

University of Pardubice

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Swinging Sixties - British 1960's Society in John Fowles' The Collector

Martin Coufal

Bachelor Thesis

2019

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Akademický rok: 2016/2017

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Martin Coufal**
Osobní číslo: **H14583**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro odbornou praxi**
Název tématu: **Britská společnost 60. let v díle Sběratel od Johna Fowlese**
Zadávající katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Bakalářská práce se věnuje období 60. let v Británii. Jakkoliv je toto období v mnoha ohledech revoluční a vyznačuje se změnou v mnoha oblastech života společnosti, jeho vliv na jednotlivé společenské vrstvy se zásadně liší. V této práci tedy bude analyzováno období 60. let a jeho převratné změny v souvislosti s třídním rozdělením britské společnosti. Vliv na jednotlivé aspekty života (vzdělání, sexualita, obava z velkého válečného konfliktu) budou zkoumány v souvislosti s rostoucím zájmem kulturních a literárních teorií o dosud přehlížené vrstvy společnosti (zde zejména working class). Teoretický základ pro tuto bakalářskou práci tak budou tvořit především díla Stuarta Halla a Richarda Hoggarta. Primárním zdrojem pro literární analýzu, která bude ilustrovat celý koncept, je Fowlesův krátký román Sběratel.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná**

Jazyk zpracování bakalářské práce: **Angličtina**

Seznam odborné literatury:

- Alexander, Michael. *A History of English Literature*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
Crowther, Jonathan. *Oxford Guide to British and American Culture*. Oxford University Press, 2005.
Donnelly, Mark. *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics*. Routledge, 2005.
Drabble, Margaret. *The Oxford companion to English literature*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
Fowles, John. *The Aristos*. New American Library, 1970
Fowles, John. *The Collector*. Back Bay Books, 1997
Hoggart, Richard. *An English Temper*. Chatto & Windus, 1982.
Poplawski, Paul. *English Literature in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Sandbrook, Dominic. *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties 1964-1970*. Abacus, 2009.
Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
Storry, Mike, and Childs, Peter. *British Cultural Identities*. Routledge, 2012.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D.**
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **30. dubna 2017**


Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **31. března 2018**



prof. PhDr. Karel Rýdl, CSc.
děkan



L.S.



doc. Šárka Bubiková, Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 31. října 2017

Prohlašuji:

Tuto práci jsem vypracoval samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využil, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury. Byl jsem seznámen s tím, že se na moji práci vztahují práva a povinnosti vyplývající ze zákona č. 121/2000 Sb., autorský zákon, zejména se skutečností, že Univerzita Pardubice má právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití této práce jako školního díla podle § 60 odst. 1 autorského zákona, a s tím, že pokud dojde k užití této práce mnou nebo bude poskytnuta licence o užití jinému subjektu, je Univerzita Pardubice oprávněna ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložila, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše.

Beru na vědomí, že v souladu s § 47 b zákona č. 111/1998 Sb., o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších předpisů, a směrnicí Univerzity Pardubice č. 9/2012, bude práce zveřejněna v Univerzitní knihovně a prostřednictvím Digitální knihovny Univerzity Pardubice.

V Pardubicích dne 17. 6. 2019

Martin Coufal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D., M.Litt. for her help and guidance while I was writing this thesis. Many thanks go to my wonderful girlfriend and my amazing parents for their everlasting love and support.

TITLE

Swinging Sixties - British 1960's Society in John Fowles' *The Collector*

ANNOTATION

The thesis aims to analyse *The Collector* using the theory of encoding and decoding. To analyse the book properly, the thesis provides necessary historical, literary and cultural background of the 1960s. The practical part of the thesis analyses the dialogues of the book using the theory of encoding and decoding to find out why the characters of the book misunderstand the messages of each other and what these misunderstandings eventually lead to.

KEYWORDS

Fowles, *The Collector*, Swinging Sixties, Working-class, Encoding and decoding, Postmodernism

NÁZEV PRÁCE

Britská společnost 60. let v díle *Sběratel* od Johna Fowlese

ANOTACE

Cílem bakalářské práce je analyzování díla *Sběratel* za použití teorie kódování a dekodování. Aby byla analýza úspěšná, práce v teoretické části vysvětluje historické, literární a kulturní pozadí let šedesátých. Praktická část se již zaměřuje na samotnou analýzu knihy, kde za pomoci výše zmíněné teorie analyzuje rozhovory hlavních postav a důvody, kvůli kterým si postavy nerozumí a také analyzuje k čemu tyto porozumění posléze vedou.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Fowles, *Sběratel*, Šedesátá léta, Pracující třída, kódování a dekodování, Postmodernismus

Table of contents

Introduction.....	8
1 White Heat of the Swinging Sixties.....	10
2 Literary and cultural context.....	20
3 Class distinctions in <i>The Collector</i>	24
4 Conclusion.....	42
5 Resumé.....	45
6 Bibliography.....	48

Introduction

The swinging sixties are often considered one of the most influential periods in the modern history of the United Kingdom. And truly, it can be said that during the 1960s, the Britain underwent many important changes. The rising affluence and better working conditions improved lives of millions of people living in the United Kingdom. Many scholars discussed whether these changes will eliminate the ever present working-class and the class distinctions will be no longer present, but even despite the rising affluence, the class differences were still quite considerable. This is shown in the book *The Collector* written by John Fowles who wanted to examine the clash between classes, to show how different they are and examine whether they can find a common ground and eventually come to an understanding.

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the dialogues between the main characters of *The Collector*, using the theory of encoding and decoding to find out how the differences between the characters influence their conversations and opinions on each other and further find what the possible misunderstandings between them might eventually lead to. To be more specific, the thesis analyses whether the class differences between a working-class clerk named Frederick who abducted a middle-class art student Miranda somehow influence the way they communicate and interpret the messages that they want to convey. The analysis takes both points of views into account to provide an insight into minds of both of the characters which further helps with proving their points.

In order to analyse the dialogues between the characters, it will be necessary to provide information about the working-class in the decades prior the 1960s. This part depicts the everyday life of the members of the working-class before they gained affluence, how they lived after urbanisation and how they managed to adapt to the demanding conditions of their lives. Further, the thesis will explain how they spent their money and what they enjoyed doing in their free time, even if they did not have much of it because of work. After that, the thesis will illustrate how their lives changed with the rise of the affluence when they could afford things they had previously only dreamed about. Furthermore, the thesis will show the coming of the mass-entertainment and how the working-class had to endure the pressure of advertisers trying to influence their opinions and shopping habits by printing advertisements in magazines and books. Then, the chapter depicts how the mass-entertainment influenced the working-class and whether the class changed under the pressure of the mass-culture. Consequently, the chapter will provide information about the increasing permissiveness of the society and various

improvements in lives of the population. Additionally, the chapter shows how the education changed and what happened to the working-class students who further pursued their education.

The second chapter provides literary and cultural context of the thesis. It explains what the postmodernism is and provides a list of several defying narrative techniques and to illustrate the techniques, it further provides examples from the books written by John Fowles. Additionally, as the mass-entertainment was getting increasingly popular, many theories discussing its consequences on the audiences. One of them is the theory of encoding and decoding by a cultural theorist Stuart Hall. The chapter provides explanation of the theory as it is used in the analytical chapter of the thesis.

The third chapter of the thesis uses the aforementioned theory to analyse the dialogues between Frederick and Miranda, the main characters of *The Collector*. As both of them come from different backgrounds, it is interesting to see the differences between them and how they influence the way they speak and think. These will be considered when analysing the possible misunderstandings between the characters. Further, the possible consequences of these misinterpretations will be discussed.

1 White Heat of the Swinging Sixties

Harold Wilson, a labour party politician and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, promised a scientific revolution for the British people and claimed that if Britain was to prosper it would need to be “forged in the White heat of this revolution.”¹ Many problems occurred to Harold Wilson and his Labour administration. David Childs notes that devaluation of sterling with the strikes of unions and the colonial crisis in Rhodesia were among them,² but even despite these problems, one can see that the 1960s were truly a decade of innovations, not only scientific ones but also of cultural and social revolutions. As will become apparent later in the chapter, the working class was gaining progressively more freedom and affluence during the first half of the 20th century and many people were afraid of that because the working-class would have to change or eventually vanish and be replaced by a new class or even by a classless society.

Before proceeding to examine how the lives of people were changed in the 1960s, it will be necessary to provide a background of the lives of the working-class in the years prior. Erik Hopkins says that in the beginning of the 20th century, the working class was becoming more urbanized and industrialized.³ This means that the economy was more focused on industry rather than on agriculture and thus working-class people had to move from their houses in the countryside to cities where factories were located. Richard Hoggart notes that in these cities, they lived together in recognizable working-class districts.⁴ Due to living in these districts, one can assume that the working-class people lived in close communities. Hoggart further adds that the reason why these districts were so recognizable from the rest is following: “All day and all night the noises and smells of the district – factory hooters, trains shunting, the sting of gas-works. [...] The children look improperly fed and clothed, and as they could do with more sunlight and green fields.”⁵ This indicates that the atmosphere in these districts was quite dreary and it reminded everyone that there was a work to be done. Additionally, there were no parks or green areas in these industrial parts of cities, therefore the children had no place to play and because of the lack of money, their parents were unable to provide them with sufficient

¹ “The White Heat of Wilson,” BBC news, last modified March 31, 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4865498.stm.

² David Childs, *Britain Since 1945: A Political History* (Routledge, 1993), 179-185.

³ Erik Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes 1918-1990: A Social History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991), 2.

⁴ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), chap. 1, Kindle.

⁵ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 2.

nutrients. Further, clothes of the working-class were recognizable too, as people did not have enough money to buy new ones, therefore, as Hopkins says: “clothes often had to be patched.”⁶ This is further shown in a comedy sketch called *I Know My Place*, starring John Cleese, where the representatives of the higher classes are making fun of a poorly clothed working-class man.⁷

Despite the mockery and higher classes looking down on them, there was a strong group feeling among the members of the working-class. Hoggart claims that for the working people, the world is divided into ‘Them’ and ‘Us’ and then adds an explanation for the term ‘Them’: “They are ‘the people at the top’, ‘the higher-ups’, the people who give you your dole, call you up, tell you to go to war, fine you. [...] ‘aren’t really to be trusted.’”⁸ This shows, that the working-class generally did not have much trust towards the government and the rich and rather gave them a label. They did not have many reasons to trust them as they had to obey every wish the government had; especially after World War I and World War II, when many members of the working class had to go and fight in the war. Also, it is apparent they desired relationships with the people that were considered ‘Us’, such as their neighbours. Hoggart further explains that this group tradition was likely caused by the close and intimate conditions of their life.⁹ Thus it is clear that the values of the working people are friendliness and homeliness, as they prefer to be close to each other and belong to a group.

Even though the life of the working-classes was not easy by any means, Richard Hoggart claims that people of the working-class were prepared to adapt to the hardness of their lives: “When people feel they cannot do much about the main elements in their situation [...] they adopt their attitudes towards that situation which allow them to have a liveable life under its shadow.”¹⁰ One can assume that people simply accepted the fact that there was nothing to be done with their lives and that they should enjoy what they had because life was never going to be perfect. In addition, Hopkins says that “the ordinary working-class pub was still the meeting place for working’s men clubs and friendly societies,”¹¹ hence it is quite clear that the working-class men usually lightened their life situation by drinking beer with friends or work colleagues and smoking cigarettes. However, drinking had to be in reasonable amounts since

⁶ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 37.

