

The Psychoanalytic Theme in Margaret Atwood's Fiction: A Response to Burkhard Niederhoff^{*1}

FIONA TOLAN

I

In Margaret Atwood's 2003 dystopian novel, *Oryx and Crake*, the protagonist and narrator Jimmy—later known as Snowman—persistently presses the beautiful and enigmatic Oryx for details of her exotically traumatic past; “Tell me just one thing” (114), he pleads. Born into geographically un-located third world poverty and sold into child slavery—working first as a beggar, then filmed for paedophilic pornography—before entering North America as a state-sanctioned sex worker, Oryx's history is a litany of degradation and abuses. For Jimmy, this necessarily equates to trauma; Oryx has suffered, in Ian Hacking's term, a “spiritual lesion, a wound to the soul” (Hacking 4).² Faced with her determined refusal to recover and examine further memories of her exploited childhood, Jimmy reads Oryx's reluctance as an admission of unacknowledged horror and shame; “He thought he understood her vagueness, her evasiveness. ‘It's alright,’ he told her, stroking her hair. ‘None of it was your fault’”; but Oryx deflects his sympathy with the maddeningly ingenuous response: “None of what, Jimmy?” (114). Oryx refuses Jimmy's invitation to speak her trauma, to enact “a recovery of lost memories of pain” (Hacking 3), and thereby achieve self-knowledge and self-acceptance. Discussing the novel's interrogation of Crake's “purportedly therapeutic scientific

^{*}Reference: Burkhard Niederhoff, “The Return of the Dead in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and *Alias Grace*,” *Connotations* 16.1-3 (2006/2007): 60-91.

For the original article as well as all contributions to this debate, please check the *Connotations* website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debniederhoff01613.htm>>.

project" (Dunning 87), Stephen Dunning suggests that, through her silence, Oryx "both secures herself against penetrating intellectual curiosity and becomes the site of perpetual mystery" (96). Despite her silent resistance, however, Jimmy simply amalgamates her reticence within a psychoanalytic narrative of repression and denial: "Where was her rage," he ponders; "how far down was it buried, what did he have to do to dig it up?" (142).

In his insistence that Oryx should react 'appropriately'—with anger, hatred and distress—to her childhood trauma, and in his assumption that talking about the past will bring her greater clarity (and that such insight would be *ipso facto* beneficial), Jimmy casts himself in the role of psychoanalyst and saviour. He invites Oryx to enter into the "talking cure" (Freud, "Psychoanalysis" 184)—to undergo what Sigmund Freud once referred to as a "cleansing of the soul" ("Psychoanalysis" 184)—and be healed. In his pursuit of her unconscious self, vague recollections become dreamlike "memory symbols" ("Psychoanalysis" 187) with revelatory potential; chasing incidental details that resist signification, Jimmy fantasises about psychoanalytic breakthroughs: "there it would be, the red parrot, the code, the password, and then many things would become clear" (138). It is certainly a curative procedure that Jimmy himself would like to engage in. The last man standing in a post-apocalyptic world, Jimmy longs for a sympathetic ear into which he might unburden his heavy soul, and he cries out in his desolation: "Just someone, anyone, listen to me please!" (45). Atwood, however, proves sceptical of the psychoanalytic—specifically, Freudian—method. As auditor-analyst, Jimmy, who first encounters Oryx as "just another little girl on a porno site" (90), is inextricably entangled in a web of voyeurism, vicarious thrills, and pleasurable indignation. And as implied western readers of this exotically oriental misery memoir, we too are painfully, irresistibly, implicated in Jimmy's desire to plumb ever greater depths of poverty and sexual degradation. The truth, it seems, does not always set us free, and revelations of past traumas are not always productive and therapeutic. This anxiety around the efficacy of psychoanalytic practice—as

Niederhoff valuably demonstrates in his article on Atwood—is a concern that the writer repeatedly returns to in her fiction.

