***The Misconceiver*** (Simon & Schuster, 1997; Wandering Aengus, 2022)

Review excerpts

The Misconceiver is a startling novel in ways that highlight how unsurprising most pro-choice novels are. Ferriss isn't interested in merely confirming our liberal ideals; she makes us work for them. . . . The novel offers a challenging exploration of one woman's struggle to work through the profound moral dilemmas of her life. -- Ron Charles, The Washington Post

*The Misconceiver* . . . is energetic, increasingly scary and suspenseful, and even intermittently sexy. Ferriss's writing stay sharp throughout. From time to time, the prose is beautifully lyrical, even as Ferriss describes the grotesqueries of Phoebe's imprisonment. . . . Ferriss imagines the desperate consequences when public policy and national politics dispense with the morality of justice and care. Equally important, she grapples with the ways that individual actions require a vibrant moral basis. *The Misconceiver*, like Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, tells a story that places women's need to control their own bodies at the center of a society's moral code. -- Rickie Solinger, *San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle*

*The Misconceiver* is primarily a powerful novel of dystopia. Ferriss has made the world a much darker place, just twenty-odd years from now. A great economic crash has given power back to men, there are pro-natal packages for women, and no employment for wives. There is even a move to preserve the life of the unborn child in preference of that of the mother. Gays have to live carefully, the liberal arts are forgotten; no one eats meat because of the diseases. . . . But it is also a very tense thriller. Ferriss is a fine writer, and in this dark and starkly realistic tale, she answers all her own questions, pulling no punches. --*The Times*, London

Phoebe’s eventual understanding of how she will gain the courage to struggle against the complex web of inhumane policies adds tension and emotional catharsis. And her knowledge of how she will share her life has real poignancy. If in this novel Ferriss makes you think, she will also make you feel. --*PW* (starred review)

In Ferriss' convincing early 21st century dystopia abortion is outlawed. At great risk, her eponymous female lead seeks to return to women some small measure of reproductive rights. The clandestine nature of her work, and self doubts, imperil even this feeble lifeline. As Ray Bradbury once said, 'I'm not here to predict the future, I'm here to warn about it.' --*Time Out*, London

Ferriss infuses *The Misconceiver* with integrity through her taut style, her tense plot and exciting subplots, and her characters, both quick and dead…. *The Misconceiver* stands stalwartly by John Irving’s *Cider House Rules* as a compassionate novel about abortion and, thus, about women. --*St. Louis Post Dispatch*

Thought-provoking and disturbing…. It’s not really fair to Ferriss to say *The Misconceiver* is “in the vein of *The Handmaid’s Tale*,” as her publisher does on the jacket. It’s too subtle and original for that. --*Contra Costa Times*

“A powerful, painful book.” – Frederick Busch, author of *Girls*