

Beyond the Factions: A Psychoanalytic Study of Dream and Trauma in *Insurgent*

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Abstract

This research builds on the psychoanalytic exploration of Veronica Roth's *Divergent Series* and focuses on a comparative analysis of the second novel *Insurgent* and its film adaptation directed by Robert Schwentke. It looks into the relationship that develops between the characters' mental growth and the author's psychology throughout the book. The main objective is to analyze the psychology of fear as it affects the author and examining how it manifests subconsciously in the depiction of characters. This research includes a detailed study of dream study and its connection between the author and the characters, as well as a trauma study associated with the characters researched in this paper. A detailed qualitative study is conducted to find the answer for the research question about whether the author unconsciously influenced the characters' fears examining the use of guilt and different methods of hypnosis to suppress a divergent-minded individual.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, dream studies, literary adaptation, trauma study.

Introduction

The article titled “Beyond the Factions: A Psychoanalytic Study of Dream and Trauma in *Insurgent*” seeks to critically analyze the bestselling second English novel *Insurgent* from the *Divergent* trilogy series by Veronica Roth with the emphasis on the aspect of ‘fear’, trauma and the author's personal experiences which influenced her work at various levels. This research is conducted to understand the significance of the authors psychology while writing this work and how that has impacted the characters psychology. *Insurgent* literary means a person who is fighting or rebelling against the government. The story like of *Insurgent* is exactly like the title of the novel.

Psychoanalysis, with its roots dating back to the 1890s, was pioneered by Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist. From Freud’s ideology, psychoanalysis constitutes a collection of psychological theories and therapeutic approaches found in Freud's various works, including notable texts like *The General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *The Ego and the Id*. At its core, psychoanalysis posits that all individuals harbor unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires, and memories. The approach suggests that by bringing these unconscious contents into conscious awareness, individuals can undergo a process of purification and gain insights into their inner minds. This, in turn, is believed to offer relief from psychological distress. Addressing both conscious and unconscious disturbances involves open discussion about the elements causing complications and accentuate finding solutions rather than concealing them in the mind. Freud's contributions include developing theories on

the workings of the mind and the impact of sexual instincts on human behavior, such as the psychoanalytic theory of personality development.

In Freud's notable work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he asserted that delving into dream interpretation and encouraging patients to freely associate ideas allowed psychoanalysts to gain insights into the workings of the unconscious mind. He understands that dreams are a reflection of a person's conscious mind. The mind filters the difficulties when conscious. So there is a power to delete unwanted memories. But the unconscious mind is more fragile than the conscious mind. Every problem that was deleted in the conscious mind will appear in an individual's dreams.

Trauma studies are based on Freudian theory, which was established in the 1990s. Trauma can be defined as a 'psychological wound' can be produced by negative thoughts, words, or deeds. This undesirable memory is retained in our awareness layers and has a volatile character. It separates the self and mental processes, allowing them to work independently. It can lead to illnesses like split personality. Dissociation causes individuals to become separated from their surroundings. It might occur during the occurrence or after being reminded of the trauma. Dissociation is often associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Freud distinguished between the terms 'fear' and 'anxiety,' specifically using 'fear' to denote a reaction to genuine, tangible threats, as opposed to 'anxiety,' which lacks a specific object and pertains more to an emotional state. In Freud's works, such as *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926) and *Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1917), he explored the interconnections of anxiety, fear, and fright. Freud's earliest writings introduced the concept of differentiating phobias based on the object of fear.

Veronica Roth is New York bestselling author best known for her *Divergent* trilogy. She is a young adult dystopian author. She was born in 1988 in New York city then later on she moved to California. She wrote her first work *Divergent* in 2011. Following the great success of her first book she wrote her second book in 2012. Over 35 million copies of the *Divergent* trilogy, which includes *Divergent*, *Insurgent* and *Allegiant*, have been sold worldwide, and it has been translated into more than 40 languages. Additionally, a film series featuring Shailene Woodley and Theo James was adapted from it. Roth has written more than just the *Divergent* series. She is the author of several other books, including the contemporary thriller *Chosen Ones* and the science fiction duology *Carve the Mark*. She is a well-liked speaker at literary events and has also written essays and short stories.

Insurgent and Guilt

In the first book *Divergent*, we are introduced to Beatrice "Tris" Prior, born into Abnegation, but chooses Dauntless despite her test results indicating Divergence, that is when a person belongs to multiple factions. During brutal Dauntless initiation, Tris conceals her Divergence and excels in training, gaining the attention of a mysterious instructor "Four". She uncovers a plot by Erudite, led by Jeanine, to control minds and overthrow the system using simulations. Tris and Four join Abnegation and Amity in a rebellion against Erudite. And somehow stop Jeannie in her attempt and flee.

