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BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S – Author and Narrator.

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To my family, my teachers, professors, colleagues and friends.

“The brain may take advice, but not the heart, and love, having no geography, knows no boundaries”

Uncle Randolph, *Other Voices other Rooms*, Truman Capote.

ABSTRACT

This work intends to show how connected some characters and events in the book *Breakfast at Tiffany's* are to the author's life, Truman Capote. This work seeks to demonstrate how much of the author's own life and experience could be associated to the narrator of the book and even to some characters in it. To do so, some facts about the author's biography and elements of the narrative of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* will be compared. Other works by the same author will be used as an example of his trajectory in the construction of semi-autobiographical narratives. Interviews, documentaries, articles of magazines, book prefaces and videos about the author will be used to trace this parallel. This work will approach the concepts of author, narrator, implied reader and real reader as proposed by Wayne Booth, Gérard Genette and Dorrit Cohn as well as some definitions of autofiction by Serge Doubrovsky, Arnaud Schmitt and Anna Faedrich Martins

KEY-WORDS: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* – Truman Capote – Implied Author – Autofiction

RESUMO

Este trabalho pretende mostrar o quão conectados estão alguns dos personagens e acontecimentos do livro *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Bonequinha de Luxo) à vida do autor, Truman Capote. Esse trabalho busca demonstrar como o autor, o narrador do livro e algumas personagens estão associados. Para isso, alguns fatos sobre a biografia do autor e elementos na narração de *Breakfast at Tiffany's* serão comparados. Outros livros do mesmo autor serão usados como exemplo de sua trajetória de construção de narrativas semi-autobiográficas. Entrevistas, documentários, artigos de revista, prefácios de livros e vídeos serão usados para traçar esse paralelo. Este trabalho abordará os conceitos de autor, narrador e leitor de Wayne Booth, Gérard Genette e Dorrit Cohn, bem como algumas definições de autoficção por Serge Doubrovsky, Arnaud Schmitt e Anna Faedrich Martins.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: *Bonequinha de Luxo* – Truman Capote – Autor Implícito – Autoficção

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1 - INTRODUCTION.

In the year of 2009 during the second term, taking my undergraduate Letters program, a professor told his students (and I was one of them) the course offered a somewhat diversified array of working opportunities for those who would eventually manage to finish it; translation, teaching, researching and jobs where knowing another language would be a requirement. As for the areas of interest in the course, there would be a basic division between two main domains: linguistics or literature.

As I advanced through the course, I never really saw much of a division between these two main fields (except for some really specific research works in phonetics, morphology or some specific authors). I have always seen these two fronts interrelated to a minor or lesser level, depending on the focus of study. But I acknowledge the Letters student may prefer to work a bit more with literature or a bit more with linguistics.

I chose literature, because I always liked to read and literature enables the reader to imagine, think and consider realities, experiences and ideas that are common to real life. Literature is a way of expanding the limits of one's life and seeing beyond. For the final essay of the course I chose Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany*.

It is important to say I had known nothing about Truman Capote for a long time. Until very recently, in fact, the information I got about him was just by rumors, comments and even gossip as he was mentioned as a gay militant, snobbish writer who was part of the "jet set" of the 60s and 70s in the United States. And I had briefly watched his infamous Television interview to Stanley Siegel in 1978.

In those years, I was a comics reader. I grew up reading comics like "the Phantom", "Tintin", "Spirit", "Hot Stuff", "Tex", "Asterix" etc.. Disney titles like "Donald duck", "Mickey" and "Uncle Scrooge". I also read some superhero comics like "Spider Man", "Superman", "Hulk", etc. I also read Brazilian publications like "Monica's Gang" by Maurício de Souza.

I kept reading this format of literature till I made the transition to a "more serious" kind of comics with such titles as "The swamp Thing" and "Sandman". And I would end up reading graphic novels as "A Contract with God", "The Nam" and others. The common subject to the above mentioned comics and graphic novels is the action and adventure spirit.

In the mid-seventies and early eighties I also read juvenile books through a famous book collection in Brazil called “Coleção vagalume”. Some of the books I read were “O Caso da Borboleta Atíria”, “O Escaravelho do Diabo”, “O Mistério do Cinco Estrelas” and others. Once again, adventure, action and “detective stories” made up a great deal of the narratives.

In the same period I began reading some of my first books. But books were expensive and, unfortunately, my family did not have enough means to buy books on a regular basis. That was when we came to know the “Book Circle” (O círculo do livro).

The Book Circle was a Brazilian publisher established around early 1973 through an agreement between two publishers: Grupo Abril (from Brazil) and a German publisher called Bertelsmann. The books were sold in a "club system", where the person was indicated by any member and, from that moment on, received a fortnightly magazine with several titles to choose from. The new member would then have to buy at least one book in the period. The price of the books was lower than in the bookstores and the quality of the printed material was very good. Most books had a hard cover.

That´s how I read my first “big book”. It was “Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea” by French writer Jules Verne. I read many books from “Circulo do Livro” for some years. Until around 1983 I had read authors like Lobsang Rampa, Carlos Castaneda, Arthur Charles Clark, Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov, Arthur Conan Doyle, Erich von Däniken and others.

My main interest with these authors was the action, science-fiction and adventure stories. In 1984, when I came back from a trip, I had heard about Capote’s books because I was curious about Audrey Hepburn. I was not her fan; I just thought she was beautiful and in those years I had watched three movies with her; *My Fair Lady*, *Funny Face* and *Roman Holiday*: two musicals and a romantic comedy. The spreading use of VCR (at that time) made many earlier movies available at local video rentals. I actually picked up *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* from the shelf, with the true intent of watching it, but I gave up in the last minute. That was a time when I was trying to read books of a different nature: I tried to read books like *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* and *Sophie’s World* but I could not finish any of them. My early call for science-fiction and adventure books was stronger and I added some terror/horror and mystery to my interests when I started reading Clive Barker, Stephen King, Edgar Allan Poe, H.P. Lovecraft among others.

So I gave up reading *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and decided Truman Capote was not among the writers of my interest. I just carried on with my life, studied and graduated in exact sciences and kept going on. For more than 20 years I had no contact with literature other than technical texts (chemistry). I went back to college in 2009 in a completely different area: Letters. I then started to read books I had only heard of: *The Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Other books I had never heard of: *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, *Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street*, *Macbeth* (and four other plays by Shakespeare), *Antigone*, *Tartuffe*, *Phaedra*, *The Metamorphosis*, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, etc. They were not part of my background in literature. It was a specially difficult period for me; because my colleagues, apart the fact that they were much younger than me, had, most of them, read these books before. Throughout the course I got to know the work of some authors I had never read any line of like James Joyce, Dorothy Parker, José Saramago, Gil Vicente, Mia Couto, Luandino Vieira, Padre Antonio Viera, Antero de Quental, Castro Soromenho, Arthur Miller, Art Spiegelman, Sylvia Plath, Toni Morrison, Henry James, William Butler Yates, etc..

In 2013 I was happy to see one of the few pieces of literature I had already read in the syllabus: *Watchmen*, by Alan Moore. In that same term another surprise; *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. I wondered: "Will I finally read this book?' I did. And I watched the movie too.

I realized that long gone and almost forgotten piece of literature deserved the credit it got. In some sense, it is ahead of its time. And much of its value relies directly upon the author: Truman Capote.

The memory I had of him (a decaying celebrity) should be revised and as I had no information about him I decided to search for some details of his life. I came to the conclusion that, to a certain extent, Capote used part of his memories, experiences and memorabilia in his stories.

In this essay I will try to show how attached some characters and the narrator in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* are to Truman himself and how an ideology that could be roughly summed up as "acceptance and free spirit" permeate his work. The vision the author has about love, is a very important ideology in his work, molding narrators and characters.

To accomplish my mission, I read other stories by Truman: *A Christmas Memory*, *Other Voices Other Rooms*, *In cold Blood*, *The Thanksgiving Visitor*. I also partly read *Summer Crossing*, *The Grass Harp*, *The Muses are Heard*, *Music for Chameleons* and

Answered Prayers. In chapter 1 I am going to compare some facts about Truman's life and the above mentioned literary works. In chapter 2 I am going to discuss some concepts of Narratology, in special the notions of real author and implied author, as well as the concepts of focalization and other theoretical notions of Narratology. Autofiction will also be part of the theoretical approach as a supplementary instrument for this analysis. In chapter three I am going to pin-point the coinciding elements in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and the author's life and chapter four will be devoted to a further discussion and conclusion of this analysis. My brief and basic reading history and the view I had about Truman Capote as a writer, are intended to work as an invitation to the reflection that preconceived ideas, questionable information sources, personal impression and, with a great participation of the media's interest in creating and destroying people and facts, one may have his/her perception of a writer's work pre-established to a minor or lesser extent. Time, however, is capable of changing this perception as the reader acquires more consciousness or information about literary works through the contact with specific or academic papers, his own life experience and his/her willingness to see some of these works through a different perspective.

2 - Truman's work prior to Breakfast at Tiffany's – The author through his books

In this chapter I am going to present a list, mostly chronological, but also divided according to narrators, of some of Capote's literary works which, to a greater or lesser extent, were based in some of his own life experiences, giving him the necessary inspiration to write. From sections 1.1 to 1.4 the examples will refer to the author's childhood and the resulting focalization through child-like or teenager narrators[1]. In section 1.5 this pattern will be interrupted and other books which break the profile of narrators previously established in Capote's work will be presented.

2.1 – Other Voices Other Rooms *(1948)*

The 2004 edition of Capote's *Other Voices Other Rooms* is presented with an introduction by John Berendt[2] where one can read:

> *Other Voices, Other Rooms* is the story of Joel Harrison Knox,a thirteen-year-old boy who was raised in New Orleans and,after his mother's death, is sent to the rural South to live with his father who had abandoned him when he was an infant.Joel's journey to his new home takes him to ever-smaller towns over less-traveled roads through yet murkier landscapes to the overgrown and nearly deserted Skully's Landing. There,in a half-ruined mansion with neither electricity nor indoor plumbing, he meets his father, a bedridden, near-mute invalid who communicates by tossing red tennis balls from his bed onto the floor. Other members of this strange household include Joel's strait-laced stepmother,her effeminate "silver-tongued" cousin Randolph, the old black mule-driver, and the mule-driver's granddaughter, Missouri "Zoo" Fever. (page 7)

Had anyone read or heard anything about Truman's biography, this introduction excerpt would most probably trigger previous knowledge about Truman himself. Capote first denied the autobiographical tone of *Other Voices Other Rooms*. However, "like the fictional Joel Knox Capote had been born in New Orleans, longed to see his absent father, was sent as young boy into the rural South to live with relatives, and took his mother's last name, not his father's." (BERENDT, 2004, p.7) Joel is described as "too pretty, too delicate and fair-skinned" with an "uncommonly soft" voice and a "girlish tenderness" that softened his eyes. Joel's best friend is Idabel, a tom boy based on Harper Lee, Capote's childhood best friend. If Truman based one of his characters on Harper Lee in *Other Voices Other Rooms*, Harper, on

[1] The narrators are dramatized and represent the author most of the times.
[2] John Berendt is an American author, known for writing the best-selling non-fiction book *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, which was a finalist for the 1995 Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction.

her turn, also based one of the characters of her book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, on Truman[3].

Twenty five years after the first publication of *Other Voices Other Rooms*, Capote admitted the novel had been an "An unconscious, altogether intuitive attempt, for I was not aware, except for a few incidents and descriptions, of its being in any serious degree autobiographical. Re-reading it now I find such self-deception unpardonable" (CLARKE, 1988, p. 150). Capote wrote this statement in *Harper's Magazine* (November 1967) in an article entitled *A Voice from a Cloud.* In his 2004 introduction to *Other Voices other Rooms*, John Berendt affirms:

> In order to create fictional characters and give them thoughts, speech patterns, mannerisms, and motives, writers have little choice but to draw on people they have known, including themselves, even though they may have no intention of writing an autobiography. (BERENDT, 2004, p.8)

Maybe Capote's words were harsh to himself and Berendt tries to explain that, to a certain point, a writer has not many options. Although I consider both statements offer a valid explanation for this "unpardonable mistake" I am not so convinced Capote wrote this story so "unaware" of what he was doing. The reason is on the back of the novel's dust jacket: there, photographed by Harold Hama a 23 year-old Truman (who looks thirteen on the picture), stretching on a couch and gazing into the camera in a somewhat suggestive pose, is "the photograph of an author who exactly matched the description of Joel Harrinson Knox" (CLARKE, 1988, p. 154). People use to talk more about that photograph than they do about the book, sometimes. According to Gerald Clarke, Capote had a genius for publicity and despite his claims the photographer had suggested that pose, "It wasn't true. Truman did it himself".

