



Psychoanalysis of A.J Finn's *the woman in the window*

Rasega Renjeni B

Department of English
PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore

Dr.M. John Suganya

Associate Professor of English
PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore

Abstract:

This paper delves into the application of psychoanalysis of A.J Finn's *the woman in the window*. The protagonist, Anna Fox, grapples with agoraphobia, leading to a distorted perception of reality. This analysis uncovers the subconscious desires and fears that drive Anna's actions. Her world is confined to the four walls of her home, where she battles severe anxiety, depression, and unresolved trauma from her past. As the result of her past trauma and fear, she spends her days observing her neighbours from her home, this relates to issues of identity and disassociation. Her inability to leave her home and connect with the outside world might represent a disconnection from her own identity. This article examines how family dynamics and unresolved conflicts from the past continue to affect their behaviour and relationships with the support of psychoanalysis theory and also portrays how past traumas, secrets, and interpersonal relationships shape one's thoughts and actions.

Keywords: trauma, anxiety disorder, stress and fear, isolation.

Introduction:

Psychological factors like trauma, family dysfunction, stress and fear are the main reasons for one becoming involved in violent crimes, including becoming psycho killers, is a complex and rare phenomenon. Adolescents who have experienced severe trauma or abuse, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, may be more likely to develop violent tendencies as a way to cope with or externalize their pain and anger. In the article, "Communal Expectancy and the Authentic Self of Men and Transgenders - Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw and Birthday by Meredith Russo" the author Suganya et al. explains the psychological effects as, "The stereotypical knots should be untied and everyone under the sky should perceive

that, it is not unmanly for a man to cry. Restricting one's emotions will lead to physical and psychological effects" (Suganya et al. 882).

Daniel Mallory is an American author who writes fiction under the name A.J Finn, who was born on January 28, 1979, New York, United states. He studied English and history at Duke University and completed his master of philosophy in 18th Century English literature at the University of Oxford. The novel *the woman in the window* is his debut novel which published in January 2018, which was a commercial success, debuting on the New York Times Best Seller list and receiving praise for its clever plot twists and psychological tension. The story revolves around Anna Fox, an agoraphobic woman who is confined to her home in New York City. Anna becomes a witness to a disturbing event in her neighbour's house which sets off a chain of mysterious and suspenseful events.

Glimpse of the novel:

Dr. Anna Fox, a former child psychologist who has become agoraphobic because of her past trauma. Anna used to stay in her home always due to her paralyzing fear of the outside world. She spends her days observing her neighbours through her windows. This isolation has a significant impact on her mental state and contributes to her unreliable narration. Her only contact with the outside world is her physical therapist and her tenant, David. Anna becomes particularly obsessed with the new neighbours, the Russell and his son Ethan, who move in across the street. She begins to watch their family dynamics and becomes convinced that she has witnessed a crime through her window in their house. However, her heavy use of prescription drugs and alcohol makes her an unreliable narrator, and her claims are met with scepticism. As Anna delves deeper into her suspicions, she becomes determined to uncover the truth about what she believes she saw in the Russell house, where she suspect Russell for the murder but the real murderer is Ethan is the teenage son of the Russell family, with whom Anna become obsessed with. Ethan initially appears as a mysterious and intriguing character. Ethan's relationships within the Russell family are complex. He is affected by his family dysfunction, which makes him to kill people. The quest for the truth about Ethan puts her in danger and leads to a series of shocking revelation about him. Anna tries to unravel as she grapples with her won mental health challenges.

Psychoanalytical Approach:

Agoraphobia is a type of anxiety disorder, characterized by an intense fear and avoidance of certain situations or places, people often have a fear of experiencing panic attacks or intense anxiety symptoms in certain situations. This disorder often develops as a result of experiencing one or more panic attack, especially in certain situations. Stressful life events, traumatic experiences, or significant life changes can contribute to the development of agoraphobia (web). In this novel the protagonist Anna Fox, suffers from agoraphobia, this condition isolates Anna from the outside world, and the main reason for Anna's anxiety disorder is due to her past trauma were she lost her husband Ed, and daughter, Olivia, this family dynamics and unresolved conflicts from the past continue to affect her which results in agoraphobia.

