Isolation and Insanity in Stephen King's The Shining and Dennis Lehane's Shutter Island

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Završni rad

Mentorica: izv. prof. dr. sc. Biljana Oklopčić

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Bachelor Thesis

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Abstract

This paper deals with the motifs of insanity and isolation in Steven King's *The Shining* and Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*. Although both authors use the same motifs in their works, their approach towards the plot development in the novels is completely different. Stephen King combines the motifs of insanity and isolation with common horror motifs whereas Dennis Lehane embeds the aforementioned motifs into the traits of crime novel to tackle upon human consciousness and perception. The first part of the paper explores the genres of Gothic fiction and crime fiction in the works of contemporary authors. The second part of the paper focuses on the usage of the motifs of insanity and isolation in King's and Lehane's novels. The paper concludes with the detailed comparison of King's and Lehane's works, and the motifs of isolation and insanity portrayed in them.

Keywords: insanity, isolation, Stephen King, Dennis Lehane, *The Shining, Shutter Island,* Gothic fiction, crime fiction

Contents

Introduction

Isolation and insanity are two motifs often found in literature, especially of the Gothic and crime genre, as the causes or triggers of the work's plot. Both have negative connotations when it comes to their influence on the characters, degrading and destabilizing what was once a functioning human being and turning him/her into a dangerous and unstable person with violent tendencies. By setting the plot in a location that is deprived of other people or the outside world, the author creates a base upon which the character or multiple characters may become less mentally stable due to the repetitiveness and the immutability of their everyday life. This is more emphasized if the character is already dealing with or has dealt with a past trauma. As time passes and the plot advances, the character/characters become more unstable, and their psyche starts to degrade to the point of insanity or madness. They become more susceptible to outside and/or supernatural influences, which in turn leads to unwanted and tragic events.

Stephen King, the author of *The Shining*, is an American author best known for many of his best-selling horror and Gothic novels, some of which have been adapted into successful movies and TV-shows. In *The Shining,* King secludes the Torrance family from the outside world by having them come to the Overlook Hotel and by doing so sets off a series of events that will prove fatal by the end of the novel.

The author of *Shutter Island*, Dennis Lehane, is an award-wining American author and screenwriter best known for his novels *Mystic River* and the aforementioned *Shutter Island*, both of which were adapted to successful films. In *Shutter Island*, Lehane questions the sanity of the main character Teddy Daniels, who is a U. S. marshal investigating the disappearance of a patient situated on an isolated island and detained in a mental hospital. In the novel, the readers follow an unreliable narrator while trying to decipher reality from one's perplexed imagination.

The first part of the paper aims to briefly present contemporary Gothic fiction as well as contemporary crime fiction, whereas the second part will analyse the motifs of isolation and insanity in Stephen King's *The Shining* and Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island* respectively. The final part of the paper will focus on the detailed comparison of the dominant motifs in the works of both authors, namely isolation and insanity. Furthermore, the paper aims to examine the manner in which the narrative composed on isolation and insanity is conducted and presented to the reader.

1. Gothic Fiction in the Contemporary Time

Contemporary Gothic fiction is hard to define because of the enormous variety of themes that are termed Gothic. Gothic and horror have risen in popularity during the twentieth century and as such have embedded themselves in popular culture, be it fiction or film. It [Gothic] is so engraved in popular culture that the vast majority of novels and films use some Gothic elements but are not considered Gothic. In his work "The Contemporary Gothic," Aldana Reyes presents the problem as such:

> As the fragments of an already atomized type of literature, the contemporary Gothic is marked by its ubiquity: if a certain novel is not Gothic, it is bound to utilize motifs or to include literary aspects that have, at some point, been associated with the Gothic, from graveyards and ruins as memorable settings to rapacious monks, monsters, and ghosts as villains. Since these are very specific and no longer confined to narrative effect, it is possible to find the "Gothic" as an aesthetic or thematic qualifier in further subgenre hybrids (Gothic romance, Gothic science fiction, Gothic noir). (2)

This variety of themes brings into question the definition of contemporary Gothic. Bruhm thus argues that contemporary Gothic does not differ much from classical Gothic: "the central concerns of the classical Gothic are not that different from those of the contemporary Gothic: the dynamics of family, the limits of rationality and passion, the definition of statehood and citizenship, the cultural effects of technology" (284). Bruhm further states that contemporary Gothic deals with present anxieties and provides a possible explanation for the development of contemporary Gothic's themes. After the Second World War, a Gothic stream appeared emphasizing the fear and invasion of other, visible in such works as William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* and Stephen King's *The Tommyknockers*. Due to the advancement of technology in the second half of the twentieth century, the themes of total destruction and creation of superhumans have emerged, as seen in Stephen King's *The Stand* and Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The civil and human rights movements, as well as the ever-increasing secularity of the world, disturbed and destabilized the then dominant social and moral norms. That, in turn, created narratives that concerned themselves with Satanism and other anti-Christian topics, such as David Seltzer's *The Omen* and Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (Bruhm 285-86). Another important factor of contemporary Gothic, according to Bruhm, is Freud's psychoanalysis, which has provided a deep understanding of the human mind and psyche along with the conflict found within them. In addition,

> [w]hat makes the contemporary Gothic particularly contemporary in both its themes and reception, however, is that . . . unconscious desires center on the problem of a lost object, the most overriding basis of our need for the Gothic and almost everything else. That loss is usually material (parents, money, property, freedom to move around a lover, or family member), but the materiality of that loss always has a psychological and symbolic dimension to it. (Bruhm 288)

Even though contemporary Gothic is not uniform, it still uses well-known Gothic tropes, adjusting them to fit the contemporary themes and concerns:

> The adaptability and timelessness of hauntings, both clearly constrained by space but not by time, is one of the reasons why the haunted house narrative has been one of the most popular manifestations of the Gothic in the 20th and 21st centuries; it conjures up the barbaric and threatening quality of the past while allowing novels to be set in the present, making their fears more relevant and immediate to contemporary audiences. As narratives moved away from the aristocratic castles of late-18th- and early-19th-century Gothic and into the modern streets of growing urban centers, there was a concomitant move toward the manor house as Gothic space. The historical and personal legacies of these buildings, sometimes dating back centuries and various generations (alongside their often- sprawling sizes), made them ideal locations for the staging of Gothic returns. (Aldana Reyes 6)

Gothic's function is constantly questioned to prove its worth in today's utilitarian world. As previously stated, Gothic is heterogenous with its themes and in turn its purpose may be understood through multiple perspectives, be that political criticism, questioning moral or being wary of the future. Gothic is ever-present with its ability to reach many and its cultural impact is therefore undisputed.