This last assertion by Gerald Clark leads me to the conclusion that some of Capote's "unintentional" acts may have been, in fact, done on purpose, in order to boost media awareness. I would say even his texts were directed at "provoking" the reader. In this case the discovery of Joel Knox-Truman Capote's sexuality at an early age. In this sense, Capote creates a kind of "character" or persona, for himself. This public persona will serve to the construction of an implied author, a concept that will be better analyzed in chapter 2.

[3] The character Dill is based on Truman. As we read from *Capote, a Biography* – "There are photographs of Truman at that age- a tiny towhead with a huge grin – but Harper provided the best picture thirty years later. She modeled one of the characters in her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* after him and described him as a true curiosity".

Other Voices Other rooms is written in what has been called Gothic Southern Style [4]. Major Themes deal with sexual maturity, acceptance and the "search of o boy for his father". I would, however, elect the "discovery of one's sexuality" as a theme that stands in the same level of "A search of a boy for his father" in *Other Voices Other Rooms*. Joel mirrors himself on Randolph and understands his own nature.

One can assume Capote's sexuality was a fact by which he lived, loved and produced his art. The definitions presented by cousin Randolph point to love as having no boundaries, as a feeling of multiple forms which cannot be trapped, limited or judged. This definition certainly engulfs and privileges love in all of its forms even between same sex people. Naturally, Capote's literary work does not revolve around sexuality only. Gerald Clarke points out the "the loneliness that afflicts all but the stupid or insensitive; the sacredness of love, whatever its form; the disappointment that invariably follows high expectation; the perversion of innocence." (1988, p. 151). However, the author's sexuality and his vision of relationships and love seem to be the "springboard" of most of his books themes. His sexuality is present even when it does not seem so obvious (*Breakfast at Tiffany's*) or when does not include himself in the narrative (*In Cold Blood*). Like many other books by Truman, *Other voices other Rooms* had a film version in 1995, by director David Rocksavage

2.2 – The Grass Harp (1951)

This book was written when Capote was living in Italy and it is another reference to his childhood: this time the story is based on Capote's memory of a tree house in the backyard of his cousin's house, Jenny. Capote would spend some time in this tree house as a child - it was possible to access it through a spiral stair - with Sook and Nelle (Harper Lee). The character/narrator is Collin Fenwick a 11 year-old orphan (during most of the narrative he is 16 years old). The way Capote tells the story is, once again, through a child's, or teenager's, eyes.

> Now, sitting on the terrace of the Fontana Vecchia in Taormina, his gaze shifted homeward, to Alabama and a subject that had never failed him: his childhood. If *Other Voices* had been an attempt to exorcise demons, his new novel, *The Grass Harp*, was an attempt to raise the bittersweet spirits of remembrance and nostalgia. (…) If Joel Knox represents one half of his character, then Collin represents the

[4] It is not the goal of this work to detail this style. However, a somewhat general definition, found in the *Educational Portal* website may be helpful to set the aura in which the story is narrated: "Southern Gothic literature is a genre of Southern writing. The stories often focus on grotesque themes. While it may include supernatural elements, it mainly focuses on damaged, even delusional, characters." Available at: http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/southern-gothic-literature-definition-characteristics-authors.html#lesson accessed on November 1st 2014.

> other half. *The Grass Harp* is the bright, obverse side of *Other Voices*, and Collin is the sunny, happy side of Truman Capote. (CLARKE, 1988, p. 218)

Gerald Clarke's point of view is that *The Grass Harp* bears a "much more factual resemblance" to Truman's life than does *Other Voices other Rooms*:

> Sook is the model for his heroine, (…) Callie and Jennie are combined in the character of Dolly's sister Verena. Anna Stabler, the black woman who helped Sook with her chores, is Dolly's best friend, Catharine Creek. Truman is of course Collin, the boy who is sent to live with his old maid cousins after his mother dies. (CLARKE, 1988, p. 219)

The references and memories could be called "unpardonable" once again. There is another character who mirrors cousin Randolph from *Other Voices Other Rooms*: Judge Cool [5]. His message in the book is that "no matter how love is expressed it is always sacred". Love as being part of nature and nature as being part of man, in different ways. Life engulfs these differences in a sense that all its variations are natural. The book was adapted into a play – by director Robert Lewis in 1952; a musical - by Kenward Elmslie and Claibe Richardson in 1971; and a film – by director Charles Matthau in 1995.

2.3 – A Christmas Memory (1956)

The A&E[6] biography on Truman Capote says:

> How did this flamboyant little man came to be world famous is a remarkable story given his humble background. Growing up in the depths of great depression in a small farming town in Alabama called Monroeville: a peaceful place where roads weren't paved and the town hall clock would always run five minutes slow. Lillie Mae Faulk, Truman's very pretty and ambitious mother had been raised in this backwoods town and she couldn't wait to get out and see the world. So, at seventeen, she married Arch Persons, a smooth talking salesman from New Orleans. Arch took his bride back to New Orleans for a honeymoon, but in typical fashion he ran out of money before the week was through.. Lilie Mae was so disgusted she would have immediately gotten a divorce but she discovered she was pregnant and on September Thirtieth 1924, little Truman Streckfus Persons was born. But neither parent wanted the child. By the time Truman was four his father had run off and her mother left him with her family in Monroeville while she went to New York City to find a new husband. This time, one with money.

Virtually, all accounts about Truman's early years have the same ideas: his mother was ambitious and eager to leave the small town where she lived, she got married and then she found out she was pregnant; she separated from her first husband (her first marriage was a deception) and, being unable to take Truman to a big city like New York, she turned him over to the care of his mother's family in Monroeville, Alabama.

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[5] The name is important again, in the sense of "refreshing" or "invigorating", "nice", etc.. The character could be described as a free thinker and a "problem solver". A wiser person.

[6] *Biography: Capote, The Tiny Devil* [TV episode]. 60 Minutes. United States of America. 1997.

A Christmas Memory dates back to 1956[7]. It tells the story of a seven year old boy, called simply "Buddy" [8] and his relationship with his much older cousin Sook [9]. The story seems to evoke some nostalgia as the reader is invited to imagine "A coming of winter morning more than twenty years ago." When it was published, Truman was 32 years old. Yet, the focalization of *A Christmas Memory* narrative is entirely through Buddy's point of view.

Buddy's best friend is his older cousin. There are other people in the house, living with them, but they seem to be of little matter to Buddy or Sook.

Truman's move to Monroeville was also difficult: he had to live with three middle-aged and quarrelsome sisters and their reclusive brother. Sook was the oldest cousin, but her mentality was different: "she was so childlike that she was thought to be retarded by some people" (CLARKE, 1988, p. 15). Similarly, the reason Buddy and Sook seem to get along well, may rely on the fact that Buddy's cousin is much older than him, but her behavior is similar to a child's: "She calls me Buddy, in memory of a boy who was formerly her best friend. The other Buddy died in the 1880's, when she was still a child. She is still a child." (Capote 1956, page 8)

A Christmas Memory had adaptations to television, radio programs, theater plays and even opera. It is considered, until today, as a holiday classic.

2.4 – The Thanksgiving Visitor (1967)

This is another Capote's short story originally published in 1967 in a magazine called *McCall's* and later published as a book by *Random House*, Inc. in 1968. The reader is readily presented to Buddy and Sook, again but the main idea of the short story revolves around a bully who tirelessly makes Buddy's life a torment. As Buddy narrates: "Of course it wasn't that I hated school; what I hated was Odd Henderson. The torments he contrived!". Such a bullying treatment would be a result of Buddy's effeminacy:

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[7] The Story was originally published in the *Mademoiselle* magazine – a fashion magazine which was also known for publishing short stories by well-known writhers such as William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Flannery O'Connor and others. Later it was republished in *Breakfast at Tiffany's – A short novel and three stories*, in 1958.

[8] His older cousin calls him Buddy in memory of a boy who was her best friend and who had already died. This artifice of naming a character based on a memory of another character would be also used in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, where the narrator is named "Fred" after Holly Golightly's memory of her brother.

[9] The character of Sook is based on Truman's cousin named Nanny Rumbley Faulk – who Truman called "Sook". Buddy's older cousin is unnamed in the story but is called Sook in later adaptations and in a future short story called *The Thanksgiving Visitor* – a sequel to *A Christmas Memory*.

> "Once, when he had me pinned against a wall, I asked him straight out what had I done to make him dislike me so much; suddenly he relaxed, let me loose and said, "*You're a sissy. I'm just straightening you out.*" *He was right, I was a sissy of sorts*. (…)"

The story goes on to a turn of events where Sook invites Odd for thanksgiving supper at their place, along with other guests, in an attempt to make him go easy on Buddy. After witnessing Odd stealing a cameo in the bathroom, Buddy plans to publicly humiliate him, by telling everyone at the dinner table he is a thief. Miss Sook goes check Buddy's claim, but to Buddy's astonishment she says the cameo is in its place when she returns from the bathroom. Odd, however, confesses he had taken it and leaves the house. Feeling betrayed by his best friend, who lied not to incriminate Odd, Buddy runs out and sulks in the barn until the party is over. Miss Sook calls him and tries to teach him a lesson on why he shouldn't have publicly humiliated Odd.

To a certain extent Buddy tries to bully his own oppressor. The final moral content of the story is an explanation of Miss Sook on why buddy shouldn't go on"eye for an eye" revenge.

What happens to Buddy in this *A Christmas Memory* sequel, may have been something Truman himself experienced in his early years and this is probably a criticism Capote states in his work. It´s plausible Truman would have suffered some bullying for his feminine traits at that time (1930's and 40's) if we imagine the narrative focus of *The Thanksgiving Visitor*. In the story Odd Henderson is described as being a 12-year-old boy, while the other boys were 7 or 8. Considering Truman was born in 1924 and the story is set in 1932, the ages would certainly match (Capote would be 8 years old). But what may settle the case is a reference in *Capote, a biography*:

> Just as Danny had reminded him of a military-school classmate, so did John, remind him of a Monroeville boy, a boy whose personality had stamped itself so indelibly on Truman's memory that he made him the title character in his story "The Thanksgiving Visitor". Only later did Truman recognize how accurate and prophetic that association was; that boy was the school bully who had made his days miserable and filled his nights with foreboding. Odd Henderson he had called him "the meanest human creature in my experience". (CLARKE, 1988, p. 445)

To finish this section about *The Thanksgiving Visitor* there is one passage I would like to highlight: it is a reference to the meaning of an expression: "It was while listening to Annabel at the piano, and ***falling in love with her***, that I felt Odd Henderson. I say felt because I was aware of him before I saw him." (p. 49)

How can the reader understand this "falling in love with her" in the book? If the reader has had some previous experience with Capote's literature he/she may well associate to the love definition of cousin Randolph in *Other Voices Other Rooms* as a *genuine love* in its broader sense- without boundaries. A reader who is not familiar to Truman's work may understand this same sense of love (opposite to what a "mainstream definition" of love between a boy and a girl could elicit into one's mind) once he/she understands (through the reading) that Buddy is openly gay in the story. Buddy felt something attractive, maybe poetic in her playing the piano and defined it as love. Love will be described, in a similar sense by the narrator at *Breakfast at Tiffany's.*

The Thanksgiving Visitor was also adapted for television. The role of Sook was played by Geraldine Page. She received two Emmy Awards for her interpretation of Sook in both adaptations. The voice-over narration in both movies was made by Truman Capote.

2.5 – The End of childhood memories, the remaining contact with real life. Fiction and fact in Capote's literary work.

