Original Article

Ken Kesey's 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest': The sardonic representation of power and authority in nurse Ratched

Mariella Scerri, MA

Teacher of English, PhD Candidate, University of Leicester

Corresponding Author:
Ms Mariella Scerri
18, York, N. Caruana Dingli Street, Mellieha MLH 1709, Malta
email: mariellascerri at hotmail dot com

Received: 19-FEB-2020 Accepted: 29-MAR-2020 Published Online: 26-APR-2020

Abstract

Critical acclaim and popular opinion have elevated Kesey's first novel, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* published in 1962, to something of a modern classic, much read and written about as well as adapted for film. *Cuckoo's Nest* offers an interesting alternative scenario to the usual depictions of the nurse as Angel of Mercy, the unskilled handmaiden or the ministering angel found in literature. In giving Nurse Ratched tyrannical authority, demonising the institution and its representative, Kesey elicits the themes of control, submission and alienation through the structure of nursing and care involved. These same themes also link to gender, representing similar fears of female empowerment and male power rendered impotent by a sterile social structure. This paper aims to analyse the sardonic representation of the power and authority in Nurse Ratched and how gender and the spectacle of masculinity is defined through discourse. This is imperative as literature and the media have a strong influence on public views, shaping the way the public values and treats professions in health care. Nursing is plagued by feminine stereotypes that continue to undermine the profession up till the present day. This reading of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* provides educational opportunities to engage in critical dialogue around this and other texts which speak to nursing and human concerns. This will equip nurses with the right tools for discernment so that they can challenge rather than accept how nurses are represented in the literature.

Keywords: Authority; Discourse; Gender; Health humanities; Literature; Medical humanities; Nurse Ratched; Nursing; One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest; Power.

Cite this article as: Scerri M. Ken Kesey's 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest': the sardonic representation of power and authority in nurse Ratched. RHiME. 2020;7:64-74.

"We do not impose certain rules and restrictions on you without a great deal of thought about their therapeutic value. A good many of you are in here because you could not adjust to the rules of society".

– Ken Kesey[1]

Introduction

The modernisation of the health care system in Britain, accompanied by a rapid growth in medical science, changed nursing from a vocational profession with its own system of ideals and values rooted in service to the patient, to a more secularised career intent on serving the ideals and values of the newly constituted National Health Service (NHS) founded in 1948. This shift in nursing's evolving occupational identity and public status is also manifested in literature and popular culture.[2] Although media representations allow for a useful analysis of nursing roles and activity within a specific text or group of texts, research of this kind often argues that mass media misrepresent nursing, perpetuating stock, outmoded ideas of what nursing really is all about.[3] On the other hand, the evolving artistic imagery in this regard sheds light on and lends unique insight into the role. This is significantly true for Nurse Ratched in Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* as the novel pitches the nursing ideal set in media representation and literature against the perverted role which the nurse enacts.[1]

The Novel

Critical acclaim and popular opinion have elevated Kesey's first novel, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, published in 1962, to something of a modern classic, much read and written about as well as adapted for film. The novel is narrated in the first person by the half-Indian Chief Bromden, one of the patients in the mental institution where almost all of the action occurs. Bromden is a long-term patient, and the novel traces the stages of his liberation beginning with the arrival on the ward of a new admission, McMurphy. It ultimately ends with the narrator's escape from the hospital. This gradual process of liberation is triggered by McMurphy's rebellion against Miss Ratched, the 'Big Nurse' who runs the psychiatric ward by means of a dehumanising and repressive regime of terror.[4] Although at the end, McMurphy is mercifully killed by Bromden after a lobotomy has reduced him to a vegetative state, his influence allows Bromden and most of the other patients to recover enough self-confidence and humanity to face the outside world again.

