

*Dancing in the Asylum:
The Uncanny Truth of the Madwoman
in Janet Frame's
Autobiographical Fiction*

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JANET FRAME'S first two autobiographical fictions, *Owls Do Cry* and *Faces in the Water*, draw on her experience of incarceration in New Zealand mental hospitals in the late 1940s and early 1950s. During this period the "new attitude" to the treatment of mental patients was being instituted.¹ As Istina Mavet, narrator and protagonist of *Faces in the Water*, observes with conscious irony, "mental patients are people like you and me" (72). Patients were to be given modest responsibilities and recreational activities including dances, sports days, and Christmas celebrations. That the Enlightenment response to the mad elaborated by Foucault in *Madness and Civilization* is once again considered "new," suggests both the entrenched resistance to its acceptance and the way in which models of medical progress mask the continuation of oppressive practices.² The "new attitude" must be understood more in terms of society wishing to see itself as humane, than as a significant shift in the understanding of madness. While the hospital is the site of the tragic dénouement of the earlier novel, *Faces in the Water* takes place almost entirely within the institution. For Frame, the fragmentation of the subject made so painfully visible in the institutionalized madwoman signifies the truth of the divided subject. The madwoman is representative of the ontological fragmentation that the sane, in misrecognizing themselves as whole, refuse to see. In contrast to Mark Williams, who argues that Frame "confront[s] the reader with the simple but terrifying truth that what we find in madness is not something utterly alien to us but merely ourselves" (36), Frame's madwoman will be positioned here as an uncanny figure, a double whose familiarity must, at all costs, be denied.³ The

madwoman brings to light that which should remain concealed. She is witness to the misprisions through which the social constitutes the mad and sane as subjects, misprisions which are foregrounded in Frame's representation of the asylum dance.

In *Owls Do Cry*, the story of the life and lobotomy of Daphne Withers, the dance in the mental hospital begins with the nurse's order:

—Dance. Dance. Go on, get up and dance!

So they danced, being told to, like real ladies and gentlemen, except the men sweated and smelt and held too closely and the women forgot to listen to the orchestra so that people had their feet trodden on, and no one apologised but laughed instead and said,

—It serves you right.

So they danced or walked or hopped or twirled round and round in the same place, and though it was a joking time, with a fine supper afterwards, no one will deny that inside was crying and confusion.

(147-48)

Here, Frame situates the dance in its dimension of deception.⁴ The mad mask their disorder with party clothes and mimic "real ladies and gentlemen." In Lacan's understanding of the term, mimicry is normative. It is the effect of the split in the subject between its being and the semblance it shows to the other (107). In this scene, the division in the subject is simultaneously a destabilizing of received meaning and an assertion of a moment of subjective truth. For what does Frame's use of the adjective "real" signify here? In this scene, the signifier "real" is divorced from its signified and starts edging towards the traumatic real, the moment of uncanny recognition.⁵ These mad "ladies and gentleman" are doppelgänger. The mad inhabit the forms of the social and, in so doing, they reveal the disturbing uncertainty, the strangeness of those forms. This ambiguity is incorporated within the bodies of the dancers: there is a semblance of enjoyment but within there is "crying and confusion." For Frame, the mad subject's truth is determined in the divide between what can be seen and what is unseen, hidden, secret. In its attention to the point where words fail to represent the real condition of the subject, Frame's narrative constructs a critique of the mental institution's reification of the mad.

The split between the way the mad subject sees herself and the position from which she is seen—a split represented in *Owls Do Cry* by the different registers of “real”—presupposes the existence of two registers of the gaze in the process of subjectivation: the imaginary and the symbolic. Joan Copjec notes that “Once the permanent possibility of deception is admitted” (30) the gaze moves beyond demarcating the subject as visible, to a Lacanian understanding of the subject as culpable, that is, as subjected to the Other. At the level of the imaginary, the eye institutes the split between the ego and the mirror reflection in which the subject misrecognizes herself. But the seeing eye is under the auspices of an unseeing symbolic gaze. This is the gaze of the Other that one does not see in the mirror, the gaze as signifier of that which is lost, the negative kernel around which the subject is constituted. The gaze of the Other is opaque. It is like a screen upon which the desiring subject is projected, and the opacity of the gaze is the opacity of the signifier that mediates the subject’s perception of her image, requiring as a consequence, “the subject’s active intervention in the imaginary relationship” (Rose 154). The screen is a locus of mediation between the subject and the gaze of the Other, between the desire of the subject to see what it wants to see and the gaze as the object of the subject’s desire. In this way, the process of subjectivation can be understood as an effect of the desire to see and to be seen.

