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Diplomová práce

Comparison of two Patrick McCabe's
novels with their film adaptations

Porovnání dvou novel od Patricka McCaba
s jejich filmovými adaptacemi

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Abstract:

The focus of this thesis is to closely explore the personalities of the protagonists of two of Patrick McCabe's novels, namely *The Butcher Boy* and *Breakfast on Pluto* to determine the source of their individual personal traits. The second part of this thesis is focused on analyzing the film adaptations of the aforementioned novels and the way the films depict the personalities of Francie Brady and Patrick Branden.

Abstrakt:

Tato práce se zaměřuje na blízké porozumění a získání vhledu do dvou novel od Patricka McCaba, jmenovitě *The Butcher Boy* a *Breakfast on Pluto*. Přesnější zaměření této práce je prozkoumání osobností obou protagonistů a určení původu jejich osobnostních rysů. Druhá část mé práce se zaměřuje na analýzu filmových adaptací obou novel a způsobu, jakým byly osobnosti Francieho Bradyho a Patricka Brandena ve filmech ztvárněny.

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1 INTRODUCTION

When choosing a topic for my diploma thesis I was offered numerous topics, yet one topic stood out to me. That is Patrick McCabe, who is one of the renowned contemporary Irish authors. My supervisor explained to me the main tropes of his novels especially *The Butcher Boy* and *Breakfast on Pluto*. That immediately got my attention, for I am very fond of dark humor and satire which is deeply rooted in both novels. However, what really got my interest in the possible focus of my diploma thesis was the fact that both these novels were made into films by Neil Jordan. I realized that the novel to film transition harbors numerous opportunities for my analysis, interpretation or comparison. Realizing the numerous opportunities, I officially chose it as the topic for my diploma thesis. Only after reading through both of the novels and watching both the films a started to shape a concrete idea about my thesis. This process of choosing the right focus of my thesis took some time and a lot of contemplation about both the protagonists. However, the final decision on the focus became clear. In this thesis, I am going to explore the personalities of both Francie Brady and Patrick Branden and explain the reasons behind their personalities and the way those personalities were shaped and what influenced them. After their personality traits are explored I will discuss the film adaptations of these novels and identify the changes made in the movies and interpret them. However, my focus when comparing the novels to the films is not whether the story, or characters and places were simply changed, but the way the films capture the personalities of both protagonists and whether there is a discrepancy between the personality of the novel-based protagonists and their film-based counterparts.

Patrick McCabe is an Irish novelist, playwright and short-story writer born in 1955 in Clones. Even as a young boy he has shown a big talent for English and when he was twelve years old he went to ST. Macartan's College. However, shortly after he started studying at his new school his father has died, which had a severe impact on him. When he was fourteen he attended St. Patrick's College and later he decided to become a teacher. In order to do that, he went on a teacher's training at the St. Patrick's Teacher Training College in Dublin. In the 1970s in Dublin as a hippy he consumed hallucinogenic drugs, McCabe himself calls this period his 'wild years'. In 1974 he started to teach full-time at St. Michael's Boy's National School (primary school). This is also the period when his musical career started as played the

keyboard for a country and western band in the town he was teaching in. In 1980 McCabe quit his first teaching job and moved to London to teach at the Kingsbury Day Special School. In London, he met his wife Margot (née Quinn) who he married a year later. Around this time, McCabe starts writing short stories. One of those: *The Call* received the Irish Press Hennessy Award in 1979. His first book was a children's story book called: *The Adventures of Shay Mouse: The Mouse of Longford* which was published in 1985. This book was also illustrated by his wife who also was an artist. His first book aimed at the adult audience was a novel called: *Music on Clinton Street*, which was published in 1986. Nonetheless, as his first novel it was not popular. His second novel *Carn* published in 1989 had a real impact and McCabe became popular. However, the novel that really put a high status on McCabe's name was *The Butcher Boy* published in 1992 only to follow his success with *The Dead School* in 1995 and *Breakfast on Pluto* in 1998. After *The Butcher Boy* was released, McCabe became financially independent from his job as a teacher, so he quit his job to become a full-time writer. Some of his more recent novels are: *Emerald Gems of Ireland* (2001), *Call Me the Breeze* (2003) and *Winterwood* (2006). McCabe also wrote a play adaptation of *The Butcher Boy* known as: *Frank Pig Says Hello*, first performed at the Dublin Theatre in 1992.

McCabe's life and personal development is also very interesting to have a look at. His father Bernard McCabe was an alcoholic with aspirations to become a musician. His mother Dymphna née Maguire was an intelligent woman who had a very tense marriage with Bernard. McCabe himself remarks that his childhood was not a very happy one. As a young boy McCabe likes comic books to which he escapes from his not-so-happy family environment, where he very often had to endure listening to the violent arguments of his parents.

We can identify a lot of inspiration McCabe got from his own life and childhood that influenced his work. For example the figure of his father is without a doubt a model for Benny Brady and he himself is partially a model of Francie Brady. The motif of dysfunctional family is very common in his novels. To give an example he, worked as a teacher mainly on Catholic schools, so that meant he was in contact with priests who were also teachers. That is the origin of the criticism towards Catholic Church and pedophilia and other taboos originating from celibacy and the way Catholic Church is run (even though McCabe himself is a Catholic). This topic of pedophilia and clerical parentage is in both of the novels I am going

to investigate. Nevertheless, McCabe has the courage to voice something widely known but not talked about via his novel. He makes a social commentary about the rotten and dishonest state the Catholic Church (not only in Ireland) is in. It is also crucial to notice, that McCabe moved from Ireland to work in London. James Joyce said that if you want to write about Ireland you have to get out of Ireland (to gain the oversight and realize certain things). That is fully applicable to McCabe (even though he moved back to Ireland to his birth town Clones). McCabe also disagreed with the terrorist activities of Irish Republican Army (IRA). That is also reflected in his work, mainly in *Breakfast on Pluto* when he describes all the atrocities IRA had done. For example, he depicts the murder of Irwin who was an IRA member, he got only questioned by the police without saying anything, but his IRA comrades murdered him nonetheless. That reflects his disdain with the IRA activities throughout the 1970s.

Some authors even interpret McCabe's work as a social commentary about Ireland as a post-colonial country. That means that McCabe is somehow under the surface commenting of the Irish society and the condition Irish society is in. Ireland as a former part of the United Kingdom gained independence, but now is suffering from the victim-symptoms and is unable to properly recover from the colonial era and remains in a way torn apart as a nation. That is something that for example Tim Gauthier talks about in his article: "*Identity, Self-Loathing and the Neocolonial Condition in Patrick McCabe's The Butcher Boy*" or Ellen Williams in her article: "*Madness and Mother Ireland in the fiction of Patrick McCabe*". They both paint the society that is described in McCabe's novels as a mirror to what the British colonization has caused to the Irish nation. The discrepancy between the Nugents who had lived in England and thus have a high social status and Bradys who are a dysfunctional family with an alcoholic father and a suicidal mother is very apparent. A logical connection to this post-colonial syndrome and the fictive world McCabe built is easy to make. However, this is not the focus of my thesis. Yet I felt the need to at least mention this frequently-made interpretation of McCabe's fiction.

2 FRANCIE BRADY

In this major part of this thesis, I am going to have look at Francie as the protagonist of *The Butcher Boy*. For Francie is a very complicated character and his personality has so many layers, that I find it essential to have a detailed look at his personal traits and behavior. Francie comes from a dysfunctional family, which had a devastating effect on his upbringing and as a result he became a psychopath. However, Francie as he is presented (or presents himself) in the novel does not see himself as bad, broken or disturbed. He covers everything up with his fantasies and all of the disturbing things happening around him are only realized subconsciously. This shows how much of a disturbed child Francie is and throughout the novel we see a lot of puzzle pieces to his troubled personality. This part of my thesis is the main where all the pieces of the puzzle are to be explored, explained and discussed with secondary sources in order to paint the bigger picture of Francie's personality. The question to raise is whether Francie is a protagonist, or an antagonist, or is both? Is he a monster for whom the reader has empathy?

2.1 Francie as a Child Frozen in Time

In this sub-chapter the childish side of Francie's personality will be explored. The novel starts with Francie as school boy. At the end of the novel he has grown up quite a bit, but we can't tell for certain because the story is narrated by Francie which means that the perception of space and time is confusingly subjective, unreliable and full of distortion. This is a phenomenon that Clare Wallace reflects upon in her article *Transgression & Dysfunctional Irelands*:

"Francie Brady provides a striking illustration of this distortion. His understanding of time remains childlike, although as he states in the opening line he '(...) was a young lad twenty or thirty or forty years ago (...)'(BB,4) he never grows into adult time or behavior. He remains arrested at a particular juncture returning to an imaginary utopian time—'They were the best days them days with Joe. They were the best days I ever knew, before ... Nugent and all this started' (BB, 6). Francie's ideal time involves very precise divisions which simultaneously excise traumatic memories and events and draw attention to their lingering presence."
[Wallace 2004, 146]

The novel starts with a flash-back scene, where he is hunted down by the authorities for killing Mrs. Nugent. At this time he is quite grown up, but hiding from all the people that wanted to capture Francie and probably lynch him, yet he has no fear. More important than the need to escape is the little water drop on a leaf he observes from his hideout.

"I liked rain. The hiss of water and the earth so soft bright green plants would nearly sprout beside you. This is life I said. I sat there staring at a waterdrop on the edge of the leaf. It couldn't make up its mind whether it wanted to fall or not. It didn't matter – I was in no hurry. Take your time drop, I said – we've got all the time we want now. We've got all the time in the world."[McCabe 1998, 2]

This passage shows us his love for nature and all the beautiful things in the world. Even though he was no longer a child he still possesses the childish imagination. He appreciates the little detail of a waterdrop and even talks to it as if it was a person. Which is something that one wouldn't be expected from a grown up. This also could be an indication, that he felt quite lonely and used his imaginations and fantasies in order to have some sort of social connection and interaction. As a child Francie was not very popular as demonstrated here:

“We sped by the convent. There was a few of the lads from the school kicking a ball up against the wall. I gave them a big wave through the window and they waved back for a minute until they seen it was me. Then what did they do only pick the ball up as if I was going to get at it or something. I waved again but they pretended not to see me.”[McCabe 1998, 65]

As was the weird kid who never had many friends (except for Joe), he liked comic books which gave Francie a fantasy into which he could escape from the reality, a reality that if taken seriously would cause Francie to behave in a very different way. Francie liked comics as a youngster and the same principle of escapism provided by comic books was applied to his whole life. This means that Francie did not perceive life as it really was, he did not think about consequences of his actions in a logical way, but he just extended his love for comic books into his real everyday life.

“The best thing about him was his collection of comics. I just can’t get over it, said Joe, I never seen anything like it. He had them all neatly filed away in shirt boxes not a crease or a dog-ear in sight. They looked as if they had come straight out of the shop.” “We had to have them and that was that. We called round to Philip and had a swopping session. We cleaned him out. I admit it. It was only a laugh. We’d have given them back if he asked for them. All he had to say was: Look chaps, I think I want my comics back and we’d have said: OK Phil. But of course Nugent couldn’t wait for that. Anyway we left Philip with his pile of junk and off we went to the hide going on about it all until tears ran down our faces.”[McCabe 1998, 3]

At this point in the novel, we would not call Francie an evil child or an antagonist. He was a little child doing a bit of a mischief with his pal Joe. It needs to be admitted, that yes, they were picking up on Philip Nugent who was an intelligent and very orderly young school boy, but there was no aggressiveness or hate in Francie against Philip or his mother. The child-like behavior is clearly visible in the transition between the subjective value of the comics to Francie. First, they had to have them, but after they had to return them the comics suddenly became merely a pile of junk, which is admittedly a child-like behavior. Children seem to hate things they cannot have, which in Francie’s case carried onto the relationship with Mrs. Nugent, which will be explored later on. This childish play sent Francie down on a sliding slope with Mrs. Nugent and the happenings in his family and his only friend Joe.

We might be thinking that the enjoyment of comics, hiking and playing outside is normal for kids and children eventually grow out of this, but not Francie. Francie is a child frozen in time, so even as a grown-up he thinks like a child and acts like it, not realizing the real consequences of his actions and the severity of the situation he gets himself into, for example in the part of the novel after his mother committed suicide. Where he watches Philip sleeping through the window:

“Philip was sleeping in his mother’s bed. His head was tilted back on the pillow with his mouth open. She was sleeping soundly, her chest rising and falling as if to say there’s no trouble at all in my dreams I have my son beside me and my dear husband will be home tomorrow. Philip’s mouth was a small whistling o. If there was a word bubble coming out of his mouth I knew what would be written in it. I love my mother more than anything in the world and I’d never do anything in the world to hurt her. I love my parents and I love my happy home. I could read the comic on the table beside his bed. It said: Adam Eterno Time Lord.”[McCabe 1998, 44]

His mother just died and there is no argument, that she died because of Francie as he ran away from home. Her death was a direct consequence of his escape. Yet Francie does not seem affected by that, at least consciously. Instead he goes to watch the Nugents and his perception of the real world is mixed with his childish comic books fantasies. Instead of mourning for his mother, he watches Philip as an example of a son who would never do something like that to his mother, and Francie knows that what he did was wrong and that he caused the death of his mother. The comic book bubble text is something he thinks to himself but he projects that onto Philip and Mrs. Nugent. In my opinion this is when the envy-hate relationship with Mrs. Nugent is created which will be discussed later.

Another instance when we can see his child-like logic and way of behaving is for example in the names with which he denotes certain people or things. For example, the policeman who arrests Francie and takes him to a Catholic correctional institute for youngsters is nicknamed “Sausage”:

“The sergeant reminded me of a clown in Duffy’s circus not the way he looked but when he talked. Especially when he was telling you all the terrible things were going to happen to you now. H’ho! He’d say. And H’haw! Just the same as Sausage the clown. H’hower an awfill man altogedder, Sausage’d say and away off round the ring with his stripey legs flying. Him and the sergeant must have been born in the same town or something.”[McCabe 1998, 66]

Here Francie realizes that he is not the same person as the clown from the circus, he knows that perfectly well. Although he has one feature that the clown had, he instantly nicknames the sergeant "Sausage" and makes an irrational link between the sergeant and the clown by thinking that they must have been born in the same town or something, which of course is a nonsense but for Francie it all makes sense. Another nickname is for example Father Bubble who is the director in the correctional institute, because his looks resembled a bubble. Yet another nickname was for the pedophile priest who used Francie's stories as a sexual stimulus for his masturbation: this priest got the nickname "Father Tiddly" because of what he was doing with his genitals. It was not only people who got nicknamed. For example, in order for Francie to be released from the correctional institute, he knew the priests would have to see him as fit and corrected before his release, so he nicknamed this state of correction the "Francie Brady not a Bad Bastard Any More Diploma" which he will be studying for. He also called the institute "School for Pigs" or "A House of a Hundred Windows". One very memorable nickname Francie comes up with is "the garage" which is in fact a mental hospital his mother visits. Francie thought of healing one's mental health like repairing a car in a mechanic's garage:

"I didn't know anything about ma and all this but Joe filled me in. I heard Mrs. Conolly saying breakdown what's breakdown Joe. I says, Oh that's when you're took off to the garage, Joe told me, it's when the truck comes and tows you away. That was a good one I thought, ma towed away off up the street with her coat on. Who's that, they'd say. Oh that's Mrs. Brady they're taking her off to the garage." [McCabe 1998, 3]

Throughout the novel his fantasies and the nicknames he pins onto people are getting gradually more and more unhinged from reality. Near the end of the novel, Francie is drugged by some pills that cause him to lose touch with reality altogether. Francie then calls real people by his fantasy made-up names and expect them to accept it as it is their normal birth name:

"Then I looked up and who's coming the priest. It was Father Fox not because his real name was Fox but because he had a long snout and hmm I wonder how could I trick this fellow face? Hello Father Fox I said, I'm looking for Joe Purcell. You're what! He says and I could see that Father Fox he wasn't such a nice fox at all his face went all dark." [McCabe 1998, 188]

This quoted passage is from the part when Francie, drunken and drugged, confronted Joe in the middle of the night in his new school, where Joe forsake Francie for good, which reveals the main point of this interpretation about Francie being a child frozen in time.

Joe Purcell is his best friend and blood brother in his childhood. They shared all the comics and watched all the movies and serials on TV. They hiked together and went on adventures. They prayed to Manitou and shouted at fish to “fuck off”. For Francie, this meant the world to him, because for a child from a dysfunctional family having a friend like that was very important. Francie met Joe while hacking at a frozen-over puddle, this was a milestone for Francie, a childish milestone which meant a new friendship for Francie.

“The first time I met him was in the lane at the back of our house. We must have been four or five at the most. He was hunkered down at the big puddle beside the chickenhouse. It had been frozen over for weeks and he was hacking away at the ice with a bit of a stick. I stood looking at him for a while and then said to him what would you do if you won a hundred million billion trillion dollars? He didn’t look up, he just went on hacking. Then he told me what he’d do and that kept us going for a long time. That was the first time I met Joe Purcell” [McCabe 1998, 40]

The problem is that every friendship advances in time as the individual persons in that friendship grow up and became adults. Joe grew up and advanced in life as any other person, but Francie remained frozen in the happy child times with Joe and even after their friendship became to break apart he did not let that get to him, he covered it up with his fantasies, he simply suppressed it. As Francie was a troubled child from a dysfunctional family, Joe was some sort of reality check for Francie. He stopped Francie’s violent urges against Philip Nugent, at least for a time. After Francie began to slide into madness because of his self-indulged delusions and irrational blame put onto Mrs. Nugent, Joe began to see that he must break free from Francie. That is also something that Tim Gauthier depicts in his article:

“Joe’s growth throughout the novel also illuminates Francie’s arrested development: he matures in a way that Francie cannot. The community welcomes Joe with open arms, as revealed in the friendship that develops between him and Philip Nugent and between the Nugents and the Purcells. The Purcells’ social position, although only marginally higher than the Bradys’, guarantees that Joe will benefit from the community’s attention in ways that Francie will not. By the end of the novel, Joe is enrolled in a private school ‘another house of a hundred

windows' while Francie remains on the outside peering in." [Gauthier 2003, 198]

He began to be friends with Philip, which was very hard to get over for Francie and he became obsessed with the letter Joe sent him. The letter mentioned that he is friends with Philip now and he gave him a gold fish he won, later on this gold fish became a symbol of the broken relationship and one of the reasons why he killed Mrs. Nugent. After a while, Joe starts evading Francie and stops being friends with him altogether.

"Then he goes over to Joe and says to him: What are you doing hanging about with him? What does your old man say? Then Joe said it: I'm not hanging around with him. I used to hang around with him!" [McCabe 1998, 111]

Not only the ambiguous relationship between Francie and Joe is an indication of Francie being frozen in time, but also the environment. The chicken house is mentioned several times in the novel, namely the noise produced by the fan in the chickenhouse. This is a clear symbol of Francie being frozen in time, for the sound is present when he became friends with Joe and is mentioned several times throughout the novel. This is a symbol of perpetuity and sameness. A fan is a device that rotates, it's on a loop it makes the same exact sound over and over. Francie's life and comradery with Joe was exactly like the fan. Ultimately the sound of the fan is like a reminder, a theme even to Francie's perception of the world and time in a similar way as the theme song "The Butcher Boy" is the main background theme and title of the novel. Yet in the very end Francie breaks away from this loop and realizes what happened and what he has done, or to some extent at least.

"We stopped at the chickenhouse and Fabian says you two men stay out here at the front just in case you can't be too careful. Right they said and me and the sergeant and him and the other two went inside. The fan was humming away and it made me sad. The chicks were still scabbling away who are all these coming with Francie?" [McCabe 1998, 205]

This is after he killed Mrs. Nugent and escaped from the police and right before he tries to burn himself alive in his house. The reason why the sound of the humming fan made him sad is quite clear. The self-created illusion of his life was broken, once he heard the humming in the background of his situation which made him realize what really had

happened and what he had done. The loop of his subjectively deluded perception of the reality and the events was broken. His life was never going to be like before, like the life the humming fan symbolized.

2.2 Francie Brady a Dysfunctional Family Offspring

Francie is a rare character in the bad way. As a child frozen in time with fantasies that cover up the harsh reality of real world events, as well as his delusions and violent urges, the question arises: Where did all of this come from? Was the neurosis inherited from his mother? Did simply Francie develop those characteristics by himself or was he influenced? Every reader who pays attention to little details and hints in the novel must be sure, that Francie was strongly influenced by his parents. For there is no doubt that Francie's psyche is a mix of mother's and father's influence combined with Francie's dependence and love for his only friend Joe (as clarified in the previous chapter). Francie's relationship with his parents was somehow ambivalent and to a certain degree was subliminal, for deep-down Francie loved his parents dearly, but on the outside he behaved as a young deviant, which ultimately contributed to his mother's demise.

This sub-chapter is dedicated to the parents-son relationship and to the characteristics of his mother and father, for it is crucial to understand their personalities in order to understand Francie. The relationship between the father and the mother is also very crucial not only for the story but also for Francie. The characterization of the mother and father and their relationship lays ground to the next chapter which focuses on the specific influences on Francie and what the outcome of those influences was in the plot of the novel.

The personality of the mother is exposed to the reader from the get-go right in the beginning of the novel. McCabe brings this exposure of the mother with the alcoholic father as the background to build-up for the eventual suicide of the mother. The reason why the mother dies so early into the novel is quite convenient as the thought of the mother whose death is caused directly by Francie is like an undertone of Francie's actions and behavior throughout the whole novel. The figure of the mother represents the pure, simple and kind person who turns into an emotional wreckage under the influence of her alcoholic husband.

There is a nice analogy pointed out by Ellen McWilliams who compares Francie's mother to:

"Ireland imagined as a woman, bearing the scars of colonial oppression or the promise of liberation" [McWilliams 2010, 391]

Further supporting this concept is:

“If the Mother Ireland figure served historically to inspire the young men of Ireland in their bid for political freedom, in McCabe’s version she appears as a sure recipe for psychosis.” [McWilliams 2010, 392]

McWilliams applies this theory to The Butcher Boy in the sense of the relationship between the father and the mother:

“In McCabe’s novels, male protagonists are often trapped in a pathological relationship with Mother Ireland, which causes a great deal of suffering to both the men and women who inhabit his fiction.” [McWilliams 2010, 397]

In a way, it is an analogy to Francie himself for he is the product of this pathological relationship. He also was a pure soul before he got raised in a dysfunctional family and became a delusional psychopath. When the mother dies quite early on, it serves as an indication of the mental state Francie is going to get into as her offspring and direct inheritor of her genes as well as his father’s qualities. After she dies, the thought of her also influences Francie as a voice of conscience and regret.

The mother is very unhappy in her marriage for the father is never home, he gets drunk and has violent urges towards the mother. His misogynist behavior and the long time she had to endure that leads to her mental instability and she became very fragile. The only thing that keeps her going and the only hope she ever has of at least some sort of happiness in her life is her son Francie. This is clearly visible in the scene right after Mrs. Nugent comes round to their house and complaints about Francie stealing comic books from Philip and calls the whole Brady family pigs (based on the dirty way of living of the alcoholic father).

“Ma pulled me down the stairs and gave me the mother and father of a flanking but it took more out of her than it did out of me for her hands were trembling like leaves in the breeze she threw the stick from her and steadied herself in the kitchen saying she was sorry over and over. She said there was nobody in the world meant more to her than me. Then she put her arms around me and said it was her nerves it was them to blame for everything. It wasn’t always like this for your father and me she said. Then she looked into my eyes and said: Francie – you would never let me down would you? She meant you wouldn’t let me down like da did I said no I wouldn’t let her down in a hundred million years no matter how many times she took into me with the stick. She said she was sorry she had done

that and she would never do it again as long as she lived. She said that was all there was in this world, people who let you down"...Francie if you ever have a sweetheart you'll tell her the truth and never let her down won't you?"[McCabe 1998, 5]

This quotation reveals about the mother much, that it is realized only after the whole novel is read through. The despair the mother is in is just so shockingly apparent and she is so mentally ill that she is begging Francie to never let her down. In a way, she is telling Francie that he is the only thing in this whole, disturbed and awful world that keeps her alive. She punished Francie for stealing the comics as any mother would do, but only after she finished the punishment did she realize that she only hurt herself: she instantly regrets ever punishing Francie, for Francie was her sun in the darkness of her life and awful marriage to Benny Brady. The final sentence of the quotation only exemplifies the devotion she had to her husband. Even if the husband was a violent and alcoholic misogynist, she still was fully devoted to him. This full devotion brought her into the instable state she is at. She gave her soul to Benny but in return he has only shown disdain and hatred towards her. She knew that but she could not go back, her whole life was bound with her husband and therefore Francie is so important to her, as the part of her that is pure and kind. Francie embodies the love she has that did not bring her pain as the love she had for Benny did. It was the kind of parental love that she puts her whole hope into. When she punished Francie, she did not regret the physical punishment and pain, since she felt weak and fragile. She just caused pain to the only part of her personality that could ever bring her happiness and consequently felt so bad because the reason why she punished Francie was that he behaved like his father. She became afraid that Francie was going to turn out like his father or would behave towards her in the same way as the father. If Francie turned out like his father, she would lose all the hope, she would lose the very bastion of her soul. When she punished Francie, she felt like it was a defense against his father's influence. She wanted to exorcise the bad behavior of Francie, for she knew it would end-up by her suicide.

