

# Clio's Psyche

Understanding the "Why" of Culture,  
Current Events, History, and Society

**Special Issue:  
Love, Hate, and Attachment**

**Sagan Evolutionary Theory  
Mini-Symposium**

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# Clio's Psyche

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## Love, Hate, and Attachment Special Issue

### Introduction

Prelude on Love and Hate.....179  
*Kenneth Fuchsman*

### Some Freudian Viewpoints

The Freudian Psychology of Love.....186  
*Kenneth Fuchsman*

Passionate Inferno: Mother-Child Love and Hate.....191  
*Jane Goldberg*

The Primacy of the Mother for Ian Suttie.....195  
*Kenneth Fuchsman*

Superego Dynamics of Judgments and Rapprochement.....199  
*Donald L. Carveth*

On Hating Freud's Injunction.....203  
*Jeffrey Berman*

### Reflections on Aggression and Love by Practicing Therapists

Person on Love.....208  
*Vivian M. Rosenberg*

Why Should I Love Thee?.....213  
*Hanna Turken*

Aggression in the Long-Term Relationship.....219  
*Jean Hantman*

### Poetic Intermission

Fool Songs of Love.....244  
*Daniel Dervin*

---

### **Culture and Myths of Love, Hate, and Attachment**

- Love, Attachment, Dependence, and Hatred in Long-Term Relationships.....226  
*Paul H. Elovitz*
- Reuben Fine on Love and the Human Experience.....231  
*Jacques Szaluta*
- A Conversation Between Dreamers on Intimacy.....237  
*Irene Javors*
- 

### **Sagan Evolutionary Theory Mini-Symposium**

- Do We Need an Evolutionary Theory of Society?.....241  
*Eli Sagan*
- Comments on Sagan.....256  
*David Beisel*
- Sagan's Application of Private History to Human History.....261  
*Edmund Leites*
- 

### **Psychohistorical Explorations of Current Events**

- Presidential Savior Fantasies & the Election of Barack Obama...264  
*David Beisel*
- What Caused and Happens After the Economic Collapse.....270  
*Tom Ferraro*
- Call for Papers: Financial Crisis.....274
- 

### **Jerome Lee Shneidman Memorial**

- The Life Experience & Scholarly Achievement of J. Lee Shneidman (1929-2008).....274  
*Paul H. Elovitz*

### **Letter to the Editor**

- On Death and Dying: A Father Remembers.....282  
*F. Lincoln Grahfls*
- Bulletin Board.....284
- Call for Papers: Binion Symposium.....2??

## **Love, Hate, and Attachment Introduction**

### **Prelude on Love & Hate**

**Kenneth Fuchsman - University of Connecticut**

The crazy quilt pattern of our domestic arrangements raises questions about what love is and what it is not. In a time when human relationships have been dramatically transformed, it is no longer clear what love is, how long it lasts, when different loves collaborate or conflict, and to what degree people are brought together or split apart in the course of love.

What a change in family and love life there has been in the last 30 or 40 years! Back in 1970, 70.5 percent of all households had a married couple, and 85 percent of children resided with two parents. In the U.S. in 2000, 51 percent of the nation's households contained a married couple, 23 percent of homes are married partners with their children, over a third of children are born out of wedlock, cohabitation and same sex unions are more prevalent, and individuals marry later. The divorce rate, which had skyrocketed in the 1970s, has declined in recent years; still, 28 percent of children are being raised by one parent, close to 60 percent of children live with both biological parents, and over ten percent of children live in blended families.

Love has conquered marriage, according to historian Stephanie Coontz, and the results are mixed (*Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage* [New York: Viking, 2005]). Coontz claims that in previous eras the foundation and stability of marriage was dependent on more than the feelings the married partners had for each other. Now love rules the way. When Coontz speaks of love in marriage, primarily she is referring to husband and wife, not parents and children. To

her, many people are more fulfilled in marriage than ever before. Romance can still be volatile, and when it falters or fades, relationships may break up and marriages dissolve.

The hunger of parents for fulfilling romance may conflict with their love for their children. Seeking fulfillment in and through marriage is common. Should the marriage become dead, combative, or abusive, alternatives may be sought. When there is constant parental fighting or family violence, it will likely be in everyone's interest to break the family up. Still, there is often difficulty in reconciling parental love and personal fulfillment in marriage. In marriage, care for one's partner, commitment to one's own life, and the well-being of the children may at times be in harmony and at other times at cross purposes. If it is the latter, choices between various commitments and concerns may conflict, with no easy choices available. Separation and loss often cause turmoil. When marriages break up, adults may recover from their divorces, or they may not. Many children of divorce and remarriage do well, but others have long-term emotional scars. In this age of divorce and blended families, adult love relationships do not always maintain themselves. The failure of adult love has consequences for the children.

Judith Wallerstein and her colleagues found that children from divorced and remarried families express more aggression toward their parents and teachers, are more depressed, have greater learning difficulties, and suffer from more problems with peers than children from intact families (Judith Wallerstein, Julia M. Lewis, and Sandra Blakeslee, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce* [New York: Hyperion, 2000], p. xxiii). There are other psychosocial consequences of divorce and single parenting. "The chances that a white girl from an advantaged background," report McLanahan and Sandefur, "will become a teen mother is five times as high, and the chances a white girl will drop out of high school is three times as high if the parents do not live together," (Sara McLanahan and John Sandefur, *Growing Up With a Single Parent* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994], p. 60).

Regardless of race, sex, and previous marital status, Kay Hymowitz says, children of single mothers are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, to commit crimes, and to fail in school; they graduate from college less frequently; they are more likely to give birth at a young age and more likely to be unmarried when they do so (Kay Hymowitz, *Marriage and Caste in America* [Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006], p. 4).

However, the “major impact of divorce does not occur during childhood or adolescence. Rather, it rises in adulthood as serious romantic relationships move center stage,” Wallerstein and associates write. “Men and women from divorced families live in fear that they will repeat their parents’ history,” (Wallerstein, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*, pp. xxix, 31). Often they do. Adult children of divorce, Paul Amato and Danielle DeBoer report, have double the divorce rate of those whose parents remained married (“The Transmission of Marital Instability Across Generations: Relationship Skills or Commitment to Marriage?” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63 (4), 1038–1051).

Marriage with children was once promoted as a haven from a heartless world. Family life can be the source of deepest comfort and belonging or become a battlefield in itself. There is a paradox: benevolence and acrimony, joy and destructiveness all emanate from the house of love. Many couples who likely married for love and care deeply for their children end up suffering themselves when the marital relationship falls apart and their children’s faith in the benevolence of others may be seriously undermined. The consequences of these broken relationships can either be lifelong or healable. How is love and destruction so closely connected? Marital and parental love can end up in the deepest conflict. If love has conquered marriage, and its results can cover such extremes, fundamental questions about the nature of this phenomenon become pressing. Those who want to understand love in our time must focus, in part, on where its conflicting loyalties play out: marriages with children.

The very extremes of contemporary domestic arrangements raise very broad and difficult questions:

1. What is the nature of love? What are its psychological dynamics that cause such joy and pain, fulfillment and damage?
2. What are the various kinds of love? How are they similar, how do they diverge, and how can they conflict?
3. What sustains and what undermines love relationships? Is romantic love something with a lifetime warranty, a short shelf life, or an indeterminate length? Does love have developmental stages?
4. What are the dynamics of love between parents and children? What is the connection, if any, between love and marriage, or love and parenting? Where do marital and parental love connect and where do they conflict? What are the consequences for everyone concerned when marital or romantic love conflicts with parental love?

Psychoanalyst Stephen A. Mitchell in 2002 published a volume entitled *Can Love Last?: The Fate of Romance Over Time* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002). A related question is whether these serial intimate relationships are really love or if they need some other name.

“We use the word *love* in such a sloppy way that it can mean almost nothing or absolutely everything,” writes poet and essayist Diane Ackerman (Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of Love* [New York: Random House, 1994], p. xviii). Given the turmoil and fulfillment in relationships, where can we turn to get some clarity, to understand the nature of love and how its vicissitudes impact on the lives of adults and children?

What about the bards of love: poets, novelists and songwriters? Can they illuminate love's fancies? Conflicting conceptions of romance are present in literature and song.

If Shakespeare set the standard, the instability of contempo-

rary romance would not be called love. He writes:

“Love is not love  
Which alters when it alternation finds  
Or bends with the remover to remove  
O, no, it is an ever-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken”

(William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets* [New York: Penguin Books, 2001], Sonnet 116, p. 119). To Marvin Gaye, love is not as constant as Shakespeare contends:

“Love just comes and it goes  
How long it’s gonna last nobody knows  
That’s the way love is, baby.”

Love, to some, brings union and happiness. D. H. Lawrence presents romance as a glorious fusion: “How can I say ‘I love you’ when...we are both caught up and transcended into a new oneness where...all is perfect and at one” (D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* [New York: Barnes & Noble, 1916], p. 354). To Shelley, love is romantic and sexual:

“Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms bound  
And our veins beat together...  
The fountains of our deepest life, shall be  
Confused in Passion’s golden purity  
We shall become the same”

(Shelley, *Epipsychidion* [Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger, 1821], lines 565-573).

Others see heartache and conflict as unavoidable, such as Ovid: “Love offers less pleasure than pain; Lovers...suffer again and again...their pains are innumerable” (*The Art of Love* [New York: The Modern Library, 2002], p. 93). He also feels that, “Love is a kind of war. Faint hearts, you’re debarred....You’re in for suffering” (Ovid, *Love*, pp. 71-73). Paul Simon sings:

“Love’s no romance  
Love will do you in

And love will wash you out.”

Rodgers and Hart have a skeptical view:

“When love congeals - it soon reveals  
The faint aroma - of performing seals  
The double-crossing - of a pair of heels  
I wish I were in love again.”

These divergent visions of romance show the extremes of love's joys and despairs. Given this broad spectrum on what romance is and how long it lasts, it is unclear to what extent love is enduring devotion, the double-crossing of a pair of heels or an opening door. Literature exemplifies but does not answer the question about what it is in love that brings on these ecstasies and disorders.

If literature and song provide an inconsistent vision on the meaning of love, can philosophy with its goal of conceptual clarity illuminate love's various natures?

Pre-Freudian Western philosophy focused on three overlapping and diverging ideas about love: *eros*, *philia*, and *agape*. Plato gives his conception of *eros*, which is that love heals the wound of being human by uniting the halves that have been divided. Lovers cling together and do not ever want to be separated. Platonic love completes individuals; harmony reigns over conflict. Mortality threatens this perpetual union. By having children, Plato believes the individual insures immortality. Valuing one's offspring “is for the sake of immortality” and “this zeal...is Love” (Plato, *Complete Works: Symposium* [Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company 1997], pp. 474-5, 488-9, 491). Plato shows both romantic and parental love.

The meaning of *philia* is explicated by Aristotle; this Greek word is usually translated as friendship. According to philosopher Richard White, *philia* “literally refers to one's ‘nearest and dearest’” (Richard White, *Love's Philosophy*, [New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001], p.24). *Philia*, Aristotle declares, is concerned more with giving than receiving affection (Aristotle, *Nicomachean*

*Ethics* [Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 962], p. 229). To him, those who care wish to do good for one another and such relationships are free from complaints, quarrels, and conflicting loyalties (Aristotle, *Ethics*, p. 240).

*Agape*, another Greek word for love, calls on the deepest part of the self to be dedicated to God. Deuteronomy directs that “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (*The Holy Scriptures: Deuteronomy* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917], 6:5, p, 221). This devotion has a human component. “The heart shall not have hate, and neighbors are to be loved as thyself” (*Holy Scriptures: Leviticus*, 19:17-18. p. 143). The first epistle of John says: “Let us love one another: for love is of God....God is love” (*The Holy Bible: King James: John* [Nashville: Gideons International, 1961], 4:7-8, p. 1088).

Each of these variations on the meaning of love is illuminating in its own way, yet they are one-sided, and stress harmony and benevolence. There is no tension or conflict between different kinds of love. The side of love that is destructive or self-seeking is absent from all three versions, and what enhances and what diminishes love is not a topic of interest. Only Plato gives any hint of the passions of sexual union.

Philosophy after Freud includes a broader spectrum of love's emotions, a fuller picture of love's entanglements and complexities. As Freud is a major turning point in how love is perceived, rather than examine philosophers influenced by his ideas, it is best to turn to the primary source and see what Freud and his descendants have to say about love, its dynamics, motivations, and various manifestations; what strengthens and weakens it; and the relationship of parental love to marital attachment. Can the psychoanalytic emphasis on the unconscious, sexuality, and the family romance fully confront the wild paradoxes of fulfillment and destruction in our love relationships?

Do not expect just one answer from psychoanalysis. It, like most disciplines, has conceptual, methodological, and ideological divisions. There is a dialogue among those influenced by Freud as to the nature and extent of passionate and parental attachments. A review of what psychoanalysts and related psychologists have said about love can bring understanding but will also need comparison, integration, and recognition of plural viewpoints. This inquiry cannot only help us understand dilemmas within the definition of love, but also the fragmentation and interconnections within the history of psychoanalysis.

This issue of Clio's Psyche will have critical reviews of psychoanalytic books on love, attachment, intimacy, and hate, as well as other articles on these complex subjects. They will range from Freud's original ideas to more recent examinations of the nature of love.

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## **Freudian Viewpoints of Love, Hate, and Attachment**

### **The Freudian Psychology of Love**

**Kenneth Fuchsman - University of Connecticut**

Sigmund Freud wrote in 1936 that "I have never ventured beyond the ground floor and basement of the building," (*The Sigmund Freud-Ludwig Binswanger Correspondence 1908-1938* [New

York: Other Press, 2003], October 8, 1936, p. 212). Concerning his ideas on love, both his strength and limitation are his emphasis on the underside—the unconscious, sexually-derived motivations in human relationships. Freud brings the discussion back to less altruistic notions of love. He grounds our emotional connection to others to their infantile sources, shows the sides of love that grow out of need, demand, desire, and complicated family dynamics. Integrating self-seeking and mutual care is not the strong point of Freud's explication on love relationships.

Disentangling love and sex is a challenge in Freud's work. Sex and aggression were the two basic drives; love was not included. In the index to his complete works, sexuality covers about five pages; love, little more than a column. Still, what makes Freud so important for understanding the nature of love is his concentration on the earliest relationship, that of mother and infant. He sees this connection as the prototype for all subsequent romantic attachments. While Freud built on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century glorification of the mother, he moved this idealization from the mother as a moral force, to the mother as providing the nourishment-sensual-sexual-relational needs of the baby. He believed that the emotions aroused in infancy have long-lasting impact on the individual's romantic life. Freud also showed how important imagination and fantasy are in the lives of all human beings.

He revealed the centrality of the mother to the child, but he did not omit the father's importance, or that of siblings. Through the notions of identification and choice of a loved one ("object" in Freud's psychoanalytic terminology), he brought in the problem of gender and the importance of sexual identity. Attachment-separation issues and the vicissitudes of relationships also have strong roots in Freud's thought. Later investigators show it is not just the feeding at the breast that forms the child, but also tactile experiences, sensuality, varying attachment patterns, stages of brain development, and the actual parent-child relations that are important. Almost all these subsequent developments build on Freud's innovations and syntheses. His thought is a foundation for under-

standing love's nature. This article will consider Freud's ideas on sexual love; later writings will concern sublimated love, the relationship of sexual and sublimated love, *eros*, and more on sexual love.

Love, Freud maintains, is when the mental side of sexuality is in the foreground (Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, S.E. Vol. 16 [London: The Hogarth Press, 1917], p. 329). He believes the origins of love are in the satisfied need for nourishment (Freud, *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, S.E. Vol. 23 [London: The Hogarth Press, 1940], p. 188). He sees sexual life beginning with the baby suckling the mother's breast (Freud, *Intro Lectures*, p. 313). When "children fall asleep after being sated at the breast, they show an expression of blissful satisfaction which will be repeated in life after the experience of a sexual orgasm" (Freud, *Introduction to Psychoanalysis: Lectures*). The mother finds fulfillment in relation to her baby. The "mother's love for the infant she suckles and cares for...is in the nature of a completely satisfying love-relation, which not only fulfills every mental wish but also every physical need; and...it represents one of the forms of attainable human happiness" (Freud, *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, S.E. Vol. 11 [London: Hogarth Press, 1910], p. 117). In feeding and sexually arousing the infant "lies the root of a mother's importance, without parallel, established unalterably for a whole lifetime as the first and strongest love-object and as the prototype of all later love-relations—for both sexes" (Freud, *Outline*, p. 188). The mother is the child's first love (Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, p. 329). When he speaks of an "object choice," he means it is what one wants to have (Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, S.E. Vol. 18 [London: Hogarth Press, 1921], p. 106). Love to Freud involves possessing the other, which at first is the mother.

The course of the child's love for the mother does not run smooth. While others attribute the disruption in the infant-mother bond to the child's anxiety over separation, Freud dates the crisis in the relationship to the appearance of a younger sibling. "A child,"

Freud writes, “who has been put into second place by the birth of a brother or sister, and who is now for the first time almost isolated from his mother, does not easily forgive her this loss of place; feelings which in an adult would be described as greatly embittered arise in him and are often the basis of a permanent estrangement” (Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, p. 334). This loss “of love” leaves behind “a permanent injury to self-regard in the form of a narcissistic scar” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, *S.E.* Vol. 18 [London: Hogarth Press, 1920], p. 20).

It is not only a baby sister or brother that stands between mother and child. The young boy observes that his father stands between him and his mother (Freud, *Group Psychology*, p. 105). “He does not forgive his mother for having granted the favour of sexual intercourse not to himself but to his father, and he regards it as an act of unfaithfulness” (Freud, “A Special Type of Object Choice Made By Men,” *S.E.* Vol. 11 [London: Hogarth Press, 1910], p. 171). His displacement from his mother arouses the boy’s anger, not at the unfaithful mother, Freud asserts, but toward his paternal rival. The son’s relationship with his father “takes on a hostile coloring and becomes identical with the wish to replace his father in regard to his mother as well” (Freud, *Group Psychology*, p. 105). Freud’s writings on the girl’s oedipal dynamics are not as extensive or clear as those on boys. Still, from his writings it is evident that the little girl finds herself in emotional turmoil when she chooses her father as her desired love and turns away from the mother who nourished and cared for her.

To Freud, emotional attachment becomes complicated by rivalry for the loved one’s attention. Love desires exclusiveness, and from childhood on, this desire is difficult to fulfill. These issues emerge in the complete Oedipus complex, which, Freud maintains, stems from the bisexuality present in children (Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, *S.E.* Vol. 19 [London: Hogarth Press, 1923], p. 31). The oedipal drama becomes a complicated triangle where the child struggles over gender and sexual identity. On one hand, the child wants to possess the mother and get rid of the father; on the other,

the child wants to have the father and sees the mother as rival. The strength of the child's gender identification with one or the other parent determines whether the child chooses the positive Oedipus complex and the parent of the opposite sex as the love to be identified with, the negative complex where the youngster chooses the parent of the same sex to ultimately love, or some combination of the two (Freud, *Ego and Id*, pp. 31-32). While love is a dyadic relationship to many, Freud sees it as being a triad at the minimum. Competition and choice of love attachment go hand in hand. The lover is worried over being replaced by someone else, a rival for exclusive possession. Concern over whether one is loved or not is as much a part of romance as is benevolence toward the loved one.