The dialectic between eye and gaze can be tracked through Frame’s depiction of the dance. The dimension of the uncanny is introduced into this normative process when the gaze, rather than being the negative presence in the image, is in fact discerned by the subject. This perception is experienced at the level of affect, in the recognition of the other as a double. Mladen Dolar elaborates:

The double is the same as me plus the object *a*, that invisible part of being added to my image . . . imagine that one could see one’s mirror image close its eyes: that would make the gaze as object appear in the mirror. This is what happens with the double, and the anxiety that the double produces is the surest sign of the appearance of the object.
(13)

It is this uncanny moment of recognition that Frame explores in her representation of the madwoman.

In *Faces in the Water*, Frame returns to the scene of the hospital dance. This text is described in a prefatory note as a fiction in documentary form. The narrator/protagonist, Istina Mavet, witnesses to the affective truth that the patients' bodies speak. By denying the medical institution's understanding of the "objective" truth of madness, Istina, like the narrator in *Owls Do Cry*, follows Camus's dictum that the artist's role is to "witness to the body, not to the Law."⁶ In her depiction of the dance in the asylum in this fiction, Frame demonstrates how the medical staff avoid recognizing the madwoman as the uncanny double, as something more than a subject, by ensuring that she appears as something less. She is nothing but spectacle. Witnessing for the truth of the madwoman, that is for the madwoman as representative of the subject in its division, Istina counters the institution's ploy by representing the madwoman's impossible desire to be seen as more than her image, to be seen as the "self" that she knows she is.⁷ Frame's representations of the dance in the asylum induce the reader to imagine both what is not visible in the image of the madwoman, what is lacking in her representation, and what is all too disturbingly visible. While Foucault comments in his discussion of the Panopticon that "Visibility is a trap" (200), the mad subject in Frame's text is constituted in the gap between what is seen and what is not. The subject cannot be trapped within the image because the interpretation of the image calls the signifier into play. As Copjec observes, "the signifier alone makes vision possible" (34), thus indicating the dependence of the visible upon language.

Frame's figurings of the dance in the asylum in *Owls Do Cry* and, more significantly, in *Faces in the Water*, can be situated in a tradition of both visual and written representations of the Lunatics' Ball. Sander Gilman's valuable work on the way culture has constructed madness provides a context for Frame's account, for in the supposed "new attitude" to the management of mental patients is the residue of early nineteenth-century asylum reform. Gilman discusses the eye-witness accounts of the Lunatics' Ball by Charles Dickens and Charles Maurice Davies, a Church of England clergyman. Documenting both the pathos of madness and the progressive nature of their times, they index the Luna-

tics' Ball as evidence of the humane treatment of the mad. Gilman discusses these versions of the ball in terms of stereotypic categorizations of madness. He succinctly contrasts Dickens's and Davies's images of the asylum: "The madhouse has ceased to be an asylum, a refuge from the world, and has become an institution, a structure harboring the insane. From the former there was the promise of a return to the outside world; from the latter, the promise was lacking" (96). This opposition between asylum and institution supports Gilman's argument that the two aspects of the stereotype of madness are mutually exclusive: either madness is perceived as an illness that affects only part of the personality and is thus curable through "moral management," or, it is "moral insanity, the belief in the total and overwhelming nature of madness" (97). Gilman notes that Dickens "tended to limit his descriptions to that fine area just along the borderline between sanity and madness" (88). For Dickens, "It is society itself which contains the seed of potential madness hidden in its institutions. But it is through other institutions, such as the dance, that mental balance can be returned" (96). In his brief analysis of Charles Davies's observation of the asylum dance, Gilman contrasts his view with Dickens's. For Davies, the role of the asylum is not to restore the mad to society: death is the only way out. The significant differences in Dickens's and Davies's representations of the mad dancers illuminate Frame's representation of the dance, for she draws attention to the contingency of the division of madness from itself that is evident in Gilman's discussion. Turning to Dickens's and Davies's texts, it is possible to see the workings of the institutional gaze in the constitution of the subject of madness and to locate the points where the sane subject's eye moves towards a moment of traumatic recognition of the madwoman as double.