The other examples I am going to list now are not related to Truman's childhood memories. The afore mentioned examples do not completely cover the childhood references Truman portrayed in his books and short stories, but I have rendered them as the most significant. They give examples of how much Capote needed to base his fiction in people and facts around his life and sometimes upon some important value or characteristics of his life. *Breakfast at Tiffany's* will be intentionally skipped from this chronological list of examples and it will be detailed in chapter three. The literary samples I am going to analyze now reflect fictional and non-fictional events Truman investigated or lived.

2.5. 1 – In Cold Blood (1966)

This is the book that made Truman Capote internationally famous. It was written after *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958). This is a completely different literary work from most of previous Capote's work. It is considered as a non-fiction book which details the 1959 murder of Herbert Clutter, a farmer from Holcomb, Kansas, by two criminals: Richard Hickock and Perry Smith. The crime shocked the city and arouse many questions at that time as for why the family (four people) was so brutally murdered. It took Capote five years to write the book and almost all of the details of its writing process were narrated in Gerald Clarke's *Capote, a Biography.*

It has been considered as an example of true crime literature[10], as it is pointed out in the subheadings of the title: *A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences*. In the Acknowledgements section one reads:

> ALL THE MATERIAL IN THIS book not derived from my own observation is either taken from official records or is the result of interviews with the persons directly concerned, more often than not numerous interviews conducted over a considerable period of time. (Capote 1966, page 9)

Despite Capote's claims that everything in the book was "immaculately factual" old and recent investigations promoted by journalists contradict this claim. There were also rumors about a relationship between Truman and Perry Edward Smith:

> Perry's and Dick's numerous appeals not only caused him depression and anxiety. They presented him with an insoluble moral dilemma. He desperately wanted his book to be published. But publication almost certainly meant the painful deaths of two men who regarded him as their friend and benefactor, two men whom he had helped, counseled and, in Perry's case tutored. "It wasn't a question of my liking Dick and Perry", he carefully explained to an interviewer. "That's like saying, "Do you like yourself?" What mattered was that I knew them, as well as I know myself". (CLARKE, 1988, 352)

Finally, the possible "close relationship" between Capote and Perry was also mentioned in Bennett Miller's 2005 production *Capote*.

> Harper Lee "Well, did you? Did you fall in love with him? (Perry Smith)
> Truman – I don't know how to answer that.
> Harper Lee – Truman..
> Truman Capote – It's as if Perry and I grew up together, in the same house. And one day he stood up and went out the back door while I went out the front.

Capote was certainly very involved in the story as a writer and as a narrator too. Yet, he did not mention any of his involvement in the book. 14 years later, he would say that was the view he had in the preface of another book, *Music for Chameleons*:

> From a technical point, the greatest difficulty I'd had in writing *In Cold Blood* was leaving myself completely out of it. Ordinarily, the reporter has to use himself as a character, an eyewitness observer, in order to retain credibility. But I felt that it was essential to the seemingly detached tone of that book that the author should be absent. Actually, in all my reportage, I had tried to keep myself as invisible as possible. (CAPOTE, 1980, page 16)

In cold Blood became a highly praised literary work and made him world famous. The book got three film versions, it was also turned into a television miniseries and a graphic novel.

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[10] True crime is a recently created term used to refer to nonfictional accounts of actual crimes, usually murders. It has been described as "factional" meaning it is a mix of "facts" and "Fiction" - Christiana Gr Christiana Gregoriou (2011). *Language, Ideology and Identity in Serial Killer Narratives*. Taylor & Francis. p. 2.

2.5.2 - Music for Chameleons (1980).

After the huge success with *In Cold Blood*, Capote did not engage in any other publication for 14 years. For quite some time he was connected to parties, alcohol and drugs. He was still part of the jet set, but rumors about a future book - *Answered Prayers* - where he would tell the story of some high society people, caused a reaction and he would finally fall short of friends and be cast out of this jet-set ambience. Before this rather tragic event in Capote's life this book, *Music for Chameleons* is presented as a collection of short fiction and non-fiction stories (including *Handcarved Coffins* an American nonfiction short story that may remind the reader about *In cold Blood*, and where Capote includes himself in the narrative). The book has a preface written by Capote, where he claims he had some crisis in 1977, while attempting to write *Answered Prayers*.

> However, I did stop working on Answered Prayers in September 1977, a fact that had nothing to do with any public reaction to those parts of the book already published. The halt happened because I was in a helluva lot of trouble: I was suffering a creative crisis and a personal one at the same time. As the latter was unrelated, or very little related, to the former, it is only necessary to remark on the creative chaos. (Capote, 1980, page 14)

Despite this 14 years gap, *Music for Chameleons* was an unexpected success and Truman managed to sell the rights of *Handcarved coffins* to his friend Lester Persky, a movie producer. The film, however, was never finished. Despite Capote's claims that *Handcarved Coffins* was a nonfiction story, a 1992 investigation made by reporters Peter and Leni Gillman (London Sunday Times) never found evidence of the "series of murders" Truman argued had been reported. They found, however, that some of the details they found were very similar to a case Al Dewey, the investigator shown in *In Cold Blood* had been working on. They concluded the whole story had been invented by Truman.

2.5.3 Answered Prayers (1986 – posthumous)

Some of the stories of *Answered Prayers* had already been published and they arouse furious reactions. As Truman, himself, describes it in the preface of *Music for Chameleons*:

> For four years, roughly from 1968 through 1972, I spent most of my time reading and selecting, rewriting and indexing my own letters, other people's letters, my diaries and journals (which contain detailed accounts of hundreds of scenes and conversations) for the years 1943 through1965.In 1975 and 1976 I published four chapters of the book in Esquire magazine. *This aroused anger in certain circles, where it was felt I was betraying confidences, mistreating friends and/or foes.* I don't intend to discuss this; the issue involves social politics, not artistic merit. *I will say only that all a writer has to work with is the material he has gathered as the result of his own endeavor and observations, and he cannot be denied the right to use it. Condemn, but not deny*. (CAPOTE, 1980, page 13)

Due to the possible disclosure of secrets (and Truman knew "the dirty of everyone") of jet set people, Truman was practically banned from their entourage. He was nicknamed "Tiny devil" and he lived the rest of his life in discreet anonymity. Gerald Clark recalls he advised Truman about the publication of *Answered Prayers*: "Truman, they're not going to like this' I warned him. "Nah, they're too dumb" he answered. "They don't know who they are"… (CLARKE, 1988 p. 548)

2.6 – Commentary

Based on the aforementioned examples I selected from Truman Capote's works (the selected works do not comprehend all of the books which could be considered autobiographical or which showcased Truman's views about life, love and intimacy. Others like *Summer Crossing*[11], *The Dogs Bark*[12] , *A Tree of Night*[13] and others short stories) it is my intention to introduce these points: *Memories* - the author uses his own life memories in a considerable number of his works (adapted to a minor or lesser extent) in order to create his

[11] This original work remained lost for many years, until it was found by a home sitter in 2004, in an apartment Truman had previously lived in the 1950's. The original work dates back to 1943. It was finally published in 205 by Random House. According to Winston Manrique Sabogal – columnist of "El Pais" newspaper: " (…) *Summer Crossing* unveils a more intimate ecosystem, the one where the most private dreams and desires dwelt and which let us see what this 19 year-old young man, the age when he started writing the novella, thought about attraction, desire, passion and, mainly, about feelings and love – Translation into English from the original text: "Crucero de verano recrea y desvela un ecosistema más íntimo, el de los deseos y sueños más privados donde deja ver lo que pensaba ese joven de 19 años, edad en que empieza a escribir la novela, sobre la atracción, el deseo, la pasión, y, especialmente, sobre los sentimientos y el amor." . *Summer Crossing* has also been selected for a movie adaptation. It is currently in-production, by director Scarlett Johansson.

[12] *The Dogs Bark: Public People and Private Places* was published in 1973. This is an anthology where Truman reunited a series of short texts about his life, favorite writers, his first job in the *New Yorker* and his previous works like *Summer Crossing* and *Other Voices Other Room.*

[13] *A tree of night and other short stories* was published in 1949 (the title story had already been published in Harper's Bazaar in 1945). As Gerald Clarke describes in his book *Capote, a Biography* (page 85): More subtle in its use of symbolism than "Miriam", "A tree of Night" treats the same theme in a different way, as a supposedly rational woman succumbs to the terrors that lie hidden within her soul. For Truman the story was also a visit to the past, a return to his childhood; the model for lazarus is of course Arch's Trickster, The Great Pasha**.**

narrators, characters and even his stories; *Sexual orientation* - Being openly homosexual in the 40's, in a post-war period, Truman was regarded as someone "ahead of his time". His homosexuality was "an important part of his image"[14]. In our present days the life of homosexual individuals as it concerns rights, affection and prejudice are themes of discussion in society and these themes are no longer part of "only arts' anymore. In this sense, Truman's work is up-to-date and can be included as part of the social changes most societies have experienced throughout the years; *Definition of love* - Capote's perception of love encompasses what could be considered as a larger meaning of such an emotion. The view he expresses through his narrators and characters is, apparently, not limited by gender, social roles, distance, sexual orientation, religion or by "negative" feelings like remorse, ingratitude, indifference and even hate. Capote acknowledges people may live in contradiction with their own feelings, but love seems to overcome apparent inconsistencies. This particular way of understanding love also contributes to the idea of "being ahead of his time" and to a broader comprehension of people, with their natural contradictions, values and feelings. This definition will be particularly important in chapter 3, when the analysis of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* will be made.

In the next chapter I am going to establish the literary theory that will be used in chapter 3 from two main theoretical branches: Narratology and Autofiction.

[14] A&E documentary "Biography: Truman Capote the Tiny Terror" – 1997. The artistic ambience seemed to be the right (maybe only) place for this theme. Innovations in social behaviors were, in that time, in the artistic world and that was the environment such a topic could find space to be talked about and more accepted.

3 - Narratology and Autofiction

In this chapter some concepts of Narratology and autofiction will be used to situate the narrator, and some characters of *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, which will be analyzed in Chapter 3, but examples from other works by Capote will be added to emphasize aspects of his poetics. In Narratology there is a great variation concerning terminology and some main definitions. As this area is ground for vast study I will mostly use the concepts by authors such as Wayne Booth (1961), Gerárd Genette (1972) and, mainly, Dorrit Cohn (1978). I will not comprehensively present the extensive work these authors have in Narratology, but I will make usage of some of their early concepts.

Autofiction is a rather new field of literary study that has been gone through changes in concepts and ideas in the latest years; therefore, it will be used only as a supplementary theory in this work. I will use the early definitions made by Serge Doubrovsky (1977) and, briefly analyze some changes in concepts offered by Arnaud Schmitt (2010). Autofiction will be used as a supplementary theory in this work. Part of the content about autofiction will be taken from Anna Faedrich Martins's PhD dissertation (2014)

3.1 – The art of fiction No. 17

In his 1957 interview entitled *The Art of Fiction No. 17* to *The Paris Review,* Capote talks about his experience in writing short stories:

> INTERVIEWER - What did you first write?
>
> CAPOTE - Short stories. And my more unswerving ambitions still revolve around this form. When seriously explored, the short story seems to me the most difficult and disciplining form of prose writing extant. Whatever control and technique I may have I owe entirely to my training in this medium.

The idea of "control" is mentioned and the interviewer asks him about it:

> INTERVIEWER - What do you mean exactly by "control"?
> CAPOTE - I mean maintaining a stylistic and emotional upper hand over your material. (…) I don't mean to imply that I successfully practice what I preach. I try, that's all.

This control, not only in rhythm and phrasing, but in style and emotion, would imply that some "distance" between the author and his/her work must be achieved. As the interview continues, Capote is asked about one of his recent publications, the book *The Muses Are Heard*[15] where he is the narrator who joins a cultural mission with the Opera *Porgy and*

[15] *The Muses Are Heard* is the first nonfiction book written by Capote. It was first published in two issues of *The New Yorker* in October 1956 it was published as a short story book on a print edition at the end of the year by Random House. Despite being regarded as "nonfiction" many changes and even completely invented events

Bess[16] staged by *The Everyman's Opera* to the U.S.S.R. in the mid-1950s. This is Truman's answer:

> (…) Actually, I don't consider the style of this book, *The Muses Are Heard*, as markedly different from my fictional style. Perhaps the content, the fact that it is about real events, makes it seem so. (…) But I believe my fictional method is equally detached—emotionality makes me lose writing control: If my fiction seems more personal it is because it depends on the artist's most personal and revealing area: his imagination.