The final sentence of the quotation also shows us the hopes she puts into Francie. Her marriage and her whole life with it was ruined by her husband. She hopes that the only part of her that still has any hope, by which I mean Francie will sometimes be in love and will be loving husband who appreciates and honestly loves his wife and thereby atone for his

father's sins. She put all her hope of having the love, happy marriage and a fully functional happy family onto Francie. That is something Annie Brady never got.

All this trouble and misery brought the mother into a state constantly being on the edge of committing suicide. Francie was keeping her from killing herself, but still she had a tendency towards suicide, which caused her to be taken into a mental hospital (the "garage") on several occasions.

"I got into the kitchen who's there only ma standing there and a chair sideways on the table. What's that doing up there ma I says it was fuse wire belonging to da just dangling but she didn't say what it was doing there she was just stood there picking at her nail and going to say something and then not saying it. I told her Mary's was shut could I still keep the sixpence she said I could Yee ha! I said and bombed off out to the border shop to get six cough-no-mores but then when I got there I said two Flash Bars and a macaron please. When I got back ma was just doubled up in the chair by the dead fire for a minute I thought she was shivering with cold but then she looked at me and said: You know you were only five pounds weight when you were born Francie." [McCabe 1998, 7-8]

This only supports my theory that Francie was the sole bastion of hope for the mother and as long as Francie was around she wouldn't kill herself. She got ready to kill herself, but when she thought about Francie, when she thought about his birth and what it meant for her, she couldn't go through with her suicide. Not only does this exemplify the suicidal nature of the mother, but it also shows how Francie did not really care so much about his mother, all he cared about was candy his mother gave him money for. Yet while we are led to believe that this is the case, later on, Francie's delusions and Mrs. Nugent visions reveal, that Francie was aware of the situation. He knew that his mother was attempting suicide, but he didn't act on it. This thought, this information, got "stored" in Francie's subconscious awareness and affected him on an unconscious level later on down the road.

In the previous quotation, there is a symbol of fire or the fireplace which is supposed to evoke the happy family connotation. The fire and its warmth symbolizes the happy and functional family, it is the center piece of the family home. The fire place is like a gathering point, where all members of the family share the warmth. Nevertheless, the mother is shivering by the dead fire, for there is no fire in Brady's fireplace. The fireplace symbolizes the state the Brady family is at. There is a strong connection with Francie's attempt to kill

himself at the end of the novel when he tries to burn himself alive in the house. The attempt to burn himself alive is in a way a release of suppressed memories and thoughts. Francie tried to burn himself alive to make up for all the family warmth that was missing all of his life. Francie was thinking about his mother and in a way giving her the warmth posthumously, however this will be discussed later.

Annie Brady was trying to keep herself occupied in order to escape her misery. She tried to keep herself busy to forget, for example the way she baked and prepared everything before uncle Alo arrived. This is another exposition of Francie's (un)awareness of the gravity of her situation. She was neurotic and going from one place to the other in a disturbing manner. Yet Francie makes fun of it in a way and calls her "Ma Whiz". Alo was the brother of Benny and he was his counterpart. Annie prepared for his Christmas visit, because she was looking forward to this one brief happy moment.

When talking about the mother, there is one most important fact to be mentioned, for it not only symbolizes the personality of the mother, but it also symbolizes the influence the mother and Francie's dysfunctional family had on him. It's the most favorite record of Annie "The Butcher Boy":

*"I wish my baby it was born
And smiling on its daddy's knee
And me poor girl to be dead and gone
With the long green grass growing over me.
He went upstairs and the door he broke
He found her hanging from a rope
He took his knife and cut her down
And in her pocket these words he found
Oh make my grave large wide and deep
Put a marble stone at my head and feet
And in the middle a turtle dove
That the world may know I died for love.
In that fair city where I did dwell*

*A butcher boy I knew right well
He courted me my life away
But now with me he will not stay
I wish I wish I wish in vain
I wish I wish a maid again
But a maid again I ne'er will be
Till cherries grow on an ivy tree.
He went upstairs and the door he broke
He found her hanging from a rope
He took a knife and he cut her down
And in her pocket these words he found
Oh make my grave large wide and deep
Put a marble stone at my head and feet
And in the middle a turtle dove
That the world may know I died for love.”
[McCabe 1998, 19 and 208-209]*

The first half of the song is written quite early on in the novel, with the second part written right at the end of it. It sets the mood of the novel and provides some pieces of the puzzle. Only after the story advances does this song symbolize the mother's personality which underlines Francie's actions and behavior. More pieces of the puzzle are revealed in order to be able to put the whole picture together at the end of the novel and understand Francie. The song "The Butcher Boy" gives the name to the whole novel, because "Butcher Boy" relates to both Francie as well as his mother. "The Butcher Boy" unveils the deep layer of Francie's personality based on his mother, whereas the surface irresponsible and violent side of Francie's personality is inherited from his father.

As father to Francie and husband to Annie Brady, Benny Brady's personality adds another layer of complexity to Francie's personae. The family and the nature of the family and children in the family is based on the husband and wife relationship. Annie Brady did not

cause this relationship to break down, but the breaking of harmony ultimately led into the family being dysfunctional and Francie becoming a delusional violent-sensitive psychopath. The reason and origin of Francie's broken personality is his father Benny, because he brought Francie's mother into a state of a nerve-wrecked husk which only further affected Francie. The fuse that caused the avalanche of all the events and ended up with Francie becoming "The Butcher Boy" a closer look at Benny Brady must be taken.

Benny Brady is also analogical to Francie in a way. Not only did the same actor play in the movie as the flash-forwarded older Francie, but Benny was also a troubled child, which only led to Francie being an even more troubled and disturbed child altogether. We can quite comfortably say that the reason Benny was an alcoholic misogynist and a horrible father might be related to the fact that as a small boy he and his brother were put into an orphanage. This is clearly visible from the following quotation:

"He shouted at ma: Do you hear me talking to you? She mustn't have said anything for the next thing he was off into the speech about his father leaving them when he was seven and how nobody understood him he said she lost interest in his music long ago and she didn't care it wasn't his fault she was the way she was then he said she was mad like all the Magees, lying about the house from the day they married never did a hand's turn why wouldn't he go to the pubs she had never made a dinner for him in his life? Something else broke crockery or something and then ma was crying: Don't blame me because you can't face the truth about yourself, any chances you had you drank them away!" "When I stopped listening to the cars I'd hear him: God's curse the fucking day I ever set eyes on you!" [McCabe 1998, 6-7]

Here the father's violent and irrational nature is revealed, not in its fullest, because later on there is an even more juicy scene with his brother. We can clearly distinguish that he was broken in a way. He fell into despair when his father left him when he was seven and he never recovered. His solution to that problem was his music. He was an excellent trumpet player but he did not find the solution to his problems in music, for he gave in to the despair. Benny completely lost hope and never got out of the mud, so he turned to alcohol. Alcohol was his solution, but the alcohol made him forget only temporarily and it ultimately cost him more than he gained. Instead of seeking hope and cure for his disturbed childhood in his wife and child, he turned onto his wife and puts all the blame on her, not only his wife but also his brother and everybody else. Benny puts himself into the position that he was always the one that got wronged, he was somebody (when it came to music) but nobody

appreciated him and he got kicked around, but that was never the case. The fact that he got left as a small boy caused him to have low self-esteem. He thought that he was of a lower value because he spent his childhood in the orphanage, but he did not see any hope, he did not fight, but instead blamed everybody else for his own low self-esteem and drank himself to death.

His brother Alo on the other hand serves as a counterweight to Benny. He was younger than Benny, but he was also put into the orphanage. But he pulled through the phase and became a successful and high-valued member of society. People adored Alo for his success and career over in London. The uncle, however, is liked by Annie and appears to be a different man. Alo is not described as such an awful man. Alo was the one sibling that did not lose hope in the orphanage and he stayed optimistic, and obviously, he got over the trauma. This contrast between the two brothers is apparent in the argument they are having right before Francie runs away from home and consequently his mother kills herself. To be precise, it is not an argument but more of an anger-ventilation of Benny, an irrational anger.

“He started into The Old Bog Road, he said that was the one priest had taught them in the home all those years ago. I knew as soon as he said the word home that he regretted it. When you said it even when you weren’t talking about orphanages, da went pale sometimes he even got up and left the room. Alo tried to cover it up by saying Will you ever forget the time we robbed the presbytery orchard?”...“Then I saw him look at Alo. I knew the look. He wouldn’t take his eyes off him now until he had finished with him. I saw him do it to ma. They could pierce you them eyes good as any blade. Then he said it. Who do you think you’re fooling Alo? Are you going to go on making a laughing stock of yourself or are going to catch yourself on? Do you think any of them believe that shite-talk you’ve been going on with all night?” [McCabe 1998, 32]

“He said: He was always the same, from the minute we were dumped in that Belfast kip. The same softie halfwit, sucking up to the nuns and moping about the corridors. You know what he used to tell them? Our da’s coming to take us home tomorrow! Night noon and morning I had to listed to it! You’d be waiting a long time if you were to wait for Andy Brady to come and take you home! I told him to shut up! What did we care I said we’d manage on our own we needed nobody. I told him it was all over. But he wouldn’t listen!

Ma cried out. I never seen her face da before. Don’t blame it on your brother because you were put in a home! Christ Jesus Benny are you never going to come to terms with it! After all this time, is it never going to end?” [McCabe 1998, 33-34]

Benny never came to peace about his childhood and what he hated the most was the fact that his brother Alo had managed to do just that. The violent nature of the father is quite apparent when all it takes to start his anger is alcohol and his brother trying to make small talk and have a bit of a laugh. There is even a hint of how cold-blooded the father was. *"They could pierce you them eyes good as any blade"* [McCabe 1998, 32]. Benny was lost a long time ago and by acting violently against those people who only tried to help him, he was haplessly showing how strong he was. In a certain way, he never accepted the orphanage as his home. He showed only refusal and disdain which was the only solution he knew cope with the situation. This only caused Benny to become a sour person who blames everybody around him instead of acceptance. Acceptance and hope was what his brother did. Alo accepted that he was put into an orphanage and made it his home, however he still hoped that his father is coming back for them. Nonetheless he made the orphanage his home and embraced other people around him who tried to help him, and that is how he became successful in his personal and professional life. In a way Benny dislikes, even hates his brother for clinging onto hope and making it through while he lived in refusal and drank away any hope there was for a happy life without the trauma of the orphanage.

The physically violent side of Benny's personality in the novel shows in one scene his irrational violent behavior. This scene is important, because the analogy to the behavior Francie himself exhibits later on into the novel can be seen namely in the murder of Mrs. Nugent. Francie watches TV and suddenly it broke, or there was some problem, because there only was a "blizzard of snow" in the picture at which point the drunken father walks in:

"Then he says you know there's not as much into these televisions as the likes of Mickey Traynor makes out. He had bought it off Mickey Traynor the holy telly man that was because he sold holy pictures on the side. He fiddled about with it for a while but nothing happened then he shifted it over by the window and said it could be the aerial but it only got worse there. He hit it a thump and then what happened even the snow went. After that he started to rant and rave about Mickey. He said he might have known better than to trust the likes of Traynor, him and his holy pictures don't fool me. He'll not sell me a dud television and get away with it. He'll not pull any of his foxy stunts on Benny Brady. I'm up to the likes of Mickey Traynor make no mistake. He smacked it with his hand. Work! He shouted. Look at it – I should have known it'd be no good. Work! How long have we got? Six months that's how long we have it, bought and paid for

with my hard-earned money. But I'll tell you this – Traynor will give me back every cent I paid him every cent by Christ he will!

He drew out and put his boot through it, the glass went everywhere. I'll fix it, he said, I'll fix it good and fucking proper.”[McCabe 1998, 10]

The irrationality of Benny striking to such a low level shows that there is no doubt that this manner of behaving must have had a strong effect on Francie. Parents are first and foremost a role model for their children, and when Francie sees his father behaving in such a way it can become normal for him. Instead of returning it to Mickey Traynor and have it repaired, the father demolishes the TV. This again shows his tendency to put blame onto other people for something that is hardly in their power to influence. In the same way as the father blames Mickey Traynor for the defective TV, Francie blames Mrs. Nugent for his mother and father dying and Joe leaving him alone. The father-son analogy does not end here since Francie also based his irrational behavior and his delusions on others and ended up butchering Mrs. Nugent. Instead of following common sense and looking for a proper solution, his solution is violence. Benny did not return the TV, he didn't even give Mickey Traynor the chance to give him back “every cent he paid” but instead he has his violent mood swing and demolishes the TV that can never be fixed again nor could he ever get his money back. This only has shown to Francie that everybody else is bad and against him and that a proper solution is violence. This is somehow ironically and in a sarcastic way shown at the end of the novel when Francie is arrested and meets Mickey Traynor.

“You're a bad and wicked man and evil man and you broke your mother's heart didn't even go to the poor woman's funeral! I said to him what the fuck would you know about it Traynor what do you know you couldn't even fix the television could you well what are you talking about! Do you hear me Traynor? Fuck you! Fuck you and your daughter and The Blessed Virgin! [McCabe 1998, 203]

The only logic to this situation is that Francie is mentally ill at this point, but the origin of this madness can be traced in part back to Benny thanks to the TV as a symbol of this father-inherited distortion of personality.

Lastly the father lied to Francie, namely about his mother and their relationship. This was the real problem for Francie, because Francie as any other child needs to have a loving family to be raised in, but by the Bradys there is a severe lack of love. Francie was led to believe that their marriage was a happy one, that the father loved his mother dearly. That is

what made Francie so ambiguous when it came to his parents, as his father tried to mislead him into thinking they were a loving couple but on the other hand he saw all the misogynist behavior towards his mother so that he was really hard pressed to believe any of those lies.

“She was a good woman your mother he said, he was starting to slobber. It wasn’t always like this you’ll never know how much I loved that woman. I got into my head that a couple of the bony arses were coming over to the window to gawp I told him again to shut up it was no good now, none of it. He said not to talk to talk like that to him he had his dignity. I got down on my knees like he used to when he rolled home after a skite with his clenched fist up and one eye closed may the curse of Christ light on you this night you bitch the day I took you out of that hole of a shop in Derry was a bitter one for me. He said no son should say the like of that to his father. Every time I thought of them standing there at the water’s edge I said worse things to him and in the end he cried. I came here to see you, son, he said if you only knew. I said you have no son you put ma in a mental home. Maybe I’m better off then to have no son how could you call yourself a son after what you did. After what I did what did I do I had him by the lapel and I knew by his eyes he was afraid of me whatever way I was looking at him. What did I do? It was hard for him to say it, I could barely hear him I loved you like no father ever loved a son Francie that was what he said it would have been better if he drew out to hit me I just let go of his lapel and stood there with my back to him fuck off I said fuck off and I knew I’d been alone for a long time.” [McCabe 1998, 85-86]

Here the fight inside Francie is exposed most clearly. He tried to believe what his father told him about his mother and the early days of their relationship. He idealized it somehow, but even his fantasies couldn’t cover up the facts. He knew his father was an alcoholic and he had barely any love for his wife Annie and seriously doubts that his father loves him. Whether Benny was lying more to Francie or to himself or did Benny lie to Francie to make him feel better, to somehow substitute for the real love that was missing in the family with his lies, or did Benny lie to Francie to make himself feel better?

An analogy between the father and Francie consists in the same way Benny tells lies about him and his mother, creating a sort of a cover-up fantasy, Francie also creates some fantasies which develop into utter delusions. The concern here is not whether Benny tells those lies to make himself or Francie feel better, but the sole principle of creating those lies, those fantasies which serve to make the world and events in it seem somehow palatable and easier to cope with. Francie subsequently applies the same principle to his life, namely Mrs. Nugent as the fantasy destroying factor of his family’s harmonic life.

Francie always knew somewhere deep inside what his father is like and how he behaves towards his mother and in a way that is an undertone of the whole novel, that is why Francie goes on a search for the boarding house his father told him about. Francie wanted to resolve this inner fight and learn the truth about the relationship of his parents. Near the end of the story the real Benny Brady is revealed, stripped of all the lies he told to Francie.

“But then she says oh I don’t know, my memory’s not what it used to be. She tried to make a laugh out of it. Old age is catching up on me she says ha ha. She was putting all the photographs back into the boxes and the album now and I said why will you not tell me, you said you’d tell me. She just shook her head. Please tell me I said I have to hear it I have to hear it no she said let me go. All I wanted to hear was something about them lying there listening to the sea outside the window but it didn’t matter I didn’t hear it anyway. Then I said to her go on tell me you said you would she said: Get your hands off me do you hear me! What can I tell you about a man who behaved the way he did in front of his wife. No better than a pig, the way he disgraced himself here. Any man who’d insult a priest the way he did. Poor Father McGiveney who wouldn’t hurt a fly coming here for every twenty years! God knows he works hard enough in the orphanage in Belfast without having to endure abuse the like of what that man gave him! God help the poor woman, she mustn’t have seen him sober a day in their whole honeymoon! [McCabe 1998, 180-181]

Francie’s hopes that the memories his father talked about are true get crushed and it becomes a build up to the breaking point for Francie with the murder of Mrs. Nugent. Not only does this quotation show that the father was a liar, but it further proves the fact that he was completely broken by the orphanage. Benny was in a Belfast orphanage and that he must have known the priest personally, because he insulted him. The extent of his pain caused by the orphanage after such a long time continued after he got married as he still could not get over it. He could not even bear to meet a priest he knew from there, so any memory caused him to drinking and behave in a violent manner. In order to extract this information from the poor old woman, Francie also has shown signs of tendencies towards violence, as he seized the woman and forced her to tell him the truth.

After exploring the personalities of both the father and the mother and their relationship, it is clearly visible how deep both parents influenced Francie’s development and personality. Both parents had a certain personality and together they created a horrible family environment. In order to determine who Francie really is a deep insight into the

family bonds and relationships is needed for a better understanding of his personality and the motivation for his actions. The family he was raised in caused him to end up the way he was. In the following chapter certain personality traits he inherited from his parents will be mapped out to determine, whose influence it was that Francie followed.

2.3 Francie's Personality Traits Based on his Parents

The complexity of the mother and father figure in the way Francie perceived this relationship was already explored. The concrete instances where Francie exhibited certain personal qualities that originated from his upbringing and parent role models need a closer examination.

Francie was suicidal in a similar fashion as his mother. He also felt lost, desperate, alone and mentally tortured. When everybody left, Francie he had no one to love and no one to keep him from being suicidal. In the same way Francie was in a way keeping his mother alive, giving her hope and something to live for, in case of Francie it was Joe. Francie took extensive amounts of pills on several occasions throughout the novel. The question here is whether he just wanted to get drugged or if he was simply stupid and swallowed every pill he got his hands on or was it possibly a suicide attempt? When Francie realizes he lost Joe as a friend, he has nothing to live for, exactly like his mother felt after Francie had run away from home. In the end Francie resolved to end his life of despair just like his mother.

"I had a hard job carrying the telly over I wanted it on the top but I managed it. The guts was still hanging out of it, wires and bulbs all over the place. The records were still under the stairs but I only wanted one I threw the rest away. I plugged in the gramophone it was working as good as ever then I carried it out to the scullery and put it near the sink. Right says I, now we're in business. I got the paraffin from the coalhouse and threw it round everywhere but mostly on the pile. Spin spin goes my head with the smell of it here we go I says and then what happens. No matches! No fucking matches! Oh for fuck's sake!"... "When I got back to the house I locked all the doors and then lit a couple of matches. Soon as they fell on the heap up she went whumph! I put on the record then I went in and lay down on the kitchen floor I closed my eyes and it was just like ma singing away like she used to." [McCabe 1998, 207-208]

Unlike his mother who tried just to hang herself and later drowned herself, Francie had a more elaborate way of killing himself. He gathered up all the memos of his parents onto a huge pile in the middle of the living room and burned it all up with him in the middle of it. This was in a way a release mechanism, he felt like burning things associated with his parents would reunite the family in a weird way. By killing himself with all the objects associated with his parents, he tries to become the happy family in death, the happy family they never were while living. To a certain extent, it was a ritual. At first it is unclear what

Francie is trying to do: only after he mentions the paraffin does it become clear. Actively he is just hoarding junk onto a huge pile, but passively, deep down every single thing he puts on there has a personal and emotional value to him. Everything there is on the pile has a certain connotation which he is trying to add to his death. The reason why Francie wanted the television on the top is in the realm of speculation, but the TV represented the father's aggressive nature. Francie felt like he was affected by his role model and he himself was aggressive. By putting the TV on the top he rejected his father. His father lied to him, he put his mother into a mental hospital and never treated her well. All of this suicide ritual had a strong maternal undertone, for while burning himself he listened to *"The Butcher Boy"* recording and imagined that it was his mother singing the song. By burning himself he releases his guilt for his mother's death and by burning the TV on top of the pile he atoned for his father's behavior towards the mother as well.

"I was crying because we were together now. Oh ma I said the whole house is burning up on us then a fist made of smoke hit me a smack in the mouth its over says ma its all over now." [McCabe 1998, 209]

By killing himself Francie, wanted to be reunited with his mother and by putting the TV on top, he wanted to cleanse the "bad" from his father. If we think about the symbol of fire, it is quite clear why Francie wanted to burn himself up. He wanted to have a good family, specifically he wanted to have a family like Philip Nugent has, but that was something that would never come to be, so he killed Mrs. Nugent. In order to cleanse all the bad things in the Brady family, he had to burn everything down, himself included, so they could be reunited in the afterlife as a happy family. The fire is a catalyst for all the bad things, so afterwards they could rise up like a Phoenix from the ashes and there would only be "all the beautiful things in the world".

The previous quotations also uncover the sensitive side of Francie. He loved his mother dearly. If it was not so, he would not have imagined his mother being with him while he was dying in the fire and he would not have played the recording. He did not like the recording that much, but he knew that the recording personifies his mother and he felt guilty for her death so by playing the song while killing himself he expressed all the love he had for his dead mother. Francie always loved his mother but the problem was that he also was strongly influenced by his father which made him behave in an ambivalent way towards his mother, only to regret it later and to feel bad for his behavior towards her. Francie was

like a switchbox in which he got constantly switched from his father-like behavior to his mother-like behavior. His father influenced Francie when it came to the apparent surface behavior and his mother went much deeper into Francie's feelings and unconsciousness. The scene that exemplifies this is the scene from Dublin after Francie ran away from home. That was an influence from his father, because he would never run away if he realized what running away would mean for his mother.

"The priest came down and put his hand on my shoulder. He says: Do I know you? I says no. He says why are you crying my child? I says I'm not crying I pulled away and went out into the street. I stayed by the canal. Rat, I said, fuck off! I leaned over the quayside wall. The brown water was streaked with strips of orange and yellow. I don't know what made me do it ma, I said. An old fellow stopped and says to me are you all right you're shaking all over. Then ma smiled and said she understood, she knew it wasn't my fault. Come home Francie she said. I'm sorry ma, I said again then she said it again, come on home, I'm waiting for you. I will ma I said I was glad it was all over now and I would never do it, anything like that ever again." [McCabe 1998, 41]

Francie's state from the first person is not experienced, but rather revealed via an aside from people around Francie. We only know Francie was crying in the church thanks to the priest as well as we know about Francie's shivering thanks to a passerby. Here in this scene, the father-like side of Francie gave away and the guilt Francie felt regarding his mother was so strong that it surfaced into his consciousness and made him cry and shake all over. He imagined his mother being there and begging him to come home, for he knew that he had endangered her by leaving (which he did of course!). After this realization, Francie bought his mother a gift in Dublin and hurried home to save the day and sooth his mother, which could never happen. The gift he bought her was a wooden carving saying "A Mother's love's a blessing no matter where you roam"[McCabe 1988, 41]. This in a way also exemplifies how sensitive Francie was to her deep down. This carving is a symbol of the guilt Francie felt for leaving his mother alone and he wanted to give her this carving in order to show his mother that he realizes what he did and he knows that he is the single and only important thing for her in this world. In a way his mother and her love towards Francie and vice versa was a voice of consciousness for Francie. It made him realize certain things and sometimes this voice of consciousness emerged on the surface even if he was indulged in his fantasies. Ironically, this voice of consciousness penetrating his fantasies and making him realize the reality is usually uttered by Mrs. Nugent (in his fantasies).

“ I was thinking that I saw Philip and Mrs. Nugent coming. I knew she thought I was going to turn back when I saw them. She leaned over and said something to Philip. I knew what she was saying but I don't think she knew I knew. She crinkled up her nose and said in a dead whisper: Just stands there on the landing and lets the father do what he likes to her. You'd never do the like of that would you Philip? You'd always stand by me wouldn't you? Philip nodded and smiled. She smiled happily and then it twisted a bit and the hand went up again as she said: Of course you know what she was doing with the fuse wire don't you Philip?” [McCabe 1998, 11]

In this way Francie grasped what he saw and got a full understanding of it. When he met his mother trying to hang herself, he did not care about her problems, all he cared about was candy. This information got acknowledged, but it never got processed at that point and the only instance it really got processed in active consciousness was during his imagination, maybe even during his delusion about Mrs. Nugent. Only then did he realize how endangered his mother was and that he must never abandon her, but this realization happened in his fantasy, so it may not have affected his normal conscious state.