Equally part of this oedipal dynamic is sexual and gender identification. The complete Oedipus complex offers a spectrum of positive and negative choices and identifications. This means that sexual identities can take a variety of forms within each individual and this internal diversity impacts the outcome of the Oedipus complex and subsequent choices.

The dynamics of the complete Oedipus complex then show how individuals develop their sexual selves, what can stimulate romantic attraction, and how relational conflicts are implicit in dyadic love alliances. Freud believes that moving beyond romantic fixation on a parental love choice is important. "The liberation of an individual, as he grows up, from the authority of his parents is one of the most necessary though one of the most painful results brought about by the course of his development" (Freud, "Family Romance", *S.E.* Vol. 9 [London: Hogarth Press, 1909], p. 237). This may happen if incestuous fantasies can be overcome (Freud, *The Psychology of Love* [New York: Penguin, 1905, 2007], p. 202). The emergence of a superego corresponds to the male child's giving up his mother as a love choice. Then, after puberty, sexual love is front and center. For "love naturally consists...in sexual love with sexual union as its aim." (Freud, *Group Psychology*, p. 90). Yet according to another motif in Freud's writings, it is not always easy to let go of the first love choices. The "first allocations of the

libido” are “powerful,” and later choices do not quite measure up. “The husband is...only ever a substitute, never the right man...[T]he father...has first claim on the woman’s capacity for love, the husband has at best the second claim” (Freud, *Love*, p. 272). To Freud, these emotional complications indicate that “there is something in the nature of the sexual drive itself that is unfavorable to the achievement of complete satisfaction.” An adult sexual partner is a “surrogate” for the original choice, and a later choice is not “completely satisfying” (Freud, *Love*, p. 259). The lover or spouse is always fighting ghosts from the nursery. Adult romances then contain echoes of childhood oedipal choices. The struggle for liberation from the parent’s authority is likely never ending.

Neither *Philia*, *agape*, Platonic *eros*, nor Shakespearean constancy can explain these complex undercurrents of romantic entanglements that Freud reveals. It is in showing these relational complications, with their roots in infancy and the Oedipus complex, that Freud makes his major contribution to understanding the dynamics of love. He redirects discussion about love away from the one-sided emphasis on benevolence and goodness in *philia* and *agape* to the vagaries of attachment and choice. While literature can illustrate the volatility of romance, Freud’s ideas go farther in showing why sexual connections arouse such a range of emotions.

*Kenneth Fuchsman’s biography can be found on page 186.*



## **Passionate Inferno: Mother-Child Love and Hate**

**Jane Goldberg - Private Practice**

When Freud started looking closely at family life, he saw its dark underside: competition, anger, jealousy, hatred, and the desire to kill. Children want to kill parents, and sometimes do. Alternatively, parents want to kill their children, and sometimes do.

It is true that men murder much more often than women, but when a woman causes the death of another, that person is most likely to be her own newborn baby. As Sarah Hrdy documents in *Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants, and Natural Selection* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), the notion of an inborn and natural maternal instinct is more myth than fact. Mother love is conditional and dependent on a variety of factors. An unvarnished reading of the historical record reveals indifference and even cruelty toward not only other people's children but their own as well.

For mothers, the contradictory needs between mother and infant, mothering and survival, mothering and the desire to be attractive for males, mothering and work are all factors that make mothering a complex, contradictory endeavor. At these times, mothering can become more burdensome than blissful. Infanticide is one way throughout history that women—especially those without access to birth control or abortion—have terminated their investment in offspring when mothers felt that conditions weren't favorable for motherhood. There is a village in Bolivia where, during a period of war and economic stress in the 1930s, nearly every woman killed her newborn. In one village in Papua New Guinea, 41 percent of all live infants born between 1974 and 1978 were killed by their parents just after birth. In 1978, the number of abandoned children in Brazil was estimated at 15 million.

What can be more traumatic than biological separation is the breaking of the narcissistic bond, or the sense of symbiotic oneness and the once-in-a-lifetime union, that exists between mother and infant as well as between mother and fetus. As a mother, I have been thinking and feeling a lot about the process of separation.

When my daughter Molly was four years old, I was taking a nature walk with her, something we like to do together. The area around our country home was buzzing with the song of the 17-year cicadas, which come in massive numbers only once every 17 years to live long enough to make their strange ethereal music before they drop their eggs from a tree.

As we were walking through the woods, we came across a cicada in the last, waning period of life. He, though I do not really know how to distinguish gender in these insects, allowed us to pick him up by his wings, place him on a tree, and then take him off. He sat in our hands and walked on our arms. We spent 20 minutes with this cicada. We even named him, and Molly decided she wanted to take him home with her. We set him in Molly's carriage, perched in the empty seat like he was a king, and started to walk home. Suddenly Molly reached for him, took him out of the carriage, put him on the ground, and proceeded to stomp on him.

For just a little while, Molly seemed to love this little cicada. For that moment, Molly embraced love, life, and togetherness. Then Molly had had enough of that little cicada; she was ready to be done with him. In that moment of stomping, she embraced hate, death, and separation. In her acts of love and subsequent murder, she embodied some basic principles about love and aggression, attachment and separation; you don't have one without the other. They go together as surely as the proverbial horse and carriage. Also, they are usually directed to the same object; you don't necessarily love one person and hate another; you hate most of all the ones you love most of all. You don't want to leave someone unless you also want to be close; the people you most ardently want distance from are the same people you want to possess.

In this age of violence, terrorism, death, and destruction, is there an antidote for our predilection for destruction? Yes—we can learn to do better. Learning is what human beings uniquely do rather well.

It is a startling concept: We have to learn to love. To *learn* to love—by which I mean *learn* to be loving—is an active verb, an act. The time when it is easiest, fastest, and smoothest to learn is, of course, when we are children. We need these lessons to be authentic and real, not some sanitized, idealized version of love that none of us can live up to and that none of us will be able to sustain over time.

We need to learn that hate is not a “four-letter word.” For children to learn to love, they need to learn that they hate and that they, too, are hated. Children are hate-able precisely because they themselves hate. The parents who does not permit themselves to hate a child are refusing to respond to the real person that the child is. In such an atmosphere of denial, the children will never have the feeling that they is known, accepted, and fully loved for who they is.

Healthy psychological growth is fostered by parents helping their children to recognize and feel their destructive wishes and, at the same time, to refrain from acting on them. Constructive hate—hating without destructive action—is the same thing as love and will allow the child to be hated and to hate without being frightened of the consequences.

Psychoanalysis is a ritual of telling one's story. In telling the patient to say what comes to his or her mind, psychoanalysts are suggesting the silencing of the normal operations of our everyday conversational speech. When we do this, another language presents itself to us, the language of the unconscious, or our inner speech. This speech that connects us with our deepest being.

I think of the process of being analyzed as a “growing down” to the origins. In order to give up the compulsion to repeat the past, you have to grow down into that past and return to it, defenseless and open. You must return to that psychic place where the pain began, and allow yourself to re-experience it.

The job of the analyst, then, is to return the patient to that period of time before defenses were erected—before there was tightness in the chest instead of a raging anger, before there was numbness instead of unbearable hurt. This is the time when feelings are still raw, unfiltered, conflicting, and irrational. All this is the natural state of the child, but becomes the unconscious of the adult.

When analysis is done properly, this growing down is done quite artfully, as a guided tour. This excursion into one's in-

ternal landscape is quite a different matter than when one stays grown down because one simply cannot grow up. The former has maturity as its goal, and is organized and freeing; the latter is chaotic and constricting. It is the analyst's job to make sure that this delicate, even dangerous, growing down heals rather than harms.

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## **The Primacy of the Mother for Ian Suttie**

**Kenneth Fuchsman - University of Connecticut**

A few days after Scottish psychiatrist Ian Suttie died in London on October 23, 1935 at the age of 46, his only book, *The Origins of Love and Hate* (London: Free Associations Books) was published. It has gone in and out of print for over 70 years. Suttie is credited with anticipating the ideas of another Scottish physician, Ronald Fairbairn, and the attachment theorist, John Bowlby. The latter called Suttie's sole-published book, "a milestone" (Bowlby, in Suttie, *Origins*, p. xvii). Ian Suttie's work is a revision of Freud's body of work.

In taking Freud's ideas and running with them, Suttie is able to develop fundamental new psychoanalytic insights. Like Freud, Suttie recognizes that human biology dictates a long period of dependency and has shaped the human to be both adaptive and non-adaptive. Suttie sees love and hate as stemming from the infant's relationship with the mother. To Suttie, "love of mother is primal...as it is the *first formed and directed* emotional relationship." Hate, on the other hand, is not primal but is an intensification of the anxiety over separation (p. 31). When the newborn's need to retain

the mother is thwarted, it arouses terror and rage as loss of mother is a premonition of death (pp. 15-16). Suttie connects love, hate, and anxiety over mortality to the recurring process of attachment, separation, and reunion.

The centrality of the mother-child relationship in Suttie's work cannot be overestimated. He shows in greater complexity than Freud the interactive dynamics of mother-infant attachment. Where in the beginnings of the positive male Oedipus complex, Freud characterizes the boy as loving the mother and directing his anger at his father, Suttie presents a complete spectrum of emotions toward the mother in what would nowadays be called the pre-oedipal period.

To Suttie, the mother-infant relationship can be both tender and reciprocal. As well as the mother nurturing her baby, the infant wants to give to his or her mother. Suttie asserts that the original interaction between these two entails both giving and getting (p. 50). The mother gives the breast, and the baby, the mouth. Suttie uses the word "gift" to describe this interaction, which he also calls "mutual absorption." As time goes on, and the baby becomes more aware of the world, cooperative activities lead to common meanings. A companionship of love between mother and child exists where they are each the other's world; this commonality evolves into a companionship of interest. The mother-child sharing develops into curiosity about external beings ("objects" in Freudian terminology, p. 32). Interest in the world is an outgrowth of the common meanings in the mother-child bond; this is not just sublimation, but an extension of the care between mother and child. It is not surprising then that Suttie understands "love as social rather than sexual...and as seeking *any state of responsiveness* with others as its goal...culture-interest is derived from love as a supplementary mode of companionship" (p. 36).

Mutual attachment is not the only side of the child's relationship with the mother. "The exigencies of life...interrupt this happy relationship" (p. 39). The mother may reject the baby's gifts, or the mother does not give as much to the child, or at times is un-

available. Separation-anxiety sets in, the infant mixes love-longing with worry and anger, and this is called ambivalence (p. 39). These worries and longings stem from the fact, according to Suttie, that humans are the only anxious creature (p. 19). The child wants to rid him- or herself of these angry and ambivalent sentiments and to restore harmony with the mother. For the baby, this hate of the loved one is intolerable, and recovering the closeness of love is a matter of life and death (p. 42). There are a variety of different ways the child seeks to regain the mutual absorption. Some are more successful than others, and different relational patterns are formed. Whatever the evolved psychological relationship of mother and child, mother is “supremely important...in building up the child’s first idea of *itself* and its first ambitions and purposes.” She not only enforces repression and denial, but also strengthens the constructive side of the child’s personality (p. 101).

The centrality of the mother’s influence leads Suttie to differ from Freud on oedipal developments. Where in the early stages of the positive male Oedipus complex, Freud has the father standing between son and mother, to Suttie, it is the mother who generally enforces the ban on incest, rejects the son’s overtures, and enforces repression. Freud separates love and hate; the former being directed toward the mother and the latter at the father. Suttie, on the other hand, has love and hate initially both directed toward the mother.

It is only when maternal repression is weak, Suttie declares, that patriarchal suppression is evoked. The father’s enforcement does not fully replace maternal repression. For maternal rejection is more effective in repressing the oedipal wish than is the father’s threat of castration. The infant can only imagine gratification with the mother’s knowledge. Should the mother repudiate incest, the child has difficulty proceeding to the next stage of oedipal desire. “The idea, ‘mother would never consent,’ is the conclusive barrier to the oedipal wish, even at fantasy level” (pp. 101-102). In Freud, even though the unfaithful mother chooses the father over the son, Freud does not envision the mother as the enforcer of the incest ta-

boo. While her distancing leaves the Freudian son estranged and bitter, the son's anger in the positive Oedipus complex is directed primarily at the father. Why the Freudian son is not equally enraged at both mother and father is not addressed in Freud's writings. The son in Suttie focuses his hate mostly on the mother. What Suttie omits is the complete Oedipus complex and the place of varied sexual/gender identifications and identity in the formation of the self. The place of the father is secondary to the mother in Suttie's psychology. Still, he does discuss how rivalries and resentments between all family members can impact on the varying dynamics characteristic of families.

When Suttie describes adult love, it is not surprising that he centers it in the vital relationship between mother and infant. He says that the rapport between child and mother is central for all species who nurture offspring. Love has its roots in "a sense of security and companionship which is pleasant *in itself*, and which certainly plays a part in life from very early days" (p. 69). The "nature of love" is "necessarily subconscious and involuntary" (p. 74). In sexual relations, "the complete passion of love integrates genital appetite with that 'love' or tenderness which is the descendant or derivative of infantile need." This sexual connection aims at "restoring the lost sense of union with the mother," as intercourse and infantile sucking are alike. The sexual act "is totally reciprocal" and "restores the free give-and-take of infancy" (p. 72).

By stressing the mutual, the reciprocal, the gift, tenderness, and companionship, Suttie grounds the intimate attachments of infancy and adulthood to relationships and benevolence. He is not blind though to the darker side of bonds, to how the infant's crisis of separation arouses hate and anger along with a drive on the child's part to restore harmony with the mother. His ideas then can help us understand how closeness and conflict can be part of love relationships. Both the security and volatility of romance is captured in Suttie's work. The cycle of attachment, separation, fear of death, and reunion would apply to the dynamics of adult romantic love as it did to mother-infant relations, even though Suttie himself

does not make this connection. In relation to the four sets of questions in the “Prelude” (see p. ?? in this issue) about the nature of love, Suttie does give a definition of what love entails by tying together love and hate as containing the germ of a theory of love’s dynamics. He is better at describing maternal than paternal love; he integrates romantic and parental love, but does not show their difference. Like Freud, he does not really show what sustains and what undermines love, nor does he describe developmental stages of adult romances. Still, by grounding close relationships in an ethic of mutual care and the disruption of the mother-infant bond as the origin of hate, Suttie helps advance the understanding of the dynamics of love from its beginnings in infancy through adulthood.

*Kenneth Fuchsman’s biography can be found on page 186.*



## **Superego Dynamics of Judgment and Rapprochement**

**Donald L. Carveth** - York University, Toronto

Aggression in superego dynamics play a central role in long-term relationships, in addition to the many more obvious manifestations such as overt violence, verbal abuse, exploitation, degradation, devaluation, intimidation, sarcasm, teasing, and mockery. Here I am referring to sadomasochistic patterns of judging and being judged, of reproaching and being reproached.

Although today we also recognize a mature conscience fueled by attachment, love, and concern mediating reparation toward injured others and forgiveness toward the self, Freud focused mainly on the punitive superego fueled by aggression. As “heir to the Oedipus complex” it comes into being through the turning of

hostility toward the oedipal rivals against the self, generating narcissistic states of persecutory guilt, shame, and the myriad patterns of self-damage he referred to as moral masochism.

Freud acquainted us with “the criminal from a sense of guilt” who, owing to a pre-existing but unconscious sense of guilt rooted in unresolved oedipal and pre-oedipal conflicts, commits a crime in order to be caught and punished. He also described those who fear success, or are wrecked by it, because they unconsciously equate it with an oedipal crime or triumph for which their superego demands suffering.

Though we are tempted to dismiss such guilt and punishment as entirely neurotic, Freud reminds us that it would be a mistake to do so. For while no actual crime may have been committed, a thought-crime, such as a death wish, may well have existed, which, while not deserving the same degree of punishment as the act with which it is falsely equated in the unconscious, nevertheless justifies a degree of guilt. We are judged by our superegos not merely for the evil we do but also for the evil we carry in our hearts.

Long-term relationships constitute a field in which both superego-driven, masochistic needs to suffer, as well as sadistic defences against this need, are played out. A common defence against the punitive superego is to seek to be its subject rather than its object, to identify with it and place someone else, the scapegoat, in the role of victim. Here one swings from masochism (being the sinner who gets punished) to sadism (being the righteous judge who punishes sinners).

Sometimes such sadomasochism takes an overt and concrete form in the dramatic costumes and practices of the sadomasochistic underground. But in somewhat more subtle forms it is commonly seen among couples in long-term relationships, who occupy these reciprocal roles, occasionally reversing them. While one might expect the sadistic role to be occupied by a man and the masochistic role by a woman (and this is often the case where overt violence is

concerned), when the abuse is more refined we may find either gender submitting masochistically to painful psychological and emotional torment, humiliation, exploitation and domination by a punitive, superego-identified partner.

One of the most subtle forms of sadistic torment seen in relationships involves guilt induction. Almost a century and a half ago, in his *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche described the will to power of the weak. Unable to conquer the strong in direct struggle, the weak redefine strength itself as a sin: now filled with shame and guilt for being who they are, the strong fall on their own swords. In long-term relationships, we see the pattern whereby a masochistic partner with pre-existing neurotic guilt has this guilt intensified and manipulated in myriad ways by the sadistic partner who in this way gains a large measure of control.

Ms. A's parents had adopted a daughter a year prior to her birth. Ms. A came to be treated as the genuine daughter, although she was consistently berated and demeaned by her disappointed, bitter, and alcoholic father who had been passed over for a senior position in the corporation he had worked for. Ms. A, despite showing great promise in her studies, never managed to develop a career or marriage and a family of her own, devoting herself to nursing her aging parents until their deaths, at which point she and her sister inherited substantial sums of money. Now free to develop a new life for herself, Ms. A has for several years been bogged down in a dysfunctional relationship with a narcissistic and exploitive man who uses her financially, is unfaithful to her, and who, like her father, continually demeans and degrades her. She dares not leave him, for when he is not around to mortify her, she resorts to physically mutilating herself in various ways. Ms. A is not consciously in touch with the murderous rage toward her father that she has turned against herself in the form of her sadistic super-ego, which she externalizes onto her partner, nor is she yet conscious of her need to suffer for her implicit triumph over her older adopted sister. Meanwhile, her neurotic guilt makes her an easy mark for her exploitive, if not mildly sociopathic, partner.

