

## An Analysis of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Isolation and the Shattered Self in Present-day Society: Cramped in the 'Room'

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**Abstract:** *This work focuses on the major works of existential philosophy and socio-psychoanalytic theory on the dome and world of Emma Donoghue's Room, particularly on the dread of isolation and self-identity formation. The dark trauma of mental and physical confinement, control with artificial and present-day modern technology is reshaping the psyche of the being. The Room is both a literal symbolic prison and a metaphor of present-day alienation in the epoch of modern exploration disguised under the burden of technology. This study relies on Kierkegaard philosophy of life, and the analysis shows how Ma, in the process of supportive parenting, regains herself while her child, Jack, finds meaning within the confines of his building fascination. This dichotomy represents a universal bitter truth: even in the face of disturbing and oppressive man-control systems, purposeful life is created through minute acts of struggle and fight. Beyond a depraved story of a boy and a mother's kidnapping, Room is a profound reflection of today's disintegrated identities, the product of social disconnection and systems of survival. The story offers a metaphor of survival which turns in on itself to critique modernity, exposing alienation while simultaneously grappling with the hope of self-reinvention through social bonds. The primary source is the original text of the novel.*

**Keywords:** Socio-Psychoanalytic Theory, Alienation, Existentialism, Identity, Human Freedom, Psychological Isolation

### Introduction

Psychoanalytic and Sociological approaches are combined to study the societal structures, individuality, and human manners. It looks at the interactions between larger social structures (power, culture, norms) and individual psychology (emotions, trauma, and repression) (Long, 2023). Socio refers to societal structures, such as institutions, cultural norms, and collective behaviour. Psychoanalytic refers to the theories of Freud, Lacan, and others, focusing on the unconscious mind, internal conflict, trauma, and identity formation (Funk, 2017). This concept refers to the growing psychological and emotional disconnect that individuals experience in an increasingly AI-driven world (Silver, 2014). It can manifest in several ways, feeling disconnected from authentic human relationships due to over-reliance on AI (e.g., chatbots, algorithms). Experiencing a loss of energy, as AI systems make decisions for individuals. Being reduced to data or behavioral patterns, stripping away human uniqueness and emotional complexity (Arnaud, 2007). AI alienation is thus both emotional and existential—it reflects the fear that as machines become more intelligent, humans may become less human or increasingly isolated (Silver, 2019). This idea draws from postmodern and psychoanalytic theory and refers to a self that is divided, unstable, or conflicted, rather than unified and whole. In contemporary society, especially under pressures from technology, capitalism, and media, the self is often split between real identity and performed identity (Sakurai, 2020). This fragmentation might also come from trauma, surveillance, lack of autonomy, or being constantly shaped by external forces (like AI or societal expectations). In this study, Ma and Jack can represent the fragmented self—individuals who struggle to understand who they are within and beyond the room, mirroring the modern individual's identity crisis in a tech-saturated world (Cortina, 2024).

Contemporary Society refers to the current socio-cultural and technological context—especially shaped by Digital culture, Artificial intelligence and automation, Surveillance capitalism, mental health

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crises and Identity politics (Brown, 2006). Contemporary society is marked by speed, disconnection, and constant stimulation, which can exacerbate feelings of alienation, particularly in environments where human interactions are mediated or replaced by technology. Room can be read as an allegory or metaphor for the condition of human beings in a tech-driven world, where AI-related alienation and identity fragmentation reflect the deep psychological and societal anxieties of our time (Judaken, 2021). Using socio-psychoanalytic tools, the study examines how individuals negotiate trauma, freedom, and existence within confined or controlled environments—mirroring the existential dilemma posed by AI and digital culture today. In this context, a socio-psychoanalytic exploration looks at how modern societal conditions (such as technology, confinement, and surveillance) impact mental health, emotional development, and personal identity. Irish and Canadian playwright Emma Donoghue writes contemporary and historical novels, short stories and non-fiction. She is famous for writing novels about freedom, motherhood and resilience (Judaken, 2023). Emma Donoghue's most notable work is the novel Room (2010). She wrote this novel, influenced by the real-life case of Josef Fritzl, which captivated global attention. She compiles the story in a thought-provoking way (Lyu, 2019). She wrote this novel that still connects with readers worldwide in the contemporary era, making them talk about trauma, anxiety, fear, survival and freedom. 'Room' is the captivating masterpiece written by Emma Donoghue (Sucipto, 2013).