⁷ The Frost Report, “I Know My Place,” posted November 30, 2016, YouTube video, 1:34, <https://youtu.be/nxpZkKKbDgA>.

⁸ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 3.

⁹ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap 3.

¹⁰ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap 3.

¹¹ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 56

working-class people were sometimes close to poverty and heavy drinking might have even financially ruined them.

Simultaneously, Hoggart mentions that the working-class people did not believe in saving money.¹² One cannot blame them, for they had little money to spend, and if they were to save it, they had even less to spend and life might become miserable. Hoggart then adds that:

This helps to explain two features in the spending of money which members of other classes find particularly difficult to appreciate. First, the way in which working-class people, once their immediate dues have been met, will spend much of the remainder on ‘extravagances’. This will often happen even though there may be more money in the house than there has been for years, or than there will be in a few months more. Second, of habits with money which exasperate or puzzle outsiders, is the order of priority into which working-class people will range the items between which they have to divide their income.¹³

Thus, working-class people preferred spending money on something extra, something they wished for or wanted rather than on something that was needed. Sometimes, when they had more money than usual, they even liked to go out to seek entertainment. Hopkins notes that: “people still went out to the pub, club, dance hall and cinema, and still ended the evening with fish-and-chip supper.”¹⁴ This shows that people would rather spend money to have fun than to save it for the uncertain future. One can even assume that they did not want to deposit money to the banks as they were operated by ‘Them’ and, as was already mentioned, there was little trust in the people from the other side of the society. Moreover, Hoggart mentions how fond of gambling working-class people were, especially of playing the football pools.¹⁵ They clearly considered gambling as their way out of the life full of uncertainty and labour. On the other hand, gambling introduced yet another element of uncertainty into their lives; if they spend too much on gambling, similar to alcohol consumption, it could potentially ruin their families. One of the main characters of the novel *The Collector*, Frederick Clegg, is a superb example of how popular the pools were for he and his work colleagues were playing pools and he even won a substantial amount of money in it.¹⁶

Turning now to the entertainment of the working-class, it is important to note that, according to Hopkins, by 1937 about four million workers were entitled to paid holidays due

¹² Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 5.

¹³ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap 5.

¹⁴ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 109.

¹⁵ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap 5.

¹⁶ John Fowles, *The Collector* (London: Vintage Books, 2004), 12.

to the Holidays with Pay Act.¹⁷ Hence they had more free time to pursue different kinds of pleasures and entertainments. Hoggart further expands this idea when he says that “Most working-class pleasures tend to be mass-pleasures, overcrowded and sprawling. Everyone wants to have fun at the same time, since most buzzers blow within an hour of each other.”¹⁸ These mass-pleasures marked the beginning of the mass-entertainment of the 1960s which Hoggart later criticized. These activities strengthened the bonds between the members of the working-class as they spent their free time together. Hoggart mentions daytrips to a seaside by special ‘chara’ buses which were quite popular.¹⁹ It was because they allowed working-class men and their wives to forget all the hardships which accompanied them through their everyday lives and to enjoy themselves with their friends and other people.

Working-class people enjoyed visiting pubs and clubs, where they could listen and dance to live music, and drink alcohol. Hoggart claims that specialized working-men’s clubs were founded to provide pleasure for the hard-working men.²⁰ In these clubs, they were free to relax, play cards, read newspapers or simply discuss life with their colleagues and other club members. Since radio was getting more and more popular as a form of entertainment, people rather enjoyed listening to news or serial programmes where stories were aired on a regular basis.

So far, this chapter has focused on the lives of working-class people in the decades prior to the 1960s. The following section will discuss how the rising affluence, better standards of living and technological development influenced the working-class and whether it was for better or for worse. Undoubtedly, the economy as well as the standard of living grew exponentially in the late 1950s and the 1960s. Following the end of World War II, Hopkins claims that it was quite a favourable time for the Great Britain as Germany and Japan were in no condition to compete.²¹ One can say that because of this, the Great Britain was able to expand internationally, and it helped its economy. He further adds that there was a recognizable shift of employment towards the service sector which can be seen as a first sign of a deindustrialization of the society.²² As a result of these changes, it is apparent that the wages were getting increasingly better and because of the new service sector, new positions were made available. To illustrate, Arthur Marwick recalls a worker who said that “there is now so much

¹⁷ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 16.

¹⁸ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 5.

¹⁹ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 5.

²⁰ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap 5.

²¹ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 122.

²² Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 122.

work to be done and so little unemployment so if the boss rattles at you or threatens you with the sack, you can just up and leave. There is no poverty anymore.”²³ The government also noticed this newly gained affluence of the society and the conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan even announced that “most of our people never had it so good.”²⁴ And truly, they never had it so good, as the affluence was rising and working conditions were getting better and shifts shorter, working-class people were finally able to enjoy their life to the fullest without worrying about money.

Stephen Brooke claims that there were worries that these abrupt changes in employment, opportunities and affluence would transform the working-class into something entirely new or it would eliminate the working-class completely.²⁵ Indeed, if people could afford things that they previously could not, are they still considered to be members of the working class? Even Richard Hoggart says that “it is often said that there are no working-classes in England now, that a ‘bloodless revolution’ has taken place, which has so reduced social differences that already most of us inhabit an almost flat plain, the plain of lower-middle to middle-classes.”²⁶

Before proceeding to the consequences of the rising affluence and the newly popular mass-entertainment, it is essential to present how the lives of the working-class people changed during the 1960s. Additionally, many other things beside the rising affluence improved the lives of the people. For example, the space race of the American and Soviet scientists to reach the moon can be considered one of the most influential technological developments in the years after World War II. This rapid development of technology eventually led to public enthusiasm for modern things. A famous model Lesley Hornby, known also as Twiggy, recalled that “anything modern was wonderful, and anything old was terrible. It has a lot to do with the middle-class, suburban way of thinking, to revere new things, everything up to date, up to the minute, brand new and streamlined and contemporary.”²⁷ Richard Hoggart attributes this way of thinking to the lack of sense of the past and of the future.²⁸ If one employs this kind of

²³ Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Social and Cultural Transformation in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, 1958-74* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 113.

²⁴ “1957: Britons 'have never had it so good',” BBC news, accessed March 2, 2019, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/20/newsid_3728000/3728225.stm.

²⁵ Stephen Brooke, “Bodies, Sexuality and the “Modernization” of the British Working Classes, 1920s to 1960s,” *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 69 (Spring 2006): 105. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27673024>.

²⁶ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 1.

²⁷ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties 1964-1970* (London: Abacus, 2009), chap. 3, Kindle.

²⁸ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

thinking, it is assured that they have to live in the present and for someone who lives in the present, everything new is automatically better than the old just for the sake of novelty.

More importantly, the increase of affluence caused many changes of the lifestyle of the working people. Progressively more people could spend larger amounts of money on improving their homes than in the decades prior to the 1960s. Hoggart suggests that working-class people, especially mothers of families, bought modern goods not because of greed for possession of the newest, but simply because without these things, life would be much harder.²⁹ Life without some house appliances, such as refrigerators or washing machines, would be unimaginably more demanding and thanks to the fact that families were able to own them, their life standard improved. It is also noteworthy that an increasing number of working-class people could afford to buy their very own cars for the first time in history, which can be assumed eased their travels. Dominic Sandbrook mentions a survey which discovered that two-thirds of housewives were regularly travelling to the newly founded supermarkets.³⁰ This shows yet another change in the way of life of the working-class, because until then, people would shop in local stores. Owning cars allowed them to buy more and choose from a wider selection of goods in supermarkets. As an indirect consequence people were no longer as close to each other as they used to be. In the past they could talk and meet with their neighbours in their local corner shop, instead, they began travelling to other parts of the city in order to do their shopping.

Having defined how the standard of living improved with the rising affluence, the paper will now focus on the leisure activities and the rising popularity of mass-entertainment. Not only did the living conditions improved but the working conditions improved as well. Sandbrook mentions that by the beginning of the 1960s, almost ninety-nine percent of industrial companies gave the workers two weeks of paid leave.³¹ This means that millions of people had more time to pursuit their hobbies and gained the freedom to travel to destinations of their choosing. Once enjoying their trips to the seaside, the working class was also able to enjoy holidays in more exotic and sunnier destinations than Blackpool. As Sandbrook further adds, Spain was such a popular destination for British tourists, that the dictator Francisco Franco decided to turn the country into a holiday resort, turning seaside villages into cities with hotels and boutiques filled with luxurious goods.³² This proves that the British people were now able to fly to Spain and even spend money on hotels and on the exotic goods offered there. The

²⁹ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

³⁰ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 10.

³¹ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 10.

³² Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 10.

popularity of Spain can be seen in *The Collector*, when Miranda recalls her time spend there with her friends.³³ Traveling to such places surely was different from a trip by a chara bus. Many working-men enjoyed spending their free time by repairing things around the house, gardening or even by breeding pets. Hopkins claims that these were mainly due to men having more free time and also because having things repaired by a professional was costly.³⁴ Contrarily Richard Hoggart does not attribute these hobbies to an effort to save money but rather to a feeling of usefulness as he says that: “In these activities, as is sometimes pointed out, working-class men still exercise personal choice, act freely and voluntarily. Their regular jobs are often undemanding.”³⁵

Simultaneously, the cinema together with television and popular music were at their peak. The Beatles and The Rolling Stones were listened to by millions of people no matter the class they belonged to. Movies starring James Bond were enjoyed by people visiting cinemas worldwide, British actors and actresses were becoming more prominent in Hollywood and were starring in many of the American movies. Books too, were enjoyed by people of all classes, especially paperbacks for they were affordable and easy to read. Dominic Sandbrook notes that in 1960, there were around six thousand paperbacks in print and publisher were selling millions of them a year.³⁶ Together with paperbacks, magazines and other publications were still selling in considerable numbers. All of these were called mass-media as they were enjoyed by millions no matter their class.

All of this meant an incredible feeling of freedom for the working-class as in the years prior, they had to count every penny and be satisfied with what they had. Now, they were able to buy what they wanted, listen to what they wanted and even travel where they wanted. Hoggart says that “one can easily see how this may spread in a class which has never before felt so free. [...] It is in the interest of the organs of mass entertainment that this attitude should be maintained.”³⁷ There are obvious reasons to why the publishers of mass media should maintain the feeling of freedom. In order to profit from the newly gained affluence, many of the popular things were full of advertisements, suggesting to people from the working-class that they could easily become members of higher classes if they bought the right product. Sandbrook mentions the British television show called Avengers which was one of the first television series ever to

³³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 199.

³⁴ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 179.

³⁵ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 11.

³⁶ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 19.

³⁷ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

employ the method of product placement in a form of cars or luxurious clothes.³⁸ Cristel Antonia Russel illustrates what product placement is, when explaining how producers place branded products in the content of mass media programming.³⁹ Therefore product placement tries to influence audiences to buy a specific product by showing it in a popular show or in a movie.