Mr. B. is the middle of three children of a narcissistic mother whose husband left her when the children were small. Mr. B felt ignored and emotionally deprived by mother and sisters. As a result, he developed intense oral envy and greed, and a level of narcissism matching his mother's. Having achieved great success in business, he now longs to have revenge on mother and sisters by invidiously rubbing their noses in all that he possesses and they lack, thus stimulating in them the painful envy he himself has suffered from. But his unconscious superego will not allow him to get away with this. He binges and then hates himself for his weight gain. He exercises and runs to the point of injuring himself and suffering chronic pain. He has temper tantrums that alienate his wife and that cause him to feel intense shame and remorse for the effect his yelling and screaming are having on his children. His wife puts up with all this as a way of expiating her own guilt for enjoying an opulent life style far exceeding that of her parents and siblings, as well as for the crime of hating her narcissistic and devaluing father.

Mrs. C is the middle child of three children of a narcissistic, cold, and bitter mother who was in constant marital conflict with her husband, who, though successful in his career and much loved by his employees and friends, was withdrawn from the family and ended up drinking himself to death at a relatively early age. Mrs. C early on became involved in activities outside her unhappy home and left it as early as she could. Successful in her studies, she married and, together with her husband, established a business that quickly became extremely successful. She entered analysis because of growing conflict with her husband, whom she had come to envy and hate for the recognition she felt he unfairly garnered in connection with the business which she felt she had done more than he had to build. It became clear that Mrs. C equated her husband with her mother—in fact, equated the whole world with the mother from whom she longed for warmth and appreciation but, instead, seemed to receive only cold indifference and constant unfair demands. Mrs. C reacted to all this with bitter rages, especially on weekends,

which turned her family life into something resembling that of her parents. In this way, and through her excessive drinking and various professional indiscretions, Mrs. C chronically punished herself for her unconscious hatred of her mother and for her oral envy, greed, and narcissism.

A good deal of the aggression we see in long-term relationships involves the activity of the punitive, at times sadistic, superego and of defences against the pain and self-torment it inflicts on the subject. A common defence against the punitive superego involves identifying with it and directing its aggression away from the self onto others, such as one's spouse or children. Such people have what Heinrich Racker called a "mania for reproaching." They often form relationships with people who have what might be called a mania for being reproached—that is, who cope with their own sadistic superegos by submitting masochistically instead of identifying and projecting or displacing blame. Three clinical illustrations of such sadomasochistic dynamics in long-term relationships have been given, but nothing can equal their depiction by Edward Albee in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and by Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in the memorable film version of the play.

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## **On Hating Freud's Injunction to Give Up Loving Those We Have Lost**

**Jeffrey Berman - SUNY-Albany**

In Freud's groundbreaking 1914 essay "On Narcissism," he

writes, "A strong egoism is a protection against falling ill, but in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill, and we are bound to fall ill if, in consequence of frustration, we are unable to love" (*S.E.*, Vol. 14, p. 85). That statement has always moved me, both for its insights into the psychology of love and for its magisterial prose rhythms, which are evident even in translation. Ever since I began reading Freud in college, I have admired his deep understanding of love and loss: his recognition of the importance of love for a fulfilling life, his realization that love can dissolve easily and violently into hate, and his definition of psychological health as the ability to love and work. Freud has always been a heroic figure to me: his intellectual courage in the face of adversity, his wry characterization of himself as a "disturber of the world's sleep," his refusal to be silenced by his many critics, his extraordinary work ethic, his determination to pursue the truth no matter where it might lead (he chose as the motto for *The Interpretation of Dreams* a quotation from *The Aeneid*: "If I cannot bend the Higher Powers, I will move the Infernal Regions"), and his acceptance of a tragic vision of life. Nothing in life could break his spirit, not even the early death of his daughter Sophie in 1920 followed by the death in 1923 of her four-year-old son Heinz, to whom Freud was so attached. According to Freud's biographer Ernest Jones, Heinz's death "was the only occasion in his life when Freud was known to shed tears" (*Sigmund Freud: Life and Work*, Vol. 3 [London: Hogarth Press, 1957], p. 92).

For more than 30 years I have taught graduate and undergraduate courses on literature and psychoanalysis at my university, never failing to point out both the insights and blindness of Freudian theory. I had no criticisms of his theory of bereavement, however, until the death of my beloved wife, Barbara, who succumbed to pancreatic cancer on April 5, 2004, at the age of 57. When I began studying Freud's observations on bereavement, in an attempt to understand my own dark, turbulent emotions, and my need to keep Barbara's memory alive by talking about her to my students, discussing her at professional conferences, and writing books about

her that focus on death education, I found myself becoming angrier and angrier. The more I read Freud, the more I disagreed with his conclusions on bereavement—a disagreement so strong that it approaches furious dissent. Is my new “hatred” of Freud’s theory of bereavement impassioned, honest disagreement, or is it clinical resistance—an example of protesting too much? You be the judge.

One of Freud’s most important statements on loss appears in his 1916 essay “On Transience,” where he states in his most emphatic language that mourners must detach themselves from their lost loved one. “Mourning, as we know, however painful it may be, comes to a spontaneous end. When it has renounced everything that has been lost, then it has consumed itself, and our libido is once more free (in so far as we are still young and active) to replace the lost objects by fresh ones equally or still more precious” (*S.E.*, Vol. 14, p. 307). Freud was no less unambiguous in arguing, in his justly famous 1917 essay “Mourning and Melancholia,” that to avoid depression, the living must give up all connection with the dead. “Reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object” (*S.E.*, Vol. 14, p. 244). This withdrawal of libido or “decathexis” of energy, is necessary so that the “ego becomes free and uninhibited again.” Otherwise, Freud warns, using one of his most suggestive metaphors, the “shadow of the object” will fall upon the ego, resulting in depression.

Freud views bereavement in terms of his early libido theory, not in terms of the internal system of object relations (love relations) theorized by later psychoanalysts. I suspect that he found the psychology of mourning as enigmatic as he did the psychology of women. To his credit, he did not pathologize grief, but he felt that it disappeared quickly in “normal” mourning. In his *Notes Upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis* (1909), better known as the story of the Rat Man, Freud tells his patient that “a normal period of mourning would last from one year to two years” (*S.E.*, Vol. 10, p. 186). He conceded in “Mourning and Melancholia” that “people never willingly abandon a libidinal position, not even, indeed, when a

substitute is already beckoning to them,” but he nevertheless concluded that “[n]ormally, respect for reality gains the day” (*S.E.*, Vol. 14, p. 244). The “work of mourning” occurs when “[e]ach single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hypercatheted, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it” (*S.E.*, Vol. 14, p. 245)—like erasing a computer’s hard drive of all its data.

For decades clinicians have accepted Freud’s view of mourning. For example, in the first edition of *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy* (New York: Springer, 1982), J. William Worden agrees with Freud and lists one of the “Tasks of Mourning” as “withdrawing emotional energy from the deceased and reinvesting it in another relationship.” In the third edition (New York: Springer, 2002), however, Worden reverses himself and concludes that Freud was mistaken about the mourner’s need to shatter the relational bond with the deceased. “We now know that people do not decathect from the dead but find ways to develop ‘continuing bonds’ with the deceased” (p. 35). Worden now suggests, contrary to Freud, that one of the tasks of mourning “is to find a place for the deceased that will enable the mourner to be connected with the deceased but in a way that will not preclude him or her from getting on with life. We need to find ways to memorialize the dead, that is, to remember the dead loved one—keeping them with us but still going on with life” (p. 35).

Other contemporary theorists and clinicians agree with Worden’s new position. For example, Stephen Shuchter and Sidney Zisook argue that it is not only undesirable but also impossible for many people to break their attachments with the dead. “The continued emotional or spiritual existence of the dead spouse becomes one of the most powerful means of containing the potentially overwhelming emotions of grief.” The task of mourning, they conclude, is to “find a way of continuing the relationship with their dead spouse that allows both an ‘appropriate’ experience of grief and a continuing involvement in living” (“Treatment of Spousal Bereavement,” published in *Psychiatric Annals* [1986], p. 303).

Psychoanalytically oriented clinicians have adopted a new paradigm of mourning, one that recognizes, as Marilyn McCabe explains in her book *The Paradox of Loss: Toward a Relational Theory of Grief* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), “both that the lost other is an ongoing part of our existence, and that the *processes* of relationship continue to be reintegrated, transferred, rejuvenated, and transformed. These relational processes are part of a verbal and nonverbal, tacit and conscious narrative that helps us reconstruct our selves and our lives in the experience of profound loss” (p. 13; emphasis in original).

In light of this new view of bereavement, my need to talk about Barbara and write books about death education reflects my desire to hold onto her, to maintain rather than renounce my relationship with her. I don’t want to “decathect” from her but to develop my continuing bond with her. Contrary to Freud, my mourning did not come to a “spontaneous end” in one or two years. Barbara died nearly five years ago, and I am still in mourning. Nevertheless, I experience the many joys of life as a parent, grandparent, teacher, and friend. I cannot imagine that I will discover a substitute who will “replace the lost object”—no one can replace Barbara, though I hope that I will find another woman whom I can love, which was something that my wife also wished for me as she lay dying.

If Freud were alive, I suspect he would understand and endorse this new view of mourning and bereavement, for there was one love that he could never renounce, even when his own death loomed, something that was not a person but a new way of looking at human reality—psychoanalysis, his own offspring, which he never doubted would survive and prosper long after the creator’s death. All of us have different foci for our love, be they people, pets, God, or ideas. We cannot and should not be asked to let them go when they or we are on the brink of extinction. One need not believe in a supernatural afterlife to recognize that we are less alone when we internalize our loved ones and hold onto them for dear life.

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## **Reflections on Aggression and Love by Practicing Therapists**

### **Person on Love**

**Vivian M. Rosenberg - Drexel University**

*Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters: The Power of Romantic Passion* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988) is a fascinating and complex study by Ethel S. Person, a practicing therapist and Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. She writes articles and books for general as well as professional audiences. In her writings Person draws on insights gleaned from her own experiences as a practicing psychiatrist and on her impressive knowledge of a wide range of theories, research studies, biographies, autobiographies, and letters and comments—by both famous and ordinary people—about loves that flourished and loves that failed. Moreover, the author is familiar with an incredible number of novels and films illustrating different kinds of love relationships; she uses real life and fictional love stories as examples of the “Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters” mentioned in the title of her book.

The book is divided into five sections: “The Experience of Romantic Love,” “The Aims of Love,” “The Paradoxes and Struggles Inherent in Love,” “The Gender Difference in Love,” and “The Fate of Love.” These complicated topics are further sub-divided and then explored and carefully analyzed in prose that is energized by her obvious enthusiasm for her project.

Sprinkled throughout the book are personal comments that

remind the reader that this study is of more than academic interest to the author. In the very first sentence of the “Acknowledgments” section, Ethel Person discloses her own passionate interest in her project. “This book,” she writes, “is written for those who, like me, have struggled to understand the importance and power of romantic love.” The “Introduction” that follows again reminds the reader that the book evolved from a personal need: “Love,” Person confesses, “has been one of the most profound interests of my life since I was no more than twelve.” Such personal asides help the reader identify with the writer and move through the complex material.

A mission at the core of this book also animates the text: explaining what motivated her to undertake this project, Person tells the reader that she felt compelled to correct what she sees as a tendency in the therapeutic community to disdain and denigrate romantic passion. It is interesting to note that a popular book by Irving Yalom, published in 1989 (New York: Basic Books), only a year after this one, offers evidence that Person’s criticisms, at least when she wrote them, were on target. Yalom, writing about his own experiences as a psychiatrist, called his book *Love’s Executioner and Other Tales of Psychotherapy*. “Love and psychotherapy,” he asserted, “are fundamentally incompatible”; “the good therapist fights darkness and seeks illumination, while romantic love is sustained by mystery and crumbles upon inspection.”

Ethel Person would disagree with Yalom’s assessment of romantic love, and actually, in the title story of his book, Yalom wryly admitted that, in at least one case, he had been wrong when he tried to steer a patient away from what he thought was an inappropriate love. Long after her analysis ended, Yalom found out that this patient had continued the affair for years, apparently with no adverse consequences and with benefits to both participants. In her book, Person writes about many positive passionate romances, but she also insists that “even when the outcome of love is unhappy, the lover may nonetheless have experienced the liberating effects of love and be able to preserve the fruits of that liberation, whether in expanded creativity, enlarged insight, or a subtle internal reordering

of personality.” Thus she insists that therapists, their patients, and the rest of us can and should celebrate romantic passion.

Of course Person doesn't deny the suffering that love affairs can cause to the lovers or the collateral damage that may be inflicted on their families, especially in adulterous relationships. Nevertheless, she contends that it is wrong to ignore the benefits of romantic love: such experiences can be life-affirming “change-agents,” empowering the patient “to take more risks and build a stronger sense of self.”

In her most recent book, *Feeling Strong: The Achievement of Authentic Power* (New York: William Morrow, 2002), Person reiterates the idea that love enables people to break out of stultifying and even destructive personality and behavior patterns. This book, published 14 years after *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters*, includes a chapter on “Power in Intimate Relationships.” Here, drawing on her earlier work, Person once again observes that “falling in love is often accompanied by unusual spurts of energy, growth, and change, and by a sense of richness, abundance, and inner strength.”

I suppose one might counter Person's optimistic conclusions by citing instances of passionate love that left one or both participants feeling weaker rather than stronger, and generally regretful about the experience. However, the type of love Person most admires (no matter whether or not it lasts) is “mutual passionate love,” a love that is “reciprocal” and that includes these essential qualities: passion and tenderness, and “tender longing” when the lovers cannot be together; mutual caring; and empathy, which Person emphasizes, is “not complete identification.” “One feels with one's beloved,” she explains, “one does not become one's beloved.” This is an important distinction. Although lovers crave merger, “this can only be realized for brief moments”; with mutual, caring love, “the essential autonomy and integrity” of each lover is maintained.

An interesting example of romantic love as an agent of

change appeared in the March 2006 issue of this publication. In a fascinating article entitled “Marriage at-a-Distance,” psychoanalysts Jean Hantman and Donald Carveth described their nine-year courtship while she was living in Philadelphia and he was in Toronto. Awed by the depth of their love despite the fact that they “lived 502 miles away from each other in separate countries,” both of these psychologically sophisticated and trained professionals contend that they changed far more as a result of their romance than they had through years of therapy.

The love relationships Person most admires, and the one Hantman and Carveth describe, are clearly different from the kind depicted in many films, including Woody Allen’s most recent film, *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*. For Person, this film would fall under the category of “carnal (sexual) love”; I call this “tourist love” because, as Allen’s title implies, the participants experience love as they experience Barcelona: they visit, and even savor it, until they decide to move on to another tourist attraction. Romance, for them, is exciting and absorbing for a while, but because it is driven primarily by sexual desire, it is shallow and short-lived. *Saturday*, Ian McEwan’s 2006 novel, offers an excellent example of a long-married couple who share the reciprocal, caring love Person most admires.

The reader should be warned that this book is not an easy read. In 354 dense pages, the author discusses a great array of ideas about romantic love and offers multiple examples from life and fiction to illustrate these ideas. Her analysis also includes discussions of the impact of cultural and family contexts on desire and behavior. The many qualifying and nuanced remarks, as well as the frequent reminders of the multifaceted nature of romantic passion, make it difficult to draw clear conclusions. At the end of her book, Person herself notes that “it is not possible from what I have said to draw up any recipe for romance.” She admits, too, as many have before her, that “love defies complete analysis.” Luckily, the patient reader will discover stunning insights here, and many will find that their own experiences support the author’s contention that love,

whether it lasts or not, “is one of life’s pre-eminent crucibles for change.”

The major problem I found with *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters* is that it is 20 years old; all the references are necessarily limited to what was available before 1988. It would be wonderful to have an update that would cite current research and theories as well as examples from more recent films and books. A particularly serious omission is any reference to John Bowlby’s Attachment Theory. When Person was writing her book, Bowlby was known primarily for his work on mother-child relationships. Now, more therapists are building on Bowlby’s work when counseling unhappy couples. (See Sue Johnson’s 2008 self-help book, *Hold Me Tight*, a book based on Bowlby’s work.)

By the time Person wrote *Feeling Strong*, she did include references to Attachment Theory. In the chapter, “Power in Intimate Relationships,” Person refers to both Bowlby and Daniel Stern, another eminent name in the field. It seems to me that “attunement,” a word often used in Attachment Theory, is in fact the quality of love relationships Person most values in both the 1988 work reviewed here and the 2002 book.

Because *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters* was written in 1988, also missing are discussions of events and problems affecting current romantic relationships: for instance, fears of sexually transmitted diseases or the impact of technology (for example, Internet affairs, virtual sex, pornography). Possibilities—and problems—related to Viagra-style drugs (greeted with such acclaim in 1998) could not be addressed here, either. These drugs have had unexpected, and not always positive, consequences. As early as 1978, the sociologist Philip Slater, in his book *Footholds*, was already criticizing Americans for turning lovemaking into a “task,” a task that had to end with a “product” and had to be graded as “adequate” or “inadequate.” More recent studies by sociologists and psychologists have described the effects of medical identifications of sexual “dysfunctions” and the aggressive marketing of pharmaceuticals to “cure” these “dysfunctions.” Specifically, re-

searchers like Meika Loe and Lenore Tiefer maintain that drugs, and the ubiquitous advertisements for them, not only increase “performance anxiety” but also limit our notions of love and sex and decrease attention to creative pleasuring and relationship building.

Even though Person could not anticipate such recent developments in her 1988 book, I believe teachers and therapists will still find it of interest; so will ordinary readers, many of whom might better understand their own relationships after reading Person’s thoughtful and informed analysis. Moreover, the lengthy index, the careful and copious footnotes, and the references that include lists of books and articles and films are wonderful teaching and research resources. What is most important, however, is that *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters* bubbles with rich and profound ideas about a topic that has universal appeal.

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## **Why Should I Love Thee When I Have So Many Reasons to Hate Thee?**

**Hanna Turken - Private Practice**

Martin Bergman’s *The Anatomy of Loving* (1987), covers the significant developments and important contributions to the psychology of loving, and consequently the psychology of the opposite—hate, anger, hostility, and violence. From these contributions and my experience in the practice of psychoanalytic psycho-

therapy, hate, anger, hostility, and violence to oneself and to others are always related to the unfolding of how we are or were loved, our developed capacity to love others, and how we love ourselves. All positive and negative components of human relatedness are derived from our interpersonal experiences throughout life. Like others in my profession, I am struggling to understand better what the psychological components are in the increased violent acting out of anger in the patient population and in society at large.