The novel is, in a sense, a product of its time, the anti-authoritarian and iconoclastic sixties, celebrating the rebellion of an individual against the system. In particular, it reflects contemporary dissatisfaction with established psychiatric practices and institutionalisation, lobotomy and electro-convulsive therapy, and over reliance on drugs. Suggesting that the novel provides other various manifestations, critical commentary has accordingly ranged from the 'psychological and the mythical or religious, which describes McMurphy variously as the Grail Knight and a Christ figure, a kind of disruptive redeemer who loses his life in the process of saving others', to those that challenge 'the novel's racism and sexism, in which the Big Nurse and her black assistants embody the evil forces of a repressive hospital and a repressive society'.[4]

The stereotypic role of the Nurse and the role of Nurse Ratched

Cuckoo's Nest offers an interesting alternative scenario to the usual depictions of nurses as Angels of Mercy, unskilled handmaidens or ministering angels found in literature. It also presents a different view projected by the media of the typically young, white, single

female being over-sexualised as well as diminished intellectually. From the onset of the plot, Nurse Ratched is portrayed as authoritative, acting from a position of power, and represented as a deity to the inhabitants of the mental hospital:

Year by year she accumulates her ideal staff: doctors of all ages and types, come and rise up in front of her with ideas of their own about the way a ward should run some with backbone enough to stand behind their ideas, and she fixes these doctors with dry eyes day in day out, until they retreat with unnatural chills.

Further, the description of Nurse Ratched as a veritable angel of mercy immediately takes sarcastic undertones:

Miss Ratched is a veritable angel of mercy and why just everyone knows it. She's unselfish as the wind, toiling thanklessly for the good of all […] she even further serves mankind on her weekends off by doing generous volunteer work about town.

This sardonic representation of Nurse Ratched together with Chief Bromden's portrayal of monstrosity, leads the reader to question the representation of law and authority by the matriarchy. Literature and the media have a strong influence on public views, shaping the way the public values and treats professions in health care. Nursing is plagued by feminine stereotypes that continue to undermine the profession. These double-edged views are "never more striking than in efforts to honour nurses, which often rely on emotional angel images rather than recognition of nurses health skills or tangible contributions to patient outcomes".[5]

The various stereotypes given to the nursing image have never really given an accurate description of the role and function of a nurse. Accordingly, Kesey's fiction does not seek to offer an alternative scenario; it rather affirms mythological structures reasserting masculine hero myths rather than rejecting them.[6] In giving Nurse Ratched tyrannical authority, demonising the institution and its representative, Kesey elicits the themes of control, submission and alienation through the structure of nursing and care involved. These same themes also link to gender, representing similar fears of female empowerment and male power rendered impotent by a sterile social structure.

The fiction of the 1950s and 1960s reflects this cultural phenomenon of the early Cold War, often featuring an angry defensive male figure who finds his manhood threatened and retaliates through a violent sexual act. Where 'modernist male heroes often lacked sexual virility',[7] post-World War II writers tended to privilege virility and promote sexual and emotional release rather than restraint. Their characters are more "animalistic, more virile and lustful, and increasingly antagonistic to a social network that is often portrayed as feminine or feminising".[8] The increased representation of violent sexual acts in fiction is linked to an evolving masculine identity that re-emphasised an essentialist conception of gender, in which criteria are believed to be biologically determined rather than socially constructed, thus associating manhood with virility and a male need for social release.[6]

The reading of *Cuckoo's Nest* overturns expectations of masculinity and gender alienation more than once, and in more than one way. At the novel's opening, immediately after the first group therapy sessions, McMurphy unsettles the inmates' theories of Big Nurse as either the 'tender angel of mercy', 'Mother Ratched', or as the 'juggernaut of modern matriarchy', and sets out to expose the

seams of her myth: he is going to "bug her till she comes apart at those neat little seams, and shows just one time, she ain't so unbeatable as you think".

McMurphy's attack on the archetypal Big Nurse is part of the basic American mythos underlying American fiction.[8] According to American literary critic Leslie Fiedler, the castrating female is the "old, old fable of the white outcast and the Noble Red Man joined together against home and mother, against the female world of civilisation".[9] The castrating female is an American archetype, hypostatised by Hannah Duston – a colonial Massachusetts Puritan woman – the tomahawk-wielding "Great WASP mother of us all",[9] who massacred ten of her captors and whose fable had lent itself to the unique host of fictive women, alternately "henpecking and monstrous, nagging and castrating".[8] The myth of the woman as castrator clearly points to male fears and phantasies about the female genitals as a trap.