Continuing in the second book *Insurgent*, Tris mourns fallen loved ones and grapples with her identity as a Divergent. Erudite captures Divergents to use for experiments. Tris and Four seek allies among Candor and Amity. Tris discovers secrets about her past and her parents' role in the faction system's creation. A final battle erupts as Tris confronts Jeanine, showcasing the dangers of Divergence and the need for faction unity. Susan Dominus from the *New York Post* has commented about the novel,

Divergent clearly has thrills, but it also movingly explores a more common adolescent anxiety — the painful realization that coming into one's own sometimes means leaving family behind, both ideologically and physically. It is not a coincidence that Tris falls in love while undergoing initiation into her new tribe. It is precisely the moment when young people discover romance that family life all but evaporates, at least in terms of its emotional significance. (May 12, 2011)

The society Veronica Roth portrayed in her works is divided based on the faction the population was forced to choose. The lack of peace makes them uncomfortable. The factions were created by the founders of the society in hope to eliminate any future disputes or wars. But for Tris it feels like she has always been walking on eggshells. After the war the world was damaged and the people inside the walls believed that they were safe when they were inside the walls. The society is divided into 5 different factions Abnegation, Dauntless, Erudite, Amity and Candor. Self-denial is implied by the phrase abnegation. Selflessness is valued by Abnegation members. Erudites value knowledge above everything else, but they also value well-spoken speeches. Great knowledge is what the word "Erudite" signifies. Even with their high level of intelligence, Erudite people have failed in the past. Amity places a high priority on peace and harmony, which is defined as amity as amicable ties. People who are in harmony are content and eager to help. Honesty is the attribute of candor. Sincerity is the most important quality to candor. They only speak the truth, even if they are aware that doing so will make matters worse. Dauntless is regarded as the factions' soldier. The meaning of the word is demonstrating bravery and resolve. Those who exude bravery and seem nearly fearless are dauntless.

Every year, all the sixteen-year-olds must select the faction to which they will devote the rest of their lives after taking an aptitude test. The children are supposed to choose a faction but it has to be in regards to their test results, but they are allowed to make their own choice at the Choosing Ceremony. It is possible for a person to qualify for more than one. This is usually only two factions. This is called 'Divergent'. But in Tris's case she was the only one to qualify for three factions. She showed an aptitude for Abnegation, Dauntless and Erudite. So the feeling of wanting to be different has always been the aim but the threatening situations around her made Tris suppress her feelings. She chose Dauntless because of her wild nature, want to take risks and she thought she will be protected there.

Roth has always dealt with trauma and mental health concerns with empathy and realism. But it is clear that she has done a detailed research of trauma and mental health which is visible in her works. In her books like the *Divergent Series* and *The Chosen One* she has conveyed the effects of trauma and its affects in a humans life and their relationships with others.

In this particular work, the character Tris was very strong minded in the first book, taking risks and fighting for her family and for what is right. But in *Insurgent* the consequences and effects of trauma and guilt takes affect. In this work she decides to take a risk and cut all her beautiful hair indicating want to the move on from the deaths around her. Her hair was a connection between two factions, from abnegation to dauntless. But this brave action proved not to work because the guilt of killing her friend 'Will' in the first book is giving her PTSD or post traumatic stress disorder. She is unable to hold a gun and shoot. The same Tris was the best shooter during dauntless training. Her relationship with Four was a side story in the first book but in *Insurgent* we see a more serious relationship. But because of the guilt and the stress they had a rocky relationship this whole book. The thought of her Friend Will and his death gave Tris immanence anxiety and according to Freud this anxiety can be the root cause of fear and Guilt.

Roth's parents divorced at the age of five, this could show the effects of the character Tris losing both parents. The doubt of having a committed relationship for Tris and Four might be the after effects of the writers traumas. This might have been the cause of childhood trauma as well. Roth has always always struggled with anxiety disorder and she avoids taking chances with physical health. She did, however, say in an interview with the Chicago Tribune that she stepped outside of her comfort zones when she married young, chopped off her hair, and moved to Romania for a short while. Roth addressed the connection between herself and the character Tris in the same interview with Chicago Tribune.

I didn't want my writing to become related to real life, but it just did. You know, there are lingering fears that we're moving toward a more authoritarian kind of government and we now feel so much more divided than we did before. I think we always had these divisions, but certainly some people were not as aware of it, including me. It's felt especially important to be honest and as accurate — as a space-based book can be — about the kinds of things that people can do with power and you know, what's worth fighting against.

The authors connection with the character here is not as evident as it was in the first book but in one way or the other there will be some connections and similarities. The emotions the author might have felt at one point of her life time or what she was feeling while writing this work is visible in her works.

Conclusion

Tris's adventure to find her identity did not stop within this single book. Her constant search for her true identity is seen through the whole trilogy. She had to overcome her fears and control her emotions to find her purpose and to find her identity. Fear and guilt has an important role in this work. As it is seen, the fears of Tris and Four have an important role in their own life. It is proved here that some fears might have a deeper reason. The anxiety the author had in her life has in one way or the other been reflected in her works.

Roth has successfully used fears and trauma, the idea of which we discern originate from the authors personal feelings over her life time. Her work suggests the possibility of a society where all can co-exist with virtues and vices. The assertion of factions or categories or classes diversifies the society and the forceful confinement causes chaos and disharmony. Facing the fear, going into the depths of one's mind, is her way of suggesting that each individual in the society would be controlled by certain factors which may inhibit one's growth. The calm acceptance as well as resilience can help the individual and the society to happily agree to disagree and thrive as healthy individuals. Tris and Four in their struggle drive home these lessons.

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