My patient, Mr. V, is representative of those cases in which positive feelings, from his early childhood to coming to treatment, were not able to outweigh the negative ones. I was able to learn from him that when we speak of anger, hate, and violence, we are really looking at the presence or absence of love, and how both our innate ability to love and to hate, and how the ability of “important others” to love and hate interact. Mr. V’s case offers a glimpse into the components that at times led him to act out against family members, himself, and society in general. His request for help was to maintain emotional stability to keep his job, continue his studies, and resolve some of the difficulties with his wife. He felt on the verge of physically striking his supervisor at work and of striking back at his wife by having an extramarital affair as he perceived both his supervisor and his wife exercised their power over him in an abusive manner. He indicated that when such powerful feelings of hate and utter contempt overwhelm him, he comes very close to repeating his past violent, acting-out behaviors. A pattern exists in which he gets most jobs he applies for with ease, but eventually negative feelings develop toward the individuals above him, and he sees no alternative but to leave the job before inflicting physical harm. As to his wife, what he perceives as her manipulation of sex infuriates him to the point of wishing her harm.

Mr. V is a middle-aged, engaging man who presents himself on the one hand as intelligent, verbal, interactive, caring, and seemingly easy to get along with, and on the other as threatening when afraid, frustrated, misunderstood, or feeling “unfairly provoked.” His resounding voice and his big size—he is six feet tall and of

solid build—invoke two split images: that of a growling bear on the one hand and that of a cuddly bear on the other. The first four months of his treatment were spent with him using me as a container for his seemingly bottomless anger and contempt for all those important others who had failed him, and my learning how to tolerate his mannerisms without getting caught in my own fear. After those four months, he stopped treatment.

For two years I did not hear from him, until a message on my answering machine, full of contrition, begged me to take him back into therapy. He said I was the only person who could prevent him from destroying that which he attains through hard work. He had changed jobs, was about to graduate from college, had applied to graduate school, and had refrained from having an extramarital affair. After resuming treatment, he remained in therapy until he obtained his master's degree. Below is a reconstruction of why Mr. V's negative, hateful feelings prevail over the positive, progressive ones.

Mr. V remembers feeling happy until about the age of four: he loved his father, mother, and two siblings who were two and three years younger. His life spiraled downward after his father left the Dominican Republic to look for work in the U.S., leaving his family to face severe poverty. His mother was unhappy and struggled to make ends meet while waiting to hear from a father who never returned. When he was seven, his mother left to find his father in an attempt to reunite the family, leaving her boys in the care of her sister.

The first time Mr. V can remember doing something violent, an act which he feels was justified, and yet one that leaves him with a sense of shame, happened while living with his "mean-spirited" maternal aunt. She came after him "viciously yelling, smacking, and pinching him." Her anger was aroused by his interference with her punishment of one of his brothers. To protect himself before she inflicted serious physical damage, he grabbed a baseball bat and gave her a hard blow to the stomach. The following days he spent alone by a creek near the house. The water had a

quieting effect on him and provided a place where he could sort out his feelings, but it also intensified his loneliness and sadness, and perhaps induced unformulated thoughts of drowning as well. At the point when things between himself and his aunt were at their worst, his grandfather took the three boys to live with him and their grandmother, who were extremely poor but provided a nurturing environment.

When he was 10 years old, he was “wrenched away” by his mother and brought to New York, where she had remarried. His relationship with his stepfather, who was alcoholic and bad-tempered, deteriorated continually. He desperately wanted to escape from this man, but could not; he felt compelled to protect his mother and brothers. He began to spend hours away from home, and became a street urchin, developing a talent for storytelling and ingratiating himself with some older adults in the neighborhood. In mid-adolescence he made a definite conscious choice. Although doing well in school, he saw no use in trying to survive as things were, thinking, “Fuck the world. I want money and sex.” He began to sell drugs and eventually to use cocaine. He was part of a gang and helped protect their territory by carrying a gun. Looking back, he thinks an angel sat on his shoulder; for all intents and purposes, “I should have been dead!”

Mr. V married in late adolescence and fathered a son, but the marriage did not last. At that point he was abusing alcohol and cocaine. When he was 25, he met his present wife while involved in a rehabilitation program based in a Pentecostal church where she attended revival meetings regularly. She had also been divorced and had a young daughter. They have been married for 22 years and have a son together. Their relationship has had many ups and downs but Mrs. V.'s determination to see it through has held them together. He still has occasional alcohol binges but has not used cocaine since his 20s.

Mr. V's return to treatment after the long absence significantly changed the love and hate ratio that helped modulate an original fear expressed by his leaving. In developing a trusting re-

lationship with me, he feared that he would ultimately be let down as had been his experience with others, who led him to think they believed in him and were looking out for his welfare, only to disappoint him, which then caused his subsequent knee-jerk reaction to attack and harm them.

With an increasing ability to express his feelings of hurt rather than act them out, he was able to experience both the depth of his lost childhood and the concomitant depression. He began to report dreams involving themes of life and death. He wrote poems and brought them to sessions, and at the same time developed severe chest pains.

Some time into the second year of treatment, Mr. V developed a tolerance for accepting interpretations that challenge his right to be overly aggressive toward others, such as, “You don’t have to raise your voice for others to hear or see you. Your height and your defensive lineman frame are threatening. Like a growling bear you can intimidate and frighten others.” He would begin each session by expressing satisfaction in being there: “I love this room. In this room I can be myself.” He would take possession of not only the chair he was sitting in, but the whole room and my presence as well, “When I am here it feels good to be alive. Here I am free of shame. I have been a liar all my life. I do not want to lie here, or anywhere else for that matter. But I have to tell you, people don’t make it easy. Everyone wants to impose their own agenda on me. At work they tell me we are like a family, they treat me as if they love me and promise to take care of me, but they always end up taking care of themselves and not giving a ‘shit’ about me. This makes me feel manipulated, stupid, powerless, frustrated, and angry. Here I am able to realize that as a kid I was not a liar even though I was told I was. I was just a kid with a big imagination who loved to talk and entertain. At the same time my mother made it impossible not to lie in order to keep myself out of her line of fire. At times I really thought she wanted to kill me.

With his increasing sense of well-being and self-awareness, recognition began to take hold that going to treatment was not

about anger, hate, and violence, but about the promise of love and the love that comes from within him. He engaged in a campaign to tell the truth at all costs, no matter what the consequence. It is significant that at this point he began to speak to me only in Spanish, the language of his childhood and my first language, and began sharing fond memories of his childhood, such as the folklore he enjoyed. He began to speak of his wife with a deep attachment, and to recognize and accept the vital role she plays in his life. "Even though she is difficult, she has stuck with me through the worst of times during my alcohol abuse and simultaneous verbal abuse of her. She is my best friend and I love her. Only with her continuous emotional support can I accomplish what I need to accomplish."

Mr. V is now at a point at which he no longer denies his need for his mother's love, but he is willing to acknowledge realistically that the relationship with his mother could not offer him that and will not change. He is able to acknowledge that his mother's abuse when he was a child had to do with her sense of helplessness and frustration. He is also more aware of his deliberate attempts to prove to himself and to others that there was only hate and that love was not worth fighting for. His new sense of reality enabled him to remain at a job, pass his professional examination, remain in treatment, and complete his master's degree.

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## **Aggression in the Long-term Relationship and Progressive Emotional Communication**

**Jean Hantman** - Private Practice

### **Introduction**

The psychoanalysis of couples involves *two people with good intentions* in fierce battle with their *unconscious urge to repeat historically destructive patterns*.

We are all familiar with the history of marriage, because throughout human existence and spanning geography, the institution can be split into two eras: *before love* and *after love*, which is a very recent revolution in the course of human social history, about 200 years old, and has led to *a high rate of divorce*. It is not that marital disharmony did not occur before the era of the love marriage; it just did not matter in terms of how the disharmony played out, because marriage had little to do with emotions and much more to do with finances, property, and social status.

Family historian Stephanie Coontz (*Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage*) [NY: Viking, 2005] wrote, “Ironically, the fragility of modern marriage stems from the same values that have elevated the marital relationship above all other personal and familial commitments: the concentration of emotion, passion, personal identity, and self-validation in the couple relationship and the attenuation of emotional attachments and obligations beyond the conjugal unit.”

Along with the “fragility” that comes with love comes the need for couples to learn how to strengthen their bond by learning how to talk and stop pretending, to give up the illusion that marriage will cure their problems. The solution to emotional fragility is talking, constructively. Most of the couples who come into analysis, who were madly in love when they got together, then wonder

why they have nothing much to say to each other within two years, are helped through analysis to understand the consequences of “concentrating” all of their “emotion, passion” and, *especially*, “personal identity and self-validation” into their marriage.

The closer we are to someone, the more intense our feelings are, both positive and negative. The contortions that people, who are afraid of their own aggression and others’ toward them, go through to conceal their negative feelings do not work. Freud wrote, “He who has eyes to see and ears to hear will be able to convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips. Betrayal oozes out of him at every pore” (*S.E.*, Vol. 7, pp. 77-78).

There are basically three categories of defenses that people suffer from and bring into their long-term relationships in an attempt to *conceal* their aggression rather than acknowledge it. These are *symptoms*, *substances*, and *psychosis*.

### **Symptoms Case Study**

D grew up in a working class home with two uninterested, unhappy parents and an older brother who was allowed to torture him and rule the household. D’s mother would use him for sympathy and companionship without protecting him from his father or brother. That is, she took and he gave.

He reported in analysis that, as a child, he built an elaborate cardboard house under the dining table where he would isolate himself for hours. D survived childhood by becoming a scholar, hiding out in academia and becoming a tenured professor at a young age. His inner life remained unequipped to deal with relationships.

When he met E, an instructor at the same university, he thought he had found a kindred spirit, an intellectually brilliant woman who had a similarly neglectful childhood and had survived by isolating herself from her family. They seemed to each other (unconsciously—they never spoke about this) like twins who would be able to depend on each other for nurturing without having to

give any back.

In their second year as a couple E injured her hand badly and was suddenly forced to depend on D for everything—sympathy, nursing, fetching medicine and food—everything D had counted on not ever being needed for. At that point he became unconsciously resentful and though he provided E with the things she needed it stimulated memories of his mother; he became exhausted and shut down emotionally, to punish her for needing him. After that incident they went on to get married, but he is still shut down, having never discussed with her his disillusionment and resentment. His symptom, *the substitute for discussion*, is to lock himself in his study (cardboard box) and avoid interacting. There are times when he will not even answer casual questions E asks him and just ignores her completely. Their sex life also ended after E's injury and has yet to resume.

#### **Substance Abuse Case Study**

X was raised by an alcoholic father and a cold, abusive mother, who fought viciously in front of X and his two brothers. X took on the role, as a child, of literally standing between his mother and his father while they screamed at each other, begging his mother to be quiet so that his father could go and “sleep it off.” His two brothers would disappear during their parents' fights and he was left alone, blaming his mother for inflaming the screaming fights and protecting his drunken father. He reported in analysis remembering lying in bed at night praying that his parents would not get divorced.

X grew up with typical “survivor” mentality, believing that anything even the slightest bit better than what he had experienced as a child was enough to make for a good life. Of course this always fails because anything a *little bit* better than a violent, abusive, alcoholic childhood is not enough to make a good marriage.

X married a cold and girlish woman, whose own father was an alcoholic. Because of X's (unconscious) repetition compulsion, he had married a woman who was uninterested in their children,

and in denial about her negative feelings and his. He became an alcoholic to medicate his disappointment in her controlling and unloving behavior. His wife had a pathological need to be seen by the world as warm and caring, unlike his mother who did not care what anyone thought about her. X's alcoholism was the "functioning" type whereas his father's interfered with his work and home life. X imagined that he had succeeded in leaving his childhood behind. Since this was not the reality, and he would not admit it for several years into analysis, he became depressed and his substance abuse increased.

### **Psychosis Case Study**

R, a woman who identified with her psychotic mother, grew up suffering from psychotic beliefs that impeded her adult life. Although R was able to marry and raise two children without appearing to be as psychotic as her own mother, she was afflicted with a deeply entrenched thought disorder. She suffered from extreme agoraphobia, was hospitalized for anxiety when her second child was born, and was most destructive in terms of her marriage—splitting. She turned everyone in the world into either all good or all bad. Since she was incapable of imagining that she had married a "bad" man, or seeing reality, that he was both good and bad, she turned *him* into all-good and displaced her hatred of him onto "men."

All of her negative emotions leaked into political issues, about which she became completely informed, an obsessive reader, especially the news, and became a strident pseudo-feminist whose rage at her husband took the form of spouting at parties and other social occasions (she could leave the house if someone else drove) about the injustices and inequalities that "women" endure at the hands of men. All women are good, strong, and smart victims of all men, who are all evil masters. Being unconscious, she did this seemingly political discourse loudly, in public, in front of her husband. Then in analysis she wondered why he didn't desire her, why he fell asleep on the couch after dinner, why he shut down whenever possible.

### **The Language of Emotional Progressive Communication**

Couples have only one healthy choice to manage aggression, avoid becoming symptomatic and estranged from their partners, and create a harmonious marriage: *discussions, about everything*—discussions that modern analysts call *progressive emotional communication*.

In order to be equipped to have these discussions, couples have to be willing to abandon the three most common ways used to deal with unpleasant feelings stimulated by their partners: *defensiveness, criticizing, and avoidance*. In other words, couples have to learn *how to listen and how to respond* so that a good fight ends *with the couple loving each other again instead of hating each other more*. In order to do this, the couple has to help each other stick with an unpleasant discussion until it is resolved.

What psychoanalysis contributes to the topic that is missing from all of the popular self-help books is an acknowledgment of the power of the unconscious, which fiercely fights our well-intentioned, *conscious* goals. In essence, there are more than two people having a fight. There is a person fighting with *his* unconscious to have a logical, loving discussion, and his *partner* and *her* *unconscious* battling *her* for the right to have a constructive discussion.

The purpose of modern analysis is to help people put their feelings into words, not actions. In *the first phase* the couple will not be able to have the discussion at all. In *the second phase* of analysis the unconscious will *alter* or modify the words so that the effect is weakened. Usually the way in which the unconscious alters the direct communication suggested by the therapist makes things worse, not better. Instead of saying, “I’m afraid,” the patient’s unconscious induces her to say something to inflame her partner, leaving her more afraid. In *the third phase* the couple is ready to have a progressive emotional discussion.

### **The Foundation of Progressive Communication**

In order for a couple to begin having civilized, progressive

discussions, they have to learn first to *tolerate and accept difference and the need to control*. This might seem like a natural skill that we all learn growing up, but unfortunately, many of us are not raised to tolerate difference. More people than not are greatly disappointed to find that the partner they chose is not their clone. Much of the analysis of couples, besides learning the language of progressive emotional communication, involves helping people not only to tolerate and accept their differences but also to enjoy the differences.

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## Poetic Intermission

### Fool Songs of Love

**Daniel Dervin** - University of Mary Washington

Love's fools, so full of sound  
And nonsense, seem wise even  
To themselves, so laughing love-wise—  
Yet others merely chuckle at their lack:  
Prudently they utter vows to be other-  
Wise than love's fools; thuswise failing  
To win our awe, they merit mere envy.

For love is what we mostly get over,  
Thank god, for we have to get on  
With living, after all, don't we?  
For we can't get distracted and act  
Our age in an age that loves itself

So much, so awfully much,  
It's proven itself 100 percent love-proof.

But a man can be like a woman—  
One just as dangerous as the other—  
And when you put them both together  
They can put an end to fooling.

Forget all—all but being a fool—  
And when it's too late for a school  
To help you rhyme or remember this,  
You may yet figure forth what love is.

Believing in happy endings, fools  
Haphazardly die not a few times and  
Not altogether happily—giving only  
A fool's proof they chanced to live.

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## **Culture and Myths on Love, Hate, and Attachment**

### **Love, Attachment, Dependence, and Hatred in Long-term Relationships**

**Paul H. Elovitz** - Ramapo College

Myths about attachment, dependence, hate, and love within long-term relationships and the family abound. They are fed by romantic notions gained from books, fairy tales, movies, popular music, television, and the ego ideals of earlier societies sometimes presented, by psychologically untrained historians, as the same as the realities of these societies. Nothing could be further from the truth. Such myths are encouraged by our defense mechanisms, culminating in the human tendency to repress bad experiences and the desire to idealize life in the "good old days." This human proclivity is illustrated in the data of the Harvard longitudinal studies revealing what people actually said about their experience of life over a period of 60 years: they were inclined to repress that which was most painful. This issue is discussed in some of the writing of the psychoanalyst George Vaillant who has headed this invaluable study for a number of decades in *The Wisdom of the Ego: Sources of Resilience in Adult Lives* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993) and *Aging Well: Surprising Guideposts to a Happier Life from the Landmark Harvard Study of Adult Development* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2002).

The incredible rise in the standard of living and life expectancy of humankind has reshaped love relationships in the modern world. The most basic love is that of the mother for her child as she shapes the world in which the child is born and grows up. However, myths about motherhood dominate discourse on the subject in modern society. Loving attachment is not automatic, as has

been demonstrated by many researchers and by the long history of infanticide carried out by mothers and the other women of the family. Our relationships with our mother, father, and siblings will have a profound impact on all of our subsequent love relations and life. Until the creation of modern society, children were enormously dependent on their parents. They were taught to thank their parents for providing life itself. The primary form of education of children was by their parents and mostly through identification as the children copied what their parents did. Children were put to work alongside their parents at very young ages. Daniel Defoe, in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, all but rhapsodizes at coming across young children barely beyond the age of toddlers working alongside their parents and thus increasing rather than decreasing the “wealth of the realm.”

Mothers (and to a lesser extent fathers) and children have the ultimate long-term relationships. These are lifetime relationships—unto death. When our parents die, the relationships still live within us, shaping our future attachments. (Of course, when our children die before us, they also still live within us.) One of my most difficult and favorite courses to teach for the last 30 years has been *Children and Youth in History*. Most students do not like to confront many of their feelings about their own childhood and their parents. In a similar vein, decades ago I also did child therapy where I came to see some of the incredibly violent feelings broiling below the surface of polite society. I quickly came to learn just how inclined children were to act out the violent, disclaimed, and repressed feelings of their parents and how abruptly some parents would terminate therapy if they felt the therapist was saying that the problem was in the family itself, rather than only in the child who was acting out. One striking phenomenon was how when one child stopped acting out as a result of therapy, another within the family would assume the role of the problem child.

Role reversals were also a major issue. For example, two bright, intellectual parents were raising their five-year-old to be the brilliant one in the family, unconsciously denying him the chance to

know the simple joys of childhood. He was the project holding their shaky marriage together. When, as a result of therapy, they allowed him to be a child, as well as an extremely bright human being, they could go on with their own separated lives.

Marriage and love relationships have changed dramatically in the last few centuries. In traditional societies prior to the French Revolution (1789-99) marriage was about property, social status, and acquiring in-laws, as well as controlling sex and procreation. Among the ruling classes it was used to cement military and political alliances as well as to secure succession to the throne. Among the ordinary people, the focus was on finding a healthy and reliable work partner. In all social groups, in all societies, and throughout all of history, personal attraction was of secondary importance. Love was seldom considered a legitimate reason to marry. Women sought security rather than love—if they were lucky love came after marriage, not before. Indeed, the very notion of marrying for love threatened the economic and political organization of society, as Stephanie Coontz has made clear in *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York: Viking, 2005).