II

In “The Return of the Dead,” Niederhoff compares Atwood’s 1972 novel *Surfacing* to the 1996 novel, *Alias Grace*. The former, which Niederhoff rightly notes has attained the status of a classic work of contemporary fiction, commences with its unnamed narrator heading up into northern Quebec in search of her missing father. As she becomes increasingly immersed in the emotional implications of this quest, the text gradually exposes an unstable narrative voice. In a crucial moment of uncanny encounter, the narrator dives into the lake in pursuit of her father’s last movements and discovers an amorphous “dead thing” (136) floating in the water; the drowned corpse is presumably her father’s, but to the traumatised narrator it becomes the foetus she unwillingly aborted. The encounter prompts a rush of submerged memories, seemingly reinforcing Freud’s assertion that: “*hysterical patients suffer from reminiscences. Their symptoms are the remnants and the memory symbols of certain (traumatic) experiences*” (“Psychoanalysis” 187). Her reaction exposes the repressed knowledge of repugnant acts: “I couldn’t accept it, that mutilation, ruin I’d made, I needed a different version” (137). No longer free to reside in the “paper house” (138) of false memory, the narrator belatedly acknowledges her pain and loss—“I’m crying finally, it’s the first time” (166)—and is subsequently able to contemplate a return to society and selfhood.

Surfacing is, clearly, a text of its time; influenced by rising second-wave feminism and sympathetic to the concerns of ecofeminism and environmentalism, it also reflects the contemporary interest in the kind of national thematic criticism that Atwood exemplifies in her critical text of the same year, *Survival*. In contrast, *Alias Grace* is a product of the mid-1990s. Intricately plotted and self-consciously

inconclusive, it takes much from postmodern literary practise and is a forerunner of the current preoccupation with neo-Victorian fiction. Like *Surfacing*, it is, as Niederhoff notes, characterised by themes of memory and recollection; by what Atwood describes as: "the lure of the unmentionable—the mysterious, the buried, the forgotten, the discarded, the taboo" ("In Search of *Alias Grace*" 1509). Based on a notorious Canadian murder case of 1843, the young protagonist Grace Marks is accused of conspiring with a fellow servant in the bloody murders of her master and his housekeeper-mistress. Grace claims total amnesia of the events, and the prison Governor's sympathetic wife encourages her to be hypnotised by Simon Jordan, a young doctor and pre-Freudian psychoanalyst. Rather than revealing the desired truth, these sessions introduce various possible explanations, including: Grace's spiritual possession by her former fellow servant Mary; a deliberate and cunning deception perpetrated by Grace and, possibly, an accomplice; or a modern medical diagnosis of multiple personality disorder. As Coral Ann Howells notes: "The fascination of a character like Grace is intimately bound up with nineteenth-century anxieties about women and their true nature: are they angels in the house or are they lying devils, and which is Grace?" (*Contemporary Canadian Women's Fiction* 30). As characters and readers attempt to diagnose Grace's condition, ultimately the veracity of each of the novel's competing accounts remains a conundrum that the determinedly post-modern text refuses to unravel.

Examining these two quite different novels, published almost twenty-five years apart, Niederhoff suggests that both exemplify a central theme in Atwood's work: the return from death and/or the underworld. Accordingly, a key informing image in *Surfacing* is a description of the narrator's mother resuscitating the narrator's drowning brother; while in *Alias Grace*, the dead return in the form of Mary's ghost, haunting and manipulating an unwitting Grace. In fact, while the significance of this theme can be logically traced through Niederhoff's discussion—the survival of death; the return from the dead; the laying to rest of ghosts; the confrontation of repressed

memories—its initial invocation falls away over the course of the article and is tellingly absent from the conclusion. Instead, the article's primary and more rewarding concern is with Atwood's evolving engagement with psychoanalytic practice. To this end, Niederhoff suggests that the two novels resemble each other in a "surprising number of ways" (75): both are detective novels concluding on a moment of anagnorisis or dramatic revelation; both contain emotionally damaged narrators; and in both, repressed trauma affects the memory. While noting these similarities, however, Niederhoff argues that "there is also a crucial difference in the way the two novels represent a secret or repressed knowledge that is associated with the return of the dead" (62). Following a detailed explication of the texts' overlapping themes, he then offers the article's central statement: "While *Surfacing* is about the necessity of surfacing, of emerging into the full light of knowledge, Grace must remain below the surface to survive. Ignorance means life to her" (86). With this observation, Niederhoff suggests a paradigm shift in Atwood's thinking about memory and psychoanalysis. This idea is valuable and demands further consideration.