2. Crime Fiction in the Contemporary Time

The definition of crime fiction is, according to Heather Worthington, complex and difficult:

> what constitutes crime fiction is equally difficult to define. I have suggested that the popular concept of crime fiction is a narrative that features a crime, a criminal, a victim and a detective. But this is not necessarily always the case. There are stories about crime that feature no detective; there are detective stories that feature no crime as such; there are even tales that focus on the elucidation of a mystery where there is no crime, no detective and no victim, or where the position of the characters as criminal, detective or victim changes according to the play of the narrative and the demands of the plot, as in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Purloined Letter" (1845). (13)

Worthington then narrows the field of what is now considered crime fiction:

> Crime fiction, or criminography, here will, then, refer to all literary material, fiction or fact, that has crime, or the appearances of crime, at its centre and as its *raison d'être*. Such a definition permits me to reject the biblical stories or the classics or folk and fairy tales or indeed the works of Chaucer and the plays of Shakespeare, where the crime is of secondary interest, and to concentrate on narratives that concern themselves with crime in the modern sense. (13)

Crime fiction as a genre started its rapid development and evolution alongside the Industrial Revolution. The corelation may be found in the growth of cities and general urbanisation that marked the Industrial Revolution. Crime grew rapidly as more people moved to the city. In the city, nearly every individual was a stranger, which made crimes less noticeable unlike in rural communities where everyone knew each other, and crime was more easily noticeable (Worthington 30-31). Crime fiction developed from real-life events and texts about criminals and their crimes, gradually morphing into and transitioning to fiction. The format of the texts changed as well, growing in length from broadsides and short stories to novels (Worthington 123). Early crime fiction relied heavily on social critique and commentary:

> William Godwin drew on precisely this kind of criminographic material in his 1793 novel *Caleb Williams, or; Things as They Are*, a narrative which used crime and the law in a philosophical critique of the contemporary social and political systems. This text has been discussed as an early example of detective fiction and as a crime novel,

> but its function as social commentary is clear evidence of how crime and criminality articulate the values of the society by which they are produced. (Worthington 14)

The nineteenth century developed two new streams of crime fiction, which shifted focus from the crime and the criminal to the detective. The amateur detective and the private investigator characters present in the new stories developed alongside each other and peaked in popularity in the first half of the twentieth century. With the development and advancement of criminology, crime fiction transformed as well. The authors were inspired by the procedures of the then new police forces and detective departments. These police procedurals were seen as more realistic and reflecting current society's complex issues. Contemporary crime fiction is rather diverse and can include protagonists that rise through the ranks and almost accidentally become investigators, female protagonists as private investigators, private investigators who expose the corruption of different organizations, the explorations of the social background of a criminal's behaviour and the difference in treatment depending on one's gender and/or race as well as the discussion of social issues present in the real world (Bertens and D'haen 1-6). It is interesting to note that

> given the 1990s climate of political correctness, racism, ethnicity, and gender feature prominently on the agenda of much present day crime writing. However, outspoken critique largely remains the province of ethnic and female detective writing. The mainstream white male detective – both the private investigator and the police detective – has largely moved into the realm of the personal and psychological . . . or of the grotesque and the horrible. . . . This is not to say that the latter works do not reflect on society. It is rather that in these novels that social dimension is to be inferred from the situations, actions, and characters they present us with. (Bertens and D'haen 5)

Due to the globalization and the ever-growing connectivity of the world, crime fiction has adapted and changed as well. The plot's locations have changed from the dominant Anglo-American and French cities (New York, London, Los Angeles, Paris) to almost everywhere around the world (Japan, Scandinavia, South America, etc.), making crime fiction a global genre (Pepper and Schmid 1-2). Contemporary crime fiction is thus

> exceptionally multi-faceted, ranging from traditional detective-focused narratives, experimental fiction, short stories, crime-centered texts, police procedurals depicting the crime-solving work of police detectives in their teams, domestic noir,

psychological crime, and historical crime fiction, to environmental crime writing and crime fiction focusing on LGBTQ+ and social justice perspectives. (Beyer 1)

3. Stephen King's *The Shining*

The Shining, published in 1977, is one of the most important works in King's opus and his first bestseller. As Magistrale states,

> [n]early everything Stephen King has published since then—from short story collections and other novels to manuals on writing and books about baseball—have found their way to the best-seller list. They have all helped to make Stephen King America's Storyteller, one of the most recognizable living authors in the American canon. (91)

King first found the inspiration for *The Shining* in Ray Bradbury's short story "The Veldt," a story of a family, set in a futuristic setting, whose house serves as a housekeeper, maintaining everything for the family including the production of the family's dreams in a kind of virtual reality. The concept of one's dreams coming true was what started *The Shining*. Stephen King's visit to the Stanley Hotel in Colorado would influence the story's trajectory toward the well-known story of today. King had a nightmare of his son being chased by a fire hose, a well-known scene in the novel, and after waking form the nightmare the novel's plot was clear to him (Hafdahl and Florence 18-19).

In *The Shining,* Jack Torrance, an aspiring author, and an alcoholic in the process of recovery, packs his bags and, with his wife Wendy and their gifted son Danny, travels to one of Colorado's famous hotels, the Overlook Hotel, to work as a winter caretaker of the hotel, hoping to find there peace and quiet to finish his play. As the hotel is closing down for the season and Jack is being given a grand tour by the hotel's manager, Danny meets the hotel chef, Mr Halloran, with whom he has an interesting conversation about a psychic ability called "The Shining," and who warns Danny about the hotel's off-limits Room 237. After some time passes and the snow shuts the Torrances in, Jack starts losing his mind enclosed in the gargantuan hotel full of uncanny occurrences and horrifying visions, at which point Wendy and Danny are convinced that Jack might start doing some bad things.

When observing *The Shining* as a contemporary horror novel, the readers can note that King uses the most common Gothic elements, such as the isolated haunted house, dark secrets, darkening of the mind, and tragic ending. King's main characters are at first presented as typical family members but as the novel progresses King reminds the readers that evil can occur even in the most loving family. Furthermore, as the plot reaches its climax, the reader gets to

understand that the true terror arises from one's mind rather than any haunted location. According to Strengell, "despite a number of supernatural ghosts in *The Shining*, the real ones of the characters' personal past have the strongest effect on the reader. Again the horror in King does not ultimately derive from the supernatural monsters but from the reader's realization that he himself could be Jack" (98).

