

Agoraphobia Study in *The Woman in The Window* Movie Script by Treacy Letts

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Abstract

This research focused on *The Woman In The Window* of Anna Fox's Agoraphobia. The researchers conduct qualitative research using the movie script of *The Woman In The Window* as a source of data. The finding shows that the movie script *The Woman In The Window* is an expressive script that conveys the message of Agoraphobia which happens because of traumatic events. Not only in the real world but in literary work it also happens. Anna Fox who is the main character in *The Woman In The Window* movie script is an agoraphobia. The cause of agoraphobia is psycho-social background of Anna Fox. The effect is when Anna experiences agoraphobia Anna has risk hard time feeling safe in any strange public place.

Keywords: Agoraphobia, *The Woman In The Window*, Tracy Letts

A. Introduction

Fear is a natural thing to happen and usually has different triggers. It can be triggered by some traumatic experiences in the past. Those who have a hard time forgetting the traumatic experiences can have anxiety such as a phobia. Traumatic experiences happen for several reasons such as violence, being alone, and staying away from the environment that makes he or she feel in danger. Those several reasons are categories of phobia which is called Agoraphobia. The book entitled *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (Fourth Edition)* by the American Psychiatric Association (1994:393) states that agoraphobia is an anxiety of avoiding places or situations where escape is not available when having a panic attack.

Agoraphobia can occur not only in women but also in men. But the most sufferers of agoraphobia are women. In America and Europe, the vast majority of individuals diagnosed with agoraphobia are women (Capps and Ochs, 1996:2)

Literature is a reflection of the real world due to it is the result of a writer's inquiry and incorporates imaginative work about human life. Literature is a record of human consciousness, the richest and the most comprehensive (Lodge, 2002). Anxiety can happen due to confrontation, Alistair's confrontation with Anna makes her cannot escape from the situation where she is not wanted is an example of agoraphobia. The research paper's author decides to examine the agoraphobia in *The Woman In The*

Window movie script. The first is that the movie starts by explaining how the agoraphobic person is controlling herself well. The second reason is how an agoraphobic person deals with a situation where escape might be difficult. This movie script is about Anna Fox who has symptoms of agoraphobia. The research aims to know the cause and effect of agoraphobia.

B. Research Method

The researcher conducts qualitative research in which the research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behavior (Kothari, 1985:5).

C. Findings and Discussion

1. The Portrayal of Agoraphobia in *The Woman in the Window*

Anna is a person who deals with agoraphobia. The criteria are physical symptoms. The physical symptoms of Anna include rapid breathing, feeling sick, chest pain, trembling, and feeling pain. The first portrayal of Anna's agoraphobia can be seen when Anna is not able to keep her breathing slowly when she gets distracted by unusual people outside. Anna increases her rapid breathing when some children try to disturb her by throwing a snowball in front of her house until she shouts behind the door to stay away from her house. It can be seen below.

(the sound of crack door)
Get away from my house!
(bang)
(children screaming and giggling) (Letts, 2021:17)

The second portrayal of Anna's agoraphobia is her hallucination. Her hallucination is when her neighbor Jane is stabbed by Alistair Russel. By showing these two scenes Anna is a sick person. In the first scene she tells to the officer in the telephone that she saw her neighbor Jane Russel stabbed by Alistair Russel across her house, she sees it behind her window. And the second scene shows the proof of Anna's hallucination when the officer tells her that nothing happened but she refuses what she hears by shouting that she sees Jane stabbed by Alistair Russel.

Police Man : 911 operator, what's your emergency?
Anna Fox : My neighbor, Jane, she's been stabbed.
Officer : Slow down, ma'am, what's your name and where are you?
Anna Fox : [fumbling] I'm Anna Fox. (Letts, 2021:42-43)

Detective : The point is, Dr. Fox, that's nothing happened.
 Anna Fox : No.
 Detective : Hmm?
 Anna Fox : No! I know what I saw! (Letts, 2021:47)

The third portrayal of Anna's agoraphobia is ringing in the tears, it can be called tinnitus. Tinnitus happens when Anna hears Jane Russells speak to her in her ear she is in a hallucination. Jane Russel does not exist when she hears her voice.

Anna Fox : I like your earrings. Does your husband mind?
 Jane Russel : I doubt he knows. A gift from an old boyfriend (Jane laughs)
 (Letts, 2021:25-26)

Another of her tinnitus is shown in the script when Anna speaks to her beloved husband who has already passed away in an accident several years ago during on holiday family trip in the winter season. Anna hears her husband's voice when they are on a telephone call. Her husband has already passed away. She is in her hallucination. It is caused by her accident several years ago in the winter season. Anna is told by her husband to break her problem down. Start from the boy, the murderer, an earring, and David. They are arguing with each other in their conversation. It can be seen below.