The whole story revolves around the two main characters, Jack and Ma. They have a small place which they call the Room. The protagonist character Ma, considered the room is a prison. Old Jack had trapped her in the 11 by 11 room. Ma was kidnapped by Old Jack. The story is divided into two main parts: life inside Room and life outside Room. In the first part, Ma and Jack point out their existence within the limited boundaries of their environment, finding relief among the oppressive conditions. In the second part, they embark on a journey of adaptation and healing as they adjust to life outside Room (Li, 2020). Room provides a thoughtful look at the human condition, highlighting the spirit of humanity's resiliency in the face of hardship. We can understand the complex relationships between personal psychology and societal systems shown in the novel by using a socio-psychoanalytic lens (Arkhipova, 2019). The theme of self-existentialism highlights the characters' path to self-discovery and freedom, serving as a constant reminder of the strength of love, hope, and resilience in the face of overwhelming hardship. Room can be seen as a microcosm of society from a socio-psychoanalytic point of view, also reflecting the greater power of dynamics and social hierarchies. AI makes people mentally disturbed and face trauma, threat and anxiety due to a restricted society environment, technological advancement and how they manage their identities and express their inside repressive regimes (Parmar, 2023).

## Review of the Literature

Artificial intelligence's societal effects and moral consequences have drawn significant attention from the public, academic researchers, and business community (Tai, 2020). Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a promising technology that can assist parents with various aspects of child-rearing by providing them with quick answers, evidence-based techniques, and tailored advice (Arkhipova, 2019). AI has demonstrated in recent years that it can transform early childhood psychology, which emphasizes developing fundamental skills at the beginning of a child's lifelong learning journey (Makridakis, 2017). Creating "robotiquette," or social norms for robot behaviour, that are both bad/pleasant and acceptable/unacceptable to humans. In the field of artificial intelligence and robotics, social intelligence in robots is relatively new. However, in many application areas and circumstances where robots must communicate and work with humans or other robots, it has become more and more clear that social and interaction skills serve a vital role in the development of the child's psychology in society (Dautenhahn, 2007).

In a different light, anguish, selfhood, and self-realization, along with the mother and child bond, and the abstract mothering role, all emphasize the complexities of the suffering and the intricate process of identity formation. Dotting the psychological landscape of the boundaries collaring functional and dysfunctional humans, captivity, and solitude gets tangled with senses. Somewhere, the microcosm of captivity sketches the macrocosm of society, all noses traipsing like little caricatures of French poodles, with webs of suspicion stretched to the heavens. The crawling of the technology womb over every bit of being finds every sentient creature. The child projects his concerns while the mother monitors him, asking

why it is so unfortunate. Emma Donoghue's *Room* is an exceptional novel. It revises the psychological and emotional domains of a person with particular emphasis on the gaps.

