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Re-narrativization of *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote and *The Collector* by John Fowles

Diplomová práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma „Re-narrativization of *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote and *The Collector* by John Fowles" vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

V Olomouci dne ………………   Podpis ………………

Tato práce se zabývá narativizací „true crime" příběhů se zaměřením na případ rodiny Herberta Cluttera a jeho převyprávění z pohledu Trumana Capoteho, který o případu píše ve svém díle *Chladnokrevně*. Zároveň se práce zaměřuje na vraždy spáchané podle předlohy, kterou bylo dílo Johna Fowlese, *Sběratel*. Hlavním tématem této práce jsou změny ve struktuře příběhu a elementy narativizace jako jsou žánr nebo použitý styl jazyka. Tyto změny budou zkoumány v porovnání původních zločinů a jejich originálních popisů v novinových článcích a vice versa.

This thesis will examine the re-narrativization of true crime stories, focusing on the Herbert Clutter family case as re-told by Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* and on the copycat killings that followed the publication of The Collector by John Fowles. The changes of story structure and narrative elements such as genre or language discourse will be examined while reviewing the newspapers reporting on the stories.

CONTENTS:

1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the re-narrativization of *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote and *The Collector* by John Fowles in newspaper articles. Re-narrativization is a term here used for the changes in a story structure and its narrative elements such as language, or the change in the genre itself that takes place during a re-creation of a story.

In Cold Blood is a non-fiction novel based on the Clutter family murders of 1959 in Holcomb, Texas. The story was heavily reported on by newspapers throughout the search for the perpetrators while Capote was writing his detailed account based on interviews and personal information provided to him by the citizens of Holcomb.

The Collector is a crime thriller, work of fiction from 1963 about Frederick, a butterfly collector and Miranda, a beautiful student he decides to kidnap for his collection. The story is so compellingly written that copycat murders followed and were reported on by newspaper articles, thus producing re-narrativization of the original story, transforming *The Collector* into a story with true crime connection.

Although there is a great focus on true crime genre classification, not as much emphasis is on how the genre is made and what makes it popular. In relation to that gap, this thesis will demonstrate that the popularity reasons lie in the structure and language. This will be demonstrated on *In Cold Blood* and how this re-narrativization of the crime differs from the journalistic style of connected newspaper articles. Then changes from crime fiction of *The Collector* in the journalistic style of newspaper articles following the book copycat crimes will be demonstrated. The claims are based on close reading analysis of *In Cold Blood* and *The Collector* and their corresponding newspaper articles.

In theoretical part of this thesis, we will define the true crime genre, looking at the history, structure, and language. This is important because *In Cold Blood* is classified as a true crime genre. Then the focus will be on journalistic style of writing and the introduction and specification of "new journalism." Journalistic writing is important for the understanding of true crime narratives. Moreover, the two styles often overlap, share some similarities are most importantly, both are represented in *In Cold Blood* writing style.

The practical part of this thesis includes a close reading analysis of *In Cold Blood*. The analysis part starts with an introduction into Capote's research style because it includes important information on Capote's writing processes and provides essential information for understanding his writing style. Then we proceed with analysis of the

structure and the language of *In Cold Blood*, with special focus on the stylistic choices and incorporation of literary journalism techniques, such as free indirect discourse or the length of the text.

Following the *In Cold Blood* analysis we focus on the re-narrativization of the story. The Clutter family case was keenly followed by newspapers all around the United States. We will compare several newspaper articles following the story with the *In Cold Blood* narration, to explore the differences that the medium creates, in the genre, structure and language use.

Finally, we follow with a close reading analysis of *The Collector*, looking at the genre, story structure and language used by John Fowles and again follow with the re-narrativization of the story as done by newspaper articles, following the copycat murders based on *The Collector*.

With the constant rise of popularity of true crime genre with new podcasts on the topic and true crime documentaries[1], it may be interesting to come back to the roots and observe how true crime developed and how the genre can change based on stylistic and literary devices as well as how a fictional work can become connected to true crime and how is such a connection established.

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[1] Amelia Tait, "The Rise of 'citizen sleuths': the true crime buffs trying to solve cases," *The Guardian,* October 2, 2021. Accessed June 22, 2022. https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2021/oct/02/the-rise-of-citizen-sleuths-the-true-buffs-trying-to-solve-cases

2 TRUE CRIME GENRE

In observing true crime genre, we can see that the authors use set structure and writing style and that the genre shares distinct features with journalism. Through these observations, true crime genre can be defined and distinguished from journalism, but also compared to it and to some extent, merged with it, as in Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. In this chapter I will consider the history of the true crime genre as well as the structure and language used by the authors and how it can be combined with journalistic writing.

2.1 Defining true crime genre

True crime genre and the way it is written is one of the pillars of this work. I will define the genre by introducing its historical developments and structure.

Firstly, a glance at the true crime genre history. Crime narrative overall goes far into the past, into the Bible. In the Holy Bible, Cain kills his brother Abel. As Ian Case Punnett states in his book:

> 'Cain's killing of his brother is arguably the first, complete murder narrative: a motive was established, the murder was committed, a cover-up was attempted, the crime was solved, and the perpetrator was brought to justice–with God as the first homicide detective.'[2]

Nonfiction crime can be thus seen, by Bible literalists, as going back as far back as the first decades of the 4th century BC. This is, of course, not seen as an account of a true crime by everyone, but can be defined as a murder narrative nonetheless. An undoubted true crime description can be traced back to colonial America and its execution sermons.[3] When it comes to authors, Edmund Lester Pearson is an important person to mention in connection with true crime origins. Pearson wrote "fact crime," his writing goes back to the 1920s and 1930s when he was considered one of the best trial and crime reporters, who also worked as a journalist and librarian.[4] The modern true crime, as we

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[2] Ian Case Punnett, *Toward a Theory of True Crime Narratives: A Textual Analysis.* (New York: Routledge, 2018). 5-6.
[3] Punnett, *Toward a Theory of True Crime Narratives: A Textual Analysis*, 6.
[4] "Studies in Murder: Edmund Lester Pearson," *The Ohio State University Press*. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://ohiostatepress.org/books/BookPages/PearsonStudies.htm

know it, can be traced back to *True Detective Magazine* of the 1940s and 1950s.[5] In the centuries before, true crime, or stories of murders, were quite different. The circulation of such stories in written language came mainly in pamphlets or execution sermons.[6] According to Jean Murley and her work *The Rise of True Crime*, it was the 1970s and 1980s that experienced the genre's rise to prominence.[7] Since then, many authors made their names writing true crime genre and whole bookshop sections are devoted to them. It was Truman Capote who brought the true crime genre its popularity with his narrativization of the Herbert Clutter family case in *In Cold Blood*, where he managed to establish "a specific set of generic conventions, narrative techniques, and assumptions about the audience,"[8] which gave the genre a whole new dimension. The crime itself now stands in the shadow of the book.

True crime can be a morally gray genre, since it is making someone's "private tragedies into public entertainment."[9] Authors of true crime genre embarked on a journey to understand the minds of those, who are capable of the unthinkable and thus the "psychopath" and "sociopath" were born.[10] This brings us to the question of popularity. According to a Professor of Sociology and Criminology Kevin Haggerty, media and the contemporary portrayal of murderers and omnipresence of true crime helped to establish a "culture of celebrity"[11] for the perpetrators. This culture helps to popularize the perpetrators and make them into celebrities. This can also be seen in *The Collector* by John Fowles, where the main character, even though fictional, becomes an icon for several copycat killers in real life or even in *In Cold Blood*, where the perpetrators are the main characters in the story.

Unquestionably, true crime readers are ingesting information they already got from the newspaper articles and news coverage. The appeal thus must be not in the story itself, since that is widely known by that point in time, but in the writing style and structure.

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[5] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* (Westport: Praeger. 2008). 2.

[6] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 7.

[7] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 4.

[8] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 4.

[9] Punnett, *Toward a Theory of True Crime Narratives: A Textual Analysis*, 2.

[10] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 36.

[11] Kevin Haggerty and Ariane Ellerbrok, "The Social Study of Serial Killers," *Criminal Justice and Coalition*, cjm 86, December 6, 2011. Accessed June 21, 2022.
https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/cjm/article/social-study-serial-killers

2.2 Structure and writing style of true crime genre

True crime narrative is a story of real-life events. It is often "lightly fictionalized"[12] to make it more appealing for the readers. The author is shaping the story, adding some facts while keeping other facts hidden from the readers either completely, or until they are needed in the narrative. This is the notable sign of a true crime re-narrativization in authors such as Truman Capote. In the words of Murley: "True crime, although laying strong claims to factuality, truthfulness, and realistic representation of actual events, is driven by and preoccupied with themes of […] horror."[13] On the other hand, the original story, as told by the newspapers, is extremely factual and researched account of the actions taken by the murder with only basic information about the victim: "[…] under deadline for a newspaper story, with great attention to research and accuracy […]."[14] True crime as a genre, however, takes a much deeper look at the story, reshapes it and reconstructs the events, while carefully setting to mood.

True crime narratives are always constructed by the author and at least partially fictive.[15] One of the defining characteristics of true crime is "the notion of murder narration as crime-in-context."[16] Murder narratives in the past used to be completely different, not as sensationalized as true crime genre is now. This is visible on examples of Pearson's "fact crime," execution sermons and pamphlets of the last centuries.[17]

As the methods of investigation evolved, hand in hand with this went the changes in writing style of true crime. Forensic science brought new views that needed to be portrayed in the stories: "[…] its great popularity in both textual and visual representations, we can see the appeal of forensics and the hope that minute, mysterious and previously invisible or illegible evidence can somehow unravel the mystery […]."[18] Fictionalizing the crime also comes with textual re-creation, an important part of true crime narratives: "[…] minute examination and explication of evidence demanded re-creation or reenactment of the crime."[19] These passages of researching evidence and reenacting the crime can be observed in Capote's work as well when portraying the investigation of the crime.

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[12] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 154.
[13] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 5.
[14] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 6.
[15] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 6.
[16] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 52.
[17] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 7.
[18] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 10.
[19] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture.* 11.

One of the stylistic techniques that became standardized during the 1970s and 1980s, Murley calls it "the skillful deployment of fiction masquerading as fact (most often used as dialogue or the imagined thoughts of characters related in the narrator's voice)."[20] Authors do not only re-create the crime itself, but also intimate conversations between the victim and others or between the killer and other people. In other words, the author is "positioned as an insider on the events, someone privy to special information about the case […]."[21] This can be seen in Truman Capote's work quite often, as he re-created conversations between family members and whole dialogues between the criminals. However, he did not stop at that point and went even further by talking about the killers' thoughts, wants and feelings: "Perry gripped the edge of the washbasin and hauled himself to a standing position. His legs trembled; the pain in his knees made him perspire."[22]

In the modern true crime genre, there is a great shift towards simple retelling with emotional distance, the authors stay detached, which "imbues true crime with a sense of timelessness."[23] Writers of true crime try to re-create the scenes and make the readers feel different emotions, while still staying objective, manipulating the readers with carefully chosen words and added details, in Murley's words "a constructed and carefully orchestrated portrayal."[24] Authors are using "precise, flattened-out prose"[25] without excessive descriptions of gruesome crime scenes and the "melodramatic accounts"[26] of emotive sermons and pamphlets of the past. Capote uses this detachment in his writing about the murder scene. The style is emotionally distant, yet evokes feelings in the reader with carefully chosen words without being overly dramatic:

> "[…] photographs taken at the scene of the crime by a police photographer
> – twenty blown-up glossy-print pictures of Mr Clutter's shattered skull, his
> son's demolished face, Nancy's bound hands, her mother's death-dulled,
> still-staring eyes, and so on."[27]

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[20] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 44.
[21] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 44.
[22] Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood* (New York: Penguin Random House, 1966). 52.
[23] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 57.
[24] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 118.
[25] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 12.
[26] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 12.
[27] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 75-76.

Not only do the authors try to be as objective as possible, but they are also factual: "Capote himself touted his strict factual accuracy as one of the chief virtues of his book […]."[28] Facts are the most important part of these stories, since they are based on them. Writing about actual crimes that affected real families, authors must research their works carefully. The importance of correctness is connected to the journalistic style that is so often used in this genre and can also be traced back to the influence of Truman Capote, who worked on *In Cold Blood* for six years.[29]

Authors of true crime books have time to form a kind of a relationship with the killer, look more deeply into who they are, what their past looked like, and they always use it.[30] Authors do not only look at the victims, but they focus a great deal on the killers themselves. They go over their whole biographies and personal problems, trying to make connections between their psyches, actions, and pasts as is widely visible in Capote's work when he continually looks at the perpetrator's family relations. Writers often spend more time talking about the perpetrators themselves, introducing them from many different points of view so that the reader can even forget what their actions were. Moreover, the lines between the good and the bad are blurred out while introducing the characters, they are all simply people, which is intentionally done by the authors. This can have several different reasons, but it always makes the reader more open towards all the characters in the book without prejudice, allows them to create a kind of a bond before they read about all their outrageous acts: "The bonds of sympathy between writer/reader/killer are enhanced […]. The strong identification with murderers in true crime is crucial […]."[31] These careful introductions and overall personal treatment allow for identification with the killer, which in its turn has great impact on reader's feelings. Truman Capote introduces the killers in *In Cold Blood* by actually drawing comparisons between one of the killers and the victim: "Like Mr Clutter, the young man breakfasting in a café called the Little Jewel never drank coffee."[32]

The typical structure of events is starting with the murder itself, then following the narrator through the background of all the people in the story and eventually we proceed to trial and execution or imprisonment.[33] This is not exactly the form Capote had

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[28] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 58.
[29] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 54.
[30] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 43.
[31] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 57.
[32] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 13.
[33] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 44.

chosen in his *In Cold Blood*, nevertheless, we follow all these parts as well. Capote firstly introduces the Clutter family and the perpetrators, only then follows this general introduction into their lives with the murder itself. This is followed by a chase after the perpetrators and eventual imprisonment and execution.

