatric ward in order to obtain power over them. Consequently, the arrival of Randle McMurphy disrupts her order, and the two begin competing over dominating the ward.

Furthermore, we rely on Freud’s Oedipus complex theory to show how Ken Kesey granted motherly qualities in Nurse Ratched but she uses her motherhood as a tool to be powerful. Moreover, Kesey gave McMurphy qualities that are similar to Jesus Christ to present him as a hero and saviour to the patients. Additionally, we link the concept of power with psychopathy, sadism, and insanity, using Nurse Ratched as an illustration. First we show how psychopathy is the outcome of the abuse of power, then how power enhances sadism and lastly, how power results in insanity.

General Conclusion

This research aimed to show how the concepts of psychopathy, sadism, and insanity are linked to the discourse of power in Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Freud and Lacan's psychoanalysis were interchangeably used to demonstrate how behaviours like psychopathy, sadism, and insanity can be a human state. Ken Kesey's representation of these concepts influenced both characters and the structural development of the novel.

The first chapter offered a descriptive theoretical background of the dissertation. It introduced the three psychopathic behaviours namely psychopathy, sadism, and insanity as well as the various reasons behind each one. It also analysed the three behaviours from two different approaches: the Freudian approach and the Lacanian approach. We found that Freud did not tackle explicitly psychopathy, sadism, and insanity, but his psychoanalytical implications on the ego, the superego, and the id alluded to the above mentioned behaviours. Similarly, we used Lacan's theory of the Mirror Stage in order to explain these three behaviours as Lacan's theory referred to abnormal behaviours since young age. Further, this chapter tackled the concept of power with the views and ideas of Foucault. Lastly, it sketched out a parallel link between the three psychopathic behaviours with the discourse of power.

Meanwhile the second chapter constituted an analytical and descriptive scrutiny of how Kesey's life influenced his novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and what led him to write it. Arguably, this chapter analyzed the three major characters namely Chief Bromden, Nurse Ratched, and Randle McMurphy while at the same time demonstrating how each character is associated with a psychopathic behaviour, sadism, and insanity. In other words, this chapter showed how psychopathy was represented in the character of McMurphy, sadism in the character of Nurse Ratched, and insanity in the character of Bromden. Furthermore, we believe that Kesey's novel fits the aim of this research to investigate and understand the three psychopathic

behaviours as his characters represent the prototype of the traditional psychopathic behaviours that were the outcome of a bigger force, which is power.

The third chapter was mainly about the concept of power and how it is misused by psychopathic, sadist, and insane characters of Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. The chapter focused mainly on one character. In other words, it explained how Nurse Ratched is a power-maniac character that enjoys exercising power over weaker subjects, who are the patients. Moreover, this chapter demonstrated how psychopathy is the outcome of the manipulation of power; how sadism enhances power, and how the misuse of power leads to insanity. In this light, Freud's and Foucault's ideas were relied on as they facilitated the analysis in his chapter.

Overall, the human behaviours have always been an interest for researchers in different fields. Abnormal behaviours like psychopathy, sadism, and insanity were the focus of these researchers. However, certain cultures did not –and still do not– recognize these behaviours. As a consequence, these cultures explain abnormal behaviours from a religious point of view; a lack of faith for instance, or straying away from the path of God. However, ever since modernity swiped over the world, people began questioning their state of minds especially after Freud and Janet's psychoanalysis theories were introduced.

Accordingly, the interest with people's behaviours and the reasons behind them were being observed and examined. Additionally, the reasons behind certain behaviours were always blamed on familial backgrounds or disturbed childhoods, believing that those with disturbed childhoods are more likely to develop some mental illness; or that mental illness is hereditary. While this is not completely wrong, but the focus on troubled behaviours, such as psychopathy, sadism, and

insanity, in the latest year showed that there are deeper reasons for these psychopathic behaviours.

The representation of these behaviours in literature was especially prominent in the works of the American novelist Ken Kesey. In his novel, the narrative described how a mental institution is ruled by the obsession of power and the sole purpose in that ward is to remain in control instead of helping the patients get better. Moreover, he purposefully portrayed Nurse Ratched, a female nurse, as a sadistic power-maniac character. The reason behind his portrayal of Nurse Ratched is to challenge the typical way women and nurses were represented for it is known that nurses are supposed to be loving and caring. Ken Kesey did not fail to demonstrate that psychopathic behaviours do not differentiate between genders.

In this research, the questions were indeed answered as we managed to find a link to the three psychopathic behaviours and power. With the help of Ken Kesey's novel, we found that while the characters were analyzed separately, each behaviour was linked to the discourse of power in a different way. Moreover, the psychopathic tendencies of the character McMurphy were heightened by the sadistic Nurse Ratched and her misuse of power. The latter also led to the insanity of the character Bromden.

While conducting this research, we stumbled upon some limitations. The lack of sources was the main one as it was hard to reach a conclusion with Freud's views on psychopathy and insanity, as well as Lacan's explanation of psychopathy. Another factor was the lack of motivation due to the fact that the corona virus still has its grip around the world and it has taken so many family members away from our side.

To conclude, Freudian and Lacanian descriptions of abnormal behaviours like psychopathy, sadism and insanity interconnected in the demonstrating how they can be state behaviours rather than just traits. Their implications are demonstrated in the work of Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and are linked with the discourse of power. While this research reached its aim to link the psychopathic behaviours with power, we wonder whether one should sympathize or develop a sense of empathy with psychopathic individuals. The answer of this question would be a good suggestion for further research.

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الملخص.

لطالما كانت الأمراض العقلية مجال للبحث لدى العديد من الباحثين لسنوات عدة. حيث يعتبر موضوعًا غامضًا ، خاصة في الدراسات الأدبية. على سبيل المثال ، تم تصنيف السلوك الإعتلال النفسي والسادية والجنون على أنها أمراض عقلية خطيرة وتم التعامل معها كسمات شخصية فقط ولكن لم يتم تحليلها على أنها حالة سلوكية . وبالتحديد ، فإن فهم ما يحفز مثل هذه السلوكيات في الشخصيات الأدبية ما هو إلا محاولة لعكس الدراسات الحالية التي أجريت حول مفاهيم الإعتلال النفسي والسادية والجنون. في سياق ذلك ، تبحث هذه الأطروحة في السلوكيات الإعتلال النفسي الثلاثة وصلتها بالسلطة في رواية الروائي الأمريكي كين كيسي *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* . هذه الدراسة مبنية على طريقة وصفية وتحليلية من أجل توضيح كيفية تمثيل هذه السلوكيات كحالة في الشخصيات المختارة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تشعر الشخصيات التي لديها مثل هذه السلوكيات بإحساس بالسيطرة والهيمنة على ما يعتبرونه أشخاصًا أضعف. في هذا الصدد ، تم تأطير هذا البحث نظريًا بواسطة فرويد ولاكان وفوكو لفاك شفرة كيفية عرض هذه السلوكيات في الرواية. تخلص هذه الأطروحة إلى أن الإعتلال النفسي والسادية والجنون لها علاقة موازية بخطاب السلطة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الإعتلال النفسي ، السادية ، الجنون ، القوة.