Francie was influenced by his father above all regarding their common aggressive nature. The major act of violence Francie commits is without any shadow of a doubt the murder of Mrs. Nugent. The act of murder committed on Mrs. Nugent is influenced by the father that is evident when we look at the personality of the father: he was also a traumatized child, he was emotionally and mentally wrecked from being abandoned and put into the orphanage. When he grew up, he only knew alcohol, cigarettes, music and hate for his loving wife. This misogynist and even physically violent behavior towards women meant that Francie felt no moral restraints to murder Mrs. Nugent. He never got rid of the despair from the orphanage, so he turned to violence, it was his solution, a way to let go of all the trouble and anger. This is quite analogical to Francie, for he also lost everybody. His mother died, his father died without Francie noticing it and finally he got his final ending resolution to the state of his friendship with Joe, so when he knew he lost everybody he had to pin the guilt on somebody. Another characteristic that Francie inherited directly from his father is the tendency to blame other, unrelated, people for problems inflicted by himself. After Francie loses everything and everybody, he then turns to violence and kills Mrs. Nugent. In a way Francie went even farther than his father ever would. So the murder of Mrs. Nugent is not only the example of how Francie seeks to find the solution to his problems in violence

but also how much deluded he was by putting the blame for his trouble on her. She never had anything to do with Francie's family or interfered with the friendship Francie had with Joe. Likewise, Francie's mother never had anything to do with the fact that Benny was put into the orphanage and not getting used to it.

"I started to shake and kicked her I don't know how many times. She groaned and said please I didn't care if she groaned or said please or what she said. I caught her round the neck and said: You did two bad things Mrs. Nugent. You made me turn my back on my ma and you took Joe away from me. Why did you do that Mrs. Nugent? She didn't answer I didn't want to hear any answer I smacked her against the wall a few times." [McCabe 1998, 195]

Francie does not care about any reasoning or common sense, he just wants his inner torture to stop. He kills Mrs. Nugent because his delusions led him to believe that she is the one to blame so she needs to get punished. In the same way Benny did not care about how the TV was broken, he did not want it repaired when it was still under the warranty, he wanted to release his anger. Although he talked about getting a refund, he never really wanted one, for at the same time he was talking about getting money back, he demolished the TV with his kicks. He does not want the situation resolved, he wants to release the anger through destruction. In the same way he puts the blame for the broken TV on Mickey Traynor, Francie puts the blame for losing his mother and Joe on Mrs. Nugent. Whereas father ends up destroying the symbol of the blame he pinned on Mickey, Francie ends up butchering Mrs. Nugent, so ultimately the behavior of the father and Francie is analogical.

Tim Gauthier also comments on this in similar manner:

"The violent nature of Francie's actions escalates in response to the accumulation of violence he himself suffers-physically but also, more significantly, psychologically. His frustration and despair (most pathetically communicated in the loss of Joe's friendship) can find recourse only in destruction." [Gauthier 2003, 199]

The father only found solace in his music and playing the trumpet. Before he drunk away his musical talent, he had been a well-regarded musician. Francie also liked music, namely the music book *"The Emerald Gems of Ireland"*. However, what Francie was seeking out the most were his comics. Like his father escaping to musical melodies and playing from pub to pub, Francie used to indulge himself in his comics and living the fantasy presented in those comics.

2.4 “I don’t need any of your fucking apples!”

Francie’s fantasies and delusions are the issue of this sub-chapter which will consider Francie’s day-dreaming-like fantasies. The picture of Francie’s personality requires an exploration of his delusions which is a mirror of Francie’s upbringing and mental processes. Through a few passages in the novel a full understanding of the extent to which Francie is disturbed as a person may be apprehended. Francie is not only a disturbed person but he is rather insane. Most of the time these fantasies are somehow connected to Mrs. Nugent and that these delusions lead Francie to kill her in the end. The relationship between Francie and Mrs. Nugent is the concern of the last sub-chapter.

However, the fact that Francie is a child arrested in development with a disjointed conception of time is crucial. Also the fact that Francie is a highly unreliable (mad) narrator is of a high importance. That is a phenomenon Alison Cotti-Lowell comments on:

“Yet this unreliable narration—Francie’s idiosyncratic voice—is not the simple symptom of his psychosis, but rather, the key to The Butcher Boy. His narrative is not the grid of containment to look beyond but the necessary object of analysis.” [Cotti-Lowell 2013, 93]

From the very beginning of the novel, Francie is in a way an escapist. He likes comic books that supply him with experiences that could not happen in the real world. Experiences that are only possible on a sheet of paper or a TV screen are what Francie likes. Escapism is not always a bad thing, we all are to a certain extent escapists. Reading books, watching films and serials or listening to music is escapism. These activities are healthy for normal people, but Francie went too far with his fantasies. At first his fantasies were just a means to avoid reality. For example, when he heard his dad abusing his mother, he pretended nothing was there and he concentrated on the sound of the passing cars. This was a way of escaping from the place and events happening there. Francie suppressed the reality and concentrated on something else, which could be considered normal. Only after all of the business with Mrs. Nugent had started did this way of coping with the reality get severe, for Francie started to alter the reality as a means of understanding it and making it seem better for him. He somehow put his doubts, paranoia and irrational explanations into the real-world events he saw, so it became an altered reality which Francie believed in with his whole heart. A maniac believes his delusions and this notion is applicable to Francie as well.

The quote cited on page 11 of this thesis shows how this process of altering the reality works for Francie. The irrationality of Francie's thinking is just staggering. He is going down the street and sees Mrs. Nugent from a distance, but the first thing Francie knows instantly is that she thought that he is going to turn away, how can Francie possibly know that? Does this make sense? Mrs. Nugent had no idea that Francie was even on the very street, nevertheless Francie knows it all. Francie even thinks he knows exactly what she was telling to her son Philip. How does he know that? Well he does not, he has no idea what is she saying, but that does not stop Francie from knowing everything she is saying. Mrs. Nugent is a vessel for Francie's suppressed feelings and thoughts. It is a tool to uncover the reality and the gravity of certain situations. He creates these fantasies as a way of dealing with the reality and it just so happens that these thoughts accidentally surface. Francie creates this fantasy to contrast a good family (Nugents) to a bad family (Bradys) which leads him to realize that his family is dysfunctional, that the father caused his mother to be mentally ill and that consequently he is a really bad child. This is where the envy-hate relationship against the Nugent family, namely against Mrs. Nugent, is created. Francie's way of dealing with this realization that came from his altered reality is violence. At first his response is not outright violence, but resistance, oppression and a desire to ridicule Mrs. Nugent and Philip. When the quoted scene continues, Francie actually meets Mrs. Nugent and invents "The Pig Toll Tax". This Pig Poll Tax is basically a tax only Mrs. Nugent has to pay to Francie for passing. It is called The Pig Tax because Mrs. Nugent called the Brady family a pig family. The pig-obsession will be discussed in the next chapter, but for now Francie starts impersonating the pig, he felt like being a pig to a certain level. As he felt that Mrs. Nugent and her family were a happier and so much better functioning family, he wanted to bring them down to his level. Francie wanted to humiliate and degrade Mrs. Nugent because the envy-hate relationship against her was already established. It was even a revenge for insulting the Bradys by calling them pigs, thus giving Francie the pig label he fully identified with.

These fantasies Francie creates for himself are not child-like playful imaginations nor an indication of Francie's advanced imagination, but they rather warn us about the mental state Francie is in. As novel advances, there is no denying that Francie is growing mad and madder. As an example, and the next stage for Francie's descent into madness Francie

breaks into the Nugent's house dressed up like Philip, eating their cakes and watching their TV. However, his neurosis got worse as he imagined that Philip and Mrs. Nugent were also there, so basically Francie had a split personality for both himself and Philip and he imagined Mrs. Nugent altogether. Francie started this imaginary game that he was a teacher and Mrs. Nugent and Philip were his pupils in the "School for Pigs". He bans for his pupils to walk upright, because they are pigs in the school for pigs and they can only walk on all fours.

"Then we went over it one more time I got them to say it after me. I am a pig said Philip. I am a sow said Mrs. Nugent. Just to recap then I said. What do pigs do? They eat pig nuts said Philip. Yes that's very good I said but what else do they do? They run around the farmyard Philip said. Yes indeed they do but what else? I tossed the lipstick up and down in my hand. Any takers at the back? Yes Mrs. Nugent? They give us rashers! Yes that's very true but its not the answer I'm looking for. I waited for a long time but I could see the answer wasn't going to come. No, I said, the answer I'm looking for is – they do poo!" [McCabe 1998, 61]

Here it is clearly visible how elaborate his fantasies were. There was a hierarchy and he was not only capable of impersonating himself but also Philip. He has lipstick in his hand in order to write "Philip is a pig" on the wall, which supports the notion that he impersonating a pig and wants to bring the Nugents down to his level. The sarcastic thing here is that he has written it using Mrs. Nugent's lipstick, so for Francie it was like Mrs. Nugent herself said that about her own son. In this way, even Mrs. Nugent acknowledges the fact that all they are pigs at least in Francie's imaginations. This scene described in the quotation above doesn't end here, for Francie needed a definitive confirmation that Nugents are pigs in the same way he and his family are, so he went on with the fact that pigs do poo.

"Who's going to be the best pig in the pig school and show us what we're talking about then, hmm? Come on now, any takers? Oh surely you can do better than that! That's very disappointing, nobody at all! Well I'm afraid I'll just have to volunteer someone. Right come on up here Philip and show the class. That's the boy. Good lad Philip. Watch carefully now everyone. Philip got red as a beetroot and twisted up his face as he went to work. Now, class! What would you call someone that does that? Not a boy at all – a pig! Say it everyone! Come on! Pig! Pig! Pig! That's very good. Come on now Philip you can try even harder! What do you think Mrs. Nugent? Isn't Philip a credit? At first Mrs. Nugent was shy about what he was doing but when she saw the great effort he was making she said she was proud of him. And so you should be I said. Harder, Philip, harder! He went at it then for all he was worth and then there it sat proud as punch on the carpet of the bedroom, the best poo ever. It really was a big one,

shaped like a submarine, tapered at the end so your hole won't close with a bang, studded with currants with little question mark of steam curling upwards. [McCabe 1998, 61-62]

The fact that Francie defecated while he was breaking into the Nugent's home only proves that he wanted them to be the same pigs just as he is, or at least he felt himself to be after Mrs. Nugent called them pigs (at the beginning of the novel). Francie did not do this on purpose, all of this happened in his "School for Pigs" fantasy and the real meaning of defecating on the carpet and writing on the walls with the lipstick was an unconscious act for Francie. In a kind of transition Francie talks about a class, as if his whole fantasy takes place in an imaginary classroom, but when he(Philip) is done defecating the feces were on the carpet of the bedroom, not carpet of a classroom. Even though Francie creates this school fantasy it is still somehow hooked into the reality, he acknowledges somehow that there is a bedroom and not a classroom. At this stage his fantasies and reality mix and create a strange mixture. At this point, Francie acts on his fantasies inside of his fantasies, but that soon changes.

Yet another phenomenon to notice is Francie's description of the poo. Here the comic book influence is very clearly visible. He thought of the shape of the poo as if it was shaped like a submarine Francie saw earlier on TV while he watched some sci-fi flick and now he saw the same shape in the feces. That only exemplifies the extent to which Francie lets his perception to be influenced by such things as comics and TV. Another influence from comic books is the "question mark of steam" rising from the poo, because that is how steam or air would be drawn in comics, so Francie implies comic book principles onto the real-world object in order, to best represent them.

The wall between Francie's fantasies and the real world is starting to crumble and fall apart so that this process becomes clearly visible. After Francie got quite drunk he breaks into a pharmacy and randomly takes a mixture of unknown pills. The reason, why he took those pills might have been either his stupidity or an attempt to commit suicide. Nevertheless, in the resulting hallucinatory state (caused by the abuse of alcohol and drugs), he saw Mrs. Connolly (the shop assistant) who promised him a reward for singing a song:

"I am a little Baby Pig I'll have you all to know

With the pinkest little floppy ears and a tail that curls up so

I like to trot around the town and have myself some fun

And I'll be a little porky pig till my trotting days are done!" [McCabe 1998, 151]

The reward for this song was a juicy polished apple. So not only did Francie in his fantasies impersonate the pig to such an extent that he sang a song about him being a pig, but he also behaved animalistically. He behaved in a desired way in order to get a reward and when he saw the reward his mouth started to water and he felt the taste of the apple in his mouth. This is arguably the animalistic way of thinking, so Francie felt being pig-like in reality, but he felt being a complete pig in his fantasies or in this instance his alcohol and drug triggered hallucination. Yet it does not end by Francie getting the apple from Mrs. Conolly but the "pig business" went even farther:

"What do you say ladies? Will we give him a bite of it? The women started mm mm well and all this and had a big discussion. Yes, they said then – if he picks it up like a pig! Mrs. Connolly rubbed it on her sleeve and said: Well Francis – will you pick it up like a pig? I said I would and she went down on one knee and rolled it slowly along the rubber mat. I tried to grip it with my teeth but down on all fours like that it was too hard to get at it. You'd think you had it then down it'd go again and every time it did the women cheered. Oh! They said, he's dropped it again. Then they clapped and cheered and said: Come on Francie you can do it! But I couldn't do it. It was too hard. Can I use one hand, I said. One trotter you mean, they said. Uh-uh, sorry. That's against the rules. I don't know how many times I dropped it. Ten or eleven maybe. In the end Mrs. Connolly took pity on me and handed me the apple. Ah you poor little pig, she says, God love you. Can you not even pick up an apple? Don't worry Francie!, the women said, its all your's now! Go on – eat it!" [McCabe 1998, 151-152]

All of this happened before he knew that his father had died. Francie might have realized the death of his father, but he suppressed it into his subconsciousness. After Francie was taken away to "the garage", Mrs. Connolly took care of everything, but after Francie got back to town, he visited Mrs. Connolly:

"Mrs. Connolly why did you not mind your own business this is the thing and she looks at me and starts stuttering. Mind my own business? What do you mean what are you talking about? I said you know very well what I'm talking about and she tries the Mrs. Nugent trick pushing a tear out into the eye nobody did more for your poor father than me Francie I made all the arrangements for the funeral when nobody else would I cleaned and scrubbed God knows I did and my husband says what were you doing that for and I did it because I had pity on your dear departed

father God rest him nobody knows the work that I put into that house. Then she starts sniffing and I says who asked you to clean that's the trouble with the people in this town they can't mind their own business can they they can't mind their own fucking business!" ... "I'll tell you another thing Connolly I said I don't want any of your apples either! Do you hear me – I don't want any of your apples! I don't need any of your fucking apples!
[McCabe 1998, 164-165]

This passage reveals not only the complete destruction of the wall between reality and his delusional fantasies, but it also exemplifies the father's influence on Francie. Francie blames Mrs. Connolly for helping with the funeral and cleaning the house, which is somehow a reaction on his father's death. In a way, he blames Mrs. Connolly for the death of his father because she provided help and so she interfered: she didn't mind her own business. Right there he is doing the same exact thing his father would do, blaming the others for his trouble and problems, no matter how nonsensical and irrational that is. Also the language Francie uses: "*Mind your own fucking business*" or "*I don't need any of your fucking apples!*" that is analogical to his father's "*I'll fix it good and fucking proper!*" Even though this father connection is quite interesting, what Francie says to Mrs. Connolly is even more interesting.

Francie feels angry that Mrs. Connolly interfered with his life (and his family), so he goes and confronts her. On the surface, he is angry that she did not mind her own business, but the real motivation for this confrontation is the humiliation Francie felt after she let him eat the apple like a pig. This would be quite normal and understandable if the apple-eating even was real, but this was only in Francie's hallucination. This apple is in a way an indication that Francie grew completely unhinged and that he no longer recognized what was real and what only happened in his head. Francie became completely insane and no longer acts on the level of fantasy, meaning that his fantasy actions trigger a reaction also happening inside of his fantasy. This is no longer simple altering of the reality that Francie perceives. What earlier might have been simple fantasizing now it is a full-blown delusion. Now Francie acts in the real world based on something that is not real, something that only happens inside of his head. Francie no longer recognizes what is real and what happens only in his fantasies. He considers his delusions to be as real as the air he breathes and he fully consciously acts based on those delusions. This phenomenon in *The Butcher Boy* is also described by Linden Peach who says:

“The narrative can be viewed as Francie’s attempt to construct a ‘place to settle’. Its focus, though, is upon what happens in the middle of the private delusional geographies in which Francie occupies a no-person’s land. Parr and Philo have suggested that the ‘place’ or ‘placelessness’ of the mentally distressed person lies at several intersections of the internal and external reality.” [Peach 2004, 178]

Further supporting my point of argument is Clare Wallace who argues that:

“The Butcher Boy may appear to be an uncontrolled flood of words and disjointed fragments expressing the mental processes of a schizophrenic, it is also a narrative firmly underpinned by a logic, however manic that logic might be. Though initially appearing to be a chaotic experiment in giving voice to madness, McCabe’s text is nevertheless governed by what Foucault describes as ‘reasonable unreason’ “[Wallace 1998, 158]

The wall between Francie’s fantasies and real world perceptions no longer exists, for example when Francie says that Mrs. Connolly tried the Mrs. Nugent trick of pushing a tear out from the corner of her eye. This shows how abused and violated both Mrs. Nugent and Connolly felt and that Francie had no idea he is emotionally hurting them, for him they were merely playing tricks on him.

Francie’s delusions dictating the course of his actions mixed with his declination towards violence and blaming Mrs. Nugent for his trouble results in the climax of the novel, the impending distress just waiting to be triggered.

This fall into madness is finished, when Francie visualizes things that simply do not exist whatsoever. To this point his fallacies were at least somehow connected to the stimuli from the real world. It could be comic books, TV or events that really happened and he altered them according to his fantasy. Accordingly, he acted in the real world based on information and feelings originating from his fantasy. However, when Francie starts to see object, events, situations and people in the real world when they are not existent at all, this ends his descent into insanity. Francie literally materializes whole scenarios in the world and projects them onto his senses that he perceives as more real than anything else in the world. This is uncovered in the part of the story when Francie sees Mrs. Nugent driving a car to visit the Purcell family.

“Then what did I see only the Nugent’s car going by skitting water onto the footpath and Mr. Nugent leaning over to wipe the windscreen

holding the pipe in the other hand. Mrs. Nugent was driving. I didn't know she could drive. Next thing the car slows and pulls up outside Purcells"...Philip wasn't there. Where was he? Then there's Mr. Purcell and Mrs. Purcell looking over his shoulder ah hello there this is a surprise. After that what does Nugent do only hold up the box I could see it better now it was all wrapped up it wasn't a box at all it was a present. When I looked again the door was closed and the light was on in the front room. I could see Mr. Nugent handing glasses around and throwing back his head someone was telling a funny story"...When Mrs. Purcell opened the door he was bleary-eyed and rubbing them and he was in his pyjamas and dressing gown whatever he was at now. I could hear Nugent inside who is it who is it. Someone had turned the light off in the front room I don't know which of them it was. There wasn't a sound in the place. I said to him what's the party for Mr. Purcell and he says what party. The party, I says, the present and all." [McCabe 1998, 165-166]

The extent to which his fallacy is elaborated on is unbelievable. Francie even sees the little details like the present or drinking. He is also capable of reading body language as when Mr. Nugent threw back his head when he laughed like everybody would do when laughing. The reader could be misled into thinking that this is a real event based on the way of Francie's narration. Even though Francie believes everything his delusions put into his mind, the reality somehow still surfaces though only for the reader, but not for Francie. The fact that he just woke Mr. Purcell up and that he was in his pyjamas seemed somehow ironic, amusing even to Francie. He did not even consider the fact that Mr. Purcell is rubbing his eyes and wearing pyjamas weird. For Francie, there is simply no boundary between delusions and reality, everything merges together and Francie has no idea what is real and what is not. He expects other people to behave according to his deluded perception of reality, and when other people have no idea what is going on, he thinks other people are stupid or lying to him. The way Francie confronted Mr. Purcell has a very important outcome. Not for Francie of course because he is deluded to such an extent that he no longer understands the real meaning of the reactions of people around him.

"His face changed it got all sort of pained and I liked him then it was like the old Mr. Purcell he was trying to tell me something but he didn't know how. But it didn't matter for I knew what it was he was trying to say. It was all OK until she came along wasn't it Mr. Purcell? It was fine until Mrs. Nugent started interfering and causing trouble. That's the only reason she's giving you presents – isn't it Mr. Purcell? I looked him straight in the eye and I said: Its true isn't it? His eyes looked kind of sad and he said: Francie. I knew he wanted to say something else to me but couldn't because he knew Mrs. Nugent was listening inside the sitting room. I put

my finger to my lips. I wanted him to know that I understood. He rubbed over his eye as if he had a headache and I knew by the way he looked at me it was his way of saying sorry. I smiled. It was good of Mr. Purcell to do that. I had known all along the Purcells hadn't meant it to happen the way it did. If only the Nugents hadn't come to the town, if only they had left us alone, that was all they had to do." [McCabe 1998, 167]

After this quotation, there is no shadow of a doubt that Francie is completely mad. Not only Francie's behavior and way of thinking proves this, but even Mr. Purcell is the final proof. Mr. Purcell felt extremely sorry for Francie, for he realized how bad his state really is. He felt like saying something, but he lost all words. He knew him as a little boy who was friends with his son but now there he is, deluded and insane at one o'clock in the morning telling him about a party he himself is supposed to be having right now. All Mr. Purcell could say was a sad "*Francie*" expressing his realization and lack of words to express his pity towards Francie. Yet this explicit meaning of Mr. Purcell's reaction was not understood in any way by Francie. Francie led himself to believe that the way Mr. Purcell reacted meant that he had understood him. Francie knew exactly what he was telling him by his pained look, he understood what Nugents have done to him. Francie felt like Mr. Purcell is giving him a look full of contempt and support. Francie irrationally put all the blame for everything on Mrs. Nugent and he felt like he needed some general consent and confirmation that Mrs. Nugent caused all the trouble by her interference (calling his family "pigs"). Nonetheless, there is no interference, there is no trouble she could have ever caused there is nothing, but Francie's delusions caused him to hold all of these notions as the undeniable truth. Francie projects all of the feelings towards Mrs. Nugent onto the look Mr. Purcell is giving him. Consequently, the real concept of meaning of the pity-look is completely discarded in favor of Francie's own surreal, deluded and utterly irrational concept.