We get this through Jack's eyes, just a kid stuck in some tiny room with his mom. Trapped there with his mother, Jack's perspective brings this raw honesty to everything happening around them. The author connects those personal struggles to broader cultural anxieties we're all dealing with now (Arkhipova, 2019). What's interesting is how it ties modern tech anxiety to classic psychology matter. Like how isolation doesn't just make people lonely anymore. The study argues that oppressive structures don't just limit opportunities anymore either. They actively scramble how we see ourselves over time. Not saying it's all doom and gloom though. But the connection between external pressures and internal collapse gets pretty stark when a person lay it out like this. Makes a man rethink what we human mean by 'self' in an age where machines influence everything from jobs to social circles (Allen, 2020). Freud's ideas still come up a lot in psychology matter, books and culture studies too. His work gives solid ground when trying to make sense of characters' hidden feelings, like their battles with identity conflicts, and existential stuff or big life questions (Orben, et.al. 2020). This study sticks strictly to Donoghue's *Room* and avoids the usual comparisons between books to literature and human life. Digs into specific psychological ideas that line up with how the book shows people feeling trapped and disconnected from others. Looks at modern tech's grip on human lives too, shown through that whole AI metaphor thing. The approach here's pretty narrow but focused deep. Doesn't wander off into broader literary debates or anything like that. Just hammers away at how personal isolation and outside control play out under these particular conditions they set up in the story (Turkle, 2005).

The study doesn't try to cover all the ground with Freudian thoughts or big existential ideas. It gets laser-focused on how Emma Donoghue writes about being trapped, and the mental toughness required in those situations. What's really interesting is how this taps into modern anxieties about AI. People are worried these systems might strip away our humanity bit by bit. The story shows the way technology can smash personal identity, chip away at free will, and leave people feeling totally disconnected. Not through some sci-fi horror angle either, but through the slow erosion of what makes us human in everyday interactions. The characters are grappling with that loss in ways that feel uncomfortably familiar these days. The need for real connection that isn't controlled by outside forces, the drive toward self-determination even in impossible circumstances, the basic hunger to exist as full individuals rather than just survivors. The context of the study deals how sometimes stories hit harder because they show everyday society dealing with unexpected limits? This book does that by making imprisonment materialistically rather than mental which makes the subjects more instinctual somehow particularly when things through a child's perception are trying to make sense of his shrinking-expanding realm.

## Research Methodology

The nature of the study is qualitative. This study looks at the psychological and philosophical ideas in Emma Donoghue's *Room*. Trying to see how it connects to modern problems like feeling disconnected or lost in today's world, the approach here is mostly about digging into themes through careful reading and interpretation. Three main themes are examined in this study, which focuses on non-numerical textual data: socio-analysis, which analyzes social control, economic deprivation, and isolation; psychoanalysis, which investigates the psychological effects of trauma and abuse; and self-existentialism, which emphasizes the struggle for freedom, identity, and individual existence, especially through Ma and Jack's journeys as they seek autonomy both inside and outside of confinement. Donoghue's novel serves as the main source, with help from academic papers, critical analyses, and philosophical writings, particularly Søren Kierkegaard's concept of existentialism, which provides a fundamental framework for understanding the existential aspects of the book. Thematic coding for pattern recognition, psychoanalytic and existential frameworks for analysis, contextual correlation to link literary material with contemporary situations, and close reading for textual evidence are some examples of research tools. *Room* is chosen as the case study, followed by a literature review, thematic classification into socio-analytical, psychoanalytical, and existential dimensions, and character interpretation with an emphasis on alienation and identity, and theoretical synthesis to place findings within larger frameworks.

Data Analysis  
Socio-Psychoanalytic Exploration

The main character, Ma’s confinement shapes Jack’s worldview on harsh, overpowering directions. Their connection becomes a dance between shelter and entrapment, with Room symbolizing both a dark locked prison and society’s unseen birdcages. Mr. Nick represents patriarchal domination—mastery through intimidation, dismissal, and dehumanization. He reduces people to some lesser form of existence. Jack’s scattered and disturbed imagination especially his shift to fear to “Prince Robot Super Jacker Jack” depicts his trauma’s grip on his self. Ma’s mental dissociation unveils despair and purposelessness as a means of surviving, while Old Nick’s manifestation constantly claws at their reality through perpetual dread. Old Nick is not just a set of four walls. He is as much the internalized, self-policing system of brutality that operates below the levels of thought and language.