In her book *Voracious Children*, Caroline Daniel points out that the Vagina dentata is the mouth of hell – a terrifying symbol of woman as the 'devil's gateway'... [it] also points to the duplicitous Nature of woman, who promises paradise in order to ensnare her victims. The notion of the devouring female genitals continues to exist in the modern world; it is apparent in popular derogatory terms for women such as 'man eater' and 'castrating bitch'.[10]

Certainly American fiction includes a long line of negative female characters, from Dame Van Winkle to Margot Macomber and beyond. Dame Van Winkle is a sharp-tongued and nagging woman whose only role in the narrative *Rip Van Winkle* is to antagonise and hound her lay husband.[11] Similarly, Margot Macomber in Hemingway's *The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber*, is vicious and is considered a predator and villainous.[12] Big Nurse stands out even in this infamous company, but by making her into a reincarnation of Mrs Duston, archetypal criticism has self-servingly emphasised one trait at the expense of several other equally significant components. Critics who saw Big Nurse as a realistic character opine that she is the "vehicle of a calumnious attack on women by an openly misogynist author, expressing male fear. The Big Nurse happens also to be the Big Victim when viewed with an awareness of the social and economic exploitation of women".[13] Critics are bent on forcing her to fit their chosen genre to reduce her complexities. There seems to be an "irreconcilable conflict between authorial attempts at constructing a solid verbal simulacrum of the female as monster and the unwitting narrative cracks through which a different female reality, that is a victimiser becomes victim, may be perceived".[8] This suggests that the novel needs to be read for what it is: an allegorical satire.[8]

Scholar Edward Rosenheim beholds satire as a genre that contains and conceals an unresolvable paradox; even a solid definition that "satire consists of an attack by means of a manifest fiction upon discernible historic particulars".[14] Scholarly work by Everett Zimmerman suggests that "satire aims to confine the apparent fluctuations of narrative within an evaluative framework";[15] this is true for Kesey's work as his satirical intentions are constantly qualified by his narrative strategies. The conflict of satire and narrative is best observed on the level of character, particularly the target figure: instead of a unified, almost literally 'cardboard' character demanded by satire, narrative produces a heterogeneous, decentred personality. Big

Nurse as a satiric target becomes both victimiser and victim for narrative reasons, in part because Kesey "has chosen to filter his vision of America's technological consumer society through the point of view of a schizophrenic half breed Indian".[8]

Significantly, to subscribe to the idea of Nurse Ratched as victimiser, her name recalls the tool ratchet, thus alluding to her machinic nature.[8] 'Rat-shed', another blatant pun, also suggests that she personifies a giant cage in which the rat-like mental patients are imprisoned. Additionally, a play on the word 'wretched' gives a meaning and a sense of her unpleasant self. The satirical intentions are clear: Big Nurse is inhuman, rat-like and a piece of machinery. Even her "breasts create a confusing, bionic effect which she wants to conceal in her stiff arched uniform". [1]

As a satirical sign, Miss Ratched's bosom is an undesirable supplement of her machinic 'personality' but as a narrative sign, it allows for the signification of her thwarted womanhood and humanity.[8] Archetypal and psychoanalytic criticism have variously interpreted Big Nurse's big breasts as signs of the Destructive Mother or the Bad Mother: for the former, she is a castrator, while for the latter, the inmates 'yearn' that Big Nurse's actions "should answer the promise of her anatomy, the promise of softness and abundant giving one can associate with a mother's breast".[16]

Such "straight reading still supports the satirical male-centred concept of power-hungry women becoming the willing instruments of oppression at the cost of their womanhood".[17] This satirical attack embodied in Miss Ratched is also an attack on the nursing profession, at least implicitly, and goes on to show how much nursing is intricately linked to gender. While undermining a woman's authority, attacking the 'abundant giving' breasts, the same breasts which define a woman, it also subverts the authority of the profession which she represents. Kesey's story-telling aims might not have been the demonization of a nurse; however, the fact that Miss Ratched was a nurse affects the way the reader views nursing as an authoritative profession.