In order for the advertisements in entertainment to be successful, the entertainment truly needs to be massive and reach to millions of people. Hence, they have to be attractive for the majority of the population which is done, as Hoggart says, by scaling down everything to their measure.⁴⁰ Because of this, everyone is considered equal, and thus the class distinctions may seem to be blurred or even non-existent. These advertisements and the effects of the mass-culture worried many people including the writer John Fowles who said that “the price they pay for having money to spend is the surrender of their old working-class freedom in cultural matters to the skilled technological opinion-molders employed by commerce. Their labour is no longer exploited; but their minds are.”⁴¹ This means that working-class people had to, because of their affluence, endure the attempts of mass-culture producers to suggest them what to think and what to spend their money on through the media.

Similarly, the same problems plagued even literature and magazines. They were full of advertisements promising people gaining a better vocabulary or attacking their feeling of inferiority by promising them products that the higher classes loved. Hoggart further notes, that paperbacks were usually written only by a few authors, often writing under different pseudonyms, who managed to write a considerable amount of books per year.⁴² This suggests that only a small number of writers and producers were able to influence the tastes of masses in order to convince them to buy their books or magazines. Further, it was already mentioned that working-class people traditionally liked to belong to a group and to have close ties with people around them. Hoggart uses this tradition to explain, why the mass-culture was so popular, as it made people feel like a part of a group, listening to the same music and reading the same books as everyone else.⁴³ Since the authors of the books had to write a lot of books

³⁸ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 19.

³⁹ Cristel Antonia Russel, “Investigating the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Television Shows: The Role of Modality and Plot Connection Congruence on Brand Memory and Attitude,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, no. 3 (December 2002): 306. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/344432>.

⁴⁰ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

⁴¹ John Fowles, *The Aristos* (New York: New American Library, 1970), 129.

⁴² Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 7.

⁴³ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

per year, the books were not written in a complicated way and they used simplified language, so people would read them quickly and soon buy a new book. Hoggart further adds that the publishers of printed magazines and books were aware of the radio and the television and their ability to provide up-to-date news and information and that is why they tried to draw the attention of readers by adding sex and violence into their stories.⁴⁴ Whether these books influenced their audience by any means is arguable but Hoggart asserts that it was not proven yet.⁴⁵ As seen, producers of mass-culture tried to do their best to sell their movies, music or books to the millions of newly affluent people and together with it, influence them with advertisement. Hoggart then concludes that because of the influence of the mass-entertainment on them, the working-class merged into a large class without any cultural character and because of the affluence, they were no longer pressured into being members of any group.⁴⁶

One wonders how it was possible for the publishers to print paperbacks and magazines with sexual content, a concept which people in the decades prior to the 1960s would not have even imagined. But because of the affluence and many life-improving bills and Acts, the society was far more permissive than before. Eric Hopkins says following: “what really makes this period unique in the history of the working classes was the combination of higher standards of living and of new permissive attitudes, especially in sexual relations.”⁴⁷ Arthur Marwick is more careful with his words and only mentions that the Victorian values were finally laid to rest.⁴⁸ As mass-produced clothes were getting bolder, young women started to wear mini-skirts and teenagers started to reject the old-fashioned values of their parents, sexual behaviour was getting more commonly discussed. People simply felt that sex is natural, and no one should repress it. It can be assumed that this repression and old-fashioned values have their roots in the decades prior to the 1960s, as people were not accustomed to talk about such things. People received hardly any sexual education and talking about sex was considered rude; even parents did not discuss such matters with their children. Hoggart notes that parents usually left their children to learn about these things from their friends when playing outside.⁴⁹

More importantly, the contraceptive pill was legalised and people could finally have a sexual intercourse without worrying about consequences. However, Dominic Sandbrook claims that the impact of the pill was not as great as it is often perceived because other forms of

⁴⁴ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 6.

⁴⁵ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 8.

⁴⁶ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 11.

⁴⁷ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 159.

⁴⁸ Marwick, *The Sixties*, 95.

⁴⁹ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 3.

protection were far cheaper and more common.⁵⁰ Related to this matter was the legalisation of abortion. Up until this point, abortion was outlawed, but Hopkins says that despite the illegality, many women underwent these operations under the roofs of illegal clinics or they even induced the abortions themselves.⁵¹ Marwick adds, that after the legalization, the procedure was rather quick and simple as only two doctors were needed to confirm the necessity of the abortion.⁵² Lastly, for those women unsatisfied with their marriage, the Divorce Reform Act was passed in 1969, allowing married couples to divorce after a two-year separation.⁵³ Unfortunately, Sandbrook claims that even despite this, the divorce was still regarded as a social stigma.⁵⁴ Thus, there is a possibility that people did not want to divorce and rather lived in unhappy marriages, as their families would be talked about by their neighbours and kids would be mocked by their classmates.

Moving from the sexual revolution to the education of the 1960s, it is important to note that the era introduced many changes that eased the process of getting education for working-class children. Dominic Sandbrook mentions that Britain had most art school in the world.⁵⁵ These schools later became a ground zero for many of the new musical trends, art styles and philosophies. Arthur Marwick further notes, that these schools were great for working-class students who chose to proceed with their education and despite their poor results in school, they were still creative and talented.⁵⁶ Other working-class students won a scholarship and therefore were able to attend universities which helped them to improve their lives and land their dream jobs after graduation. It can be assumed that because of the education, they can no longer be labelled working-class. Hoggart claims that these students then belong to no class, as they are now superior to their old roots; he calls them the 'classless intelligentsia'.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 23.

⁵¹ Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes*, 168.

⁵² Marwick, *The Sixties*, 265.

⁵³ "A Brief history of divorce," The Guardian, accessed May 7, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/19/divorce-law-history>.

⁵⁴ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 32.

⁵⁵ Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat*, chap. 4.

⁵⁶ Marwick, *The Sixties*, 57.

⁵⁷ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 10.

2 Literary and cultural context

The previous chapter demonstrated how the lives of the working people were influenced by the rising affluence and by the rapid development of the mass media and the technology. Deeply related to these changes is a literary movement called postmodernism. According to Barry Lewis, postmodernism was a dominant style of literature between the years 1960 and 1990,⁵⁸ it was an international sensation and many writers were inspired by it, including John Fowles, the author of *The Collector*. Many tried to explain what postmodernism is and many others refused to accept that it exists. When asked, Jean Baudrillard refused to explain his understanding of the term: “I cannot explain, and I will not explain. Post modernism for me is nothing. I do not worry about this term. I am very exhausted with this post modernism.”⁵⁹ Additionally, Anthony Easthope adds more to the topic when he says that art moves in a certain direction and therefore modernism is merely left behind due to the pursuit of the new.⁶⁰ Another definition is by Charles Jencks, whose book *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* first popularised the term postmodernism, claims that postmodernism arises when modernism is joined with new technologies which then produces a mixture of different styles.⁶¹ Thus one can assume, that postmodernism can be understood as a concept which questions the ideas connected with modernism and further expands on them.

These new styles arose because of the writers experimenting with literature, breaking and combining traditional forms. Barry Lewis says that postmodernist authors and their works vary a lot, but despite the differences, their works share many features which they experiment with, such as fragmentation, erosion of the sense of time and paranoia.⁶² Firstly, the erosion of the sense of time can be observed in *The Collector* when Frederick Clegg tells certain parts of the story in a different order than his victim Miranda does in her diary. For example, Frederick describes how Miranda had her first bath and after that, she was drawing his picture and he offered two hundred guineas for it however Miranda describes these events in a reverse order. Thus a reader might be perplexed about the order of events in the book.

⁵⁸ Barry Lewis, “Postmodernism and Literature,” in *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, ed. Stuart Sim (New York: Routledge, 2002), 121.

⁵⁹ Nigel Watson, “Postmodernism and Lifestyles,” in *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, ed. Stuart Sim (New York: Routledge, 2002), 54.

⁶⁰ Anthony Easthope, “Postmodernism and Critical and Cultural Theory,” in *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, ed. Stuart Sim (New York: Routledge, 2002), 17.

⁶¹ Easthope, “Postmodernism and Critical and Cultural Theory,” 18.

⁶² Lewis, “Postmodernism and Literature,” 123.

Secondly, Lewis explains that characters of postmodernist fiction commonly suffer from a “dread that someone else is patterning your life,” and adds that paranoia is usually felt by characters bound to one place.⁶³ Miranda in *The Collector* might be a perfect example of such a character. She is being held in a house in, to her, an unknown location, and due to this feeling of captivity, she often questions her own nature, her parents and even her superiority to Frederick.

Lastly, Lewis mention fragmentation as a way to disrupt the traditional sense of a plot and settings and mentions *The French Lieutenant's Woman* by John Fowles as a prime example of such disruption.⁶⁴ In the book, Fowles speaks to the reader directly and even projects himself into the story as one of the characters. Furthermore, Fowles provides three alternative endings for the book. In one of the endings, the characters are reunited but in the other they are separated forever. This shows that Fowles tries to introduce a certain effect of uncertainty into the book and because of it he disrupts the traditional storytelling.

Turning now to the next part of the chapter, as mass entertainment was becoming more and more popular, many theories discussing those media appeared. Stuart Hall introduced one of them in his influential essay *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*. He was worried about the new mass-media and wanted to find out whether they influence their audiences and how the audiences perceive and understand the media. Thus, the theory explains the process of communication between the creator and the consumer of media, when producers encode messages and meanings into their works and the media consumers then decode the message. Hall suggests that this communication process has four relatively autonomous parts: production, circulation, distribution or consumption and reproduction.⁶⁵

To explain, Hall claims that when media are made, they are encoded by a complex process which existed prior to the media.⁶⁶ During this process, production entities frame the message by their goals, beliefs or even by their assumptions about the audience. In the production of the media, these goals and beliefs are then transformed into language as Hall claims that: “Reality exists outside language, but it is constantly mediated by and through language: and what we can know and say has to be produced in and through discourse.”⁶⁷ This

⁶³ Lewis, “Postmodernism and Literature,” 130.

⁶⁴ Lewis, “Postmodernism and Literature,” 127.

⁶⁵ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” in *The Cultural Studies reader*, ed. Simon During (London: Routledge, 1993), 90.

⁶⁶ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 92.

⁶⁷ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 97.

means that if the message is to be understood, it has to be encoded in a meaningful discourse. Hall further adds that: “It is this set of decoded meanings which 'have an effect', influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioural consequences”⁶⁸In other words, to be affected by the media means to have decoded it properly. Having decoded the message, one can then bring what they learned during the process back to their lives as a belief, perception or action; this is called reproduction.

Additionally, Hall points out that “the codes of encoding and decoding may not be perfectly symmetrical.”⁶⁹ This is important because the closer a member of the audience is to the code of a producer of the media, the better they are able to decode the meaning that the producer wanted to convey. This means that if a member of the audience and a producer have different codes, they will not understand each other, as Hall writes: “what are called distortions or misunderstandings arise precisely from the lack of equivalence between the two sides in a communicative exchange.”⁷⁰ Many messages may be self-explanatory, for instance, a picture of a dog undoubtedly represents a dog but at more abstract levels, a higher level of understanding is required.