Dickens's essay appeared in January 1852. It describes, in very positive terms, the Boxing Day dance at St Luke's Hospital for the Insane. While Dickens does not consider asylum reform to be a panacea for madness, he affirms the insubstantiality of the line between madness and sanity by commenting that through humane treatment of the mad, "improvement, and hope of final restoration will come, if such hope be possible" (391). Davies,

writing twenty years later, also questions the difference between the mad and the sane in his description of a "lunatic ball" at Hanwell, John Connolly's reformed asylum. He locates within the mad the presence of a desire which is not evident in the images though which they are perceived. While Davies emphasizes a division between insanity and sanity, a division literalized in the walls of the asylum, this is shown to be an effect of the necessity to differentiate absolutely madness from sanity. He concludes his essay with the comment: "And the question which *would* haunt me all the way home was, which are the sane people and which are the lunatics?" (50). While he expresses sympathy for the mad "double," getting too close to the madman disturbs Davies considerably. Finding himself in a refractory ward with the attendant at some distance, Davies confesses: "I do not know that I am particularly nervous; but I candidly confess an anxiety to get near that worthy official" (41). For Davies, it is precisely because the sane and the mad look alarmingly alike, that the mad must be positioned as radically other, and their confinement thus seen to be justified.

While Dickens's view of the insane other may be more sympathetic than stigmatic, he figures the dance at St Luke's in terms of spectacle. As observer, Dickens distances madness from sanity and himself from the mad. He is a visitor to the asylum, attracted by the "curious dance," a qualification that differentiates this dance from its refined model in society. Dickens sentimentalizes the stock figures he identifies. There is, for example, "the old-young woman with the weird-gentility . . . [who] languished through the dance with a love-lorn affability and condescension to the force of circumstances, in itself a faint reflection of all of Bedlam" (389). That the madwoman is the very figure of madness—a faint figure at that—is indicative of the feminizing of insanity, a development that Elaine Showalter locates at the beginning of the nineteenth century (9-10). But more importantly, it guarantees the boundary between the sane male observer and the madwoman: Dickens neutralizes the possible trauma of recognizing himself in the mad double by narrativizing madness in terms of romance.

Davies, on the other hand, attempts to see through the eyes of the mad. He writes in the opening paragraph: "The prevailing

opinion inside the walls was that the majority of madmen lay outside, and that the most hopelessly insane people in all the world were the officers immediately concerned with the management of the establishment itself" (38). He tries to "fancy how it would feel if one were really being consigned to that receptacle [the asylum] by interested relatives" (39). Throughout his observation of the dance he returns to this "fancy," imagining what it must be like to be mad, or to be diagnosed as mad and have periods of sanity during which the awareness of one's condition would be unbearable (48). Davies is sensitive to the mad subjects' perception of their own objectification, with the result that the division between madness and sanity takes on a certain arbitrariness in his text. Thus Davies's view is not merely a contradiction of Dickens's reading of the dance. It constitutes a radical critique of Dickens's sentimentalization of the mad.

Dickens was spectator at the ball. Davies is both spectator and participant. He comes to the Lunatic Ball in the guise of a musician and it is through music that he establishes a point of identification between madness and sanity:

It was quite curious to notice the effect of music on some of the quieter patients . . . "I used to play that instrument afore I come here," said a patient, with a squeaky voice; . . . indeed most of the little group around the platform looked upon their temporary sojourn at Hanwell as the only impediment to a bright career in the musical world. (43)⁸

Although his tone is somewhat ironic, Davies does recognize the patients' very human desire to be acknowledged as something more than they appear to be.

In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault describes the way the nineteenth-century reformer Samuel Tuke held "tea-parties" in his asylum, the "Retreat," at which everyone "was obliged to imitate all the formal requirements of social existence; nothing else circulated except the observation that would spy out any incongruity, any disorder, any awkwardness where madness might betray itself" (249). Foucault emphasizes the way such social occasions forced the madman to "objectify himself in the eyes of reason as the perfect stranger, that is, as the man whose strangeness does not reveal itself" (249-50). Janet Frame takes

a different tack. In *Owls Do Cry* she highlights the uncanny “strangeness” of the patients mimicking “real ladies and gentleman” at the dance, not in order to exemplify the way insanity betrays itself, but to emphasize the institution’s attempt to repress the truth the mad subject embodies, the truth of the subject in its division.⁹ The dance is at once evidence of the “new attitude” to seeing the insane and the disavowal of that belief. Frame’s focus on the representation of the mad subject distinguishes her understanding of the dance from Dickens’s account. Where Dickens celebrates the humanitarian reform of the asylum, Frame exposes the artifice of the festivities that do not—cannot—recognize the patients as subjects nor meet their needs.