Authority is the power that is vested in an individual or organisation to accomplish a given task or responsibility. [18] Once virtually irrelevant to formulating a treatment plan for patients, the nurse's role has grown from that of virtual 'servant' to one of full colleague in the provision of health care, and now includes certain responsibilities relating to diagnosis and assessment. Originally limited to basic care, the scope of nursing orders is rapidly increasing. This increased responsibility for the nurse also brings about a shift in her authoritative position, placing her in a position of trust, judgment and decision making; criteria inherent with authority.

The nurse as ward supervisor is a separate role in itself. The nurse in charge acts as intermediary between the doctors and the patients, managing the day-to-day running of the ward, liaising with the doctors and providing professional help and support to the nursing staff she is supervising. The cynical representation of Nurse Ratched debunks the authoritative role portrayed thus undermining her authority. While Kesey's novel seems to uphold one of its main protagonists in an authoritative position, it simultaneously dismisses her. In a final attempt to erase Ratched's authority, McMurphy attacks the Big Nurse, nearly killing her:

After he'd smashed through that glass door,

her face singing around, with terror forever running any other look she might ever try to use again, screaming when he grabbed for her and ripped her uniform all the way down the front screaming again when the two nippled circles started from her chest and swelled out and out, bigger than anybody had ever imagined, warm and pink in the light.

Violence drains Nurse Ratched of her power and transforms her from the cold mother figure into the prostitute. In nursing terms, the binary stereotypes of femininity – the virgin and the whore – take on a set of particular characteristics that clearly have their origins in early Victorian ideals about the 'essential' nature of the feminine.[8] The 'good nurse' has invariably been seen as some form of self-sacrificing angel who gives up everything to dedicate her life to caring for the sick. The 'bad' nurse is her exact opposite, misusing her position of power and authority over the sick individual to satisfy her own needs and desires, whether these are material, sexual or simply sadistic.[8] McMurphy manifests the role of the 'bad nurse' in Nurse Ratched by exposing her feminine sexuality, revealing the 'two nippled circles', a literal transformation here from a cold machine to something more vulnerable, something 'warm and pink'.[8] At the sight of the forbidden – forbidden because the breasts belong to an asexual – even the good narrator unwittingly turns pornographer. Nevertheless, the narrative subtext also suggests that only by becoming exposed and defenceless does Miss Ratched 'prove' that she is not after all a machine, but a 'warm and pink' human being.[8] Far more grievous than her humanity that is violated and destroyed, is the "humanity that attempted to preserve itself by refusing the role of her breasts, in accordance with society's dominant male expectations, would automatically have condemned her to play".[8]

Defining gender and the spectacle of masculinity through discourse

At the centre of the struggle against power in *Cuckoo's Nest* is Randle P. McMurphy, a charming thug who lives largely by impulse. He finds rules, schedules and social structures of all kinds overly confining. He viscerally rejects authority and proceeds to violate, subvert and outwit those who would confine him and his appetites in any way. When McMurphy enters the world of the locked ward, he enters a 'total institution' unlike anything he has encountered before. He has no idea of how entangling the coils of what he has stumbled into can be. Once he realises that he will get nowhere by conning Nurse Ratched with false subservience, McMurphy adopts a political strategy; he attempts to ferment resistance among the other inmates, most of whom he believes have psychological problems and symptoms not because they are really ill, but because they are being repressed by Nurse Ratched's regime.

The strict regime embodied in Nurse Ratched reflects the concept of a 'carceral archipelago' which appears in Foucault's work on surveillance systems and its practice of social control and discipline over its population in all areas of social life.[19] Taken from his work *Discipline and Punish*, modelled on the principle of and relation to the nation state, and ideally employed on the idea of an incarceration system producing society's need for prisons, it employs physical boundaries to gain control of urban space.[19] Foucault was referring to the Mettray Penal Colony when he introduced a possible socio-cultural nomenclature to be used; "it was the most famous of a whole series of institutions which well beyond the frontiers of criminal law, constituted

what one might call the carceral archipelago".