The most important part of contemporary true crime narrations that began with Capote's portrayal of Herbert Clutter family case, is the relationship between the writer and the killer.[34] Many passages are dedicated to simple conversations, authors are engaging with the perpetrators in different ways to present them to the reader from all the possible angles. In *In Cold Blood*, Capote's close relationship with the perpetrators is visible not only through the details he is able to provide to the reader, but also through the treatment of the perpetrators, where Perry is always portrayed in a slightly more agreeable way: "Perry was not a gifted liar, or a prolific one […],"[35] a statement that is immediately followed by Dick intentionally running a dog over.

It is not the actual stories, well known by the readers by the point of buying the book, that draws them in. It is the language, the writing style and the structure that keeps them interested in the story, the "free indirect discourse" as it is known in literary studies, or in other words, the seemingly made-up details, and thoughts. It presents the protagonist's voice, but is mediated by the author, and the mode was first widely exploited during the 19th century, by writers such as Jane Austen.[36] Free indirect discourse is a mode of narration, in which readers can listen to protagonist's thoughts, identify with the perpetrators, and feel close to them. The author's skills are making the readers stay and make the story interesting all over again.

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[34] Murley, *The Rise of True Crime: 20th Century Murder and American Popular Culture*. 45.
[35] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 13.
[36] "Overview: free indirect style," *Oxford Reference.* Accessed April 4, 2022.
https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095834150

3 JOURNALISTIC STYLE AS A NARRATIVE

In this chapter, I argue that journalistic style as a narrative is used by authors of true crime genre as well as crime fiction. True crime uses many of the same methods as journalistic writing does and thus those two are interconnected. Journalistic style has an important role in explaining true crime's narrative style. Moreover, as the main topic is concerned with the changes in the texts between journalistic writing in newspapers and true crime writing in books, introduction of journalistic style is key. With that in mind, this chapter will be consacrated to analysis of journalistic style as a narrative and how do authors use it to create compelling stories. The core of journalistic writing is the newspaper style of writing.[37] Journalistic style is, however, leaning into literary genres and the borders are becoming less obvious nowadays. There are also more styles of journalistic writing between those we can name news journalism or literary journalism, and different textual genres, such as feature, column, essay, and more.[38]

Journalistic writing as can be found on daily basis in newspaper articles, is characterized by short and simple sentences. As it is stated in *Writing for Journalists*:

> "Be clear; avoid ornament; let the message reveal itself. […] What is needed
> is plainness, decorum, economy, precision – above all, clarity. What is not
> needed is rhetoric or embellishment."[39]

The text should be easy and fast to read, clear and straight to the point. Journalism is about providing the consumer with hard facts in the easiest language possible. It is said that "good writing should mirror speech rather than aspire to be something else, something artificial, contrived, self-consciously literary."[40] Immediately, it is clear, that this is not the language Tuman Capote uses for his account of the Clutter family case in *In Cold Blood*.

Narrative journalism focuses on representations "of an event or a series of events"[41] and is the most substantial style for the analysis of Truman Capote's writing in

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[37] Maarit Jaakkola, "Journalistic Writing and Style," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. July 30, 2018. Accessed April 2, 2022. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.884
[38] Jaakkola, "Journalistic Writing and Style," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.884
[39] Wynford Hicks et al., *Writing for Journalists*, second edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 1999). 150.
[40] Hicks et al., *Writing for Journalists*, 152.
[41] H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). 12.

In Cold Blood. It was first recognized in the 1960s, often referred to as *new journalism*.[42] The style changed the traditional ways of journalistic writing, and its features can be observed on *In Cold Blood* when Capote combines the research techniques of journalistic style with stylistic devices from literary writing. Capote is one of the most important individuals credited with beginning the movement, alongside the name of Tom Wolfe, who later wrote a publication about this new journalistic style called *The New Journalism*.[43]

Through the analysis of Capote's work, we can see that the combining of both, journalistic and literary techniques could be used literary, with the incorporation of newspaper headline: "CLUES ARE FEW IN SLAYING OF 4"[44] or it can be more subtle with a simple switch of the narrative style, when the characters are presented as witnesses making statements: "We live three miles west of the Clutter place. […] The lights were on downstairs – in the living-room and in Mr Clutter's office."[45]

Tom Wolfe in his publication on literary journalism asks himself: "Namely, what is it precisely – in terms of technique – that has made the new journalism as 'absorbing' and 'gripping' as the novel and the short story, and often more so?"[46] He offers as the answer several facts. According to Wolfe, specific devices are used by the writers, that "underlie the emotionally involving quality of the most powerful prose,"[47] with connection to realism in writing, which "raised the state of the art to an entirely new magnitude,"[48] when introduced to literature in the 18th century. Realism based on facts connected to the power of prose and its emotions led to a new discovery: "This discovery, modest at first, humble, in fact, deferential, you might say, was that it just might be possible to write journalism that would … read like a novel."[49] And with this notion in mind, literary journalism was born.

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[42] John C. Hartsock. *A History of American Literary Journalism: The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form*. (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000). 6.
[43] Peter Feuerherd, "How Truman Capote Advanced the New Journalism," *JSTOR Daily*, September 28, 2018. Accessed June 22, 2022. https://daily.jstor.org/how-truman-capote-advanced-the-new-journalism/
[44] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 81.
[45] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 47.
[46] Tom Wolfe, *The New Journalism* (London: Picador, 1975). Preface.
[47] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. Preface.
[48] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. Preface.
[49] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 9.

3.1 Writing style of literary journalism

Literary journalism has the same need for facts based on interviews, calculated research, and observation as any other reporting style. The use of literary style in journalism does not mean that the facts are not present, even though that was the general idea at the beginning of the movement. According to Wolfe, his first reaction was thinking the writer made all the dialogues up and for the next nine years during which literary journalism established itself, this was the thought of countless journalists and literary intellectuals.[50]

Literary journalism packs all the important facts, dates, and names into a beautifully crafted fiction style of writing. Journalistic pieces of writing using this style are much longer than classical reporting style articles: "[…] the piece about the demolition derbies was the last one I wrote that came anywhere close to being 1,500 words. After that they started climbing to 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000 words."[51] Not only the readers get immersed in the story, but the authors do also. The depth of the information is something completely different from the classical way of reporting. Authors use whole scenes, dramatization of the events, lively dialogues: "[…] it was possible in non-fiction, in journalism, to use any literary device […]."[52] They would spend days, weeks or even months with the people they were writing about to get to know them enough, to understand their lives so that they can portray them better.[53] The ties journalists now created with their subjects were something before unseen and an important part of the writing process.

As can be seen in Capote's work, the relationships between the writer and the subjects are fundamental and without the intimate ties, the style could not exist. Capote himself spent a substantial amount of time trying to create relationships with the people of Holcomb to be able to obtain the information needed.[54] Based on Capote's writing, this closeness to the subject does not have to be limited to the main persons of the story. *In Cold Blood* incorporates letters from the perpetrator's families which are as important for Capote as the victims or murderers themselves. However, the difference in the relationships and the degree of intimacy can also be observed on the writing style. Capote always refers to the perpetrators as to Dick and Perry. Perry's sister, on the other hand, is

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[50] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 11.
[51] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 15.
[52] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 15.
[53] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 21.
[54] Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. (RosettaBooks: New York. 2013). 5

always referred to as Mrs Johnson: "It was a photograph that invariably transfixed Mrs Johnson,"[55] or "Mrs Johnson was unsure […]."[56]

The question of narrator became important in non-fiction writing. In typical news reporting, there is no narrator of the story, the author simply states the fact as they are based on the research they have done. Creating a new form of journalism though, connected to storytelling would need a narrator, someone to tell the story when fact stating is not enough. Tom Wolfe did not like the existing representation of a narrator as "off-white or putty-colored walls […] popularized in interior decoration … a 'neutral background' against which bits of color would stand out."[57]

Overall, narration became a playing field in which any author could use any voice that suited him and the story he was telling. Capote shows that there could be several different narrative styles present in one story in his writing of *In Cold Blood.* His narration is done in two different styles, narrated by several different people. Narration done by the omniscient narrator sets the scene and introduces characters. When the narration needs to be more dramatic and informational, the characters are given the narrator's role, either as witnesses or as the killers – the most gripping parts about the actual crime are narrated by the perpetrators themselves: "Right then. Started with Mrs Clutter. I made Dick help me – because I didn't want to leave him alone with the girl."[58]

The language is no longer strictly factual, simple, with short sentences. The writing style is now an inseparable part of telling the story. The focus on more poetic language and finding one's own style is undeniable. Wolfe writes on this topic:

> "I found that things like exclamation points, italics, and abrupt shifts (dashes) and syncopations (dots) helped to give the illusion not only of a person talking but a person thinking. […] It is not very often that one comes across a new style, period. […], but [finding a new style] via journalism – I suppose that would seem extraordinary."[59]

This new style of writing brought great freedom to journalism, since the writers were free to use exclamation points, interjections, onomatopoeia.

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[55] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 167.
[56] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 168.
[57] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 17.
[58] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 223.
[59] Wolfe, *The New Journalism*. 21-22.

In observing Capote's writing, one feature freely used in *In Cold Blood* are parentheses. Capote uses them to insert extra information either connected to the story he is telling: "Perry could be 'such a kid' […] crying in his sleep ('Dad, I been looking everywhere, where you been, Dad?),"[60] or quite inconsequential for the reader: "(a pair of railroad workers robbed and killed an elderly farmer 11-1-52; a drunken husband beat and kicked his wife to death, 6-7-56)."[61] Using of parentheses is prominent, however, there are also other devices from new journalism found in his work, such as onomatopoeia, even though the instances are rare: "The sudden rain rapped the high warehouse roof. The sound, not unlike the rat-a-tat-tat of parade drums."[62]

Free indirect discourse, a classic device used in fiction, has also found its way into journalism. Authors could not create an engaging novel-like non-fiction story, without giving the readers lively dialogues or inner thoughts. As it is now freely used in true crime writing, it must have been incorporated in journalism as well, since true crime and literary journalism often go hand in hand.[63] Free indirect discourse has its formal characteristics: "the absence of quotation marks, the past tense shift, except in the last sentence, and the pronoun shift."[64] The device also has its functions: "[it serves] to make the words sound authentic, which would not be allowed by the use of Indirect speech."[65]

This is used in *In Cold Blood* when the perceptions of the perpetrators are presented or at the beginning when the Clutter family is introduces. Through this technique, the characters are more lively and accessible, their minds are in the open.

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[60] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 99.

[61] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 140.

[62] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 311.

[63] Gisela Redeker. "Free Indirect Discourse in Newspaper Reports," *Linguistics in Netherlands*, vol. 13, issue 1, 1996. 1. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237732824_Free_indirect_discourse_in_newspaper_reports

[64] Olga Blinova, "The Notion of Free Indirect Discourse and its Use in Contemporary Journalism," *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 2015. 368. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3609299

[65] Blinova, "The Notion of Free Indirect Discourse and its Use in Contemporary Journalism," 368. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3609299

4 IN COLD BLOOD

In Cold Blood is a true crime story written by Truman Capote in 1965.[66] It is often perceived as a pillar of modern true crime genre writing since Capote incorporated many new techniques and views. *In Cold Blood* is following the Herbert Clutter family case. Clutter family murders happened on November 15, 1959, in Holcomb, Kansas.[67] Four family members were murdered in their rural home – Herbert, his wife Bonnie and two of their children, Nancy, and Kenyon. The perpetrators, Perry Smith, and Richard Hitchcock were caught and sentenced not long after. The crime became sensationalized and was immediately interesting to Truman Capote, who was wanting to write a non-fiction book for quite some time by that point and he always insisted that *In Cold Blood* is not really a true crime, but a "new journalism" or "nonfiction novel."[68]

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote is nowadays inseparably connected to the true crime case staying behind it. Newspaper articles as well as scholar papers only refer to Capote's book, not to the Clutter family case by itself. It is always standing in for the real case. I suggest that that is due to the journalistic writing style Capote uses in his story and how he interconnects this with fictional style of writing, which is not typically used in non-fiction works. *In Cold Blood* cannot be separated from journalistic writing, since it was originally published in four installments in *The New Yorker*[69] and the book itself helped to establish literary journalism and legitimize it as a new writing style. The style and structure that Capote used in writing this true crime account is so interesting and captivating, that it completely overshadowed any other work written on the topic and is referred incessantly.

4.1 Truman Capote

Capote first achieved recognition as a writer for his short story "Miriam," in the year of 1945.[70] "The most famous unpublished novelist in America"[71] got his first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, published in 1948. However, it is *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1948) is

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[66] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 577.
[67] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 515.
[68] Punnett, *Toward a Theory of True Crime Narratives: A Textual Analysis*. 2.
[69] George Steiner, "A cold-blooded happening: 'In Cold Blood' by Truman Capote," *The Guardian*. December 2, 1965. Accessed April 2, 2022. https://www.theguardian.com/books/1965/dec/02/classics
[70] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 162.
[71] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 279.

one of Capote's most popular pieces of fiction till this day, already called a "small classic"[72] when it was published.

In Cold Blood came as an idea after reading an article about the case at the end of 1959.[73] It was from then on, that Capote spent long months in Kansas interviewing the Clutter family acquaintances and later the perpetrators themselves. His interviews would, however, go on in the style of "seemingly casual conversations."[74] Capote then spent his time consulting experts from different areas to be able to portray everything correctly.[75] Capote during this time moved from the United States, which was mainly because of his vow to stay away from everything except for his work, so that he could concentrate solely on the story.[76] Capote only returned to New York after three years abroad when his work was almost done, and he saw no point in staying secluded anymore.[77]

The publishing of In Cold Blood in 1965, brought Capote great peace, the story was finally done.[78] The book itself was published in 1966[79] and was immediately proclaimed to be a masterpiece[80]. Capote's later writing, however, never came close to the success of In Cold Blood or other earlier pieces.