Furthermore, audience can choose how they want to decode the message. Hall suggests that decoders may choose their own code and if there were no limits, audiences could read anything they want into any message.⁷¹ Thus one can assume, that decoding does not have to be a passive activity, but decoders can participate more actively. Hall then proceeds to explain the three main positions that decoders may choose when decoding a message.⁷²

Firstly, Hall suggests the dominant-hegemonic positions⁷³, which means that the audience decoded the message exactly as was intended and thus operate within the dominant code. Secondly, in the negotiated position, audience is accepting what has been suggested by the dominant code but are not willing to accept the message completely.⁷⁴ This means that one accepts both the legitimacy of the dominant code but also its faults. Hence the reader accepts the dominant code but at the same time they are modifying it based on his own experiences. Lastly, in the oppositional position, audience decodes the message in the way contrary to the

⁶⁸ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 93.

⁶⁹ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 93.

⁷⁰ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 94.

⁷¹ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 100.

⁷² Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 100.

⁷³ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 101.

⁷⁴ Stuart Hall, “Encoding, Decoding,” 102.

dominant code.⁷⁵ One can find meanings which were merely implied or even find new meanings, based again on their experiences or beliefs. Thanks to this possibility of choosing how to decode messages, audiences have the ability to find meanings that they would not have found previously. Violence in books or movies can be now observed not as a celebration but rather as its critique and conversely, people can decode news but be influenced by their propaganda. One could even say that audiences shall be called media decoders instead of media consumers.

⁷⁵ Stuart Hall, "Encoding, Decoding," 103.

3 Class distinctions in *The Collector*

In his book *The Aristos* John Fowles expresses how disappointed he was by the severe misunderstanding of *The Collector* which surrounded the book when it was first published.⁷⁶ The public together with critics perceived the book as a mere crime-fiction and ignored the implications and suggestions hidden behind the main story of abduction. Fowles claims, that he wanted to write a deeper analysis of the class system and the inspiration for that were the thoughts of a Greek philosopher Heraclitus.⁷⁷ Thus, *The Collector* should be perceived as a book about a clash between the representatives of lower classes, the unthinking Many, and the intellectual elite, the Few. A clash between Frederick, a representative of a working class and a middle-class student Miranda.

In fact, the first part of the book is a story of a simple man, a lonely clerk named Frederick Clegg who wins a considerable amount of money in the football pools and decides to kidnap Miranda, an art student whom he is obsessed with and it truly reads like a crime-fiction but then, approximately in the half of the book, it takes an unexpected and interesting twist, when the narrator changes from Frederick to the victim of his crime Miranda, allowing readers to observe many of the aspects of the story from her perspective. Her narrative adds many crucial details about her life that were previously missing and it reveals the relations between the characters and how different they are from each other. More importantly, the second part of *The Collector* introduces George Paston, or G.P. as Miranda refers to him in her diary, who can be perceived as a mentor to Miranda which can be seen in their conversations captured in her diary.

In this chapter *the Theory of Encoding and Decoding* will be applied to the dialogues of the main characters in order to analyse whether they can understand each other clearly and examine the possible causes of the potential misunderstandings and miscommunication between them and also, what these misunderstandings eventually lead to. Moving towards the application of *the Theory of Encoding and Decoding* to the first dialogue, it is important to note that the following part is strictly subjective, and based on one's experience, education and origin multiple interpretations and results can be found.

Firstly, one of the very first dialogues that happens between Frederick and Miranda lays the foundation for almost all of the following conversations between the characters and it

⁷⁶ Fowles, *The Aristos*, 9.

⁷⁷ Fowles, *The Aristos*, 9.

introduces the main topics that are reappearing throughout the book. Shortly after the abduction and her arrival to the cellar prepared for her inside the house Frederick bought, he tries to welcome her and wishes her a good morning. However, Frederick is quite surprised with her attitude towards him when she immediately demands her release from captivity. "Get out of the way. I'm going to leave,"⁷⁸ she says without a hesitation and tries to walk out of the door. There is a possible explanation that she was unable to comprehend what had happened to her and was in denial about the fact that she was abducted as she might have been in a state of shock.

Frederick, however, is determined not to let her go and blocks the way. She sees that there is no way out just yet and decides to find out more about her abductor and perhaps even why he kidnapped her. While Miranda interrogates Clegg, she realizes she knows who he is; she saw his photo in newspapers. As a way out of the conversation, Frederick comes up with a story of him simply following orders of some other man who wanted Miranda abducted.⁷⁹ Thus, the message he wants to convey is that he is not responsible for the kidnapping. She does not believe him, therefore she does not operate inside the dominant code but rather inside the oppositional code; she understands he is trying to say he is not innocent, but she rejects the dominant code. One can assume that the reason for her rejection of the message is that Frederick is someone she never met before and someone who most certainly abducted her, hence she has no reason to believe him.

After that, she tries to persuade him into telling her the reason why he abducted her, as she can see how costly the things he bought her must have been. She thinks he must have abducted her to hold her for ransom, but he says it is not about that. "The only other thing is sex. You want to do something to me,"⁸⁰ she says to him in response. He is shocked when he hears that; the shock being the effect of him decoding the message using the dominant code. He is shocked both because he really does not want to have a sexual intercourse with her and because she thinks he does. Frederick says to Miranda: "It's not that at all. I shall have all proper respect. I'm not that sort,"⁸¹ implying that he is not that type of a man who would take an advantage of her situation. Soon after, he quite unexpectedly admits to being in love with her and wanting her to get to know him. In response she asks him whether he thinks he will make her love him by keeping her in his tomb as he will be only a kidnapper to her.⁸² He gets up and

⁷⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 31.

⁷⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 32.

⁸⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 36.

⁸¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 36.

⁸² Fowles, *The Collector*, 37.

wants to leave. There it is clear that he operates inside the dominant position as he decoded all her messages in the preferred code; she will not fall in love with him as long as she stays there. It could be assumed that the effect of those messages was him being quite disappointed, therefore an emotional effect, as the conversation was presumably not going according to his expectations.

Next, Miranda in her attempts to illustrate how insane his motives are tries to explain that it is impossible for her to fall in love with Clegg as long as she is kept within his house. She tries to be nice to him and explains that it is not about not falling in love with him but about falling in love within the room she is being held in. In response, he says that he only wants to know her.⁸³ A possible explanation for his reaction is that he understands the message she is trying to convey but also rejects it, not wanting to admit her refusing his love; therefore, operating within the negotiated position.

Furthermore, she says that he cannot kidnap people to befriend them, on which he replies: "I want to know you very much. I wouldn't have a chance in London. I'm not clever and all that. Not your class. You wouldn't be seen me dead in London."⁸⁴ The indicated reaction is extremely important as it is one of the few aspects that define Frederick Clegg. He is a representative of a lower class - the Many, and his envy of higher classes is being suggested many times throughout the book. He never had much in his life. He was orphaned in his youth and raised by his aunt and uncle in a nonconformist household. Thanks to the pools, he was given the opportunity to actually transform himself from the Many to a representative of the Few, but soon after he won the prize he realizes that people from higher classes will never welcome him between them.

Additionally, similar behaviour can be observed by Miranda, shortly after her part of the book begins, when she is trying to describe Clegg in her diary. She claims that his voice sounds to her like a voice of someone who has no education yet is trying to sound educated.⁸⁵ This seems like a perfect counterpart to his description of the voice of her mother; he calls it the la-di-da voice.⁸⁶ Miranda writes that Clegg admitted he thought she would be always above him, once again signalling his envy of her class, her privilege. She thinks that he is constantly making her pity him because of him being working class as she writes in her diary: "He was

⁸³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 38.

⁸⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 39.

⁸⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 122.

⁸⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 10.

very lonely, he knew I would always be ‘above’ him. It was awful, he spoke so awkwardly, he always has to say things in a roundabout way, he always has to justify himself at the same time,⁸⁷ and then she adds that he is “putting the tentacles of his being hurt around me. His not being my ‘class’.”⁸⁸

After that, she defends herself that she hates prejudice and that even some of her friends are of a working-class origin. Nevertheless, he is aware of the class differences between him and Miranda. He sees how she treats him and how impatient and sarcastic she is with him when he makes mistakes. After that, she continues with her persuasion of him to release her:

I promise, I swear that if you let me go I will not tell anyone. I’ll tell them all some story. I will arrange to meet you as often as you like, as often as I can when I’m not working. Nobody will ever know about this except us. [...] If you let me go now I shall begin to admire you. I shall think, he had me at his mercy, but he was chivalrous, he behaved like a real gentleman.” I can’t, I said. Please don’t ask.⁸⁹

Clegg refuses the message of her pleading with him to release her even though he most assuredly decoded the message as was intended but he knows he cannot release her, because all of the things he has done would be in vain and he is also aware of the possible consequences of abducting her, hence he rejects her release. Thus, it can be assumed that he operates within the negotiated position.

On one occasion she asks him to tell her what his hobbies are, and he reveals that he collects butterflies. “Now you’ve collected me,” she responds, and he thinks that Miranda is making fun of him, so he replies that he did “in a matter of speaking”⁹⁰. However, she meant it literally. This dialogue shows how they misunderstand each other. She thinks of herself as a prisoner, yet he believes she is a guest who should enjoy her stay. Due to this lack of equivalence between the two sides of the conversation, distortions or misunderstanding between characters often arise in the book.

The following day, Miranda attempts to escape her captivity but Frederick prevents the attempt and as a result, she does not speak to him and refuses to eat. In response, he promises her that she can leave in several weeks if she eats and talks to him and she says that she will agree with those conditions, only if he agrees to her own conditions; she wants fresh food, art supplies and record-player together with regular baths and access to fresh air.⁹¹ Consequently,

⁸⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 122.

⁸⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 123.

⁸⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 40.

⁹⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 44.

⁹¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 46-47.

it can be assumed that both of them operated within the negotiated position due to the fact, that they accepted the preferred code, yet they also created their own rules. This means that they both agreed to fulfil their part of the deal only when certain conditions were met.

Additionally, she makes him buy fresh food as well as a lot of fruit and vegetables together with fresh coffee, and he remarks that “she was very particular about that.”⁹². Unfortunately, it is clear that she does not enjoy the food because she notes in her diary that “he tries his best to cook, but it’s hopeless “. ⁹³ It is apparent that she dislikes the frozen food due to the fact that as a young woman of a middle-class origin, she was used to eating fresh food and fruits every day and eating a meal prepared with frozen ingredients made her stomach upset.

Moreover, when he buys her the record-player, he also buys a record by Mozart, as he was uncertain what kind of music Miranda prefers. When they listened to the record together later, she cried because Mozart was dying while writing the piece and the music was sorrowful, Clegg did not understand why was Miranda sad as “it just sounded like the rest” to him.⁹⁴ Assuming that the music conveys a message, it is clear that Miranda operated within the dominant position, as she understood why the music was supposed to be sad and she had a proper emotional reaction after decoding the message but on the other hand, due to the lack of exposure to the classical music during his life, it is certain that he had no chance of understanding the record the preferred way. Further, it can be said that as a working-class man, he prefers mass-produced popular music.