Niederhoff argues that "[i]n her early works, Atwood fully endorses the principle of *sapere aude* [Kant's "dare to know"], echoing the revolutionary and optimistic *Zeitgeist* of the late 60s and early 70s" (81). This Enlightenment faith in knowledge, he suggests, underpins *Surfacing's* conclusion, in which the narrator's recovery of her repressed memories (analogous to a period of psychoanalysis) is painful but necessary, eventually restoring her to a more fully integrated selfhood. By the mid-1990s and the publication of *Alias Grace*, this epistemological faith is lost, and Atwood's characters instead voice significant concerns around the value of knowledge. For Niederhoff, psychoanalysis, with its foundational belief that 'the truth will set you free,' "provides a general model for interpreting the development of the narrator in *Surfacing*, [but] is not an adequate model for understanding *Alias Grace*" (86). Consequently, although the later novel contains myriad allusions to psychoanalysis, and to the Freudian

method in particular,³ "*Alias Grace* is not a psychoanalytic novel but rather an attack on psychoanalysis" (86). This shift, suggests Niederhoff, is part of a broader cultural scepticism around the psychoanalytic project, fuelled in part by feminist critiques; it finds expression in *Alias Grace* in Atwood's conclusion that 'the truth' (Niederhoff accepts the spiritual possession theory) not only fails to relieve and cure, but is positively dangerous. Realisation that she has committed murder under the influence of Mary's spirit would both equate to a compromising confession and jeopardise Grace's mental health. Niederhoff charts a clear trajectory from an early Atwood, advocating "belief in the liberating power of true knowledge," to a later, more sceptical Atwood, for whom "[t]he struggle for survival and against victimisation no longer involves the recognition of truth" (87). This conclusion, however, is interpolated from just two texts; it is useful therefore to test this evolutionary hypothesis against one of the interim novels.

Indeed, as a writer who "problematizes the idea of authenticity and unitary identity" (Palumbo 74), and for whom "duplicity—deceit and doubleness" (Grace 55) are central concerns, the agnate notions of revealed and concealed truth are a recurring and shifting theme in Atwood's work, encompassing the political, the moral, and the psychoanalytic.⁴ To focus on the latter: in addition to *Surfacing* and *Alias Grace*, *Cat's Eye* (1988), like *Oryx and Crake*, provides another instance of repressed childhood trauma being dealt with in a very particular manner.

III

Cat's Eye, like *Surfacing*, commences with a return. Protagonist Elaine—an artist, like the narrator of *Surfacing*—is similarly revisiting the location of her childhood after many years of absence. "I'm having a retrospective, my first" (15), explains Elaine, signalling the novel's subsequent association of art with the unconscious processes of memory.⁵ Unlike the earlier novel however, Elaine's moment of anagnori-

sis occurs, in chronological terms, before the narrative begins. Through an accumulation of retrospective episodes, it is revealed that Elaine suffered a traumatic period of childhood bullying by the charismatic Cordelia and her toadying subordinates, Carol and Grace. The persecution culminates in a near-death experience, when Elaine is forced by Cordelia, functioning as Elaine's death drive,⁶ to enter a forbidden ravine: "It's as if she's driven by the urge to see how far she can go. She's backing me towards an edge, like the edge of a cliff: one step back, another step, and I'll be over and falling" (154). The ravine, site of unspeakable sex and death,⁷ functions as a scar on the respectable suburban landscape, symbolising the troubling repressed that always threatens to rupture the surface of the conscious mind. Entering its darkness, Elaine falls into a frozen stream and almost succumbs to the desire for annihilation, to "the instinct to return to the inanimate" (Freud, *Pleasure Principle* 38), imagining herself as "a dead person, peaceful and clear" (188). Saved by a vision of the Virgin Mary—a recurring trope in the novel—the encounter in the ravine marks for Elaine a decisive moment of physical and psychological separation from Cordelia. When she re-encounters her tormentor in adolescence, all negative feelings about the past have been entirely repressed: "I can't remember ever hating Cordelia" (359), she thinks.