The dance in *Owls Do Cry* is not a distorted reflection of the dance in the “real” world. The patients’ mimicry of social behavior confirms, for the onlookers, both the otherness of the mad and the observers’ misrecognition of themselves as sane.

Yes, it was June that they danced, when in the world, as you know who live there, young ladies are being measured and fitted for their coming out dresses; and choosing their long gloves; and between talk of swot and the music master, preparing to attend their first real ball, and be presented to the Bishop or the Governor-General, or the local member of parliament, or whoever has what is called dignity and standing in the community. (147)

Here, too, Frame foregrounds the deceptions perpetrated at the dance. As part of their ensemble, the male patients buy from the canteen “the cheating type [of tie] that you pin on . . . or a new handkerchief, or a pen to put in their pocket, displaying it there, as if they worked in an office, and were not patients” (147). Just as they do in Dickens’s and Davies’s accounts, the men align themselves on benches on one side of the hall and the women on benches on the other side. On the stage the members of the band, in evening dress, are “waiting, whispering together, smiling, amused” while “the nurses and . . . the bigger chiefs sat on red velvet chairs, watching and pointing” (147). This is madness as spectacle but the mad are not sentimentalized. Rather, the depth of their suffering is penetrated by the narratorial witness’s eye.

The mad subject as uncanny double is explored in a more sustained and complex fashion in *Faces in the Water*. In her representation of the dance in this text, Frame distinguishes between the artifice of the dance that the institution prescribes for the patients and the unconscious eruptions of more ancient forms of the dance through which the truth of the subject escapes. There is the "wild dance" (44) of despair performed by the inmates of Ward Two before entering their dormitory and the dance "people danced with good reason which is without reason" (113) when spring arrived. A "dance" was staged daily in Lawn Lodge, "the refractory ward" (89) that Istina Mavet witnesses "as from a seat in a concert hall" (90). It is performed to the

violent orchestration of unreason; . . . [their] movement was a ballet, and the choreographer was Insanity: and the whole room seemed like a microfilm of atoms in prison dress revolving and voyaging, if that were possible, in search of their lost nucleus. (90)¹⁰

Through the "dance," the madwoman's yearning for the "lost nucleus," that excluded part of being, finds expression, and the impossibility of the subject's self-identity is made manifest. Lacan refers to the notion of a nucleus in the context of the syntax of the subject. The nucleus is that which discourse condenses around. Rather than this condensation presupposing the existence of an ego, "the nucleus must be designated as belonging to the real" (68). Frame's representation of the dance as an expression of the yearning of the mad for something forever lost, resonates with a Lacanian notion of subjectivity structured around lack.

This point is elaborated in a narratorial intervention, the terms of which are important for an understanding of the significance of the asylum dance in Frame's texts. The narrator dismisses popular fiction's "romantic" stereotyping of the insane as heroic or "charmingly" eccentric, those figures evident in Dickens's account of the dance (112). Speaking from the position of the sane, Istina insists that the truth of madness is anything but romantic: "Their behaviour affronted, caused uneasiness; they wept and moaned they quarreled and complained. They were a nuisance and were treated as such" (112). Yet this sentence is immediately qualified: "It was forgotten that they too possessed a

prized humanity which needed care and love, that a tiny poetic essence could be distilled from their overflowing squalid truth" (112). The narrative asserts again and again that this "tiny poetic essence," this sense of being that is at odds with the way the subject appears, is precisely what is missing from medicine's understanding of madness, and sanity's perception of itself as whole.

In *Faces in the Water*, the degree to which the mental institution effaces the truth of the mad subject becomes particularly evident at the dance where Dr. Steward, the hospital's superintendent, officiates. As in *Owls Do Cry*, Frame emphasizes the dimension of mimicry at the dance:

Yes, we danced, the crazy people from Ward Two whom even the people from the observation ward and the convalescent ward looked upon as oddities and loonies. We dressed in our exotic party dresses . . . and we lined up outside the clinic to have make-up put on our faces from the ward box with its stump of lipstick, coated and roughened powder puffs, box of blossom-pink powder and scent bottle squirting carnation scent behind our ears (who did we expect to kiss them) and in the hollow of our wrists. By the time we were ready we were a garden of carnations and we looked like stage whores. (186)

The madwoman masquerading as "stage whore" is doubly reified. Istina attempts to escape entrapment within this image by the assertion of her sense of herself as agent: "I still could not believe that there was no hope for me, or I kept running over the rat-infested no man's land between belief and disbelief and pitching camp on one side or the other" (186). Istina's negotiation of this gap between belief and disbelief, meaning and unmeaning marks her transition from madwoman to narratorial witness.