Moving on to another dialogue of the book, after Clegg allows Miranda to bath, they discuss his fear of her escaping. “I’m sorry I’m suspicious”, he says and then adds that “It’s just that you’re all I’ve got that makes life worth living. [...] If you went, I think I’d do myself in.”⁹⁵ “You need a doctor,”⁹⁶ responds Miranda and Frederick just makes a sound in response to that. Assuming that by doing himself in he means he would commit suicide if she escaped, Miranda decoded the message in the preferred way, therefore she operates inside the dominant code, knowing Frederick has no reason to lie as he has not lied before. Similarly, he makes a sound as a respond to her message about the doctor, as he too decoded the message as was meant to be decoded and therefore understands that she thinks of him as crazy. She offers him her help:

⁹² Fowles, *The Collector*, 49.

⁹³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 124.

⁹⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 49.

⁹⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 51.

⁹⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 51.

‘I’d like to help you.’ You think I’m mad because of what I’ve done. I’m not mad. It’s just, well, I’ve got no one else. There’s never been anyone but you I’ve ever wanted to know. ‘That’s the worst kind of illness,’ she said. She turned around then, all this was while I was tying. She looked down. ‘I feel sorry for you.’⁹⁷

There it is clear that she wants to help him as she thinks he might suffer from a mental illness of some kind, but he rejects the message because he believes that he does not, therefore it can be assumed that he operates within the oppositional code. His reason for that is that he is just lonely, that is why he kidnapped her. And he truly is lonely, as it is described throughout the book. For instance, he has no one he could consider a friend; he disliked his male colleagues for making fun of him and considered his female colleagues rude and vulgar.⁹⁸ In addition, he grew up only with his aunt and his uncle, who was like a father to him, yet he died when Frederick was fifteen years old, leaving him only with his aunt and her daughter.⁹⁹ Miranda decodes the message about his loneliness in a preferred way and the effect of the message is her sympathy for him.

Next, she convinces him to show her the house he is keeping her in. “Aren’t you going to show me your house?”¹⁰⁰ she asks him. He agrees but almost immediately, she starts criticizing decorations and furniture. “This is the wrong-coloured carpet. You ought to have rush matting or something. And those pictures – horrible!”¹⁰¹ In her diary, she adds further criticism:

A lovely old house really, done up in the most excruciating women’s magazine ‘good taste’. Ghastliest colour clashes, mix-up of furniture styles, bits of suburban fuss, phoney antiques, awful brass ornaments. And the pictures! You wouldn’t believe me if I described the awfulness of the pictures. He told me some firm did all the furniture choosing and decorating. They must have got rid of all the junk they could find in their store-rooms.¹⁰²

In his defence, Clegg argues that the pictures were quite expensive, and she informs him that he cannot judge art by how much it costs. It can be said that he clearly misunderstood the message Miranda tried to convey and thinks that she claims the furniture is cheap and thus hideous and not appropriate to be used as a decoration in such an old house as they are in. He clearly operates inside the oppositional code. It can be assumed that the message she tries to convey is that the furniture is unfitting in general and that even inexpensive decorations can

⁹⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 52.

⁹⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 12.

⁹⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 52.

¹⁰¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 52.

¹⁰² Fowles, *The Collector*, 125.

look good if chosen properly. This misunderstanding undoubtedly arose due to their different views of art and taste. Miranda studies art and comes from a middle-class family, therefore one can suspect that she was raised to have a good taste but on the other hand, Clegg lived with his aunt his whole life before the abduction. Never before had he have an opportunity to live on his own and choose to decorate his house in a way he wanted. He did not want to risk choosing wrong decorations as he says “I haven’t any experience in furnishing”¹⁰³, so he chose a company in Lewes to do the decorating for him¹⁰⁴ and it is safe to assume they decorated the house according the latest fashion which was, as seen in the second chapter, comprised of bright colours and mass-produced furniture.

It is essential to note that soon after, it starts to be evident from the diary which Miranda writes, that she is feeling above Clegg as she states: “I’m so superior to him. I know this sounds wickedly conceited. But I am. [...] I feel I’ve got to show him how decent human beings live and behave.”¹⁰⁵ Additionally, John Fowles explains how arrogant and contemptuous Miranda is in his preface to *The Aristos*.¹⁰⁶ It is apparent that she perceives how big of a difference is between them and she also notices how envious Clegg is of her class, thus she must try to change him so that he can become a better man and see what bad things he has done. “My theory is that I have to unmartyr him,”¹⁰⁷ she writes to her diary, further proving her belief that if she educates him and helps him to elevate himself to a better being, he might let her go and she would no longer be a prisoner.

Moving towards another conversation between Miranda and Frederick, they are starting to spend more time together. He takes photographs of her and she draws pictures of him, yet she seldom finishes them. He claims that she often tears the pictures regularly and blames it on her artistic nature. When she tears the picture, he says “I’d have like it,”¹⁰⁸ however, she does not respond. It is possible that he misunderstood the reason why she is destroying the pictures, blaming it on her temperament. Due to his response, it can be assumed that he operates within the negotiated position, as he understands that she destroyed the picture because she was not satisfied with it, but he wanted it anyway, as he thinks that everything she draws is worth having simply because it was her who drew the picture. Alternative interpretation is that she destroyed

¹⁰³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 54.

¹⁰⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 22.

¹⁰⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 130.

¹⁰⁶ Fowles, *The Aristos*, 4.

¹⁰⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 121.

¹⁰⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 58.

the painting simply because he was on it and she cannot bear seeing more of him; not even in her paintings.

Later in the conversation, she complains on his features: “You’re very difficult to get. You’re so featureless. Everything’s nondescript. I’m thinking of you as an object, not as person. [...] You’re not ugly, but your face has all sorts of ugly habits. Your underlip is worst. It betrays you.”¹⁰⁹ Yet again, he is unable to comprehend the meaning of her complaint and says that he “looked in the mirror upstairs, but [he] couldn’t see what she meant.”¹¹⁰ Again, there are two possible interpretations of the distortion that arose between the two of them. Firstly, one can assume that Clegg did not understand the message Miranda was trying to convey since he thinks she meant it literally and that she was truly talking about his physical features, but on the contrary, she was depicting his character and how the character is projected onto the painting. Secondly, he understood the message perfectly and was operating inside the dominant code, yet he simply did not see why his underlip would look ugly. He further adds that:

Sometimes she’d come out of the blue with funny questions. ‘Do you believe in God?’ was one. Not much, I answered. ‘It must be yes or no.’ I don’t think about it. Don’t see that it matters. ‘You’re the one imprisoned in a cellar,’ she said. Do you believe, I asked. ‘Of course I do. I’m a human being.’¹¹¹

Later, Miranda asks Frederick whether he believes in God and when he says that he does not think about God very often, she compares him to be a prisoner himself; prisoner of his simple mind one could say, proving that she genuinely thinks of herself as being superior to him. Although, one could argue that this time Miranda was the one who misunderstood the message. She presumably thinks that he is not thinking about the God due to not being intellectually gifted, but in fact lower class people never really bothered with thinking about the God, as Richard Hoggart says.¹¹² This proves that Miranda operated within the oppositional code.

Despite her contempt for him, in her attempts to befriend him and unmarry him, she tries to get to know him better. She says: “You’re lucky having no parents. Mine have only kept together because of my sister and me.”¹¹³ This implies that her parents did not divorce due to divorces being stigmatized during the 1960s and they were afraid of the possible impact that the divorce could have had on their daughters. It is clear that Miranda hates her mother when she says: “My mother’s a bitch. A nasty ambitious middle-class bitch. She drinks. [...] I could

¹⁰⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 58.

¹¹⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 58.

¹¹¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 58.

¹¹² Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 5.

¹¹³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 59.

never have friends to stay,”¹¹⁴ on which Clegg replies that he is sorry and in response, she looks at him suspiciously which indicates that she does not trust him. One can assume that she believes that he meant it in a sarcastic way but as he himself says, he did not.¹¹⁵ She operates within the oppositional code due to the fact that she understood the message in a contradictory way for she might have thought he is envious of her having friends when he was alone all his life and possibly of her having her parents.

After that, she shows him a picture of him she drew. He is astonished by the painting and by the likeness of him and wants to buy the picture:

Would you consider selling this, I asked? ‘I hadn’t, but I will. Two hundred guineas?’ All right, I said. She gave me another sharp look. ‘You’d give me two hundred guineas for that?’ Yes, I said. Because you did it. ‘Give it to me.’ I handed it back and before I knew what, she was tearing it across. Please don’t, I said. She stopped, but it was torn half across.¹¹⁶

The cause of her tearing the picture is that she was not satisfied with the painting at all, yet he offered a substantial amount of money as a payment for it as she notes in her diary: “I drew him this morning. [...] But it wasn’t any good, and he wanted it. Said he would pay TWO HUNDRED guineas for it. He is mad.”¹¹⁷ Unfortunately, Frederick, as was already proved, has no education in art thus he is unable to identify whether a painting is good or not. Additionally, he loves Miranda tremendously and that is why he might feel obliged to like and own everything she paints. One could even say that Clegg, as a photographer, is only interested in likeness of a picture, of how similar the picture is to the object it was based on.

This idea is further expanded on in the following paragraph, when Miranda draws several pictures of fruit and Frederick has to select the best looking one but always choose poorly. When shown the one that was supposed to be the best he says that “the one that was so good only looked half-finished to me, you could hardly tell what the fruit were, and it was all lop-sided,” showing that he did not like the best one much. She tries to explain why the picture was the best looking one: “There I’m just on the threshold of saying something about the fruit. I don’t actually say it, but you get the idea that I might. Do you feel that?”¹¹⁸ and he replies that he does not feel that. From his quote it is clear that he does not understand any art forms other than the direct reproductions. In both cases he was unable to decode the message in a preferred

¹¹⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 59.

¹¹⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 59.

¹¹⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 60.

¹¹⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 124.

¹¹⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 61.

code for his utter lack of art education and experience with paintings. On the other hand, Miranda understood perfectly why the pictures were not any good for she studied at art school, which were popular at the sixties and she even won a scholarship to attend the school, therefore she has a great deal of education that concerns art.

Furthermore, she sees an opportunity to educate him in art when she sees that he does not understand what she means when she talks about paintings. Thus she proceeds to show him a book about art by a famous French painter Cézanne and says that “He’s not only saying everything there is about the apples, but everything about all apples and all form and colour.”¹¹⁹ Again, it is quite clear that Frederick has no opinion on art and he is not interested in it that much, so he says: “I take your word for it. [...] All your pictures are nice.”¹²⁰ She thought that this was a proof that he thinks he has no reason to think about art at all and hence writes in her diary: “He annoyed me, it didn’t mean anything to him, and he made it clear in his miserable I’ll-take-your-word-for-it way that he didn’t really care. To him I was just a child amusing herself.”¹²¹ In her furious response to his ignorance, she says: “Ferdinand, they should have called you Caliban,”¹²² naming him after a character from a play *The Tempest* written by William Shakespeare. Caliban is a half monster, half human, who attempted to rape Miranda, the daughter of Prospero and have many children with her: “Thou didst prevent me, I had peopled else this isle with Calibans”¹²³ One can assume, that Miranda named Clegg after such monster due to her fear and contempt she feels for him and because of his inferiority to her.