4.1.1 Writing of In Cold Blood

Truman Capote's approach to the writing of In Cold Blood is one of the reasons why it is so different from any other journalistic work done until that day. By looking at Capote's writing process, we can see that his writing was influenced by his relationships he created with his subjects. This is important in analyzing his writing style because it provides an explanation for his rather subjective style, which differs from the detached journalistic style that would be expected in reporting on a crime. Capote deciding to penetrate the community of Holcomb, basically living within the community, and creating relationships with the people was a new way of doing things. It is important to look at how close he, as the author, became with the people playing important part of In Cold

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[72] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 511.
[73] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 515.
[74] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 523.
[75] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 539.
[76] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 631.
[77] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 551.
[78] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 577.
[79] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 588.
[80] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 590.

Blood and with the perpetrators themselves, since these real-life relationships are playing an important role in his writing of their characters.

Over the years, Capote became less and less interested in writing fiction. He wanted to investigate, take part in the real-life events and problems and deal with them on paper: "In that mood, he opened *The New York Times* on Monday, November 16, 1959. There, all but hidden in the middle of page 39, was one column story headlined, "WEALTHY FARMER, 3 OF FAMILY SLAIN."[81] This paragraph transformed into Truman Capote's most notable work. Capote was immediately interested in the story, not only the murder itself, but the place – Kansas – which was completely foreign to him: "What excited [Capote's] curiosity, was not the murders, but their effect on that small and isolated community."[82] Capote was originally planning to write his piece on the community itself, on the family, their history, not about the perpetrators, who were unknown at the time.[83]

This interest in the community is visible in the first pages of his work, where he introduces all the characters and the town itself. Capote carefully describes the mood of the town and of the people living in it. Moreover, he alludes to the changes in the attitudes of the inhabitants that will take place after the crime. His interest in the community helped him present the town in a compelling way:

> "But afterwards, the townspeople, theretofore sufficiently unfearful of each
> other to seldom trouble to lock their doors, found fantasy re-creating them
> over and again – those sombre explosions that stimulated fires of mistrust
> in the glare of which many old neighbors viewed each other strangely, and
> as strangers."[84]

It was with the idea of an article on a community shaken by a tragedy, that Capote arrived in Kansas, accompanied by Harper Lee, saying that "it would be a tremendously involved job and would take two people."[85] Since it initially was the townspeople that interested Capote, he needed to create relationships with the inhabitants and gain their trust, so that they would let him into their lives and homes. That would turn out not to be

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[81] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 590.
[82] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 517.
[83] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 517.
[84] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 5.
[85] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 517.

an easy task for a foreigner. Not only was Capote an unknown and bizarre person to the Kansas people, but he also arrived into a community that was scared and mistrusted even the people they knew their whole lives: "Lights burned all night; doors that had never been locked were bolted; loaded guns were places next to beds. It was into that atmosphere […] that Truman and Nelle now came."[86] Getting the help of such a distressed community would be almost impossible. Eventually though, with the help of Harper Lee, he started gathering information by inconspicuous interviews: "Not once was he or Nelle seen taking notes: it was Truman's theory that the sight of a notebook, or worse still, a tape recorder, inhibited candor."[87] Using this technique, he was able to interview people without them even knowing it. By conversing with the inhabitants of the town and persons close to the Clutter family, he slowly began to get all the information he needed. In the end, he was able to penetrate the closed off community of Holcomb.

With the information gathered from everyone, mostly without them even knowing, he was then able to portray the lives of the family in a detailed way. That is to say, the first chapter of *In Cold Blood* is a detailed biography of the Clutter family members complete with information about their relationship with other townspeople. This information would be unobtainable without the cooperation of the people of Holcomb:

> "Mr Clutter had of necessity learned to cook; […]. Mr Clutter enjoyed the chore, and was excellent at it – no woman in Kansas baked a better loaf of salt-rising bread, and his celebrated coconut cookies were the first item to go at charity cake sales – but he was not a hearty eater; unlike his fellow-ranchers, […]."[88]

The arrest of the perpetrators eventually altered Capote's original plan of writing about the family only: "[…] his story expanded far beyond his original conception. He had done only half his reporting; and a worthless half at that unless he could reconstruct the lives of the killers as precisely and minutely as he had those of their victims."[89] At this point, Capote knew, that the story he was about to publish would not be enough. Harper Lee, when seeing Capote's reaction to Perry Smith, thought that their relationship

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[86] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 520.
[87] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 599.
[88] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 9.
[89] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 526.

would be an interesting love affair.[90] Capote indeed created this complicated relationship with both killers, but especially Perry, with whom he shared many similarities, which fascinated him, seeing the man "he might have been."[91] It is said that Capote in Perry "recognized his shadow, his dark side, the embodiment of his own accumulated angers and hurts."[92] Creating this bond with these men and seeing himself in one of them gives a great insight into what Capote himself was feeling and probably even why Perry's character seems so soft, almost romantic, as it is portrayed in *In Cold Blood*.

Capote had spent hours upon hours with both Dick and Perry.[93] He interviewed them not only about the crime, but about their lives, their education and childhood, which is visible from all the information the reader gathers in *In Cold Blood*. He wanted to have all the information one would need to write this story. He wanted to portray the perpetrators is as much detail as the Clutter family. Capote, however, was not a psychologist, and needed some help in that department to be able to portray the perpetrators as they really were. He flew to London to see a psychiatrist to help him with that task.[94]

The thoroughness of the work was soon understood, and the new journalism detailing came through: "His Kansas book, on the other hand, would be not only long, but complicated; he would have to weave together a bewildering collection of characters, facts, legal explanations and psychological studies."[95]

The last portion of *In Cold Blood* is mainly reporting on Perry and Dick's lives in their tiny death row cells, which mean that Capote had to be able to communicate with them and see them often enough to be able to tell the tale. He was eventually able to bribe the right people who would get him access whenever he wanted.[96] Capote was also able to correspond with both perpetrators regularly.[97] This correspondence gave Capote an immense insight into their lives in prison and even greater understanding of who they were.

This regular correspondence, even though it had taken a toll on Capote, helped him with the accumulation of important details. The relationship with Perry enabled him

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[90] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 529.
[91] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 529.
[92] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 530.
[93] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 532.
[94] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 539.
[95] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 617.
[96] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 539.
[97] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 558.

to be let into Perry's life so much so that he could read letters addressed to Perry by his family and friends and was able to put the contents of said letters into his book: "Dear Perry, I was sorry to hear about the trouble you are in and I decided to write and let you know that I remember you and would like to help you in any way that I can."[98] Capote was also able to obtain autobiographical statements that the perpetrators wrote to their psychiatrist, Dr Jones, and use them in his story as well: "One thing I never told you about the Clutter deal is this. Before I ever went to their house I knew there would be a girl there. I think the main reason I went there was not to rob them but to rape the girl,"[99] which was the first time Dick revealed his true motif and his pedophiliac tendencies.

However, writing the book and being in close relationship with two killers gave Capote depression and anxiety.[100] Not only was he not able to publish it for a very long time, since he had no ending until the perpetrator's fate was ensured, but he was constantly in the middle of the whole story, receiving letters from both, Dick and Perry, while also feeling pressured by everyone waiting for the new bestseller to finally come out, "an ambition that had grown beyond the bounds of reason."[101] Moreover, the publication meant the death of two people he, unexpectedly, became quite close to and whom he had known "as well as I know myself."[102] Eventually, on April 14, 1965, they were executed by hanging with Capote watching.[103] Immediately after it was over, Capote went back to New York to publish *In Cold Blood* with the ending he had just witnessed.

Overall, it was the closeness to the whole story that gave Capote the power to write such book. The whole perspective was new. The idea was something never before executed, and Capote was able to create something like *In Cold Blood* through mildly controversial approach that eventually paid off.

It is quite important to state, that the journalistic work on *In Cold Blood* was taken seriously by Capote, who always wanted to make sure his facts were correct. He thus worked with Sandy Campbell, a fact checker from *The New Yorker*, who checked the accuracy of *In Cold Blood* at Capote's request.[104] The work is, in Capote's own words, "immaculately factual,"[105] even though he does own up to a few "minor distortions."[106]

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[98] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 237.
[99] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 254.
[100] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 571.
[101] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 654.
[102] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 571.
[103] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 576.
[104] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 569.
[105] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 581.
[106] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 581.

4.2 Structure and language analysis

In Cold Blood was a new type of literature. Categorized as true crime, but with many different influences. Capote is not simply accounting for the events as they were described in the newspaper articles at the time. *In Cold Blood* also had its effect on journalism since reading about crime and all its gory details became popular and almost respectable. Journalists had new ways to write about it, using true crime writing style to sensationalize such crimes for the public's reading pleasure. By looking at the structure and the language of *In Cold Blood*, we can see that it differs from typical journalistic accounts in various ways and that the author uses literary devices and subjective opinions to manipulate the reader, which is important because these differences are what makes the work so notable and interesting to read, even though the facts were already accounted for by the newspaper articles.

4.2.1 Title

The title itself, *In Cold Blood*, was meticulously chosen by the author. Titles are extremely important to every work because they carry a lot of meaning inside. When a reader browses through books they would like to read, they look for an interesting title to provoke their curiosity. *In Cold Blood* says several different things about the story hidden inside its pages.

Firstly, it immediately gives the reader an idea about the genre of the book. It is clear, that the story is about a crime. Since it was originally published in parts in a newspaper, the crime the author reports upon must have happened.

Secondly, and most importantly, *In Cold Blood* insinuates, that the crime was planned. This was even noticed by Dick and Perry themselves when they were informed about the title of their story. Capote tried to calm them down and lied to them about it, but to no avail. "But [Perry and Dick] knew better, and Perry indignantly told [Capote] so: "I've been told that the book is to be coming off the press and to be sold after our executions. And that book IS entitled 'IN COLD BLOOD.' Whose fibbing? […].""[107] Perry then also states "[…] I have repeatedly informed you, there was *no* discussion at *any* time to harm the Clutters."[108] This is not, however, how Capote presents the murders in his book.

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[107] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 645.
[108] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 646.

4.2.2 Story structure

By looking at the structure used by Capote, we can see that he intentionally provides the reader with a long chapter on the perpetrators, during which the murders are not mentioned. This is of importance, because it is part of the deliberate manipulation of the reader which leads to a relationship being establish between the reader and the perpetrators, making it hard to judge them. Moreover, is shows a great difference between Capote's narrative and newspaper style narration of the case. At the beginning, the author alludes to the murders after a few short pages, breaking up the chronology of the story. It is not a problem, since every reader of the book already knows the main story. It is used mainly as a kind of a cliffhanger, the reader wants to know, how did the whole thing happen. The murder is introduced in a very poetic way of writing:

> "But then, in the earliest hours of that morning in November, a Sunday morning, certain foreign sounds impinged on the normal nightly Holcomb noises – on the keening hysteria of coyotes, the dry scrape of scuttling tumbleweed, the racing, receding wail of locomotive whistles. At the time not a soul in sleeping Holcomb heard them – four shotgun blasts, that, all told, ended six human lives."[109]

This quotation shows quite clearly the flowery writing style of Capote. Such poetic language would not be expected in a true crime story. It alludes to the quietness and coziness of the town, gives the reader an idea of the setting. Capote lures the reader in with his writing. Next, Capote takes a step back and returns to the chronological retelling, introducing people in the story in "short, cinematic scenes."[110] He carefully depicts the image of Herbert Clutter, giving every detail so that by the end, the reader feels personally attached to the person, even though they already know the family's fate. Capote also leads the reader through the day with Herbert, presenting a typical, but also the last, day of the family man, unsuspecting of what is to come. Then he swiftly goes to introduce the killers, without stating so explicitly, which is another interesting device used. He introduces them as any character in the story, but the reader knows, that this man, sipping his coffee and

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[109] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 5.
[110] Clarke, *Capote: A Biography*. 578.

smoking Pall Mall cigarettes,[111] will take away a life. We are then following the perpetrators and the family throughout their day, forming relationships as with any characters in fictional stories, almost without realizing, that they were real people.

Following the introduction, Capote proceeds with the crime itself, shockingly ending the amiable relationship the reader might have established with the family and the perpetrators. The story of the murder is skipped over, and Capote follows the ways of the investigation. The readers are uncovering everything with the policemen. Though we know the perpetrators, we do not yet know exactly what and how it happened. This is another device used by the author to keep the reader guessing and absorbed in the story.

Following the crime itself, the hunt begins and the reader followes both, the policemen and the perpetrators. This helps to create tension as we see the perpetrators getting away and the policemen groping in the dark for answers. However, as is typical in true crime works, the policemen eventually caught up with the perpetrators and their whole story is revealed. Capote kept the motive and connection of the murdered and the Clutter family to himself and only revealed the truth in the last chapter, to keep the reader guessing. Eventually, we follow the interrogations, the trial, and the capital punishment.

What Capote leaves out, however, is a usual middle part of a true crime book full of photos of the victims and perpetrators, sometimes even the crime scene itself. The lack of such photos could be connected to the new genre, that Capote tried to create with *In Cold Blood*. It is not a simple re-telling of a terrific crime, it is a fictionalized account of a true event, written in an elevated language which adds value to the story and to the whole genre it is representing.

Overall, the story is divided into four long chapters, each precisely named to elicit feelings about the upcoming information and to outline what is the chapter dealing with. The chapter names are as follows: *The Last to See Them Alive*, *Persons Unknown*, *Answer* and *The Corner*.