Clare Wallace while describing Francie's insanity makes a logical connection to his frozenness in time and the discrepancy between the Bradys and Nugents:

"Francie's schizophrenia seems partly to be his response to the difference between the happy tidy world of the Nugents and his messy unhappy one, and to his intolerance of change, understood as loss. His stated desire to please his mother, to retain a static childhood friendship, to return to an idyllic pre-Nugent time, reflects his unstated desire to prevent change, to avoid loss and to arrest time. This desire activates his disengagement with the 'sane' adult world and the creation of an alternative reality." [Wallace 1998, 160]

2.5 Mrs. Nooge

This last sub-chapter is dedicated to Mrs. Nugent, or to be precise the relationship Francie has with her. In a way, the whole novel is about the relationship between Francie and Mrs. Nugent, or at least on the surface. Francie hates Mrs. Nugent, he thinks that everything is somehow connected to her. For Francie Mrs. Nugent is in a way an arch enemy, a master of puppets pulling all the strings which make his life miserable. Quite frankly, Mrs. Nugent is in fact just a normal mother from an upper mid-class family who has no idea what she's become in the eyes of Francie Brady the pig. The pig is a huge symbol throughout the novel and the whole pig obsession started with Mrs. Nugent. The point at which Francie and the whole family are called pigs starts all of the trouble for Francie. It started his irrational train of thought about Mrs. Nugent which got Francie into trouble. By calling the Brady family pigs, Francie realized that it was true or at least to some extent and he also recognized the contrast between the good functional Nugent family and his own family. This is where the envy-hate relationship originates from. To examine this origin of the pig obsession and envy-hate feelings towards the Nugents, a look at the following passage where Mrs. Nugent comes round to the Bradys to complaint about the stolen comics has to be taken:

"I was waiting for her to come flying up the stairs, get me by the ear and throw me on the step in front of Nugent and that's what she would have done if Nugent hadn't started on about the pigs. She said she knew the kind of us long before she went to England and she might have known not to let her son anywhere near the likes of me what else would you expect from a house where the father's never in, lying about the pubs from morning to night, he's no better than a pig. You needn't think we don't know what goes on in this house oh we know all right! Small wonder the boy is the way he is what chance has he got running about the town at all hours and the clothes hanging off him it doesn't take money to dress a child God love him it's not his fault but if he's seen near our Philip again there'll be trouble. There'll be trouble now mark my words! After that ma took my part and the last thing I heard was Nugent going down the lane and calling back Pigs – sure the whole town knows that!" [McCabe 1998, 4]

Mrs. Nugent says that it is not Francie's fault but that it is the fault of the pig-family. Francie has no chance to be a better person than he is in conditions like this, so Francie fully realizes this and from this point he feels like being the little pig, for he grew up among pigs. Here his desire to have a better family starts in order to be a better person. Mrs. Nugent

voiced what Francie knew all along, but never wanted to admit: that his misogynist alcoholic father broke the family apart and created a pig family. Mrs. Nugent put a face on this dysfunctional family. That face was of a pig, so the pig became a symbol of the dysfunctional family. That is something Clare Wallace mentions as well:

“The pig constitutes the unifying symbol of Francie’s ‘manic logic’. His envy of the Nugents, his unhappiness at home and his inability to retain the friendship of Joe corresponds to the episodes of repression which surface in his obsession with pigs. Mrs. Nugent’s comment about Francie’s father sets in motion a chain reaction in his self-image. From this point he begins to identify himself as a pig (or pig-man)—the pig representing for him something dirty, abhorrent and guilty. When he enacts what he describes as the pig-school in the Nugent’s house he attempts to reverse the naming process in the pig equation.” [Wallace 1998, 161]

Francie wanted to get away from it, at least on a sub-conscious level. He became a butcher, killing pigs. He also killed Mrs. Nugent who put this symbol on him, but none of this could ever help, because he still felt like the pig. The pig face put on him is something he could never wash away and for that he hated Mrs. Nugent and blamed her for everything. Yet this hate was only on the surface, because in the next quotation Francie indeed wanted to have a better family, a better mother and a better home. He felt like he was a pig and he wanted the Nugents to get down to his level and ridicule them. This following quotation is crucial to show that all that Francie wants deep down is to belong to the Nugent family (all of this happens in his fantasy):

“Then I heard Philip Nugent’s voice. But if was different now, all sort of calm. He said: You know what he’s doing here don’t you mother? He wants to be one of us. He wants his name to be Francis Nugent. That’s what he’s wanted all along! We know that – don’t we mother? Mrs. Nugent was standing over me. Yes, Philip, she said. I know that. I’ve known it for a long time. Then slowly she unbuttoned her blouse and took out her breast. Then she said: This is for you Francis. She put her hand behind my head and firmly pressed my face forward. Philip was still at the bottom of the bed smiling. I cried out: Ma! It’s not true! Mrs. Nugent shook her head and said: I’m sorry Francis its too late for all that now. You should have thought of that when you made up your mind to come and live with us! I thought I was going to choke on the fat, lukewarm flesh. No!” [McCabe 1998, 60]

This happens in the break-in scene, when Francie breaks in to the Nugent’s house and behaves like he is in his own home. He eats cakes, watches TV and relaxes. No wonder

why the above-mentioned fantasy scene is triggered. This break-in follows right after his mother's death, so Francie sub-consciously longs for his mother, but for a better mother than his late mother. How his fantasies work is clearly revealed. His fantasies channel (mostly via Mrs. Nugent) his deepest thoughts, hopes and wishes. Actively he does not want this breast-feeding to happen, he hates Mrs. Nooge, for it is her who has caused all his family's trouble, but deep down he feels like she is the mother he always wanted. She represents the good family and that's why the breast feeding happens in his fantasy. The breast-feeding is quite an important symbol, for supposedly the breast-feeding is the single most important element in creating the emotional bond between the mother and the baby. Francie sub-consciously wanted to be emotionally bound with Mrs. Nugent as if she was his own mother, most importantly a better mother than his real mother ever was.

Francie feels defensive about his own fantasy. Something caused him to have this fantasy but he did not want to have this fantasy he called for his own mother and tried to stop Mrs. Nugent from breast-feeding him. This only exemplifies that there were two layers of Francie's sub-consciousness: the surface-like one which caused him to be defensive and the deep layer one which caused the whole breast-feeding fantasy in the first place. In the follow-up scene, he plays the aforementioned "School for Pigs" game. This also has an undertone, the fact that Francie defecates on the carpet might be a defense mechanism against the desire to belong in Nugent family, so he tries to ridicule Mrs. Nugent and the whole Nugent family. For the inner desire to be a Nugent is uncomfortable to Francie and he tries to fight against it. At first, he just acted as a pig in front of Mrs. Nugent in the entrance hall and later he broke into Nugent's house and defecated on the carpet. Yet none of these were enough for Francie, these were just feeble actions to try to defeat something much bigger inside of Francie. This deep emotion to belong in the Nugent family was much stronger than Francie himself had anticipated.

This is further proven in the part of the story, where Francie is in the correctional institute, where he is sexually abused by Father Tiddly. During the sexual intercourse between Tiddly and Francie, once again Francie sails into his fantasies:

"Ma came out into the yard to take in the washing. When she seen Mrs. Nugent smiled through her thin lips. Then she went over to her and leaned over the wall. Ma stumbled with the washing piled under her arm. She just kept smiling at ma. With her eyes she was saying: I'll speak when

I'm ready. And when she was, she said: Do you know what he did? He asked me to be his mother. He said he'd give anything not to be a pig. That's what he did on you Mrs. Brady. That's why he came to our house! Her breast was choking me again, lukewarm in my throat. I think I hit him first he fell back and I heard him shout Don't hurt me Francie I love you!...all I could see was ma smiling and saying to me over and over again don't worry Francie no matter what she says about you I'll never believe it I'll never disown you ever ever not the way I did you ma I said no son no! she said I said its true ma no she says but it was and it always would be no matter what I did." [McCabe 1998, 91]

The sarcastic thing is that in his fantasy, he choked on Mrs. Nugent's breast but in the real world it was a penis belonging to Father Tiddy. This is extremely controversial and even more controversial because this is an Irish author and the audience of this novel is mainly a very conservative Catholic Irish reader.

Putting aside the black humor of this situation, Francie feels very ashamed for his desire to belong into the Nugent family. He was a pig and felt ashamed for it, so his desire was to become the son of Mrs. Nugent but this desire tore him apart because he felt like he is betraying his loving late mother. This is the perfect characterization of Francie: he was torn apart and suffered inside. He was like a dog chased into the corner by his inner feeling towards his real mother and towards Mrs. Nugent and he did not know what to do, so he blamed Mrs. Nugent. He Blamed her for causing all the trouble, but the real blame was on Francie and nobody else. The trouble meant that Francie was in a torn-apart state with no other apparent solution for him. There was only one desperate solution how to resolve his torn-apart psyche which was the murder Francie committed on Mrs. Nugent at the end of the novel. By killing Mrs. Nugent he resolved his inner dilemma, he made the reason for his dilemma disappear and remained true to his mother (even after death, which he quite frankly partially caused). As a conclusion to analyzing Francie's personality the act of murdering Mrs. Nugent should be looked at more closely:

"She stumbled trying to get to the phone or the door and when I smelt the scones and seen Philip's picture I started to shake and kicked her I don't know how many times. I didn't care if she groaned or said please or what she said. I caught her round the neck and said: you did two bad things Mrs. Nugent. You made me turn my back on my ma and you took Joe away from me. Why did you do that Mrs. Nugent? She didn't answer I didn't want to hear any answer I smacked her against the wall a few times there was a smear of blood at the corner of her mouth and her hand was reaching out trying to touch me when I cocked the captive bolt. I lifted her

off the floor with one hand and shot the bolt right into her head tholk was the sound it made, like a goldfish dropping into a bowl. If you ask anyone how you kill a pig they will tell you cut its throat across but you don't you do it longways. Then she just lay there with her chin sticking up and I opened her then I stuck my hand in her stomach and wrote PIGS all over the walls of the upstairs room." [McCabe 1998, 195]

The way he kills her is like a pig, but the reason why he kills her with the captive-bolt gun and then slices her throat like a pig's throat is quite poetic. By killing her like a pig, he also kills the pig-him. By making her personality disappear from this world, his pig personality also disappears. It was not simply a murder, it was a ritual by which he cleansed himself of the pig face Mrs. Nugent had put on him. His torn-apart personality was healed and cleansed by this ritual killing.

His motivation can clearly be identified and the smell of scones and a picture of Philip only accelerated his actions. The smell of scones evokes a home-like feeling which is analogical to the family fire-place I mentioned at the beginning. This warmth of a happy family life was something Francie never felt or experienced and all of this was even multiplied by the picture of Philip. Thus, he started to shake and committed the murder in affection, for the torn-apart feeling got provoked by both his vision and sense of smell.

A strong comic book connection is shown by the description of the sound the captive bolt made when killing Mrs. Nugent which is taken straight from comic books. Not only that but to further describe the sound he compares it to a goldfish dropping into a bowl, which again is quite poetic if it is remembered what the goldfish meant for Francie. When Francie read the letter from Joe telling him that he is friends with Philip and that Philip won a goldfish and gave it to him, Francie feels betrayed. The goldfish symbolizes the breaking point of their relationship. Francie also wants to give Joe a goldfish to win him back as a friend, but it is already too late for that. Therefore, describing the sound, the captive bolt made while killing Mrs. Nugent by comparing it to a goldfish dropping into a bowl is very sadistic and also quite ironic.

After killing Mrs. Nugent, Francie cuts her belly open and writes pigs all over the walls again. The first time he wrote pigs on the walls of Nugent's house it was with lipstick belonging to Mrs. Nugent, writing "Philip is a pig", but now it was meant for the whole family. The fact that he opens the belly of Mrs. Nugent is again a poetic ritual to a certain

level. By opening her belly, he denounced himself from being her son, he destroyed her womb, thereby destroying the symbol of her motherhood and used it to write pigs all over the wall. Linden Peach is describing the motivation of the murder in a similar way. However, I dare to disagree with his interpretation of cutting Mrs. Nugent's belly. Francie feels guilty towards his dead mother, he wants to destroy the reason of his guilt and source of his torn-apart state. He wants to destroy the mother-figure Mrs. Nugent represents for him and cleanse himself of the guilt and from being a pig. Peach explains this as a wish to re-enter the womb (in a positive way). Which in the logic of my interpretation makes little sense:

"The fact that Francie has failed to make the transition from thinking in terms of simple good-bad binarism is the reason he is so at home in the rigid binarism of children's stories and comics. Unfortunately, Mrs. Nugent represents the 'good mother', frequently the absent present in fairy stories, which Francie desires. His mother, whom he loves, is for him the 'bad mother', eventually withdrawing permanently from him through her suicide for which he blames himself. Mrs. Nugent, as the 'good mother', comes between Francie and his real mother because she reminds him of the way his own mother failed him, and probably how he thinks of himself as having failed her. Within this context, the ostensibly gruesome details of her murder become highly symbolic because in cutting open her front, Francie seems to signify a desire to re-enter the womb." [Peach 2004, 185]

A contradiction to both mine and Peache's interpretation can be made. Maybe that cutting Mrs. Nugent had no deeper meaning at all. Francie's work as a real (pig) butcher required not only killing of the pigs, but also gutting them, so disemboweling of Mrs. Nugent was nothing more than following an automatized work routine.

Nonetheless, this is not only a complete act of resistance towards his desire to be the son of Mrs. Nugent, but a complete destruction of everything Mrs. Nugent represented for Francie. Tim Gauthier also mentions this:

"The murder of Mrs. Nugent emerges as the inevitable conclusion to his futile search for identity. Francie cannot shake her label: therefore, he must destroy the source of this identity. His act of violence is characteristically Irish if we see violence as the only recourse remaining in a struggle against the dominant culture." [Gauthier 2003, 207]

He not only cleansed himself from being a pig, but cleansed himself from his own inner desire to be her son and put the pig face back on Mrs. Nugent (even though posthumously). At the beginning of the novel Francie became a pig because Mrs. Nugent

called their whole family pigs. Throughout the novel Francie was fighting in a way with this pig personality and at the end of the novel, the outcome of this fight was the murder of Mrs. Nugent which in a way was a ritual way of giving this pig personality back to Mrs. Nugent.

3 PATRICK “PUSSY” BRANDEN

In this second main chapter, we are to investigate the personality and life events of the protagonist of the novel *Breakfast on Pluto* also by Patrick McCabe. This novel was also adapted to the silver screen. Thus, it serves the purpose of this thesis very well. Not only are the *Butcher Boy* and *Breakfast on Pluto* the only novels by Patrick McCabe which have been adapted into a film, but they bear some similar characteristics.

However, the personality of Patrick “Pussy” Branden is nowhere near the complexity of Francie “the Pig” Brady. There is no denying that both Francie and Patrick are disturbed as children and later as adults, but Francie is disturbed at so many different levels that it makes him quite difficult to understand and predict many of his actions. On the other hand, Patrick is disturbed on just one level, the level of absent parents and having no proper family bounds, which consequently leads to the distortion of his sexual identity and mindset. When exploring Francie a mentally ill person’s problems appear like a puzzle and one is trying to make a sense out of it. With Patrick, he is a transvestite prostitute, but he is not crazy or mad. Patrick is not a flat character, for there is a lot of depth to Patrick’s personality, but the dysfunctional non-existent family Patrick grew up in disturbed him just at one level. In this part of my thesis, I will try to prove that Patrick is not simply a transvestite but rather a woman trapped inside a man’s body. This part of the thesis is not going to be as extensive as the previous one on *The Butcher Boy*.

3.1 Son of a Priest

Patrick Branden is the protagonist of the novel *Breakfast on Pluto* and he is quite a unique character. A look behind the scenes of what Patrick presents requires a look at his family background for it was crucial for his development. The family background of Patrick Branden is the reason, why Patrick or “Pussy”, is such an interesting character.

Right from the beginning of the novel, we are presented with the fact that Patrick is not a child living happily with his parents. There is no real family to speak of, because he was left as an infant on the doorstep of Mrs. Branden who was basically a woman who lived from social benefits for all the “out-of-wedlock” children she took in. There was no real motherly love in the Branden family, because Mrs. Branden was both an alcoholic and a heavy smoker. She was a disgusting woman, who Patrick felt ashamed of. The reason why he calls her Whiskers is because of her facial hair, for the facial hair Mrs. Branden has resembles the facial hair of a cat to Patrick.

The audience can see quite clearly the feelings Patrick has towards his step-family (and everybody else in the novel) for the novel is narrated in the first person in the format of a life-long diary. Patrick realizes who his step-mother is and why there are so many children in their family. Patrick feels the need to belong into a real family and know who his real, biological parents are and to get to know them. I would like to exemplify this unhappy dysfunctional step-family with the section of the novel right at the beginning describing the “happy” Christmas at Branden’s.

“Now that she’s suitably drunk she decides to pull the only cracker available, triumphantly producing it from her handbag and yowling: ‘Come on over here and pull this fucking cracker till we get this fucking Christmas finished with!’ as, happy family that we are, like a snapshot from the past, we all come crowding around, happy bright-eyed bastards all – Wee Tony, Hughie, Peter, Josie, Caroline and snot-trailing Little Ba, who for such a magnificent display of domestic harmony are hereby presented unopposed with the Patrick Branden ALL-IRELAND FUNCTIONAL FAMILY OF THE CENTURY AWARD! So congratulations, Hairy Ma and all your little out-of-wedlock kids!” [McCabe 1999, 9]

Not only does this show us the conditions the whole family lived in, but it also exemplifies the cutting sarcasm Patrick feels toward all of this. The sarcasm is a coping mechanism for Patrick, because that is the only way for him to get above all of this and

Whiskers and search for his own identity away from this dysfunctional step-family. This self-identity he was looking for away from Whiskers functions as the main plot of the whole novel, for the new identity he found was an identity as a woman. The discussion about her or sometimes about him alternates between both, for convenience of expressing the discrepancy in his trans-sexual personality.

This dysfunctional step-family is not the origin of Patrick's special personality. This dysfunctional family or to be precise a private money-making foster home was just something Patrick wanted to break free from. The real origin of Patrick's personality is the biological family, his real father and mother he never experienced.

His biological parents influenced him the most even though he never spoke to them or met them face to face. Here the controversy of the novel starts because the father of Patrick was a Tyreelin priest, Father Bernard Mclvor. His mother was his young maid Eily Bergin. After they beget Patrick, to avoid a scandal in the Catholic Church, Father Bernard sends Eily over to England to hide her and his sin. Patrick learns the truth about his parentage which constitutes the source and the main objective of his fantasies.

The main theme of the novel is the journey Patrick undergoes in his search for his mother in London. The reader is exposed to the historical background of the terrorist attack by the IRA in London and also all the juicy bits about his London job as a transvestite-prostitute. The real reason he leaves for London and leads his life in such a way is only to find his mother Eily Bergin. He thinks of his mother as if she were in exile.

When he was looking for his mother, he also was looking for himself. "His" stay in London definitely made it "her" stay in London. Patrick's sexual identity will be explored later. Her stay in London was just a desperate, self-destructive attempt to find her mother. This is an undertone of the burning desire expressed concretely in the twentieth chapter, which has a very forward title: "*Where the Fuck is my Mammy?*"

"Write to me – this place is fucking crazy! Sometimes, I'm afraid, I don't feel so good! I love you Charlie, Irwin! And if not that, then once more thinking of her I'd give my life to find the one-and-only Eily Bergin. 'Where are you Mammy?' I might often be heard to choke. 'Where are you?' For how long already had one been searching? Since the very day of arrival, to be honest! Once – can you believe it! – a pallid face observed in the passing tube: 'It's her! I swear it's her!', for Mitzi she did, in truth, resemble! Mitzi

as she might be now in 1973! How many people in this teeming city? Ten million? More? How long to find one's mammy? Has anyone seen my mammy? Look – there she is in the empty church. Turning her head to greet you. 'Hello, Paddy. Why did you leave it so long?' As 'Ah' goes, thorned head upturned: 'Ah! Did you think it was your mammy?' And in a café too, of course! From the street you saw her as you passed, sitting there, pale hands curled around a cup. 'Mammy!' 'I beg your pardon?' How many times did that one happen? Why, hundreds, dearest, hundreds!' [McCabe 1999, 74-75]

The angry-ish desire to find his mother is very apparent. He was not angry at his mother for leaving him, no this anger towards his parents was focused rather on Father Bernard, because he made his mother go away. Anyway, Patrick was angry at the fact that he could not find his mother. There was a missing part of his personality, arguably the mother bond he never had. Patrick wants it, he longs for it but he cannot find it. Accordingly, this despair is the reason, why he starts seeing his mother in people completely unrelated to her. This deep longing has caused him to see every woman even remotely resembling Mitzi Gaynor as her (or his?) mother. Patrick goes even so far as to address the women only to realize that it is not her mammy. The fact that he cannot find her after such an extensive search makes him even more desperate, which is making him feel shattered and broken. It is not only this but also his escort-service job which is taking a toll on his psyche. That is why, he does not feel so good. Patrick left London and abandoned his search for his mother after he had a nervous breakdown while working with yet another client.

"I never did find Mammy, though, despite the fact that after leaving Tyreelin I had the place scoured looking for her. My escort work I gave up yonks ago, one night just breaking down in the arms of some poor unfortunate man, going: 'Let go of me! You don't love me! None of you love me!' "[McCabe 1999, 198]

This only tells us that all Patrick ever wanted was his mother's love. He never got it from Whiskers and he needed it. That might be one of the reasons why he became a transvestite. He was an escort service worker because he wanted to make an easy living and to some extent he felt like he is filling the void in his soul. Yet the void couldn't be filled up, it could not be fixed for all he needed was to be loved as a son is loved by his mother.

However, he tried to substitute for this mother-like love. When he was having an affair with one of his sugar daddies called Bertie, he lived in a flat where there was a

landlady Louise whose son was killed in an accident. A bond developed between Louise and Patrick.

“She asked me to call her ‘Mammy’ which, apparently, because of his dad being Irish, was exactly the way Shaunie pronounced it. ‘O my silly boy, my Shaunie Shaunies!’ she’d say, and I’d just say: ‘Mammy!’ After a while I started to really like it, just sitting there on her knee and being engulfed by all this powdery warm flesh. I never wanted to get up in fact. Until, one day, quite unexpectedly, who happens along only Berts! There is no point in pretending I was anything other than embarrassed out of my life when he snapped: ‘What the bloody hell is going on here!’ in this shaky voice, because I hadn’t said anything to him about what was going on – as well as being in the middle of sucking on her nipple and going: ‘Mammy!’ ” [McCabe 1999, 91]

Patrick’s desire to have a mother and get the parental love he always lacked got him to the point where he pretended to be a deceased son of his landlady and role-playing. At this point I would not call him crazy nor would I call Louise crazy. They both were two severely damaged individuals lacking something in their lives and having a void in their souls. I think that they both knew exactly what they were doing, but they still did it in order to feel better. Louise lost her son and there was nothing she could do and Patrick grew up abandoned and without love, so there was nothing that could be changed about that either. They just helped each other, not to change the past and make their trouble disappear, but to escape from their troubled reality by this role-play. Patrick felt like having a mother because he sucked her nipple. The child-mother relationship is biologically created during breast feeding, so even if Patrick was a grown-up male(female), he still felt this need to create the bond, but it was too late for this bond to be created so he at least pretended that he had the bond while sucking on her nipples. As for Louise, she had this bond, but her son died so when Patrick sucked at her breast she felt like this lost bond is being regained at least temporarily. This is easily proven by the following passage in the novel:

“The only thing about it being that somewhere at the back of my mind, I kept thinking: ‘you shouldn’t be doing this, as well you know. She’s not your mammy. If she wants you to be her son, that’s fine. But she’s not your mammy. Your mammy was special. Even if she did dump you on Whiskers Branden’s step and leave you for ever. Even if she did do that, no one, no one!, could ever take her place. So why are you sitting on a strange woman’s knee, Patrick Branden?’ I’d try my best not to let it come and would furiously suck on the nipple, but somehow it always did, a little curling whisper: ‘Why?’” [McCabe 1999, 92]

There is a certain consistency in the symbol of breast feeding in both *The Butcher Boy* and *Breakfast on Pluto*.

This strong parental need was almost exclusive towards her mother who remained somehow mystical to Patrick. She was the mother figure in her fantasies, she was somebody she wanted to embody as a woman. However, there is also the question of fatherhood that aggravates Patrick's life. The biological father is known to Patrick, he knows that his father is the priest Father Bernard. There is nothing mysterious about him and that is why Patrick has a certain negative mindset about him.

Patrick hates his father and he wishes revenge. He wants to be the avenger and pay back for the things he did to both his mother and his own life. Patrick makes fantasies about confronting the father eye to eye and making him confess his sins. At a certain point in the novel, the reader is misled to believe that Patrick actually burned the church down with Father Bernard trapped inside the church. It is later revealed that that was only Patrick's fantasy. I would point out the discrepant feelings Patrick has towards his mother and father. Whereas the mother is non-existent and mystical and Patrick has a void inside of him which he needs to fill, the father is very real so there is no void inside of Patrick. That is why Patrick hates him. He does not even want him to behave like a father and be his father in the common way. Never throughout the novel is this wish to have a father explicitly expressed. Patrick does not need a father, but he severely needs a mother. Bernard only posed a bad role-model for Patrick because he was a figure who inseminated his mother and left and merely washed his hands of it. He loathed the parental irresponsibility that Father Bernard represents. This bad role-model only showed Patrick how a father should not behave and he knew, that it was bad and not fatherly behavior which might be another cause for his transsexuality. He despised his father for what he did to him and his mother so inevitably he despised the concept of a father. That is why he embraced comprehensively the woman side of the parental relationship. This deeply rooted hate and a twisted concept of fatherhood would have been resolved for Patrick quite easily, but it never was because of the social taboo it posed. All that Patrick ever wanted from Father Bernard was to be acknowledged as his son. He simply needed to know that he has a father who thinks of him as his son and that Bernard cares about Patrick no matter how much of a taboo that was. He did not need father Bernard to be openly behaving like his father. A subterfuge relationship with his

father would be enough for Patrick, but father Bernard never had the courage to acknowledge him in any way. He felt ashamed for it and he changed after Patrick was born, he was penitent after what happened. That is why Patrick hated him so much, he did not hate him for not being there for him as his father, he hated him because he was the object father Bernard felt ashamed for:

“Many of his parishioners knew, despite rarely giving voice to it in public, that what might be termed: ‘Change in Father Bernard’ dated back to a single 1950s morning in the year 1955 and to no other – the morning he inserted his excitable pee pee into the vagina of a woman who was so beautiful she looked not unlike Mitzi Gaynor the well-known film star. And then arranged for her to go to London so that there would be no dreadful scandal. ‘Dear, dear. I wonder what is wrong with Father Bernard,’ his parishioners would say, adding: ‘He’s not the man he was at all.’ It would have been nice, of course, if at any time in the intervening years – particularly at Christmas – he had arrived down to the Branden household with a little present for his son. Which he didn’t of course.” [McCabe 1999, 8]

This exemplifies the taboo it meant to be a cleric and a biological father of a child at the same time. In Ireland, which is strongly catholic this behavior means a huge scandal. In a way, McCabe is openly making a critique of the Catholic Church by the means of his fiction, which, even though it is a fictionalized plot is still touching some very uncomfortable topics. Several cases were revealed whereby priests were known to be pedophiles or to father a child, but the scandal was kept under the rose. By writing this novel McCabe is making a social commentary about the consequences that priest’s celibacy might have with Patrick as the real victim here.