Isolation and loneliness is another psychological factor, Anna's agoraphobia leads to profound isolation and loneliness. She is cut off from the outside world, and her only connection to it is through her observations of her neighbours. This isolation lead to excess alcohol consumption, and she has limited interactions with her estranged husband, Ed, and their daughter, Olivia, who no longer live with her, the only people she interacts with regularly are her physical therapist and her tenant, David. To combat her isolation and satisfy her need for human connections, Anna observes her neighbours through her windows. This isolation has a significant impact on her mental state and contributes to unreliable narration.

Trauma refers to psychological and emotional response to an event or a series of events that are distressing or harmful. It can have a profound impact on an individual's mental and emotional health. Anna Fox, grapples with profound trauma that affects her mental health and shapes her actions. Her past tragedy has left her emotionally scarred and unable to function in the outside world. Anna uses coping Mechanisms to deal with her trauma, including a heavy reliance on prescription Medication and alcohol. Due to Anna's mental state she struggles with repressed memories related to the traumatic event from her past.

Family dysfunction refers to patterns of behaviour, communication, and interaction within a family that are characterized by conflict, tension, and dysfunction rather than healthy and functional relationships. Anna's own family has experienced significant dysfunction due to her struggle with agoraphobia and the trauma in her past. Her husband, Ed, and daughter, Olivia, no longer live with her because her condition strained their family life. This separation is a source of immense grief and dysfunction within her family unit. The other important character of this novel is Ethan who is son of Russell, who becomes Anna's new neighbours. Like Anna, the Russell family also grapple with family dysfunction which badly affects the mental health of the teenage boy Ethan, who becomes psycho killer and tries to kill Anna. Family dysfunction can have a lasting impact on the mental and emotional health. It may contribute to issues such as depression, anxiety, and difficulty forming healthy relationships outside the family unit. In the article "Gender Performance on the Reinvigoration via Food", the author Suganya et al. describes the psychosocial support for the psychologically affected individuals in life through food as, "The performance of food reinvigorates the lives through food offerings. Food consumption and the offering of comfort food by women shape an optimistic multicultural environment. Love for the culinary arts and committed to the idea that, no matter our cultural differences, we can still be united at the table" (Suganya et al. 890).

Conclusion:

Trauma, isolation, mental health plays a vital role in shaping ones character and actions. The impact of family dysfunction on mental health, not only within Anna's own family but also within her new neighbours. It is important to note that the effects of trauma, isolation, and family dysfunction can vary widely among individuals. Not everyone who experiences these challenges will respond in the same way, and many people demonstrate resilience and seek help to overcome the negative impacts on their actions

and mental health. It is important to take care of their family members and especially children and teenagers to avoid mental health disorders like agoraphobia, and mental health.

Reference:

Finn, A.J. *the woman in the window*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2018, India.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._J._Finn

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15769-agoraphobia>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jan/30/thriller-reviews-woman-in-the-window-child-finder-the-feed>

Suganya, M.John & Boopalan, Priyanga & .V, Harish Sachin. (2023). Gender Performance on the Reinvigoration via Food Section A-Research paper Eur. European Chemical Bulletin. 12. 883-891. 10.31838/ecb/2023.12.s1.095.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372140450_Gender_Performance_on_the_Reinvigoration_via_Food_Section_A-Research_paper_Eur.

<https://www.eurchembull.com/uploads/paper/b9181a968de998b7727c25b6af5d20f2.pdf>.

Suganya, M.John & S., Jeevitha & Grashya, L.. (2023). Communal Expectancy and the Authentic Self of Men and Transgenders - Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw and Birthday by Meredith Russo. European Chemical Bulletin. 12. 878-882. 10.31838/ecb/2023.12.s1.094.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372140477_Communal_Expectancy_and_the_Authentic_Self_of_Men_and_Transgenders_-_Arms_and_the_Man_by_George_Bernard_Shaw_and_Birthday_by_Meredith_Russo.

<https://www.eurchembull.com/uploads/paper/72c7b104b7b5ddc1f8fe0b8cbb0f69a8.pdf>.