3.1. Isolation in Stephen King's *The Shining*

Isolation is one of the key elements in *The Shining* because it sets the plot in motion and forces the characters in the hotel to stay there over the winter months without any connection to the outside world, be it physical or by radio. According to Passey, the isolation in King's novel is so prominent because it relies on the Gothic sensation of estrangement within the (partially) familiar surroundings: "Stephen King's bestselling novel *The Shining* draws explicitly on the gothic anxieties of tourism. It centres specifically on the uncanniness of the hotel as structure—as home that it is not a home (*unheimlich*), a transient space, seemingly unfixed, and made liminal by its very function" (56).

At the beginning of the novel, the hotel's location, and the possibility of getting isolated, are brought up when the hotel's manager, Mr Ullman, mentions the previous hotel caretaker Grady, stating that he may have developed a condition called cabin fever:

> It's a slang term for the claustrophobic reaction that can occur when people are shut in together over long periods of time. The feeling of claustrophobia is externalized as dislike for the people you happen to be shut in with. In extreme cases it can result in hallucinations and violence—murder has been done over such minor things as a burned meal or an argument about whose turn it is to do the dishes. (King, *The Shining* 9)

As time passes, Jack's behaviour changes and he starts having angry outbursts more frequently, growing annoyed of his son and wife. Gradually, the hotel starts affecting Jack's behaviour and implementing deranged ideas into his mind. Its uncanny appearance and magnitude produce the feelings of isolation and uncanny. If one is to see the Overlook Hotel as a haunted house, its mountainous location contributes to this notion. When observing the setting of Gothic novels, Hume indicates the following:

> [t]he key characteristic of the Gothic novel is not its devices, but its atmosphere. The atmosphere is one of evil and brooding terror; the imaginary world in which the action

> takes place is the author's objectification of his imaginative sense of the atmosphere. In other words, the setting exists to convey the atmosphere. (286)

Secluded from civilisation and isolated during the winter months, the Overlook Hotel is a perfect place for isolating its targets. When observing the syntagma "Overlook," the reader can note that King implies that the term refers to either something isolated from everyone, or something negligent, such as domestic violence. It should be emphasized that anything troubling, such as gang wars, suicide, and others, can happen there, because it has the tendency to be "overlooked" by the rest of the world. As King states in *Danse Macabre*, "*The Shining* is set in the apotheosis of the Bad Place: not a haunted house but a haunted hotel, with a different 'real' horror movie playing in almost every one of its guest room and suites" (246-47). By placing an already unstable and problematic family in such a setting, the situation they are in worsens and the relationships within the family crumble.

Heavy snowfall and winds make the road to Sidewinder inaccessible and Jack Torrance, whose mind is at that point growing weak and susceptible to the hotel's influences, destroys the snowmobile and the radio, the only means of communication with the outside world. In *Danse Macabre*, King asserts that "the characters are snowbound and isolated in an old hotel miles from any help. Their world has shrunk and turned inward; the Overlook Hotel becomes the microcosm where universal forces collide, and the inner weather mimics the outer weather" (260). The family's isolation is not only physical but psychological as well. The isolation prevents the family, mostly Jack, to run away from their past. He is instead constantly reminded of his wrongdoings and is left to fight with the ghosts of his past. Jack's alcohol addiction makes him more susceptible to the hotel's influence, but it also isolates him from his family, not only during the events at the Overlook but in the past as well. Every action he takes is meticulously and carefully observed by Wendy and is seen as an action of an alcoholic even though Jack stopped drinking since the incident when he broke Danny's arm. In the instances where he is weak and susceptible, he is alone with no one to help him resist and snap back to reality.

As time passes, Wendy is more afraid of Jack and his angry outbursts, be they yelling, threatening or actual physical violence. She distances herself from Jack even though there is nowhere to go. Even before coming to the Overlook, Wendy seriously considered moving away from Jack and getting a divorce. Before the snow encloses them in the hotel, she desperately wants to leave with Danny and let Jack finish the job alone, fearing for the wellbeing of her son. As things turn out for the worst, Wendy is the one that willingly stands between Jack and Danny, knowing well that Jack is stronger than her and that she will possibly get hurt or killed

if she does not move away. She is the heroine of the story, doing anything necessary to protect her son. Her growth is noticed by Halloran at the end of the novel:

> She looked older, and some of the laughter had gone out of her face. Now, as she sat reading her book, Hallorann saw a grave sort of beauty there that had been missing on the day he had first met her, some nine months ago. Then she had still been mostly girl. Now she was a woman, a human being who had been dragged around to the dark side of the moon and had come back able to put the pieces back together. (King, *The Shining* 493)

From the first description of the Overlook Hotel, the readers could notice that its geographical location suggests solitude, especially during the winter months: "The Overlook was built in the years 1907 to 1909. The closest town is Sidewinder, forty miles east of here over roads that are closed from sometime in late October or November until sometime in April" (King, *The Shining* 6). Moreover, King intensifies the negative emotions towards the hotel with Danny's visions: "[i]t was the place he had seen in the midst of the blizzard, the dark and booming place where some hideously familiar figure sought him down long corridors carpeted with jungle. The place Tony had warned him against. It was here. It was here. Whatever Redrum was, it was here" (King, *The Shining* 69). As soon as the family arrives at the hotel, Danny experiences the negative sensation that would later be described as isolation:

> Danny didn't know the word isolation, but if someone had explained it to him he would have seized on it. Far below, lying in the sun like a long black snake that had decided to snooze for a while, was the road that led back through Sidewinder Pass and eventually to Boulder. The road that would be closed all winter long. He felt a little suffocated at the thought, and almost jumped when Daddy dropped his hand on his shoulder. (King, *The Shining* 75)

Like Danny's feelings of being trapped, Jack experiences doubtful feelings towards coming to the hotel, especially with the family: "When I had that interview with Ullman, I thought he was just blowing off his bazoo. Now I'm not so sure. Maybe I really shouldn't have tried this with you two along. Forty miles from nowhere" (King, *The Shining* 142). Furthermore, as winter approaches, the Torrance family starts comprehending the hotel's magnitude in comparison to their smallness:

> Flakes of snow swirled and danced across the porch. The Overlook faced it as it had for near three quarters of a century, its darkened windows now bearded with snow,

> indifferent to the fact that it was now cut off from the world. Or possibly it was pleased with the prospect. Inside its shell the three of them went about their early eventing routine, like microbes trapped in the intestine of a monster. (King, *The Shining* 232)