On one hand the author says his craft on writing comes from "exhausting emotions" so that he is capable of the necessary distance to control his writing and tell the story. On the other hand he admits he tries to do it, but it does not necessarily mean he achieves this goal. And even when he is supposed to narrate a chronological sequence of facts (the original idea for *The Muses Are Heard*) he intentionally changes the order of some facts and even invents whole scenes. As he includes himself in the narration, the distance between the narrator and the story that is being told is certainly debatable. As one reads from *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative:*

> Usually the extent to which the narrator plays a part in the story has an impact on our assessment of the information he gives us. Distance, as I am using the term here, refers to the narrator's degree of involvement in the story she tells. This is something that is almost infinitely variable.

When the narrator seems to merge with the author, the "playing a part in the story" seems equally closer or more distant to the author according to the variation spectrum. But the question is " Can an author not be confused or related to the narrator of any given narrative?" Quoting the section "Narrator" in *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*:

> And in interpretive disagreements, if there is a narrator, almost invariably the reliability of the narrator becomes a focus of dispute. This is because the first point almost everyone in the field of narrative will agree on nowadays with regard to narrators is that they should not be confused with authors. The narrator is variously described as an instrument, a construction, or a device wielded by the author. Some theorists (like Barthes) put this emphatically: " The (material) author of a narrative is in no way to be confused with the narrator of that narrative" (ABBOTT, 2002, p. 63)

Abbott questions Barthes assumption:

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were inserted in the story: "Like many later new journalists, he took substantial liberties for the sake of lively reading, sometimes changing the order of events and occasionally bringing separated episodes together. In one case he even invented a whole scene – a hilarious encounter in the Brest-Litovsk railroad station- and fabricated, or made composite figures of, some of his characters" – *Capote a Biography* page 294.

[16] An "American Folk Opera" based on DuBose Heyward's novel *Porgy*. Music by George Gershwin and lyrics by DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin.

> I wonder about Barthes's "in no way". If I start to tell the story of my life, should I "in no way" be confused with myself ? (…) Some might argue that in fact there is "no way" I can entirely hide myself, even if I wanted to – that whatever narrative voice I choose to narrate my story, there would be discernible traces of the real me lurking in it. (ABBOTT, 2002, p. 63)

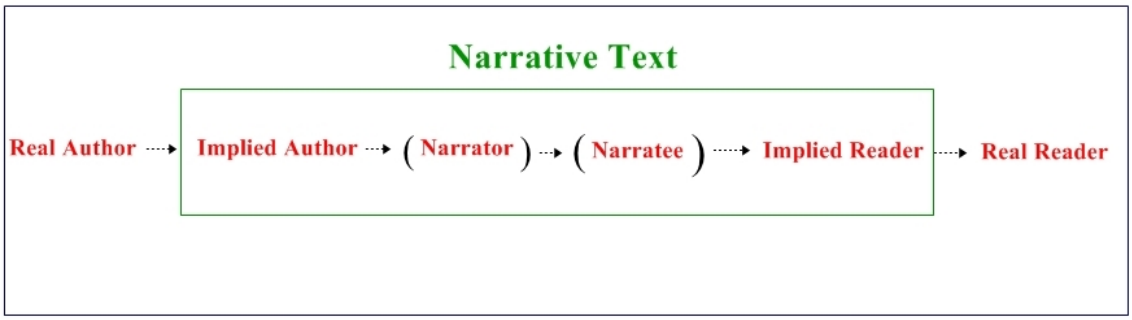
It is important to remember that Capote's first novel was considered "semiautobiographical" as the author himself acknowledged later. The same could be said about his short stories *A Christmas Memory* and *The Thanksgiving Visitor*. According to Capote, style is another element which is present in a writer's work. In the continuity of his 1957 interview Capote states: "(…) your style is you. At the end the personality of a writer has so much to do with the work. The personality has to be humanly there". Although Capote recognizes personality as a "debased word" he concludes that "(…) The writer's individual humanity, his word or gesture toward the world, has to appear almost like a character that makes contact with the reader. If the personality is vague or confused or merely literary, *ça ne va pas*."

The examples selected for chapter one of this essay can give the reader a rather comprehensive view of Truman's personality, interests, values, etc. When Capote states that "the writer's individual humanity" has to "appear almost like a character that makes contact with the reader" I am inclined to say Abbott's questioning about Barthes's assumption meets Capote's view on whether the narrator in a story could actually, "in no way", be confused with the real author. On a great deal, Capote relied on his childhood memories to create the narrators, characters and stories mentioned in section one of this work. And he liked being a public figure. He loved the spotlight and the glamour of high society. In the documentary *Truman Capote the Tiny Terror*, his relationship with Jack Dunphy is defined as "a case of opposites attracting; Capote, the ultimate social butterfly, had fallen for a very private man." As Capote's fame grew over the 50's and 60's people knew him "not only as a successful writer, but as that funny little man who appeared on all television talk shows."

Capote needed to keep strings with real life, as well as enough ground to expose his sexuality, personality and his worldview in his work. That's part of his style and also part of who he is.

3.2.1 - Parties in a narrative

To better understand the characteristics of the narrator I will postulate for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* I am going to point out the main definitions, according to some Narratology theorists, to the parties in a narrative. These definitions may present minor differences in terminology or assessment according to different critic theorists. I am going to present a general diagram[17] of the whole narrative-communication scenario, briefly introduce them and select and explain those that will be used in this work:



3.2.2 - The Real Author and the implied author.

According to Wayne Booth, a narration is a form of communication and, therefore, there will always be a *sender*, a *message* and a *receiver* in this system. According to him, these three concepts did not translate only into author, narrative and reader. Other communicative agents would be involved (as the diagram above shows). One of these agents is the *implied author*: the author who is evoked, but not represented in a work. A construction of the reader based on the style, ideology and values he/she can extract from the text, but also built by the real author: "Of course, when the real living and breathing author constructs the narrative, much of that real author goes into the implied author, (…) a kind of construct that among other things serves to anchor the narrative" (ABBOTT, 2002, p. 77). As this *inferred* or *implied author* may actually have much of the real author I would like to refer to dust jacket of Other *Voices Other Rooms:* It might have been the result of Truman's "commercial genius" as Gerald Clarke mentions but *it also shortened the distance between author and implied author*. That's the real author who is there, looking at the camera (or at the reader) in a sensual way. The reading public may relate directly with that image, especially after reading the book and being introduced to a young boy's discovery of his homosexuality. In a certain sense, Capote delimited the implied author, or the construction the reader could have of him, making it clear he, Truman, was also present. This is probably one of Capote's strategies to give his narrators a higher credibility: "The closer the narrator's statements resemble the implied author's ideology, the more reliable he will turn out to be" (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 17)

[17] *Story and Discourse – Narrative Structure in fiction and film* by Seymour Chatman. 1978, page 151.

Nonetheless , the implied author is not a widely accepted concept. Some important narratologists oppose it, like Gérard Genette: “Genette considers an intermediate figure such as the implied author entirely superfluous” (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 18). He argues that a literary work would only say and have some meaning if the reading public can “see” the empirical author, who is “in the text”. That is the agent that guarantees the statements in a text would not lose their value. Peter D. Juhl, a theorist who “studies literature on the basis of intention and expression” (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 18) eventually reduces the implied author to the real author: “The propositions which a work expresses or implies are expressed or implied, not by a fictional ‘implied author,’ but by the real, historical person” (JUHL, 1980, p.178 apud HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 18).

The term implied author may sound rather problematic:

> (…) a theory that does use it might degenerate into anthropomorphism (since the term humanizes an element allegedly pertaining to the text) and biographism – (since readers and critics often enhance the implied author with elements from the author’s real life) (…) (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 18)

On one hand, the excerpts above discuss significant points: the (un)importance of an implied author, the connection with an empirical author, the resulting anthropomorphism of an element that belongs to the text, biographism, etc. On the other hand, if a reader had no information about Capote to create a biographism, a style of literary interpretation which uses the author’s life as the essential context for his or her work, the notion of implied author, created by the reader, would be applicable:

> We only accept the implied author as an intermediate position; that is, as a construction resulting mainly from the interaction between text and reader. The reader can consider the implied author as a reflection of the real author, but both those authors in fact amount to constructions by the reader and so, obviously, does the reflection. (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 18)

Nevertheless, Narratology understands the implied author as a creation of the real author. Booth offers some examples of different implied authors created by Henry Fielding; in *Jonathan Wild* the implied author is concerned with “public affairs” and “the effects of unchecked ambition on the great man who attain to power in the world”; in *Amelia* the implied reader conveys an “air of sententious solemnity”; and in Joseph Andrews the implied author is “facetious” and “generally insouciant”.

Let’s consider, for the sake of an exercise, that most readers of these three books have imagined similar implied readers as Booth’s. What the readers probably accept is that the

narrative for these books needed different views to be told. These three different perspectives come from the real author in an attempt to tell different stories in different ways. The implied author is a certain way the real author delivers the story. Naturally if the reader finds out about the real author in an interview, article, TV show, radio program, "about the author" page, or any other means of information, even friends or family, the reader will recognize these three different voices *as tools* that best suited the narrative and they were created by the real author.

My point is that Truman, who admittedly liked being on the spot-light, created this persona by which people would recognize his work (his style – and he believes people are born with style) almost immediately. As he played this persona constantly, the association readers make between Capote and the implied author is highly oriented by the author himself. Commercially, Capote knew how to promote his work. Let's suppose someone laid hands for the first time in any of his early writings like the short stories or his first novel. How could the reader imagine the implied author? Probably someone who comes from southern cities, who openly talks about homosexuality (in a time few people discussed it), who relies on childhood memories for his stories, etc.. It is as if Truman presented himself as the implied author the readers already knew.

However, despite the rather obvious influence Capote had in the construction of his implied author, through his persona, they cannot be considered as the same thing: of course there are similarities between Capote's persona and the implied authors; there are also similarities among the implied authors. But it is possible to understand that the implied author serves that one narration, because of its specific needs. In *A Christmas Memory* and *The Thanksgiving visitor* the narrator is the same. The implied author may, however, present differences: memories of childhood, happy moments and some nostalgia seem to be part of the implied author in *A Christmas Memory*; on the other hand moral issues, sexuality, and acceptance are more a part of the ideological profile of the implied author in *The Thanksgiving Visitor*. These are subtle details, but important for the narrative.

One can also hypothesize that upon reading *In Cold Blood*, the reader could construct a completely different implied author from Capote's previous works – most of them based on childhood memories. That is true to a certain extent. But by the time he wrote *In Cold Blood* Capote was already nationally known (*In Cold Blood* made him internationally famous). Capote used to conduct *public readings* of his books, and his public reading of *In Cold Blood*

was highly expected and could be inserted in a series of "prior to publishing" advertisement. Capote *wanted* recognition. As one reads from *Capote a Biography*:

> (…) lying in front of him, missing only thirty of forty pages was the best seller that would alter his life irrevocably that would make him rich and bring him what he coveted above all else: recognition as one of the foremost writers in America – indeed, the world. (CLARKE, 1988, p. 348)

Gerald Clarke mentions several examples of "anticipated publicity" revolving around the launching of *In Cold Blood.* Almost all of them, connecting Truman Capote directly to the book. The reader does not really need to construct much of an *implied author*. What happens is that the reader is invited to see Capote's work under a new angle with *In Cold Blood*. A journalistic view meant to be "immaculately factual". But as it has already been mentioned in this paper even when Truman was the "author-narrator" his "minor distortions" were present. The reliability of the narrator, constantly mentioned as a focus of dispute, finds its *real source* in the real author, not in the implied author.