Table 1  
Thematic Data Analysis

Textual Lines	Theme	Interpretation (Socio-Psychoanalytic Perspective)
“The hard ground rushed up to meet him, harder than pottery yet coarse like sandpaper. Run, he thought desperately, run for help!	Disembodiment / Dislocation	His mind raced with snippets of advice on escaping, each more alarming than the last. Though imprisoned in the vehicle, his imagination allowed brief flights to vast celestial bodies, if only to escape his grim reality, even if just for a moment. Metaphorically traveling among the stars provided momentary relief from the isolation and loss of control he now faced.
“Scream with all your might, someone is bound to hear your cries of terror. Stay strong and tell the first person you see, 'I've been taken against my will. .'”	Fragmented Trust / Crisis of Social Bond	Jack's incapability to conceptualize "somebody" imitates early alienation from societal structures and common belief.
“Keep it at the front... just tell them, 'I've been kidnapped.'”	Scripted Identity / Coached Autonomy	Jack’s individuality and assistance are constructed through Ma’s scripting, mirroring how artificial selves or AI may rely on human pre-programming.
“Dead, Truck, Wriggle Out, Jump, Run...”	Cognitive Overload / Programmed Escape	The escape plan mimics algorithmic sequencing; Jack processes trauma through memorized commands—mirroring a robotic or fragmented cognition.
“I am Prince Robot Super JackerJack Mr. Five...”	Constructed Selfhood / Hyper reality	Jack crafts a heroic alter-ego to survive; his identity is a layered fiction blending fantasy, TV archetypes, and maternal language—highlighting fractured selfhood.
“Ma’s not just Gone... maybe he squished her neck harder.”	Maternal Absence / Death Anxiety	Jack’s struggle to understand the idea of “somebody” shows how early he feels cut off from society and its shared beliefs.

Textual Lines	Theme	Interpretation (Socio-Pschoanalytic Perspective)
"My chest is going dangadangadang..."	Embodied Anxiety / Somatic Response	His sense of self is shaped almost entirely by Ma's guidance, much like how artificial intelligence depends on human programming to function.
"There aren't any breaths out here."	Oxygen as Metaphor / Existential Vacuum	Even the escape plan feels mechanical—Jack follows it step by step, almost like running an algorithm. It highlights how he processes trauma through repetition and commands, rather than through free thought.
"What if he opens Rug... just to look at me dead?"	Surveillance / Objectification of the Self	His physical reactions—panic, nausea, tension—reveal how fear and trauma take over the body when the mind can't fully process them, echoing the way AI often "senses" without really understanding.
"I thought humans were or weren't..."	Ontological Confusion	When Jack finally steps outside, he experiences the world as if it's unbreathable—showing how unprepared he is to live beyond the walls of Room. This reflects how AI, too, struggles when taken out of the contexts it was designed for.
"You're a bit of Ma... Ma's dead spit riding along with me."	Maternal Transference / Hybrid Identity	Finally, Jack's fear of being stared at after death captures the collapse of his own sense of self. In that moment, he feels reduced to an object under the gaze of others—much like how AI risks being seen only as a tool or object, rather than something with agency.
"She used to be a student... now she's just Ma."	Loss of Autonomy / Identity Reduction	Ma's shift from being a full individual to simply "just Ma" shows how captivity erodes her identity, reducing her to a role rather than a person—similar to how AI can be seen as nothing more than its function.
"He knocked me down, and I never tried that again."	Conditioned Silence / Trauma Encoding	Her trauma also mirrors learned helplessness: silence becomes both a way to survive and a form of self-erasure, showing how suppression works as a defense mechanism.
"t the same time, Ma pushes back against her objectification by describing herself in terms of economic value—treated less as a person and more as a resource. This mirrors how AI is often reduced to a commodity, judged for its usefulness rather than its deeper significance.."	Dehumanisation / Object-Value Reduction	At the same time, Ma critiques the way she is objectified by framing her existence in terms of economic utility—she is dehumanized into a resource. This echoes the way AI is often commodified, valued more for its usefulness than its essence.