Traditional families suffered considerable loss, though not usually from divorce, which was a rarity. (Abandonment was certainly common, especially with rapid urbanization and male immigration from Europe to the New World as alternatives to marriage.) The loss in traditional families stemmed from the high death rate of all parties concerned: most especially infants, young children, and women. Women so often died in childbirth, as in the case of the early feminist Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), or were literally worked to death in the era before laborsaving machinery.

Life expectancy in the modern world has expanded enormously, making for longer marriages. The dramatic increase in the standard of living means that the focus has shifted from mere economic survival of the family to their quality of life, which has resulted in new strains on the family. Children have gone from being an economic asset, as in traditional society, to become an economic

liability in our world. At the same time, the ego ideals of Western society have changed so that rather than children being the servants of the parents, the parents are now held responsible to serve their offspring and support them for many decades. Is it any wonder that traditional, arranged marriages established by the families of the marital partners have a much higher rate of success than our modern marriages based upon notions of love?

Academics and novelists have generally approached love, marriage, and relationships in history with modern preconceptions. They so often take the middle class Victorian ideal as the reality rather than looking at the Victorian reality that the psychoanalytically trained historian Peter Gay has brought to the fore in recent decades. Twentieth-century popular culture has intensified the idealization. For example, the song "My Blue Heaven" with the lyrics, "Molly and me, and the baby makes three/ We're happy in my, in my blue heaven/" is still so popular in the minds of many that it is available as the ringtone of cell phones. This longing for and acceptance of romantic notions of love encourages the prevalent failure to recognize the complexities of the feelings that are brought to or emerge in love relationships.

Disappointed expectations are built into the modern notion of romantic love as depicted in the media and in pulp fiction. A professional woman cannot be a perfect lover, spouse, mother, workmate, and best friend while building a professional identity and picking up after her family. She may fall into the pattern of being like her spouse's nagging mother. A man cannot be a perfect lover, spouse, father, and breadwinner while trying not to fall into the habits of expecting his wife to support him just the way his mother did. Many have gone from serial marriage to a living together arrangement rather than making the commitment of marriage and children.

In popular culture and non-psychoanalytic thinking, the issue of attachment is so often lost amidst the romantic notions of love. Attachment can come about as a result of many different circumstances. Sulia Rubin was a "forest wife" who used to come to

my course on the Holocaust to talk about her experiences as a teenage Jew who, upon joining a group of partisans trying to survive the murderers of the Third Reich and their local collaborators, had to immediately choose a "forest husband" from the men in the group. She chose one she had previously seen at a distance, who looked "kind." They lived and loved for the next 60 years, with Sulia always saying, "Hitler was our matchmaker." When I last saw her she was visibly shaken after her spouse's death from natural causes. The lifelong marriages to their "forest wives" of two Bielski brothers, depicted in the book by Peter Duffy and the 2009 movie *Defiance*, reflects a similar situation. Sharing traumatic experiences can be quite bonding.

Aggression can be a barrier to love, or a facilitator. A close friend was drawn to strong women he could fight with. This was in sharp variance with his relationship with his parents, with whom he had not been able to fight with openly when growing up. A former patient of mine was so afraid of his own aggression that he, although experienced sexually, could not have sex with the "nice girl" he had married for many months after their marriage, because of his unconscious fears that he would somehow destroy her through sexual intercourse. They fell into a pattern of wrestling together, and in the course of "playful" wrestling he was able to overcome his fears sufficiently for their body contact to end in coitus.

The arranged marriage in pre-World War I of my Polish paternal grandparents forged an incredible bond, but in their case, of hate rather than love. Grandma Esther thought she had married beneath her station because of her "advanced age" of 21 years and so Grandpa Morris was looked down upon by his wife and the children she raised to share her contempt for him. Although, as far as I knew from direct observation and family members, they did not say a kind word to each other, sleep in the same bed, or otherwise have intimate relations for most of their marriage of close to six decades, they lived together in a small house and died within several months of each other. Their marriage attachment was "till death do us

part.” My other grandfather, known as a ladies’ man, years after being widowed in middle age, married the same woman three times. Clearly, their trouble in living together resulted in two divorces, but on the other hand, this couple did not seem to be able to live without each other. Living with another human being is a complex and often difficult affair, regardless of what system brings two people together.

The dark underside of the feelings arising in living together, friendship “with benefits” (sex), love, and marriage must be dealt with if people are to successfully navigate intimate relationships. Generally, those whose approach these relationships realistically will have a better outcome.

*Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, last year presented an early version of the article “Love, Attachment, Dependence, and Hatred in Long-term Relationships under the title, “A Psychohistorical Perspective on Love, Attachment, Dependence, and Hatred in Long-term Relationships and Marriage.” He is editor of this publication and may be contacted at pelovitz@aol.com.*

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## **Reuben Fine on Love and the Human Experience**

**Jacques Szaluta** - U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Love is basic to the well-being of every person, reports Reuben Fine in his profound *The Meaning of Love in Human Experience* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1985), in which he delves into the many cultural impediments for individuals to achieve this most desirable goal. He explores love because “much of the unhappiness in the world stems from the lack of love.” This he does by going into an exhaustive study of the societal problems that serve to frustrate love by taking an in-depth encyclopaedic psychoanalytic and historical approach, supported by literature, philosophy, anthro-

pology, sociology, economics, and man's artistic expressions. Dr. Fine's lengthy work is a *tour de force*.

Fine, who took his doctorate in psychology, acknowledges his enormous debt to Freud, but as he says, "my goal has been to round out his theories, to correct his errors, to review the evidence that has accumulated since he worked, and to present a more comprehensive view of the field than he did." He amply accomplishes this goal.

Rueben Fine was born in New York City in 1914 and died in 1993 after an unusually distinguished career. He was an outstanding chess player of international standing, rising to the rank of chess grandmaster. He wrote numerous articles and books on chess, including the widely respected *The Psychology of the Chess Player* (Dover Publications, 1967), thereby combining his passions. Fine had such a stellar career in chess that he himself became the subject of an excellent fine biography: *Reuben Fine: A Comprehensive Record of an American Chess Career, 1929-1951* by Aidan Woodger (McFarland & Company, 2004). Ultimately, he became a psychoanalyst, with a large practice, and he founded and directed an institute for lay psychoanalysts, The New York Center for Psychoanalytic Training (NYCPT). NYCPT was a thriving school for well over 30 years. Fine published so widely that only a few of his books can be mentioned here. Among his many publications are *The Development of Freud's Thought* (Jason Aronson, 1973), *A History of Psychoanalysis* (Columbia University Press, 1979), and *The Psychoanalytic Vision* (The Free Press, 1981). Reuben Fine was also a Visiting Professor at CCNY, the University of Amsterdam, the Lowell Institute of Technology, the University of Florence, and Adelphi University. For a period of about 40 years, he was one of the most eminent scholars and leaders in the field of psychoanalysis.

Dr. Fine examined various cultures in a global perspective, searching for those that are "love cultures" in comparison to those that are "hate cultures." The love cultures are relatively few and small. A love culture is characterized by affection and cooperation,

and by a general feeling of harmony. Hate cultures are harsh and paranoid, and exhibit antagonisms. Fine, as a Freudian, recognizes the universality of aggression and the inclination to project hostile or negative motives onto another group. In support of these views, there is an extensive use of anthropological studies, where he differentiates between shame versus guilt cultures. This is in line with a recent work by Dr. Mary Coleman, a neurologist, who specifically examines guilt societies and shame societies in her psychohistorically informed book *Blood of the Beloved* (iUniverse, 2007), and finds that groups such as the Amish and Mennonites not only are pacifists, but that there are virtually no murders within their societies.

Reuben Fine advances the notion that love cultures, such as the Arapesh and the Ifaluk, leave people free of hostility and violence. In a love culture, such as the Manganians, everyone has a love partner, while frigidity in women is unknown. For men, impotence is rare until old age. Dr. Fine ranges far and wide in his presentation of varied groups, including the Tahitians, noted for being nonviolent and gentle.

Alternatively, hate cultures abound. The Aztecs appeared around 1400, and their warrior civilization was marked by enormous cruelty in their subjugating other peoples. They staged countless human sacrifices of up to over 100,000 people, with a standard method of killing being to cut out the heart of the victim. Dr. Fine posits that in such a culture there was little love, brutality abounded, and children were prepared for combat by being forced to submit to corporal punishment and exposed to severe cold.

Another society designated as a hate culture is Nazi Germany, which Fine also labels as a paranoid state. Despite its being aggressive and threatening to its neighbours, Germany rationalized its behavior by proclaiming that all other peoples were victimizing Germany. The Nazis sought to destroy the family and with it Germany's humanistic and cultural traditions. In line with other hate cultures, women were subordinated and degraded, a characteristic of repressive societies. Germany went to the extent of establishing

“stud farms” where unmarried young girls were to be available to German soldiers, in order to be impregnated by them and have racially “pure” children for the German army. Obviously, in these sexual encounters, there were no deep affectionate feelings between the men and the women.

With regard to religion, Dr. Fine pays close attention to the historical influence and role of organized religion in contributing to hate cultures. Islam and Christianity are considered to be “warrior religions,” and their attacks on each other were a form of channeling and displacing anger within their societies toward others, making theological rationalizations for going to war, as noted above with the Aztecs. What the author notes about Islamic aggression has a contemporary quality, although this work was published in 1985, before the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks; Muslim extremism has been common throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Fine, its founder, Mohammed, spent much of his life at war, fighting other Arabs and Jews, and brutally expanding his empire. He was merciless, conniving in assassinations, and ruthless toward his enemies. Fine writes that Mohammed “appears to be a grandiose opportunist,” who married numerous times for money or political advantage, or to advance his conquest. Women were cruelly subordinated, which continues to this day. He wrote this book when the Ayatollah Khomeini was in power in Iran. He describes the ghastly practices of this regime, including the stoning to death of women and many other punishments for perceived offenses. Reuben Fine comments, “Love is certainly not one of the virtues promoted by Islam.”

Initially, Christians were pacifistic and persecuted by the Romans. However, during the reign of Theodosius I, Christianity became the established church, and views on killing and warfare changed. Theologians such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas justified war, and in time Pope Urban called for a holy war to defend Christianity. The Crusades channelled aggression outside of Europe. In effect, Roman Catholicism did not ameliorate Roman hate culture. Over time this gave rise to attacking infidels and here-

tics in Europe itself, and led to the Spanish Inquisition. Nevertheless, there remained the ideal of love, which was tied in to the love of God. A dilemma which existed for “Christianity is the revulsion against sexuality.” When celibacy was established in the 13<sup>th</sup> century for the Catholic clergy, with its prohibition on sexuality and marriage, it also meant that they “could not have any strong ties to any other human beings.” Despite the widespread, periodic repression, reform movements were nevertheless quite common, and eventually gave rise to the Protestant Reformation.

In Fine’s view, Martin Luther, who inspired the Reformation by denouncing Catholicism, was himself a hateful person, as demonstrated by his vehement opposition to the rebellious German peasants and numerous religious groups that arose in the wake of the Reformation, which plunged Germany and much of Europe into protracted civil wars. The widespread atrocities that eventually occurred amidst the religious conflict led to some intellectuals advocating the need for religious toleration, in effect advancing a kinder disposition toward people of other faiths. Dr. Fine writes notably about the American and French Revolutions. He considers the French Revolution of 1789, about which he is quite knowledgeable, to have failed although it did serve to ultimately advance the rights of the individual, democracy, and religious freedom. He has high praise for the Founding Fathers of the American Revolution because “one of the wisest of all measures adopted” by them was to separate church from state, as established in the laws of the new Constitution. Pertinently, the Founding Fathers all had a Protestant background.

Dr. Fine examines the dominant cultures in Western civilization, dividing more than 2,000 years into six periods. The first is that of ancient Greece, noting that it is characterized by bisexuality; the second is Rome, characterized by cruelty; the third is Christianity, noted for its asceticism; the 12<sup>th</sup> century, gave rise to romantic love; the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which sparked religious and social movements; and the sixth period, starting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which led to the making of the modern family.

This work has covered the evolution of love and hate in various cultures over the millennia, culminating with the contemporary world. Globally, hate cultures are still widespread, but there are positive developments, certainly in the Western world. One distinctive and pivotal advance to creating a more loving culture is the revolutionary theory of psychoanalysis. In our time, countless people have been helped by therapy. Psychoanalysis and the mental health fields generally are vehicles of social reform to give people a better life. Therapists help in many ways, but ultimately they teach the patient how to be more loving and to have more satisfying sex in their lives. As Dr. Fine notes, not being able to love is a serious disorder.

In sum, *The Meaning of Love in Human Experience* is a thoughtful work, impressive in its range, its intellectual rigor, and its candor. It is a major contribution, and a triumph of the field of psychoanalysis as it elucidates the damage caused by the cultures of hate in contrast with the benefits derived from the cultures of love.

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## **A Conversation between Dreamers on Intimacy**

**Irene Javors - Yeshiva University**

For centuries, the subjects of sex, love, and intimacy have perplexed and intrigued the best minds of their times. Now, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are offered a very different perspective on intimacy by two co-authors of a rather disturbing book that challenges all of our assumptions about love, connection, attachment, and relationship: Leo Bersani and Adam Phillips, *Intimacies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Respectively, they are a professor emeritus of French at the University of California-Berkeley, author of numerous articles and books, including *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art and Homos*, and a psychoanalyst, visiting professor in the English Department of York University (England), general editor of Penguin Modern Classics Freud Translations, and author of many books including *Monogamy*. The authors conceived of the book as a work in progress based upon their separate thoughts on the subject and a dialogue conducted over a 20-year period. Bersani wrote the first three chapters and Phillips “then responded immediately” to his colleague’s ideas with his own thoughts and questions. The authors decided to leave in “the loose ends” so as not to lose momentum. The result is a volume based upon the authors’ musings and unproven idiosyncratic theories, giving it the quality of a conversation between Bersani and Phillips, and of an e-mail exchange that morphed into a book. Their electronic “free association” is the root of the problem with this book, since the authors seem to think that stream-of-consciousness, free-association writing is tantamount to the presentation of a real theory.

Bersani and Phillips’ challenge to psychoanalysis is that it “has misled us into believing, in its quest for normative life stories, that knowledge of oneself is conducive to intimacy, that intimacy is by definition personal intimacy, and that narcissism is the enemy, the saboteur, of this personal intimacy considered to be the source and medium of personal development.” Furthermore, “psychoanalysis tells us, in short, that our lives depend on our recognition that other people—those vital others that we love and de-

sire—are separate from us, are ‘beyond our control’ as we say, despite the fact that this very acknowledgement is itself productive of so much violence.” Controversially, the *raison d’etre* for the book is that “difference is the one thing we (humans) cannot bear” and so “the dialogue of this book is a working out of a new story about intimacy, a story that prefers the possibilities of the future to the determinations of the past.”

These authors reject the traditional psychoanalytic view of the need to overcome narcissism and the need for the individual to recognize and accept the otherness and difference of the other in order to achieve intimacy. They have concluded that we are incapable of coming to terms with difference and that this older analytic model does not work because “difference” is unacceptable to us and that our inability to deal with the other must ultimately lead to interpersonal and societal violence.

In his three chapters, Bersani interrogates traditional notions of intimacy and attempts to present his vision of non-normative intimacies. In the chapter, “The It in the I,” he begins with a quote by Phillips: “Psychoanalysis is about what two people can say to each other if they agree not to have sex.” As an example of this he cites the 2003 film, *Intimate Strangers*, directed by Patrice Leconte, in which a tax accountant is mistakenly thought to be a therapist by a woman who enters the wrong office and tells her whole story. Even after she finds out that he is not an analyst, she continues to confide in the accountant with beneficial results for both parties.

Bersani then goes on to “talk” (this is a most conversational book) about the Henry James short story, “The Beast in the Jungle.” He portrays the relationship between Mary Bertram and John Marcher as a further example of non-normative intimacy. They do not live together or marry. They are bonded through talking, much like the characters in the Leconte film.

The discussion of both the film and the short story gives value to the idea of the existence of a “virtual relationship” that is not necessarily concretized in sexuality exists in a place of the pos-

sible. It is an effective alternative to the *sturm* and *drang* of traditional, normative forms of relationships. This virtual intimacy is termed, “impersonal narcissism.” This intimacy is freed from the demands of the ego and so allows one to be truly present for another.

In subsequent chapters, Bersani elaborates on the theory of “impersonal narcissism.” He focuses his discussion on the possibility of relationships that disrupt and defy identity and the tyranny of the ego. In chapter two, “Shame on You,” Bersani discusses the practice of bare-backing—unprotected anal sex between gay men—to describe an intimacy that rejects the personal. Although horrified by these practices, Bersani is drawn to the radicalism of the behavior.

In a further assault on the destructiveness of the ego, Bersani discusses the serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer and the Bush administration’s war on terror as examples of how aggression both thrills and gratifies the ego. In chapter three, “The Power of Evil and The Power of Love,” he offers a reading on Socratic love as discussed in Plato’s *Phaedrus*. Bersani interprets Socratic love as a way to divest oneself of the investments of the ego and as a perspective that allows for a recognition of the other.

In Phillips’ only chapter, “On a More Impersonal Note,” he takes up where Bersani leaves off. He raises more questions about impersonal narcissism and begins to explore the intertwining of love and violence. He wants to believe that impersonal narcissism would encourage love without the tendency to violence. From his writing, it is obvious that Phillips greatly admires Bersani’s project. They both want to believe, “if we were able to relate to others according to this model of impersonal narcissism, what is different about others (their psychological individuality) could be thought of as merely the envelope of the more profound (if less fully realized, or completed) part of themselves which is our sameness.” Furthermore, “naturally, each subject’s type of being is not reflected in everyone else...the experience of belonging to a family of singularity without national, ethnic, racial, or gendered borders might make

us sensitive to the ontological status of difference itself as what I (Bersani) called the non-threatening supplement to sameness.” In the concluding chapter, Bersani offers more arguments for the efficacy of the theory of impersonal narcissism, which is, “to love the other’s potential self is a form of self love, a recognition that the partners in this intimacy already share a certain type of being (a sharing acknowledged by love).” He goes on to suggest that we need to rethink how we dialogue, educate, and organize cultural institutions as well as how we teach children “never to see the world outside the family, as something from which the family ‘protects’ us.”

What are we to make of the musings of Bersani and Phillips? Is the idea of impersonal narcissism utopian? How does this all fit in with psychoanalysis? Freud was not a utopian thinker. As a student of Freud, I am sure that Bersani and Phillips learned that Freud advised that there is no way out of the inevitable dialectic of separateness/merging; love/hate; *eros/thanatos*.