3.2.3 Narrator - Voices

"Voice" in narration, could be summed up to "who we hear" in the narrative. The one who tells the story. "The simple distinction is grammatical, that of "person" of which there are two principal kinds in narration: *first person* and *third person*" (ABBOTT, 2002, p 64). There are also narrations in second person, but they are comparatively rare. There is some "voice interchange" if one understands that a first person or a third person narration amount for the main voice of a narrative, but some parts in the narrative may show an insertion of first person in third person e vice-versa. More important than the grammatical person is "our sense of the kind of character (or non-character) it is whose voice *colors* the story it narrates" (Abbott, 2002, p. 65). In a further explanation:

> In this sense, narrative voice is a major element in the construction of a story. It is therefore crucial to determine the kind of person we have for a narrator because this lets us know just how she injects into the narration her own needs and desires and limitations, and whether we should fully trust the information we are getting. " (Abbott, 2002, p. 65)

This is how Truman Capote answers one of the last questions in his 1957 interview to the *Paris Review*:

> INTERVIEWER - Do you have any definite ideas or projects for the future?
> CAPOTE (*meditatively*) well, yes, I believe so. I have always written what was easiest for me until now: I want to try something else, a kind of controlled extravagance. I want to use my mind more, use many more colors. Hemingway once

> said anybody can write a novel in the first person. I know now exactly what he means.

Interestingly enough, most of his narrators were in first person. But they were character-narrators. The story was told through the eyes, or with the focalization, of one of the characters. And this also happens in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, which would be published in 1958 and received an almost instant movie adaptation in 1961. As the terms "first person" and "third person" narration seem to be rather imprecise to express the idea of narration of our present days I will adopt the terms used in the description below:

> The term diegesis has been adapted to refer to the world of the story – that "reality" in which the events are presumed to take place. More recently, diegesis in this sense of the term has been replaced by narrative world or storyworld, both of which have the advantage of being clearer and unencumbered by another meaning. But Gerard Genette drew on the word diegesis to introduce a very useful distinction between homodiegetic, heterodiegetic and extradiegetic narration. The first refers to narration that comes from a character in the storyworld and the second and third refer to narration that comes from outside the storyworld. Again, a more reader-friendly set of terms for the same distinction is James Phelan's character and noncharacter narration. Whichever set of terms you choose, the distinction is much more adequate than that between first-person and third – person narration for specifying where a narrator stands in relation to the world of the narrative. (ABBOTT, 2002, p. 75)

Thus, the narration in many of Capote's books is homodiegetic or character narration. The focalization is usually conducted by the narrator (although many narratives may open space for the heterodiegetic narration, merging focalizations.) Which, for most of the cases in Truman's work is a character-narrator.

The term *diegesis* which is present in the excerpt above is defined as when "the narrator summarizes the situation instead of showing it." By suppressing direct speech in a text and saying what happened, as an example. *Mimesis*, on the other hand:

> (…) evokes reality by staging it (…) the narrative almost literally shows what was said in the reality evoked by the text, and yet a complete overlap between narrative representation and the "real" conversation is out of the question. Short phrases like "he said" already indicate an intervention by the narrator. (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 14)

Luc Herman and Bart Vervaeck use a similar definition of narrator as of Abbott's characterization of narration. They define the narrator as extradiegetic when it hovers over the narrated world and intradiegetic when a character in the story is responsible for the narration. They explain the relation with the reader in this way:

> (…) The extradiegetic narrator mostly speaks to an extradiegetic narratee. These so-called addresses to the reader do not involve the empirical reader at all but rather an agent who does not appear in the story and yet functions as the narratee.

> Intradiegetic narrators mostly address other intradiegetic agents; that is, other characters. (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p 81)

This concept where an intradiegetic narrator (a character – narrator) mostly addresses other intradiegetic agents (other characters) will be especially significant in chapter 3 where the narrator of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* addresses other characters most of the time and the main character very often.

Focalization is "the lens through which we see characters and events in the narrative" (ABBOTT, 2002, P. 66). However, focalization does not mean only "seeing". All senses and mental processes (thoughts and judgments) would be involved. In the Thanksgiving Visitor, The first sentence is exactly the nameless narrator's thoughts about Odd Henderson: "the meanest human creature" (page 35). In *A Christmas Memory* the same nameless narrator is ready to say he is seven years old and his distant cousin is "sixty-something". Despite her age (and the narrator's) his opinion is that "She is still a child". In *Other Voices Other Rooms* the narration is made by an external omniscient narrator. As the whole story is based on the character of Joel Knox, Capote uses what Genette (1980, p 10) calls "external focalization": "(…) in internal focalization the narrative is focused through the consciousness of a character, whereas external focalization is something altogether different: the narrative is focused on a character, not through him."

So, the narrative in *Other Voices Other Rooms* presents external focalization, while in *A Christmas Memory*, *The Thanksgiving Visitor* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* the focalization is internal. With regard to other characters Capote usually presents their speeches between quotation marks in a direct-speech representation. Herman and Vervaeck, discussing Dorrit Cohn state that *consciousness representation* represents both: conversations and thoughts by a character. In fact they rely a lot on the work of Dorrit Cohn as she distinguishes two kinds of consciousness representation, which imply two different relationships between narrator and character. First, "the narrator who represents consciousness can coincide with the character whose thoughts he represents, in which case the narrator most often uses the first person." (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p. 23)

This consciousness representation is present in *Other voices other Rooms*, *The Grass Harp, A Christmas Memory, The Thanksgiving Visitor*, among other works. This is also the representation adopted by Capote in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Secondly, the narrator who

represents consciousness is different from the character whose thoughts he represents. In this case third person narration is used. This would be the case of *Summer Crossing.*

Third person narrators are divided in three cases, according to Cohn:

> (…) third-person representation has no less than three types, which roughly correspond to indirect, direct, and free indirect speech. Cohn calls the first type psycho-narration. (…) It is also the most traditional method of consciousness representation. (…) Literal consciousness representation by means of quotations constitutes the second type in a third-person context. Cohn calls it quoted monologue. (…)Free indirect speech brings us to the third type of third-person representation, narrated monologue. (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p. 24)

Free Indirect Speech (also called free indirect discourse or free indirect style) finds a clearer definition, in my opinion, in Genette's work (1980, p. 174) "(…) in free indirect speech, the narrator takes on the speech of the character, or, if one prefers, the character speaks through the voice of the narrator, and the two instances are then merged". The third person representation, called psycho-narration is also called "traditional" by Cohn, meaning it is an omniscient narrator who presents the characters' thoughts and feelings without quoting them directly. This kind of narrative representation can be seen in Summer *Crossing* and *In Cold Blood*. There is something rather peculiar about these two third-person-narration books by Truman. While *Summer Crossing* was a project abandoned by Truman (he abandoned it when he got the inspiration to write *Other Voices other Rooms*) and posthumously published in 2005, *In Cold Blood* was the book he pledged all his efforts to write. The third person narrator in *Summer Crossing* seems to tell the story in a rather poetic tone, sometimes exaggerated and slow-paced whereas the narrative of *In Cold Blood* is almost journalistic and carefully "dosed" in emotions and descriptions. He wrote *Summer Crossing* when he was 19, still in the beginning of his career. He began writing *In Cold Blood* in 1959, 16 years later and after having published books like *Other Voices other Rooms* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. He was 35 years old and finished *In Cold Blood* in 1965, six years later, when the four final chapters were published in the *New Yorker*. The book was published in 1966. This difference was probably perceived because the implied author has suffered changes. Capote's experience, maturity and even style changed through the years, to the point even a more "distant" kind of speech (considering author and narrator) also changed. As Truman himself explains in a 1966 interview, *the story behind a nonfiction novel*, when George Plimpton asked how he could keep himself entirely out of the book, considering his involvement in the case:

> (…) My feeling is that for the nonfiction-novel form to be entirely successful, the author should not appear in the work. Ideally. Once the narrator does appear, he has to appear throughout, all the way down the line, and the I-I-I intrudes when it really shouldn't. I think the single most difficult thing in my book, technically, was to write it without ever appearing myself, and yet, at the same time, create total credibility.

Capote connects the credibility of a literary work to how much an author appears in the book. It is possible to understand his difficulty with this third person narration that, according to him, is the one that best suits the form of nonfiction. However, he points out some interesting idea in the same interview when Plimpton asks him if it was difficult to present his point of view being "removed" from the book: "(…) it's by the selection of what you choose to tell. I believe Perry did what he did for the reasons he himself states. (…) I could have included other views. Perry's happens to be the one I believe is the right one."

Cohn also describes the first person narration:

> Cohn's three types in the third-person context reappear in the first person context. The first-person equivalent of psycho-narration is self-*narration*. Here the I-narrator summarizes his memories. He does not quote himself as a younger man, but instead he talks, in a way similar to indirect speech, about the ideas and feelings he had. For Cohn, the quoted monologue of the third-person context becomes self-*quoted monologue* in a first-person context. In this first- person version of the quoted monologue the narrating I quotes itself as character.(…) ambiguity grows in Cohn's third type of first-person consciousness representation, the *self-narrated monologue*. Here the use of free indirect speech causes the present tense of the quotation to become past tense. As a result, narrative passages dominated by the narrating I (Cohn's self-narration) surreptitiously shift to indirectly quoted monologues in which the character is talking (self-quotation). (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005, p. 28)

These three kinds of I-narrators are present in Truman's works selected for this research. Truman uses the first person narration, in most of his work, as mentioned before. From the selected material presented here, most of the narration is in first person represented by a certain character. This style is used to describe thoughts and speeches of the character-narrators themselves and of other characters. In The *Thanksgiving Visitor*, Buddy describes one of Annabel's questions and answers it using the character-narrator in first person: "It was a mystery to her why I hated school, why some mornings I wept and pleaded with Uncle B., the deciding voice in the house, to let me stay home. (…) it wasn't that I hated school; what I hated was Odd Henderson. The torments he contrived!" (CAPOTE, 1996, p. 35)

Truman's style is almost a direct conversation with the reader, through a character. In *A Christmas Memory*, Buddy and Sook want to buy some whiskey to be used as ingredient in a cupcake recipe from Mr. Haha Jones, a giant Native American with scars who never smiles (that is the reason for his nickname). They set out for Mr. Haha's "business address", a

"sinful" fish-fry and dancing café down by the river". They knock on the door and wait. This is how the narrator describes his and Sook's first contact with him:

> Footsteps. The door opens. Our hearts overturn. It's Mr. Haha Jones himself! And he *is* a giant; he *does* have scars; he *doesn't* smile. No, he glowers at us through Satan-tilted eyes and demands to know: "What you want with Haha?" (…) "If you please, Mr. Haha, we'd like a quart of your finest whiskey." His eyes tilt more. Would you believe it? Haha is smiling! Laughing, too. "Which one of you is a drinkin' man? (CAPOTE, 1996, p. 12)

Quotation marks are used to reproduce direct speech and the lack of proper auxiliary verb usage in Haha's first question is probably an attempt to characterize spoken English (or maybe the way a Native American would be expected to talk or the view Capote had about it). It is probably an attempt to make this whole description sound more realistic too. The narrator asks: "Would **you** believe it?" and then he describes Haha's smiling and laughing. Who is this question addressed to? My first interpretation is that this is a "generic you", anyone who is reading the story. Or maybe it is a description in words of what might have been Buddy and Sook's physical reaction, staring at each other in owe, because Haha is actually smiling and laughing. A description of the narrator's thoughts.

If the narrator is trying to share his thoughts or if he is trying to address the reader, both cases seem to show the narrator wants to share his experience with the reader. This kind of style in narration will also be used at *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

As Herman and Vervaeck (2005, pgs. 18-19) state when discussing Booth's concepts of dramatized author, the dramatized narrator and the undramatized narrator: The *dramatized author* is not a character in the fictional world but becomes visible through a first-person narration. This would be the example found in *The Muses are Heard*, where Truman includes himself in the narration and describes his trip with the *The Everyman's Opera* into former USSR. The *dramatized narrator* appears in the story as a character. This is the narrator in most of Truman's work used as examples here and in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* too. Finally there is the *undramatized narrator* who tells the story without being seen, through the eyes of other characters usually. It differs from the dramatized narrator in the aspect that he never uses "I" in the narrative. That would be the case of *In Cold Blood*.