Man : So, now you don't wanna talk.
 Anna Fox : I'm busy.
 Man : If I can't say what I think...
 Anna Fox : I'm not delusional.
 Man : Break it down. First, it's the boy, then that murder across the street. Now there's another women in Boston... An earring, and fucking David, who you always liked.
 Anna Fox : You done?
 Man : With you at the center..
 Anna Fox : Don't. On all those damn pills. Fuck off!
 Man : There's nothing here for you. You know it. You've got to move on.
 Anna Fox : I can't.
 Man : Why not?
 Anna Fox : I don't know, I'm just not made that way. I wish to God I could, believe me, but I can't. Everyone else can move on. I can't.
 [glass shatters] (Letts, 2021:59-60)

Anna's agoraphobia is shown by her trembling that people surround her disturb her activity in her world, in Anna's opinion is her house while she is sleeping on her bed. People in these scenes are shown by the children playing in front of Anna's house, it

makes Anna unconvinced and gets up from her bed, goes to the door and she begins shouting to the children. It can be seen below.

(children talking a lot in distance
(bang)
(puffs)
(the door cracking)
Anna Fox : Get away from my house!
(bang)
kids shouting and laughing (Letts, 2021:17)

The last portrayal of Anna's agoraphobia is feeling faint. After having a trembling situation and fainting she gets into conversation with Jane Russels, her neighbor. As agoraphobic, Anna refuses that she has fainted a lot after being asked by Jane. It can be seen from the quotation below.

Jane Russel : Jesus, it's dark here. Do you faint a lot?
Anna Fox : I didn't faint. I mean, it's... like fainting. (Letts, 2021:19)

2. The Cause of Anna Fox's Agoraphobia

The cause of Anna Fox's agoraphobia is psychosocial factors. They are personality characteristics and interpersonal characteristics.

a. Personality characteristics

Personality characteristics can lead someone with reactive development. Personality characteristics can also enhance the symptoms experienced by an agoraphobic person. In the *Woman in the Window* movie script, Anna is portrayed as a pervasive fearful individual. She always gets scared by hearing something unusual inside her house. In the script, Anna starts to go down from her room to check something unusual inside her house. While she checks the situation, she tries to call 911 for the emergency in her house until she is shocked by her tenant David, and starts to scream.

breathing heavily and shakily
cellphone thrilling
Police Man : 911, what is your emergency?
Anna Fox : I think there's somebody in my house.
Police Man : What's your address, ma'am?
Anna Fox : It's 104, West 121st Street.
Anna Fox : (screams) I'm sorry. (Letts, 2021:29)

a. Interpersonal relationships

Another cause of Anna Fox's agoraphobia is interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships can also lead enhance the symptoms of agoraphobia. In *The Woman In The Window* movie script, Anna has close relationship with her family, her husband, and her daughter. Anna has already lost her family in an accident, it makes a traumatic experience. A traumatic experience can be a trigger for Anna to have an anxiety called agoraphobia. In this story when Anna with her family go on a holiday family trip, Anne argues with her husband. They argue about being good parents in front of their daughter. Her husband says to Anna that he can't do that anymore because Anna has had an affair.

Anna Fox : You and I spoke in painful detail and I thought that we agreed that we would not ruin Christmas.
 Her husband : And I can't do it anymore. I can't. The acting is foolish. It doesn't dignify our daughter.
 Anna Fox : You don't care if she gets upset?
 Her husband : She should be upset. It's upsetting.
 Anna Fox : Well, don't blame me if she's scared for life.
 Her husband : I do blame you. You're to blame. (Lett's, 2021:72-73)

3. The Effect of Anna Fox's Agoraphobia

Agoraphobia always has a negative effect, as an agoraphobia, many times are spent always in the safe house and stay away from the outside. The following quote shows Anna always spends her time not going outside.

The Tenant : oh, Halloween tonight. How do we do it tonight you going outside? You want me to get some candy?
 Anna Fox : I'm not going to give out candy. I'm going to turn the lights out and pretend I'm not home. (Letts, 2021:15)

David, the tenant explains about the Halloween party and he tries to invite Anna to go outside in the halloween party. Anna as an agoraphobic person chooses to stay at her house and pretend not to be home by turning the lights off.