In adulthood, however, Elaine experiences inexplicable periods of depression and anxiety, climaxing in a half-hearted suicide attempt urged on by a disembodied voice, which she fails to identify as Cordelia's, whispering: "*Do it. Come on. Do it*" (373). This incident unconsciously re-enacts the childhood trauma in the ravine, and Atwood's text closely accords with Freud's description of neurotic patients' attempts to repress an "incompatible wish":

They have, indeed, driven it out of consciousness and out of memory, and apparently saved themselves a great amount of psychic pain, *but in the unconscious the suppressed wish still exists*, only waiting for its chance to become active [...]. ("Psychoanalysis" 195-96)

Only years later does Elaine attain knowledge of her past. Sorting through the material debris of her childhood, she engages in a meta-

phorically therapeutic process, excavating "down through the layers, unearthing discoveries" (397). As Freud notes, explaining the process of psychoanalysing a neurotic patient: "It was quite impossible to reach the first and often most essential trauma directly, without first clearing away those coming later" ("Psychoanalysis" 185). In the same manner, Elaine eventually attains her "essential trauma"; recovering a cat's eye marble—totemic emblem of the past: "I look into it, and see my life entire" (398).

Elaine's return to Toronto, which initiates the narrative of *Cat's Eye*, occurs after this moment of revelation. What becomes apparent, however, is that revelation alone is not enough to furnish Freud's "cathartic treatment" ("Psychoanalysis" 188). Instead, the visit to the city of her youth performs as an extended period of 'working through' past trauma. This process is disturbing and distressing; walking in Toronto, Elaine experiences a visceral reaction to the familiar streets: "I can feel my throat tightening, a pain along the jawline. I've started to chew my fingers again. There's blood, a taste I remember" (9). The city becomes a manifestation of her unconscious; a repository of memory. She states at one point: "In my dreams of this city I am always lost" (14). This recalls Freud's lecture on the origins of psychoanalysis, in which he likens "memory symbols" to "[t]he memorials and monuments with which we adorn our great cities" ("Psychoanalysis" 187). Monuments to (memories of) the traumatic past are natural and healthy, but Freud instead imagines a Londoner "who today stood sadly before the monument to the [thirteenth century] funeral of Queen Eleanor, instead of going about his business"; neurotics, he suggests, are like this man: "not only in that they remember the painful experiences of the distant past, but because they are still strongly affected by them" ("Psychoanalysis" 187). Elaine is similarly in thrall to the past, invested in its perpetual significance. Tracing the shifting topography of the city, she encounters its alterations with something close to panic; seeing that her old school—site of so much suffering—has been demolished, she states: "I feel hit, in the pit of the stomach [...] bewildered, as if something has been cut out of my

brain" (399-400). Finally, recognising that she is still trapped within the past, she realises that she needs help: "Get me out of this Cordelia," she pleads, "I'm locked in. I don't want to be nine years old for ever" (400).

The revelation of repressed truths proves necessary—indeed urgent—for Elaine; but it also requires an extended process of examination and acceptance that mimics a period of psychoanalytic therapy. Eventually, catharsis is achieved with the retrospective exhibition of Elaine's art, which functions in the novel as a repository of repressed trauma. Howells notes: "While Elaine's discursive narrative remains incomplete, her paintings offer a different figuration, acting as a kind of corrective to the distortions and suppressions of memory" (*Margaret Atwood* 114), and Laurie Vickroy suggests that Elaine's "artistic expression reveals trauma but also provides evidence and structure with which to work through it" (129). The traumatic experience is revealed through the compulsive repetitive representation of Grace's mother, who Elaine unconsciously charges with colluding in the young girls' bullying. When she suddenly begins to paint intimate and grotesque portraits of the older woman, Elaine describes the process in notably unconscious, dreamlike terms: "I paint Mrs Smeath. She floats up without warning [...]. One picture of Mrs Smeath leads to another" (338). Still sustaining at this time the repression of her past, Elaine can only muse: "It's still a mystery to me, why I hate her so much" (352). Art expresses Elaine's unconscious trauma, but it also marks her moment of recovery. The final section of the novel is entitled "Unified Field Theory," and as she surveys her paintings, hung by the gallery in chronological order and presided over by a portrait of Elaine's adopted patron saint, "the Virgin of Lost Things" (408), she is finally able to make the connections and trace the links that have so long been obscured by her partial recall. Significantly, it is this act of exposition that defuses Mrs Smeath's symbolic power, revealing instead her "defeated eyes, uncertain and melancholy" (405). Reviewing her past, manifest in her art, Elaine suddenly imagines the whole collection going up in flames, and experiences the

thought, "not as a fear but as a temptation" (409). Indeed, to discard the past *is* tempting, even freeing, but for Atwood, as for Freud, it must first be recovered before it can be relinquished.