However, to underscore the point that all that Patrick ever wanted was to be recognized by his father as his son, the following passage from the novel may serve to illuminate this issue:

“ ‘Sit down here don and have a cup of tea like a good fellow. Myself and yourself have a lot to catch up on! By the way – I love the powder blue, puff-sleeved shirt – or is it a blouse? Ha ha!’ All of which is fair and reasonable enough, I suppose. But I wasn’t bothered about any big speeches or get-togethers like that. All I wanted him to do was say: ‘Hello there, Patrick,’ once in a while. Even nod, for heaven’s sake! But he couldn’t even do that much! As a matter of fact, any time he saw that I was sitting on the summer seat, he put his head down and made a detour around by the chickenshed. Did I mention that ever since I’d been dumped on the front

step of Rat Trap mansion I suspected Whiskers had been getting extra cash for my upkeep, over and above what the government gave her? ('Mickey money' they called that locally.) Well – she was!’ [McCabe 1999, 58]

There is no doubt that this kind of denial of his existence caused him to feel hatred towards Father Bernard. As Patrick said numerous times throughout the novel, he will never forgive him, he tried really hard (and he realized the importance of being able to forgive), but it just could not be done. He hated him for not having the guts and for the shame he felt for bringing him to this world. This is the reason why Patrick refuses the role-model of a father, thus denying the manly side of parenthood and embracing instead the motherhood and consequently trying to fill the empty mother-space by becoming a woman. By becoming a woman, Patrick makes up (in a certain way) for the sins and shame of his father who had denied the very existence of him.

3.2 Living a Fantasy

Before we get into the concrete and apparent aspects from this novel, the reason this novel exists might be only a fantasy. For this novel is written as a life story Patrick writes for his doctor who took care of him the reader does not exactly know if he was a surgeon or a psycho-therapist, but only that he encouraged Patrick to write *The Life and Times of Patrick Branden*. However, the figure of Dr. Terence is somehow mystical, because he quite quickly disappears after meeting Patrick. He felt fascinated by Patrick's personality and encouraged him to write down the story of his life, leading one to surmise that Dr. Terence is not real but he embodies all Pussy ever wanted in a man. He is a decent person, his hands are strong and bear-like and he can calm him down and make him feel loved and evokes the family-like feeling, which is something Pussy wants very dearly. This is only in the realms of speculations and provides a certain angle, that might be taken into consideration while interpreting this novel and Patrick's personality. This notion is something that also Clare Wallace makes a comment upon:

"Breakfast on Pluto is apparently a confessional memoir of transvestite prostitute Patrick 'Pussy' Branden written for 'her' analyst, Dr. Terence, who may or may not exist, about events which may or may not have happened in the manner in which Pussy relates them. This 'memoir' moves between Pussy's reflections on various highly camp outfits to flights of fancy involving true love revenge upon the priest she believes to be her father, and terrorism, but is punctuated by brief accounts of violent sectarian murders which are narrated in a different voice. It remains uncertain as to whether these are doses of a harsh external 'reality' or are indeed yet another aspect of Pussy's repertoire of fantasy." [Wallace 2004, 145-146]

Patrick's questionable parentage and his dysfunctional step family leads him to resolve into fantasizing. The reason behind those fantasies or the motivation for his fantasies is his parentage of which he knew, but never really understood. He knew who his mother and father were, but he did not emotionally understand why he got dumped on the front step of "The Rat Trap Mansion" to be fostered by Whiskers.

To be precise, Patrick rationally understood the reason, it was the taboo for the clerical fatherhood, but even if he understood, he still felt ashamed for it in a way. This shame made him consider his intrinsic value to be lower than other people. He considered his birth and sheer existence the reason, why his mother fled into an exile in London and

why his father was so ashamed that he would not even acknowledge him, not even in secrecy. Patrick's parentage put a big stigma on him, and he did not know how to get rid of it. He tried to cope with it by fantasizing.

His fantasies did not help him to get rid of the stigma which he felt was put on him by his parentage. Nonetheless, it helped him to understand who he was much better. By fantasizing about the sex-scene between his mother and father, he was able to put some emotional value into his conception. He fantasized about this scene to be able to explain to himself under which circumstances he was created. He felt like if he somehow lives through the process of his conception he will be able to understand better what his father and mother have done to him.

He perceived his father and mother during those fantasies in specific roles: He sees his mother as an innocent woman (as we found out later into the novel she was only 16). This innocent girl Eily Bergin is just helping out Father Bernard as a maid. She is perceived as a young sweet girl who likes music and only wants to earn some money to buy more music records. In a way this is a reflection of Patrick's personality, for he also really likes music. When materializing his mother in his fantasies he projects his personality into her, because he feels to be a victim of his father's sins as was his mother. He thinks of his father as a seducer and later on, even a rapist. His mother is only a victim to his uncontrolled lust. Thus, not only the mother is a victim but gradually Patrick is even more victimized compared to his mother. He is the outcome of this victimization so he is a double victim of his father's crime so he hates his father that much more.

The reason, why he creates these fantasies is to justify his hatred towards his father, which was gradually built up. It began with him writing rather spicy school essays.

"It was unfortunate that I had now learned the truth once and for all about my clerical parentage, for I really was becoming quite obsessed with it. Hence the persistently colourful titles of my submitted essays, e.g. 'Father Stalk Sticks It In' and 'Father Bernard Rides Again!' " [McCabe 1999, 10]

There is the start of his obsession with how he was conceived, at first he wrote some essays. That was quite natural at that point, he felt like there was a big question mark buried inside of him and by writing about it he tried to resolve that. It is no wonder that these

essays got him into a lot of trouble. These essays were not enough however, for the hate relationship towards his father was established later, only after he had become a woman (which admittedly may only be another effect caused by the rape-like conception of Patrick). These made-up essays evolved into whole-chapter fleshed out short-stories which describe the scene in a greater detail. These short stories were not just simply kept in the drawer but Patrick took these obscene short-stories and put them in his father's post box. A fully realized short-story came from just few of them, when it comes to the rest we only know the titles like: "Sex Mad Sky Pilot" or "Fornicator" or "The Adventures Of Father Benny Rape!". By doing this Patrick confronts his father in a way and he tries to make him realize what has been done to him. He wanted Father Bernard to see the damage he has done and possibly man up and acknowledge him as his son, but that did not happen so Patrick's hate only evolved into the wish to kill his father later on. To explore the origin of this blood-thirsty hate, a closer look is needed at chapter 8 from which this quote about his conception comes:

"What might have happened if she had not leaned, for no reason other than to fork some more rashers onto father Bernard's plate – thereby permitting her housecoat and skirt to ride up just a little, not a lot, but just enough – must remain forever in the realm of conjecture. Was she herself aware of the fast-moving developments occasioned by this oversight on her part – the metal suspender of a white girdle gleaming in the gritty sunlight – why, of course she was! Which was why she remarked: 'Ops! My skirt and housecoat are riding up! Better abort this task at once or we could have an explosive clergyman filling the air with pent-up sexual energy thanks to god knows how many years' abstinence!' " [McCabe 1999, 26]

From the beginning, Patrick imagined his conception to be somehow mutual. A hint of a sexual foreplay and overall delicacy and sexual tension is evident, and the sex was playful. This was the kind of sex which was taboo and thus exciting. The forbidden fruit tastes best, but as this sex scene full of obscene descriptions goes on, it became quite clear that it was not like that. Patrick did not feel like it was innocent flirting anymore, he grew to feel more and more used and violated. At least the feelings he projects onto his mother in this fantasy as exemplified here:

"And who would obviously stop at nothing now until he had you destroyed with sticky stabs and practically broken you in two in the bargain! All she could think of as she lay there on the table with the small moist map forming on the fabric of her housecoat was: 'Rosano wouldn't do it!' and 'Neither would Vic Damone!' (Whom she also loved.) All of

which made her break down in tears – and is it any surprise!” [McCabe 1999, 28-29]

This transition between a playful sex into a rape-like sex is crucial, for this is the point where Patrick realized that his father is the only one to blame and that it was him, who ruined the life of his mother and even more ruined his own life. This rape-like scenario has a continuation in the chapter 33 where Patrick describes the sex once again, but here the sex is not playful at all but a pure rape. The way he describes the feelings of his mother makes the reader even uncomfortable, for what he describes is an out-of-body experience. He thought that it was not his mother having sex, it could not be her because she was saving herself for a marriage and a happy family life with a loving husband. This is without a doubt a defense mechanism that Patrick felt his mother used in order to get over the rape. She felt like it is not happening, she blanked out the reality to be able to live with it only to realize that it really was her and what Father Bernard did to her.

“Why was he doing it, though? She wondered. It made her cry to watch him as he continued. But not as much as it made her cry when she realized just who was it, i.e. that it had been her all along. You can imagine the shock she got. Crying: ‘Why! The girl is me!’ and then of course, the baby coming – the biggest shock of all!” [McCabe 1999, 127]

After this, all that Patrick feels was hatred and a wish to avenge his mother and himself on Father Bernard. Patrick drifts away into the fantasy of burning the church with his father in it. More interestingly, it is crucial to note what was happening to him in reality when he was fantasizing about the burning of the church. He was being interrogated and beaten by London detectives because he was a suspect in an IRA terrorist attack. A clear analogy to a defense mechanism he projected onto his mother occurs, for his mother pretended not to be the one being raped as she blanked it out. When Patrick was being interrogated he also blanks it out and escapes into a happy place. This happy place for Patrick is the vengeful idea of burning his father to death. The reader is led to believe that he really went through with it only to realize that Patrick was still under arrest and fantasizing about it.

“ ‘Oh no!’ she hissed, ‘I’m not your son, correct, my father, because what I am’s your daughter or hadn’t you noticed you gorgeous man in lace and serge, you’ve passed me on your journeys,’’You fucking bastard!’ she squealed, bad gremlin on a fern-furzed hill. ‘You fucking

fucking bastard! Never will I forgive you! Never never never! " [McCabe 1999, 177]

This is the definite proof that Patrick felt like his whole life was raped by Father Bernard. This also might be an explanation of Patrick's trans-sexuality because he might have been trying to embody the hurt of the violated woman his mother was. There is one even more graphic, cruel and malevolent scene in which the hate relationship towards Patrick's father is apparent. This scene is preceding the quotation above after this scene Patrick realizes that he has to learn how to forgive only to realize that he could not do that, he just could not forgive the damage committed on him:

"When Terence came in I was screaming his name (Daddy's – Bernard's – whatever the fuck you want to call him) and was tearing the pages into pieces, crying: 'I'll fucking kill him! I'll cut his fucking cock off and burn his church down with him in it!' " [McCabe 1999, 122]

Those fantasies Patrick develops are not pointless but serve to help Patrick define himself, to get to know who he is and where he came from. They also serve the purpose of having at least some emotional connection to his parents. These fantasies offer solace and understanding moreover these fantasies helped to form Patrick's female identity and a desire to become a mother with a loving and functional family. Most importantly, through these fantasies McCabe makes a social commentary on what unnatural celibacy might lead to. This animalistic sexual desire is apparent in the description of the sex act that leads to Patrick's conception. Maybe McCabe is just trying to say that celibacy is wrong and against nature and that some incidents are inevitable. Moreover, these incidents are way more dangerous to our society and individuals than if priests were allowed to have a family. Patrick "Pussy" is a reflection of all that is wrong with Catholic Church, celibacy and the taboo it poses. In a way Pussy and his imagination only mirrors the whole society.

3.3 Sexual Identity

In this sub-chapter, some light will be shed on Patrick's trans-sexuality. There are some simple theories about Patrick's trans-sexuality and some theories that go very deep and are on the brink of being called speculations.

First and foremost if we perceive Pussy as a gay-man we are mistaken. There is no hint whatsoever about Patrick feeling aroused by the same sex. Moreover, he does not act or talk like a man or even a gay-man at all. He feels himself to be a woman and acts according to it. He not only dresses up as a woman, he embodies a woman's figure to its fullest only with a small drawback which is his penis (he would like to get rid of it). Pussy also likes to be submissive like women tend to be (or that was common at the time, when feminism and women emancipation was not the trend).

“ ‘Nothing like perfume to take all your cares away!’ I’d say and do a twirl. ‘If this doesn’t stop,’ Irwin said, ‘I’m quitting the gang!’, but Charlie said: ‘Oh pipe down, why don’t you’ and he did, shuffling off and sticking up two fingers. It wasn’t long after that anyway that we started the wars as well and that kept him happy, there wasn’t a word out of him about the perfume and the international modelling as long, as we promised to keep doing the wars. Which I didn’t mind in the slightest, especially as Charlie clicked her heels and went: ‘Compan-ee-tenshun!’ I loved that, for some reason – her being the boss! As off we’d march behind her.” [McCabe 1999, 18]

Not only did Pussy like being bossed about but she also spoke the way women do. His speech is full of “Darlings” and “I’m afraid” and “Of course”. Pussy speaks with certain easiness that is typical for women. There is more evidence to the point that he is not a gay-man at all but rather a woman. Patrick even experiment hetero-sexually with Charlie only to realize that this is not for him, for all he ever wants was a vagina of his own. That is certainly not how a gay-man would feel. Another example is his obsession with celebrities and pop-music stars. He also likes all fashion and lifestyle magazines as well as the newest trends in fashion, cosmetics and perfumes. It is not a face Pussy puts on to be like a woman, this is genuine woman's behavior and that leads me to the conclusion that he is a woman trapped inside a man's body. The first instance the reader is presented with Patrick's trans-sexuality appears in this passage:

“ ‘Gone for at least an hour!’ I cried, in the grip of delightful excitement. But no! Hardly twenty minutes later – the pair of them back, mooching about in the kitchen looking for a prayerbook or something they’d left behind. None of which I was aware of, of course, being much too busy dabbing on Whiskers’ lipstick (Cutex Coral Pink, would you believe!) and saying: ‘Hello, Patricia!’ in the mirror and pretending I was dancing with Efrem Zimbalist Junior! Whom I didn’t really know, of course, except that I’d seen him in Modern Screen once or twice and really liked the look of him – though the name quite fab too, may I add! And was more than glad to say: ‘Oh yes!’ when he husky-groaned: ‘Like to dance then, sweet Patricia?’ As round and round we twirled to my favourite song: ‘Son of a Preacher Man’ – what else, darlings! With Efrem crooning, ‘The only one who could ever teach me was—’ at exactly the same moment as the door came bursting in (they must have heard me ‘la-la-laa-ing’!) and who’s there only – yes! – Caroline going: ‘My dress! He’s wearing my favourite dress!’ and putting on quite a performance, I have to say.” [McCabe 1999, 12-13]

This is really the first exposure to the “she” inside of Patrick. His obsession with cosmetics, fashion, music, celebrities and the woman-like way of speaking is here, and this scene happens when Patrick is still only a small boy. The music background is also humorous in a way. The *Son of a Preacher Man* was a musical hit throughout the 60’s and 70’s and the whole novel is written around the idea of clerical parentage. However, this song is from the USA where Protestant preachers are allowed to have a family, so this only exemplifies the irony and difference between Protestants and Catholic Irish. This song is also easy-going and energetic as Patrick is in his adulthood.

That Patrick is a woman inside of a man’s body is undoubtedly caused by his non-existent dysfunctional family. His clerical fatherhood and his mother being sent into exile is without a doubt the origin of Pussy and the end of Patrick. However, this family background could have caused any kind of personality disturbance, so why was it trans-sexuality? The first possible explanation of Patrick’s trans-sexuality is offered by Patrick himself at the beginning of the novel only as a sarcastic commentary regarding his father:

“Father Bernard McIvor, will be busying himself inside his sacristy. Donning the starched vestments which, it would later be the contention of ill-formed psychiatrists, were partly responsible for his son’s attraction to the airy appareil of the opposite sex.” [McCabe 1999, 8-9]

While there is a hint of sarcasm and bemusement apparent, Patrick himself is admitting the fact that the priest’s robes might be the reason why he became a woman. For Patrick, the way priests dress up is reminiscent of the way women dress up. Saying this in a

rather sarcastic way, he himself that this explanation is far too simple and, even though it might have had some influence, the real reason for his trans-sexuality is way deeper than that. This is not the explanation we are looking for, but this is something Pussy presents to us as a jape. It took something far more serious to cause Patrick to become trans-sexual.

Becoming a scandalous transvestite was a taboo in Ireland, so his gender change might have been an attempt to draw Father Bernard's attention towards Patrick and acknowledge him as his son. He was basically putting on display who he is in order to make his father realize whom he had begot. He tried to meet his father. He wrote him obscene letters all of which had one goal only. He just wanted to meet his father as his son and he wanted to know that his father cared about him. Even though Patrick did not "choose" to be trans-sexual (it was not based on some decision he made, that was just the way he was) this might have been just a sub-conscious way of becoming something his father must take notice of however uncomfortable that was for him. Maybe Patrick felt that by becoming trans-sexual the shame that lies on his father would grow even bigger so his father would not be able to take it anymore and acknowledge him as his son.

A rather far-fetched explanation might be the disgust felt towards Mrs. Brander. There is a reason why Patrick calls her "*Whiskers*" or "*The Old Bat*". Patrick finds her looks disgusting and repellent. He hates her facial hair the most. Maybe by dressing up as a woman, he wanted to show her, that not only is she a horrible step-mother but she is also terrible as a woman because even a boy like him is a far more beautiful woman than she is.

It is quite apparent that Patrick's trans-sexuality is somehow connected to his mother and his desire to embody her in a way. This is of course caused by not having a proper mother at all (he never once considered Whiskers as his mother, for there was no motherly love between them) and by the sub-conscious urge to make up for it by being a woman. He wanted to embody his mother in order to give something he never had to the others, but this wish to become his mother has two different angles we can explore.

The first angle is the embodiment of his mother as a symbol of both womanhood and beauty. His mother looked like Mitzi Gaynor, who is a film star and Patrick adores film stars, so maybe he wanted to duplicate the symbol of the beauty which Mitzi Gaynor represents, thus his mother represents it as well.

“She looked just like any old ordinary priest’s housekeeper you might see shuffling along the road with her shopping basket of ferrying a plate of rashers and eggs across the floor to her employer. And most definitely not a perfume-sprayed version called Mitzi Gaynor with a head of gorgeous bubble-cut curls that would make any man’s privates go – sprong! – never mind that of a poor deprived clergyman!” [McCabe 1999, 23]

Patrick adores the glamorous and famous good-looking celebrities so naturally he wants to look like Mitzi Gaynor while denying his manhood in favor of the woman he feels inside. Unlike in the film, there is no trace in the novel where Patrick got the information that his mother Eily Bergin looked like Mitzi Gaynor, there is simply no proof about it being true. Patrick has no idea how his mother looks. However, he apparently adores Mitzi so he imagines his mother looking like her. In a way, Patrick idolizes his mother, or at least her physical appearance.

The second and most plausible angle that can be taken to explain Patrick’s trans-sexuality is that he tried to re-create the essence of his mother’s existence. By becoming a woman, Patrick not only embodied his mother as a symbol of womanhood and motherhood, but he tried to replicate the molested sixteen-year-old girl his mother was when she gave birth to him. Patrick already felt disturbed and broken and becoming a woman was the last step to get the closest to his mother. He really put a staple on his father’s shame for being his father. For not only did Patrick pose a huge taboo as a trans-sexual in the whole town, but he also was a mirror to Father Bernard. He mirrored to all the inhabitants of Tyreelin all the sins of his father and what this kind of sin might lead to. By his trans-sexuality he was telling his father to have a good look at what he has done. He was telling him that maybe the real Eily is gone, but another Eily is still in town. This is the broken and damaged Eily no one knew, and Father Bernard made her like this. Patrick wanted to become like his mother, but rather emotionally than physically is proven by the fact that he made his living by being a prostitute. Being a prostitute was really hard on him and that even though it came easy to him, he was really suffering. His letter to Charlie indicated that he was not feeling so well and this led to his nervous breakdown. This only exemplifies to us that this P. Branden Piccadilly Escort Service was in a way a self-destructive process for Pussy. The reason why Patrick is leading his life in such a self-destructive way is to fulfill his transformation into his “ruined” mother. He wanted to learn exactly how she felt after

Father Bernard molested her. Patrick did that by being a transvestite prostitute until he had a breakdown. After this breakdown, his transformation was complete and now he was like his mother, a woman left alone, molested, unloved and also with no child to look after. This is another reason why he wants to become a mother so much, because his mother was forced to abandon him and thus could not care for him. He feels like he has to make up for his mother not to his mother, for he never found her: for his mother meaning that he longs to fulfill something she was forbidden to have - a full functional loving family. Sadly, that is not possible because biologically he is a man. His personality is torn apart in the same way as his mother's only for a different reason. By not having a real mother, there is an empty space which he needs to fill up, he does that by substituting for his mother by himself embodying her essence. Thus, Patrick became a trans-sexual. This is also directly proven by Pussy himself who has a chat with Terence:

“ ‘I think the truth is, Patrick,’ I can hear him saying, ‘is that maybe you always secretly wanted to become her. Eily. After all – she could hardly walk away then!’ ” [McCabe 1999, 94]

3.4 Superficiality

The novel gives the impression that Pussy is extremely superficial, which is true at least to some extent. Not only does he not care about a lot of people, but Pussy only seems to care about himself and the clothes he is going to wear and the perfume he is going to spray on himself. More importantly all of this is on a background of all the terrorist attacks by IRA (or UDA) and Pussy just does not care. He calls it politics which does not concern him as long as he has his Dior scarf to wear.

"I sat with them in the darkened square, shamefully not thinking about the dead victims or their relatives but what combination of my luscious goodies I should go any try on first!" [McCabe 1999, 39]

The irony of the situation is that Pussy basically cares about only two people, Charlie and her boyfriend Irwin. When Irwin is tangled up with the IRA he was subsequently interrogated by police, thus becoming uncomfortable for his IRA pals. Thus, he gets killed and Charlie is threatened and emotionally wrecked. However, that is as close as some politics and IRA issues got to Patrick, for he simply did not care as long as he had his sugar daddies and magazines full of celebrities. One scene exemplifies this superficiality perfectly. It is another fantasy fairy-tale that Pussy tells the detectives who interrogate him after he survived a terrorist attack and was being held as a suspect:

"The first time he had actually bombed a restaurant in the city of London. Up until now, it had mostly been assorted public buildings, and tube stations of course. 'Oh, figs!' she exclaimed, casting her fifteenth and final gown to the floor. 'Let someone else do it tonight! I can't find a thing to wear!' 'No! No, please!' the other members of the unit pleaded with their adored leader. 'We beg you to do it, Puss! After all, you are the most feared terrorist in London!' " [McCabe 1999, 146]

Even though Pussy had nothing to do with the IRA or any kind of terrorists, he still makes up a story to ridicule the English detectives. However, he cannot fully commit to it because yet again he entangles himself in high fashion and the importance of looking good even if you are supposedly a bomber out for blood. This scene brings us to the scene which is the reason Pussy is held captive and being interrogated as an IRA terrorist suspect. The scene in the restaurant, which Pussy thankfully survives is not even an exemplification of how superficial Patrick is, but it is also very amusing. The dramatic irony of the situation and the way Pussy reacts to this situation is charming in a way:

“ ‘I’m not dead,’ she said, and touched her lipstick with the tip of her tongue. She couldn’t taste anything at all. ‘Strange’ she mused to herself, ‘I can’t taste anything at all’. It was only then she noticed her Christian Dior tights were torn to ribbons....If anyone had been observing Puss, they would surely had said: ‘Why is she laughing, for heaven’s sake? Doesn’t she realize she ought to be dead?’ Which, if they’d asked her, they would have soon found out that that was precisely the cause of her thin, protracted laugh – the fact that it was dawning on her that she must have been practically beside the point of detonation. What she was doing there – standing up, fingering her gold neck chain and thinking: ‘I must be practically beside the point of detonation and my tights are in ribbons. I must get a new pair! I really must!’ ” [McCabe 1999, 141]

This is so horrifyingly funny: Patrick was nearly blown to pieces and it is only a miracle he survives but the only thing that concerns him is the need to buy new tights. Not only that, but after he was taken as a suspect, he was being photographed for the newspaper and he became all giddy and laughing. Moreover, he regretted not keeping the newspaper issue where he was photographed after the terrorist attack because he looked rather attractive on that photo. This might have been just some hysterical laughter caused by the trauma or else it was just Pussy not caring about anything, at that point save for her fashion (and finding his/her mother). This happened in London where he was looking for his mother and was extremely desperate, so maybe he was just laughing at the fact that if he died, everything would just go away: every trouble and misunderstanding for him would just leave him if he died, however, since he did not die that was the irony he might have been laughing at.