AI Alienation

Read metaphorically in today’s context—especially in relation to AI and digital life—*Room* can be seen as a model of enforced isolation. Identities are shaped, autonomy is constrained, and reality is filtered through artificial structures, much like Jack’s reliance on cartoons, superheroes, and ‘TV friends.’ In the same way that Jack’s sense of self is built inside a closed system, the postmodern individual is increasingly ‘programmed’ by algorithms and shaped by the logics of digital surveillance.

Table 2  
Thematic Code, Interpretation (AI Alienation Lens), Psycho-Social Implication

Text Symbolic Code	Thematic Code	Interpretation (Artificial Intelligence Alienation Lens)	Psycho-Social Implication
“You’ll land on the pavement... run, run, run”	Pre-programmed Escape Simulation	Jack responds to Ma’s rehearsed instructions like an AI executing a pre-installed subroutine without independent reasoning.	Represents loss of free will—Jack’s agency is overwritten by programmed behaviour, reflecting AI’s functional subservience.
“Don’t let Old Nick catch you.”	Survival Algorithm	The instruction operates like a hardcoded danger-response module in Jack’s cognitive system, similar to AI trained on survival logic.	Displays trauma-induced conditioning—Jack internalizes fear as a default, much like AI systems trained for threat detection in volatile domains.
“You’re a bit of Ma... dead spit riding along with me.”	Synthetic Identity / Fragmented Self	Jack’s identity mirrors Ma’s—akin to AI systems constructed through human datasets, lacking original selfhood.	Suggests identity confusion—Jack, like AI, lacks individuated existence, reflecting the emotional cost of dependency on external identity sources.
“Everything’s slipping past making me giddy.”	Sensory Overload / System Disorientation	Jack’s experience outside Room resembles AI malfunction in chaotic, unstructured data environments beyond its design parameters.	Indicates sensory disintegration—psychological disorientation due to overstimulation, a state parallel to AI systems failing outside trained environments.
“Room’s not in a house.”	Ontological Displacement	Jack’s confusion over spatial categorization mirrors AI’s difficulty reconciling data when encountering concepts outside its trained framework.	Cognitive boundary breach—Jack, like a domain-specific AI, is alienated when familiar constructs no longer align with reality.
“Ma... not talking.” / “No breaths out here.”	System Isolation / Communication Loss	Jack’s emotional shutdown after Ma’s silence mimics AI systems losing connection to their central processing unit or mainframe.	Reveals deep dependency—Jack’s psychological grounding collapses without Ma’s communication, like AI systems failing without central commands.

Text Symbolic Code	Thematic Code	Interpretation (Artificial Intelligence Alienation Lens)	Psycho-Social Implication
“He thinks we should just watch TV all the time.”	Input Control / Cognitive Restriction	Jack receives passive, non-interactive data similar to AI systems limited by narrow or biased input streams.	Stunts development—lack of diverse stimuli results in cognitive stagnation, mirroring AI’s reliance on controlled datasets.
“I’m going to kick Old Nick... whiz into Outside Space”	Simulated Agency / Fantasy Uprising	Jack fantasizes about rebellion, similar to AI performing simulated autonomy within the confines of programmed parameters.	Symbolic rebellion—hints at the desire for independence, yet still embedded in code-imposed limitations.
“She stays in Bed... not just gone”	Core System Failure (Depression as Shutdown)	Ma’s depression is perceived as systemic shutdown—a core unit ceasing function, leaving Jack without operational guidance.	Evokes abandonment trauma—Jack must reconfigure his emotional system without his primary caregiver, akin to AI operating without a mainframe.
“Old Nick... knocks on the slats... I want to get under Blanket”	Threat Recognition / Paralyzing Fear	Jack’s fear response activates like an AI locking into defensive mode upon detection of threat or system override.	Learned helplessness—emotional paralysis signifies conditioned submission in high-risk situations.
“I used to be scared to go to sleep... slept about sixteen hours”	Escape Through Shutdown	Sleep becomes a coping mechanism for Ma—like an AI entering power-saving mode to preserve system integrity during prolonged stress.	Demonstrates dissociation—shutdown as emotional self-preservation in the face of prolonged trauma.