IV

Cat's Eye was published sixteen years after *Surfacing* and eight years before *Alias Grace*, and it marks a very apparent sympathy with Freudian notions of trauma, repression and recovery.⁸ This can be compared to Atwood's subsequent novel, *The Robber Bride* (1993), in which Charis, one of three main protagonists being tormented by the villainous Zenia, is also dealing with past trauma. Like *Cat's Eye*, *The Robber Bride* employs a present day narrative interspersed with narrative sequences from the past. One such retrospective episode reveals Charis's secret history of sexual abuse at the hands of her uncle and guardian. Charis—or Karen, as she then was—reacts to the abuse by entering into a dissociative state⁹: "Charis watches in amazement as the man grunts, as the small child wriggles and flails as if hooked through the neck" (262). This process becomes a conscious survival tactic: "As soon as Uncle Vern touches her she splits in two [...] and stays with the cooler part, the clearer part of herself. She has a name for this part now: she is Charis" (263-64). With adolescence the abuse stops and her uncle "hopes she's forgotten it all," but "[s]he remembers everything, or rather Karen does" (264). As a dependent teenager, Charis's memories resist her uncle's desire to negate the past; as an adult escaping her uncle's house, she instead undergoes a wilful process of repression: "*Karen* was a leather bag [...]. Charis collected everything she didn't want and shoved it into this name, this leather bag, and tied it shut. [...] she walked to the shore of Lake Ontario and sank the leather bag into the water" (265).

For Freud, the unconscious is 'created' by the need to repress something: "repression is not a defensive mechanism which is present from the very beginning," he explains: "it cannot arise until a sharp cleav-

age has occurred between conscious and unconscious mental activity" ("Repression" 569). The problem—which Michael Billig suggests Freud never resolved—is that repression cannot, by its nature, occur consciously, or knowingly. In effect, "[i]f we have secrets from ourselves, then not only must we forget the secrets, but we must also forget that we have forgotten them" (Billig 13). In *The Robber Bride*, however, Atwood envisions Charis's act of 'forgetting' as a deliberate decision to suppress (rather than repress) the unwanted past. Unlike Elaine in *Cat's Eye* and the narrator in *Surfacing*, Charis chooses to forget. This forgetting is similar in many ways to repression, and Charis experiences the same irrepressible return; in a time of great stress prompted by Zenia's manipulations, Charis's defences falter: "Karen is coming back, Charis can't keep her away any more" (266). Karen becomes Charis's alter, harbinger of Mary in *Alias Grace*; she is a Jungian "'shadow' or dark side of one's nature" (Bontatibus 359); and she echoes the return of Freud's repressed. She brings disruption and distress, but also occasionally necessary anger and unaccustomed potency.¹⁰ In Charis, Atwood mimics a Freudian case-study of repression and return, but envisions the act of forgetting as a conscious tactic for survival rather than a passive symptom of neurosis. Niederhoff writes: "While *Surfacing* is about the necessity of surfacing, of emerging into the full light of knowledge, Grace must remain below the surface to survive" (86). *The Robber Bride* instead enacts a third possibility: Karen/Knowledge "come[s] to the surface" (266) despite Charis's conscious efforts to keep her submerged. In this novel, rather than choosing between knowing and not knowing, Charis is always cognisant of the truth, but equally asserts her authority over it. In *Alias Grace*, Atwood affords her protagonist an agency similar to Charis's: that is, Grace both knows and chooses not to know.

Indeed, it is arguably the figure of the psychoanalyst who comes under attack in Atwood's novels, rather than the process of recovering repressed truths. In *Surfacing*, *Cat's Eye* and *The Robber Bride*, each of Atwood's traumatised protagonists achieves some kind of emotional equilibrium, and does so alone: The narrator in *Surfacing* undertakes a

therapeutic retreat into nature; Elaine utilises art as a powerful means of expression; and Charis finds comfort in meditation and spiritualism. In contrast, Oryx and Grace, the two protagonists who most determinedly withhold their secrets, are also the two who are most persistently pressed into revelation by others. Both Jimmy in *Oryx and Crake* and Simon in *Alias Grace* seek to uncover their analysand's secrets in a manner that is frequently problematic. Just as Jimmy's unspoken desires colour his wish to know Oryx's past, so Simon experiences a powerful counter-transference during his sessions with Grace:

Murderess, murderess, he whispers to himself. It has an allure, a scent almost. Hothouse gardenias. Lurid, but also furtive. He imagines himself breathing it as he draws Grace towards him, pressing his mouth against her. *Murderess*. He applies it to her throat like a brand. (389)¹¹

Niederhoff's reference to feminist critiques of psychoanalysis is pertinent here. Simon exemplifies a masculinist psychotherapy, in which the active (male) physician works to open the "locked box" (132) of his passive (female) patient's unconscious; analysing Grace, he thinks to himself: "He's got the hook in her mouth, but can he pull her out?" (322). Responding to inequitable relations, Grace asserts what small power she has, thinking to herself: "I have little enough of my own, no belongings, no possessions, no privacy to speak of, and I need to keep something for myself" (101).