Moving on, the feeling of superiority and inferiority and misunderstandings caused by these feelings, is apparent many times throughout the book. Clegg thinks that Miranda tends to talk down to him and is impatient with him and she truly does, especially when she thinks of G.P., her love interest and mentor. She writes:

I hate the uneducated and the ignorant. I hate the pompous and the phoney. I hate the jealous and the resentful. I hate the crabbed and the mean and the petty. I hate all ordinary dull little people who aren’t ashamed of being dull and little. I hate what G.P. calls the New People, their new-class people with their cars and their money and their tellies and their stupid vulgarities and their stupid crawling imitation of the bourgeoisie.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 61.

¹²⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 61.

¹²¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 132.

¹²² Fowles, *The Collector*, 61.

¹²³ William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2007), 1140.

¹²⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 207.

It is apparent how much contempt Miranda feels towards the class that Frederick originates from. She hates that they have no education, yet they are not ashamed of that. She feels hatred towards the new affluent society for having money yet not knowing what to do with it and towards their futile attempts to be comparable to higher classes. She says that she voted for the Labour party but G.P. ridiculed her for it since they are “the party which brought the New People into existence,”¹²⁵ referring to many changes during which the working class prospered and increased affluence and well-being. He then adds that “the New People are still the poor people. Theirs is the new form of poverty. The others hadn’t any money and these haven’t any soul.”¹²⁶ One can argue that by this he means how interested they are in mass-produced goods and entertainment instead of the higher art; paintings of renowned artists, classical music and books by famous writers. But at the same time Miranda expresses that Clegg is not exactly the same as the New People and together with it she shows an insight into how middle-class people perceived the new affluent society:

Caliban is not typical of the New People. He’s hopelessly out of date. [...] And there’s his lack of confidence. They’re not ashamed of themselves. I remember D saying they think they’re all equal to the best as soon as they have a telly and a car. But deep-down Caliban’s one of them – there’s this hatred of the unusual, this wanting everybody to be the same. And the awful misuse of money.¹²⁷

It can be said that Miranda is being influenced by the views and opinions that G.P. shared with her. And in a way she is. In her journal she keeps writing about advice he gave her on art and how to paint. She writes that “he’s changed [her] more than anything or anybody,” and adds that “it’s not just that he’s seen so much more life. Had so much more artistic experience. [...] But he says exactly what he thinks, and he always makes me think. He makes me question myself.”¹²⁸ Thus one can assume, that the ways that Miranda tries to teach Frederick are the ways that she was being taught by G.P. One could even argue that in their relationship, Miranda was the same to G.P. what Clegg is to her; someone she puts on a pedestal and worships for their ideas or looks. And even though she resents Clegg, she is still trying to teach him how to be a better human being.

One day, Miranda talks with Frederick about the nuclear disarmament and she asks him: “What do you think about the H-bomb?”¹²⁹ He says that he does not think much about it. She

¹²⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 207.

¹²⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 207.

¹²⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 209.

¹²⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 143.

¹²⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 132.

responds: “You must think something,”¹³⁰ which seems like she operates within oppositional code; she decoded the message that he does not think about it, yet she believes that he has an opinion about the matter. He then says that he hopes that the bomb does not kill him or her. She, in her superiority, says: “I realize you’ve never lived with people who take things seriously, and discuss seriously. [...] Now let’s try again. What do you think about the H-bomb.”¹³¹ She presses him more to make him think, to teach him how to think and how to construct his own opinions, yet he still says: “If I said anything serious, you wouldn’t take it serious. [...] It’s obvious. You can’t do anything. It’s here to stay.”¹³² He operates within the negotiated code; it is clear that he thinks something about the bomb but is scared to say what because he does not want to upset her. He then adds: “We don’t have any say in things,”¹³³ referring to a working-class view of life, as described by Hoggart, where the working-class people divide the society into “Us” and “Them” with “Them” referring to higher classes and the government and of the belief that “They” will never do anything what “Us” want.¹³⁴

Further in the discussion, she tries to explain that the aforementioned view of a life and people that are sharing the said view are exactly the reason why the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament does not have much of a chance to succeed: “Well, you’re part of it. everything free and decent in life is being locked away in filthy little cellars by beastly people who don’t care.”¹³⁵ Once again, she shows her contempt for the lower class even though she stated how she hates prejudice, yet one can argue that since the moment she said that, she shows exactly the same prejudice that she hates. Clegg responds to that: “I know your lot. You think the whole blooming world’s all arranged so as everything ought to be your way.”¹³⁶ Miranda understands that he is implying that her class has the advantages, yet she operates within the negotiated code as she tries to explain to him, that thanks to the money he won he can change and have the same advantages as her: “You haven’t caught up with yourself. You’re rich now. You’ve got nothing to be hurt about.”¹³⁷ In her diary, she writes that she tried to persuade him into using his money for his education and he said that he will do that; unfortunately she felt that he only said it so she would be happy.¹³⁸ Her feeling indicates that she decoded the message using her past

¹³⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 132.

¹³¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 132.

¹³² Fowles, *The Collector*, 133.

¹³³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 133.

¹³⁴ Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, chap. 3.

¹³⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 134.

¹³⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 134.

¹³⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 134.

¹³⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 150.

experience with him and his previous promises he made just to please her. In his part of the book, it is apparent that she tried to suggest how to change and become a better human being: “You have money – as a matter of fact, you aren’t stupid, you could become whatever you liked. Only you’ve got to shake off the past. You’ve got to kill your aunt and the house you lived in and the people you lived with.”¹³⁹ This view originates from ways that G.P. influenced Miranda with¹⁴⁰, further proving how much of an influence he had on her thoughts and opinions.

Simultaneously with trying to educate Frederick and making him a better man, Miranda also continues to persuade him into releasing her:

‘Don’t you feel this has gone on long enough?’ No, I said. ‘Won’t you let me go now?’ No. ‘But there must be something you want to do with me?’ I just want to be with you. All the time. ‘In bed?’ I’ve told you, no. ‘But you want to?’ I’d rather not speak about it. [...] I don’t allow myself to think of what I know is wrong, I said. I don’t consider it nice.¹⁴¹

From this excerpt, it is clear that Frederick has no intention of releasing Miranda from her captivity and when he says that he wants to be with her, she thinks that he means in bed, thus decoding the message that he wanted to convey in a wrong way and therefore she operates within the oppositional code. Clearly, he does not like thinking about sex and considers thinking about it to be wrong. One can assume that it is because he did not receive any sexual education from his aunt due to her beliefs and it was also common not to provide children any sexual education prior to the 1960s as is written in the first chapter. Additionally, it is possible that he feels such hatred towards sexual intercourse due to his mother being a prostitute. As a response to that, she says: “You are extraordinary,”¹⁴² and Clegg thanks her for it. It is apparent from her diary, that she did not mean it as a compliment but rather as a sarcasm for she writes that “he’s so ordinary that he’s extraordinary,”¹⁴³ but unfortunately, it is not clear whether Clegg operates within the dominant position or within the oppositional position, for his thanks could be considered a sarcasm as well.

Despite his refusals to release her, she still wants to help him and teach him. When she sees how he reads a book about art only to please her, she tries to converse with him about books and why there is such a lack of them in the house on which he replies, that there are a

¹³⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 76.

¹⁴⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 144.

¹⁴¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 70-71.

¹⁴² Fowles, *The Collector*, 71.

¹⁴³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 127.

few books upstairs.¹⁴⁴ Miranda does not find the answer satisfactory and their following dialogue is captured in her diary:

M. A few measly detective novels. Don't you ever read proper books – real books? (Silence.) Books about important things by people who really feel about life. Not just paperbacks to kill time on a train journey. You know, books?
C. Light novels are more my line. (He's like one of those boxers. You wish he'd lie down and be knocked out.)
M. You can jolly well read *The Catcher In The Rye*. I've almost finished it. Do you know I've read it twice and I'm five years younger than you are?
C. I'll read it.
M. It's not a punishment.
C. I looked at it before I brought it down.
M. And you didn't like it.
C. I'll try it.
M. You make me sick.¹⁴⁵

From their dialogue it is apparent that Miranda tried to ask him about books that would make him question things, but due to his silence after the question, he did not decode the question properly and simply did not understand what she meant by the term real books. It can be argued that he was capable of answering the question only after she explained herself. After that, he promised to read *The Catcher In the Rye* despite his previous unsuccessful attempt, just to please her. He might have made her sick because of his acceptance of everything she says and proposes, for she says: "I always seem to end up by talking down to you. I hate it. It's you. You always squirm one step lower than I can go."¹⁴⁶ Presumably, he decoded the message in a preferred code and understood that she expressed his inferiority to her and the effect of the decoding was emotional, as he was feeling hurt: "She went like that at me sometimes. Of course I forgave her, thought it hurt at the time."¹⁴⁷ In addition, when he finishes the book, he hands it to her and says: "I've read it."¹⁴⁸ However, she decodes that message in an opposite way, due to his tone, and thinks that although he finished it, he did not like it, therefore she operates within the oppositional code. And truly, he did not enjoy the book for he did not understand the similarities between him and the main character of *The Catcher In The Rye* which she wanted to show him. Also, it is clear that the term 'measly detective novels' refers to mass-produced paperbacks which were popular at the time and he must have preferred them. And truly, he agrees that 'light novels' are his line.

¹⁴⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 148.

¹⁴⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 148.

¹⁴⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 76.

¹⁴⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 205.

Having discussed how Miranda tried to educate Frederick and help him to become a better man, the following part of the paper will focus on the most significant misunderstanding between both of them which eventually led to the death of Miranda and to Frederick reborn as someone new; someone worse. Miranda decides to organise a party with Clegg to befriend him in hopes that she might persuade him to let her go.¹⁴⁹ After a while spent talking, Frederick decides to ask her to marry him:

“Please marry me, I said. I had the ring in my pocket all ready. There was a silence. Everything I’ve got is yours, I said. ‘Marriage means love,’ she said. I don’t expect anything, I said. I don’t expect you to do anything that you don’t want. You can do what you like, study art, etcetera. I won’t ask anything, anything of you, except to be my wife in name and live in the same house with me. She sat staring at the carpet. You can have you own bedroom and lock it every night, I said. ‘But that’s horrible. It’s inhuman! We’ll never understand each other. We don’t have the same sort of hearth.’¹⁵⁰

From the silence of Miranda, it is probable that the proposal shocked her altogether and she could not believe that he truly is asking her to become his wife. One can argue, that she cannot accept the proposal due to not loving him as she already told him that she would never fall in love with him as long as she is held captive. He, in his denial of her message, claims that it does not matter to him if she loves him or not, he only wants her to be his wife. Another reason she cannot accept might be because of her parents. Since they did not love each other and she saw how ruined the marriage was by the lack of their mutual love, she realizes that her marriage with Clegg would not work at all. He starts getting angry after a while spent arguing with her and she uses that to attack him in order to escape. Unfortunately, he defeats her and uses chloroform on her in order to make her fall asleep. In her sleep, he undresses her and take photographs of her in underwear.¹⁵¹ Due to the events of that night, he concludes that the plan with Miranda was not going as he envisaged and he started losing interest in her: “Things were never the same again, in spite of all that happened. Somehow it proved me we could never come together, she could never understand me, I suppose she would say I never could have understood her, or would have, anyhow.”¹⁵²

When she wakes up, she must have realized that he undressed her the previous night. She is furious for he was touching her without her permission and writes that: “From now on we are enemies. Both ways,” and then adds “He doesn’t realize it fully yet, because he’s trying

¹⁴⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 213.