The motif of isolation in *The Shining* can be observed from two different points of view. At first, the reader may observe Jack's isolation from himself. In a sense, being in the hotel provokes Jack's trauma and resurfaces his bad relationship with his father. In the process, Jack gets gradually relinquished from his positive traits and finally deprived of his identity before the final events in the Overlook. In one of his interviews, Stephen King reflects on the source of isolation and trauma in *The Shining*: "People ask if the book is a ghost story or is it just in this guy's mind. Of course it's a ghost story, because Jack Torrance himself is a haunted house. He's haunted by his father. It pops up again, and again, and again" (qtd. in Rogak 75). Isolation further gets more objective and applicable to the entire Torrance family. The physical and psychological isolation from the rest of the world urges the conflict and final decadence of the family as "[t]he hotel caught Daddy" (King, *The Shining* 412). All in all, Jack's self-deprivation and isolation make him easily subjected to the hotel and its glorious past. As such, Jack gradually begins feeding on the fragments of a different reality that ultimately becomes his own. In light of this, it can be said that Jack's isolation correlates perfectly with the insanity that it provoked:

> The more Jack enters into the simulacrum of the Overlook rendered through the scrapbook, the more his bond with the place deepens until he eschews critical objectivity. Their protective posturing notwithstanding, Al Shockley and Stuart Ullman have, ironically, nothing to fear from Torrance's interest in writing about their hotel. As a fallen man himself, Jack has as much in common with the Overlook as any of its ghosts or living allies; almost from the moment he begins reading about it, Jack sympathizes poignantly with its moments of decay, and likewise shares vicariously in its triumphs during periods of past grandeur. In short, his exposure to this document creates an affinity for the place. Leonard Mustazza has considered this evolving interface between hotel and caretaker when he concludes, "no matter how much we sympathize with Jack, we must part company with him when he begins to be drawn towards the colorful figures of the hotel's past. In other words, King deftly begins the process of distancing us from [Jack] merely by making him admire the people who once occupied this place" (115). (Magistrale 242)

3.2. Insanity in Stephen King's *The Shining*

Insanity in King's *The Shining* arises as a consequence of Jack's trauma and general isolation from the rest of the world. As such, insanity in the novel can be observed as either a consequence of the aforementioned factors or a side effect of paranormal happenings at the hotel. Throughout the novel, the reader can observe how insanity gradually takes over Jack and shapes his future actions. However, since *The Shining* can be observed as "the ultimate ghost story set in the ultimate haunted house" (Magistrale 92), the readers tend to even involuntarily search for potential horror and Gothic elements in the story. Despite this, in *The Shining*, King roots the terror in the human mind and soul rather than any supernatural encounter:

> We expect the novel to deal with horror, and we look for points which will take us into the genre. King moves immediately into the minds of the characters and lets us read their thoughts. The conflicting views he presents of Jack leave us wondering what to think of this man. We hear the same things he does about the hotel and follow his reactions. We tend to agree with him that the hotel's past history should not prevent the manager from giving him the job. We know that the previous caretaker killed himself and his wife and children, but this first horror seems to be part of the natural rather than the supernatural world. (Russel 47)

From the beginning of the novel, the readers are introduced to Jack's quick temper that cost him his job: "You were teaching English in a Vermont prep school. You lost your temper, I don't believe I need to be any more specific than that" (King, *The Shining* 8). Nevertheless, the beginning of the novel suggests Jack's desire to recover and form a healthy domestic environment for his family:

> They were walking up to the door and Mommy had come down to the porch to meet them and he stood on the second step and watched them kiss. They were glad to see each other. Love came out of them the way love had come out of the boy and the girl walking up the street and holding hands. Danny was glad. . . . Everything was all right. Daddy was home. Mommy was loving him. There were no bad things. (King, *The Shining* 37)

Jack's path to insanity cannot be directly dissected because it is composed of smaller incidents that merely hint the true state of his psyche. For example, one of the earliest signs is Jack's urgent need to have a drink or him producing the same gestures that he did under the

influence: “He took his handkerchief from his back pocket and wiped his mouth with it. Wendy had a moment of that sickening time-is-running-backward feeling again. It was a gesture she remembered well from his drinking days” (King, *The Shining* 138). As the plot progresses, Jack’s drive for alcohol becomes intolerable and makes him imagine scenarios inside his head:

> “Hi, Lloyd,” he said. “A little slow tonight, isn’t it?” Lloyd said it was. Lloyd asked him what it would be. “Now I’m really glad you asked me that,” Jack said, “really glad. Because I happen to have two twenties and two tens in my wallet and I was afraid they’d be sitting right there until sometime next April.” . . . “So here’s what,” Jack said. “You set me up an even twenty martinis. An even twenty, just like that, kazang. One for every month I’ve been on the wagon and one to grow on. You can do that, can’t you? You aren’t too busy?” Lloyd said he wasn’t busy at all. (King, *The Shining* 261)

Furthermore, on several occasions, the hotel projects the voice of Jack’s father who instructs him [Jack] to kill his family. Here, the source of terror shifts to Jack’s childhood in which he never fully impressed his father or received love from him. As such, the hotel recognizes Jack’s insecurities and provokes his madness:

> —kill him. You have to kill him, Jacky, and her, too. Because a real artist must suffer. Because each man kills the thing he loves. Because they’ll always be conspiring against you, trying to hold you back and drag you down. Right this minute that boy of yours is in where he shouldn’t be. Trespassing. That’s what he’s doing. He’s a goddam little pup. Cane him for it, Jacky, cane him within an inch of his life. Have a drink, Jacky my boy, and we’ll play the elevator game. Then I’ll go with you while you give him his medicine. I know you can do it, of course you can. You must kill him. You have to kill him, Jacky, and her, too. Because a real artist must suffer. Because each man—. (King, *The Shining* 250)

It can be said that the hotel feeds on Jack’s darkest fantasies until it finally over-dominates his reason with madness. According to Hornback, “the Overlook Hotel is haunted by powerful ghosts, which only Danny is able to see. Jack, the family patriarch, is gradually possessed by the evil spirits in the hotel and eventually tries to kill his family” (692). Furthermore, there are some brief episodes in which Jack manages to differentiate the boundaries between real and fantasy, lucidness, and insanity. In those instances, Jack understands that he is losing his mind to the hotel’s influence: “(cracking up not playing with a

full deck lostya marbles guy just went loony tunes he went up and over the high side went bananas lost his football crackers nuts half a seabag) all meaning the same thing: *losing your mind*" (King, *The Shining* 279). As the plot progresses, Jack's understanding that he is losing his mind provokes inexplicable aggression that will culminate in the climax of the story. In one of the final sessions with Lloyd, the sudden rush of reality hits Jack:

> He stopped. Lloyd was gone. Worse still, he had never been here. The drinks had never been there. . . . All the booths were empty. The sound of laughter had died like a stir of autumn leaves. Jack stared at the empty lounge for a tick of time, his eyes wide and dark. A pulse beat noticeably in the centre of his forehead. In the very centre of him a cold certainty was forming and the certainty was that he was losing his mind. (King, *The Shining* 264)

The hotel eventually overpowers Jack and makes him its marionette. According to González Ferrín, Jack eventually comprehends the hotel's intentions concerning his family, yet he is willing to carry out the hotel's idea no matter the consequences (22):

> The thought rose up from nowhere, naked and unadorned. The urge to tumble her out of bed, naked, bewildered, just beginning to wake up; to pounce on her, seize her neck like the green limb of a young aspen and to throttle her, thumbs on windpipe, fingers pressing against the top of her spine, jerking her head up and ramming it back down against the floor boards, again and again, whamming, whacking, smashing, crashing. Jitter and jive, baby. Shake, rattle, and roll. He would make her take her medicine. Every drop. Every last bitter drop. (King, *The Shining* 295)

As the passage indicates, the hotel's ultimate aim is to deprive its caretaker of anything humane, such as family, social contact, and real world, and trap him inside its walls for eternity: "Damn you both. I know what you want. But you're not going to get it. This hotel . . . it's mine. It's me they want. Me! Me!" (King, *The Shining* 416). Correspondingly, Jack starts identifying himself with the former caretaker and finally understands that he killed his family because they were an unnecessary distraction that created rupture in the fantasy that the hotel presented to him:

> "I believe you must take it up further with your son, Mr. Torrance, sir. He understands everything, although he hasn't enlightened you. Rather naughty of him, if I may be so bold, sir. In fact, he's crossed you at almost every turn, hasn't he? And him not yet six." "Yes," Jack said. "He has." . . . "He needs to be corrected, if you don't mind me saying so. . . . My own girls, sir, didn't care for the Overlook at first. One of them

> actually stole a pack of my matches and tried to burn it down. I corrected them. I corrected them most harshly. And when my wife tried to stop me from doing my duty, I corrected her." He offered Jack a bland, meaningless smile. "I find it a sad but true fact that women rarely understand a father's responsibility to his children. Husbands and fathers do have certain responsibilities, don't they, sir?" "Yes," Jack said. "They didn't love the Overlook as I did," Grady said, beginning to make him another drink. . . . "Just as your son and wife don't love it . . . not at present, anyway. But they will come to love it. You must show them the error of their ways, Mr. Torrance. Do you agree?" "Yes. I do." (King, *The Shining* 387-88)

Yet, in the rare and ultimate moments of reality, Jack saves his son from himself: "'Doc,' Jack Torrance said. 'Run away. Quick. And remember how much I love you.' 'No,' Danny said. 'Oh Danny, for God's sake –' 'No,' Danny said. He took one of his father's bloody hands and kissed it. 'It's almost over'" (King, *The Shining* 476). Ultimately, it can be said that Jack's insanity is a product of isolation and trauma from the past. Jack, who was determined to be different from his father, becomes his mere image. It should, however, be noted that the supernatural in the Overlook plays a crucial role in Jack's tragic fate:

> It should work. No reason why not. No reason at all except that it was part of the Overlook and the Overlook really didn't want them out of here. Not at all. The Overlook was having one hell of a good time. There was a little boy to terrorize, a man and his woman to set one against each other, and if it played its cards right they could end up flitting through the Overlook's halls like insubstantial shades in a Shirley Jackson novel, whatever walked in Hill House walked alone, but you wouldn't be alone in the Overlook, oh no, there would be plenty of company here. (King, *The Shining* 308-09)

4. Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*

Shutter Island by Dennis Lehane is a novel published in 2003. In an interview for *Powells.com*, Lehane talks about the idea behind *Shutter Island*:

> So I said with *Shutter Island* that I would write a book that was an homage to gothic, but also an homage to B movies and pulp, and that the levels that it worked on would not be readily apparent; the subtext would not be readily apparent. The book works on a straight plane of pure entertainment. If you want to go back and see what other planes it works on, great. If you don't, that's fine. That was the plan. And when I finished it, I thought I'd done it. I had a hybrid of *The Bronte Sisters* and Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* in mind. (qtd. in Weich)

Set on an island, the novel begins with a ship approaching a dock, carrying two U. S. marshals, Teddy Daniels, the protagonist of the story, and his partner Chuck Aule, who have been sent to investigate the mysterious disappearance of a female patient by the name of Rachel Solando. Rachel is a patient of the Ashecliffe Hospital, a hospital for the criminally insane located on the island, who was charged with the murders of her three children. Despite of being locked up in a cell, and under constant supervision, Rachel somehow managed to escape and is located somewhere on the inhospitable island. In Rachel's room, the marshals find a code, which Teddy deciphers, that points to the hospital's 67th patient even though the hospital records mention only 66 patients. After some time passes, Teddy reveals that he specifically took the case because he heard that another patient named Andrew Laeddis might be an inmate in the Ashecliffe Hospital. Laeddis is an arsonist that set fire to the building Teddy and his late wife Dolores lived in. As Teddy conducts the investigation, he starts to question the truthfulness of the hospital's staff and starts to think that there are certain things happening behind closed doors. His investigation will cease when he discovers what is happening on the island and the fate of Andrew Laeddis. In the plot's climax, Teddy discovers that he is Andrew Laeddis, the 67th patient of Ashecliffe, who murdered his wife Rachel Laeddis after she drowned their three children, and that his fake investigation was a desperate attempt to bring his sanity back. Faced with a choice, to accept his past or continue to live his fabricated life of a marshal, he struggles to accept his identity. Ultimately, the open ending of the novel allows the readers to decide about the truthfulness of the described events.

The exploration of the human mind and its ability to adapt and form its own narratives after traumatic events is the focus of the whole novel. At the same time, the patients' isolation as well as the location of the island and its hospital contribute to the overall vulnerable status of the protagonist's mind, which will serve as the main element in the exploration of Lehane's novel.