According to Booth; "the implied author, the dramatized author, and the narrator – dramatized or undramatized (…) imply both a hierarchy and a shift. The first agent sits closest to the author, while the last occupies the position closest to the text."

It is my understanding that the dramatized narrator is, likewise, closer to the author, mainly in those cases where the real author and the narrator share some common information in a symbolic way or as if in a representation. This is the case of Joel Knox, Buddy and Collin Fenwick who are dramatized homodiegetic narrators that share similitudes with the real author's life.

3.2.4 - Narratee, Implied Reader and Real reader.

The narratee is basically the audience or the "hearer" of a narrative. Genette calls the narratee as the "receiver" of a narrative. The concept, coined by Gerald Price[18] refers to a variety of hearers: in a letter the narratee is the addressed correspondent; in a private diary it is usually the writer himself/herself; in a book it is the implied reader or real reader. Sometimes the narratee may be present in the text and sometimes it is not visible. According to Herman and Vervaeck (2005 page 21)"Every text has a narratee, even though she or he remains invisible".

The implied reader is many times presented as the counterpart of the implied author.

> Just like the implied author, the mock reader is an abstraction that cannot be heard or seen in the text. (…) Just like his counterpart, the mock reader occupies an intermediate position. He is neither the concrete individual reading the text nor the agent explicitly addressed by the dramatized author or narrator. (HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005 p. 20)

It is not very clear whether Truman did or did not expect his reader to share his same ideologies, but in my opinion it is very probable, because his ideology of acceptance and sexual orientation are present in all of his most well-known works: if we understand the implied reader as a construction from the author (and from other readers too) or as "the audience presupposed by the narrative itself" (CHATMAN, 1978, p. 150), Capote's implied reader could be roughly defined as those who accepted the "fictional contract" and read his stories in the way an implied reader should perform: with a certain *Welt Anschauung* (worldview) he/she should adopt. One could imagine this implied reader as someone who appreciates Southern Gothic literature, those who could relate to "being raised in the South", the feminine public (and masculine too. His first short stories where published in women's fashion magazines like *Harper's Bazaar* and *Mademoiselle*), part of his social circle (some of the American jet set at that time), homosexuals (as it was mentioned before, homosexuality was not openly talked about at that time – or even now) who could relate with the characters

[18] "The term was first coined, so far as I know, by Gerald Prince, "*Notes Toward a Categorization of Fictional 'Narratees*,' " Genre, 4 (1971).

of his books, the literary circle (where he had friends and foes) and American and British readers in general. A considerable amount of his readers were also the usual readers of literary and news magazines like *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker and Story* And finally the public who had no previous information about him and bought one of his books and, of course, those who knew him through articles, interviews and TV shows. All of these examples are, in fact, Truman's *real readers*. People read him for a variety of reasons, in several media. "The real author and real reader are outside the narrative transaction as such, though, of course, indispensable to it in an ultimate practical sense." (Chatman, 1978, p. 151).

3.2.5 - Autofiction

Autofiction is a concept in literary criticism that refers to a kind of fictionalized autobiography. The term was first coined by Serge Doubrovsky in his book *Fils*[19] in 1977 and since then the term has been adapted and changed as other authors try to use it in different senses. Here is the concept, from *Fils* back cover:

> Autobiography? No, that is a privilege reserved for the important people of this world, at the end of their lives, in a refined style. Fiction, of events and facts strictly real; autofiction, if you will, to have entrusted the language of an adventure to the adventure of language, outside the wisdom and the syntax of the novel, traditional or new. Interactions, threads of words, alliterations, assonances, dissonances, writing before or after literature, concrete, as we say, music. Or better, autofriction, patient onanist, who expects to share his pleasure now.

Other Voices Other Rooms was considered semibiographical and even Capote admitted some obvious references to his childhood memories in this book later in life. Duobrovsky's concept of autofiction leads to the idea of "sharing". The author, who bases his fiction on some facts of real life, shares part of his/her memories in a fictional way, combining "invention" (or "lies" as some writers say) of fiction to his/her particular view of the experiences he/she had. If the memory of some life events brings the author some "pleasure" the writer is also glad to share these experiences in a fictional way with the readers. Anna Martins (2014, p 23) emphasizes that Duobrovsky attempted to distinguish autofiction from autobiography:

> Additionally, the movement of autobiography is from LIFE to the TEXT while the movement of autofiction is from the TEXT, from literature, to LIFE. It means that in autobiography the narrator-protagonist is usually someone famous "worthy of an autobiography" (actors, musicians, politicians, football players, etc..) (…) Autobiography chronicles life in a beautiful style. To Mikhail Bakhtin (2006)

[19] In French, "Fils" mean "son" if the speaker pronounces the "s," but "threads" if the "s" is silent. So there are two possible translations according to the interpretation.

> autobiography is a literary act, that is, an aestheticized act as the author aims his/her Self and his/her life in an artistic plan. The movement of autofiction is another (and this distinction is essential to our understanding of autofiction). A good writer can draw attention to his biography through the fictional text, however, it is the literary text that stands in the foreground. The biographemes are there working as a literary strategy of One's fictionalization.

Doubrovsky's assertion that autobiography is "reserved for the important people of this world" may be content for some criticism and discussion. In Martins's text the direction in which the text flows and the importance of the literary text can give us enough ground to understand how a writer can draw attention to his/her biography through a literary text by the usage of biographemes. If we try to characterize biographemes, one can say that they are details and fragments, emulating the direct contact with reality. According to Roland Barthes, who coined the term, biographeme is an anamnesis exercise: "The biographeme is nothing more than factitious anamnesis: the one I attribute to the author that I love."

Yet, autofiction is a term that generates controversy:

> The autofiction neologism ended up being used indiscriminately in France, so that today the term is also rejected by many French writers and scholars of literature. Thus, each theorist begins to create its own neologism to classify such writing, defending justifications for the acceptance of his/her term. Autonarration and self fabling are two examples, the first by Arnaud Schmitt, and the second by Vincent Colonna. (MARTINS, 2014, p. 147)

Autofiction seems to be a matter for much discussion, conceptual and political dispute. Arnaud Schmitt's autonarration finds some resemblance in Dorrit Cohn's aforementioned work, as she first coined "autonarration" and psyco-narration. Moreover: "Schmitt also relates autofiction with another literary movement born in the United States in the 1960s: "faction, a merge of the English terms 'fact' and 'fiction'. [...] Revisiting the real with the freedom of fiction. "(MARTINS, 2014, p. 148). The association Schmitt makes with Cohn could also be seen as an association to some of narratology's concepts. The term faction has been used to characterize *In Cold Blood*, since "faction" is also called "non-fiction" (ZANDER, 1999, p. 403). Autofiction seems to emerge as a very "open terrain" and I would say it can contribute to literary theory in the years ahead. As this area is relatively new where old and new concepts are still thriving, for this present work, only some of its main concepts were seen and used mainly with a "ramification" proposed by Schmitt.

In my view, autofiction establishes one of its most interesting footholds in the definition of the pact between reader and author. The theory sees the pact as ambiguous or undefined. Sometimes there seem to be no pact at all. On one hand Philippe Lejeune's (1975 apud MARTINS, 2014, p. 18) autobiography is defined as: "A retrospective account in

prose that an actual person gives of his or her own existence with the emphasis placed on the individual life and in particular the development of personality". He adds that in order to speak of autobiography it is necessary that the author, the narrator and the protagonist be one.

Drubrovsky's autofiction comes as an answer to Lejeune's autobiography in some aspects but in reference to the "subject" of a biography, the contemporaneous theories cannot see such a unity, because postmodern literary criticism considers the subject as fragmented, unstable and chaotic. Autofiction is, in some amount, a postmodernist variation of autobiography that "does not credit the possibility of reconstruction of the self, to consider, now, the *continuity* of the self" (MARTINS, 2014, p.76).

Being aware of the instability of the subject the postmodernist novelist creates his own fiction based upon his/her own life and/or fantasies. He/she also uses other people's lives to create his stories and characters.

So, the pact with the reader is a little different. The author still relies on some of his real life experiences to base his work, but the reader will have to accept that part of what he/she tells is "a lie", an invention, the fiction used by the author to make the story more interesting. Or commercial. The pact established with the reader is regarded as oxymoronic and interstitial as Martins points out:

> That is the reason why the autofiction pact with the reader is oxymoronic, contradicting, because the author is not demanded to say what is true or not, anymore; maybe, not even the author could tell one from another. The principle of truthfulness (autobiographical pact) is broken and the principle of invention (fictional pact) is not fully adopted either. Both are merged resulting in a reading contract which is marked by ambiguity in an interstitial narrative. (MARTINS, 2014, p. 23)

In autofiction the author does not claim to say "only the truth" and the pact with the reader must be different from the one proposed by Lejeune in autobiography. The reader must be more "sympathetic". The reader, most of the times, knows part is fiction and part is true, but he/she cannot really differentiate them. In this sense, autofiction is "in between genres".

There is, also, the autobiographical romance, which is a genre Martins postulates will become obsolete, as autofiction (and its relativeness as a concept) keeps growing in literary studies. The autobiographical romance could be understood by the reader as totally as fiction,

until the reader gathers information about the author and makes the consequent relations. As for autofiction: “The protagonist is the author himself, there are indications in the narrative that create this ambiguity. (…). Generally the protagonist is a writer and talks about a fragment of his/her life.” (MARTINS, 2014, p. 125)

Although the narrator is not exactly the protagonist in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s,* I would like to connect idea to the narrator, as both, Capote and “Fred” are writers and both are recalling the past.

Another concept from autofiction:

> Since 1977, the concept has been redefined and updated, and now one hears of autofictions, in the plural, given the diversity of autoficcional exercise in the world literature. We can already mention one kind of autofiction whose ambiguous pact is established from the concealment of the name of the character - the author does not give a name for the protagonist, as in so-called "zero pact", as we see in A casa dos Espelhos - The House of Mirrors,- by Sergio Kokis. (MARTINS, 2014, p. 126).

In *A Christmas Memory,* and *The Thanksgiving Visitor* the narrators do not have a name. The same happen in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*.

In this present work the real author and the real reader play an important role too. If implied reader and implied author may be undone by different relations author and reader has for a certain narrative, the real author may also be someone the reader “thinks” he/she knows. What the reader knows is in fact part of what the real author is through the implied author, or, in Capote’s case, through his *persona.* And the gaps are fulfilled by the impressions and conclusions one can draw upon some analysis. The same happens with the implied reader. The real author may well think he/she knows the reading public, but the possibilities are numerous and just a certain “profile” would work.

Finally the concepts of Cohn of self-narration and the narrator whose consciousness coincides with the character whose thoughts he represents, create almost a direct allusion to the real writer. The autofiction related to Cohn’s concepts give us the notion it is part a decision of the author to show how much he/she appears in the text in accordance to the kind of narrative that is written. These concepts will serve to the analysis of *Breakfast at Tiffany’s,* now in chapter 3.

4 – Breakfast at Tiffany's

"I am always drawn back to places where I have lived, the houses and their neighborhoods."(CAPOTE, 2000, p. 2). This is how Truman starts *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Through a nameless character-narrator who seems to evoke memories of places and people of his past. One person is special in his memories: Holly Golightly, someone he last saw more than 10 years ago. Through a phone call the narrator receives from a common acquaintance of him and Holly's, Joel Bell, the narrator realizes he has an interesting story to tell: hers.

Breakfast at Tiffany's narrates the friendship between a struggling writer in New York and one of his neighbors, Holly Golightly, who lives in the same brownstone, below his floor, in early World War II (1943). Although the reader never gets to know the narrator's real name, he is called "Fred" by Holly, because he looks like her brother Fred. The narrator first notices her on a summer night, when she forgets her keys and rings another tenant's doorbell to get into the building. They finally meet one night when Holly accesses his apartment through the fire escape. From this point on the story focuses on the relationship between the narrator and Holly, her questionable past, her point of view about life (Holly likes to provoke people with some of her unorthodox thinking) and her struggle to find someone rich enough to give her the life she wants. Holly lives a life of acceptance, and she is described as a "free spirit".

