

JPCS JOURNAL FOR THE PSYCHOANALYSIS OF CULTURE & SOCIETY

Spring 1997
Volume 2, Number 1



Critical Press

CONTENTS

	Editor's Column: Always Psychoanalyze! Historicism and the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society <i>by Mark Bracher</i> 1	
ARTICLES	Trauma Revisited: Culture, Mourning, and the Unconscious in the Oklahoma City Bombing <i>by Howard F. Stein</i> 17	
	PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE POLITICS OF HATRED	
	Hatred Is Counterfeit Community and the Simulacrum of Love <i>by C. Fred Alford</i> 39	
	Skin Ego and Purification Ritual: Psychodynamics behind the Nazi Final Solution <i>by James M. Glass</i> 47	
	Subjective Uses of Inequality: The Clarence Thomas Hearings, Male Bonding, and the "Traffic in Women" in Contemporary American Politics <i>by Jane Flax</i> 55	
	The Sexuality Revolt in Black and White <i>by Cynthia Burack</i> 65	
	Hating the Self in the Other <i>by Eugene Victor Wolfenstein</i> 75	
	PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVES ON REPRODUCTION AND THE FAMILY	
	Some Reflections on Medically Assisted Reproduction <i>by Paola Mieli</i> 79	
	Psychoanalytic and Anthropological Perspectives on Incest in the Modern Family <i>by Danielle Bergeron</i> 89	
	The Psychological Consequences of Ignorance: Adoptees' Right to Know Who their Biological Parents Are <i>by John C. Sonne</i> 105	
	Hatred of the Phallus <i>by Lucie Cantin</i> 115	
	Green Fantasy and the Real of Nature: Elements of a Lacanian Critique of Green Ideological Discourse <i>by Yannis Stavrakakis</i> 123	
INTERVIEW	Slavoj Žižek <i>Interviewed by Andrew Long and Tara McGann</i> 133	
FIELD NOTES	Advertising <i>by Yannis Stavrakakis</i> 139 Historiography <i>by Dylan Evans</i> 141 Criminology <i>by Dragan Milovanovic</i> 145	
REVIEWS	Gabrielle Schwab, <i>THE MIRROR AND THE KILLER-QUEEN: OTHERNESS IN LITERARY LANGUAGE</i> <i>Reviewed by John Stone-Mediatore</i> 149 Richard Feldstein, Bruce Fink, Maire Jaanus, <i>READING SEMINAR XI: LACAN'S FOUR FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS</i> ✓ <i>Reviewed by Sinkwan Cheng</i> 151 Emily Apter, <i>FEMINIZING THE FETISH: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND NARRATIVE OBSESSION IN TURN-OF-THE- CENTURY FRANCE</i> <i>Reviewed by Elizabeth L. Constable</i> 154	
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS 161	

choanalytic and anthropological thought, a synthesis which reaffirms the importance of the aesthetic to today's cultural criticism. Remarkable in its theoretical breadth as well as in its literary acuteness, *The Mirror and the Killer-Queen* merits serious consideration from anyone concerned with the politics of reading.

—John Stone-Mediatore

Richard Feldstein, Bruce Fink, Maire Jaanus, eds.,
Reading Seminar XI:
Lacan's Four
Fundamental Concepts
of Psychoanalysis.

New York: SUNY P, 1994.

Pp. xv, 282. Index.¹

This book features a collection of papers delivered at the Paris "Lacan Seminars in English" in 1990, with members of the *École de la Cause freudienne* (ECF) giving the majority of the lectures, complemented by contributions made by several scholars from other countries.² The essays are generally marked by clarity and precision in their explication of Lacanian concepts. The talks given by Miller, Laurent, Soler, Fink, and Quinet, in particular, make this collection by far the best pedagogical tool I can find for introducing students to Lacan's *Seminar XI*.

In contrast to other English publications on Lacan, this book

has the additional merit of reading the dynamics of *The Four Fundamental Concepts* in the context of the institutional struggles carried out by Lacan as he sought to establish his own school of psychoanalysis. One prominent way in which this anthology departs from former Anglo-American Lacanian scholarship is its emphasis on Lacan's difference from, rather than his "return to," Freud. Miller, Soler, and Fink present very convincing articulations of these differences. Of these, Miller's lecture orients our reading of the entire collection. By outlining *Seminar XI* against the backdrop of Lacan's "break" from Freud, he enables us to understand anew the concept of the "Name-of-the-Father" and its history (6-7).