Not caring at all about the historic events indicates, that Patrick is superficial. It exemplifies the relationships he has had with his numerous sugar daddies. The first sugar daddy relationship he has with the so-called Dummy is epitomized in this quote:

“ ‘How much can I give you to make you mine for ever?’ Well, obviously I couldn’t be his girl into perpetuity but I was quite prepared, if he continued to lavish me with compliments and with cash, certainly to remain with him for as long as – well, who knew! – and would indeed most likely that have done, if he hadn’t gone and died. I often think of him, blown up like that, his poor little mickey in slo-mo coming back to earth, like a flower pink and bruised, an emblem sent by all the dead men who’d crossed over. There are those who say it was the IRA and other the UDA and then some who say it was the two of them together. I didn’t know, and didn’t fucking care. All I knew was that dear old Dums was gone! Poor old Dummy!” [McCabe 1999, 33]

Pussy only was with Dummy (Eamon Faircroft) because of all the things he bought for him. He bought him perfumes, clothes, shoes and other fashion items, of course. Maybe Dummy was the reason behind Pussy becoming a prostitute later on (for he showed her how easily money is made by providing sexual services) but that is open to the differing interpretations. Dummy was only the first sugar daddy Pussy had, but he is the most significant because he signifies how easily Pussy could be bought and how much Patrick actually cared about his sugar daddies. After Dummy got killed, he cared more about not being able to get money and gifts from him than the fact that his lover was murdered. Hence, even after the person who cherishes him and with whom he lives gets murdered, Patrick simply does not care and even makes silly comic book-like fantasies about his penis being blown up into the air.

These incidents show us that Patrick cared about only fashion and where there was some serious depth to him was only his parentage (and all the trouble it caused him), Charlie and his desire to be a woman and a mother. This only leads to the idea that is his(her) desire to become a mother, for it is the main characteristic of Pussy.

3.5 He Wants to Be a Mommy

The desire to be a mother is clearly visible throughout the entire novel, I consider this the main philosophy aim of the whole novel. The desire to be a mother is basically just compensation for Patrick. First, and foremost Patrick's fate caused his desire to be a mother, to compensate for something he lacked his whole life. He wanted to be mother for as many other children as possible in order to make up for his own lack of motherly love. He knew what it meant to have no mother and what severe consequences it had for him, so he wanted to protect all the unwanted children. Some parts of the novel support this notion strongly. This burning desire inside of Pussy is not apparent at the first glance from the beginning of the novel. Only after Dummy is introduced is the reason behind his nick-name is revealed.

"What I can tell you is how Dummy came about. Because it was me who put it on him, that silliest name of all! 'Oh, Mammy!' he'd say when he got in one of his moods and I came up with this idea of inserting my thumb into his mouth. It was quite a spontaneous gesture on my part – but, oh boy, did he love it! 'Oh, Mammy! Mammy!' he'd cry, sucking away on it like nobody's business! I can't tell you the states he used to get into when I'd flutter my lashes and say – actually, not even say, but mime it – the word 'Dummy'. He just could not get enough of it! Once he got so excited that afterwards he handed me three hundred pounds and said: 'Here – go on! Buy yourself whatever you like, you teasy little brasser you!' " [McCabe 1999, 34]

Patrick enjoyed this sexually-infused role-play. He came up with the idea of inserting his thumb into Dummy's mouth after he was addressed as a mom. This only somehow exemplifies his motherly instinct of nursing his baby, even if it was during their sexual play. We already discussed the importance of sucking mother's nipples when it comes to emotional bonding of the mother and the child and it is no coincidence that Patrick wanted to find this bond with Dummy. Although this was a barely sufficient way to substitute for this bond, this only shows how desperate Patrick was to establish this bond, so that he even took on a perverted illegal arms dealer as his child to make up for never having as a baby. This is the first scene that exemplifies his burning desire to be a mother, but still this only concerns the symbol and the role of the mother. Still Pussy went much farther than this, for he wanted to be a woman and mother on the biological level as well. He wanted to be a mother not only emotionally but physically as well.

“ ‘Please kiss it,’ I begged her, oh, so many times. ‘My one-eyed, one-horned, purple people-poking Peter,’ but she just laughed and said: ‘No! Why should I! When all you want is the impossible – a vagina all of your own!’ And to that – what could I possibly say when it was true.”
[McCabe 1999, 36]

He wished to have a vagina to become a woman in the meaning of sexuality and undergo a complete sex change. To some extent this is true, but he didn't want to have a vagina in order to enjoy sex as a woman. Rather, the only reason he wanted to have a vagina was to have a womb. The biological ability to give birth to a child was the real reason he wanted to have a vagina. Arguably the intercourse which precedes the conception of a fetus is sexual and that is only natural, so to some extent having a vagina was sexually-motivated but only as long, as the outcome of the intimacy was a baby. Clare Wallace interprets this notion in a similar way:

“While this resentment of her conception seems perilously close to a desire for non-existence, it is also entangled with Pussy's jealousy of her own mother's reproductive capacity. Notably, Pussy's other impossible longing is a deathbed fantasy in which she is attended by her numerous loving children. In effect Pussy's utopia is the womb itself, as a place of origin and symbol of womanhood.” [Wallace 2004, 154]

It is crucial to take note of how Pussy felt about being a mother.

“I just genuinely felt that if you bring someone into this world then it is your responsibility to care for and look after them! And if you don't, then you are wrong and I don't care who you are! I was sorry for upsetting Terence that day I started crying and saying that Mammy was wrong for leaving me and not coming back! I wasn't blaming her for leaving – but she should have come back! She should have come back or wrote to me or something! She should never have just gone like that! For without her, how can I ever belong on this Earth?” [McCabe 1999, 101]

He felt that bringing a baby to this world means giving him all the love and care like a mother. Failing to do that, the baby is going to grow up emotionally flat and missing something in its life. He knew exactly what it meant for the baby if the baby were abandoned and that created his very responsible mindset towards being a mother (or a parent in general). The defensiveness of his attitude towards leaving a baby alone is very clear: it is wrong for he was himself a victim of abandonment and as such he felt like he must put a stop to this. He felt like that what happened to him was the most vicious thing that can happen to a child and he wished that no baby ever should undergo the emotional

devastation like he did. He not only had this mindset against abandoning children, but he acted on it, or he would act on it if he could. He wanted to serve as a safe house for all the endangered children, he wanted to be a mother, giving love and support to all the children. He wanted children of his own in order, to beat his fate and turn it all around. Being a mother would fulfill his life and make him happy. This need to defend all the possible unhappy children which could eventually share his grim fate is very obvious in the part of the novel dealing with Martina Sheridan and the *“Incident behind the Creamery”*.

Patrick knew a girl from town who got misused by a local married man. It was only natural that Patrick was sticking his nose into their business for he felt the need to protect her, since he knew what it was all about and wanted to prevent something bad from happening.

“All that I could get to come into my head then was the thought of Tommy McNamee (her ‘boyfriend’ – he was twenty years married, for God’s sake!) slowly pulling his jeans down and whispering into her ear: ‘You’re the nicest girl in this village, Martina. That lovely wavy blonde hair of yours is enough to turn any man’s head!’ and her cheeks flushing scarlet with all his flattery – because, of course, she didn’t know any better. How could she? How was she to know that all he cared about was pleasuring himself and walking away then to boast about it?” [McCabe 1999, 105]

This *“Incident behind the Creamery”* is just Patrick trying to save Martina from trouble, specifically from giving birth to another Patrick Pussy Branden. He knows that Martina does not realize what and why is Tommy being like that, however Patrick understands and feels protective. The irony is that no matter what he does, he simply cannot beat the foolishness of youth and Martina still has sex with Tommy McNamee and subsequently gets pregnant. The description of Martina show that Martina resembles his mother Eily, for Eily also had lovely blonde hair. So, in a way Patrick projected his young mother on Martina and saw what was coming to her. He saw that Martina was going to end up exactly like her mother and the real victim here would be the child like him, so he tries his best to put a stop to this. However, Martina still was expecting a child and the way Patrick felt about this is also described in the novel:

“All I can really remember about those day is sitting there by the window, suddenly seeing a spot on the Venetian blind and running out to get a cloth to clean it and suddenly bursting into tears whenever I took my

coffee up again. What this was all about, I hadn't the faintest idea, as I say, I should have been happy as Larry..."

"But still I couldn't stop feeling weepy. Maybe that explains why I couldn't get Martina Sheridan out of my mind. If it's just an excuse to take my weepiness out on, I don't know." [McCabe 1999, 187]

Martina Sheridan was the reason why Patrick felt so sensitive and could burst into tears any possible moment. Patrick himself sees the obsession with Martina's situation as an outcome of his mood. He thinks that he feels weepy and sad and that is why he cannot stop thinking about Martina and her pregnancy, but the opposite is in fact true. Martina is the reason he is in such an emotional state. He felt like he failed to protect her, so he blames himself to some extent. Patrick knew that she is going to deliver the baby very soon and that is why he was prone to cry even though he did not realize the reason behind his weepiness. No matter what he does, there is still going to be unwanted and abandoned children like him. That fact made him feel hopeless and desperate thus he bursted into tears for no apparent reason.

"I was so depressed after that I can't tell you, so bad that even Charlie could see I was worse than her, putting her arm around me saying it would be all right but I knew it wouldn't be all right, if it was, why were half the young girls of the village going around pushing buggies, with babies they never bothered to wash, never even lifted them out to cuddle once in a while, why because they didn't want them!" [McCabe 1999, 188]

The despair Pussy was in is very obvious. On one hand, there was the child Martina is going to deliver which is going to end up like him abandoned and unloved and on the other hand, there is Patrick full of love for children he can never have. He would do anything to have a baby to love and care for. The fact that he could not have one even though there were so many abandoned and unloved babies in the world that is what tore Patrick apart. That is why he feels like he does not belong on this Earth.

It is quite fitting that the fantasizing about delivering a baby and being a mother to that baby is put at the end of the novel. McCabe wanted to make this social commentary via Pussy's personality in the novel. This is really what the whole novel was about no matter how spicy it was.

"All I really want is to be left alone here, flicking through my magazines, looking yet again for Mitzi and that old bubble-cut of hers, maybe one day taking the time to write it down for Terence, what my

fondest wish would be (he asked me to – even though he'll never see it now) – to wake up in the hospital with my family all around me, exhausted after my ordeal maybe, but with bloom like roses in my cheeks, as I stroke his soft and tender head, my little baby, watching them as they beam with pride, in their eye perhaps a tear or two – who cares! – hardly able to speak as they wipe it away and say: 'He's ours.' ” [McCabe 1999, 199]

This is somehow nostalgic and depressing at the same time. At the end of the novel Patrick feels, till the day he dies, that nothing mattered to him, there was no politics or terrorism that concerned him. Instead he just wished to have a loving family, a huggy-bear of a husband and to fill the home with love and caring.

Patrick has another fantasy halfway through the novel which is far more important and is the centerpiece to this novel. This baby-delivery fantasy at the end of the novel and this following one go in a tandem because one describes Patrick giving life to his child (possibly children) and the other one describes his death and the importance of having your children at your side. He thinks of his children as a continuation or better yet extension of his existence. He recognizes the fact that a baby is not a simple outcome of sex, but a piece of your soul and that the love and bond between the mother and her children is sacred. Patrick is able to recognize this fact strongly, because he never felt the grace of being loved by his mother or father. That made him recognize the value, importance and responsibility of having a baby.

In chapter 11 Patrick describes the above-mentioned dying scene. He thinks about the ordeal he will have to endure but he thinks of it as something positive. It feels positive because all of his children will get there to be with their mother. They will all gather to say goodbye and say thanks for everything. Patrick thinks of his children as pieces of his soul and life which gathered together and in his death, all of these pieces are put together by the love he gave them and the love they have in between them. In doing so, he feels like his existence is coming to an end but it does not matter because his existence extends all around him and will continue to multiply. That is what it means to be a parent.

“Everyone would my children love for they themselves knew love and shared it. It would be sad, of course it would. But a happiness there would be too, perhaps even close to ecstasy. As all about me now they gathered and I heard their tender whispers: ‘Do you remember the little picture we had above the fire? With that sweet, entwining blossom and the words that read: “Chez Nous”?’ And then once more, for the very last time

I'd smile. Smile and whisper if I could: 'Of course, my darling. Of course, my beautiful, lovely darlings!' – each one of them from my hard stomach labours so lovingly sprung. And who would ever to deny it dare? To say: 'They are not hers! For she has no vagina!' There would be no one. And as my eyelids slowly closed and the first tears pressed their way into the world, I'd clasp each hand and say goodbye, to each one abideu bid, safe in the knowledge that baby one and baby two, right up to baby ten, had all their lives been given it, and to the very end received it, that wonderful thing called love." [McCabe 1999, 41]

This is a perfect juxtaposition of both sides of Patrick's personality, one being a woman and a foremost mother and the other one being physically a man. This is, why Patrick is so torn apart inside and it might be a reason for his superficiality and self-destructive behavior.

What might seem quite unimportant and somehow forgettable is the 'Chez Nous' picture. It has strong family symbolism and is very important in analyzing the meaning hidden in the title of the novel (and the song as well).

The title of both the novel and the song is descriptive of the torn apart state pussy is at. Whiskers used to light cigarette papers and let them fly up into the sky and as Patrick says that is how he feels in this world, drifting up into to sky, going as far as Pluto. He was just drifting through life from one place to another, being a prostitute gold-digger with nothing solid in his life to settle on. He could never settle down, because in order to do that, he would have to have a vagina and a bear of a husband and at least ten children. But that was not possible for him. The title 'Breakfast on Pluto' is an allegory to something family-like (Breakfast) on Pluto (impossible to get to), which represents something Patrick can never reach. That creates his desperate and torn apart state. The family-like breakfast and the feelings Patrick has towards a fully functional family are described in the 'Chez Nous' chapter. This chapter is Patrick's fantasy of how his life would be had he a normal, non-clerical father and mother living in the harmony of a loving family. Patrick knew that if he had that, he would be a completely different person. The picture saying 'Chez Nous' is then a symbol of happy family life (belonging on this earth) he never had but which he wants to have for his children. Thus, the title *Breakfast on Pluto* is fully descriptive of Pussy's state of mind.

Patrick is drifting through his life towards something unreachable (Pluto) because he cannot belong on this earth, he cannot be rock solid for he has no mother. Having a mother means he would be able to anchor his existence on this earth thanks to all the love and emotional bond he would have with her. He would have had his 'Chez Nous' and the word breakfast would bring him joy. Since he was abandoned, he is missing this anchor and is like the light-up cigarette paper flying up to Pluto. That is why he has a nervous breakdown when the word breakfast specifically is mentioned, for it reminded him of the unreachable sense of home (Chez Nous):

"He knew my story inside out and understood why I broke down. As he did now. 'Yes!' I spluttered through the tears. 'She said "Breakfast"'. She said: "Please stay for breakfast" or something stupid like that!' I could see him looking at me so tenderly for a long time after that, then looking down at his notepad as he said softly: 'You hate that word, don't you?' And I nodded." [McCabe 1999, 114]

All of the stigmas Patrick has to deal with throughout his life could be broken down and find expression in two songs. These songs capture the mood and overall atmosphere of the novel and personal development of Patrick 'Pussy' Branden. Not only that, but it is important to note the succession of these song on the timeline of Patrick's life. For all the baggage from the first song is carried over to the second one giving it a whole new meaning and changing the way we understand Patrick as a person. The two songs are *Son of a Preacher Man* by Dusty Springfield and *Breakfast on Pluto* by Don Patridge. The first captures the sexual play between two lovers (Dusty Springfield and a son of a preacher man) in a positive way.

*"Billy Ray was a preacher's son
And when his daddy would visit he'd come along
When they gathered around and started talkin'
That's when Billy would take me walkin'
Out through the back yard we'd go walkin'
Then he'd look into my eyes
Lord knows, to my surprise
The only one who could ever reach me*

*Was the son of a preacher man
The only boy who could ever teach me
Was the son of a preacher man
Yes he was, he was, ooh, yes he was
Bein' good isn't always easy
No matter how hard I try
When he started sweet-talkin' to me
He'd come'n tell me "Everything is all right"
He'd kiss and tell me "Everything is all right"
Can I get away again tonight?
The only one who could ever reach me
Was the son of a preacher man
The only boy who could ever teach me
Was the..." [Springfield 1969]*

In the context of the novel this sexual play and overall connotation is also present, only it is a priest and not a son of a preacher man and it is not in a positive way but rather rape-like.

*"Go anywhere without leaving your chair
And let your thoughts run free
Living within all the dreams you can spin
There is so much to see
If you can't fly high
No need to feel low
The world is a merri-go-round
Look at the sky, and up there you'll go
Peacefully floating along
No cares to care and no races to run
Flying up in the air*

*No time to change and no time to learn
And no time to wonder where
Up on the moon
We'll all be there soon
Watching the earth down below
We'll journey to mars
And visit the stars
Finding our breakfast on Pluto
Go anywhere without leaving your chair
And let your thoughts run free
Living within all the dreams you can spin
There is so much to see
No cares to care and no races to run
Flying up in the air
No time to change and no time to learn
And no time to wonder where
Up on the moon
We'll all be there soon
Watching the earth down below
We'll journey to mars
And visit the stars
Finding our breakfast on Pluto
Go anywhere without leaving your chair
And let your thoughts run free
Living within all the dreams you can spin
There is so much to see
Oh la lalalalalalalala" [Patridge 1969]*

The second song captures the consequences of the stigma that the first song had on Patrick's adult life. He is floating through his life trying to find his breakfast on Pluto as Don Patridge sings.

3.6 Reception of *Breakfast on Pluto*

Breakfast on Pluto was a breakthrough in Irish literature that McCabe achieved. He managed to write the perfect novel for the time and mood in all of Ireland. In the late 1980s all the way to the late 1990s there were several cases of priest's molesting or even raping little children. However, all of these cases were somehow swept under the carpet, because the status of Catholic Church in Ireland was very high at the time. A priest as a representation of god on this earth was socially highly regarded. Even the slightest hint that he was in fact a criminal and took advantage of his position in order to molest little children was quickly discarded by Catholic authorities. That created a tension in Ireland, because the rumors were there, but no priest was punished or imprisoned. What the church authorities did instead was relocate the priests to another area in order to cover the tracks. However, that there are pedophile and sexually active priests among the Catholic Church was an open secret. People in Ireland wanted to voice this somehow and people wanted to put a stop to this. Exactly at this time, McCabe comes with his novel, and it was exactly what people needed to hear. The form in which McCabe makes his critique of the Catholic Church is fascination. He not only comments on the act of rape itself, but through the character of Patrick Branden, he comments of the aftermath such behavior might lead to. Nonetheless, McCabe makes this social-commentary in his novel very graphical and raw. He does not only describe the fact that something like that happen and express the taboo it meant for the Catholic Church or for individual characters in the novel, but describes the sexual intercourse in a very detailed way and sometimes it is even pornographic. However, the most striking thing about the sexual intercourse McCabe describes is the rape connotation he puts on it. Through Patrick's fantasies, he describes the feelings of a woman being raped and experiencing and out of the body experience while at the same time she feels an extreme physical pain. McCabe really struck gold with this novel, because it was exactly what people of Ireland wanted to hear. It voiced the all-social disgust with the Catholic Church. That is the reason why *Breakfast on Pluto* became a best-seller in Ireland. Not only that but it became a social event, because people felt that McCabe had the courage to voice this open secret about the Catholic Church and people identified with it. That is the reason, why *Breakfast on Pluto* remained an Irish best seller for more than two and a half years. After *Breakfast on Pluto* was released, the status of the Catholic Church in Ireland suffered a mortal wound. The

sanctity of the Catholic Church evaporated and people of Ireland no longer felt ashamed for voicing their critique of the Church. That is why it became a breakthrough in Irish literature and a social event in all of Ireland. After publishing *Breakfast on Pluto*, the Catholic institutions lost their original absolute power. People felt empowered to question the ways Catholic Church was run. Before, the Church had an absolute trust when it came to treating one's soul, but after so many cases of abusing this trust given to the Church and when McCabe published this novel, the trust ceased to be absolute. That is a phenomenon that is also mentioned in the article: *Audacious Ireland* by Ben Howard:

"One can think of exceptions, such as William Trevor's gentle story 'Of the Cloth' (in The Hill Bachelors), in which the church is seen as a declining institution, more to be pitied than reprovved. But in the general run of recent Irish writing the church and its officials no longer enjoy a position of sacred privilege, or even of earned respect. In the aftermath of multiple scandals, the once powerful clergy of Irish fiction and drama, like their counterparts in reality, appear rather smaller than life. Ludicrously ineffectual or dangerously corrupt, they are not to be trusted with the care of one's soul" [Howard 2006, 410]

Howard further mentions the decline of the social impact of Catholic Church in Ireland. He reflects upon the impact McCabe had on other Irish authors who before the publication of *Breakfast on Pluto* lacked the courage to write something similar as McCabe did.

"A spirit of imaginative daring now prevails in Irish writing, tempered by artistic tact and conservative literary form. With only a little exaggeration it might be said that contemporary Irish writers have been standing on the table and slapping their teachers (and priests and politicians) for the past two decades." [Howard 2006, 416]

4 FRANCIE'S AND PATRICK'S PERSONALITY ON THE SILVER SCREEN

In the main previous main part of this thesis the personalities of both Francie and Patrick as main protagonists of *The Butcher Boy* and *Breakfast on Pluto* were examined. Their personality traits, the way of their thinking, their feelings and what influenced them as persons were presented.

To understand Francie and Patrick to the deepest level, a full insight into their psyche is necessary, and likewise the film adaptations by Neil Jordan of both these novels need to be examined as to their faithfulness to the characters in the prose fiction.

Their complicated personalities at the emotional level had to be addressed in the movies, because it would not be possible to film both the stories while avoiding the complexity of both Francie and Patrick.

In this last part of this thesis, an exploration of how the personalities of Francie and Patrick were transferred onto the silver screen focuses on their personality traits. In what way, were they captured in the movie, which were only implied or which personality layers were completely left out of the movies? Comparing the events in the novel and in the movie, is only done to make logical connections to some of the characteristics of the protagonists.

Some of the changes that had to be made between the prose fiction and the film in order to adapt these novels into a movie requiring understanding why the book depicts some personality traits while the movie depicts some others. The complexity of both Francie and Patrick is very difficult to depict on the silver screen. These changes, or simplifications will be evaluated as to how the personalities of Francie and Patrick are altered.

5 THE BUTCHER BOY FILM ADAPTATION BY NEIL JORDAN

The importance of Francie's personality traits is in no particular order. These points mentioned are solely based on the order of succession in the film. If there is a moment in the movie that highlights some of Francie's characteristics it will be examined throughout the whole movie and make a connection to the novel-based Francie. So, it must be noted that jumping to and fro is necessary and no chronological order is followed.

Right from the get-go the genius of Neil Jordan is presented. Because even before the movie starts the audience is presented with Francie's obsession with comic books as they are on the background of the initial credits. This implies that Francie uses comics as an escape mechanism, because his heroes like Superman, Flash or Batman let him escape the "reality" in which he is a pig. The way these initial credits end is also somehow indicative of another characteristic of Francie, namely his mixing of reality and his fantasies as the credits make a transition into the first scene. The comic book-like picture of Francie lying in a hospital transfers into a normal camera shot of Francie lying in a hospital. It is very subtle but very indicative of Francie which Jordan got right.

The fact that Francie is a child frozen in time is very well expressed in the film. From the beginning, scenes with Joe and Francie doing mischief as boys show their friendship being established. He acted without thinking about the consequences and played around. This boyish behavior is also visible in the movie. The juxtaposition of Joe as a boy who grows up and advances in life with Francie who still acts like they were friends even if they ceased to be friends a long time ago (at least from Joe's perspective) is identical to the novel. The goldfish, is depicted more in the film than in the novel, because the goldfish is a very clear indication for the audience of the friendship falling apart. The obsession with the goldfish is more apparent in the film. Francie just could not let it out of his head which was brilliantly impersonated by Eammon Owens who was constantly mumbling to himself something about the goldfish and Joe being friends with Philipp Nugent. The anxiety caused by the goldfish is so well depicted by the movements Owens does in the scene when he is having a chat with Father Bubbles, not only does he start talking about the fish completely out of context but the movements of his arms and pace and even his mimics are full of anxiety and very troubled. This only shows how Jordan tackled visualizing Francie as a child having to acknowledge something unpleasant while still denying it on the other hand. Ultimately, he

froze in time, still thinking Joe is his friend even though he was no more. This in a way is the main story-layer of the film. Francie started losing Joe to Philipp with the goldfish as a signifier which ultimately causes Francie to blame Mrs. Nugent for this loss happening. She was the reason that the good old times were gone and Joe was taken away from him, so he ends up taking his revenge on her and kills her. However, the novel actually goes much, much deeper when it comes to Mrs. Nugent and the motivation behind her murder.

What the movie emphasizes more than the novel is the fact that others feel afraid of Francie. The single most staggering thing Owens brings to the movie character of Francie is the execution of creating fear in the movie. Owen's performance and especially by this embodiment of somebody everybody is afraid of was very well performed. Even though he is a small boy, there is some phantom menace in him and everybody feels it and is consequently afraid. To some extent everybody around Francie knows that there is evil in him and even if it is dormant for the time being, they are very careful not to wake it up. This is clearly visible in numerous scenes in the film. For example, the scene when Francie bullies Philipp about his music box or the "Pig toll tax" scene or it is also very well visible in the shop scene with the town women when Francie is delivering meat to the shop. In all of those scenes the facial expressions of fear in all the witnesses to Francie's behavior is evident. On one hand, everybody feels sorry for Francie but on the other afraid, they are terrified at the same time. However, in the novel, only implications of the others being terrified by Francie are described. The movie is more graphic than the novel so the facial expressions of the people around Francie may be seen so the audience is able to tell what people think, though this is hard to convey in a novel.