4.2.3 Literary journalism techniques

Journalistic style of writing is immediately visible after a few pages of the book. This is not surprising since true crime should be about facts, and reporting on an actual crime in a respective way. Capote also had a journalistic career, so this style of writing is typical for him. Firstly, we can observe a very matter-of-fact writing, simple stating of facts, at

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[111] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 13.

the beginning of the story: "Up on the highway, there are two filling stations, one of which doubles as a meagerly supplied grocery store, while the other does extra duty as a café – […]. (Holcomb, like all the rest of Kansas, is 'dry'.)"[112] This citation also shows the interesting habit Capote displays in *In Cold Blood* of inserting little facts, that are not actually important to the story, in parentheses. This is quite prevalent: "Farming is always a chancy business, but in western Kansas its practitioners consider themselves 'born gamblers', […] (the annual average is eighteen inches) […],"[113] or "[…] River Valley Farm (a name justified by the Arkansas River's meandering presence but not, certainly, by any evidence of valley)."[114] Sometimes such parentheses include much more information or even whole conversations:

> "(It was Bogart's best picture, but the old guy who played the prospector, the one who reminded Perry of his father, was terrific, too. Walter Huston. Yes, and what he had told Dick was true: He *did* know the ins and outs of hunting gold, having been taught them by his father, who was a professional prospector. […] 'Whoa, honey, whoa. I seen that show. Ends up everybody nuts. […].')"[115]

The parentheses contain extra information that Capote wanted to put into the story, yet somehow felt they needed to be distinguished from the rest as redundant and not imperative to the story. Some of them seem to be funny, some are offering a deeper look into who the people are.

Capote uses sentences that evoke the style of newspaper headlines: "'And that,' he was to testify the next day, 'was the last I seen them,'"[116] or "Speaking of her friendship with Nancy Clutter, Susan Kidwell said: 'We were like sisters. At least, that's how I felt about her – as though she were my sister.'"[117] Such sentences would work amazingly to capture the attention of any reader. This sentence style is very striking, it makes the reader wonder and outlines the next events while evoking the feelings of doom and melancholy. Capote was also using real headlines from newspapers at the time: "Clutter-English Vows

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[112] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 4.
[113] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 4.
[114] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 11.
[115] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 14.
[116] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 39.
[117] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 86.

given in Saturday ceremony: that headline, appearing in the social page of the Garden City *Telegram* for 23 November, surprised many of its readers."[118] *Telegram* is not the only newspaper Capote refers to, he also talks about other articles that were printed about the case and what they reported: 'The Kansas City *Star* printed a lengthy account of the Clutter funeral, but the edition containing the article was two days old before Perry […].'[119] He likes to connect the timeline of the articles with what the murderers were doing at the time, to make the readers realize that while all this was happening, while funeral of the Clutter family was in the news, the perpetrators were relaxing in a hotel room.

The journalistic part of the story is also visible in the portrayal of facts. Capote states dates: '[…] it was well after seven when he awakened on Saturday, 14 November, 1959,'[120] or '[…] front-page article in the 17 November edition of the Kansas City *Star*.'[121] Giving precise dates is helping to draw the timeline for the reader and also gives a sense of finality. Moreover, it helps the reader create a kind of a relationship and opinion: '(At this very moment he was eating a cold, oily tortilla.) They had crossed the border at Laredo, Texas, the morning of 23 November, […].'[122] Giving the readers and insight like this into the days after the murder gives them an understanding of what the killers must be like and helps to magnify the animosity the readers are already feeling.

Capote is immaculate with stating distances as well as dates: 'Approximately four hundred miles east of where Arthur Clutter then stood, […].'[123] Distances are helpful for the readers to realize, how far the perpetrators were able to travel, how free they must have felt, four hundred miles from where they just killed several people. Furthermore, it gives the readers a certain feeling of hopelessness yet a thrill of the upcoming chase. All the facts are stated not only to be truthful and fulfill the journalistic duty, but to give the readers a more specific idea of the time and more detail than newspaper articles could.

Capote also cites from the policemen files, to give more insight: 'The incident is noted in his files as follows: 'John Carlyle Polk, a Creek Indian, 25 years of age, resident Muskogee, Okla., killed Mary Kay Finley, white female, 40 years of age, a waitress residing in Garden City. […].''[124] Even though such a fact has nothing to do with the

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[118] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 98.
[119] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 88.
[120] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 8.
[121] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 81.
[122] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 99.
[123] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 81.
[124] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 140.

crime in question, Capote uses it to give more interesting information to the reader and keep them engaged. It shows new, interesting facts from the police work and represents the amount of information, he was able to obtain. It also helps to establish relationship with the policemen, knowing about their work and their past.

4.2.4 Writing style

Even though Capote is very factual and gives the reader precise dates, he uses beautifully poetic language. By looking at the vocabulary Capote uses in his descriptions and the figurative language we can see that the language it meticulously thought-out to evoke real feelings of loneliness, darkness, unpleasantness, and vivid imagery to make Holcomb seem as uninviting as it felt after the crime took place. This is important because it shows the shift from journalistic writing to the more novel-like feel of the story. His writing sets the mood for the whole story, which is leaning into the horror and gothic atmosphere, which are definable by feelings of "fear and shock"[125] and connected to "frightening places."[126] Firstly, adjectives are used bountifully:

> "Some seventy miles east of the Colorado border, the countryside, with its hard blue skies and desert-clear air, has an atmosphere that is rather more Far West than Middle West. […] horses, herds of cattle, a white cluster of grain elevators rising as gracefully as Greek temples […]. After rain, or when snowfalls thaw, the streets, unnamed, unshaded, unpaved, turn from the thickest dust into the direst mud."[127]

His descriptions make Holcomb and its citizens feel almost as if frozen in time and fear. The feeling of melancholy is presented as an omnipresent layer covering the city, which shrouds the reader as well: "[…], the postmistress, a gaunt woman who wears a rawhide jacket and denims and cowboy boots presides over a falling-apart post office. The depot itself, with its peeling sulphur-coloured paint, is equally melancholy; […]."[128] The reader immediately feels disquieted and expectations for the darkness of the story are set. "No

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[125] "Horror," *Cambridge Dictionary*. Accessed June 21, 2022.
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/horror
[126] "Gothic," *Cambridge Dictionary*. Accessed June 21, 2022.
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/gothic
[127] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 1.
[128] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 4.

passenger trains do – only an occasional freight. Up on the highway, there are two filling stations, one of which doubles as a meagerly supplied grocery store […]. And that, really, is all."[129] Capote's language makes everything seems almost finite. As the place presented as gloomy and secluded, so are the people: "The inhabitants of the village, numbering two hundred and seventy, were satisfied that this should be so, quite content to exist inside ordinary life – to work, to hunt, […]."[130] The emphasis Capote puts on the mood and the setting is differentiating *In Cold Blood* from simple newspaper reporting of the crime. His descriptions are just as influential when Perry and Dick are introduced:

> "Sitting, he had seemed a more than normal-sized man, a powerful man, with the shoulders, the arms, the thick, crouching torso of a weigh-lifter – weight-lifting was, in fact, his hobby. But some sections of him were not in proportion to others. His tiny feet, […], would have neatly fitted into a delicate lady's dancing slippers; when he stood up, he was no taller than a twelve-year-old child, […]."[131]

Such a grotesque image of Perry, a terrifying killer, must influence the reader. How is one to be afraid of a person that seems weak and small, like a child and how is someone like that capable of murdering four people. Painting such a picture differentiates Perry from the Holcomb citizens. Perry does not look scary, but pitiful. One wants to know more about the perpetrator himself. Dick was described by Capote as follows:

> "It was true that the tightening action of a smile contracted his face into its correct proportions, and made it possible to discern a less unnerving personality – […], sane enough but not too bright. (Actually, he was very intelligent. An I.Q. test taken in prison gave him a rating of 130; the average subject, in prison or out, scores between 90 and 110.)"[132]

It is worth noticing, that while the image of Perry is more piteous, Dick is rather scary. Not only based on his looks, but also on his intelligence. The descriptions here are

[129] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 4.
[130] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 5.
[131] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 14.
[132] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 29.

carefully crafted to differentiate between the two perpetrators and sway the reader's opinion, make them think that one is worse than the other, which is not an objective reporting style of writing, but represents a rather subjective view of Capote's.

In descriptions, Capote also uses a lot of dashes, which allows him to give more details about the people and places he is describing, it provides more facts: "Nancy had been reasonable – at any rate, she had not argued – and now, before saying good night […],"[133] or "[…] the men who worked for him – and there were sometimes as many as eighteen – had small reasons to complain."[134]

With his writing, he can draw attention to whatever he needs to be visible and disquieting to the reader: "Mr Clutter seldom encountered trespassers on his property; a mile and a half from the highway, and arrived at by obscure roads, it was not a place that strangers came upon by chance."[135] With the facts the author decides to give to the readers, he alludes to the reality, that there must have been some connection between the murderers and the Clutter family, a motive. Withholding that information is a thought-out strategy by Capote, since it is something that keeps the reader guessing and interested the whole time while accentuating the horror and gothic-like feelings of fear.

Capote keeping the information about the motif is also similar to the tactics used in a crime novel. The reader slowly discovers pieces of evidence that the author is offering, yet the revelation only comes at the end when the author decides it is the right time. Capote does this not with who the killers are, since they are introduced within the first pages, but with other information that are important, and he can afford to hold them back. That was the case of the connection between Dick, Perry, and the Clutter family. Same thing could be seen with Dick's pedophiliac tendencies, which are implied in many ways, but not clearly stated until the second half of the novel.

Capote also uses metaphors. Metaphors describe an object or a person by referring to something that is considered of similar characteristics.[136] Through those metaphors, he can create a vivid imagery for the reader without extra descriptions, so that they have the correct effect. They are used for the characterization of the people of Holcomb: "Mrs Clare is a famous figure in Finney County. […] woman of unrevealed age […] but promptly revealed opinions, most of which are announced in a voice of rooster-crow

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[133] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 8.
[134] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 10.
[135] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 12.
[136] "Metaphor," *Cambridge Dictionary*. Accessed June 21, 2022.
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/metaphor

altitude and penetration."[137] The reader can imagine the voice of the character and the effect is immediate. Another example could be: "But it's a job you *bid* for. Goes to whoever puts in the lowest bid. And I always do – so low a caterpillar could peak over it."[138] Metaphors are also used by Capote when he dives into the minds of the perpetrators: "What was there to look forward to? He and Dick were 'running a race without a finishing line' – that war how it struck him,"[139] which has a specific meaning about running from the law. It is thus understandable, that even the perpetrators knew what the eventual outcome would be. When referring to the perpetrators, metaphors with "gut" are used several times, since it is more graphic, thus it is more effectual: "But *he* thought so. I always knew if we ever got caught, if Dick every really let fly, dropped his guts all over the goddamn floor – […],"[140] or "Dick would never do that – 'spill his guts'."[141] It is worth noticing, that the metaphors are only used in dialogues or thoughts of the characters into which they are incorporated, so they serve to bring more vividness to the characters themselves.

Capote is the master of free indirect discourse. By looking at the way he uses it, we can see the shift that takes place from simple news reporting to a more in-depth analysis of his subjects connected to the personal relationship with the subjects, which is important when studying how his narration differs from published articles and how it appeals to the readers. Capote's account of the crime is built on intimate details and information that only the Clutter family or the perpetrators, Perry, and Dick themselves, could have had. Those are also the pieces that put the narrative together and make it more like a novel than a non-fiction account of a crime. Each person is described as any character in a novel would be:

> "Normally, Nancy would willingly have taught Jolene to prepare an entire
> turkey dinner; she felt it her duty to be available when younger girls came
> to her wanting help with their cooking, their sewing, or their music lessons
> […]. Where she found the time, and still managed to 'practically run that
> big house' and be a straight-A student, the president of her class, a leader in

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[137] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 63.
[138] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 63.
[139] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 185.
[140] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 213.
[141] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 176.

the 4-H programme and the Young Methodists League, a skilled rider, an excellent musician […], an annual winner at the county fair […]."[142]

Each person is introduced to the reader, even praised. Naturally, every reader forms a relationship over the course of the book with each person, as one does with fictional characters in novels and it is at moments hard to realize, that they were real people, not characters in the author's story. The realization that their lives were taken away in real life, makes the reader even more taken aback by them. The whole first chapter is dedicated to their lives, their personalities, and friendships, yet by page seventy, their lives are gone and the reader proceeds to the chase, it almost feels as if they were stolen just when a relationship was forming between them and the reader. This feeling of relationship with the characters is unique to Capote's type of reporting in *In Cold Blood* and closely tied to free indirect discourse, because it does not happen when reading about the case in newspaper articles. Dick and Perry, the perpetrators, have a much more persisting presence. The readers are getting to know them as any other person and are, almost unwillingly, forming relationships with them as well. Here Capote again influences the reader by his subjectivity when presenting Perry as swayed by Dick: "[…] Dick was very literal-minded, […] Dick's literalness, his pragmatic approach to every subject, was the primary reason Perry had been attracted to him, for it made Dick seem, compared to himself, so authentically tough, invulnerable, 'totally masculine'."[143] Without a proximity to the subjects, Capote could not have created his subjective opinions and portray them in his work. It is the step he took towards the characters that enabled him to write in their voices and confuse readers with alternating feelings of fear and pity for Perry.