Equally interesting, the constructed state of gender which the reader is accustomed to in most novels is subtly negated in the novel. Harding, an inmate, gives a brilliant interpretation as to whom power is relegated to:

In this hospital, the doctor doesn't hold the power of hiring and firing. The power goes to the supervisor.

The emphasis on 'in this hospital', implicitly suggests that in normal circumstances, it is the patriarchal male doctor who is in control and who has inherent power.

The reading of post-World War II masculinity in this essay assumes that gender definitions are performative, fluid and culturally formed, a concept influenced by Judith Butler and Michel Foucault. Butler famously pointed out that gender constitutes "a performative accomplishment with the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, who come to believe and to perform the mode of belief",[20] whereas Foucault suggests that sex entails power structures which are "put into discourse".[21] The body becomes the site of these power structures, a place of discourse itself. We enact identities that we envision as, culturally speaking, powerful or viable in our social environment of rewards and punishments. Foucault points out that juridical systems of power produce the subjects they subsequently come to represent. The juridical systems of language and politics constitute the contemporary field of power. Hence there is no position outside this field, but only a critical genealogy of its own legitimacy practices.[22]

Foucault however argues that in a contemporary society, power is a positive element, one which produces our discourses and structures and which constructs ourselves and self-understandings. This positive power is not always tangible in Kesey's novel. Throughout the novel the matriarchal power of nurse Ratched is continuously alluded to. Resilient and in total control, Miss Ratched is enacting a role written for the opposite sex. According to Foucault's theory, Chief Bromden and the other male patients are the product of subjection of a particular domination. Foucault further avers that the "power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy, that its effect of domination are attributed not to appropriation but to disposition, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings; that one should decipher in it a network of relations, constantly in tension".[19] From the outset, Chief Bromden portrays Nurse Ratched as one who:

wields a sure power that extends in all direction on hair like wires too small for anybody's eye but mine; I see her set in the centre of this web of wires like a watchful robot, tend her network. With mechanical insect skill, knows every second which wire runs where and just what current to send up to get the results she wants.

The emphasis here is on Miss Ratched's penetrating gaze, and through this continuous and functional surveillance, she gained the 'disciplinary power' which 'became an integrated system'.[19] This surveillance system reflects the idea of panopticism identified by Foucault. Nurse Ratched serves as a panopticon, representing authoritarianism, totalitarian control and social conformity. Throughout she is associated with machines, tools, artificial objects and synthetic materials, and her goal is to 'adjust' the individual to fit in with the group.[24] Although the

Big Nurse disguises her intentions behind a carefully constructed façade of sympathetic concern for the men's well-being, Chief Bromden perceives 'her hideous real self' and realises furthermore that she is actually a 'high ranking official', of something much larger and more widespread, which he terms the 'Combine':

A huge organization that aims to adjust the outside as well as the Inside […].
The ward is a factory for the Combine. It's for fixing up mistakes made in the neighbourhood and the schools and in the churches, the hospital is.

The ward and the Combine work in concert and share the same aim. The unit is therefore, neither the territory (unit of domination), nor the place (unit of residence), but the rank: the place one occupies in a classification. Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. This domination operates through language to structure all our other institutions and relations. Power operates through discourses that define and legitimate its operation.[19]

Kesey seems to insist on a conventional sense of manhood, manhood rooted not in the discourse of the 'polymorphous erotic body' but in the abstract language of the symbolic order, a form of phallocentric power.[23] He contends that in such a system, meaning always operates within a hierarchical language system. Oppositions are established, and manhood is won when the male presence governs the female absence.[23] It is ironic that McMurphy, the libertine convict who knows nothing about psychological theory or theorists, turns out to be the true therapist for the men.

Admitted to having never been in 'Institute of Psychology' before, McMurphy is "intuitively able to cut through the obfuscatory psychological jargon and see things for what they are".[23] In typical fashion, he subverts the psychiatric label attached to him:

Now they tell me a psychopath's a guy who fights too much and fucks too much, but that ain't wholly right, do you think? I mean, whoever heard tell of a man getting 'too much poozle'?