4.1. Isolation in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*

Isolation in Lehane's novel stems from the fact that its setting, Ashecliffe Hospital, is set on an unpopulated island with the hospital complex being the only sign of civilisation: "Ashecliffe Hospital set on the central plain of the island's northwestern side. Sat benignly, I might add. . . . From the sea, it didn't look like much. . . . A scrub plain in the middle of the outer harbor. Barely an island, you'd think, so much as the idea of one" (Lehane 8). Additionally, the only way off the island is by boat, which is inspected and protected by guards. The maximum level of security on the island further contributes to the negative connotations attached to the hospital and suggests its seclusion from the rest of the world: "AN HOUR LATER, on the other side of the island, they met the fence line. Beyond it lay the old fort and the lighthouse, and Teddy could see that the lighthouse had its own fence, penning it in, two guards at the gate, rifles held to their chests" (Lehane 53). Having set the story in an isolated asylum, the author "allow[s] the reader to enter the asylum and aim[s] the novel towards the question, who is really insane here?" (Kremmel 456)

Before the actual beginning of the novel, the author presents the readers with a prologue in which the fictive author, Dr. Lester Sheehan, gives his reasoning for writing the story. Lehane's prologue can be crucial for the understanding of the story as it is written from the first-person point of view and thus implements the degree of subjectivity and importance to the story. Due to the author's [Sheehan's] compelling urge to write the story down before it fades away from his memory, the reader comprehends its importance and becomes more invested in it. The first-person point of view in the crime narratives

> put the reader or viewer, as the case may be, into the mind of the protagonist. In that way the viewer/reader could experience in a more intimate way the angst of the character. More importantly, it compelled the viewer/ reader to identify at least partly with the narrator, regardless of whether that narrator was deeply flawed, capable of

> felonious behaviour or even psychopathic rage, as in so many of both classic period and post-noir crime films. (Silver and Ursini 71)

Even though Lehane opts for the third-person narration for his further chapters, the readers get the feeling that the narrator is someone who has experienced the action first hand. With the intention of creating the story of isolation, Lehane's fictive author also experiences isolation. Firstly, his beloved wife is battling a disease: "Soon I will lose her too. A matter of months, Dr. Axelrod told us yesterday" (Lehane 7), and secondly, Sheehan is also subjected to estrangement and isolation from his own identity: "Lester, he added, you're not looking well yourself. I suppose, I'm not. I misplace things far too often these days . . . I enter stores and forget what I've come for, leave the theatre with no recollection of what I've just seen" (Lehane 7).

Furthermore, the experiments conducted at the psychiatry unit suggest that the complex is well-hidden from the rest of the world and depends entirely on the subjectiveness and consciousness of its medical staff: "'The old school,' Cawley said, 'believes in shock therapy, partial lobotomies, spa treatments for the most docile patients. Psychosurgery is what we call it. The new school is enamoured of psychosurgery" (Lehane 90). Moreover, Teddy's initial isolation stems from his war experience. During that time, he was involved in numerous killings and violent scenes from which he bears scars that constantly remind him of his trauma. According to Rahmi and Arianto, "[t]he dark past events can make people experience psychological disorders caused by deep trauma. Trauma usually will appear when people hav[e] certain emotional injuries. Such as the deep [trauma] related with world of war, rape, murder and etc" (225). In light of this, it should be emphasized that Teddy's trauma secludes him from his surroundings since they are not able to understand it. As such, he experiences posttraumatic symptoms that are embedded in his psyche and have caused envy towards those who did not experience war: "Christ, how Teddy envied Chuck. His ability to believe in the words he spoke. In silly flirtations . . . But most importantly of all for the weightlessness of his charm. Charm had never come easily to Teddy. After the war, it had come harder still. After Dolores, not at all" (Lehane 125). With this in mind, the reader can notice that isolation in *Shutter Island* does not come entirely from the geographical position of the institution but rather from the personal past traumatic experiences: "Teddy could still hear the noise that had come over the radio. Screams, static, crying, static, machine gun fire followed by more screams and more crying and more static" (Lehane 132).

In addition, the idea of seclusion is emphasized in Teddy's discussion with the "real" Rachel Solando. She informs him that the asylum is a closed complex that no one ever leaves. During this passage, the readers can note that Rachel hints that the asylum does illegal things that are known to the outside world but are quietly approved, since the inhabitants of the premise are the mentally ill:

> "The Nazis used Jews. The Soviets used prisoners in their own gulags. Here, in America, we tested patients on Shutter Island." Teddy said nothing. No words occurred to him. She looked back at the fire. "They can't let you leave. You know that, don't you?" "I'm a federal marshal," Teddy said. "How are they going to stop me?" That elicited a gleeful grin and a clap of her hands. "I was an esteemed psychiatrist from a respected family. I thought that would be enough. I hate to inform you, but it wasn't." (Lehane 243-44)

After the conversation with Rachel and her final words that everyone knows about what is happening at the hospital, Teddy begins experiencing physical isolation and mistrust to everyone, including his partner: "'You will never get off here. You're one of us now.' . . . 'I had a friend. He was with me tonight and we got separated. Have you seen him?' She gave him the same sad smile. 'Marshal,' she said, 'you have no friends'" (Lehane 248). When observing the entire conversation in retrospective and Rachel's urge to name Teddy "a patient," the reader can notice that Rachel actually tries to paradoxically explain the truth about Teddy's state. Ultimately, Teddy's reality gets shattered when Cawley informs him that he came to the island alone. "'My partner,' Teddy said. 'Chuck'. Cawley came off the wall, the cigarette dangling from his fingers. 'You don't have a partner, Marshal. You came here alone'" (Lehane 260). Teddy's posttraumatic experience, however, makes him blame himself for losing Chuck, even though he was purely a part of his twisted imagination:

> He stood in the leaves and looked back at Ashecliffe. He'd come here for the truth, and didn't find it. He'd come for Laeddis, and didn't find him either. Along the way, he'd lost Chuck. He'd have time to regret all that back in Boston. Time to feel guilt and shame then. Time to consider his options and consult with Senator Hurly and come up with a plan of attack. He'd come back. Fast. There couldn't be any question of that. (Lehane 269)

Ultimately, the readers should pay attention to Teddy's dreams about his late wife Dolores. With the vivid description of Teddy's dreams, Lehane connects both the crime fiction

and Gothic fiction elements in his novel. In the manner of crime fiction, Teddy's dreams help the readers understand the facts about the places, relationships, and events; in the manner of Gothic fiction, dreams help establish the connection between the past trauma and the present events. The use of dreams in Gothic fiction introduces the notion of