In his article, Niederhoff discusses Atwood's evolving response to the biblical dictum "the truth shall make you free" (80-81), but *Alias Grace* also implicitly alludes to another line of Scripture: "Physician, heal thyself" (Luke 4:23). This directive applies to the increasingly emotionally entangled Simon as he fails to sustain professional distance; it also applies to the amateur analyst Jimmy, who revels in Oryx's miserable past while repressing his own childhood trauma of maternal abandonment, declaring: "I am not my childhood" (68). In *Alias Grace*, the reader's desire to know what *really* happened becomes conflated with Simon's attempts to unlock Grace's memory. In the same way, Jimmy's plaintive probing—"Just tell me [...]. I need you

to" (92)—resonates uncomfortably with the reader's desire to comprehend the enigmatic Oryx. Discussing the 2000 novel *The Blind Assassin*, Atwood describes the narrator Iris's dislike of confessional talk shows: "it's entertainment for other people, people watching it. What are they left with at the end? They're empty. They've spilled all the beans" (Solomon 233). A similar suspicion of the efficacy of revelation informs *Alias Grace* and *Oryx and Crake*. Both Grace and Oryx ultimately retain their secrets, but rather than indicating a lost faith in "the liberating power of true knowledge" (Niederhoff 87), these novels might be better read as resisting the psychoanalytic impulse to reveal and expose, asserting instead the protagonist's agency and ownership of the truth.

Liverpool John Moores University
Liverpool

NOTES

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²As Niederhoff notes, Atwood cites Hacking's *Rewriting the Soul* in the "Acknowledgements" of *Alias Grace*.

³Niederhoff notes, for example, that the maid at Dr. Jordan's lodgings is called Dora, clearly recalling Freud's famous case study.

⁴In *Bodily Harm* (1981) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), for example, the act of seeking and asserting the truth—whether as a political journalist or as a political prisoner—is fundamentally bound up with liberty and justice. These novels make explicitly political statements about individual resistance to governmental concealment and distortion of the truth; in both, the revelation of truth is a morally urgent process. (See Tolan for further discussion.)

⁵For further discussion of this, see Vickroy.

⁶Freud discusses the death drive in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, in which he argues that "the aim of all life is death" (38).

⁷The ravine is filled with "deadly nightshade," "empty liquor bottles," and used condoms—"Even finding such a thing is dirty" (74-75)—and a girl is raped and murdered there: "It's as if this girl has done something shameful, herself, by being murdered" (241).

⁸Freud summarises the underlying principle of psychoanalysis, which largely coincides with the perspective of *Cat's Eye*: "If this repressed material is once more made part of the conscious mental functions—a process which supposes the overcoming of significant resistance—the psychic conflict which then arises, the same which the patient wishes to avoid, is made capable of a happier termination, under the guidance of the physician, than is offered by repression" ("Psychoanalysis" 196).

⁹See Hacking for an extended discussion of the developing clinical history of Multiple Personality Disorder and its relation to child abuse and dissociation. Hacking describes and questions the assumption, developed in the 1970s and 1980s, that "[a] child copes [with overwhelming trauma] by heightening the separation between behavioural states 'in order to compartmentalize overwhelming affects and memories generated by the trauma.' Children may in a sense deliberately enter into dissociative states" (88).

¹⁰On the night that Karen 'returns,' Charis conceives her daughter; later she muses: "She has always known who the father was, of course. There weren't any other choices. But the mother? Was it herself and Karen, sharing their body?" (266).

¹¹Freud explains that 'transference' occurs when "a woman patient shows by unmistakable indications, or openly declares, that she has fallen in love [...] with the doctor who is analysing her" ("Observations" 378), and he warns against the possibility of 'counter-transference,' whereby similarly misplaced feelings are experienced by the analyst.

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