The movie is accurate in the way Francie blanks out the inconvenient things happening in their family. In the movie, the violent nature of the father and the way the mother is being abused is shown very well, but what is also shown very well is the way Francie is coping with this happening. There is a take in the movie in which Francie is sitting in an armchair witnessing his mother being molested by his father. At first, he is trying to cover his ears and later he starts talking himself into some strange fantasy. This coping mechanism Francie deploys is well described by Carole Zucker:

"Here we witness Francie retreating—in the face of domestic carnage—into one of the many personae he adopts during the course of

the film, largely influenced by British and American television and comic book characters, including Richard Kimble of the Fugitive, The Lone Ranger, and the upper-class British stereotype of the well-mannered Algernon Carruthers...As greater violence is enacted upon Francie's psyche, his regression into an imaginary world is amplified." [Zucker 2003, 205]

That is exactly what the novel-based Francie does. In this regard the movie sends the same message as the novel. Francie is acting like he is not here and that the horrible events he witnesses are not really happening.

The relationship with the mother in the film is crucial for distinguishing the main differences between the novel and its film adaptation. In the film when Francie walks into the room and finds his mother trying to hang herself, Francie knew instantly what was going on. Owens yet again proves that he is a brilliant little actor, because the facial expression he makes when he sees his mother standing on the table with the wire shows his full understanding of the situation. In the movie, Francie actively knew what was going on and tried to protect his mother and promised her not to ever leave her. He looks worried and full of contempt. That is something not depicted in the novel, for the severity of this situation was not perceived by the novel-based Francie. In the novel, all of this passed Francie unnoticed and stored in his subconsciousness, only to surface through the voice of Mrs. Nugent. This subconscious level of Mrs. Nugent as his desired mother and all of the breast feeding and his wish to be a pig no longer but a Nugent is completely left out of the movie. Consequently, it is understandable that Jordan had to bring the love Francie feels towards his mother more into the spotlight and make it more apparent. The same could be said about the reaction to his mother's death. In the novel, the death of the mother is actively unnoticed. Without actively mourning his mother, Francie is haunted nevertheless by this skeleton in the closet at the subconscious level, as Mrs. Nugent which is left out of the film. The logical thing to do for Jordan was to put the mourning, sadness and trauma caused by the death of his mother apparent on the surface in order to avoid building this subconscious level of Francie's personality in the film, which would be very challenging. It could have been done, but this would have narrowed the audience of the film to a very specified intellectual circle of highly educated people. Negotiating through this very complex and dark subconscious level of Francie's personality also entails bearing in mind the financial viability of the movie.

The binary of this real mother vs wished mother (Mrs. Nugent) relationship was what influenced Francie the most. This was the main motivation behind the murder of Mrs. Nugent and it caused him to be emotionally torn apart. Completely leaving out this layer of his personality and simplifying his relationship with his mother has the effect of simplification which is very apparent in the film, requiring Jordan to place the emphasis on the influence of his father.

The father-like qualities are depicted very well in the movie, with the emphasis on the father-like qualities placed larger in the movie than in the book. Seeing the abuse of alcohol, his mother and violence as a way of dealing with things became normal and advisable, all of those witnessed issues have a huge impact on Francie. Additionally, blaming the other for his own problems is also the behavior of the father which later Francie took over as his own. The movie does not deviate from the novel in the sense of changing things. The movie puts a bigger influence on the father side of Francie rather than on the mother side (as in the novel). That Francie became father-like is ironically proven by the fact that at the end of the film, the grown-up version of Francie is played by Stephen Rhea who played the role of Francie's father prior to his death. How this transition of personal traits from the father onto the son works is clearly visible in the TV scene. The TV broke while the father was watching it in a drunken stupor accompanying the William Tell melody from the TV with his own trumpet. After the TV stops working, he starts to shout out that it was the fault of Mickey Traynor (who sold him the TV) and ends up kicking into the TV and trashing it in the process. The important fact to note here is Francie's reaction to this kind of father role-model. At first, he is surprised, he does not understand the outburst, but after the father trashes the TV Francie's face indicates that he approves of his father's actions. Not only that but the following day when Francie talks with Joe, he tells him that dad fixed the TV good and proper, which is taken directly from the novel. The only problem here is that in the novel it was the father who said that.

Francie copied this pattern from his father completely. There was the problem of the broken TV, he blames somebody not even remotely responsible and he resolves problems through violence, exactly what Francie later did. He began to lose Joe as a friend, so he blamed Mrs. Nugent and ultimately, he ended up killing her as a solution. This is in a way the

main storyline of the film and it is mostly based on his father's influence. This a major difference between the novel and the film.

In the film, Francie is more father-like, more prone to violence and approving of violence as means of dealing with problems while in the novel Francie is more mother-like, sensitive, suicidal and torn apart based on his breast-feeding delusions wishing not to be a pig, but to be a son of Mrs. Nugent. At the suicide scene at the end of the movie when Francie is trying to burn himself alive, in the novel he piled some junk onto a heap and put the recording "*The Butcher Boy*" on the gramophone and lit the match to die and the recording was mother-connected, for it characterized the mother and her psychically tortured state and the relationship with her son Francie. This song is the main undertone of the whole novel and serves as a way of setting the overall mood of the novel. The recording is descriptive of Francie's feelings and his inner pain and suffering while burning himself alive.

However, in the film it is not "*The Butcher Boy*" song playing on the gramophone, but rather the William Tell theme song that his father played on the trumpet before he destroyed the TV. Even though the fact that Francie is committing suicide is mother-based, the way he does that is solely father-like. The William Tell song makes a clear connection to what Francie did and why he did it. Francie was saying in a way that it was the father who caused him to be like that and who taught him to deal with problems through violence. That is why he is killing himself right now listening to the song that symbolizes the violent role-model of the father. In his death, he is like his mother who also became mentally unstable under the influence of the drunkard misogynist father. Jordan makes this logical connection to the father and what his behavior caused to Francie and his mother only through the music (the William Tell song) and one may view this filmatic solution as ingenious.

The topic of the "*The Butcher Boy*" is an undertone to the mother in the movie, but in the novel, it is also an undertone to Francie and his relationship with the mother as it is in a way a "theme" song of his death. Both in the novel and in the film Francie calls the song to be "stupid". However, in the film it has no further effect on him after he rejects it, but in the novel, it is yet again stored in his subconsciousness and that is why he plays the song in the background while committing suicide. In the film, he blames himself for the death of his mother, and that is why he mourns for her, but in the novel, he blames Mrs. Nugent,

because he feels she interfered and caused all the trouble. This again exemplifies how the subconscious layer of Francie's personality in the novel is left out of the film.

The juxtaposition of father's violence and this "*The Butcher Boy*" suicidal nature of the mother, has a clear symbol in the film. That is the scene with the mother baking all the cakes and the father thrashing them. Francie stands as witness to the aftermath of his father's misogynist rage against his mother. There is the gramophone playing "*The Butcher Boy*" with pieces of broken cake. The cakes litter the whole house, or at least what is left of them, but this juxtaposition of the recording with the pieces of all the thrashed cakes is a very important symbol. The cake his mother baked with love was for Uncle Alo, but at the same time she is suffering inside because of her unhappy marriage. The cake symbolizes something positive, mother-like and the father just walks in and violently destroys everything. The pieces of all the broken cake embody in a way the personality of the father and his misogynist violent nature. The filmatic shot of the gramophone playing "*The Butcher Boy*" with the remains of the cake symbolizes the whole Brady family. The cake symbolizes the love the mother gives to the family and the state of the cake symbolizes how the father abuses his mother and ultimately renders the family dysfunctional. With the background of the recording all the damage to Francie in his upbringing is audibly and visually obvious. This symbol is in a way an essence of Francie's personality. Father's violence (thrashing the cake) mixed with his mother's loving sensitivity (baking the cake and the song characterizing her) actually created Francie as the very Butcher Boy Sinéad O'Connor is singing about.

This juxtaposition is shown again in the take where his father hits his mother in the face. As he hits the mother in the face the camera focuses on the picture which was taken on their honeymoon, again symbolizing the dysfunctional family Francie was raised in. It also symbolizes the torn-apart state Francie is at in the film. The reason behind that is that his father reminds him how happy he and his mother were when they were younger, but he is constantly reminded that that might not be the cause as he constantly witnesses the abusive and violent behavior towards his mother. He knew that there was something rotten in the relationship between his parents and the shot in the movie with the father hitting the mother on the background of the supposedly happy photograph symbolized this torn-apart state inside of Francie.

Francie was emotionally torn apart in both the novel and the film. Yet in the novel the main reason behind was his desire to be son of Mrs. Nugent and the guilt he felt towards his own dead mother. However, in the film this torn-apart state is caused by the father-mother relationship and the lies about it that his father is telling him. Later he uncovered the deception his father has put him into. He feels extremely sympathetic for his mother, which is why he is crying out in pain for his mother on the beach after the lady from *Over the Waves* told him the truth about the way his father treated his mother right after their wedding. Ultimately being emotionally torn apart because of the relationship his parents had and losing Joe resulted in Francie blaming Mrs. Nugent and killing her in the film. It was not the guilt based on Francie's wish to be a Nugent as depicted in the novel.

The symbol of the broken cake is further shown in the scene in the film when Francie breaks into Nugent home. Before Francie broke into the Nugent's he saw that there was a lot of cake and that provoked him to break in after the Nugent family left the house. Francie simply started destroying all the cakes and occasionally having a bite or two. Why he does that is quite clear, because once again this is his father's influence. His mother was dead at this point, but he saw the cakes Mrs. Nugent baked so he could not help himself but destroyed all of those cakes. This is what his father did and this is what he was going to do. He was just releasing the sorrow he felt for his mother after she died, since he knew that he had caused her death in part. The cakes reminded him of her, so by destroying them he resolved in a way his inner dilemma. The problem here is that he resolved his dilemma in the same way his father would, by violence. This event of Francie destroying the cakes is the first of violence towards Mrs. Nugent (even though it is only implied violence). Jordan makes this logical connection with the cake again to emphasize the violent and father-like side of Francie. Maybe this was also an attempt to ridicule Mrs. Nugent to pay her back for calling their family pigs. That is why he wrote all over the walls "Philip is a pig" and "pigs" (meaning the whole family) and this is why he plays his fantasy-induced play. In this play he pretends that he and Phillip and also Mrs. Nugent are in a school for pigs. The outcome of this is that he, pretending to be Philip, defecates on the carpet in the living room. All of this is identical to the novel, but the motivation for Francie to do this, whereas in the movie it is only on the paternal level on which he tries to ridicule Mrs. Nugent and violate her house and privacy. In

the novel that goes much deeper: the subconscious wish to be a Nugent and defecation on the carpet is Francie's act of defiance against this desire and the guilt connected to that.

Another aspect of Francie's personality and the way it was transferred into the movie is his fantasies and delusions. This is another aspect in which the movie differs from the novel. The subconscious layer of Francie's personality is not present in the movie. This subconscious level when he realizes certain things via the voice of Mrs. Nugent is happening inside of his fantasies and delusions in the novel. As this subconscious level is left out of the movie, all his fantasies and delusions also had to be left out. Only hints of these fantasies and subconsciousness are implied in the movie. However, that is done very slightly and the movie viewer has no proof to distinguish whether this is really happening or if it is only inside Francie's head. What the movie shows are Francie's child-like fantasies which are even playful, not some truly insane delusions which lead him to the murder of Mrs. Nugent. One of the instances that might be interpreted as fantasies is the shot in which Mrs. Nugent is sitting in her living room and says: *"I hope he is proud of himself the pig, after what he's done on his mother"*. The only implication that this is not real but rather one of Francie's fantasies is that he is looking through the window at the same time Mrs. Nugent says this. Was it too offensive and unexpected of Mrs. Nugent to such an extent that the audience can assume that Francie only imagines it? Or was it Jordan's intention to have this scene in the film to really put emphasis on the pig label on Francie and create this vibe of impending doom for Mrs. Nugent? Was it because Jordan wanted to support the story arc of Francie losing Joe because he is a pig and seeking revenge on the single person who labelled him a pig? This scene is in the movie to imply that there is more to Francie than the audience might think, but at the same time Jordan does not further commit to this idea. This notion is something George Bluestone also mentions in his article published in the Collection *Film Theory and Criticism* edited by Mast and Cohen:

"The rendition of mental states—memory, dream, imagination—cannot be as adequately represented by film as by language. If the film had difficulty presenting streams of consciousness, it has even more difficulty presenting states of mind which are defined precisely by the absence in them of the visible world."... "The film, by arranging external signs for our visual perception, or by presenting us with dialogue, can lead us to inferthought. But it cannot show us thought directly. It can show us characters thinking, feeling, and speaking, but it cannot show us their thoughts and feelings". [Mast and Cohen 1974, 292-293]

It was a real event happening with a slight implication that might be open for interpretation. If Jordan really wanted to make this a purely fantasy scene, he would commit to it fully and if he did so, he would have to develop all of the subconscious layer of Francie's personality. This scene ever so slightly touches the Mrs. Nugent – Francie's mother novel-based story level, that it could have been cut out of the movie completely without having any negative effect on it.

Another scene of this caliber is the Purcell-Nugent house party. In the movie, the only thing that could be telling us that it is not real but only imagined are the surreal notes echoing throughout the take. However, these sound effects are there only to show us the emotional discomfort and betrayal that Francie feels when he stands witness to both the families being friends. Joe is now friend with Philipp and the gold fish business was enough for Francie and he felt desperate. However, when he saw that even Joe's and Philipp's parents are friends, that was just too much for Francie. That is why the sound effects were used, not to express surreality but to express his inner suffering and discomfort.

One fantasy that is explicitly shown in the movie is the fantasy Francie is having with the Saint Mary of Roses performed by Sinéad O'Connor. She is talking to Francie in his fantasies, telling him that everything is going to be good. This fantasy vision of Saint Mary is soothing for Francie and he finds solace in it. This fantasy from the movie is also in the novel, but there is nothing soothing about them. These novel fantasies are merely an instrument for Francie to get his "Francie Brady not a bad bastard anymore" diploma and get away from "the school of a hundred windows". This soothing visions of Saint Mary are in a way a counterpart to the novel-based delusions with Mrs. Nugent channeling Francie's subconscious thoughts. This angle in interpreting the visions of Saint Mary, shows a big discrepancy between the novel and the film. In the film the vision of Saint Mary creates comfort for Francie whereas in the novel the delusions about Mrs. Nugent create a conflict within Francie.

The movie leaves completely out the drug overdosing. On several occasions in the novel, Francie takes an overdose of pills for no apparent reason without even knowing which pills is he taking. That might have been because he was either stupid or suicidal (as was his mother who also was taking pills for her mental illness). This was also left out of the film to further embrace the influence of his father.

One thing that could be noted about Francie's personality is his childish way of describing things and people. This is done in the film exactly like it is in the novel. In this regard the movie does not deviate from the novel at all. The comic books influence is ever so strongly visible in the film as in the novel. For example, "House of a hundred windows" or the "Francie Brady not a bad bastard anymore" diploma is present in the film, as well as Francie's onomatopoeia like when he described the way the bogmen slept as: "Whiiz, whiiz, whiiz".

Another aspect of Francie's personality is transferred well into the movie: his frozenness in time expressed at the end of both the film and the novel. Both of these achieve telling the audience that he is frozen in time. Only the way of delivering that motif is different. At the end of the novel, Francie is yet again meeting someone and they start to hack at the ice together and asking what would they do with a million trillion dollars and going for hikes. That is exactly like it was with Joe, so the loop of Francie's life is clearly stated here, only with the difference that there were tears in his eyes (a reminder of what really happened to those dreams and that subconsciously Francie realizes that the time advances). However, in the film this statement is done by his Saint Mary fantasy, when Francie says that all the trouble is now over and that is the end of it. Yet we are reminded of Francie's child-like qualities when he describes the sound the waves are making as: "swish, swish". Later in this take when Saint Mary starts talking about Joe, goldfish and flashbars, it is clear that Francie is still frozen in time, he did not break the loop. As the Saint Mary says in Francie's fantasy (Francie is telling that to himself): *"The world goes one way and we go the other"*.

The main discrepancy between the novel and the film is that the novel is more based on his father and has a narrower story arc which revolves mainly about his friendship with Joe Purcell. The novel works on numerous and much deeper levels involving his subconscious desire to cease being a pig and become the son of Mrs. Nugent and fighting the guilt he is feeling towards his own mother which is without any doubt left out of the movie. That is also something Carola Zucker pays attention to and makes the following comment about:

"Interestingly, Jordan does not focus on Francie's desire to 'be a Nugent' as McCabe does in his novel. In the novel, McCabe goes so far as to

have Philip say, 'He wants to be one of us. He wants his name to be Francis Nugent...Once can only hypothesize that this scene may have been too shocking to film. As screenplay generally require more focus on the specific objectives, goals, and desires of a character, Jordan may have felt the wanting-to-be-a-Nugent plot line was a dispersal of focus in terms of Francie's arc in the story.' [Zucker 2003, 206-207]

However, the fact why this story arc is left out of the film is later clarified by McCabe himself in an interview from 2013:

"There are a number of other elements that were left out. For example, his relationship with Mrs. Nugent, it's a sort of psychological relationship when he breaks into the house... That's not explored in the play, because it would be too much to ask the journey. It could interrupt the flow of it and go interior when it should be external." [Lebargy 2013, 137]

The murdering scene of Mrs. Nugent, right before she is shot by the captive bolt gun exemplifies this notion. The first citation is from the film and the second from the novel:

"Don't worry Mrs. Nugent, you have won. Joe is gone!"

"You did two bad things Mrs. Nugent. You made me turn my back on my ma and you took Joe away from me. Why did you do that Mrs. Nugent? She didn't answer I didn't want to hear any answer." [McCabe 1998, 195]

There is no mention of the mother that died supposedly because of Mrs. Nugent. It is all based on Joe and it is the revenge for losing Joe that is the motivation for this murder, not some subconscious guilty desire that Francie feels the need to eradicate. She was unfairly blamed that Joe ceased to be friends with him. Because his father would seek the answer in violence, so did Francie. He blamed Mrs. Nugent, because she called the Bradys pigs. He felt that as he was a pig, after that all his trouble started. His mother died and his only friend left him, because he embraced "the pig", for he knew there was a lot of truth to that. He is the butcher boy and kills Mrs. Nugent like a pig. Francie even quarters her like a pig, he processes her body as a butcher would do with a pig. Francie writes pigs all over the house to finish his revenge for the trouble Mrs. Nugent supposedly caused by calling them pigs. No symbolism of opening up Mrs. Nugent's belly to destroy her womb and the mother symbol she presents in the novel is shown in the film. The movie was simplified. However, the film brought Francie's personality onto the silver screen effectively. Francie is a deluded maniac and to bring all of the layers of his crazed personality is clearly impossible, so leaving out the above mentioned subconscious layer of his personality was a clever decision. The plot is

coherent and makes sense. It still tells a story about a boy from a dysfunctional family who goes through a lot emotionally and acts irrationally, which later leads him to murder an innocent woman. The overall essence of the story and the social message it conveys stays unchanged, only altering the influence of the parents, switching emphasis from the mother to the father. The judgement whether this alteration was for the best or it has done more harm than good is very subjective. Considering how challenging it would be to bring the same exact Francie from the novel into the film turned out satisfactorily.

6 THE BREAKFAST ON PLUTO FILM ADAPTATION BY NEIL JORDAN

Compared to *The Butcher Boy* film, the adaptation by Neil Jordan of *Breakfast on Pluto* is different. Pussy in the beginning of the movie is similar to Pussy from the novel. Yet the personality of Pussy presented as the outcome of the film could not be more different, for the Pussy personality is turned upside down compared to the novel.

The personality of Pussy was already deeply explored in this thesis. Admittedly, the single three factors that influenced Pussy the most in her life were: the father who denies Pussy's existence and hatred towards him based on his denial, longing for her mother and never meeting her and the wish to be a protective mother to as many children as possible and the trauma caused by her biological inability to do so. All of these three most crucial factors to Pussy's personality are turned upside down in the film: it basically changes the personality of the Pussy depicted in the best-selling novel. How and to which effect these basic personality traits were changed in the film will be explored at the end of this chapter. Also, a reason behind these changes Jordan and McCabe made will be contemplated at the end of this chapter. However, before doing so other aspects of the film will be examined that were done faithfully which present the personality of Pussy

The movie pictures Pussy as a transvestite well. The brilliant performance that Murphy exhibits in his trans-gender role shows Pussy clearly as a woman, not a gay man. That is exactly like in the novel. The way Pussy talks and moves around in the film truly is a woman trapped inside of a man's body. Also, Patrick's trans-sexual origin is done well according to the novel. The take when he starts dressing as a woman and using lipstick comes out of the blue, exactly like in the novel and his transition from a boy into a girl is very natural and unforced. Yet, the film manages to make this transition even a bit funnier, when after Whiskers Branden (performed by McCabe's own mother!) says that he will sign him up with the local soccer team (hoping to make a real man out of him). Only what Patrick does is imagining himself running on the pitch in a woman's night cocktail dress. This transition is apparent later in his puberty, when he gets into serious trouble after asking in his school about getting a sex change and where it could be done (the school was a strict Roman Catholic institution!). That proves that all he wanted was to have women's genitalia which is not deviating from the novel in any way. One beautiful way of depicting him as a woman Jordan used was the soundtrack. When there was a take of Pussy dressing up as a woman to

go out, the song *You're such a Good Looking woman* by Joe Dolan is playing. This a very fitting, ironic and surprisingly fitting for Pussy if we have a look at the lyrics:

*"When God created a woman for me
he must have been in a beautiful mood
to show the world what a woman could be
when he created a woman like you."*

The ironic thing about this is the line saying that God created the woman. Patrick was a man created by a priest who is an earthly representation of the forgiving God. Thus, as the song says, Pussy basically was a woman created by God. Yet even more ironic is the fact that he was a man(biologically) who showed the world what a woman could be, which is another line from the song. An interesting fact is that Cillian Murphy (Pussy) was also a professional singer of a Cork band before he started acting. Both Jordan and McCabe personally picked the songs for this movie as they both were active in the music scene during the 1970's. A lot of credit is due especially for integrating this song which is fitting and ironic and creating one of the laughing moments in the film.

Pussy's fantasies about his mother and father having sex for his creation also made it into the movie, though only as a school writing and not in the obscene letters addressed to his clerical father. The important thing here is that the fantasies were softened up for the mainly Irish audience. In the film, these fantasies were sexual, playful with Eily being a coquette and Father Bernard feeling the sexual tension and giving in to his suppressed desire after years of celibacy. This is where these fantasies end in the movie, but not in the novel. In the novel, these fantasies develop into a rape-like scenario where Eily is tortured by the act of intercourse and violated by the Father. In one of Pussy's fantasies, he even describes this rape as an out-of-body experience for his mother, for she felt violated so much that she imagined it is not even her anymore. This out-of-body rape scene is not depicted in the movie at all. The rape victim-like feelings Patrick feels towards his father are left completely out of the movie, because the father personality differs a great deal from the novel counterpart. Another of Pussy's fantasies is the fantasy that Pussy escapes into when he is being interrogated as a suspect of the IRA bombing attack of a London disco frequented by the occupying army on Northern Ireland. However, this fantasy is different in the novel

and in the film. In the novel, Pussy tells the detectives his made-up story about her bombing crew and described into detail the preparation process for the bombing. Only later does he escape to another fantasy about burning down his father's church with him in it. Yet, in the film the fantasy the audience is presented with is Pussy defeating a whole secret IRA terrorist hideout with the use of his perfume. After he does that, there is no fantasy of burning any church. Instead he fantasies about dancing with his deceased Down Syndrome friend Lawrence. This also exemplifies how the movie was softened for the wider audience.

Other personal traits from the novel which Pussy possesses transferred into the film is his promiscuity. Even though it is not so graphical and described, it is still there. The sexual descriptions in the book are very erotic, one could argue even pornographic. The promiscuity in the film Pussy shows is very apparent throughout the whole novel. However, the first take when this is visible is very provocative and funny in the irony of the situation, for pussy is flirting with a priest. What is even more funny than the irony of the whole situation is the fact that the priest is the headmaster of his school and he visits him to be punished for his sexually-obscene creative writing assignment he handed in. He insists that the priest-headmaster calls him Kitty, after the Saint Kitten. Not only does he flirt with him, but he also mocks him with the saints of Ireland. This only exemplifies another of Pussy's personal traits, that is the inability to take serious matters seriously. Nevertheless, the movie clearly diminishes his promiscuity, because in the novel he went straight to being a prostitute after he arrived to London. However, in the film he started working in an amusement park for children as an oversized teddy bear. Only later does he eventually go to winning his bread as a transvestite-prostitute. The movie captures well the aftermath of his near-death experience as one of his "customers" tries to suffocate him with a garrote. The take when he is just absent-mindedly sitting in a café with a wire-bruise on his neck writing onto a piece of paper like he was not even here captured the emptiness and violated feelings perfectly. He seems really deeply wounded and writing becomes a therapy for him, or at least it gives him some solace. It is mentioned in the film that Patrick has been sitting there for four hours. The character of Dr. Terence is left out of the movie. In the novel, it was Dr. Terence who got Pussy into writing as a coping mechanism with all his trouble and suppressed feelings and desires. He also was the personification of the ideal husband he could ever wish to have. Nevertheless, Pussy's promiscuity is very nicely juxtapositioned from chapter 30 by the film.