¹⁵⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 84.

¹⁵¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 87.

¹⁵² Fowles, *The Collector*, 87.

to be nice to me at the moment. But he's much nearer than he was."¹⁵³ She resents him and is feeling more superior to him than before: "He is absolutely inferior to me in all ways," and further adds that "His one superiority is his ability to keep me here."¹⁵⁴ She realizes that despite the class differences between them, he is becoming superior to her in that regard, by keeping her hostage he is making her dependent on him by providing her with food and clothes and many other things she requested and because of this realization she claims that: "I prostituted myself to Caliban."¹⁵⁵ And in her fury and spite, she attacks him again but once again the attack is futile.¹⁵⁶

In the light of the past days, Miranda is feeling increasingly hopeless and longs to be released. In her discussion with Frederick, she is trying to find what else she could provide him with in order for him to release her and because of her desperation, she is ready to go beyond her moral rules and asks him whether he wants to have a sexual intercourse with her:

'If you felt I was doing it for some other reason. Because I liked you. Just for fun. You would like it then?' I can buy what you're talking about in London any time I want, I said. That shut her up a bit. She started drawing again. After a bit she said, "You haven't got me here because you find me sexually attractive." I find you very attractive, I said. The most. 'You're just like a Chinese box,' she said.¹⁵⁷

From his response it is clear that because of her proposal, he compares her to a prostitute. She decoded the message in a preferred way, hence the silence. She knows what Clegg compared her to, therefore she understands the conveyed message and operates within the dominant code. This leads her into thinking that he does not find her attractive, but the opposite is the truth; he does. She is perplexed and does not understand why he does not want to have a sexual intercourse with her when he finds her sexually attractive. Additionally, it is possible that she does not understand the reason why he does not want to have sex with her as she might think that he kidnapped her, so he could rape her.

Unfortunately, this misunderstanding leads her into believing that in order to make him act, she has to behave as his lover since she writes in her diary that "perhaps [she] really should kiss him. More than kiss him. Love him. [...] He would have to act."¹⁵⁸ Soon after, she concludes that kissing him is not enough and in order to make him release her, she has to do

¹⁵³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 221.

¹⁵⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 221.

¹⁵⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 221.

¹⁵⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 91.

¹⁵⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 95.

¹⁵⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 236.

more: “It’s useless just kissing him. I’ve got to give him such a tremendous shock that he’ll have to release me.”¹⁵⁹ It is apparent that after the unsuccessful attempts to educate him, she sees seducing him as her last option and in doing so, she proves that she misunderstood his messages about not wanting to have a sexual intercourse with her, for she might think that he is scared due to not having enough experience with women. This means that she operates within the oppositional position, as she decodes the messages in a contrary way. Unfortunately, she is not aware that he does not desire the sexual intercourse because “having her was enough. Nothing needed doing. I just wanted to have her, and safe at last.”¹⁶⁰ It can be assumed, that as a collector he only perceives her as a beautiful specimen worth having in his collection. He only fancy to be in awe of her beauty, cherishing it and by seducing him, she destroys that fantasy forever.

Next, she is trying to seduce Frederick, making him kiss her but he says that he doesn’t want to do that, and then adds that she is seducing him to make fun of him, to ridicule him.¹⁶¹ He does not comprehend that she is trying to help him. Similarly, Miranda decodes the message of his refusal the opposite way as well. She thinks the cause of his refusal is his fear of sexual intercourse and human contact, therefore she keeps kissing him and she even tells him that “there’s nothing to be frightened of.”¹⁶² Thus, both of them operate within the oppositional code. He later confesses that he wishes she never tried to do that:

I wish you never started, I said. She was silent, it seemed ages. ‘Why do you think I did it? Just to escape?’ Not love, I said. ‘Shall I tell you?’ She stood up. ‘You must realize that I’ve sacrificed all my principles tonight. Oh, yes, to escape. I was thinking of that. But I do want to help you. You must believe that. To try to show you that sex – sex is just an activity, like anything else. It’s not dirty, it’s just two people playing with each other’s bodies. Like dancing. Like a game’¹⁶³

She tries to explain to him that she did it to teach him that there was nothing wrong about sexual intercourse and that he should not consider it wrong any longer. She then says: “You could have told me. You could have stopped me at the very beginning,” and he responds: “I tried.”¹⁶⁴ If she had decoded the message in the preferred code and stopped with seducing Clegg, she could

¹⁵⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 237.

¹⁶⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 95.

¹⁶¹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 97.

¹⁶² Fowles, *The Collector*, 98.

¹⁶³ Fowles, *The Collector*, 101.

¹⁶⁴ Fowles, *The Collector*, 102.

have saved herself. But it was too late for that for he says that he never respected her again after what happened.¹⁶⁵

Soon after that night, she feels sick and suspects that she has pneumonia, but Clegg does not believe her and claims that it is only a flu.¹⁶⁶ He even takes her temperature but even then, he does not believe her for he claims that there are ways to increase the temperature, so the thermometer shows increased numbers.¹⁶⁷ It is clear that he no longer loves her because of what she did and therefore has no intention to help her. He thinks she is pretending the sickness, so she could attempt to escape again. Unfortunately, she does not pretend her sickness and she starts to deteriorate shortly. When she starts blending words together, so the meaning of her messages is impossible to decode, Clegg recognizes that her condition is worse than he thought.¹⁶⁸ Sadly, Miranda cannot be helped anymore and dies. After her death, Clegg believes that she died because she asked for it: “I kept on thinking of her, thinking perhaps it was my fault after all that she did what she did and lost my respect, then I thought it was her fault, she asked for everything she got.”¹⁶⁹ Additionally, soon after Miranda dies, he decides to kidnap another girls but “: “this time it won’t be love, it would just be for the interest of the thing and to compare them.”¹⁷⁰ This indicates that he truly changed.

¹⁶⁵ Fowles, *The Collector*, 103.

¹⁶⁶ Fowles, *The Collector*, 111.

¹⁶⁷ Fowles, *The Collector*, 111.

¹⁶⁸ Fowles, *The Collector*, 266.

¹⁶⁹ Fowles, *The Collector*, 275.

¹⁷⁰ Fowles, *The Collector*, 283.

4 Conclusion

This thesis focused on the analysis of the book *The Collector* using the theory of encoding and decoding. The aim was to find out what were the reasons for the misunderstandings between the two main characters, Frederick and his victim Miranda, and what these misunderstandings led to. In order to analyse the book properly, it was needed to provide readers with the necessary historical background, and literary and cultural background as well.

The first chapter showed how the working-class lived in the decades prior the 1960s, when their lives were considerably harder and they had to count every penny to survive. Despite these hardships they managed to live comfortable lives thanks to their leisure activities and the feeling of belongingness as they had strong bonds with other members of the working-class. During the 1960s, their working conditions improved and wages increased, thus, they were able to afford things they could previously only dream about. Unfortunately, the advertisers took advantage of this newly gained affluence and they profited from it by printing advertisements in magazines and books. Additionally, the entertainment was now mass-produced and in order to reach millions of people the producers had to get rid of all the class distinctions in the media, therefore it was found out that the working-class merged into a new class without any specific cultural characteristics for they all listened to the same music and read the same mass-produced books.

The second chapter explained what the postmodernism is and what its features are. Further, these features were explained by using excerpts from the books written by John Fowles, who was a postmodernist writer. Simultaneously, the chapter introduced the theory of encoding and decoding and explained how to process of creating a message works. The three main positions in which can the decoder decode the message are introduced and it is also shown that if the codes of an encoder and decoder are not compactible, misunderstandings can arise easily.

The third chapter applied the theory of encoding and decoding on the dialogues between the character of *The Collector*. One of the main characters, Frederick Clegg, wins a considerable amount of money in the football pools and abducts a middle-class art student Miranda who he loved. Shortly after he confesses to her that he did it because he was from the working-class and she would never love him because of her middle-class origins. She says that she hates prejudice but in fact, as was found out, the class differences between them are the major reason for their misunderstandings as they both lack equivalence so needed for the perfect understanding of messages.

He uses his money won from the pools to buy Miranda everything she wishes for and on one occasion he buys her a gramophone player with a record by Mozart. When they listen to the record together, he cannot comprehend why she was crying because to him, it sounds the same as any other piece of classical music. It was clear that this was because of his lack of exposure to that kind of music as he is of a working-class origin and likely he prefers popular music. Additionally, when he shows her the house, she hates how is the house decorated for the decorations are, according to her, horrendous. In his defence, they were quite expensive so he does not see anything wrong with them. This proved that he operated within the oppositional code and that is very important. The majority of misunderstandings between the characters occur due to them operating within the oppositional code and decoding the messages in a contrary way than they were intended.

After these incidents, it is confirmed that Miranda recognizes the differences between them and wants to teach Frederick about art and literature since she believes that when she makes him a better man, he will understand the wrong he has done and eventually release her. Also, it was apparent that by teaching him, he would be closer to becoming a higher class for he would have the needed knowledge and manners. Miranda also recalls her mentor G. P. and it is proved that he had a tremendous influence on her opinions and her view of life. It was often evident that the things G.P. had told her influenced her so much, she tried to teach them to Frederick.

Next, she tries to teach him basic knowledge of art but she soon recognizes that he is hopeless. When she tries to explain something to him, he does not understand her messages for his lack of knowledge of art. Also, when showed several pictures and prompted to pick the best looking one, he always chooses the wrong one. It is assumed that he did it for he is a photographer and due to this, he always chooses the drawings most similar to the objects they are supposed to resemble.

In addition, she tries to recommend him *The Cather in the Rye* since she saw that he reads the mass-produced paperbacks and wants to teach him to read proper literature. Unfortunately, the book was too complicated for him and he did not enjoy it. Due to these differences and his lack of interest in her teaching, she often thinks of her superiority to him. When her plan with teaching Frederick failed, she starts believing that he abducted her since he was physically attracted to her. Unfortunately, several times throughout the book, he mentions that he hates sex and vulgar women, therefore her believing he wants to have a sexual

intercourse means that she operated within the oppositional code. She then proceeds and tries to seduce Frederick because she thinks that by having a sexual intercourse, she shocks him so much he eventually releases her. But the opposite is the truth. He tries to stop her, saying he is not interested in it, that he does not want to but once again, she refuses to believe him and again operates within the oppositional code. After that, it was proven that he lost all his respect towards her and when she fell ill, he did not believe her and eventually, she died.