The proof that Anna always keeps staying away from going outside can be seen when Jane asks Anna to go outside and she refuses it directly when Jane is speaking to her.

Jane Russel : Do you wanna go outside?
 Anna Fox : You know, I have shrink of my own.
 Jane Russel : [laughing] Okay. Okay. I get it. I get it. All right, sorry. That sounds very wise. (Letts, 2021:22)

In addition to the person having agoraphobia Anna also loses her control when she is in an uncomfortable situation that can't escape.

Police Man : The point is, Dr. Fox, that nothing's happened.
Anna : No.
Police Man : Hmm?
Anna : No! I know what I saw!
Police Man : Nothing's happened to anyone.
Anna : No, I was zoomed in with the camera.
Police Woman: Did you take a picture?
Anna : I did not!
Mr. Russel : She's just admitted she's spying on our house. (Lett's, 2021:47)

Anna is having difficulty breathing when her heart is racing and she may even experience chest or stomach pains during the spells. It can be seen when Mr. Russel says that Anna has just admitted that she's spying on his house. The situation is the trigger of her panic attack where she is surrounded by several people and is not able to escape from the situation without any help from others.

Anna Fox's agoraphobia not only affects herself but also affects her tenant, David. In this story, Anna disturbs David with the delusion she has. She thinks she heard somebody scream across the street. She tries to call David but no response from him. She goes downstairs to check where David lives.

(phone line ringing)
(on voicemail) : This is David, I'm not here right now. Leave a message and I'll do my best to get back to you.
(cell phone tone)
Anna : David?
David : What's up?
Anna : Did you hear that screams across the street?
David : No.
Anna : Now. Five minutes ago.
David : I was listening music.
Anna : You didn't anybody scream?
David : i didn't hear anyone scream. (Letts, 2021:35)

The proof that Anna's agoraphobia affects David is when Anna starts to look for David downstairs. She goes down slowly and she is shocked by how many letters fall. When she is shocked by how many letters fall her heart is racing. She looks at the letters on the floor and takes them. Suddenly, David comes from the room and makes Anna upset. David is angry with Anna after seeing what Anna is doing. David gets mad at Anna due to he had a problem with someone in a bar a few days ago. It makes David unable to

control his emotions toward Anna. David feels that Anna always disturbs him when he is at home. She always wants to have any help from others. Anna asks about Jane Russel to David because he works for Alistair and Jane Russel. But David replies that David works for Mr. Russel not Mrs. Russel. It makes him mad at Annna and asks Anna call Mr. Russel by herself because David is not her messenger.

Anna : David?

(loud groaning)

(panting)

(breathe easily)

(sounds of blaring in distance)

David : What the.. (gasps) What are you doing?

Anna : Jesus. I was looking for you.

David : What is that? Are you going through my mail?

Anna : I'm sorry.

David : Unreal.

Anna : I...I...I knocked. I just... I needed to ask you a question.

David : Ask me what? Huh? Here I am, what's your question?

Anna : jane. Have you met her? Have you met the woman across the street?

David : Jane?

Anna : Jane Russel?

David : No.

Anna : You worked with them.

David : I worked for him. For Mr. Russel. I never met his wife. What am I your messenger now? Pick up the phone and call him! Better yet, why don't you take a stroll across the street. No?

[sound of cracking door] (Lett's, 2021:54-55)

Anna Fox's agoraphobia also has effects on her neighbor Alistair Russel. Her agoraphobia has effects on Alistair Russel. He makes Anna to stay away from his son Ethan. Mr. Russel warns Anna not to be close to his son because they have different ages. Mr. Russel also gives a bad word to Anna to stay away from his son.

Alistair : This stops now. Your relationship with Ethan, it's inappropriate. He's a young man! He's a...He's a boy! He's 15 and a half and you're a mature woman! And of course, you're completely out of your goddamn mind!.

Anna : [nervously] I'll call the police!

Alistair : Go. Go ahead. Go ahead. I'm sure they'd love hearing from you. A... A drunken, shut-in, pill-popping cat lady! You.... You're fucking with the wrong family. Stay away from my son! (Lett's,2021:62-63)

D. Conclusion

Agoraphobia also occurs in literary works such as this movie script, not only in the real world agoraphobia also in someone who suffers from agoraphobia. Anna the main character in the story has anxiety called agoraphobia. Her agoraphobia makes her unable to stay away from her house and decides to stay in her safe house. Agoraphobia person always needs to be accompanied by a trusted friend or family.

References

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