As in *Owls Do Cry*, the dance in *Faces in the Water* is figured initially in terms of spectacle: "doctors and . . . visitors [were] invited from the town to see mental patients engaged in recreation" (187). When the music starts and the patients are instructed to dance, the narrative moves beyond the register of the visible to that of the invisible.

The men either stood rigidly against the wall or rushed helter-skelter across the room to clasp a partner and whirl her away to dance with or without her consent. Sometimes one of the men, having chosen his

partner and danced a few steps with her, decided she did not suit him after all, and he would walk away and partner someone else; sometimes a woman ran across the room to choose her man. There were few ballroom formalities and much of the "plain speaking" that makes a virtue of insult; there were endearments and pledges and muddled conversations following the first remark which was not, "A good floor isn't it?" but "How long have you been here?" (188)

The patients are conscious of the ambiguity of their position and of their confinement. To them it is clear that the ritual being performed on the dance floor is primarily carceral, not social. Davies speaks of the asylum as "a small town in itself, and to a large extent self dependent and self governed" (49) and Frame's representation of the dance confirms the alienation of the mad within the closed world of the institution.

A dialectic between the subject's eye and the gaze of the Other is operating here. The subject is never looked at from the place in which it seeks the gaze and conversely, what the subject looks at is never what it wishes to see.¹¹ The mad find their image reflected in each other but when Istina turns to Dr. Steward it is for affirmation that she is *not* as she appears:

There's Dr. Steward, he's watching me, he's seeing that someone has asked me to dance, that I'm not a wallflower, he's seeing that I'm well, that I needn't be in Ward Two spending all day shut in the dayroom or the yard or the park; he's deciding about me. Deciding now. (190)

According to Rose, the necessity of appeal indicates "the permeation of the Other over the specular relation . . . the structural incompleteness of that relation, and . . . the irreducible place of desire within the [mirror stage]" (149). Such is the case here. As Istina whirls past Dr. Steward, doing exactly what she thinks that he wants her to do, she discovers that he isn't watching her at all. Dr. Steward does not see Istina; he does not differentiate her from the other patients dancing in front of him. Her consciousness of herself as sane is one that Dr. Steward is quite incapable of sharing. He is

talking to someone, saying, "Yes, I . . . I . . . I . . ."

Of course. Like me, like all of us, he was thinking and talking about himself. (190-91; Frame's ellipses).

At the level of the imaginary, the gaze of the seeing eye is imbued with the promise that there is another present who will recognize the subject's existence, confirm her image of herself. That this promise is unfulfillable is made painfully evident here. As Copjec comments, the Lacanian gaze, in contrast to Foucault's panoptic gaze, does not belong

to an Other who cares about what or where you are, who pries, keeps tabs on your whereabouts, and takes note of all your steps and missteps. . . . When you encounter the gaze of the Other, you meet not a seeing eye but a blind one. The gaze is not clear or penetrating, not filled with knowledge or recognition; it is clouded over and turned back on itself, absorbed in its own enjoyment; . . . the gaze of the Other is not confirming; it will not validate you. (36)

In Istina's missed encounter with Dr. Steward, the Other's lack of being is dramatized. Dr. Steward does not exist for Istina: he is absorbed in his own enjoyment. There is no confirming message from Dr. Steward but, far more significantly, Istina finds her own message returned to her. Her claiming of the "I" as her own is the effect of the split between her seeking Dr. Steward's gaze, that is, her desire to be validated by him, and Dr. Steward's lack of confirmation of her existence. In Rose's account of subjectivation, when the Other collapses as "the guarantor of certitude" identification with the Other "is conditioned by its function as support of desire" (151). Corresponding to the lack in the subject there is a lack in the Other, a lack that is evident in the gaps in the Other's discourse. In Frame's text, Dr. Steward's "Yes, I . . . I . . . I . . ." graphically represents these gaps. This means that the Other is also desiring and it is through an identification with the desire of the Other that the subject is desiring. Her sense of herself as "I" is a recognition of her desire to be seen as the sane person she believes she is. The impossibility of confirmation by the Other, in Copjec's reading of Lacan, is "the very *cause* of the subject's being, that is, its desire, or want-to-be" (35). Indeed, Lacan dramatizes the relation between eye and gaze when he speaks of the eye "made desperate by the gaze" when confronted with "an image of completeness closed in upon itself" (116).¹² However, this scene is more than an exemplification of the normative working of eye and gaze. Dr. Steward cannot see Istina because he may discover in her a double, a "face in the water"

that he recognizes as his own. This is eponymous image recurs in the narrative; it represents that which we do not wish to recognize in ourselves. In establishing the link between mad and sane at the level of their absorption in their own enjoyment, Frame's text speaks the uncanny truth that the social represses.