Similarly, he recognises and gets the men to acknowledge the destructive cruelty of the Nurse's methods. Most importantly, he gets the men to talk about themselves and their problems, offering an empathetic and receptive ear to the long suppressed confessions of weakness, fear and shame of Harding, Billy Bibbit, Cheswick, Scanlon, Fredrickson, Sefelt, and eventually, Chief Bromden himself. By so doing, and by his own example as well, he gives the men the courage and the capacity to face up to their difficulties, to construct a renewed sense of self, and begin the vital process of actualisation.

The novel makes clear that the Nurse is not an isolated case but part, instead, of an entire social syndrome. Far from attempting to help the men deal with their sexual problems, she actively preys on their vulnerabilities and insecurities as an essential part of her control mechanism. She is indeed, as McMurphy gets the men to acknowledge, 'a ball-cutter'.[1] At the same time, she herself remains, in a richly loaded term, 'impregnable', not only because she is fifty years old but because she cultivates a deliberately sexless demeanour, spoiled only by her enormous womanly breasts, about which she is 'bitter', and which she does her best to conceal.

In the end, Kesey seems to be governed by the kind of thinking that allows the

'man' to be in control. In the novel's denouement, there is an attempt to usurp the hierarchical status of the Big Nurse through the phallus by trying to rape her. The binary opposition of the roles is accentuated by the innuendos which are found throughout the novel. The other patients in this mental institution are voiceless, suggesting a usurpation of their legitimate role in the prescribed hierarchy by the Big Nurse. In the dialectic between the voice and power associated with nurse Ratched, and the patients portrayed as voiceless, there is also a juxtaposition; the insinuation that Chief Bromden is deaf and dumb replicates the subdued voice of the female gender.

The above dealings in the novel imply that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed.[24] When the 'actors' themselves stray from their performative role, they are labelled, ostracised and even demonised, as in the case of Nurse Ratched. Nurse Ratched is criticised and shunned beyond any kind of redemption. McMurphy's goal is to re-humanise the inmates and set them free from the tyrannical care of Nurse Ratched by himself, struggling against the dehumanising power of the ward.[25] The final confrontation occurs when McMurphy contrives, with the help of an alienated night watchman, to throw an after-hours party on the ward. Arriving early the next morning, Nurse Ratched finds the ward in disarray and Billy *in flagrante*. She proceeds to shame and threaten Billy so harshly that he commits suicide. In response to this, McMurphy assaults Nurse Ratched, nearly strangling her. A few moments before McMurphy attacks the Big Nurse, Chief Bromden sums up the larger context of the confrontation with power on the ward:

I looked at McMurphy out of the corner of my eye […] He was in his chair in the corner, resting a second before he came out for the next round - in a long line of next rounds. The thing he was fighting, you couldn't whip it for good. All you could do was keep on whipping it, till you couldn't come out anymore and somebody else had to take your place.

Chief Bromden seems to suggest that the power embodied in the ward is not fully under the control of any character, including Nurse Ratched. The overriding factor is the logic of control, and that bio-power trumps professional nursing ethics; Nurse Ratched is 'impelled by the need to present the order and power of the institutional world, rather than to honour her ethical commitment to the well-being and health of her patients'.[26] What she employs is an autocratic, hegemonising, authoritative position which has nothing to do with nursing, but more to do with political power and the right to rule. This stands in opposition to the subordinate position care is given in other novels. If this is taken to its logical conclusion, the previous arguments about gender attest to how the female voice employs the patriarchal male scenario in order to make itself heard, rather than finding its own discourse to establish its unique, authoritative position. In *Cuckoo's Nest* this take the form of Nurse Ratched.

Conclusion

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest flouts the reader's perceptions of the idea of caring. It stands in direct opposition to novels where care is most often portrayed as subservient and relegated to a subordinate position. Kesey's novel might shock the readers accustomed to the stereotypic construct of the nurse and its appropriation of care. On the other hand, Nurse Ratched forces us to see that her authoritative position is held in disregard by the male patriarchy. It also seems to suggest that both the patriarchal male

and the matriarchal female are more accepting of the humble and modest roles associated with caring.