Part two of the book, *Persons Unknown*, continues to show the reader that the author might not be so impartial. This is the part in which the writing process of Capote's becomes even more important. This part shows sympathy towards both the killers, but mainly Perry, who is often portrayed by Capote not as an appalling killer, but as a victim: "When Perry said, 'I think there must be something wrong with us,' he was making an admission he 'hated to make.' […] particularly if whatever was wrong was not your own fault but 'maybe a thing you were born with.' Look at his family: Look at what had

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[142] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 17.
[143] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 16.

happened there!"[144] Immediately, Perry is shown in a light that makes the reader think about the nurture versus nature discussion. And as the author proceeds to portraying Perry in a sentimental way, a little foolish and naïve type of a person, who suffers because of his bad leg and terrible childhood, the reader starts to be swayed and see him that way too. Before the readers understand what is happening, they nurture feelings of sympathy towards Perry, the little flicker of hope that maybe it was all Dick's doing. This works especially well since the murders are rarely mentioned in this part.

Dick, on the other hand, is not described as such a gullible, sensitive kind of a person as Perry: "A hundred feet ahead, a dog trotted along the side of the road. Dick swerved towards it. […], and the impact, as it met the car, was little more than what a bird might make. But Dick was satisfied. […] running down a dog, [which] was something he did whenever the opportunity arose. 'Boy! We sure splattered him!'"[145] Dick, as is visible from this extract, is presented in a much harsher light. From the beginning, he is portrayed to be the one intending to "do the job," as he calls it. Dick is never the victim in the narrator's eyes, always the cruel perpetrator. One cannot help themselves but feel pity for Perry and hatred towards Dick. Capote lets Dick take the fall for the murders in the eyes of the reader, while he shelters Perry, presenting him as a handicapped man. He not only does this to simply favor Perry, but also uses this as a shock factor later, when he reveals, that it was actually Perry who murdered the family. Moreover, there is a striking lack of information about Dick, but almost a surfeit of facts about Perry. There is a visible difference in how Capote treats Perry versus Dick based on the information he has and gives about them. Obviously, Perry is much more discussed and dissected.

Interestingly, the author also seems almost indifferent towards the Clutter family. After the praise of their characters in Part I, he scarcely mentions them and when, there are no sentiments involved. In all actuality, the description of the Clutter funeral is extremely disquieting and factual. The way Capote talks about the victims is grotesque, without any emotion except for disgust:

"The four coffins, which quite filled the small, flower-crowded parlour,
were to be sealed at the funeral services – very understandably, for despite
the care taken with the appearance of the victims, the effect achieved was

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[144] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 101.
[145] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 103.

disquieting. Nancy wore her dress of cherry-red velvet, her brother a bright plaid shirt; the parents were sedately attired, Mr Clutter in navy-blue flannel, his wife in navy-blue crepe; and – and it was this, especially, that lent the scene an awful aura – the head of each was completely encased in cotton, a swollen cocoon twice the size of an ordinary blown-up balloon, and the cotton, because it had been sprayed with a glossy substance, twinkled like a Christmas-tree snow."[146]

This description is almost disrespectful, gossipy. It serves well to paint the picture and atmosphere, but the way the victims are talk about is enough to make any reader uneasy, which is also connected to the whole gothic mood Capote is setting. It is almost too factual, describing what each of the victims was dressed in and what they head looked like, after being cold bloodedly murdered. Capote shows no emotion, especially in comparison with his descriptions of Perry, his life and later his time spent on death row.

Another interesting and smart decision was to go through the murder itself in Part I, and then almost forget about it in Part II. The reader goes through 74 pages with nearly no mention of the Clutter family murders. It is dedicated to Perry and Dick, who the readers follow on their run from the scene and from justice. Together with the author, the readers go on a trip down the memory lane of Perry and Dick's lives. Capote's manipulation of the reader is gradual, but immensely successful. It is a shocking revelation to the reader when they realize it around the middle of Part II. Melissa W. Noel calls this the best example of an author's deliberate manipulation of an audience she knows.[147] Manipulating audience is one of Capote's strong points in *In Cold Blood*. Through language, he is able to build tension in an already well-known story, to steer the reader and deliberately take them where he wants them to go, to make them feel the way he feels while writing it.

Capote writes in longer sentences, usually over two or three lines, but only rarely are the sentences uninterrupted by different punctuation. These stylistic devices can be observed throughout the whole story and by looking at them we can see how Capote differs from novelists in his writing style. The importance in this is for the understanding that even though Capote's approach was different from a simple reporting style, he kept

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[146] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 87.
[147] Melissa W. Noel, "A Cold Manipulation of Language," *The English Journal*, vol. 100, no. 4, page 51. March 2011. Accessed April 9, 2022. *JSTOR*. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23047778

some distinguishable marks of reporting in the usage of stylistic devices which then make *In Cold Blood* stand out between novels. He often uses dashes and parentheses, but also colons, semicolons, dots or even asterisks: "([…] I thought the answer might be another woman – a triangle. Well, consider: Mr Clutter was a fairly young, very healthy man, but his wife, she was a semi-invalid, she slept in a separate bedroom…), […]."[148] This sentence has several symbols disturbing the flow of the sentence. This way of writing is unusual for a novel and it a distinguishable characteristic of the writing style Capote uses in *In Cold Blood*. Italicized words are also commonly used throughout the story: "Someone left it open and empty on Clutter's bed – I *don't* think it was the owner. […] We found two dollars in an envelope on Nancy's deck. And we *know* Clutter cashed a cheque for sixty bucks just the day before."[149] Again, more than just italicized words can be observed, since the author usually uses many stylistic devices at once, either to provide more information or accentuate information.

4.3 Newspaper articles

Newspaper articles about the Clutter family murders are not written in the modern journalism techniques, since the case dates to 1959. Nevertheless, the standard journalistic writing style stayed the same throughout the years. This chapter is concentrating on the writing style and the main views portrayed in the articles. It is also important to state, that nowadays, when looking up the Clutter family case, Capote's name and *In Cold Blood* usually stand in for the actual crime. By looking at the newspaper articles reporting on the Clutter family case, we can see the journalistic methods the writers used and the objective reporting. This is important because we can the changes that took place in Capote's writing and how the crime was reshaped under his influence and compare the two reports of the same crime.

The *Kansas City Times* reported on the case in a front-page article on 16 November 1959 in the following way: "FOUR IN FAMILY SLAIN: […] The sheriff said there was no sign of forced entry. Apparently, no resistance had been offered by any member of the household. […] Dr. Fenton made a preliminary examination of the bodies at the Phillips funeral home here. He said that Clutter's throat had been cut and that the

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[148] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 78.
[149] Capote, *In Cold Blood*. 79.

jugular vein had been severed."[150] First articles about the case were superficial, working with the only information they were allowed to use at the time. The journalistic style used is going by the book, with short, clear sentences. Technical language is used while reproducing the doctor's statement. No personal information about the family members is given, the article is straight to the point.

Article by Bob Greer published in *Garden City Telegram* showed a little more personal approach and was written more dramatically, targeting readers' feelings: "CLUTTER FAMILY SLAYINGS SHOCKS, MYSTIFY AREA: School went on as usual – at first glance – at Holcomb this morning. This small western Finney County community, stunned by one of the most tragic events in regional annals, went about its way in an almost ordinary manner this morning."[151] While *The Kansas City Times* reported mainly on the facts, immediately stating names, ages and the case itself, *Garden City Telegram* started with focusing on the town's community and feelings, which is an approach closer to Capote. We can also observe the dashes with added information for dramatic effect, same as in Capote's use.

After the capture of the killers, *Garden City Telegram* printed the following article: "SMITH CONFESSES TAKING PART IN SLAYINGS: An oral confession was given by Perry Smith last night admitting he participated in the murders of four members of the Herbert W. Clutter family. Smith 31, Las Vegas, made the statements in a car while enroute from Las Vegas."[152] Although the author is not stated, it is obviously much less sentimental and dramatic in writing then the article from November 1959. Once again, strictly factual writing is introduced without any emotionally charged words. Sentences are short and to the point. There are no sentimental feelings displayed towards Perry, moreover, he is referred to by his surname or full name, which shows distance from the subject.

Another article, also printed in *Garden City Telegram*, this time written by Bob Greer, has a different feeling to it: "Perry Edward Smith logged a lot of miles in his 31 years of life before two policemen nabbed him in a parking lot at Las Vegas, Nev., on

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[150] Dick Parr and Joe Wellington, "Four in Family Slain," *The Kansas City Times*, vol. 122, no. 266, page 1. November 16, 1959. Accessed April 10, 2022.
https://www.newspapers.com/image/658924545/?terms=Clutter&match=1
[151] Bob Greer, "Clutter Family Slayings Shock, Mystify Area," *Garden City Telegram,* vol. 31, no. 5, page 1. November 16, 1959. Accessed April 10, 2022.
https://www.newspapers.com/image/2190755/?terms=Clutter&match=1
[152] "Smith Confesses Taking Part in Slayings," *Garden City Telegram*, vol. 31, no. 45, page 1. January 5, 1960. Accesses April 10, 2022.
https://www.newspapers.com/image/2197350/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1

Wednesday, Dec. 30. […] His life travels read like a travelogue: Alaska, Mexico, Nevada, Washington, Idaho, […]."[153] The facts are still in prominence, however, Greer is also interested in Perry, as Capote was, and writes about him not simply as a murderer, but is trying to discover his history as well. Nevertheless, he is again referred to by his full name and the distance between the author and subject is visible.

Surprisingly unadorned is also the following article: "COMMUTES DEATH SENTENCE: […] Two cases which likely will reach governor's desk in a few months are those of Richard Hitchcock and Perry Smith, condemned to die in the sensational Herbert W. Clutter case."[154] The article proceeds to state, that Dick and Perry were tried by the newspapers in advance, even though it is true that they were probably guilty.[155] This is a surprising statement mainly because at that point in time, both the perpetrators were declared guilty in trial. This article stayed completely clear from any subjectivity, the report is almost perfunctory, without any real interest in the story.

Their execution was commented on by a great number of newspapers as well: "HITCHCOCK, SMITH PAY EXTREME PENALTY: Cold, Crude, Casual and Impersonal"[156] announces *Garden City Telegram*'s Bill Brown, incorporating alliteration. Brown proceeds with the following:

> "As cold as the sheets of steel stacked on the warehouse floor. As casual as the guard leaning against a pile of lumber. As impersonal as the hangman, whose expression never changed under his broad-brimmed hat. […] I witnessed [the capital punishment] being carried out on two men in the early hours of this morning. I know it happened but was mesmerized into a state of unreality by the total insignificance of the surroundings. […] Two ropes swung from a heavy cross beam about eight feet above the platform. […] There was no squirming or utterances from the bodies. […] The stark reality about what I had witnessed came later […]."[157]

[153] Bob Greer, "Perry Smith Logs Many Long Miles," *Garden City Telegram,* vol. 31, no. 51, page 2. January 12, 1960. Accessed April 10, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/2198198
[154] "Commutes Death Sentence," *Ottawa Herald*, vol. 64, no. 108, page 1. April 12, 1960. Accessed April 10, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/1268037/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1
[155] "Commutes Death Sentence," *Ottawa Herald*, page 1. https://www.newspapers.com/image/1268037/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1
[156] Bob Greer, "Hitchcock, Smith Pay Extreme Penalty," *Garden City Telegram,* vol. 36, no. 138, page 1. April 15, 1965. Accessed April 10, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/2081667/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1
[157] Greer, "Hitchcock, Smith Pay Extreme Penalty," *Garden City Telegram*, page 1. https://www.newspapers.com/image/2081667/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1

This article is surprisingly personal and unlike any other on the topic of Clutter family killer's execution. It is not written in the typical third-person narration, but in the first-person point of view. The language is melodic, Brown uses alliteration and expressive vocabulary. Short, resolute sentences that are clear, but their aim is not simply to give information, but to evoke feelings of dread a horror. The whole scene is painted in bright colors. This is an example of literary journalism in practice and a great connection to Capote's reporting of the crime. The wait for the execution was so long – several years – that the sensational feeling around and the portrayal of the final execution of the capital punishment seemed justifiable. Still, there were much less excited accounts written on the same topic: "Richard Hitchcock and Perry Smith were executed at the Kansas Penitentiary early today for the murder of four members of the Herbert Clutter family five years ago. The trap was sprung on Hitchcock at 12:19 a.m., in the corner of a dingy warehouse at the Kansas penitentiary […]."[158] This account is again impersonal, short and to the point, with exact dates and times stated. There are some expressive words to be found, but not nearly as empathic as Bill Brown's article.

Nowadays, the real case is in the shadow of *In Cold Blood*. While looking for the Clutter family murders, it has become sensationalized and is mainly reported on by websites connected to or reporting on true crime stories. Every such article mentions Capote, quotes him, or simply redirects to *In Cold Blood*. Capote's work influenced the case to such an extent it is now sometimes also called "In Cold Blood murders."

4.4 Comparison

The influence of *In Cold Blood* on the Clutter family case was, and still is, extreme. Rarely does it happen, that a book written on a crime becomes more interesting and famous than the crime itself. Capote, however, was able to do that, for better or worse. Yet his portrayal of the story has its differences from the actual newspaper reports written on the crime at the time it was happening.

Firstly, one surely notices the difference in the language. Capote was reporting on the crime as any other journalist, but his writing is visibly different. He, as an author and a journalist, did very thorough research on the story he was writing. Yet it soon became

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[158] "Hitchcock, Smith Hang for Clutter Murder," *The Daily News of Johnson County*, vol. 6., no. 7, page 1. April 14, 1965. Accessed April 10, 2022.
https://www.newspapers.com/image/816426480/?terms=clutter%20case&match=1

evident to him that a simple reporting would not do the story justice. As an author experienced with writing fiction, he used his lyrical writing style combined with journalistic writing. By this, he achieved a new style overall, that become hugely popular and used by a wide variety of journalists – literary journalism. This helped *In Cold Blood* to differentiate from other reports on the Clutter family case immediately, not only by its length, but the way it was written.