They argue that one can free desire from destructive impulses and that we can love without having to possess and defend against the loss of the loved one. They want to believe that this will result in the end of violence on personal, interpersonal, and societal levels. The road to this utopia is via a “shattering” of the narrow concerns of the ego. Through a surrender, a melting of the self, a *jouissance*, we will create new subjectivities and intimacies.

If we look at the violence in the world today, where competing ideologies are calling for the individual to surrender for the good of the group, the nation, or the “ism,” one questions how “impersonal narcissism” can work within this concrete reality. After all, we can lose the self in destruction as well as in love. *Intimacies* is a book for dreamers. The questions raised are important; however, the suggested solutions are at very best debatable.

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## **Sagan Evolutionary Theory Mini-Symposium**

### **Do We Need an Evolutionary Theory of Society?**

**Eli Sagan - Independent Scholar**

The need for an evolutionary theory has rarely been focused upon at psychohistorical meetings. I am referring to the theory of the evolution and development of society and the psyche, and—most importantly—what might be the relationship between these two developmental journeys. After a few comments on what psychic and social evolutionary theory holds as first principles, I will state my conclusions and then go on to elaborate on the argument that brought me to them.

The theory postulates that development takes place within stages. There is developmental evolution within a stage, but once the maturity of that stage is reached, only by a more radical advance to the next stage does growth proceed. The energy required to proceed from one stage to another is different—and certainly more intense—than the energy required to advance within a stage. One example that, hopefully, would be acceptable to most readers is the Freudian history of the development of the libido by *stages*: oral, anal, genital, Oedipal.

Another basic tenet of evolutionary theory is that the sequence of stages is not arbitrary, haphazard, or open to change. There is an iron-bound logic of development from one stage to an-

other. In my view, as in Lloyd deMause's, it is a *psycho*-logic. I have, for instance, written a book on that stage of society which succeeds to what is called "primitive" or "kinship society," a stage I designate "complex society." When a primitive society begins the complicated journey to a new form of social structure, there is no democratic, priestly, aristocratic form that that change can adopt. Every society intent on moving beyond the kinship-primitive becomes an authoritarian, violent, unrestrained monarchy. There is no skipping an evolutionary stage. As impossible, for instance, as going from post-puberty to true adulthood without bothering with adolescence.

To anticipate some usual disagreements, it is important to state three things that evolutionary theory does not say. First, especially in reference to social evolution, the theoretical structure does not indicate that there is an imperative to evolve that all societies *must* go on to the next level of social development. A society in the primitive-kinship-tribal stage can remain in that stage—especially barring any contact with more advanced societies—forever. Why certain societies in that stage independently undertook that progress to complex society, and why others did not, is a great theoretical question, and no attempt will be made to answer it here.

Second, the theory of evolutionary stages says absolutely nothing, in itself, about moral progress. Evolutionary progress by stages is one thing. Moral progress is clearly a separate thing. The two may be deeply related, but they have to be established by two separate arguments. Both Lloyd deMause and I believe that moral progress is intimately related to—and a result of—evolutionary development. Ironically, there may be complex occasions when an evolutionary advance in one area brings moral regress in other areas. My work on the great developmental advance from primitive to complex society is entitled *At the Dawn of Tyranny*. One could even have a theory of evolutionary stages which included a greater and greater moral regress. The only one I know of is a mythical one of the ancient Greek poet Hesiod in which society has gone from a golden to a silver to an iron age.

Third, a theory of societal or psychological evolution through stages should not imply that evolutionary regress is not possible. Or even, in some cases, inevitable. The great historical stage of early Modernity—Renaissance and Reformation, most particularly—evolved into the stage of full Modernity in which we are all living. But that development also brought us, among other things, fascism: one of the worst cases of moral regression in human history. That regression, of course, was a direct result of the evolutionary and moral developments of Modernity. The one thing that every form of fascism announced is the rejection of Modernity; fascists are prepared to kill those who insist we must accept Modernity. I imagine by analogy the same is true of psychic development. The failure to embrace the next stage of psychic development may not end only in a stable compromise, but it also may produce many manifestations of psychological regression.

So then, my conclusion is yes to the “Do we need evolutionary theory?” question. We cannot truly understand the great movement of history without it. However, it is equally important to assert that, as yet, we do not have an adequate developmental/evolutionary theoretical structure. We have pieces of what I imagine will ultimately become such an adequate theory, and I intend to talk about those pieces, three pieces to be exact. In essence, then, this discussion becomes a prolegomena of a future full theory of psychic and social evolution. I intend, consequently, to discuss what valuable elements of such a theory we do possess and to suggest how they may be put together—actually, must be put together—in order to create such an elaborate theoretical structure.

The first of such elements are the political and sociological theories of social evolution. The ancestor of these is Marxism. Whatever one may conclude about the validity of Marxist views on social and economic history, one must admit that Marxism did do the evolutionist job. It delineated the stages—certainly the most recent ones: Slavery to Feudalism to Capitalism to Socialism. It recognized that there was significant development within each stage: late Capitalism differed from Early Capitalism, although both

were within the Capitalist realm. The development from one stage to a new one, however, required a qualitatively different kind of energy. Such institutionalization of a new stage was pronounced a “revolution.” The bourgeois revolution replaced Feudalism with Capitalism with Socialism. The Proletarian Revolution would replace Capitalism with Socialism. It was all inevitable and there is no skipping of a stage, no going from Feudalism to Socialism. Unlike Lenin who thought he had the omnipotent power to do just that, Marx was profoundly skeptical. His initial reaction to the Paris Commune was negative; he felt it was premature because the development between stages was ironbound.

Marxist evolutionary theory—so-called Historical Materialism—in the person of Engels also addressed and sought to answer one of the most difficult questions of all within evolutionary theory: What is the energy, or energies, driving the process? What is the “Engine of History?” For Engels the engine was greed. The desire for more and more goods produces technological change, which in turn creates radically new “modes of production,” which in turn engender radically new “relations of production.” These latter refer to class relationships in society, most particularly the question of which class is dominant. The windmill equals Feudalism equals the domination of an aristocratic feudal class. The steam engine equals Capitalism equals the domination of the bourgeoisie. On the surface, yes, a materialist explanation, but even here, below the surface is the assumption of a psychological first principle: that human nature exhibits a profound, overwhelming desire for more and more goods, which desire overrules any other consideration. Here again, one may agree or disagree with Engels’ conclusion, but one must admire the risk of taking on the fundamental question. Later on, when I address the notion of the development of the psyche, it will be necessary to raise again the question of the “Engine of History.”

The association of Marxism with any evolutionary social theory—especially any one that had a dimension of moral progress—proved enormously damaging, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to all consideration of any other developmental/ evolution-

ary social thought. As the experience of those societies calling themselves Marxist became humanly catastrophic—Soviet Russia, Mao’s Cultural Revolution, Pol Pot—for theoreticians and intellectuals Marxism became anathema, having no contemporary relevance, to be put on the historical shelf along with Locke and Hobbes. Evolutionary theory suffered from guilt by association, so that when a new, exciting, and viable theoretical structure arose, the number of those who were interested, or could make use of the new hypothesis, turned out to be remarkably small. Its impact was minimal. It did not go into oblivion, however, and this session today is one testimony to its endurance.

That late modern theory of social evolution begins with the work and influence of Talcott Parsons. Parsons had a most complex theoretical career. He began as an expositor—and significant elaborator of—the sociology of Weber and Durkheim, and others related to that *oeuvre*. A professor and chair of a department at Harvard University, he had a wide influence on a group of very serious graduate students who became professors of sociology in their own right. In the latter part of his life, however, something remarkable happened. He went into serious psychoanalytic analysis several times a week. I can attest to this possibly private account, because we were seeing the same doctor in Cambridge, and several times he had the session just previous to mine. As a result of that experience, Parsons proceeded to write a series of essays on what can only be designated psychoanalytic sociology. No one had quite done what Parsons attempted: integrate the discourse of society and psychoanalysis into one theoretical structure. I have taught those essays and can attest to their remarkable success: such as “The Superego and the Theory of Social Systems,” and “The Father Symbol: An Appraisal in the Light of Psychoanalytic and Sociological Theory.” (In *Social Structure and Personality*.) The concept of the superego, Parsons says, is the great bridge between psychoanalysis and sociology. One would have thought that insight would open the gates for a wide, productive discussion of what exactly, in social terms, is the superego. It did not happen. The number of peo-

ple in both the psychoanalytic and sociological communities who even know of these works—leastwise, have read them—is remarkably small. So far, a treasure is lost.

Parsons then went on to do something equally singular. He became interested in and committed to a non-Marxist, sociological theory of social evolution. He invited two gifted former students—Robert Bellah and S. N. Eisenstadt—to join him in giving a seminar on the evolution of societies. The understanding was that each of the three, including Parsons, would then write and publish something on the subject. Parsons went on to publish two books on the evolution of societies. Bellah published a very powerful essay, “Religious Evolution.” Eisenstadt became a leader of sociological theory and teaching in Israel, with a strong interest in social evolution.

What I like to call the Parsons-Bellah theory of social evolution is, primarily, brilliantly descriptive. It sets out to accurately describe the stages in social evolution from the beginning of human existence. It asserts, as a first principle that the development and evolution in human society has proceeded, not just by small increments of change, but has, at certain points, created wholly new stages of social life. Each one of these stages has its own, unique, individual, new system of values and institutions. Each exhibits its own religious system, its own system of values, its own political system, and its own forms of social cohesion—that which holds society together. These systems and forms can change radically from one stage to another. For example, in the Primitive stage, the overwhelming form of social cohesion is kinship. In the Complex and Archaic stages, political domination and loyalty become as important as kinship.

The primary thrust of the Parsons-Bellah theoretical system is to accurately designate these stages and to describe, with as great an insight as possible, what the nature of society was at a particular stage. They postulate five great stages of human social evolution: Primitive, Archaic, Historic, Early Modern, and Modern. Bellah's essay on religious evolution is a description of the nature and val-

ues of religion in each social stage. My own view of Bellah's sequence of stages is that in the earliest stages of society it needs a certain modification: that before the Archaic it is not accurate to postulate only the one stage Primitive. Primitive also can be designated Kinship Society or Tribal Society. I feel it is more accurate to postulate two stages instead of one: firstly, that of hunters and gatherers as the very first stage, and secondly the neolithic stage of the Primitive-Tribal. Between the Primitive and the Archaic, my work titled *The Dawn of Tyranny* asserts that there was a crucial new stage succeeding the Primitive, which I designate Complex Society: non-literate but politically complex authoritarian monarchical regimes: ancient Hawaii and Tahiti; the great early kingdoms of Africa. One fascinating support of this position is that human sacrifice, except for extremely rare cases, did not exist in Primitive-Tribal society. In early Complex societies it begins and grows increasingly important as these societies develop politically to the point where, in the great kingdoms, it is rampageous, becoming a fundamental religious ritual. Then, as society evolves into the Archaic (early Egypt or China) we have a few traces of such sacrifice; and then it almost disappears. Would not such a phenomenon of a radical change in the nature of sacrifice indicate the existence of a separate social stage?

The Parsons-Bellah system represents a powerful insight into human history and should be used by any theory of social evolution, but it is not a complete theory. It is an essential one of what I am calling here the pieces of the future complete theory. It makes no attempt, for instance, to relate social evolution to the development of the psyche. It does not include anything specifically on the evolution of childrearing, which we will look at presently. Although there are certain passing thoughts and hints, it does not address boldly the question of the engine of history. It does, nonetheless, whether modified or not, provide a solid theoretical schema that cannot be ignored by any future evolutionary theory.

We come now to the second piece, or the second pillar, of our future complex theory of social evolution, which involves a dis-

cussion of the psychological and sociological theories of deMause. Lloyd deMause has advanced four very difficult and important theoretical propositions. First, he has put the history of childrearing at the very center of social change and evolution. After the "Evolution of Childhood," a most impressive and detailed work, we are obliged to ask of every stage of society not only what was its religion, its politics, its social system, its system of values, but also, what was its *predominant* mode of raising children—or, we may add in parenthesis—of degrading children.

Second, deMause has theoretically arranged the various modes of childrearing into an evolutionary schema, which of necessity involves the postulation of stages and the inevitable, non-arbitrary movement from stage to stage, assuming that movement occurs. For him, all this evolutionary movement is a morally progressive movement: each stage more humane, healthier psychologically, and more mature than the one it replaces. Lloyd deMause's way of putting it is that the further one goes back into history—into social evolution—the less humane, the more destructive of psychic health is the predominant mode of childrearing. True history is the history of the gradual development of a humane, healthy psyche.

Third, he has emphasized the parallels, the correspondences between the actual circumstances of childrearing in any particular stage and a specific stage in the development/ evolution of the psyche. The psyche evolves in stages; each new stage is manifest in a new mode of bringing children to adulthood. It becomes, necessarily, not only a theory of the evolution of childrearing, but a theory of the development of the psyche itself.

Fourth, the correspondences are asserted between the combined evolution of psyche and childrearing and the evolutionary stages in society itself. A quick example, at this point, will help illustrate the manner in which the theory is constructed. The stage of society which succeeds the previous one of the Middle Ages is designated "Renaissance." It, in turn, evolves into the Modern stage. The mode of childrearing in the Renaissance stage was "intrusive," which corresponds to that stage of psychic develop-

ment deMause designates as “Depressive”—a progressive development from the preceding stage “Borderline” and leading, ultimately, to the more mature stage “Neurotic.” Thus, we have delineated three separate sequences of evolution development. 1. For the Psyche: Borderline, Intrusive, Neurotic. 2. For Childrearing: Ambivalent, Intrusive, Socializing. 3. For Society: Middle Ages, Renaissance, Modern. These three developmental sequences are ultimately related, one to the others. A new grand theory of psychosocial evolution will depend upon an elaboration of those relationships.

One can, obviously—and more than that, one should—without challenging the fundamental theoretical approach, which is unquestionably valid, in my view—raise certain questions, or even objections, to specific details in this most complex theoretical schema. Before questions, however, one sympathetic observation: the theory is by no means simplistic. Evolutionary thrust does not mean that regression is not possible. In fact, in certain circumstances regression occurs *as a result of evolutionary progress*. Individuation—an undoubted progressive advance—produces its own new anxieties, which are defended against with regressive behavior. “As people experience growth panic due to individualization,” he writes, “as memories of early traumas threaten to surface, they switch into alters and restage their anger, guilt and punishment in religious rituals” (“The Evolution of Psyche and Society,” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 29 #3 [Winter 2002], p. 240). When addressing the question of why the witch craze surfaced with such power at the beginning of the modern world, he states: “If the craze is seen as a reaction to growth panic it becomes explainable” (p. 277). Such a complex and ambiguous view finds a very sympathetic response in me, since I have tried to elaborate the same phenomenon in a different context. Observing that nothing moves forward without cost, I have amplified the concept of the great promise and great anxiety of the modern world. Modernity promises—and delivers—a new world. But it is not only good news. The level of individual anxiety rises precipitously, and has to be dealt

with in a healthy manner—or else. The two great social manifestations of the modern world are a significant number of stable democratic societies, which include women—and fascism.

The very best of social theories do two things. They give us insight into the nature of human history, but they also raise new questions, the answers to which require pushing the theory forward. Having reflected on what de Mause's theoretical structure offers, one is left with certain fundamental queries. What causes what? Where does the process of moving forward begin? Is the evolution of childrearing the most significant casual energy, pushing the psyche and society to evolve? Or does each of the three areas of evolution—psyche, society, childrearing—have its own independent source of energy? We are back again to the great “engine of history” question, or maybe the “engines of history” question.

One powerful way to begin to solve these problems is to undertake a detailed, deep, imaginative investigation of the actual circumstances of the transition from one social stage to the next. What was going on during that period in the transformation of the psyche, in the characteristic mode of childrearing, in the political-economic-religious institutions within society? For instance, deMause postulates that the Renaissance stage evolved into the Modern. Why, in our three areas of evolution, did that happen? In this circumstance, we have one very significant place to begin our inquiry. It's called the Reformation. Between the Renaissance and the birth of the Modern comes the Reformation, and for the Reformation we have an enormous amount of data on psyche, society, and childrearing. I realize that in this regard, I am speaking only to young people, who have a lifetime to devote to one era of history. In terms of understanding the world, nonetheless, nothing could be more important. Lloyd deMause and some others have done some of this, unquestionably, but I know of no single work that one can hold up and shout “This is it!”

The one area of deMause's theoretical structure that I do feel needs careful questioning is the subject of the early stages in society. That is, society before what he designated Antiquity

(Greece and Rome). Before we get to Greece and Rome, he postulates only one stage of society: Tribal. By Tribal I assume he means these societies which have also been designated Primitive, Kinship Societies: non-literate peoples who were the main subject of anthropologists for 75 years: Zuni, Nuer, Kwakiutl, etc. etc. In my view, to go from Hunters and Gatherers to Ancient Greece in one leap is too much. It cannot represent only one stage of social evolution. The Parsons-Bellah scheme suggests Primitive to Archaic before arriving at the Historic. The modified Parsons-Bellah theory, which I am sympathetic to, postulates a stage before the Tribal/ Primitive: that of Hunters and Gatherers, paleolithic peoples before the invention of agriculture. Also, a stage of Complex Society: non-literate kingdoms, between the Tribal/ Primitive and the Archaic. If one accepts this further differentiation, four stages of society can be observed before we get to ancient Greece: Hunters/ Gatherers, Tribal/ Primitive, Complex Society, Archaic. It can be cogently argued, I believe, that these four represent fundamental stages of development in all areas: social cohesion, politics, economics, religion, forms of social aggression, psychic maturity, and childrearing.

It is not helpful, I feel, to refer to the particular attributes of all four stages as indicative of only a single stage. For instance, deMause has elaborated at length on the catastrophic childrearing in Tribal/ Primitive New Guinea, and postulated that this is the model of all childrearing in the pre-Antiquity stage. On the other hand, Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, who went with her father, mother, and brother to be one of the first people to live with the Bushman in the Kalahari desert, when the latter were still hunters and gatherers, has recently published a book from old data called *The Old Way*. She would find the New Guinea standard of child-destruction alien to the Bushman world. I am not saying that the Hunter-Gatherer mode of childrearing was more humane or mature than the world of Primitive-Tribal societies. But I do want to suggest that the question is open, and that the further differentiation of the pre-Antiquity stages would assist us in, ultimately, finding the answer.

Allow me to mention a couple of small quibbles about what data belongs in what category. Lloyd deMause refers to early headhunters and cannibals as if both peoples belonged in the same stage of social development, which contradicts one of the exciting things I discovered in working on my cannibal book. Not always, but in general, I found that those societies engaged in widespread, complicated rituals of headhunting were not cannibals. In general, cannibals were not also headhunters. The theoretical excitement arose from the realization that the explanation of this phenomenon came from a different realm of evolution: that of the psyche. The cannibal eats his victim, who then disappears. The headhunter keeps all his heads as trophies decorating his hut. The more heads, the more man. The heads are like capital—money in the bank. The oral cannibal gets transformed into the anal headhunter. The intense oral aggression can be given up and sublimated only when an adequate anal substitute is institutionalized. Who said we no longer need Freud?