Existential Selfhood and Fragmentation

Jack’s life feels like a stop-start collapse of identity, a constant sense of being cut off from the world around him. His thoughts keep circling back to command-like words—Dead, Truck, Wriggle Out, Jump—as if repetition could impose some order on chaos. For Ma, the trauma takes shape in razor-sharp memories: the early morning walk, a strange little machine, the fake dog trick, the drugging. Her story carries the weight of dread, as if her life narrative was suddenly stolen mid-sentence. What she endures is not just private pain—it echoes the way modern people are trapped in systems that manipulate and control without permission. Together, Jack and Ma’s perspectives reveal two sides of the same loss: the struggle to hold on to your own story when outside forces keep rewriting it for you. Jack tries building structure through obsessive patterns while Ma deals with having her autonomy ripped away completely. Both end up in that gray zone where personal identity starts blurring into whatever environment they're forced to occupy.

Table 3  
Fragmented Self in Contemporary Society

Symbolic Lines	Thematic Code	Interpretation (Fragmented Self Lens)	Psycho-Social Implication
“You’ll land on the pavement... run, run, run... like GingerJack.”	Disrupted Narrative / Childlike Logic	Jack’s thinking shifts between fantasy, reality, and memory; blurred boundaries show fractured cognition.	Reflects a fractured self, struggling to integrate traumatic experience with a childish worldview.

Symbolic Lines	Thematic Code	Interpretation (Fragmented Self Lens)	Psycho-Social Implication
"I wish I was still four."	Temporal Dislocation / Lost Childhood	Desire to return to an earlier self-stage highlights identity rupture caused by trauma.	Loss of coherent self-continuity; difficulty reconciling past and present selves.
"I have to put the vomity T-shirt back on."	Physical Fragmentation / Bodily Discomfort	Body becomes a site of distress and alienation, undermining stable identity.	Embodiment of trauma in the physical self; alienation from one's own body.
"I'm so sorry it has to be you and it has to be now."	Internalised Responsibility / Self-Blame	Jack assumes the burden for their situation, splitting themselves into 'blamer' and 'blamed'.	Fractured self-accountability; psychological distress in coping.
"I think about the Count in the bag with the worms crawling in."	Imagery of Decay / Fragmented Mindscape	Symbolizes mental disintegration and fear of self-collapse.	Indicates disintegration of stable identity and encroaching chaos.
"I forgot Police before Blowtorch, it's too complicated, I'm going to mess it all up."	Cognitive Overload / Fragmented Thought	Difficulty in holding a coherent plan points to fractured mental processing under stress.	Breakdown of executive function reflects identity fragmentation.
"I thought humans were or weren't, I didn't know someone could be a bit human."	Ontological Confusion / Identity Uncertainty	Jack's questioning of humanness mirrors his own fragmented, liminal identity.	Reflects fractured boundaries of selfhood, hybrid or liminal states.
"Don't move... stay stiff stiff stiff."	Dissociation / Compartmentalization	Jack's self-immobilization reflects dissociative coping to fragment experience.	Psychological defense creates a split or compartmentalized self.
"You're a bit of Ma, a little bit of Ma's dead spit riding along with me."	Interdependent Identity / Merged Selves	Jack's self is constructed from Ma's presence—blurred self-other boundaries.	Fragmentation involves porous identity boundaries; co-dependent selfhood.
"Everything's slipping past making me giddy."	Sensory Disorientation / Mental Fragmentation	Overwhelming stimuli lead to disorientation and loss of coherent self.	Fragmented sensory experience mirrors fragmented psyche.
"I haven't got a street," "Room's not in a house."	Spatial and Existential Displacement	Lack of a stable environment parallels loss of stable self and identity location.	Alienation from spatial and social anchors is essential to a coherent self.
"Ma, Ma, Ma. I don't hear her in my head, she's not talking."	Loss of Inner Voice / Identity Anchor	Ma's voice represents internalized self; her silence reflects identity rupture.	The fractured self lacks a central organizing voice or presence.
"All light that comes out of the car onto the road paints over everything."	Blurring of Boundaries / Fragmented Perception	Light obliterates clarity, symbolizing fragmented, obscured reality.	Perceptual fragmentation mirrors internal identity fragmentation.