Capote's writing style makes *In Cold Blood* feel like fiction. The descriptions of the scene are poetic, the language sets the scene and mood, and it almost feels as if the Clutter family was a fictional family living the American dream, with amazingly popular, intelligent, and skilled daughter and respectable, well-liked father. Not even the perpetrators seem like real people. Perry is portrayed almost grotesquely, but with great emotional depth and terrible childhood history which made him into the person he is today. He is often sympathized with presented in a slightly better light then would be expected for a killer. Dick, on the other hand, is shown as a cold-blooded killer with hard past, but nothing to excuse his behavior.

Capote incorporates many journalistic elements, such as parenthesis, asterisks, dashes, or whole sentences similar to newspaper headlines. On the other hand, he pairs all those components with flowery descriptions, allusions, and lengthy sentences of fictional writing style. Journalistic articles from that time do not use fictionalized accounts of the story with a rare exception of Bob Greer's and Bill Brown's articles. Even these journalists, however, do not incorporate free indirect discourse as Capote does freely.

Another difference if Capote's relationship and thus his portrayal of Perry and Dick. Capote was able to create emotional portrayals of every person, even the killers themselves. Journalist writing articles never tried to expose any sides of the perpetrators that would make the readers empathetic towards them, yet Capote did this on regular basis. Throughout his language, he was slowly manipulating the reader into seeing more sides of Perry and Dick, trying to make them feel emotional towards their lives as well. His way of researching for *In Cold Blood* has been marked as controversial several times, yet without it, the book would not exist, or certainly would not revel in such popularity. Capote was able to establish an unprecedented relationship with the perpetrators he was to write about and use it, over the next six years of his research, to establish highly dimensional characters that would sway the audience. This close relationship can mainly be observed in the portrayal of Perry. This emotional connection between Capote and

Perry was transferred into *In Cold Blood* pages and continues to baffle its readers to this day. This is also helped by the fact that Capote held closely onto the information that Perry was the actual killer until the last moment possible, which allowed the readers to create a certain relationship with Perry, much like Capote did, and only then get hit with the realization that the poor, unstable Perry was the one to kill four people in cold blood.

The length of Capote's report on the case is to be considered. Until his writing of *In Cold Blood*, it was not a standard practice that an article would be published in parts of several newspaper issues. Admittedly, it was not Capote's aim to write a book length account at the beginning. Nevertheless, his proximity to the perpetrators gave him an amazing insight into who they were and mainly, what they were doing and thinking before, during and after the murder. No other reporter had that information. Thus, only Capote was able to recreate the true crime into a story that felt like fiction, full of conversations and thoughts that not one person, but the perpetrators themselves, would know. Given all this inside information, Capote was able to write a whole chapter on their run from the scene. His relationship with Dick and Perry also given him all the facts he needed for the chapter about their lives in prison. He was able to interview their relatives, use their personal letters to himself and other people. No one else got this close and not a single journalist was able to report on anything personal. Every journalist was limited to reporting on the current information.

Capote was able to create a whole new genre, that he himself called the *nonfiction novel*. In *In Cold Blood*, he brought together fictional writing style with journalistic reporting of true crime. Thus, his novel is a completely different genre than the articles written on the Clutter family case. Not only are the articles strictly factual, reporting the news at the time they are happening without emotions, but in most cases, they follow strictly journalistic writing style. Capote, on the other hand, let go of the journalism in most parts and submerged himself and the reader, into a whole world and community as if one was reading a novel. His rewriting of the crime changes the story and the genre dramatically.

The story structure Capote uses is typical for true crime yet differs from the newspaper articles and news coverage. Journalists did not have the same access to information as Capote had and thus were unable to recreate the scenes of the two perpetrators on run or report on what had taken place in the house of the night of the murder. Capote was able to write about that and incorporate this into his account of the case, which gave him much more to write about and changed the amount of information

and in connection the structure of his story from the newspaper coverage. This amount of information also made the story feel more personal to the reader. Moreover, the way Capote was able to recreate the scenes made his account more horrifying than the cold reporting done in newspaper.

Capote's relationship with the whole Garden City community and mainly Perry and Dick themselves gave him the ability to create a true crime story in an extremely compelling way. Undeniably, the whole world knew what there was to know about the murders, but the inside information Capote was able to produce made his story unparalleled. His poetic language used to set the scene invites the readers in during the first chapter. The horrific account of the murders as retold by people close to the family gives a new angle, never used by any journalist. Finally, Dick and Perry, the perpetrators, close enough for the reader to feel connection to them, sharing their feelings and ideas is what lures the audience in and keeps them interested throughout the whole book. Capote was able to create a whole new account of the Clutter family murders, a poetic, terrifying and absorbing account, that changes the real story into something that almost feels like a fiction, which is exactly what the reader finds the most appealing.

5 THE COLLECTOR

The Collector by John Fowles is viewed as a major crime fiction novel that is popular due to its disturbing characters, uneasy story line and switching perspectives. However, one fact about this story is usually ignored – the writing is so convincing, that it inspired people to act upon it. In this chapter I investigate that gap and concentrate on Fowles' writing to show, that it truly is his style that makes it so persuasive.

  The Collector is a novel published in 1963, about a young art student, Miranda, who is kidnapped and held captive by a young, uneducated, and unloved Frederick. Frederick collects butterflies and loves taking photographs. Miranda, to him, is just another beautiful species, as elusive as a butterfly, so one day he decides he must capture her and make her an addition to his collection. After winning the pools, he is able to buy an old, secluded house, where he builds an underground room for his new addition to the collection. Believing Miranda will fall in love with him over their time spend together, he abducts her. A sudden switch of perspectives introduces a struggling, desperate Miranda left all by herself in the underground room. In her diary, she writes all her attempts and ruses she used to understand Frederick and gain her freedom. Miranda never gets to have her freedom again and dies a captive, as all his collected butterflies did.

5.1 Writing of *The Collector*

  Fowles started working on *The Collector* in November 1960, as he states in his journal entry from November 24, 1960, and he explains it the following way: "The collector himself is to symbolize the mediocrity of our present society; the caught one, its hope and true vitality, pointlessly, maliciously crushed."[159] He worked on *The Collector* for two more years yet does not talk about it often in his journals. Another mention of it is from March 31, 1961: "E[160] has recently read *The Collector* and resented it – she has taken the attack on the uneducated to her heart. […] I can't get her to realize how symbolical it is intended to be. Platonic. Gold against lead. […] all [Elizabeth's] sympathies are for the leaden-souled. Metaphysically, they deserve pity."[161] In 1962, Fowles was ready to get his first novel published: "With Podge. He took away the first fifty pages of *The Collector* to read in Oxford recently. He thinks it 'up to standard',

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[159] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005). 452.
[160] Note: Elizabeth, author's wife
[161] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 459.

'publishable', but wouldn't say any more."[162] At this time, Fowles thinks that *The Collector* is simply bad, but no one wants to tell him that. He feels that his wife does not like it as cannot imagine any publishers, critics or readers liking it, yet he feels it is complete and should be published.[163] On May 15, 1962, however, Fowles receives a letter from Mr. Kinross, who feels the novel "extremely well accomplished."[164] It was finally published by Jonathan Cape in London, in May 1963,[165] and meant that Fowles could stop teaching and commit to his writing career full time. Many other publications followed, between those the most notable being *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Daniel Martin*, or *A Maggot*.

His unpublished diaries were revealed after his death and showed many controversial ideas Fowles had. In volume I of his *Journals*, Fowles himself states three sources for writing *The Collector*. Observing Fowles' reasons for writing it is important, because when we look at them, we can see that there were personal motifs present, which is significant, since is allows for understanding of persuasiveness of the story.

> "One. My lifelong fantasy of imprisoning a girl underground. I think this must go back to early in my teens. I remember it used often to be famous people. Of course, there was a main sexual motive; the love-through-knowledge motive, or motif, has also been constant. The imprisoning, in other words, has always been a forcing of my personality as well as my penis on the girl concerned. Variations I can recall: the harem […]; the threat […]; the fellow-prisoner […]; the selection board […]. These fantasies have long been exteriorized in my mind […]. Two, the air-raid shelter incident.[166] Three, Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle*."[167]

Capote's way of researching and creating relationships with perpetrators was controversial, as are Fowles' reasons and fantasies that prompted him to write *The Collector*. Even though the story is pure fiction, it may be unsettling to know that its roots were in somebody's actual fantasies. The realness, that is hidden behind the story,

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[162] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 500.
[163] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles.* 501.
[164] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 507.
[165] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 546.
[166] Reference to then contemporary newspaper article about a boy who captured a girl and imprisoned her in an air-raid shelter at the end of his garden.
[167] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 543-544.

however, is what enabled Fowles' to write such a compelling story that felt real to readers. It was not only the writer's fantasy, but many of the readers' as well. Reading such a novel, with Fowles' compelling writing and the readers' easily susceptible mind, it is not inconceivable, that some of them have decided to try Frederick's actions on their own and used *The Collector* as a loose manual.

5.2 Structure analysis

The Collector is a fictional crime novel, a thriller. This piece of writing was not completely based on any real crime but was inspired by one and by the author's fantasies. Nevertheless, Fowles compelling writing and his ability to write "page-turners," or in other words books, that one cannot put down, have turned out to have a real effect on readers. While true crime is reporting on an already committed crime, Fowles was, unknowingly, reporting on future crimes inspired by his novel. *The Collector* is a piece of postmodernist writing full of psychological probing.

5.2.1 Story structure

The structure of *The Collector* is mostly chronological. The story is divided into 4 different parts without any names, simply numbered, which works amazingly with the simple language of the whole story. Observing the story structure, we can see that Fowles' structuring of events corresponds with Capote's structure of firstly introducing the perpetrators and victim and only then proceeding with the crime itself. This is important because it shows how the structure differs from reporting, where the crime is always mentioned first and how the story could be viewed as a manual by easily influenced readers.

Part one is an introduction in the life of Frederick, also called Clegg. It is narrated by Frederick himself and tells a short history of his life. Throughout this part, Frederick prepares for the kidnapping of Miranda. Part 1 immediately starts with Frederick talking about Miranda: "When she was home from her boarding-school I used to see her almost every day sometimes, because their house was right opposite the Town Hall Annexe. She and her younger sister used to go in and out a lot, often with young men, which of course I didn't like."[168] In the first sentence of the book, the tone is already set, alluding to Frederick's obsession with Miranda and what might come next. Frederick explains his

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[168] John Fowles, *The Collector* (London: Vintage, Random House, 2004). 9.

fantasies about Miranda: "She drew pictures and I looked after my collection (in my dreams). It was always she loving me and my collection, drawing and colouring them; working together […]."[169] However, his malevolent side does not stay hidden: "The only times I didn't have nice dreams about her being when I saw her with a certain young man, […]. Those were days I let myself have the bad dreams. She cried or usually knelt. Once I let myself dream I hit her across the face as I saw it done once by a chap in a telly play. Perhaps that was when it all started."[170]

The introduction into Frederick's mind is abrupt and open. Following explanation of his meeting Miranda, he proceeds to tell the story of winning a large sum of money and the preparations for her kidnapping. This is already and interesting point, since in thrillers or crime novels it is unusual to introduce the perpetrator first. Typically, the reader comes to the end of the story – the kidnapping or the murder – and only then does one learn about the perpetrator and preparations. Fowles, however, decided to have the perpetrator himself tell the story, which is fascinating and adds to the feeling of connection the reader has to Frederick. In this, the similarities with Capote's reporting on the Clutter family case are striking. Both authors decided to introduce the characters first and use their voices in the preparations of the crimes. This allows for formation of a relationship with the character and for living through the action with the protagonist.

Part one does not stop with the preparations but follows the chloroforming of Miranda and the time she spent in captivity until the moment she got sick:

> "I thought it was for the best, and I thought the pills might do the trick and she would be better the next morning, with the worst past. I even felt it was a good thing, her being ill […]. What I am trying to say is that is all came unexpected. I know what I did next day was a mistake, but up to that day I thought I was acting for the best and within my right."[171]

Frederick is portrayed in a special way, similar to that of Perry in *In Cold Blood*. It is sympathetic. The way Frederick is talking about Miranda's illness is almost innocent, as if he himself was the victim, because he did not expect it to happen and though he acted correctly. Though it is obvious to the reader, that holding somebody in an underground

[169] Fowles, *The Collector*. 10.
[170] Fowles, *The Collector*. 10-11.
[171] Fowles, *The Collector*. 113.

chamber and not allowing them to see a doctor is not innocent, it is the way Frederick speaks about it, that evokes pity.

Part two, even if still proceeding chronologically in itself, goes back in time and mirrors most of what happened in part 1. There is an abrupt change of perspectives and Miranda becomes the narrator. Her part, however, is told in journal entries. She explains many of her thoughts and ruses she used on Frederick. Another addition is her reminiscing about her life in London and about her own relationships in real life. As she descends further into sickness and is unable to write anymore, her narration ends.

Miranda's view provides the reality of what is happening: "I must must must escape. I spent hours and hours today thinking about it. Wild ideas. He's so cunning, it's incredible. […] And each day here is like a week outside."[172] She is representing what the victim is feeling and it is what brings the reader back to the realization that Frederick is not to be pitied. The diary style is much more personal which is also why Miranda has such an effect on the reader. This view was missing in *In Cold Blood* and the reality came in the revelation that Perry is the main killer, which was at much later point than in *The Collector*.

Part three switches back to Frederick's point of view, when it is let on that he never got Miranda a doctor. Frederick alternated between feeling bad for what he did to Miranda and "what is done is done" approach: "I forgot all she did in the past and I was sorry for her, I was truly sorry for what I did that other evening, but I wasn't to know she was really ill. It was spilt milk; it was done and there was an end to it."[173] Eventually, Miranda dies after battling pneumonia for several days. Frederick contemplates killing himself and ending everything in a tragic love story.