A much greater loss is suffered by not adopting the notion of an Archaic stage directly preceding that of the Historic/Antiquity. The Archaic includes, among other societies, Sumeria, Babylonia, Egypt, Persia, Early China, and Early India. These societies were not in the same stage as the Greeks and Romans and ancient Israel. They did, however, prepare the ground for the birth of these world-shaking cultures. Parsons designates ancient Greece and Israel as “seed-bed societies.” We cannot understand the whole future history of the world—up to, and including, the late Modern world we live in—without comprehending the role Greece and Israel have played in social evolution. Furthermore, Greece and Israel themselves could not have existed without the Archaic stage that preceded them. Let me give just one example: think of the influence of Sumeria and Babylonia on the Jewish Bible. These Archaic civilizations were exhibiting their own particular, unique mode of politics, social cohesion, moral values, religion, economics, and childrearing—this, for me, is a matter of first principle.

To conclude this particular section on the evolutionary the-

ory of Lloyd deMause, let me propose that I do not understand it as the end of the journey, but as a great jumping-off place from which to leap forward.

Our third and last piece, or pillar, of a comprehensive evolutionary theory would be a far-reaching, encyclopedic theory of the development of the psyche, from birth to the mature adult in the Late Modern world. Having such, we could then relate those stages of psychic development to the corresponding ones of society and childrearing. We do not, however, have such a theoretical structure. We have important pieces and brilliant insights; we have several places to start. Enormously important work has been done by Freud, Piaget, Melanie Klein, Margaret Mahler, Daniel Stern, and others. We would like to be able to draw the exact correspondences between the stages of psychic and social evolution. Such an activity, I am sure, would help us to more accurately understand the great “engine of history” question.

At one point, I postulated that the development of the psyche is the paradigm for the evolution of society and culture. Three significant parallels led me to that proposition. The first was the development from greater to lesser and lesser magic; also, from omnipotence to non-omnipotent power. The healthy, mature movement of the psyche is one of gradually renouncing magical views of the world, and magical means to one’s ends. The evolution of religion in world history, as delineated so brilliantly by Bellah, is precisely on the same course. The great book to read confirming this is Keith Thomas’ *Religion and the Decline of Magic*.

Secondly, the psyche develops from an emphasis on shame to an emphasis on guilt. One can, legitimately, discipline a small child with the use of shame. One does so to a child, after a certain age, only by implying it is still an infant. Guilt becomes one important mechanism for the building of a strong conscience: you cannot do that! Here again, the evolution of society is precisely in the same direction. Primitive-Kinship-Tribal societies are shame cultures. Only a certain evolution of religion makes guilt a primary means of moral and social control. E. R. Dodds’ marvelous chap-

ter, "From Shame Culture to Guilt Culture," is a revelation. This only happens when society itself evolves to a certain point: for Dodds, ancient Greece; for Parsons-Bellah, a little bit in the Archaic and fully in the Historic; for deMause, that stage he designates "Antiquity."

The third striking parallel between psychic and social evolution is in the *mode* of legitimate social aggression. I have already referred to the movement from cannibalism to headhunting: from oral to anal aggression. There is always a particular form of social aggression; the evolution of society, therefore, depends upon the *sublimation* of aggression from a more primitive to a more healthy psychological form. The path of that sublimation—within society—is dictated by the path of a healthy developing psyche. Joseph Schumpeter underlined it brilliantly. Capitalism, he said, was the first stage of society where a man could prove he was a man without killing somebody. The universal need is for men to prove their manliness. The evolutionary possibilities: to sublimate that need into an increasingly humane, healthy, moral mode of living. We are aware today—especially since the 1960's—that one can prove one's manliness not by embracing, but by rejecting all that capitalist competitiveness, domination, and destructiveness. Again, the sublimation of aggression, within both the psyche and society, is one of the great journeys of history. The central problem of our political world today, especially in this great country of ours, is precisely how much we are willing to sublimate and renounce the drives towards domination and destruction.

On the largest question of all—creating a grand, global theory of psychic evolution—I admit to a certain inadequacy on my part; not to create such a thing, which goes without saying, but even to understand much of what has been offered thus far. For instance, I have never quite grasped the Melanie Klein evolutionary stages: Schizoid, Paranoid, Depressive. My imagination fails to enlighten me on what it feels like to be in each of these stages, even though I did publish a book on political and social paranoia and the task of going beyond it.

Lloyd deMause, however, has not been reluctant to under-

take this task. To each of his seven stages of social evolution he has assigned a one-word description of what he calls "Personality." Personality, for me, seems to indicate the particular stage of psychic development that corresponds to the parallel stage of social evolution. Thus, we get Schizoid, Narcissist, Masochist, Borderline, Depressive, Neurotic, Individuated. I am incapable of passing judgment—even a superficial one—on this evolutionary schema. What I would love to witness someday is a discussion between someone who has such a capacity and Lloyd deMause. I am sure it would prove enlightening. Meanwhile, we remain hungry for the longed-for great global theory of psychic evolution, with extended examples and arguments, containing our illustrated three pillars—and maybe more.

So, I come to the end of my prolegomena on a future grand theory of the evolution of society. Let us all go to work!

*[Editor's note: This paper was first given as a presentation at the International Association of Psychohistory on June 4, 2008, followed by a comment by David Beisel.]*

*Eli Sagan graduated with honors from Harvard University in 1948 and then devoted the next quarter century to a business career in New York City and the life of the mind. After retiring from business in 1974, he devoted his life to scholarship, eventually publishing the following books. Freud, Women, and Morality: The Psychology of Good and Evil (1988); The Honey and The Hemlock: Democracy and Paranoia in Ancient Athens and Modern America (1991); Cannibalism: Human Aggression and Cultural Form (1974, 1993); The Lust to Annihilate: A Psychoanalytic Study of Violence in Ancient Greek Society (1980, 1993); At the Dawn of Tyranny: The Origins of Individualism, Political Oppression, and the State (1985, 1993); and Citizens and Cannibals: The French Revolution, the Struggle for Modernity, and the Origins of Ideological Terror (2001). Currently, he is completing a volume on the origins of tolerance within Christianity. Despite his lack of advanced degrees, in recognition of erudition and scholarly publications, Sagan has been on the faculties of Brandeis, New England Conserva-*

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## Comments on Sagan

**David Beisel - SUNY-RCC**

I bring an historian's mindset to the issues Eli Sagan raises, which means that my first reaction to the notion of general evolutionary development is a negative one since as a concept, as Eli Sagan knows, it has fallen into disfavor for much of the last sixty years—perhaps even since the devastation of 1914-18 dealt the notion of perpetual progress a devastating blow.

But from what my freshman Western Civilization II students say in their answers to the question, "What Is Modern?" you would never know this is the consensus among historians. Mostly, my students elaborate on how good things are by noting how much "progress" we have made, delineating all the technological innovations we enjoy—the cell phones and mini-computer playthings they are continuously fondling—until they are brought up short when I mention Hiroshima and the Holocaust, which their denial systems never let them see.

I fully recognize my negative knee-jerk reaction to the notion of evolutionary development is a biased remnant of my graduate school days. We all learned that there were at least two theories which should never be mentioned in class: "The Whig Interpretation of History," the notion that there's been an inevitable advancement of humankind through constitutional government, personal freedom, and scientific advancement; and the related but separate social evolutionary theory associated with the Idea of Progress. Neither would get you through graduate school.

An opposite two-part dogma was drummed into our heads instead: that each historical event is utterly unique; and that there are no overall patterns in human development. I do not think it is much different today in graduate history departments or among historians generally.

As a result of these decades-old prejudices I come to Eli Sagan's paper with the ingrained distrust of things evolutionary learned as a

1960's graduate student. This allows me to understand the prejudice of my fellow historians when they first encountered deMause's "Evolution of Childhood" essay over thirty years ago, or encounter it for the first time today. Their criticisms then and now have little to do with the deMause essay's intrinsic scholarly merits which many Establishment historians dismiss out of hand as an example of the Whig Interpretation of History, an unfair burden deMause's essay has had to carry ever since it was first published.

I hope in my comments below not to make the same mistake with Eli's deeply felt, cogently argued, and provocative paper.

Despite what I was told in graduate school, I am not at all averse to the project he has in mind for us. Indeed, in the early 1980's I used the notion of progressive psychic integration as a focal point for a paper on early German nationalism where I argued that the ability of Europeans to finally achieve a more integrated sense of self allowed them, beginning around 1800, to transform their long-standing parochial and tribal identities into larger national identities. Implicitly, this ability showed a pattern of an earlier and greater integration in Europe moving from west to east which, again implicitly, corresponded to deMause's findings on the history of childcare—better care in western Europe and America, worse as one moved eastward—and hence improving stages of psychic integration in the west where nationalism first emerged.

As I began to read farther in Eli's paper my immediate association was to Thomas Kuhn's 1962 *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, made famous for its development of the notion of paradigm shifts. As a psychoanalytic anthropologist, he brings in the general notion that greater psychic energy needs to be expended to cause such paradigm shifts in whatever area we are talking about. It is, I think, an extraordinarily helpful way to think about things and should be considered in general as an important perspective in intellectual, social, and cultural history.

I would have liked to hear some reference somewhere along the line to Julian Jaynes's notion of the bi-cameral mind, which I am hopeful Eli will explain to me someday.

I thought next about Hegel's place in this discussion. Hegel seems to have gone missing. I expected the Dialectical Logic, with its notion of the progressive unfolding of God's mind through history, to show up somewhere down the road, but I suppose that Hegel was implic-

itly covered by Marx and Engels.

Eli's invocation of Talcott Parsons (all these years associated in my mind almost exclusively with the Weber thesis on the Protestant origins of capitalism), has made me want to revisit Parsons in a new way. Eli makes a good case for his significance, and for Robert Bellah, unfortunately known to me up till now only through an occasional letter to *The New York Review of Books*. I've got some serious homework to do.

Eli's introduction of the Renaissance-Reformation nexus seems to me apt and important. It is a traditional problem. Did the Renaissance create the Reformation? Was the Reformation a reaction against the Renaissance? Was it both? What, exactly, is the psychic advantage of Protestantism? Was it not regressive, a typical purity crusade against the secular modernity of the Renaissance? To think it is less punishing and more loving than Catholicism—and I am not sure Eli is saying this—is to ignore the harsh demands of Calvinism and the punishing thrust of the Puritans.

His phrase "iron-bound logic" made me a bit uneasy until it was concretized by the excellent example of how stages cannot be jumped—that is, that leaps from post-puberty to adulthood (skipping adolescence) just cannot be made. It makes perfect sense, but then I wonder about the applicability of the metaphor itself. Does it in any way imply the organic fallacy applied to society—America was born in 1776, went through its infancy, grew up in the nineteenth century, became a young adult in the early twentieth century, etc., etc.—or, alternately, the statement sometimes heard in Congress that Cuba is a cancer, and so on, which I am uneasy about given the well-known outcomes of organic fantasies in Nazi Germany and other totalitarian states. I wonder additionally about the fact that, until about 1900, adolescence conceptually did not exist. Yes, people went through it anyway, but did they really? And exactly how did they? And what does our society's extension of the adolescent moratorium well into young adulthood tell us about irresponsible permissiveness masquerading as helping mode parenting? Some small bones to pick, but I suggest the argument goes on.

I am happy to say I am in full accord with Sagan's work *At the Dawn of Tyranny*. I have been using the concept of movement from primitive pre-literate society to civilization via the intermediate stage of complex culture as part of my Western Civilization I classes ever since

Eli's work first convinced me 25 years ago. It dovetails nicely with the omnipresent Neolithic Revolution identified in all the college texts.

His clarifications that there is no imperative for these cultures to evolve, that some are frozen for millennia in the same patterns, and that numerous regressions are possible are all vital points that disarm the caricature advanced by critics that evolutionary theory assumes inevitable ever-upward trends, and are crucial points that need to be made over and over.

As to the great question of moral progress, I return in my simple-minded way to Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*. As I teach my psychohistory classes, the engine that drives the observable progressive renunciation of impulse may very well be deMause's great notion of improved parenting eventually producing a sea-change in behavior with the periodic emergence of a new psycho-class, one with more empathy, more understanding, and greater impulse control as a result of incremental improvements in more empathic parenting. My students respond positively to the obvious illustration that there is an enormous difference between the way co-eds dress in American colleges and universities and the way women dress under the Taliban, a gap that despite the too frequent existence of date rape and sexual harassment in our world, shows how far modernity has moved toward controlling sexual impulses in western civilization.

On the other hand (and maybe I am too close to the subject), I have spent 30 years studying the causes and consequences of the Second World War and trying to make sense of the origins of Nazi evil. That old dilemma—If there is so much progress why is the 20<sup>th</sup> century the bloodiest century in history?—keeps nagging at me and does not seem so easily answered by the all-to-easy introduction of the theme of regression from the threats of modernity, pleasure seeking, and improved psychic integration.

Historians, even those sympathetic to psychological approaches, object to Lloyd deMause's rejection of external structural influence, the dogmatic insistence that it is not "out there" until it is first "in here." It makes sense in a certain way that people turn to Christianity or begin reading Dr. Spock's childrearing manual when their psyches are ready for them, but it is enormously destructive to the historical credibility of deMause's evolutionary model, and references to it, to say that is all there is

to it. To insist that institutions play no conditioning or socializing roles in history is, to me, simply off the mark and takes history out of the equation.

The same is true with trauma, which I look for but find missing in Sagan's presentation. The question is how does the cannibal "get over" the trauma of cannibalism to move to the anal headhunting stage? (It is Eli's "Engine of Change.") How does it work, exactly? To be convinced, historians will have to be shown all the details. Psychic evolution can be seen, but how can the engine of improved parenting be proven since the anthropological literature by and large was not asking the necessary psychological questions when those participant observers were out there among the Ik mountain people of Uganda.

Does a historical trauma—say World War II—constitute only a temporary setback? Does it linger on? It is hard to imagine that the traumatic consequences of the Holocaust and Hiroshima are only temporary. I wonder about their future as indelible traumas inter-generationally transmitted.

Unless I misunderstand the argument, I wonder about the assertion that human sacrifice disappears. Did it not go on in symbolic ways at various times in history, even recent history, when individuals and groups and psycho-classes, even countries, were thrown to the wolves?

I think Eli makes a good point about triumphant capitalism discrediting Marxism and thereby discrediting evolutionary theory by association. However, I wonder why the "triumphalist" fantasy at the end of the Cold War—that is, Reagan won it, capitalism has proven itself the best system, and so forth—did not counteract the dogmatic rejection of evolutionary theory in the long run by reinvigorating the evolutionary model. For a time I thought it did, as we bought the group fantasy in the 1990's of a benevolent capitalism spreading from the U.S. across the globe inevitably bringing with it integrity, moral righteousness, and corporate transparency, until it all disappeared along with the Peace Dividend. It is not so much that Bush and the Vulcans missed the boat, it is that they unleashed an immoral, unfettered super-capitalism, harnessed to an American Empire which has proven to be about as ugly as any in history. Yes, regressions occur and need to be explained. But it is hard for me intellectually and emotionally for me to hold on to an evolutionary theory given our immediate circumstances in 2008, even though one can

marvel at the progress which seems to be demonstrated with the election of America's first African-American president.

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## **Sagan's Application of Private History to Human History**

**Edmund Leites** - Queens College

The length of humanity's existence in comparison with the length of life on earth, of earth's won existence, of the star which is our sun, or of our galaxy, is indeed small. What is more to the point in thinking about Sagan's essay is to note how brief a time we have had humanistic histories of universal humanity, of humankind as such, histories not grounded in theology, not "poetic" nor "symbolic." That is histories based on the hard evidence of how we have lived, seeing ourselves as the makers of our own history. This enterprise has, shockingly, only been undertaken since the Renaissance, and its empirical and humanistic orientation is still very much under attack, sometimes from those who insist on religious readings of human history, sometimes from those who, for egotistical reasons, make sure that their own nation or people occupies a special place in humankind's story. Therefore, should it be surprising that the discipline which Sagan has done so much to advance

has progressed so little in comparison, say, with the highly refined and remarkable histories we have of specific civilizations, culture, people, and states?

Scholars and intellectuals are no better than others in combating the parochial, but powerful, collective identities which inhabit them. It is not lamentable, but human, to experience one's history almost exclusively as civilizational, cultural, national, or local. Who finds it easy to experience the history which defines him—or her—as the history of all humankind, from its beginnings, making its own history? How courageous of Sagan to make this supremely humane task his life's work!

Is it not deceitful on the part of these historians to say that Sagan and the few who join with him in constructing humanity's "psychohistory" have overreached, bit off too much, engaged in an enterprise not yet to be attempted? For, in this case, "not yet to be attempted" is equal to "never to be attempted." Sagan is not reluctant to admit his debt to what was once called "scientific socialism," although his conception of humanity's history is hardly Marxist. Could this origin of his work account for some of the reluctance of "professional historians" to engage in a similar enterprise? It would be unlikely that Sagan could have accomplished so much had he not begun with Marx and Engels, and a motivation for this persistent hostility may lie in Sagan's affinities for Marx and Engels. Much of it, however, has its origins elsewhere—in opposition to Sagan the historian having an "existential" relation to history of his own humanity, an existential relation not only to the history of his individual humanity, but to the history of his species.

Once again, we must thank Marx and Engels for advocating a history of humans as "species beings," as having a collective history as a species. From their point of view, while acknowledging the variety within one species, we can be seen to have a unique history, one history. Sagan has, throughout his work, experienced this one history, as he sees it, in an existential, personal way. How could most academics not resist this? Professional identities, nec-

essary for the existence of the personal collectivities, require a subordination of existential realities and anxieties to agreed-upon “professional” concerns. Whatever the benefits of such professional definition to the historian—and they are genuine—the intellectual costs are substantial. From the point of view of its costs, the resistance of historians (who are, after all, human beings!) to a personal, existential relation to humanity’s history as a species is what Kenneth Burke might have called, with only slight exaggeration, historians’ “occupational psychosis.”

How did Sagan escape this? A youthful commitment to Communism alone would not have provided a way for him to go forward, as many a Marxist historian’s work reveals. The answer is clear: it is Eli’s own psychoanalytic experience, which never became solely professional, which always remained existential. What Sagan has done—extraordinary!—is to extend the existential relation of a successful patient in psychoanalysis to his own individual history, to the history of his humanity—his species history. He not only extended psychoanalytic insights about individual psychic histories to our collective history (as Freud had done), but he formed a relation to that collective history like that of a good patient to his own private history. This is a remarkable achievement. About the differences in perspective between Sagan, Parsons, Bellah, and deMause, I have nothing useful to say, save that we need to make sure an emphasis on “theoretical” differences does not overwhelm a clear and anxious, personal, relation to our past.