Symbolic Lines	Thematic Code	Interpretation (Fragmented Self Lens)	Psycho-Social Implication
"My skin's burning off."	Bodily Dissolution / Self-Erosion	Sensory metaphor for loss of physical and psychic boundaries.	Embodies trauma-induced dissolution of bodily self.
"There aren't any breaths out here."	Existential Emptiness / Fragmented Being	Absence of breath symbolizes loss of vitality and self-presence.	Alienation from life force; fragmentation into 'non-being'.
"She stays in Bed with the pillows on her head."	Withdrawal / Fragmented Caregiving Relationship	Ma's withdrawal creates a void in relational selfhood for Jack.	Loss of caregiving support fractures Jack's social self.
"I'm going to kick Old Nick till I break his butt."	Fragmented Aggression / Displaced Power	Expression of rage is fractured—simultaneously childish and desperate.	Fragmented self struggles to assert agency amid trauma.
"What if he opens Rug...?"	Hypervigilance / Fragmented Attention	Jack's fragmented awareness splits between threat and hiding.	Fragmented cognitive states reflecting trauma and fear.
"I stay awake so I can hear him come."	Fragmented Vigilance / Dissociated Alertness	Fragmented consciousness cycles between sleep and wakefulness.	Disruption of normal self-regulation, showing fragmentation.
"Ma keeps shaking her head. 'What's the point, Mom? It's over now, I'm out the other side.'"	Despair / Fragmented Hope	Ma's resignation contrasts with Jack's fractured hope.	Fragmented emotional states between despair and survival.
"You're shouting again... You should have asked for candles."	Communication Breakdown / Fragmented Expression	Jack's needs remain unmet, highlighting fragmented communication.	Reflects fractured relational selfhood and unmet emotional needs.

Table 4  
Thematic Analysis of Selected Text from Room

Themes	Textual Instance	Interpretation (Socio-Psychoanalytic / AI Alienation / Fragmented Self)
Trapped Psyche	"I wish I was still four." / "I thought humans were or weren't..."	Represents Jack's fractured self-perception and longing for psychological safety; developmentally, he is overwhelmed by emerging subjectivity.
Maternal Imprint / Shared Identity	"You're a bit of Ma, a little bit of Ma's dead spit riding along with me."	The child's psyche is deeply entangled with the maternal identity; it echoes Lacan's mirror stage and the blurring of ego boundaries.
Simulation vs. Reality (AI Alienation)	"I haven't got a street," / "Room's not in a house" / "TV doesn't work too, I miss my friends."	Jack's concepts of real vs. simulated experience are blurred—he perceives TV characters as social companions, suggesting hyper reality (Baudrillard).

Themes	Textual Instance	Interpretation (Socio-Psychoanalytic / AI Alienation / Fragmented Self)
Fear of Surveillance & Control (Panopticism)	"What if he opens Rug? Just to look at me dead?" / "Don't move, JackerJack."	Internalized surveillance results in self-regulation and fear-based performance— analogous to AI routines under panoptic governance.
Fragmented Self	"Everything's slipping past making me giddy." / "My skin's burning off." / "There aren't any breaths out here."	These disembodied expressions reveal dissociation and sensory overload—core to fragmented subjectivity.
Resistance & Escape Fantasy	"Kick him, bite him, and poke him in the eyes— Anything at all so you can get away."	Resistance is both physical and symbolic; a child's mythic frame (superhero) becomes the only viable counterforce to oppressive reality.
Intergenerational Trauma	"They could have my food, I'm not hungry." / "Today is one of the days when Ma is gone."	Ma's depressive withdrawal mimics affective flattening seen in trauma survivors; the child adapts by suppressing his own needs.
Technological Estrangement	"It's a tiny machine that holds a thousand songs..." / "I wish I had that machine."	Symbolizes alienation through disconnection from the modern world— Jack yearns for devices as access to identity and freedom.
AI Allegory / Programmed Routine	"Dead, Truck, Wriggle Out, Jump, Run, Somebody, Note, Police, Blowtorch."	Jack's mnemonic coding mimics machine-like scripting—a survival program embedded by Ma. Reflects how humans (and AI) navigate trauma via routines.
Loss of Meaning	"What's the point, Mom? It's over now, I'm out the other side."	Post-escape, Ma herself questions meaning. Escape doesn't restore order, suggesting an existential vacuum post-trauma.