Part three is where Frederick becomes a killer. It is a shocking ending to the relationship the reader created with Miranda by that point. Frederick's attempts at presenting himself as the pitiable one are at this point futile. Moreover, Frederick does not display any kind of remorse which has significant effect on readers. Nevertheless, the way his character is portrayed as someone who fails to comprehend the gravity of his actions helps to never fully take away the reader's sympathy.

Part four starts with Frederick deciding against suicide, because in his head he did not kill Miranda: "I also thought I was acting as if I killed her, but she died, after all."[174]

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[172] Fowles, *The Collector*. 165.
[173] Fowles, *The Collector*. 266.
[174] Fowles, *The Collector*. 281.

He buries Miranda with disgust and starts concentrating on a new victim, that will be easier to capture and keep.

Frederick's view of his innocence in Miranda's death is absurd for most readers. However, is also portrays an influential view for others. It also shows the psychology of Frederick and how his mind works. For ordinary reader, his decision against the suicide would feel more like cowardice than innocence. On the other hand, readers can be influenced into the same way of thinking, which then leads to the reenactments of crimes as is the case here.

Not only does the author introduce the perpetrator at the beginning of the story, but he also makes him into a main character. There is no detective, no police force working on the case and narrating the story. It is simply based on the perpetrator and the victim, who carry the whole story themselves. This gives the feeling of complete freedom; Frederick can carry out his crimes without anyone discovering him. There is no looming presence of the police force as there was in *In Cold Blood*. Moreover, the ending is not an ending that would be expected, with justice being brought. It is an open ending with Frederick being pushed to his limits and towards damnation, yet open to let in more. Frederick is not threatened in any way throughout the whole story and his character stays unpunished. There is no feeling of fatality or of punishment. This, of course, is widely different from *In Cold Blood* and allows for the feelings of freedom and superiority for reader who identifies with Frederick.

5.2.2 Postmodern techniques

Postmodern writing criticizes traditional values, in literature and in life.[175] Traditional narrative forms are overcome in postmodernism. Postmodernism is associated with the power shifts and the dehumanization of Second World War and the following consumer capitalism. It widely uses simple language, ironic narrator, intertextuality or focus on the reader. Postmodernist writings often employ unexpected narrative shifts, metafiction, or fragmentation. Fowles does not adhere to all postmodernist techniques but uses some of them.

One of the postmodern techniques used in *The Collector* is unexpected narrative shift. There is no indication that Miranda will become the narrator. The story is

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[175] Hans Bertens, "Postmodernism," *Oxford Bibliographies.* August 29, 2019. Accessed April 10, 2022. https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780190221911/obo-9780190221911-0081.xml

consistently being told by Frederick well into months spent together in the house, which makes the switch the more unexpected. However, the changes in narration are not happening in the middle of a page, but always begin with a new part of the book.

Simple language, another postmodernism feature, is used throughout the whole story. There are no flowery descriptions, no long sentences and elaborately examined feelings. In both narration styles, the language stays the same. Fredericks accounts of Miranda's captivity are as follows: "She kept it up several days. So far as I know all she had was some water. At least once a day, when I took in the food she always refused, I tried to argue with her."[176] Same simple language and short sentences are used by Miranda: "The first days. I couldn't do anything if he was in the room. I pretended to read, but I couldn't concentrate."[177] However, her language is overall more distinguished than Frederick's, due to her better education and higher social class.

Ironic narrator could be represented by Miranda. Frederick's expectations and views are not corresponding to reality, which is presented by Miranda. Frederick understands several of their encounters differently than what is later explained in Miranda's diaries, since her way is usually a ruse. The same happens when Frederick buys something he perceives as amazing, because of the price tag: "Another thing I did, I bought a lot of clothes for her at a store in London. […] I got everything there they said a girl would need. […] I paid out nearly ninety pounds that morning."[178] Miranda's real reaction to the clothes, however, was not even remotely as positive and Frederick might have hoped: "When I came out, wearing the least horrid of the shirts he'd bought for me […]."[179] There is also visible a straight forward irony in Miranda's writing: "So now I'm trying to tell it to this pad he bought me this morning. His kindness."[180]

Intertextuality, even though mostly subtle, can be found in *The Collector* as well. Firstly, it works as another way to distinguish the social class and education, since Miranda is the only one alluding to classical literature, while Frederick talks about pretending to read books.[181] Miranda, on the other hand, writes in her diary the following entry: "I have marked the days on the side of the screen like Robinson Crusoe,"[182] or

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[176] Fowles, *The Collector*. 88.
[177] Fowles, *The Collector*. 140.
[178] Fowles, *The Collector*. 24-25.
[179] Fowles, *The Collector*. 126.
[180] Fowles, *The Collector*. 117.
[181] Fowles, *The Collector*. 25.
[182] Fowles, *The Collector*. 151.

"You're a Holden Caulfield. He doesn't fit anywhere and you don't."[183] One of the most important literary references throughout the book, however, is the reference to *The Tempest*[184] by William Shakespeare. In Shakespeare's play, there are characters called Miranda, Ferdinand, and Caliban. In *The Collector*, the victim is Miranda, Ferdinand is the name Frederick tells Miranda is his. Miranda calls Frederick Caliban, which is the from *The Tempest*. The relationships between Shakespeare's characters also allude to the relationships in *The Collector*.

Fowles does not use many typical features of postmodernism, such as metafiction, or fragmentation. His characters are well-rounded, which makes them more real to the reader. He uses accurate descriptions of time and place and consistent point of view in the first person, even though he changes the narrator. The change of the narrator, however, is not disrupting the text, but more functions as a reality check for the readers, who, until that moment, are led through the story by the perpetrator and influenced by him. The consistent first-person point of view also helps to live the actions through the characters and make the story more real.

5.2.3 Writing style

When looking at Fowles' writing style, we observe the simplicity of his writing, plain language without flowery descriptions but with deep insight into the character's minds. This is important for the understanding of the profound influence the text has on readers and how the portrayal of a crime in a novel differs from accounts presented in newspaper articles.

Fowles decided to incorporate two viewpoints, the novel's anti-hero, Frederick, and the victim's, Miranda. By doing this, Fowles achieved an opposition in the narration. Even though both narrators tell the same story, they have opposing views and feelings about it. Another use of this double narration is the confusion of morality. Reader cannot help but feel somewhat bad for Frederick. Once again, there is this relationship development between the reader and the perpetrator, such as it was in *In Cold Blood*. When the switch into Miranda's perspective happens, the reader immediately starts feeling guilty for the relationship and sympathy felt for Frederick. Fowles' uses conventional timeline, which forces the reader to take an active role in the development

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[183] Fowles, *The Collector*. 205.
[184] Thomas Corbet, "The Film and the Book: A Case Study of 'The Collector,'" *The English Journal*, vol. 57, no. 3, 1968, pp. 328–33. Accessed April 15, 2022. JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/812224.

of the narrative.[185] The view of the crime through the eyes of the perpetrator makes the reader feel as a part of the story, as the perpetrator or the victim themselves: "She bent forward to peer in, I flashed a look down the road, no one, and then I got her. She didn't make a sound, she seemed do surprised […]."[186] This is a unique experience that provides with the idea of possibility of such a crime in real life.

Since Frederick is narrating his part of the story in first-person point of view in past tense, it is easy to feel as if I, as the reader, am telling the story: "The first time I went to look for Miranda it was a few days after I went down to Southampton to see of Aunt Annie; May 10th, to be exact."[187] This can make anyone with fantasies such as Frederick's feel, as if they were already taking part in his crimes. It might give a specific kind of a thrill, adrenaline.

Frederick's narration often uses exact times and dates: "I was two. That was in 1937,"[188] or "I'll agree to a month. That'd be November the 14th."[189] Through this, there is a connection between *The Collector* and *In Cold Blood*, in both stories the exact dates are of importance. Frederick is very factual in his narration, not only based on the need to provide the exact date, but also with the simplicity of language. There is no need for embellishments or metaphors, he is always to the point, which is also a specificity of journalistic writing.

Even though much of the information stays the same, in Miranda's point of view the reader can see her mind and psychology, which adds depth and enables the understanding of Miranda's actions: "I write in this terrible nightlike silence as if I feel normal. But I'm not. I'm so sick, so frightened, so alone. The solitude is unbearable. Every time the door opens I want to rush at it and out. But I know I must save up my escape attempts. Outwit him. Plan ahead. *Survive*."[190] As her narration is in the form of a diary, her voice is narrating in the present tense. This also creates two different genres used in one story; epistolary part, which is told through her diary and a classic novel narration by Frederick.

[185] Laura Lee Hope, "John Fowles' narrative stylistics in The Collector, Daniel Martin, and A Maggot," (California State University, 1990). iii. *Theses Digitalization Project*. 564. Accessed April 15, 2022. https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/564
[186] Fowles, *The Collector*. 28.
[187] Fowles, *The Collector*. 16.
[188] Fowles, *The Collector*. 11.
[189] Fowles, *The Collector*. 47.
[190] Fowles, *The Collector*. 123.t

Frederick is portrayed in a specific way. The author tugs at the reader's heart strings, as Capote did when writing about Perry. Probably because it is Frederick himself telling his story, it is told in a way which partly seems quite emotional and partly nonchalant. Frederick is at once portrayed as the perpetrator and the victim. He is the victim of society – uneducated, without parents, unloved, lonely and a sad person that never fits anywhere. This is something Miranda sees and writes into her diary: "I know it's pathetic, I know he's a victim of a miserable non-conformist suburban world and a miserable social class, the horrid timid copycatting genteel in-between class."[191] Miranda herself realizes the difference between them immediately. Frederick himself sees it too:

> "Another thing I began to do was read the classy newspapers, for the same reason I went to the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery. I didn't enjoy them much, it was like the cabinets of foreign species in the Entomology Room at the Natural History Museum, you could see they were beautiful but you didn't know them, I mean I didn't know them like I knew the British."[192]

Frederick also talks about how his father died, and his mother left him deliberately soon after. Already this account of his history influences the reader, who is manipulated into feeling sorry for Frederick and even connecting to him on some level.

Moreover, there is a childlike quality to Frederick's personality and the way he speaks: "After, she was always telling what a bad thing I did and how I ought to try and realize it more. […] My feelings were very happy because my intentions were of the best."[193] As a child, he never sees where he is at fault and what he wants is always the right thing to do. This is unveiling his psychology; it is suddenly visible that he is not fully functioning and rationally thinking adult. These passages raise almost protective feelings in the reader, who wants to shelter this innocent looking man, not adapted to the modern world.

Miranda, on the other hand, is firstly portrayed as haughty. She constantly corrects Frederick's grammar and his style of speech: "What irritates me most about him is his way of speaking. Cliché after cliché after cliché, and all so old-fashioned […]. He said, I

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[191] Fowles, *The Collector*. 161.
[192] Fowles, *The Collector*. 19.
[193] Fowles, *The Collector*. 31.

know my English isn't correct, but I try to make it correct. I didn't argue. That sums him up."[194] She does not only correct him, but she also tries to educate him all the time, which only emphasizes the difference between their education, intellects, and backgrounds. Fowles himself writes about social classes and their distinctions in his *Journals* and explains, that this apparent distinction is supposed to be symbolical and platonic[195], which is why they are so visible throughout *The Collector*. Frederick is openly irritated by this distinction and Fowles even accentuates it by the language used by Miranda.

The language overall used is indeed simple, yet there is an apparent difference between Frederick and Miranda. The parts narrated by Frederick use straightforward vocabulary and grammar, which reflects his personality and way of thinking. His language is on one hand old-fashioned: "I called in with regard to those records they've placed on order,"[196] which is mainly his way of speaking in front of Miranda, to try and remove the visible differences. On the other hand, he uses language that is quite colloquial when he addresses the reader only, such as the word "telly"[197] or "he went off la-di-da in a huff."[198] In Miranda's diary, there are phrases such as: "It's all the vile unspeakable things he *could* do,"[199] or "putting the tentacles of his being hurt around me."[200]

The different techniques Fowles' uses, with subtle differences in the language of characters, different viewpoints yet conventional timelines may confuse the reader sometimes, but also serve to its purpose, to incorporate the readers in the story and make them an active part. In Fowles' words: "the self-conscious aspects of the writing are not accidental, but a part of a deliberate policy of handing over part of the control of the work to the reader."[201] The whole time reading, the audience feels like they are solving the puzzle and going through the motions with Frederick and Miranda. There are also some strong moral points to the story that the readers must decide for themselves. Becoming part of the story and feeling in control and submerged into it, manipulates the reader into feeling that it is, in fact, a real story. By this, the author coerces the audience into thinking they have already gone through it, consequently, some think they might try to copycat it in real life.

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[194] Fowles, *The Collector*. 161.
[195] Drazin, ed., *The Journals Volume 1: John Fowles*. 459.
[196] Fowles, *The Collector*. 161.
[197] Fowles, *The Collector*. 11.
[198] Fowles, *The Collector*. 23.
[199] Fowles, *The Collector*. 118.
[200] Fowles, *The Collector*. 123.
[201] Simon Loveday, *The Romances of John Fowles*. (New York: St. Martin's, 1985). 133.

It is through language that the author manipulates the reader. Frederick being portrayed as living in a fantasy world, unaware of his own incapability to adapt makes his character extremely convincing and victim like. Miranda, on the other hand, is portrayed in almost unfavorable way. It is consciously done, so that the feelings of sympathy towards Frederick never actually disappear. The language distinguishes social classes, education, and backgrounds. The reader feels strongly for Frederick due to the way he is presented to us. The morality of the whole story and the ambiguity of feelings towards both characters is what keeps the reader interested, not simply the story itself, which is quite slow paced and sometimes repetitive due to the dual narration.

5.3 Newspaper articles

Fowles' handover of control to the reader had its effect. Leonard Lake and Charles Ng, serial killers working together, named their killing spree "Operation Miranda."[202] The connection is immediate, they named their spree after the kidnapped character Miranda in *The Collector*. Moreover, they officially cited the book as their inspiration and were brought together by their shared love of *The Collector*.[203] The oldest newspaper articles about Lake and Ng go back to 1985, the year they were captured.