Due to some connections Holly has with a local gangster she is arrested and forced to leave the country. She leaves the narrator, one of her best friends, a nameless cat, a cage he could not use to imprison any living being, and the memories of a friendship he decides to write about.

As the summary above intends to show, the two main characters are the nameless character-narrator and Holly. My analyses intend to show some connections that the narrator's recollection shares with some of Truman's real life events. Capote divided the references in the narrator and in the main character too. I will begin the analysis with the narrator:

The character-narrator is a writer like Capote. Truman's birthday is on September 30th , the same date of the narrator. He is a small person; Holly calls him a "runt". Truman was known for being tiny and small. In *Breakfast at Tiffany's* the narrator's real name is never revealed: it is named after Holly's brother, Fred. This is a technique Truman previously used in *A Christmas Memory* and *The Thanksgiving Visitor*, where Buddy - considered as an alter

ego for Capote- also tells the reader about his past. If one assumes Truman used a nameless character like Buddy to create his fiction, based on some real people and circumstances of his life, can one also assume Fred is the nameless narrator who could possibly represent Truman in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* ?

To some extent the connections are obvious. The difference between Buddy and Fred, besides the distinct narratives, is that while Buddy is a nine or ten years old boy, Fred is an adult, - a young writer, who is still struggling to be published and to make a name in the "big apple". At the end of the book we learn that the narrator becomes a successful writer: "(…) there was so much I wanted to write her: that I'd sold two stories (…)" Also, these three narratives use a first person narrator in a homodiegetic narration. All narrators are intradiegetic too, which seems to give the reader a more trustworthy narration. Discussing Cohn, Herman & Vervaeck (2005, p. 28) mention she defines self-narration, as the narrative where the I-narrator summarizes his/her memories. Fred does it along the book, since the beginning in fact as he says "It never occurred to me in those days to write about Holly Golightly, and probably it would not now except for a conversation I had with Joe Bell that set the whole memory of her in motion again." (CAPOTE, 2000 p. 2). This focalization also gives the reader the impression the narrator does not have much room to create or invent part of the story. The narrator can only "suppose" sometimes.

This is the kind of supposition a reader would expect from a narrator who is not omniscient, but rather a "witness" or observer. "The I-witness tells the story in his own words but lacks the omniscience of the authorial narrator" ((HERMAN & VERVAECK, 2005 p.31). Holly describes the narrator as someone who "wants awfully to be on the inside staring out" (CAPOTE, 2000, p. 28). It also brings the idea the narrator cannot "fabricate" the story, but rather describe what he experiences. This kind of narrator seems to make the narrative more trustworthy.

As for sexuality, the narrator in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* seems "neutral" or "non-sexual". Truman had already exposed his sexuality as a writer, a public persona, and this may be the reason why some of his narrators have dubious or openly homosexual behavior, therefore operating as his alter-egos in his works, mainly when the narrators were like his possible alter-egos – as Joel, Buddy and Collin Fenwick. In *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Truman's depiction of the narrator's sexuality is more refined and less obvious. It is not possible to infer the narrator is gay, unless the reader examines a few points: Holly wants to find someone

who is wealthy. Anyone who is in her same level, or below will not be a center of her attention. The narrator lives on the same building she does and he is not exactly rich. He has some jobs along the story, but the reader never gets a description of what he does. When he is fired and the reasons are not explained; we do not know exactly what his occupation was either. The narrator is, however, helped by his family: "(…) expecting some form of monetary remembrance from my family, I was eager for the postman's morning visit." (CAPOTE 2000 p. 48)

This apparent "lack of wealth" turns the narrator into an "unattractive issue" to Holly. There is no sexual tension between them, but much more of a friendship, like brother and sister, or two good friends. This is how the narrative is built and the reader could even conclude that had the narrator been rich and eligible as a companion to Holly there would still be no sexual desire between them. As Holly herself says she is "kind of a dyke" and the narrator is "undesirable".

Almost at the end of the book, when Holly is arrested for her connection with Salvatore Sally Tomato, the narrator is worried she might be in prison for a long time. Holly tries to calm him down with the following speech:"(…) nobody has any intention of prosecuting me, they haven't a ghost of a case. Well, I may be rotten to the core, **Maude**, but: testify against a friend I will not". "Maude" was slang in the 40's for "male prostitute" or "homosexual": "Holly calls him "Maude" in the gay slang of the day". (WASSON, 2010, p. 62)

Holly calls the narrator a "maude" and he expresses no surprise, or even mentions the usage of the word. A habitual reader of Truman would understand the implied idea the homosexual readers of the 40's and 50's would probably understand it too.

Another hint about the narrator's sexuality is in the description he makes of some male figures, particularly of Jose Yberra-Jaegar, a character which seems to bring the aura of a "latin lover". He is described as the "handsome Brazillian" and sometimes with a certain lyricism:

> (…) First, there was the Latin who came to my door (…) our accents seemed mutually incoherent, but by the time we had I was charmed. He'd been put together with care, his brown head and bullfighter's figure had exactness, perfection, like an apple, an orange, something nature has made just right**.** (CAPOTE 2000, p. 27)

The narrator describes the brownstone again, at the end of the book, with some information that could not be considered relevant, if a certain reference was not established:

> The owner of the brownstone sold her abandoned possessions, the white-satin bed, the tapestry, her precious Gothic chair; a new tenant acquired the apartment, his name was Quaintance Smith, and he entertained as many gentlemen callers of a noisy nature as Holly ever had -- though in this instance Madame Spanella did not object, indeed she doted on the young man and supplied filet mignon whenever he had a black eye. (CAPOTE, 2000, p. 63)

The reference is George Quaintance, a gay American artist known for his idealized, strongly homoerotic, male physique paintings of men in the first half of the 20th century. Probably this is a mention in honor of the artist who died in 1957. As *Breakfast at Tiffany*'s was first published in 1958 - divided in three parts - in the *Esquire* magazine, it is plausible Truman mentions a homosexual artist who was part of his references too.

The reader of this present work can associate the four above mentioned topics as "hints" to the narrator's sexuality and therefore to the implied author too. Few points are left, concerning the analyses of the narrator.

When Holly finds out the narrator is a writer, she asks him if he is a "real writer" and when the narrator asks what she means by that, Holly asks if anyone buys what he writes. And then she asks him to read her one of his stories. The narrator describes his own thoughts: "Very few authors, especially the unpublished, can resist an invitation to read aloud." This sentence could be credited to Capote or to the narrator. Capote used to make public readings of his books. In Gerald Clarke's Capote, *a biography*, for example, he narrates the nervousness Truman and John Malcoln Brinnin felt as for the reaction of a more "conservative" audience when Truman read a section of *A Tree of Night*, at the Y.M.H.A. The audience responded very positively though. His early public readings are part of his "marketing". Truman certainly knew how to promote his books. He also read sections of other books, including *In Cold Blood* and - made a public reading of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* but, this time, after the publication and the movie, to an audience in 1973, where he described exactly the scene Holly enters the narrator's apartment.

The last point to be stressed as being common to both the narrator and Capote concerns the concept of love they both seem to share:

> Or, and the question is apparent, was my outrage a little the result of being in love with Holly myself? A little. For I was in love with her. Just as I'd once been in love with my mother's elderly colored cook and a postman who let me follow him

> on his rounds and a whole family named McKendrick. That category of love generates jealousy, too. (CAPOTE, 2000, p. 43)

The meaning of love, as described by the narrator here, is not limited to the love between a man and a woman, in order to get married, have a family and children. The narrator talks about a broader sense of love, and he compares it to "other loves" he had of the same kind. This kind of love is like a fondness for someone. Independent of gender. It is the kind of love we, as reader, will also find in the main character: Holly Golightly.

The narrator refers to Holly from the beginning to the end of the narrative and we understand the way the main character thinks through his descriptions. Capote also uses Holly to refer to some of his life events: When Holly throws a party at her apartment Mag Wildwood appears, despite not being invited. When Holly asks her what she is doing there she replies: "Why, n-n-nothing, sugar. I've been upstairs working with Yunioshi. Christmas stuff for the Ba-ba-zaar." (page 10).

Harper's Bazaar was one of the first American fashion magazines to publish Truman's stories. It's interesting to note that *Breakfast at Tiffany's* was rejected for publication:

> Apparently, it was a problem of language. Carmel Snow, the editor to whom Truman had promised the manuscript, had been fired, and in her place, the Hearst Corporation had installed Nancy White, a sort of unimaginative company cog. She objected to some of Capote's colorful usage ("dyke," "hell," "damn"), and most of all, to his heroine's free spiritedness (WASSOn, 2010, p. 63)

It is also interesting to observe that one of the reasons Holly Golightly became such an iconic character was precisely because of this free spirit she had. Maybe that editor who rejected the publication was not aware of the dimension of the character.

Holly Golightly is an iconic character for many reasons. It is considered as one of the first descriptions of the modern woman, in a decade where traditional values were on top. The war had separated men and women and the post-war spirit needed entertainment, tranquility and a "certain order". Marriage was almost the main goal in life. In 1951 one-third of America's nineteen year-old women had found husbands; some of them had come from war after a long time. Women were taken from the work-force and returned to their homes. Preferably to the kitchen. There were magazines, TV variety shows, plays, movies and games for distraction. Most of life in the 50s was directed at "keeping the order". And to keep the order - gender lines, which had been formerly blurred, had to be reinstated. The woman in the 50s had small TV sets she could carry around the house to watch *Ozzie and Harriet*, *The Ed*

Sullivan Show, Father Knows Best or she could open *Modern Screen*and know that Janet Leigh had abandoned her career to favor Tony Curtis's sake. According to Sam Wasson:

> With an unprecedented degree of leisure time, and more media access than ever before, the fifties woman was the single most vulnerable woman in American history to the grasp of prefab wholesale thought, and by extension, to the men who made it. The message of conformity poured in through every opening from the outside, making it impossible for her to shut it out without shutting out the world. Banish the crazy, she discovered, and sit in silence, or sit in silence and go crazy. Either way, the unwanted voices of rebellion were quieted by the self-soothing mantras she learned from TV, print, and movies. (2010 page 29)

The 1950 are considered as "Golden Years" for the television. But the post war years and the 50s were also a transitional period between the - wars of the first half of the twentieth century and the period of behavioral and technological revolutions of the second half. The second half of the 50s foreshadowed the late 60s and early 70s movements of sexual, drugs, political engagement, and behavioral revolutions. *Breakfast at Tiffany's* was published in 1958 and it is natural the book reflects part of the transitions that were happening. Being part of literature and inserted in a historical context Capote's work reveals not only some of his ideologies and values, but also a historical and cultural aspect of the decade.

Holly Golightly is an icon for this reason too: she represents a moment of changes in society and one kind of modern woman free spirited and independent. Many people who read the book or watched the movie liked Holly exactly for her modern traits in behavior which was in part against the established context of the decade. She was unconventional.

Being unconventional was a reality for Truman for a long time. His sexuality was unconventional; his view of love was unconventional; his childhood was unconventional. A great deal of Truman is in Holly too. Truman's worldview is shared by Holly and the narrator.

On one hand Holly reflects some of the values Truman nurtures:

> Of all his characters Truman later said, Holly was his favorite and it is easy to see why. She lives the Capote's philosophy (…) her whole life is an expression of freedom and acceptance of human irregularities, her own as well as everybody else's. The only sin she recognizes is hypocrisy. In an early version Truman gave her the curiously inappropriate name of Connie Gustafson; he later thought better and christened her with one Holiday Golightly that precisely symbolizes her personality: she is a woman who makes a holiday of life through which she walks lightly. (CLARKE, 1988, p. 313)

This expression of liberty and acceptance can be found in Holly as she does not mind sharing her apartment with a lesbian, when she cannot give her cat a name - because she does not feel as if she possessed something – or someone – to give it a name - , in the Christmas

gift she gives the narrator - a cage that must not be used to put a “living thing” in - , her lack of attention to some conventions like schedules, she does not even know the narrator’s name, one of her best friends. All of this “free spirit” she has is, in part, expected from the implied author, due to past publications and a philosophy of acceptance, lack or “property” and vision of world. Truman himself, being homosexual, had to struggle for acceptance even from his own mother. Once, after a big fight, Nina started calling Truman “fairy”, “pansy” and other similar words. She said it to his friends. They felt uncomfortable because, as it has already been mentioned in this paper, homosexuality was not openly talked about at that time. Some of Truman’s friends say he looked for a job in an attempt to scape Nina’s pressure and that is one of the reasons he would have started to work at the early age of 17 as a copyboy at the *New Yorker*.