Thus, it becomes almost impossible "to avoid the long shadow that Big Nurse casts across the image of nursing".[27] She is "iconographic in both popular and nursing culture as the epitome of all that is deemed to be bad in nurses and nursing". "Unpalatable though the book's sexism might be", *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* is still a novel worthy of contributing and shedding light on the construction of nursing. It provides educational opportunities to engage "in critical dialogue around this and other texts which speak to nursing and human concerns", and can enhance nurses' and others' appreciation of the many differing ways of reading literature. This will equip them with the right tools for discernment so that they can challenge rather than accept how nurses are represented in the literature.

References

1. Kesey K. One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. New York: Viking Press; 1962.

2. Hallam J. Nursing the Image: Popular fictions, Recruitment and Nursing Identity 1950-1975. [Thesis]. Coventry: University of Warwick; 1995. Available from https://pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/record=b1399733~S1

3. Kalisch PA, Kalisch BJ. The Advance of American Nursing. Boston: Little Brown and Company; 1978.

4. Semino E, Swindlehurst K. Metaphor and mind style in Ken Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Style. 1996;30(1):143-66.

5. Summers S, Jacobs H. Saving Lives: Why the Media Portrayal of Nurses Puts Us All at Risk. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2010. Available from https://blog.oup.com/2015/07/nursing-angel-perception/

6. Meloy M. Fixing men: castration, impotence and masculinity in Ken Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. The Journal of Men's Studies. 2009;17(1):3-14.

7. Davidson M. Guys Like Us: Citing Masculinity in Cold War Poetics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2004.

8. Gefin LK. The breasts of Big Nurse: satire versus narrative in Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Modern Language Studies. 1992;22(1):96-101.

9. Fiedler LA. The Return of the Vanishing American. New York: Stein and Day; 1969.

10. Daniel C. Voracious Children: Who Eats Whom in Children's Literature. New York: Routledge; 2006.

11. Irving W. Rip Van Winkle. New York: Digital Scanning Institute; 1819.

12. Hemingway E. The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber. New York: Cosmopolitan; 1936.

13. Horst L. Bitches, Twitches, and Eunuchs: Sex-Role Failure and Caricature. Lex et Scientia 1977, 13.1: 14-17.

14. Rosenheim EW. Swift and the Satirist's Art. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1963.

15. Zimmerman E. Swift's Narrative Satires: Author and Authority. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; 1963.

16. Sullivan R. Big Mama, Big Papa and Little Sons in Ken Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Literature and Psychology. 1974;25:34-44.

17. Leeds BH. Ken Kesey. New York: Fredrick Ungar; 1981.

18. Hardy C. Researching Organizational Discourse. International Studies of Management & Organization. 2001;31(3):25-47.

19. Foucault M. Discipline and Punish. Sheridan I [translator]. New York: Pantheon Books; 1977.

20. Butler J. Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. In Conboy K, Madina N. Stanbury S, editors. Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory. New York: Columbia University Press; 1997.

21. Foucault M. The History of Sexuality: An Introduction. Hurley R [Translator]. New York: Pantheon Books; 1990.

22. Foucault M. Subject of sex, gender and desire. In Szeman Imre and Kaposy Timothy, editors. Cultural Theory: An Anthology. New York: Wiley Publishers; 2011.

23. Wexler RP. The Mixed Heritage of the Chief: Revisiting the Problem of Manhood in One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Journal of Popular Culture. 1995;29(3): 225-35.

24. Jarvis C. The Male Body at War: American Masculinity During World War Two. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press; 2004.

25. Connell R. Masculinities. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1995.

26. Catano J. Ragged Dicks: Masculinity, Steel, and the Rhetoric of the Self-Made Man. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press; 2001.

27. Darbyshire P. Reclaiming 'Big Nurse': A Feminist Critique of Ken Kesey's Portrayal of Nurse Ratched in One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Nurs Inq. 1995;2:198-202.