To conclude, it was demonstrated that Miranda tried to educate Frederick for she believed that if he could become a better man he would release her but unfortunately, she failed. Therefore it was proved that there are several possible reasons for her failure; he was unteachable as he was influenced by the mass-entertainment and because of this, he was not interested in art, classical music or literature; she was simply unable to change him for she too, was still being mentored by G. P. and not ready to teach another person, and most importantly their codes were vastly different and there was no possible way of communication between them. Had it not been for this lack of equivalence between them, she might have survived. It is almost ironic that despite her attempts to make him a better man, it was her death what changed him, even though it changed him for the worse. Having decided to kidnap another girl after Miranda died, he had changed from a collector to The Collector.

5 Resumé

Tato práce byla zaměřena na 60. léta 20. století v Británii, zejména na pracovní třídu a na změny, které postoupila během této dekády. Jejím cílem bylo analyzovat rozhovory postav v knize *Sběratel* od spisovatele Johna Fowlese za použití teorie kódování a dekódování od kulturního teoretika Stuarta Halla. K tomu, aby byla analýza správně provedena, bylo nezbytné poskytnout informace o historickém, literárním a kulturně-teoretickém pozadí dané doby. Tak bylo učiněno v první a posléze ve druhé kapitole. Třetí kapitola již obsahovala samotnou analýzu knihy.

První kapitola byla zaměřena na již zmíněné historické pozadí práce. Tak bylo učiněno ze dvou pohledů. V první části se kapitola zaměřuje na život pracující třídy v dekáдах před 60. lety. V této části byly popsány jejich nelehké životní podmínky, kdy se musely potýkat s těžkou prací a nedostatkem peněz. I navzdory těmto těžkostem života však většina členů pracující třídy dokázala žít relativně spokojené životy, a to díky tomu, že se spokojili s tím, co měli a věděli, že se to v brzké době nezmění. Velice jim také pomáhaly blízké vazby na ostatní členy pracující třídy a život si také dokázali zpříjemnit například trávením času v hostincích či v klubech pro pracující muže, kde trávili čas konverzováním s přáteli, čtením novin a pitím alkoholu. Dále, když jim čas a peníze dovolily, se během dovolené rádi zúčastňovali například masově pořádaných výletů k mořskému pobřeží, které otužovaly jejich dobré vztahy s přáteli a tím zapoměli na jejich životní strasti. Následně bylo v práci prokázáno, že se po druhé světové válce zlepšily pracovní podmínky pracující třídy stejně tak jako jejich platy, což výrazně zlepšilo jejich životní úroveň.

Druhá část první kapitoly byla zaměřena již na samotná šedesátá léta, během kterých se společnosti v Británii začalo říkat společnost hojnosti. Tento název právě vychází z již zmíněných změn, kdy jejich platy a životní úroveň stále rostla, a i lidé pocházející z pracující třídy si tak mohli dovolit věci, o kterých se jim v minulosti ani nesnilo. Poprvé v historii si tak mohli dovolit zakoupení televize, pračky či lednice, a dokonce i levnějších osobních automobilů. Ty jim zjednodušily cestování, například do nově populárních supermarketů, kde mohli provádět mnohem větší nákupy z většího výběru, než nabízely obchody v jejich čtvrtích. To ovšem vedlo k tomu, že se členové pracovní třídy postupně odcizovali a již si nebyli tak blízcí jako dříve. Lepší životní podmínky jim také dovolily rozmanitější trávení volného času, a jak bylo prokázáno, Španělsko se stalo velmi žádanou destinací pro dovolené. Bohužel rostoucí platy a větší množství volného času umožnilo růst i masově produkované zábavy, jako

byly levné knihy, populární hudba či časopisy které, jak se prokázalo, měly negativní vliv na kulturní tradice pracující třídy. Dříve pro tuto třídu specifická zábava byla nahrazena zábavou pro všechny stejnou, nehledě na jejich třídu či vzdělání.

Druhá kapitola dále poskytla nezbytné literární pozadí a vysvětlila pojem Postmodernismus a tři jeho vybrané aspekty, které autoři používali při psaní postmodernistických děl. Mezi zmíněné aspekty patří pokrivené vnímání času, pocit paranoie a fragmentace. Každý z aspektů byl poté dovysvětlen pomocí úryvků knih z pera Johna Fowlese. Dále byl v kapitole vysvětlen vznik různých teorií na základě rostoucích obav o vliv masově produkované zábavy na její publikum. Jedna z těchto teorií pochází od Jamajského kulturního teoretika Stuarta Halla a nazývá se Teorie kódování a dekódování. Tato teorie zkoumá způsob, jakým jsou tvořena média či zprávy, které chce posléze tvůrce předat příjemci. Tento proces se nazývá kódování. Dále teorie vysvětluje proces, kterým příjemce zprávě rozumí čili jak ji dekóduje. Jak tvůrce, tak příjemce mohou mít různá vzdělání, životní zkušenosti či názory, a všechny tyto věci posléze ovlivňují jejich kód. Pokud jsou kódy obou stran komunikativní výměny velmi rozdílné, dochází poté k deformacím, či neporozumění. Navíc si může každý z recipientů zprávy vybrat způsob, jakým zprávu dekóduje. Stuart Hall popsal tři tyto způsoby čtení zprávy a jsou jimi: dominantní způsob čtení, vyjednané čtení a čtení opoziční. Dominantní čtení tedy znamená, že příjemce zprávy ji dekóduje přesně tak, jak byla určena. U vyjednaného čtení příjemce připouští, jak byla zpráva zamýšlena, ale zároveň si vytváří i svá vlastní pravidla a výjimky, a ty již nemusí být s autorovou původní zprávou zcela totožné. Třetím a posledním způsobem je čtení opoziční, kdy příjemce zprávu zcela odmítne a pochopí ji opačným způsobem.

Třetí kapitola se již zabývá samotnou analýzou knihy Sběratel. V kapitole jsou analyzovány rozhovory mezi Frederickem a jeho obětí Mirandou za použití výše zmíněné teorie kódování a dekódování. Je důležité zmínit, že Frederick pochází z pracující třídy a je zamilován do studentky umění Mirandy, která pochází ze třídy střední. V momentě, kdy vyhraje peníze ve fotbalových sázkách se rozhodne, že Mirandu unese a doufá, že ji postupem času přiměje k opětování lásky. V kapitole bylo prokázáno, že mezi postavami jsou propastné rozdíly vyplývající z jejich různých původů, ať se jedná o vzdělání, vkus či znalost klasické hudby. To tudíž znamená, že kódy hlavních postav jsou velmi rozdílné a z toho důvodu dochází k mnoha neporozuměním.

Frederick své peníze využívá zejména k tomu, aby učinil Mirandu šťastnou a například ji koupí i přehrávač gramofonových desek spolu s deskou od Mozarta. V momentě, kdy spolu desku poslouchají, se Miranda rozpláče a sdělí, že v době, kdy Mozart desku psal, umíral. Frederick je zmatený a praví, že jemu to zní jako téměř každá jiná klasická skladba. Na tomto příkladu je prokázán jeden z výše zmíněných rozdílů mezi nimi. Navíc může být řečeno, že klasické hudbě nerozumí kvůli masově produkované populární hudbě, ke které má zřejmě blíže. Po několika následujících neporozuměních se Miranda rozhodne, že Fredericka vzdělá a díky tomu by ji mohl eventuálně propustit. K tomuto nápadu ji částečně i přimějí vzpomínky na jejího mentora, který ji hodně změnil život a ona se tak snaží toto vzdělání předat dále.

V následujících týdnech mu tak vysvětluje například umění, literaturu či hnutí proti jaderným zbraním. Nic z toho on ovšem nechápe a ve většině případů mezi nimi dochází k neporozuměním, která vyplývají z toho, že postavy se vůči sobě pohybují v opozičních kódech a svoje zprávy tak chápou vždy opačně. Nejdůležitějším případem tohoto opozičního chování je Mirandino rozhodnutí svést Fredericka poté, co všechny její pokusy o vzdělání selžou. V několika případech ji Frederick upozornil na to, že sexuální styk považuje za vulgární a nemá o něj žádný zájem, avšak práce dokázala, že Miranda všechny tyto zprávy pochopila opačným způsobem a myslela si, že o styk zájem má, avšak má z něho strach. Během jejího pokusu o svedení ji Frederick opakovaně prosí, aby přestala a Miranda znovu čte tyto zprávy opozičním způsobem.

Brzy po nezdařeném pokusu je prokázáno, že Frederick k Mirandě již necítí ani lásku ani respekt. Z toho důvodu, když Miranda onemocní, se jí Frederick nesnaží pomoci, a to až do doby, kdy už pomoci není a Miranda tak umírá. Práce tedy za použití teorie kódování a dekódování prokázala, že postavy z knihy Sběratel si během svých rozhovorů často nerozumí z toho důvodu, že každý pochází z jiné třídy, díky čemuž mezi postavami vzniká mnoho neporozumění a nepochopení a také proto, že oba dva z velké části dekódují zprávy opozičním způsobem. Nebýt těchto nedorozumění, Miranda by zřejmě ještě žila. Dá se také říci, že ačkoliv se Miranda snažila tyto rozdíly mezi nimi smazat jakýmsi pokusem o změnu třídy Fredericka a změnit ho jako člověka, byla to až její smrt, co ho skutečně pozměnilo. Pozměnila ho ale k horšímu, jelikož se brzy po její smrti rozhodl unést další dívku.

6 Bibliography

- BBC news. "1957: Britons 'have never had it so good!'" Accessed March 2, 2019, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/20/newsid_3728000/3728225.stm.
- BBC news. "The White Heat of Wilson." Last modified March 31, 2006. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4865498.stm.
- Brooke, Stephen. "Bodies, Sexuality and the "Modernization" of the British Working Classes, 1920s to 1960s." *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 69 (Spring 2006): 104-122. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27673024>.
- Easthope, Anthony. "Postmodernism and Critical and Cultural Theory." In *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, edited by Stuart Sim, 15-27. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Fowles, John. *The Aristos*. New York: New American Library, 1970.
- Fowles, John. *The Collector*. London: Vintage Books, 2004.
- Hall, Stuart. "Encoding, Decoding." In *The Cultural Studies reader*, edited by Simon During, 90-103. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Hoggart, Richard. *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life*. London: Penguin Books, 2009. Kindle.
- Hopkins, Erik. *The Rise and Decline of the Working Classes 1918-1990: A Social History*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991.
- Childs, David. *Britain Since 1945: A Political History*. Routledge, 1993.
- Lewis, Barry. "Postmodernism and Literature." In *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, edited by Stuart Sim, 121-133. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Marwick, Arthur. *The Sixties: Social and Cultural Transformation in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, 1958-74*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Russel, Cristel A. "Investigating the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Television Shows: The Role of Modality and Plot Connection Congruence on Brand Memory and Attitude." *Journal of Consumer Research*, no. 3 (December 2002): 306-318. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/344432>.

Sandbrook, Dominic. *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties 1964-1970*. London: Abacus, 2006. Kindle.

Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Herfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2007.

The Frost Report. "I Know My Place." Posted November 30, 2016. YouTube video, 1:34. <https://youtu.be/nxpZkKKbDgA>.

The Guardian. "A Brief history of divorce." Accessed May 7, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/19/divorce-law-history>.

Watson, Nigel. "Postmodernism and Lifestyles." In *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, edited by Stuart Sim, 53-64. New York: Routledge, 2002.