The ECF members' critique of the cult of the dead father can assume yet another level of significance for their American addressees. The editors' positioning of the essays by French and American scholars seems to suggest that, in the course of the ECF members' explanation of Lacan's break from Freud, and the *École freudienne's* break from the International Psychoanalytic Association, a transferential separation between the American scholars and their French predecessors also quietly asserted itself. In the unfolding of the dialectical desire between the subject and its other, between the French "mentors" and their American "disciples," the subversion of the father in the Lacanian unconscious enacted in this collection by the French Lacanians' marking their own "territory" against pre-

ceding psychoanalytic institutions, seems to be then repeated by the Americans *vis-à-vis* their French "mentors" as the two parties' voices gradually shift in the book.

In fact, the book is structured in ways that can potentially facilitate various kinds of transferential relationships. The essays are organized under different themes, with the opening section named "Excommunication"³ to correspond to the title of Lacan's introductory lecture in *The Four Fundamental Concepts*. After Miller's introductory talk, the book launches into the topic "Subject and Other," a section opened by Laurent's two presentations on "Alienation and Separation." The rest of the book seems to be very much colored by the themes of subject and the other, alienation and separation. Parts II through V of *Reading Seminar XI* roughly echo, in reverse order, the four main divisions of *Seminar XI*. The anthology put together by Lacan's followers thus seems to return to the master the truth of his message in its inverted form. This reversal, moreover, carries within itself an excess. Instead of ending with Part V, "Repetition," there emerges in *Reading Seminar XI* a remainder—that is, Part VI, "Discovery and Psychoanalytic Practice," and Part VII, the first published English translation of "Position of the Unconscious" from *Écrits*. A book that begins with French clinicians translating Lacan for an American audience ends with an American analyst translating Lacan into an American tongue. The talk given by Miller—the subject "supposed to know"—

finally evolves into Fink's presentation of Lacan in his own language.⁴

Reading Seminar XI, in highlighting the process through which the Lacanian institution "comes into its own," also draws attention to the way this book marks out a place for itself in the midst of current Lacanian scholarship. As a collection of papers delivered in Paris in English, yet edited in the United States for an English-reading public, this book occupies a very unique position in its struggle to preserve "the voice of the other" in both worlds. Whereas the main issue at stake for the American Lacanians in Paris is one of maintaining a voice distinct from the discourse of their French master(s), their immediate task in the United States seems to be that of establishing a place for the voice of the other (the French) in a context dominated by its own versions and ideas of Lacan. Whether this book succeeds in justifying its existence in its competitions against other English publications on Lacan depends to a significant extent on its success in fulfilling its "mission" of conveying to readers the French context of Lacan's own theory and practice.

How does this collection make a difference in Lacanian scholarship in America? One distinctive characteristic is its emphasis on clinical practice. Works on Lacan in this country have largely been devoted to creative applications of Lacan's theories to different academic disciplines—for example, feminism, film studies, literary interpretations, and, in the 90s, to social and political thought mainly

associated with the Slovenian school. *Reading Seminar XI*, by contrast, returns Lacanian psychoanalysis to its clinical "origin" and applications. The talks given by the ECF members and Bruce Fink are almost unanimous in underscoring Lacanian psychoanalysis as a practice in the clinic, rather than an abstract philosophy in the university. Fink's preface, for example, sets the tone of the book in this direction. It highlights a particular site in which Lacanian theory is produced—namely, a clinical situation in which the theory was born and transformed (x). Such an emphasis is indispensable not only to facilitating our understanding of the ethics of psychoanalysis, since ethics differs from morality precisely in the former's intimate relationship to praxis,⁵ but also to justifying Lacan's break from Freud, the *École freudienne* from the IPA, and the American Lacanians from their French predecessors, on the grounds that theory and structure should evolve with practice.

Stressing the clinical side of psychoanalysis has both advantages and drawbacks. On the one hand, it is true that Lacan's formulations were products of, and constantly interacted with, his clinical practice. In that regard, the practitioners rather than the academicians are more "faithful disciples" of Lacan. Indeed, the ways Lacan has been taught in American universities risk turning him into just another Hegel or Derrida—that is, a mere addition to the list of philosophers or theorists to be studied—and as such abstract Lacan from the clinical and insti-

tutional struggles in which his theory was embedded. Overemphasis on the clinical, however, can also stifle other rich potentials of Lacan's thought. In contrast with this book's clinical orientation, Žižek's, MacCannell's, and Copjec's innovative uses of Lacan have opened up new horizons for appreciating the malleability of the thought of the "master." One can even say that, in these scholars' creative applications of Lacanian psychoanalysis, they are practically returning to the master the truth of his message in a form he had missed or failed to recognize. In other words, while the clinicians are more "faithful" to Lacan's conscious principles, the Americans and Slovenians might have "advanced" closer to Lacan's unconscious in their resourceful adaptations of his thought. In attending to the debate between the clinical and academic appreciation of Lacan, it is perhaps worth mentioning that *Seminar XI* marked the shift of Lacan's teaching career from the hospital into the university. As Miller recalls:

The ten previous seminars had been given in Sainte-Anne Hospital in a lecture hall that held fifty and later one hundred people. For *Seminar XI*, he [Lacan] left the psychiatric hospital for a lecture hall at the *École normale*. . . . [I]t was not just a matter of changing places; it was also a matter of changing audiences. The previous seminars were given to an audience of clinicians, while this seminar was the first to address the general public—not only clinicians but stu-

dents, professors, and others in the humanities. (5)

Although the major Lacanian scholarship in the current American academy departs from the French emphasis on the clinical, both sides recognize the importance of the drive. It is through the drive that the body, reputed to have been forgotten by high theory, enters psychoanalysis.⁶ Papers delivered by Miller, Laurent, Quinet, and Brousse demonstrate that clinicians, while examining the drive, benefit from their direct and frequent interactions with the body in their practice.⁷

There is yet another important contribution that this collection makes to Lacanian scholarship in America. While Lacanian studies in the United States before the 90s had been dominated by linguistic interpretations, and since then have been coming mainly under the sway of the Slovenians and their heavily Kantian-Hegelian interpretive models, *Reading Seminar XI* has the merit of being attentive instead to the function and explanatory power of mathematics and logic for Lacan. In contradistinction to both the structuralists and the Slovenians, the "Lacan Seminars in English" further develop Lacan's use of set theory and truth tables to explicate his ideas. In this way, Miller and his colleagues are continuing their master's endeavor to formalize psychoanalysis, rendering it possible to assess analytic experience through a specific set of axiomatic and algebraic systems (ix-x). This leaning toward set theory and truth tables is especially pertinent for explicat-

ing *Seminar XI*, since Lacan begins this seminar by asking "whether psychoanalysis is a science" (*Concepts* 7, 11; *Reading* 56). Although Lacan is ambivalent about Freud's desire to be a scientist, there are suggestions in *Seminar XI* that the possibility for science is the possibility for the unconscious, even though the kind of science relevant to psychoanalysis is by no means positivistic science. Lacan himself states that psychoanalysis is only possible with the rise of modern science. It is within this logic that Lacan finds linguistics to be "a newly forming science which accounts for the scientific status of the unconscious" (*Concepts* 20; *Reading* 59)—a belief which grounds his claim that "the unconscious is structured like a language" (*Concepts* 20). On the other hand, Lacan also finds psychoanalysis to be "in the privileged position of being able to help us figure out what a science . . . is" (*Reading* 57), as he tells his audience that "psychoanalysis . . . may even enlighten us as to what we should understand by a science" (*Concepts* 7; *Reading* 57). To make his case, Lacan plays off in an ingenious manner the relationship between Descartes and Freud. While Descartes returns the foundation of the truth of science to the hands of God as the big Other, it is Freud, Lacan tells us, who understands better Descartes's unconscious truth by translating Descartes's big Other into the unconscious itself (*Concepts* 37).

On the whole, I see a potentially complementary relationship between *Reading Seminar XI's*

rather extensive use of set theory and the Slovenian scholars' deep immersion in the Kantian-Hegelian paradigm,⁸ especially since this complementarity already exists within Lacan's own thought. One remembers how Lacan's fascination with the empty set at one point resurfaces as his interest in Kant's *An Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Quantities into Philosophy* (*Concepts* 21). It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that Lacanian psychoanalysis enables Continental philosophy and mathematics each to read in the other its own unconscious truth.

—Sinkwan Cheng

NOTES

¹ My thanks to Joan Copjec and Juliet Flower MacCannell for their excellent suggestions and words of encouragement.

² For the purpose of this review essay, I have chosen to concentrate on the Americans whenever references are made to the non-French side.

³ Not surprisingly, this introductory speech in 1990 was given by Jacques-Alain Miller, the heir to Lacan's various legacies.

⁴ Significantly, Fink himself is a former student of Miller's.

⁵ Lacan himself complains in his opening speech to the eleventh seminar that "praxis . . . has been completely ignored in all published work on psychoanalysis." He even goes so far as to locate the "fundamentals" of psychoanalysis in the question of what grounds psychoanalysis as a praxis: "What are the fundamentals, in the broad sense of the term, of psychoanalysis? Which amounts to saying—What grounds it as praxis?" (See Lacan 6).