"Police pressed a desperate nationwide manhunt Monday for an ex-Marine sought in the killing of as many as 25 people, while investigators meticulously linked charred bones and other remains to persons who have disappeared,"[204] starts an article from June 11, 1985. At that time, the connection between *The Collector*, that served as an inspiration and the crimes were unclear. One of the first mentions of "Operation Miranda" appears in a newspaper called *The Journal News*: "Operation Miranda involved Lake's belief that he could survive a nuclear war in underground bunkers stocked with female 'sex slaves,' police say."[205] The search for understanding for what Lake and Ng did had no connection to Fowles' story in the eyes of some, but others saw the similarities immediately, to the point of contacting Fowles and comparing the book and the crime:

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[202] Associated Press, "Children's teeth, remains of 5 found near survivalist's cabin," *The Miami News*, page 11. June 14, 1985. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/302436046/?terms=operation%20miranda&match=1
[203] Ronnie Cohen, "Chilling link between book, mass murder," *The Press Democrat*, Empire News, page 17. June 23, 1985. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/297286988
[204] "Nationwide manhunt intensifies," *The Herald*, Crystal Lake edition, page 6. June 11, 1985. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/185217612/
[205] "Suspect's diary leads to expanded search," *The Journal News*, Sunday Journal News edition, page 6. June 16, 1985. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/163178027/

"John Fowles' 1963 novel and a videotape of a movie with the same name, 'The Collector,' have surfaced among mass-murderer suspect Leonard Lake's possessions. […]. Stan Rozanski, an attorney for Lake's ex-wife, described "The Collector" as a key element in the case […]. Fowles, from his home in England on Friday, said the link between his book and Lake made him feel "bad," but he declined further comment. […]. Like Clegg's cell, Lake's contains a hallway that stops at a wall of shelves. […]. Fowles described the cell in which Clegg hides Miranda as five or six feet underground. Lake built the Wilseyville chamber above ground and told neighbors it was a tool shed. […]. Fowles' character Clegg photographed the victim both clothed and unclothed […]. Authorities have found scores of photos of young women, many unclothed, […]. In the book, Clegg appears happiest when Miranda acts passively and obediently. "The perfect woman for me," Lake wrote in the diary found at his house, "is one who is totally controlled […]." [Leonard Michaels] said Lake apparently "could not tell the difference between the real world and the imaginative experience." […]. "Fowles wrote in such a way the reader had to take his pleasure from his identity with these characters."[206]

The similarities emphasized by Cohen are indeed striking. From this moment on, the fixation on the similarities and using of *The Collector* as a blueprint for the crimes was universally accepted. Another article dealing with the connection can be found in *Record Searchlight*:

"Booksellers in and around Calaveras County have been swamped by requests for a 22-year-old novel that has been linked to Leonard Lake and the murders he allegedly committed. "The Collector," John Fowles' story of a butterfly collector who kidnaps a young blond art student and imprisons her […] has been selling "astronomically" since the Lake case broke last month […]. […] Lake took the name for his survivalist activities at his cabin here – "Operation Miranda"– from the name Miranda Grey, the 20-year-old

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[206] Cohen, "Chilling link between book, mass murder," *The Press Democrat*, page 17. https://www.newspapers.com/image/297286988

art student […]. One sheriff's detective said he is reading "The Collector" in hope of learning more about the murders and the suspects."[207]

Newspaper articles began retelling the story of *The Collector* and comparing Lake's and Ng's acts to Frederick's. *The Collector* was suddenly at the bestselling list all over again and libraries had waiting lists for Fowles' 22-year-old novel. The crime, incidentally, served as a revival for the book. The story could be found everywhere, and crowds of people were wanting to get their hand on a copy and read it. Lake's diary entries used as evidence during the trial only confirmed the connection to *The Collector*:

> "While Ng and Lake were apart, Lake began his journal. He also began "Operation Miranda," his dream of possessing sex-slaves, inspired by The Collector […]. Lake's Feb. 19, 1983 diary entry reads: "Ah, "THE COLLECTOR." Had It really been nearly 20 years I've carried this fantasy? And Miranda, how fitting…my lovely little prisoner of the future. […]. Lake defined Operation Miranda as "a serious underground construction meant to:
>
> - Provide facilities for my sexual fantasies;
> - Provide physical security for myself and my possessions;
> - Provide limited (very) protection from nuclear fallout."[208]

Lake tried to almost rewrite *The Collector* into his real life, or maybe become the main character Frederick and continue the book's open ending. Any newspaper or magazine articles from 1985 to present day present Miranda Operation and *The Collector* as strongly interconnected, which caused Fowles' novel to be even more controversial in its topic than it initially was. Lake and Ng's crimes distorted Fowles' original story and made it into truly horrifying true crime.

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[207] McClatchy News Service, "Calaveras County case revives interest in 22-year-old novel," *Record Searchlight*, D-1, page 23. July 6, 1985. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/792585992/?terms=operation%20miranda%20the%20collector%20fowles&match=1

[208] Rick Mofina, "Dead man is No. 1 witness for defence," *Calgary Herald*, A14, page 14. November 21, 1998. Accessed April 12, 2022. https://www.newspapers.com/image/485612193/?terms=leonard%20lake%20charles%20ng%20operation%20miranda&match=1

5.4 Comparison and outcome

The language of a novel and a newspaper article reporting on crime that had arisen to copy the story are bound to be different. Newspaper articles are reporting on a true crime of two murderers, while *The Collector* is a piece of fiction. All the articles are thus written in a journalistic style, full of facts and short sentences. Expressive words are not used and no inclination to emphasizes with the perpetrators is shown. No article is written in literary journalism style. Undeniably, Fowles was not writing *The Collector* in a flowery language, so both the articles and the book share simple style of writing.

The re-narrativization of *The Collector* happens mainly because of Lake's actions that escalated farther above what Fowles' wrote in his book. Fowles' writing allowed for Lake to feel in control and a part of the story. In reaction to that, he became unable to differentiate much between what he read in Fowles' fiction and what was the reality of his own life. This escalation of his actions then caused the rewriting of Fowles' story into almost a true crime novel. Lake's diaries, unfortunately inaccessible to me, would provide an amazing example of the narrative he created in his mind. However, simply from his diary entry made public during the trial, we can see he felt himself as a new Frederick, trying to redo his actions.

Fowles' *The Collector* is no longer viewed as a harmless piece of fiction, even if controversial in topic. It unwillingly became a kind of true crime novel. Even if celebrated, the realness of the characters influenced real people. Newspapers then changed *The Collector*'s story not in explicitly aggravating it or changing the synopsis, but by imputing on it the blame for Lake's actions.

6 CONCLUSION

By analyzing *In Cold Blood*, *The Collector* and newspaper articles reporting on the same stories, this thesis has shown that language and story structure are the main reasons for the notoriety of the stories and that it is the writing style incorporating authors' subtle manipulation of the reader that makes the stories interesting even after knowing what the outcome is. It has also shown the shifts in the structures and language use in re-narrativized accounts and how it can influence the story.

The introduction the true crime genre and "new journalism" techniques in the theoretical part stayed relevant throughout the whole *In Cold Blood* analysis and enabled to explain Capote's tactics easily. The analysis also revealed that "new journalism" is a prominent style of Capote's work.

While analyzing *In Cold Blood*, the expectations were for the structure and writing style to be of main importance in keeping the readers engaged. Throughout the analysis we discovered that Capote was able to use the combination of literary and journalistic styles to create a compelling narrative. Through the writing he was able to influence readers' emotions and manipulate them into agreeing with his views. This is visible in his emotive portrayal of Perry. Moreover, the structure he chose, even if not typical for true crime stories, played an important role as expected, by allowing the readers to focus on the perpetrators only without revealing important and disturbing information until the end.

The analysis of newspaper articles then showed the subjectivity used by Capote and accentuated his usage of "new journalism" techniques in comparison with classic journalistic style of most articles analyzed. This comparison also clearly showed the differences between the newspaper accounts and Capote's account when looking at the amount of information each was able to offer and the style changes that took place in the re-narrativization.

Throughout the analysis of *The Collector*, it was surprising to notice that even though it is a work of fiction, some similarities with journalistic writing were still visible in the plain language and straight to the point approach. Moreover, some tactics were shared by Fowles and by Capote, even though each work is a different genre. This points out that again, the literary devices used by the writer are an important part of the notoriety of the novel.

While analyzing the newspaper accounts of the "Miranda operation" case, the founding that might seem the most interesting is how *The Collector* was re-narrativized into a true crime. Before the crimes took place, the novel was viewed only as a psychological thriller. However, after the connection with the "Miranda operation" was made and the re-narrativization of the story took place, the genre was slightly shifted in the eyes of the consumers which popularized the book immensely.

Both *In Cold Blood* and *The Collector* manipulate their reader through the text. The authors are able to use their subjective opinions and transfer them into their writing style while further using the structure of the text to serve their purpose and impose those opinions on the readers, as can be seen in the perception of the perpetrators in both works. Moreover, Capote's work demonstrates how the research of a topic can influence the writing style and how the extra research information can be used to set the mood for the whole story. It is the meticulously chosen language used in the correct structure of the work that makes the story and the genre appealing.

The study of re-narrativization then shows how much a story can differ based on the genre it is told in. In the newspaper articles, there is no compassion for the perpetrators, while Capote's and Fowles' accounts are full of it. Moreover, the newspaper accounts are much more objective, cold, and unaffected and do not influence the reader's opinions. The re-narrativization can also have a lasting effect on the original work. However, a much larger scope of newspaper articles would be needed to have a complete analysis that considers every possible change in the story.

7 RESUMÉ

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na analýzu děl *Chladnokrevně* od Trumana Capote a *Sběratel* od Johna Fowlese a změny, které se promítnou v příbězích po jejich přepisu.

Definice žánrů a zařazení děl k daným žánrům je věnováno dostatečné množství pozornosti, ovšem zaměření na příčiny popularity těchto žánrů chybí. Tato práce se tedy zabývá prostředky, které autoři používají, aby vtáhli své čtenáře do děje a dílo pro ně bylo zajímavé. Tato práce dále tvrdí, že těmito prostředky je jak kompozice díla, tak jazyk, kterým autor píše. Toto tvrzení je demonstrováno analýzou na příkladech „true crime" literatury *Chladnokrevně* a psychologického thrilleru *Sběratel*. Dále se práce zaměřuje vliv přepisu příběhu do jiné formy. Tyto změny jsou analyzovány na novinových článcích, které referují o zločinech buď inspirovaných danou knihou, jako je tomu v případě *Sběratele* nebo zločinech inspirujících vznik knihy, jako dílo *Chladnokrevně*.

První část práce je teoretická, se zaměřením na definici „true crime" žánru a žurnalistického stylu. *Chladnokrevně* využívá stylistické metody obou žánrů, a proto je podstatné je definovat a vysvětlit.

Praktická část je poté rozdělena do dvou částí, každá z nich se věnuje analýze jednoho literárního díla. *Chladnokrevně* je analyzováno jak z pohledu výzkumu, který Capote prováděl při získávání všech svých informací, tak z pohledu kompozice a jazyka díla. Capoteho metody výzkumu se ukázaly jako velmi podstatný faktor jeho díla. Dle předpokladu z analýzy vyšlo najevo, že kompozice i jazyk díla jsou nejdůležitějšími komponenty díla a Capote jimi manipuluje tak, aby ovlivnil svého čtenáře a vtáhl ho do děje.

Analýza *Sběratele* poukázala na ten stejný fakt, ačkoliv se jedná o jiný žánr. I tak se v díle objevuje manipulace čtenáře skrz jazykové prostředky a překvapivě je možné najít i prvky žurnalistického stylu.

Poslední části diplomové práce bylo zaměření na novinové články spojené s díly. *Chladnokrevně* je přepisem novinových článků, vzhledem k tomu že články informovaly o zločinu aktuálně v danou dobu, kdežto kniha vyšla až po popravě pachatelů. Capoteho vliv na dílo je velmi viditelný jak v sentimentalitě, která se v jeho podání projevuje, ale také v subjektivitě daného díla. *Sběratel* má své přepisy v novinových článcích až 20 po publikování, což bylo způsobeno zločiny spáchanými podle příběhu tohoto díla. Tyto přepisy vedli k celkovému ovlivnění původního díla, které začalo být spojováno s „true crime" žánrem.

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9 ANNOTATION

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Abstract: This thesis will examine the re-narrativization of true crime stories, focusing on the Herbert Clutter family case as re-told by Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* and on the copycat killings that followed the publication of The Collector by John Fowles. The changes of story structure and narrative elements such as genre or language discourse will be examined while reviewing the newspapers reporting on the stories.

Key words: true crime, Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*, John Fowles, *The Collector*, new journalism, narration, story structure, writing style, re-narrativization

10 ANOTACE

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Abstrakt: Tato práce se zabývá narativizací „true crime" příběhů se zaměřením na případ rodiny Herberta Cluttera a jeho převyprávění z pohledu Trumana Capoteho, který o případu píše ve svém díle *Chladnokrevně*. Zároveň se práce zaměřuje na vraždy spáchané podle předlohy, kterou bylo dílo Johna Fowlese, *Sběratel*. Hlavním tématem této práce jsou změny ve struktuře příběhu a elementy narativizace jako jsou žánr nebo použitý styl jazyka. Tyto změny budou zkoumány v porovnání původních zločinů a jejich originálních popisů v novinových článcích a vice versa.

Klíčová slova: „true crime," Truman Capote, John Fowles, *Chladnokrevně*, *Sběratel*, žurnalistický styl, kompozice textu, styl jazyka, vyprávění, převyprávění