At the mad dance there is a subtle negotiation between Istina as madwoman and Istina as narrator, and the effect of this negotiation is the representation of incidents in which the familiar takes on the cast of the unfamiliar. In *Faces in the Water* the mad dance is only one such event in which the patients occupy recognizable social roles. The reconfiguring of the mad by those in power over them has a dual effect. Within the context of the institution, madness is domesticated, made homely. But the mad patients' mimicry of social events—the Christmas party, the picnic, the Sports Day—defamiliarizes those rituals and exposes the fantasies which structure them. Frame's representation of the dance in the asylum in *Owls Do Cry* and *Faces in the Water* is thus closer to Charles Davies's version than to Charles Dickens's. Frame complicates the imaginary structure of self and other through which stereotypes of madness are produced by emphasizing the crucial role of the real, of that negativity which should not be seen within the visible image. For Frame, there is always a dialectical relationship between "sanity" and "insanity" as there is between the seeing eye and the unseeing gaze. In releasing the madwoman from confinement within her image and through the representation of her uncanny truth, Frame reveals the process of misrecognition through which society perceives itself as sane.

NOTES

- 1 See *Faces* 72, 134, 136.
- 2 Mary Elene Wood notes the ease with which a model of medical progress conceals "the mechanisms still at work in mental health systems and discourses . . . that serve to enforce inequalities of race, class, and gender" (166).
- 3 See Freud on the uncanny and Dolar's discussion of Lacan's development of this concept.
- 4 The deceptive nature of Frame's language is a focus of Patrick Evan's criticism of Frame. His ambivalent attitude to this characteristic is evident in his reference, in "Farthest from the Heart," to Frame's "neurotic desire to manipulate the reader" (38).

- ⁵ Patrick West invokes the Lacanian and Kristevan versions of the real in his discussion of Frame's *Living in the Maniototo*. However, Frame's text is used to frame West's argument with Lacan and to offer instances that support his privileging of Kristeva's "vraie!" (or "The True-Real"). I am employing Lacan's real in the context of his concept of extimacy: the exteriorization of the most intimate part of the self. My discussion is informed by Dolar's discussion of Lacan and the uncanny. For Kristevan approach to *Owls Do Cry* that concentrates on the representation of abjection in the Epilogue, see McNaughton.
- ⁶ Camus's comment is quoted by Shoshana Felman 108.
- ⁷ This point is in direct contrast to the critical assertion of Frame's valorization of a unified selfhood. This belief has shaped Frame criticism and is particularly evident in Delbaere's collection of essays. As she comments in the Introduction, "whatever their approach to Janet Frame's novels all the contributors agree on recognizing her passionate longing for oneness and her deep-rooted conviction that beyond all man-made divisions there is a unity which our limited vision . . . prevents us from perceiving" (18). Another version of the privileging of unity in Frame can be seen in the tendency to conflate the "I" of the autobiographical fiction with the "I" of the autobiography. Although reading Frame from very different positions, Patrick Evans, in "Janet Frame and the Art of Life," Simon Petch and Gina Mercer, intersect on this point. Susan Ash, in her problematizing of the relation between autobiography and the autobiographical in Frame's work, is a notable exception.
- ⁸ See also Davies 39-40.
- ⁹ For an insightful Foucauldian reading of the representation of psychiatric practices of normalization in *Owls Do Cry* see Jennifer Lawn. In contrast to my reading of Frame's representation of the madwoman as divided subject, she considers Frame to be complicit with a Romantic notion of unified selfhood.
- ¹⁰ Frame's description here resonates with Gilman's discussion of the diverse antecedents to the Lunatics' Ball. Gilman locates the historical roots of the mad dance in the late Dionysian rites practiced by the corybantes, in the dance of the "wild men" at the court of Charles IV of France, and in the mass hysterical dancing in the Middle Ages: St Vitus's Dance and Tarantism (90-92).
- ¹¹ Lacan elaborates these positions 67-119. See especially 102-03.
- ¹² See Adams's clear explication of the relationship between subjectivity and desire (73).

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