This juxtaposition is achieved via the score of this scene and the title of this chapter at the same time. There are scenes from his London job as a prostitute, but on the background the song *Love is a Splendor Thing* is playing. Consequently, the juxtaposition of real love and pure animalistic prostitute sex is achieved. However, this juxtaposition is not developed any further in the film, but in the novel, it was the reason for Pussy's mental breakdown. In the novel Pussy wanted a family, a loving bear of a husband and family living in harmony. None of this is depicted in the film. Maybe his wish to have a strong and firm husband is somehow hinted in the film in the scene with the bikers. The take where they camp by the bonfire and the strong and independent leader of the bikers is talking about their life philosophy. The look Pussy gives to the leader is full of devotion, interest, kindness and fascination with what he is saying or even his whole person. Maybe this perspective expresses Pussy's need to have a husband as a protector and someone to look up to and feel safe around. This way of conveying certain meanings in the film compared to the novel is something that Barrett and Erskine also talk about:

"The most obvious difference between film and literature is that film presents a photographic reproduction of physical reality, whereas language alludes to this reality through the use of verbal symbols. Prose fiction is made up of words that are imaginatively perceived by the reader through a thought process, but film demands no cognition since the information is directly perceived." [Barrett and Erskine 1973, 16]

Not being able to take serious matters seriously, his promiscuity brings us yet to another of his characteristics also depicted by the film: his superficiality and obsession with fashion, celebrities and life-style magazines. The whole movie is speckled with celebrities being mentioned or comparing some people or events to celebrities and his obsession with fashion and perfumes which is depicted really well in the film and captures the real Pussy. However, his superficiality is diminished quite a bit. Even though the movie shows us that he has sugar daddies, there is no implication that the only reason Pussy is with them is money and the fact that she is allowed to be a gold-digger. Even if all of the movie events happen on the background of the 70's which were very dangerous times considering the terrorist activities of the IRA and UDA, none of this concerns Pussy. That is nicely exemplified in the film where there is a protest about the British and Irwin is complaining to Pussy that he cannot take anything seriously, to which he replies: *"If I join you can I wear pink sunglasses?"*. That only exemplifies that fashion is more important to Pussy than politics or

the fact that people are being massacred. However, this ignorance cannot be eternal and things have to get to Pussy eventually. This is something that Charlotte Nunes makes a comment about:

“Although at the most overt level, Kitten’s overwhelming preoccupation with romance and accessories means that she operates in a seemingly apolitical vacuum, the fact of her immersion in the volatile political climate of the seventies ensures that her story cannot proceed untouched by politics, however she may resent this. The political implications of Patrick McCabe’s setting of his novel in this charged period, and Jordan’s adaptation of the film to encompass as fully as possible the complexity of the Irish experience of the seventies—renewed nationalist violence, the changing role of the Church, and an inundation of non-Irish pop culture—cannot be ignored.” [Nunes 2009, 926]

The level of not caring about politics and the sectarian killings is however shifted, where again in the film he cares quite a bit more than in the novel. In the novel, the death of the Down Syndrome boy by shooting him in the face is put forward as a joke, the way he narrates it is a sort of a very dark humor. In the film, the death of the boy (Lawrence, who actually is Pussy’s friend in the film, but not in the novel) is heart-breaking and Pussy is genuinely shattered by his death through an IRA bomb. Lawrence’s death motivates Pussy to eliminate an IRA weapon cache, consequently causing his lover to get into serious trouble. Not only that, but after the IRA hitmen came for the weapons and did not find them Pussy informed them that he has just done the spring cleanup. When he was given a gun at the back of his head he said: *“Do it, get on with it. I have nothing to live for in this stupid serious world”*. To which the IRA hitman replies: *“Are you drugged or something?”* Pussy replies: *“No, I wish I was. Do you happen to have something?”* So yet again we are presented with the fact that even the question of his life or death was not taken seriously.

What defines Patrick both in the novel and film is his deep burning desire to find his real mother Eily Bergin. That is the motivating factor behind his departure from Ireland to London, for he knew the city swallowed her mother and he was determined to find her. All that Patrick really wants is to be reunited with his mother, for without a mother he feels lost and somehow unhinged from this world: he does not belong on this earth (just like the novel-based Pussy says). Once again, the genius choice of music for this film is apparent here. After Pussy arrives into London and sets out to find his mother a song starts playing.

The song is: *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep* by Middle of the Road starts playing. What is important is the lyrics, for the lyrics capture Pussy's emotions very well:

"Where's your mama gone? (Where's your mama gone?)

Little baby Don (Little Baby Don)

Where's your mama gone? (Where's your mama gone?)

Far, far away"

This song is well fitting and sets the tone for Pussy's searching for his mother, because it is a happy and playful song. However, in the beginning of the search, he is optimistic and happy that he is in London and that he is going to meet his mother. That of course did not happen so quickly, so this playful happiness changes into despair after not being able to find and meet his mother. This despair is further developed in the movie. In the scene where Pussy is on stage with Bertie doing the magician show, Bertie as one of his performances prompts Pussy to think of one woman from the audience as his own mother. What Patrick does is that he just runs towards the woman and hugs her saying "*mommy, mommy, mommy*" again and again until Bertie stops that and says that it is a mistake that it is not his mother. His real mother some man sitting on the other side of the room so Patrick runs to him and does the same exact same thing as with the woman. This continues until Pussy is hugging a loudspeaker thinking of it as his mother. For the audience and Bertie it was fun and I believe that even Patrick took it as a jest. However, there is something real in Pussy, even though he knew that none of these people or object are his real mother, hugging them gave him some comfort and solace. He did not care all that much if the speaker was his mother or not, but he was so desperate to find her that even being able to think of something or somebody as his mother was satisfactory enough for him. The film did not leave this despair to be reunited with his mother just here. There were several other takes when Pussy imagines seeing his Mitzi Gaynor-like mother and chasing after her. That is absolutely true to the novel. The movie depicts this longing and despair admirably. However, the film differs from the book at the end, for the outcome of this despair is different in the film as it is in the novel. In the novel Patrick never finds his mother, so he stays desperate and torn apart. The film has a happy ending, for he got to meet his mother thanks to aid from his father. The fact that it is Father Bernard who gives him the address is very controversial and my main point of critique against the film adaptation. Nonetheless, even

though he meets his mother, he is unable to reveal himself to her as her son. The reason behind that is to be speculated, but what the movie implies is that he does not want to disturb her happy family life. Pussy meets his step-brother, ironically called Patrick and realizes that his mother has a new happy life and a complete harmonious family. This is something Pussy holds sacred above all and he could not bring himself into telling his mother the truth, regardless of the fact that having a mother was all that he ever wanted. The symbol of his mother leads me to another of the personality traits Pussy has.

The wish to be a woman and to have his sex changed is depicted in the film and it was already mentioned. Yet his desire and primal need to be a mother is not depicted in the film that much (only in the positive way), and this is unfortunate. In the novel Pussy expresses his wish to be a protective mother on numerous occasions, constituting one of the three main motifs of the novel (hatred for his father, longing for his mother and being a mother) and as such it creates a sort of a backbone for the whole novel. His dying fantasies with all of his ten children, the *Chez Nous* family ideal are dismissed altogether from the film. Additionally, his protective nature for all the unloved children he would want to take as his own and love them fully is also left out of the film. The relationship he has with the Down-syndrome child Lawrence might indicate that he considers him to be "his own" child to some extent. However, that is as far as the film goes in describing this protectiveness Patrick feels towards babies. This characteristic of Pussy is very nicely depicted in the novel by the whole Martina Sheridan business discussed earlier in this thesis. However, the outcome of this situation in the novel was just a deeper despair in Pussy's life. Not only was he denied his father and mother and his biological sex, but he also was denied to be a mother and one more unloved child is going to be raised and there was nothing he could do about it. This left Pussy just a tortured husk at the end of the novel, he just wishes to be left alone with his magazines and all, but in the film the end of the story is yet again happy for Pussy. In the movie, Pussy and Charlie end up raising the baby Charlie has with Irwin (before the IRA executed him) together as a family (even with Father Bernard). Charlie wanted an abortion in England. However, Pussy says that she should go through with it or the baby would become a catastrophe like he is. This was what made Charlie change her mind and she kept the baby, for she likes Patrick. That is just the complete opposite to the novel, in the novel not having a baby posed a despair and inside torture for Pussy but in the film, he is given

a baby (even though he initially approved of the abortion in the UK, which the novel Pussy would never do), there is no conflict within Pussy. This basically changes the Pussy presented in the novel, where he was torn apart, he had a void in his soul that could never be filled. However, in the film this void got filled up throughout the duration of the movie. At the end of it Pussy was a complete person that has everything he ever wanted, he is the reflection of all the things the Pussy from the novel ever wanted. In a strange way, the film creates a parallel universe which reflects how Patrick would have turned out if he was given all the things that he lacked which made him a deprived being from the novel. Maybe the Pussy we are presented with at the beginning of the film is identical to the novel, but at the end he is a completely different woman.

Why did Patrick get to raise a baby in the film and why did he meet his mother when nothing like this happened in the film? Why were these deeply negative and depriving factors of Patrick's life in the novel changed into something positive in the film? Why is the movie a resolution to his disturbing personae? The answer is apparent. All of this was done in order to make money. A film with a happy ending makes more money than a film with a sad or bittersweet ending, that is a fact. In order to do that, Father Bernard is changed in a positive and even heroic character. That is the single most important problem I have with the film adaptation by Neil Jordan. There is reasoning behind that.

The novel was an event in Ireland as I shortly clarified in the part of this thesis concerning with the novel and its reception in Ireland. What McCabe achieved to do with *Breakfast on Pluto* was to make a social commentary in the way of a satire. He expressed all the taboo somehow concealed within the Catholic Church in Ireland. He made apparent all of the rape and molestation happening inside of the Christian circles. All of these scandals were swept under the carpet by church authorities and McCabe took them out and has shown them to Ireland as a whole. That is the reason why the novel was a best-seller for such a long period of time. What was even more genius is that he made a social commentary not only on the act of rape (molestation) itself but the aftermath of this. The aftermath is the whole personality of Pussy. The movie changes the personality of the Father to make him more humane and brave. He did have sex with his maid (but not in the rape-like way as the novel describes) and he had a cross-dressing son he felt ashamed of. That is where the similarities with the novel end. Father Bernard behaves in a completely opposite way in the

film compared to Father Bernard in the novel. The way the novel paints Father Bernard is like a rapist who caused his unintentionally born son to be a thoroughgoing miserable human being. His rape caused one woman dire unhappiness and the product of the rape to be a living reminder of all the torture and violation his rape caused. Pussy is a showcase, that clerical rape is one thing, but the damage done does not end here, but becomes exponential if there is a baby involved. However, the movie paints Father Bernard as a sinner who made a mistake and failed to resist his temptation and begot a son, and finally manned up and acknowledged his son, helped him to find his mother and helped him and Charlie to raise their baby. Bernard even saved their lives when he carried them from the burning church. These changes in the personality of the Father so much that critics attacked the film. In the novel, the priest was the arch enemy, he was the cause of all of Patrick's problems. Yet in the film he was a sinner who owned up to his mistakes and fully atoned for his sin. All of the social commentary and satire McCabe built with his novel got completely white-washed in the film! It is obvious that it was done to make a happy ending, and to have a financial success. Jordan and McCabe worked together on the script so it is not like someone took McCabe's authorial integrity and made the movie against his will. McCabe himself undermines his authorial integrity and made this movie soft and socially acceptable for a wider audience. He wanted to evade the strong controversy the novel poses in order for the movie to be financially successful. He was pushed to do so, because the first movie that was based on his novel (*The Butcher Boy*) was not successful at the box office, even though it was critically acclaimed.

This change done to the character of Father Bernard and consequently the relationship with Patrick and the way it all played out for Pussy effectively changes who he was. In the novel, all that Patrick wants from Father Bernard is a simple acknowledgement, which he never got, as already explained in this thesis. Yet, in the film the exact opposite of the Father denying Pussy's existence, takes place. Not only does Father Bernard acknowledge Patrick, but he also helps him find his mother by giving him the address. This change in Bernard's character undermines two of Pussy's main personality layers at once. He gets acknowledged by his true father and he finds his mother. This single act by actor Liam Neeson (as Father Bernard) turns upside down the whole Church controversy of the novel. The novel is written in such a way that the reader cannot be sympathetic with Bernard.

Pussy is a hurt human being and he only suffers because Bernard molested his mother and created him. The reader grows to hate Bernard the same way as Pussy does, because even as he watches what a sorry creature is growing out of him, his selfishness and guilt prevent him from doing the right thing. The novel is a straight critique of the Catholic Church and celibacy and all the problems (and possible severe consequences) and taboos connected with it. That was the whole point and authorial intent of the novel. The movie on the other hand makes Father Bernard seem like a repented sinner who did exactly what should have been done in order to save Pussy and make him whole again. The grave problem with this is that it completely changes the social commentary McCabe conveyed with his novel. The priest became a hero a true father, trying to provide a happy life for his son and the baby he is taking care of with Charlie. Undermining his authorial integrity in the sense that in the movie Patrick actually became a mother might be understandable. The novel has a very dark and hearth-breaking tone, we feel sorry for Pussy and we share the hatred towards the father. By giving Pussy the baby the movie gets a slightly lighter tone without changing the overall message and the audience is told in a positive way that he wanted to be a mother. The only difference between the novel and the film is that the novel conveys this message in a negative way and describes the deprivation of not having a baby or family. The movie on the other hand conveys his wish in a positive way, showing his happiness originating from the fact that he has a baby to love and protect, so, the wish to be a protective mother is in both venues, the only change here is that in the film it makes him happy and in the novel, it keeps him desperate. He belonged on this earth, he was anchored by the recognition he got from his father and meeting his mother. He found his inner peace, at the end of the film he got his "Breakfast on Pluto". This happiness connected with nursing a baby and having a place on this earth is yet again expressed by the superb soundtrack used in this film. Both at the beginning and at the end of the movie, when we see Patrick with the baby there is the song *Sugar baby love* by the Rubettes playing in the background. This song is very easy going with a happy melody and the singers bursting with joy. There is no doubt that this song is fitting to the movie's theme. In a way, it creates a happy undertone to the film and the way things turned out for Pussy. The problem here is the fact that things did not turn out all that well for Pussy in the novel. The Pussy at the end of the film is an opposite of the Pussy from the novel. To further develop this train of thought this juxtaposition is visible the most at the end of the film, where Patrick is having a breakfast with his father. Not only is the fact that

they are having a breakfast ironic but it is yet another juxtaposition of its own if we consider the symbolism of breakfast for Pussy. While having this breakfast, Patrick says to his father the following:

“The funny thing is, that I set out to find my mother, but instead I found a way to my father” [Jordan 2005, 1:47:55]

That is outrageous considering the angry things that Pussy was saying against his father in the novel. He was completely unable to forgive him, he tried but he could not bring himself to ever forgive him. On numerous occasions, he says that he is going to burn his church down to ashes with him in it, or that he is going to cut off his genitalia and put it in his mouth before he is going to burn the church down. The contradiction to the film adaptation of Pussy and Father Bernard and their relationship could not have been more extreme than this. Yet Jordan and McCabe did not stop here. This scene is followed by another where Father Bernard takes Pussy out for shopping and he buys her women’s clothes. While the song *How Much Is That Doggie In The Window* by Patti Page (which gives the whole take a family-like vibe as if a father goes out to buy his small daughter a puppy), fits the context of the movie well, it leaves anybody who read the novel with an open mouth full of awe. The film presents us with an even more outrageous scene (for anybody who read the novel). Speaking of burning churches with rapist priests trapped in them well, this scene makes it into the movie as well. However, this scene is treated in the same way as Pussy was treated by silky and his garrote. Father Bernard, Pussy, Charlie and her new born baby are sleeping in the presbytery by the church, when an unknown person throws a Molotov cocktail through the window and sets the whole house and church on fire. Thanks to the bravery and altruism of the honorable Father Bernard, Pussy and Charlie with her child are saved from burning alive in the church. In the novel, the only thing that Pussy wishes concerning his father is for him to burn alive in his own church. However, in the novel Father Bernard saves Pussy from the burning church. This is so against the character of the Pussy from the novel that it leaves one wondering about the reasoning behind this change. In my opinion this was fully intentional and McCabe alongside with Jordan did this to make a story with a happy ending. They created a story of Pussy finding herself in this world alongside her father who atoned for his sins and became a hero in the end. As already mentioned, they had to make a movie that is going to do well at the box office or they would not get it funded. If they kept what was controversial and in a way a forbidden fruit they would have made a faithful and

better picture of the damaged Pussy. However, they get funded to make the film so they used the Hollywood formula and made it an easy-to-understand film which attracts the masses rather than a specialized narrow audience.

The symbol of the Breakfast on Pluto is well depicted in the movie. It is identical to the symbol the breakfast poses in the novel. The title of the novel and film is derived from a song by Don Patridge. That only exemplifies that McCabe, Murphy and Jordan have a very close connection with music, especially in the 1970's. Having breakfast on Pluto has an idealistic meaning for Pussy and in the film depicted in chapter 24 when Pussy has a chat with the magician Bertie. They were both talking about some mysterious Phantom Lady (which is the title of this film chapter):

“She realized that all the love songs were just songs. What is so bad about that? Nothing if you don't believe them, but she did. She believed in the magical evenings and a cloud that would cry over her flowerbed and she believed that she will have a breakfast there. Where? On Pluto, in the mystical icy wasteland on Pluto.” [Jordan 2005, 1:06:00]

7 CONCLUSION

In my thesis, I explored all the personal traits and their influences of both Francie Brady and Patrick Branden. As such a complex character they both are I deciphered their complicated characters and explored their personalities in depth. Not only description of Francie's and Patrick's personality was given, but also the possible influences and origins of certain characteristics they possess were uncovered and contemplated about. To achieve a deep insight and interpretation of Francie and Patrick, secondary literature resources have been used. Especially helpful was the research done by Clare Wallace who seems to have second to none understanding of both characters and their surroundings and society which they inhabit in McCabe's fiction. In the second part of my thesis I compared both of Jordan's respective film adaptations. I distinguished the main differences between the novel and the film counterpart in the sense of portraying the personalities of both protagonists. Also, the reasoning behind those changes and parts that were left out is given or at least speculated about. I assume that my thesis managed to achieve its goals.

8 RESUMÉ

Když jsem se na začátku magisterského studia rozhodoval, na které téma budu svoji diplomovou práci psát, byl jsem si jistý jenom tím, že bych chtěl zpracovat nějaký literární námět. Po konzultaci se svými kolegy z fakulty jsem dospěl k závěru, že kvalifikační práci budu psát pod vedením doktora Koye z katedry anglistiky, na kterého jsem slyšel hodně kladné ohlasy jako na velmi nápomocného a vstřícného vedoucího prací a konzultanta.

Domluvil jsem si tedy schůzku u doktora Koye, jenž mi nabízel různá zajímavá témata, ovšem žádné se mi nezamlouvalo do té míry, abych jej začal zpracovávat. Poté mi navrhl, abych se zabýval irským autorem Patrickem McCabem, kdy mi popsal obě dvě zadané novely, s nimiž bych měl pracovat a objasnil mi společenské problémy a tabu, které se v těchto dílech objevují, čímž byl můj zájem o toto téma značně pozvednut. Následně jsem byl informován i o tom, že obě dvě novely byly dokonce zfilmovány. Měl jsem jasno.

Jako téma jsme tedy zadali porovnání obou těchto novel s filmovými adaptacemi. Byl jsem si jistý, že zde bude více úhlů pohledu a směrů, kterými bude možno práci ubírat, ovšem tento názor se změnil po přečtení první z novel s názvem *The Butcher Boy*. Po přečtení jsem si uvědomil, že dílo, ve kterém autor popisuje šílenství a vizuální představivost ve formě bludů pomocí šíleného vypravěče, jenž je zamrznut v čase s desorientovaným pojmem o čase, došlo mi, že toto téma nebude vůbec jednoduché zpracovat a budu si muset pro svoji práci zvolit užší záběr zkoumání. Více než rok jsem nebyl schopen novelu *The Butcher Boy* uchopit a začít něco konkrétního psát. Velice jsem tápal a myšlenkami skákal od jedné idey k druhé.

K tomu, abych si zvolil užší záběr mého tématu při psaní práce, mi dopomohla četba druhé novely od McCaba nazvaná *Breakfast on Pluto*. Zde jsem dokázal vystopovat jisté spojitosti a podobnosti mezi protagonisty obou novel. Uvědomil jsem si, že oba dva hrdinové pocházejí z narušených rodin, což vedlo k jejich sociální deviaci a sociálně patologickému chování. Na novelách byl vidět i velký vliv McCabovy osobnosti v symbolice jako například vliv hudby či komiksy. Po přečtení obou novel a zhlédnutí obou filmových adaptací, jsem měl ve svém záběru jasno. Chtěl jsem ve své diplomové práci do hloubky prozkoumat osobnosti hlavních protagonistů, prvky v jejich prostředí (jak rodinném, tak všeobecném) a výchově, které způsobily, že vyspěli v jedince, jež McCabe ve svých novelách popisuje. Nejen hluboká

analýza charakteru protagonistů byla ohniskem mého zájmu, protože filmová ztvárnění od Neila Jordana mi poskytovala možnost zkoumat i to, jak osobnosti obou protagonistů byly přeneseny na filmové plátno. Chtěl jsem se zaměřit i na změny, které Jordan ve své režii udělal, abych mohl zkoumat rovněž dopad na charakter obou postav a rozdílnost charakteru filmového hrdiny od hrdiny, kterého popisuje McCabe ve své knize.

Poté, co jsem si vybral přesný záběr mé práce, začal jsem dopodrobna číst obě novely znovu a zpracovávat relevantní informace. Vytvářel jsem si poznámky a myšlenkové mapy, abych byl schopen jednotlivé zkušenosti a informace propojit do logického celku. Zároveň jsem si vytvářel jistou osnovu a vypisoval si důležité citace, jelikož má práce je z velké části založena na interpretacích, potřeboval jsem své myšlenky fakticky podložit. Potom, co jsem obě dvě novely dopodrobna přečetl a vyseletoval z nich potřebná data, udělal jsem totéž i s filmovými adaptacemi. Vždy jsem vyhledával ty úseky filmu, které odrážejí určité charakteristiky obou protagonistů, nebo naopak ty aspekty opomíjející jejich osobnost.

V hledání sekundární literatury mi bylo nápomocné EBSCO a literature online a mimo jiné i augsburská univerzitní knihovna, ve které jsem také našel některé podklady. Bohužel, na novelu *Breakfast on Pluto* se mi nepodařilo najít takové množství podkladů jako na *The Butcher Boy* a pokud ano, nedokázal jsem ke článkům získat žádným způsobem přístup. Avšak myslím si, že z ohledu sekundárních zdrojů jsem nabyl mnohé cenné informace o irských reáliích a společenském prostředí, ve kterém novely vycházely. Nejpřínosnějším autorem zabývajícím se McCabem a jeho prací byla bezesporu Clare Wallace, která psala ve svých článcích vždy velmi věcně a nabízela trefná teoretická východiska. Druhým autorem, který mě inspiroval nejvíce, byl Linden Peach a jeho publikace *The contemporary Irish Novel*.

Ve výsledku myslím, že se mi zadané téma podařilo zpracovat velmi obstojně. I když jsem se setkal s několika situacemi, kdy jsem se cítil ztracen a pořádně nevěděl, za jaký konec téma diplomové práce uchopit. Nakonec jsem dokázal vše zanalyzovat i s pomocí sekundární literatury. Trochu mne mrzí to, že jsem skoro rok nedokázal s prací pořádně začít, ale na druhou stranu mi to dalo dostatek času, abych se nad tím vším pořádně zamyslel a opravdu se do osobností protagonistů vžil. Celá diplomová práce by nevznikla také bez pomoci doktora Koye, jenž mi byl velmi nápomocným. Jeho odborné komentáře mi vždy pomohly v tom, abych si utřídil informace a byl schopen kvalifikační práci psát správným směrem. Doufám, že má diplomová práce bude přínosem i pro budoucí studenty a další akademické

pracovníky, kteří by se chtěli novelami od Patricka McCaba zabývat a ještě hlouběji nebo z jiného úhlu pohledu prozkoumávat charakteristiku daných postav.

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