There is a moment in the story Holly talks about a certain feeling of fear she has: “You're afraid and you sweat like hell, but you don't know what you're afraid of. Except something bad is going to happen, only you don't know what it is”. The narrator has this feeling too. She calls it the “the means red” and the narrator calls it angst. The narrator deals with this feeling with drinks. Holly prefers to take a taxi and go to Tiffany’s as she thinks Tiffany’s represents glamour with quietness, a calm atmosphere - well-dressed people, a smell of “silver and alligator wallets”. It’s a sensation that almost certifies nothing bad can happen to her. It is as if Holly and the narrator had “borrowed” some of Truman’s anxieties.

The name of the book is also borrowed:

> Truman had once heard an anecdote and filed it away waiting for the time he could use it. During World War II a man of middle age entertained a marine on a Saturday night. The man enjoyed himself so much in the marine’s muscular embrace that he felt he should buy him something to show his gratitude; but since it was Sunday when they woke up and the stores were closed the best he could offer was breakfast. “Where would you like to go” he asked. “Pick the fanciest, most expensive place in town”. The marine, who was not a native, had heard of only one fancy and expensive place in New York and he said: “Let’s have breakfast at Tiffany’s”. (CLARKE, 1988, p. 314)

The joke unveils a certain naivety by the marine. It is not certain Truman or his mother where that naïve, but they were “from the south” and “hillbillies” to the eyes of city dwellers. It is also remarkable a person listens to something and intentionally keeps it away for some time till the right moment arrives to use it. That is the real usage of memory of a very private and short idea, maybe one that marked the author – later Truman would use another sentence he had heard to name other of his book.

Holly's name is another link to Truman. Just like Holly, Truman's mother also changed her name for a "more sophisticated one" when she came to the big city. So Lillie Mae Faulk became "Nina" and Lulamae Barnes became "Holy Golightly". Both grew up in the rural south and desired, more than anything, a "better life".

As has been speculated, the narrator could work as Capote's alter-ego, but it could also be based on Gloria Vanderbilt's friend, Russel Hurd, who was also gay. Many people started wondering where Capote had gotten inspiration for Holly; as countless people already knew Truman got the idea for some of his characters from real people, half the women he knew and some he did not, claimed to be the model for Holly. He called these claims as the "Holly Golightly Sweepstakes", which is also a way to promote his work. Even a woman named Bonnie Golightly entered the sweepstakes too and sued Truman for eight hundred thousand dollars for "invasion of privacy". Her case did not go very far, though.

Truman also gave his version when asked about the "real Holly Golightly". He said the woman had really existed. She was a seventeen year-old German refugee who had arrived in New York at the beginning of the war. And she had actually lived in the same building Truman did for some time. Below his floor. She did not have an accent and people did not know about her real origins. Truman discovered it because they became friends. Truman said the real Holly would even have had a similar destiny to her character: She ended up in Portuguese Africa and she would have had a carving made out of her too, by a native.

Truman told Gerald Clarke this same story but the difference was that the girl was Swiss. The biographer concludes: "Did she exist? Probably. But was she Holly Golightly? I doubt it". (WASSOM, 2010, p. 66)

As for Holly's "profession"[20], Capote probably used a certain point of view he might have developed through the years, mainly in his childhood - as Nina's relationship with Arch had been a major flaw:

> "She once went to bed with a man in Saint Louis" Truman recalled: "I was only two or so, but I remember it clearly. "She took me to Jacksonville to live with my grandmother. She and my father were more or less separated at the time and she

[20] "Holly Golightly was not precisely a call girl. She had no job, but accompanied expense-account men to the best restaurants and night clubs, with the understanding that her escort was obligated to give her some sort of gift, perhaps jewelry or a check … if she felt like it, she might take her escort home for the night. So these girls are the authentic American geishas, and they're much more prevalent now than in 1943 or 1944, which was Holly's era". – *The New Yorker – Was Holly Golightly really a prostitute*? Reproduction of Truman Capote's interview to *Playboy* in 1968.

> went out with several young men while she was there". (…) "One night I could hear them doing whatever they were doing in the rumble seat of a car. Another night she brought a man right into the house." (CLARKE, 1988, p. 12)

Nina was accounted as having many lovers: "Greeks, Spaniards and college sheiks", an ex-heavyweight champion and a "hot-blooded Latin lover" among others. According to Seabon, Nina's brother, she "She had thought she was marrying a man who would give her some security and a home life". (CLARKE, 1988, p. 11) As it did not happen Nina went to New York, for better opportunities. In *Breakfast at Tiffany* Doc Golightly blames the magazines and the perspective to live in a big city as the temptations which led Holly to leave their farm.

In New York Nina marries Joe Capote; he had been educated in the University of Havana and went to New Orleans in 1924 looking for a job in the United States. Nina and Joe met for the first time in 1925 in the lobby of Monteleone hotel in New Orleans: "They had dinner together and they may have even made love but if they did have an affair it did not last long. She already had one lover not to mention a husband and a baby and Joe was not in a financial position to stay around" (CLARKE, 1988, p. 29). Joe went to New York for a job and studied business administration at night while working as a shipping clerk during the day. In 1931 he was earning a "confortable income" as "the office manager of an old and respected textile-brokerage firm". Holly looks for a man, who is wealthy and who can provide her a life with parties, drinks, trips, and leisure activities. Curiously Joe Capote, despite not being as rich as Holly would demand, was the kind of person who liked to "earn and spend money". As Gerald Clarke (1988, p 40) mentions:

> To outsiders their life together seemed charmed, almost enchanted. Living at the top of Joe's salary, and above, they appeared to have the best of everything: weekends at the racetrack, evenings at the theater or in fashionable night-clubs, vacations in east Hampton, Bermuda, Cuba or even Europe which they toured twice during the Thirties. They were rarely still and for them the depression brought not hard times but one long, boisterous party.

Capote's relationship with his real father could be understood as distant and cold, as they were set apart since Capote's childhood. But his relationship with Joe Capote was better; Truman recognized some important values in him and Joe adopted Truman in 1935. But the combination "Nina and Joe", marked by infidelity on both sides, had its own setbacks too, as the following Joe and Nina lifestyle excerpt describes:

> Joe and Nina lived extravagantly, both in Manhattan and for three years in fashionable Greenwich, Connecticut. The family returned to New York City in 1942 and took an apartment on New York's upper-class Park Avenue. At this time, Nina

> began her descent into alcoholism, often flying into violent rages at her teen-aged son because of his homosexuality.

The "extravagant" lifestyle they had, however, demanded money. Although Joe Capote had a good job with a substantial salary it was later discovered he was embezzling money from the company he worked for. He was discovered and fired. In 1955 the district attorney concluded his investigations on Joe's activities and he was indicted on several counts of forgery and grand larceny. He pleaded guilty and was sent to Sing Sing prison for a bit more than a year. The same prison in which Holly Golightly visits Salvatore Tomato in the book.

Nina's end was not a mystery as Holly's. She committed suicide in 1954. Under the influence of alcohol she swallowed a lethal dose of Seconals[21]. She died a few weeks before her forty-ninth birthday. When Holly talks about her love for José she shows she is familiar to Seconals too: "He's friendly , he can laugh me out of the mean reds, only I don't have them much anymore, except sometimes, and even then they're not so hideola that I gulp Seconal or have to haul myself to Tiffany's" (CAPOTE, 2000, p. 47).

Capote is said to have stated that "You, sometimes, have to perform a little lobotomy and cut people out of your mind or they will drag you down" (CLARKE, 1988, p. 257). Probably easier said than done, the writers sentence can be interpreted as a reference to his feelings towards his parents: "I cut my father out long ago. He never did anything for me and he was not my responsibility. I finally cut Joe out too. I gave him a lot of money and saw him through two marriages after my mother died" (CLARKE, 1988 p. 345). Similarly, Holly displays the same notions concerning attachments. "Never love a wild thing, Mr. Bell", Holly advises. The idea that love is not related with chains seems to be the main topic for her:

> (…) you can't give your heart to a wild thing: the more you do, the stronger they get. Until they're strong enough to run into the woods. Or fly into a tree. Then a taller tree. Then the sky. That's how you'll end up, Mr. Bell. If you let yourself love a wild thing. You'll end up looking at the sky. (CAPOTE, 2000, p. 42)

Finally, one of Capote's most striking and unique traits is also to be found represented in his most celebrated female character. Holly talks about a kind of love that sees no discrimination in gender; a view that is probably openly advocated by Truman in a number of situations.

[21] A barbiturate derivative drug with anticonvulsant, anxiolytic, hypnotic and sedative properties.

This present work will not analyze the movie *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961 – Blake Edwards) but one of the reasons Holly became such an iconic figure was, also, because of the popularity of the movie. Truman had first envisioned Marylin Monroe for the main character of the movie but Hollywood chose Audrey Hepburn. Although the movie and the film share similarities, they are different products. This "free love" concept, very important in the novel, was not reinforced in the film adaptation, maybe because films at that time tended to be a lot more conservative than literature. The end in the movie and the end in the book are completely different. It is however worth mentioning Capote considered the Hollywood version of his novel much altered and he disliked it intensely. Both are, nevertheless, great achievements.

5 - **CONCLUSION**

In the introduction of this work I resorted to my track record as a reader to show the kind of literature I used to read and which were my main interests, a long time ago. It is important to say I had the chance to read *Breakfast at Tiffany's* in the distant 80's but I never did it due to the kind of literature of my concern at that time and to some preconceived ideas I had about the author; mainly because I had watched part of his interview in the *Stanley Siegel Show* in 1978 where he was under the influence of alcohol and probably drugs. I had already watched him in other shows and I thought his mannerisms, his voice and the way he talked about actors, regarding most of them as "stupid" or "dumb" was particularly annoying. I considered him as a kind of scandalous person, too self-centered, a person I could not empathize with.

It is my understanding that we choose a book to read for different reasons. In probably all cases someone reads a book, the author is also an object of attention by the reader. Because, whether the work is the result of a research, scientific experiment, leisure-oriented, self-help, fiction or non-fiction, that attracts one's attention we know someone (or in rare cases something) created that book. And part of what the author has to tell, through his research, experience, ideology, intention, is of our interest as well. The credibility of the work relies, in great amount, on who the author is.

Capote came to me in the form of a mandatory reading and became an object of interest and as I read more by and about him, I was able to see that life and fiction were intertwined in his texts and his biography. This work is the result of this interest, as it shows Capote's recurrent use of narrators that work as alter egos, characters who behave like the writer's acquaintances and ideas that were also defended in personal statements. Among Capote's many literary pieces, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* seems to embody all of these traits, summarizing Capote's fictional style that would be radically altered in the painstaking creation of his most celebrated work, *In Cold Blood*. Considering that Capote repeatedly stated that his journalistic detachment exercised in the writing of his nonfictional work was the acme of his literary skills, one may wonder why so much subjectivity and personal experience was brought to his other works. Regardless of the reasons, though, the effect is of an interesting approximation between readers and writer, or at least between readers and the implied author, Capote's cool literary persona, skillfully created and maintained in literary works, TV interviews and jet-set parties alike.

Naturally, this work allows room for more: why did Capote relied so much in his memories and his persona to create his stories? What could the author reveal in his other stories ? How could the reader understand his work?

Despite these and other questions about Capote's literary persona, I have, through the examples and analyses in this work, proved the author relied on a great extent on his memories, sexual orientation and a broader meaning of love as main ideologies for his work, creating a style that was, and still is, recognized as his own. In this sense, Capote can be considered well-succeeded: Holly Golightly is remembered as this free spirit and, sometimes, as an early portrayal of modern woman, sharing what are, probably, Capote's own ideas about life and love. In some interesting way, his favorite character could still be considered as a reference to present ideas of acceptance and freedom in our society. And that will probably a theme for discussion in many years ahead.

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