⁶ Unlike much cultural studies discourse, psychoanalysis does not reduce the body to physiology, nor does it totalize the body as a mere cultural construct. Rather, the body is a site of resistance to the coercion of an "invincible" symbolic order precisely because it assumes the status of the real.

⁷ Though not a clinician herself, Jaanus shares the ECF members' practice of connecting her scrutiny of the drive to her study of the body. See "The *Démontage* of the Drive" (119-36).

⁸ After all, Žižek's talk on "The Lamella of David Lynch" is anthologized in Feldstein's collection. Possibilities of the convergence of the two "camps" look even more promising in *Reading Seminars I and II*, where Miller and Žižek have a very fruitful dialogue in "A Discussion of Lacan's 'Kant with Sade'" (212-37).

WORKS CITED

- Feldstein, Richard, Bruce Fink, and Maire Jaanus, eds. *Reading Seminars I and II*. New York: SUNY P, 1996.
- Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*. Ed. Jacques-Alain Miller. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1978.

Emily Apter,
*Feminizing the Fetish:
Psychoanalysis and
Narrative Obsession
in Turn-of-the-Century
France.*

Cornell UP, 1991. Pp. xviii,
273. Index.

The last few years have witnessed an unprecedented succession of critical re-takes on Freudian

fetishism across the fields of cultural studies, feminist theory, film studies, literary theory, queer theory, and visual culture. From within this gamut of critical re-readings, two tendencies have emerged. In broad terms, we can usefully differentiate historicizing re-contextualizing emphases, *analyzing* and *describing* fetishism's larger post-Enlightenment cultural stage, its cast of social and institutional actors, from rereadings of fetishism which *analyze* and *expand* interplays between the psychic and physical, fantasy and corporeality, desire and knowledge, subject and object in rethinking desire and sexuality. While overlaps and convergences abound, it is hardly surprising that the two tendencies articulate quite sharply distinct critical narratives about fetishism. While historicizing critics tend to resituate a still recognizable "Freud on fetishism"¹ in broader and thicker (cultural, disciplinary, historical) contexts,² that same "Freud on fetishism" becomes virtually unrecognizable, yet powerfully and resourcefully adaptable, in the work of contemporary feminisms and/or lesbian and gay studies. Here, by drawing on suggestive structural components, or contradictions, in Freud's text—particularly in the areas of disavowal, psychic investment in the material, and the fetishist's (pleasure in) ambivalence before the orthodox Freudian options—critics have read Freud against the grain. They have opened up critically transformative readings which account for non-heteronormative sexual desires, practices,

and identifications otherwise illegible within—or abjected from—the available conception of desire, sexuality, and identity in psychoanalytic terms.³

Apter's *Feminizing the Fetish* not only imaginatively renegotiates elements of *both* tendencies of recent research, the historicizing *and* rearticulating of fetishism; she also enticingly, and energetically, extends the range and multiplies the contexts of nineteenth-century fetishism. Her bold, experimental scope, theoretical nimbleness, and scrupulously probing historical research emerge convincingly if we locate her project *within*, and yet also *chronologically prior*, to the expansion of research in these two directions.⁴ And yet, foregrounding, as we have done here, the tension, if not incompatibility, separating quite distinct roles accorded to fetishism within equally distinct critical objectives (to historicize, *and* rearticulate, fetishism), anticipates inevitable strains and stresses that the combinatory double move places on the project, which cause its overall surface coherence to buckle at times.

As a way of understanding the stakes of those pressures, I suggest that we might see "Freud on fetishism" rather like the textual body of a valued, yet currently obsolete, car, off the road, in the Auto Dismantler's Yard, but an invaluable resource for the enterprising "pick'n'pull" critics able to relocate, reassemble, and recycle textual body parts, producing new epistemological vehicles of desire. For example, in redefining a psychoanalytic feminine in terms of

January 12, 1998

To Whom It May Concern:

JPCS: Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society is the official publication of the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society, an international and interdisciplinary not-for-profit organization incorporated in 1994 for the purpose of developing psychoanalytic strategies for promoting social change. *JPCS* is a peer-reviewed publication indexed in the Modern Language Association International Bibliography and listed in the MLA's Directory of Periodicals.

A year ago, after the publication of just one issue, *JPCS* was recognized by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals as one of the best new journals of the past four years. The judges for the competition commented that *JPCS* is

a remarkable enterprise, thorough and interesting and well executed, . . . a journal that really seems to be setting out to make a difference to the way certain fields and categories, as well as their consequences in the world, are being defined. This is a first-rate journal, publishing essays on culture and society of a very high level, [yet] also quite diverse in terms of its contents. The journal is truly interdisciplinary and sets a high standard for study in this field. This journal offers cause to celebrate, reason for enthusiasm—bravo!