> [r]epression [that] has always been a fundamental part of the Gothic; traditionally this theme manifested itself in the revealing of a secret that the villain had long tried to keep buried. This "haunting return of past transgressions" would more often than not take the form of evocative dreams, ghosts or apparitions or the discovery of a letter or diary that ultimately brought about exposure, but in more contemporary Gothic repression is much more to do with unresolved personal trauma. Characters who experience excessive "disruption of domestic history" often suffer deep "psychological complications" that "continually interrupt [their] perception of the world." Consequently "the protagonist of the contemporary Gothic often experiences history as mixed up, reversed, and caught up in a simultaneity of past-present-future." (MacArthur 295)

Since the beginning of the novel, Teddy's dreams have been the nostalgic reminders of his "perfect" life with Dolores. The readers can, however, disagree and suggest that the dreams are an indication of Teddy's insanity. Still, they are considered relevant for the story as they fragmentally reveal the truth about Teddy and Dolores:

> Dolores had been dead for two years, but she came to life at night in his dreams, and he sometimes went full minutes into a new morning thinking she was out in the kitchen or taking her coffee on the front stoop of their apartment on Buttonwood. This was a cruel trick of the mind, yes, but Teddy had long ago accepted the logic of it—waking, after all, was an almost natal state. You surfaced without a history, then spent the blinks and yawns reassembling your past, shuffling the shards into chronological order before fortifying yourself for the present. (Lehane 21)

In conclusion, Teddy's isolation should be observed as physical and psychological. In physical terms, Teddy's isolation stems from the geographical position of the island, the inability to "reach" the real world and retell the horrific truth he witnesses. On the other hand, Teddy's psychological isolation represents his complete estrangement from his identity and selective memory of the past.

4.2. Insanity in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*

Teddy's insanity develops gradually with his isolation on the island. As Iwen suggests, "Lehane spends much of the novel emphasising the isolation and melancholic mood of the island, reflecting his stated intent of blending the evocative Gothic writing of the Brönte sisters with the pulpy noir of the film *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*" (67). Together with isolation and insanity, the boundaries between reality and fiction expressed through the detective story plot pattern equally impact the main protagonist as well as the readers of the novel:

> Describing "the plot of a detective novel" as "an argument conducted under the guise of fiction," Freeman regards the fictional elements in such works ("humour, picturesque setting, vivid characterization and even emotional episodes") as mere sleight of hand that has the same purpose as the crime itself – namely, to distract the reader from the evidence needed to solve the case. The "climax" of the detective story is not the solution itself but the investigator's retrospective explanation or "rigid demonstration" of the reasoning process that led him to the solution. The reader's sudden recognition . . . of the significance of a number of hitherto uncomprehended facts" produces the story's "artistic effect." (Haycraft qtd. in Black 81)

Even though Teddy cannot be classified as a typical detective, his guidance is necessary for the reader's understanding of the story. In the cathartic ending, the "detective" and the readers learn the truth about Teddy's state of mind and retrospectively consider all the clues presented from the beginning of the story.

In *Shutter Island*, insanity arises as a product of Teddy's dark history and trauma: "throughout his physical journey on the island, Daniels suffers from increasingly graphic dreams and hallucinations, both accompanied by migraine headaches, illuminating a familiar psychological question: can one truly tell a dream from reality?" (Iwen 67). Similarly, the readers witness Teddy (de)constructing his identity, which can be traced back to his troubling past that left him with severe trauma and desire to create a strong defence mechanism. In Teddy's case, the defence mechanism is a replication of an existing persona with altered past. Trauma can affect the human mind in such a way that one loses his/her identity and becomes completely different, unable to distinguish imagination from reality, ultimately becoming mentally ill (Cubukcu qtd. in Rahmi and Arianto 226). As such, it has allowed Teddy to create a narrative that has made him the victim and the hero, who arises from the tragicality of his life. The impact of past trauma on human psyche thus results in creation of

> a defense mechanism to accept the real life and remember all the dark memories that may naturally go away. For some . . . cases in reality, human[s] cannot accept too much pain in their li[f]e so that can make them . . . broken and this condition continue[s] to be a big problem in human psychology. (Rahmi and Arianto 226)

It should be noted that the detailed understanding of Teddy's psyche is impossible, unless observed from the retrospective. As Teddy slips away from the world of reality into the imaginary world of madness and disturbed perception, he gradually starts alienating himself from his original self. It can even be said that for Teddy the imaginary world has more purpose than reality, because in the imaginary world he can avoid his past errors or attach them to someone else, such as Andrew Laeddis:

> The psychotic fictitious world he has webbed around himself afforded him reason enough to allow his sense of reality to ebb away and to hold steadfastly with his own reality that involves him being still a US marshal sent to a high security facility to untangle the mystery of a Rachel Solando's escape whose concoction of an intricate conspiracy theory to Teddy is yet another instance of his psychotic notions. . . . Any new thought content that impinges on and clashes with the neat class of his psychotic thoughts is booed off the stage of his mind upon which his entire psychosis is built. Reality to him is as abhorrently odd as psychosis is to the sane. Under no circumstances could he think of a world where he not only had lost his wife, whom he adored, depended on and would wither away without, but his children, his career and a chance to love them as he used to, hence conjuring up all the above-mentioned. (Sabouri and Sadeghzadegan 380)

Furthermore, the role of hallucinations and delusions in Lehane's work should be emphasized. Hallucinations are rooted in the false perception of reality. According to James Sadock and Alcott Sadock, "hallucinations are often experienced as being private [and] can affect any sensory system. When perception is altered, combinations of illusions, hallucinations, and often delusions as well, are frequently experienced together" (qtd. in Sabouri and Sadeghzadegan 381). Besides Teddy's hallucinations about his own identity, the other most noticeable hallucinations concern Rachel Solando and Teddy's late wife Dolores. The readers can notice that Rachel's history perfectly replicates Teddy's trauma. To exemplify, both Rachel Solando and Dolores have murdered their children: "The patient Rachel Solando had killed her children in much the same way your wife killed yours" (Lehane 308). In other

words, the hallucination and projection of the trauma on Rachel Solando can be observed as Teddy's attempt to attribute his past onto someone else and try to objectively understand it. Ultimately, the readers can see Dolores as one of the main triggers of Teddy's madness as Dolores was prone to arson and self-harm: "'You went there because the doctors suggested it for your wife. You remember? After she accidentally set your previous apartment on fire? Get her out of the city, they said, give her a more bucolic setting. Maybe she'd get better'" (Lehane 300). It can be said that Teddy creates this new and modified version of his family because he feels responsible for ignoring Dolores' suicidal symptoms and mistreatment of their children:

> "She was suicidal. She hurt the children. You refused to see it. You thought she was weak. You told yourself sanity was a choice, and all she had to do was remember her responsibilities. To you. To the children. You drank, and your drinking got worse. You floated into your own shell. You stayed away from home. You ignored all the signs. You ignored what the teachers told you, the parish priest, her own family." "My wife was not insane!" "And why? Because you were embarrassed." "My wife was not—" "The only reason she ever saw a psychiatrist was because she tried to commit suicide and ended up in the hospital. Even you couldn't control that. And they told you she was a danger to herself. They told you—" "We never saw any psychiatrists!" "—she was a danger to the children. You were warned time and time again." (Lehane 301)

Finally, it is suggested that Teddy lost his mind because Dolores murdered their children and he ultimately had to kill her: "After the war, after Dachau, he'd swore he would never kill again unless he had no choice. Unless the other man's gun was already pointed at him. Only then. He couldn't take one more death. He couldn't" (Lehane 326). Finding his dead children and killing Dolores produces a cathartic experience for Teddy: he faced the reality but could not live with the realisation. Just like Dolores, Teddy ultimately opts for a fictive reality in which he has control over the events and persons. Yet, killing Dolores disintegrates his psyche and causes the inversion of emotions:

> She said, "We'll pretend they're with us. We'll give them baths, Andrew." And he placed the gun to her belly and his hand trembled and his lips trembled and he said, "I love you, Dolores." And even then, with his gun to her body, he was sure he couldn't do it. She looked down as if surprised that she was still there, that he was still below her. "I love you, too. I love you so much. I love you like—" And he pulled the trigger. The sound of it came out of her eyes and air popped from her mouth, and she placed

her hand over the hole and looked at him, her other hand gripping his hair. (Lehane 326)

Even though Teddy's inability to reintegrate into functional society is the result of the influence of the past traumatic experiences on the present, the ending of the novel allows open interpretations as it once again blurs the traditional boundaries between the present and the past, reality and fiction: "Teddy said, 'I don't know, Chuck. You think they're onto us?' 'Nah.' Chuck tilted his head back, squinting a bit in the sun, and he smiled at Teddy. 'We're too smart for that.' 'Yeah,' Teddy said. 'We are, aren't we?'" (Lehane 332).

5. The Comparison of the Motifs of Isolation and Insanity in Stephen King's *The Shining* and Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*

Stephen King's *The Shining* and Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island* share the motifs of isolation and insanity. In both works, isolation is depicted in the geographical location of the setting, as well as in the isolation of one's identity. The Overlook hotel and Ashecliffe Hospital present the places of embedded trauma and misery. The Overlook's history is filled with ill-fortune, murders and uncanny, whereas Ashecliffe Hospital has a long history of mentally disturbed patients who committed heinous crimes. In the sequel to *The Shining*, Stephen King retrospectively emphasizes the dominance of the hotel over everyone: "the world was the Overlook Hotel, where the party never ended. Where the dead were alive forever" (King, *Doctor Sleep* 77). Unlike the Overlook Hotel, Ashecliffe Hospital "looked nothing like a hospital for the criminally insane and even less like the military barracks it had been before that" (Lehane 8).

Moreover, isolation is presented in the disintegration of the protagonists' psyche. Firstly, Jack Torrance is a man who has become the replica of his violent and abusive father: "[h]is own father had been the foulest-talking man Jack had ever run on" (King, *The Shining* 83). As the story progresses, Jack becomes unable to fight his nature once the hotel starts playing with his mind. In contrast to Jack, Teddy has been scarred by terrible war experiences that caused his seclusion from the rest of society: "No self-defense, no warfare came into it. It was homicide. . . . How do you tell the wife and the parents and the kids that you've done this thing? You've executed unarmed people? You've killed boys? . . . Answer is—You can't tell 'em. They'll never understand" (Lehane 135).

In addition to the motif of isolation, the novels also offer an insight into the motif of insanity and its impact on the protagonists. The major difference between Jack and Teddy lies in the fact that Jack has gradually been falling into madness, whereas Teddy is mad from the beginning of the novel. In Jack's case, madness is a consequence of the Overlook's impact on his troubled psyche: "It was not just Danny the Overlook was working on. It was working on him, too. It wasn't Danny who was the weak link, it was him. He was the vulnerable one, the one who could be bent and twisted until something snapped" (King, *The Shining* 306). On the other hand, when observed in retrospective, the entire plot of *Shutter Island* is seen as a vain attempt of Teddy's resocialisation and understanding of his monstruous past:

> Teddy sat back. “All these patients, all these people I’ve supposedly known for two years, and none of them said a word to me while I was performing my, um, masquerade the last four days?” Cawley closed the notebook. “They’re used to it. You’ve been flashing that plastic badge for a year now. At first I thought it was a worthy test—give it to you and see how you’d react. But you ran with it in a way I never could have calculated.” (Lehane 314)

All in all, Stephen King’s *The Shining* and Dennis Lehane’s *Shutter Island* show many similarities in the general use of the motifs of isolation and insanity as the dominant plot triggers. However, the approach to the protagonist is different. In King’s work, Jack Torrance is presented as a father troubled with his past but keen on producing a different future for his family, whereas Teddy is a troubled inspector trying to repress his past by creating a false identity for himself. Jack gradually grows mad whereas Teddy is a mad man creating a false narrative. Ultimately, it can be said that both novels reflect on the inability of the mentally troubled protagonist to integrate into a functional society. At the end, the downfall is inevitable for both Jack and Teddy who are overpowered by fictional reality they created.

Conclusion

Isolation and insanity shape and influence the characters' psyche, simultaneously degrading and deteriorating it until the character's persona is completely changed. Isolation secludes the characters in the novels, making them look inwards, which causes conflicts within them that later surface and cause mayhem in the character's surroundings. Insanity is gradually caused by the isolation and deterioration of the character's mind when they are faced with trauma and their hauntings. Both King and Lehane explore the effects and dangers of the given situations albeit from different perspectives. King places the Torrance family in isolation and gradually introduces trauma and hardship until Jack Torrance succumbs to the negative effects of the Hotel's isolation and becomes mad. Alternatively, Lehane places the plot on an isolated island in order to control the interactions of the main character. After the novel's climax, Lehane compels the reader to retrospectively rethink Teddy's actions and mental state, which has already been deteriorated at the beginning of the novel. All in all, both *The Shining* and *Shutter Island* give an insight into the serious effects isolation may have on the human psyche as well as the trauma that destroys and eventually mutilates the characters' minds.

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