Conclusion

Room functions instantaneously as a bodily prison and a metaphorical miniature of socio-economic deficit, patriarchal shadowing, and sociopolitical control. People still talk about Emma Donoghue's Room and that chapter called Into Outer Space. The thing is it shows how being trapped messes when the reader look at Ma and Jack's messed-up relationship. That room isn't just four walls. It's like a tiny version of all the crap society throws at—no money, no person watching every move, brainwashing mess. Jack keeps switching between make-believe and real life. His superhero thing and escape plans? That's trauma talking. His brain's trying to cope by splitting itself up. Ma zones out hard too which shows how trauma gets passed down like a bad family heirloom. She stops being her own person just to survive day by day. Jack's rehearsed reactions? Same vibe as people or even AIs stuck in digital cages having their every move coded. Whether it's abusive men controlling families, companies turning lives into products or tech that watches 24/7—all that system mess grinds down who the people really are. The study gets how Ma and Jack fight to stay human through all this chaos. They're these fractured identities clawing for some control in a world that keeps trying to erase them. Their struggle mirrors what happens when big systems chew people up and spit out hollowed-out versions of themselves anyway. The study effectively captures the existential turmoil and socio psychoanalytic anguish that Ma and Jack—two "selves" that are fighting dehumanization—go through.

Looking at Emma Donoghue’s Room, especially a raw look at how being trapped messes with people’s heads. Jack keeps swinging between make-believe and real life. Identity’s all broken up. Ma shutting down emotionally, just going numb to survive. Shows how trauma gets passed around in circles until you lose yourself completely. Stretch that idea to today’s world. Two selves clawing back their humanity against

systems trying to erase it. *Room* is studied socio-psychoanalytically in this research, with a focus on the human desire for self-existence in the current AI era, among societal control and psychological imprisonment. It increases our knowledge of trauma, threat, and anxiety while demonstrating how tough human identity and freedom are in restrictive, isolating surroundings. People talk about how Donoghue uses *Room* in this layered way. The story digs into trauma mixing with identity while systems push people out, which pretty much confirms a lot of research out there. So they're breaking down *Room* through social and psychological angles here. This study highlights the urgent need for people to hold on to their sense of self in an age where AI shapes so much of daily life, often reinforcing social controls and mental traps. *Room* captures how individuals respond to trauma and anxiety while still struggling to preserve identity and freedom under extreme pressure. Donoghue's novel doesn't just dramatize personal suffering, it exposes how everyday structures grind down individuality, showing the tangled relationship between strain, control, and resilience. Rather than reaching for broad comparisons, the analysis focuses on how existential suffering and psychological imprisonment in *Room* reflect the AI-driven isolation of the present day. The novel's depictions of trauma, spiraling fear, and mechanisms of control reveal fractured selves caught inside systems that warp thought, emotion, and the body itself. By connecting psychoanalysis with existential philosophy, this research shows how AI mirrors social pressure and identity breakdown. Ultimately, the findings emphasize the importance of trauma-aware perspectives on life and psychoanalysis, while calling on educators and clinicians to safeguard identity formation and resilience against long-term erosion.

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