A copy of the CELJ citation is enclosed.

Sincerely,



Mark Bracher, Editor
Professor and Director
Center for Literature and Psychoanalysis
Kent State University

EDITOR

Mark Bracher

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Parveen Adams
Marshall W. Alcorn, Jr.
Willy Apollon
Jeffrey Berman
Homi Bhabha
Joan Copjec
Tim Dean
Terry Eagleton
Fredric Jameson
Juliet Flower MacCannell
Renata Salecl
Robert Samuels
Claudia Tate
Victor Wolfenstein
Jean Wyatt
Slavoj Zizek

BOOK REVIEW EDITORS

Kenneth Reinhard &
Julia Reinhard Lupton
28 Virgil Court
Irvine, CA 92612
Phone: (714) 854-5611
Fax: (714) 854-9715
Email: jrlupton@uci.edu

In each of the five designated categories, the judges have determined a first and second place journal: a winner and a runner up, as the plaques and certificates indicate. After I have finished reading the citation for each of the journals and editors being honored, would the representative or representatives please come forward to receive the award, and to have their pictures taken?

* * * * *

Best New Journal

In our first category tonight, the Runner Up is *JPCS: Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, edited by Mark Bracher, and published by the Critical Press. One of the judges called *JPCS* as "A remarkable enterprise, thorough and interesting and well executed"; another described it as "a journal that really seems to be setting out to make a difference to the way certain fields and categories, as well as their consequences in the world, are being defined." The third judge agreed:

. . . this is a first-rate journal, publishing essays on culture and society of a very high level, [yet] also quite diverse in terms of its contents. The journal is truly interdisciplinary and sets a high standard for study in this field.

One final word from the judges: "This journal offers cause to celebrate, reason for enthusiasm--bravo!"

Accepting the CELJ Award as Runner Up for Best New Journal will be the editor of *JPCS*, Mark Bracher.

* * * * *

This year's Best New Journal is *Angelaki*. The General Editor is Pelagia Goulimari, the Managing Editor is Gerard Greenway, and *Angelaki* publishes itself.

One judge called *Angelaki* "A strong and surprising publication that is interested in a wide range of culture studies issues from harder-theory perspectives,"

Sinkwan Cheng "Scholarship" No. A 3a(2)

Sinkwan Cheng, 08:13 AM 1/26/98 , Articles to be Indexed by the

Date: Mon, 26 Jan 1998 08:13:43 -0800 (PST)
From: Sinkwan Cheng <scheng@benfranklin.hnet.uci.edu>
To: scheng@coyote.csusm.edu, test <chenge@uci.edu>
cc: scheng@coyote.csusm.edu, test <chenge@uci.edu>
Subject: Articles to be Indexed by the MLA Bibliography
X-Status:

----- Forwarded message -----
Date: Mon, 22 Dec 97 14:08:18 -0500
From: erik.pihel@smtpgw.mla.org
To: scheng@benfranklin.hnet.uci.edu
Subject: Re[6]: URGENT: Submissions to the MLA

Dear Professor Cheng:

We received your resubmission of your review of Feldstein, et al. Our index editor has decided to index this article.

All three of your articles will be indexed and the records sent to our electronic vendors. It is impossible to determine when they will appear in your version because I do not know which version you use. Most likely, they will appear some time in February.

Sincerely,

Erik Pihel
Coordinator of Operations
MLA
10 Astor Place
New York, NY 10003
Tel. 212-614-6353
Fax 212-533-0680
e-mail: bibliography@mla.org

>
>
>
> On Wed, 3 Dec 1997 erik.pihel@smtpgw.mla.org wrote:
>
> >
> > Dear Professor Cheng:
> >
> > Review articles are included within the scope of the bibliography, but
> > reviews > are not. The distinction is that a review article may discuss a
> > single book or > books, but the focus is on some larger theme--ie, an
> > approach > (feminist,
> > Marxist, psychoanalytic, etc.), issue, or problem relating to literature,
> > linguistics and/or folklore--rather discussing the contents of the book.
> >
> > The layout of a review article is usually like other journal articles (ie,
> > author and title of the essay); the layout of books reviews is usually an
> > untitled essay with the information on the book being reviewed (author,
> > title, > publisher, etc.).
> >
> > Obviously, the distinctions can get a bit murky in specific cases and at
> > that > > point the index editor of that particular section makes a decision.
> >
> >
> > Sincerely yours,
> >