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## **Psychohistorical Exploration of Current Events**

## **Presidential Savior Fantasies and the Election of Barack Obama**

**David Beisel** - SUNY-Rockland

Messianic fantasies often develop in small groups and the larger society, as demonstrated by the pioneering work of Wilfred Bion and John J. Hartman. When a group is regressed, its members unconsciously (or consciously) believe their world is falling apart and ready to die, and that they themselves are powerless and incompetent. Imprisoned in these fantasies, group members think that salvation can only come when a powerful parental figure comes to rescue them from the outside.

We are dealing in these instances with the idealized “other.” We know from clinical experience as well as historical precedent how idealized images inevitably begin to disintegrate over time. Messy reality eventually seeps in, showing us that the magic we have attributed to the leader does not seem to be working. We do not then realistically evaluate the leader as a flawed human being to whom we have given an impossible task. Instead, we turn against the leader, sometimes with a vengeance. The psychodynamics of these relationships are well known. By creating perfection, we ambivalently come to envy and ultimately hate what we have admired.

One characteristic of the messiah figure is that the savior be a charismatic outsider. There are many examples of this, including Napoleon the Corsican who spoke French with an Italian accent, and Hitler, who spoke German with an Austrian accent. Some psychohistorians have argued these qualities actually constituted part of their collective appeal. The very fact of their outsider status contributed to the collective feeling they were somehow better suited than others to “save” their respective countries, each of which was in crisis. In the organizational and sports worlds messianic fantasies lead to the hiring of outside consultants, new managers, and

coaches in the hope of improving performance. In presidential politics this outsider perception, with some reality, was shared during their campaigns by Carter, Bill Clinton, Perot, and Obama.

Obama's outsider status was defined early on; a *Wall Street Journal* editorial in December 2007 called him "The Man from Nowhere." This was part colloquial usage, of course, as in "he came out of nowhere," but also potentially implied he was a man without a country, that he was from nowhere—literally. The media generally made sure we knew of his outsider status, and that we were meant to see him that way. *The Week* magazine for July 4-11 noted that Jay Newton-Small said on the *Time.com* website that "Obama skyrocketed to the nomination by casting himself as a principled outsider," as just one example.

Early on in the primaries, the media also made sure we recognized Obama's powerful charisma. Journalist Kate Zernike wrote in an article "The Charismatic Mandate," that since he was being "compared to F.D.R." and "most commonly, to John F. Kennedy," Obama's popularity might be easily dismissed as "a cult of personality," suggesting instead that the pejorative phrase "cult of personality" be recast as "charisma" (*New York Times Week in Review*, February 17, 2008). Mentioning that charisma originally meant "a kind of magical power and hero worship," Zernike's article went on to quote historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. that today's usage is largely metaphorical: "a chic synonym for heroic, or for demagogic, or even just 'popular.'" Since at least mid-February 2008 we were being put on notice by the *Times* that we were to treat Obama as the Anointed One.

The thought was everywhere. On *The Daily Show*, comedian John Stuart compared Obama to Moses, though he did find Obama's "halo [to be] tarnished." David Brooks kept the religious outsider theme going in the *Times*, saying that, "Obama has been a sojourner. He opened his book 'Dreams from My Father' with a quotation from Chronicles: 'For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers.'" Obama also says that he "lives apart" (August 5, 2008).

Commenting on Obama's summer trip abroad, especially his speech in Berlin where he hoped to catch a bit of the magic still floating in Berlin's air from Kennedy's famous "*Ich bin ein Berliner*" speech, Brooks wrote in the *Times* of what he called Obama's "messiah complex," which he saw expressed in a "Disneyesque vision in which people inspired by his wonderfulness would link hands across borders and ideologies to magically alleviate hunger, genocide, global warming, and all other forms of human nastiness."

On the conservative side, *National Review Online* called Obama's vision "hazy and unbounded utopianism," the *Washington Post* called him "the golden-tongued orator," while the conservative *Weekly Standard* said "Obama acts like a man duty-bound to come to the rescue of a nation whose citizens are too stupid to look out for themselves." These citations prove that even critical commentary by the political opposition could and did communicate Obama's aura of savior. From a liberal perspective, Hendrick Hertzberg said to the *New Yorker's* readers, "call him messianic if you like," but also observed that Obama's message of hope had produced in Germany "a sea of delighted Europeans waving American flags instead of burning them." Maureen Dowd said of his trip to Germany: "After 200,000 people thronged to see Obama at the Victory Column in Berlin, christening him 'Redeemer' and 'Savior'..." A *Times* story on August 19, 2008, looking ahead to the Denver convention of the next week spoke of Obama's "expected coronation." Mary Eagan of the *Boston Herald* had noted that, "the media covered Obama's overseas trip as if it were a cross between a coronation and the second coming."

Michael Chabon's coverage of the Democratic Convention in Denver for the *New York Review of Books* continued the theme, saying of Obama's acceptance speech in Denver that, "His resonant pinewood voice lifted, and roughened, and his cadence shifted gradually to testifying" prior to wild "applause" when the audience looked at each other and said "now it was time to go save the world." A colleague told me his students say Obama looks like a

“movie star.”

The collective fantasy of Obama as savior was maintained in part by the reluctance of the media to make fun of him. During the primary and presidential campaigns he was called “the joke-proof candidate,” largely because of “that which cannot be said”—namely the notion that he is off-limits for comedians because of his race. To make fun of him could certainly devalue him, but more importantly from a psychohistorical point of view, such fun-making would serve to humanize him—certainly not a good thing if we are to retain the fantasy of our savior’s charismatic perfection. In comedic reality there is enough there to make fun of. As Joel Stein said in the *Los Angeles Times*, “are we really to believe that the nation’s finest comedic minds can think of nothing to say about a ‘manorexic’ natty dresser with a 37 bowling average whose favorite food is arugula?...there’s surely more than enough material to guarantee a level satirical playing field.”

Yet a few attempted it. Maureen Dowd noted that *The Daily Show* poked fun at the grandiosity of the “‘Obama Quest’ and the ‘Obamanauts’, showing a film clip of ‘our hero’ in chain mail, fighting off dragons and a Cyclops in his crusade to come home and rule over Dreamerica.” Dowd also reported on a caricature drawn on the We Are the World logo in the press section of the aircraft Obama used for his European trip which showed the candidate’s ears sticking out and demanding: “Worship me.”

Still most media sources continued with the messianic myth-making. All the adulation reported in the media produced a sense of uneasiness on the left as Republican strategists presented Obama as a different kind of “other.” His part-African background, which added to his allure as a charismatic outsider for some, for others became a bone of contention. Since January 2008, a friend worriedly told me several times, “I’m not sure I can vote for him. There’s a conflict of interest. He’s got family in Africa.”

As early as November 3, 2006, the cover of *The Week* magazine matched an image of Obama-with-halo with the words,

"IS he THE ONE?" Later, he was introduced by Oprah Winfrey on her show with the words, "He's the one." Americans can be forgiven for wondering if some people, perhaps many, heard Oprah's words with a large case "O." If they did, the large case "O" for many undoubtedly connected on some level with Jesus's violent death and martyrdom.

Given the twists of American history and what many of us have lived through in our lifetimes, such concerns are realistic. Scholars of messianic fantasy are aware that saviors may become a potential sacrifice, with doubters and current believers that Obama is the "Chosen One" joining in the process. While leaving my Western Civilization Honors class in early October 2008, one month before the election, I overheard one of my students tell another, "If he's elected president, I give him six months before he's assassinated."

Such public concerns are always the case when dealing with young, attractive, energetic politicians, especially those who remind us of the Kennedy family. With Obama, who thinks of himself as being like a Kennedy, there is also the added concern about him as a potential target of racial hatred. Assassination fears were on everyone's minds during the various commemorations of Martin Luther King's murder when we were reminded that exactly 40 years ago the hope of millions was traumatically snuffed out that April day in Memphis in 1968.

Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, "Speaking at the annual convention of the National Rifle Association...was interrupted by a loud noise from backstage. 'That was Barack Obama,' he said. 'He just tripped off a chair. He's getting ready to speak and somebody aimed a gun at him and he—he dove for the floor.'" (*New York Times*, May 17, 2008, p. A12.) One needn't know anything about Freud to understand the deeper feelings being expressed by Americans laughing about it.

That same small *Times* article reminded us that Obama had been "assigned Secret Service coverage last May, the earliest point

in a campaign that a candidate has been given protection. His wife, Michelle, has voiced concerns about his safety” (*New York Times*, May 17, 2008, p. A12). The associations with slain past presidents continued in the run-up to the Inauguration and during the Inauguration itself, through the media connection of Obama to Lincoln and the Lincoln-Kennedy parallels. So desperate was the need to preserve the connection to JFK that during the Inauguration television analysts said over and over again, “It’ll be nice to have young children back in the White House for the first time since the Kennedys,” completely forgetting Jimmy Carter’s daughter Amy, age nine when her father assumed the presidency.

Although to the general public, as opposed to the Washington insiders, he has not been immune to some tarnishing of the halo effect, Obama’s charisma continued after his election and inauguration. Knowing comparatively little about him gave us an opportunity to project salvation fantasies more readily onto him. Obama’s continuing messianic savior image was symbolized best by Time magazine’s 2008 “Person of the Year” cover, where his face joins the faces of the many presidents-elect, appearing there before all, portrayed in the same way, with firm, visionary faces staring off into the future in three-quarter frontal view as seen from below, as if the audience is composed of children looking up at an adored father figure. Yet for me the most telling image of Obama-as-savior comes from the astonishing photo on the front page of the January 19, 2009 *New York Times*, the day before the inauguration. The president-elect, his back to us, arms extended, holds a small child, its face filled with ecstatic joy basking in Obama’s gaze.

Between the election and the inauguration—except for CNN’s David Gergen—there were hardly any media voices cautioning that America was expecting too much. In the few days since January 20, the tarnishing of Obama’s messianic image has already begun. CNN took Obama to task on the night of January 26, stridently demanding clear and full accountability, public transparency, and rigorous oversight in the new stimulus package, never

mentioning how Bush rammed through a Wall Street bail-out plan without safeguards just a couple of months before. As we know from historical precedents and clinical practice, and we are now beginning to see signs of in the case of Obama, the idealized "other" disintegrates in the face of reality. The magic projected onto the president fades away and the idea spreads that our leader is a flawed and limited human being facing a Sisyphean task. At this point society inclines to repudiate the leader, often with a vengeance. The occupant of the Oval Office is often then knocked off the pedestal that was always a defense against envy and hatred. In the case of the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States we will see how these psychological and political forces play out.

*David Beisel's biography can be found on page 258.*



## **What Caused and Happens after the Economic Collapse**

### **Tom Ferraro - Psychoanalyst in Private Practice**

In the March 2007 issue of Clio's Psyche, the Chinese financial analyst Lily Xu and I published a piece entitled "Comparisons and Reflections on the Psychology of Savings." It was published as part of a symposium where leading economic historians and an educator were invited to comment on our work. We suggested that Americans were unable and unwilling to save because of an insatiable sense of greed for all things consumable. America was an overweight (33 percent of adults are obese), overspent, and overworked society, which was in serious debt as a result. We used Robert Shiller's article entitled "Thrifty China, Spendthrift America" to explore why it was that the Chinese were able to save so much more than Americans. Our article was roundly dismissed by commentators Collins, Felix, and Reynolds,

who suggested that, in fact, debt and spending were signs of strength in a society. They felt our piece was far too dark and pessimistic. The article was written 18 months before the financial collapse in America, which was produced by just the kind of overspending and failure to show restraint we wrote about. Debt in the real estate markets nearly toppled the banking industry, global stock markets, insurance industries, and now the automotive industry.

Clio's Psyche has presented us with an opportunity to explore the reasons behind the financial collapse in more detail. This paper will discuss the nature of American greed, how asceticism and restraint are a way out of this problem, and why it is unlikely that the mature defense of asceticism will take hold any time soon.

Michael Douglas played Gordon Gekko in the 1987 film *Wall Street*. It was in this film that we first heard the phrase "Greed is good." This phrase was borrowed from Ivan Boesky's famous line "greed is healthy" and reverberated so deeply with Americans that Michael Douglas won the Academy Award for Best Actor that year. This phrase echoed Christopher Lasch's concerns in his popular book *The Culture of Narcissism* back in 1979. Lasch wrote that a lack of role models produced a regression in the culture, which would eventuate in an angry, hungry population of narcissists filled with primitive rage. Since then psychoanalysts and filmmakers have focused on narcissism as the primary personality disorder of our time. Add to this a culture overwhelmed with irresistible advertising images and a media that incessantly tells us that we are nothing if we are not married to Angelina Jolie or A-Rod. This cultural environment produced a country of grim, over-competitive, over-worked, and never-satisfied consumers. All we needed was the infectious greed of the financial industry offering all the credit cards we desired and we had the perfect storm. The tipping point came in the summer of 2008, and then our entire economic system began to collapse.

Barack Obama presented his views on our economic situation in his last debate with John McCain. About the ever-

worsening financial crisis, he said, "We have been living beyond our means. This includes corporations, government, and industry. We have been too profligate and need to learn sacrifice and responsibility." All very true, but herein is the rub. We must become a culture of restraint, rather than one of reckless extravagance, but how is this done? It is relevant to recall that two of the seven deadly sins are greed and gluttony.

The only book that I can recall that presented some role models of restraint was the Stanley and Danko book *The Millionaire Next Door: The Surprising Secrets of America's Wealthy* (Atlanta: Longstreet, 1996). The authors discovered that the real millionaires in America, the ones that actually had over a million dollars in the bank, were those humble-looking and simple-living neighbors who drove a ten-year-old car, wore old clothes, and usually were self-employed. Those millionaires were the ones who figured out the system by avoiding the trap of conspicuous consumption. I can hear Collins, Felix, and Reynolds saying right now, "Push too much savings and too little spending onto the culture and you push us into a deep depression like the one that occurred in Japan for a full ten years." To this I say, "There is little threat that the population will be able to learn any level of restraint or sacrifice."

Some of the population's understanding that rampant materialism leaves much to be desired has caused an emergence of Buddhism in America, but the clash of philosophies could not be more dramatic. Then, there is another arcane discipline that attempts to espouse the ascetic life style, which is psychoanalysis. The six mature defenses include sublimation, altruism, humor, suppression, anticipation, and asceticism, according to Meisner in *The Textbook of Psychiatry* (Washington: American Psychiatric, 1985). The mature analysis, towards the end of a successful analysis, is expected to find some fulfillment in restraint and the delay of gratification. In an effort to explore this little-discussed topic in greater detail, I submitted a proposal to the APA Division 39 (Psychoanalysis) 2009 spring meeting in San Antonio, which was rejected. It ap-

pears that asceticism is a tough sell, even to supposedly mature psychoanalysts.

My view is that the culture has very few role models of restraint. Barack Obama and Ralph Nader both live famously austere lifestyles, but the list ends there. People are more drawn to the lifestyles of the rich and famous, rather than the poor and humble. Mother Teresa appears to be one of a kind.

If we turn to films, we can see how screenwriters and directors are working these themes through. Three of the most popular films of 2008 and 2009 are *Children of Men*; *I, Legend*; and *The Road*. All three are post-apocalyptic nightmares of a world in decay, despair, and utter depletion. At the end of each film, you can see a sense of slight, unformed hope with the girl or boy being ushered into a new world being built out of the ashes of the current world. These films are so popular, or so highly anticipated in the case of *The Road*, because many Americans are beginning to understand in some way that our current life of materialism, over-indulgence, over-work, and indebtedness does not work. It in no way makes us happy, peaceful, or content.

Long ago in the world of the 1950s we all shared happy, hopeful images in “Father Knows Best,” “My Three Sons,” and “Leave It to Beaver.” That American experiment appears to have failed and failed miserably. We now await someone to tell us how the new world will be. I think this message will be given to us by some writer, director, or religious type. I doubt that it will come from a politician. Until this message and messenger arrive, we will try to pay off our credit card bills, make those mortgage payments, and pray we don’t lose our jobs. Let’s all hope we are not waiting for Godot, who never arrives.

**Tom Ferraro, PhD** is a psychoanalyst on Long Island with a specialization in sports psychology as well as a journalist who publishes columns in Hong Kong, South Korea, and America. He may be reached at [DrTFerraro@aol.com](mailto:DrTFerraro@aol.com). □

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**The Life Experience and Scholarly  
Achievement of J. Lee Shneidman  
(June 20, 1929-July 29, 2008)**

## **Paul H. Elovitz - Psychohistory Forum**

Jerome Lee Shneidman died on July 29, 2008 after a courageous struggle with ill health, starting with the cancers he had as a young child and ending with the one that ultimately killed him. The latter was diagnosed late in 2007, only nine months following the sudden loss of his beloved wife Conalee Levine-Shneidman, to whom he was married since 1961. Dr. Shneidman was an accomplished medieval Spanish and early-American historian with a wide range of interests and publications in various fields. In the course of his academic career, Professor Shneidman published over 100 articles, chapters of books, and book reviews on many diverse subjects. He taught at five different colleges and universities in various positions, and dedicated many hours to forwarding psychohistory in several different groups.

A word about names will be a helpful guide to this complex man. As a colleague and friend of over 30 years, I always knew him as Lee, as did most people from the 1960s and 1970s, but I eventually discovered that as a child he was called Jerome and within the immediate family Roma for short. High school friends called him Jerry. In this he was like his father, who was called four different names, based upon the preferred language of the people who knew him —English, Polish, Russian, or Yiddish.

Jerome Lee Shneidman was born as the elder of two sons on June 20, 1929 in New York City to a family of Jewish immigrants from the borderlands of the Tsarist Russian Empire who lived in the Bronx and then moved to the Upper West Side when he was 13, where he would spend the rest of his life. His father Bernard was a dedicated Marxist who reported (his son only believed what he could verify with documentary evidence or through personal experience) to have gone back to Europe to fight as a Red Army officer in the Russian Civil War under Trotsky until becoming disillusioned by a decision to ally with an anti-Semitic Ukrainian anarchist. Back in America, Bernard married Fanya Raskin, a beautiful, theatrical woman from Vilnius (Vilnia), endeavoring to support her

family by opening a laundry. Lee reported that there “was always enough money for books, magazines, and the right [left-wing] causes,” but often not enough money for clothes or doctors.

A central issue of Jerome Lee Shneidman’s life was cancer, beginning with the melanoma on the groin, diagnosed when he was about six months old. A major skin graft rearranged elements of his body. The hated hospital dominated his existence for the next 13 years. Twice his parents were told he would not live until morning, and athletics and other physical activity were prohibited. His parents scrounged money for the doctors, his father resenting so much attention being devoted to his elder son. After Roma returned home from one failed operation to remove a tumor, it quickly returned, exploding with pus. The doctor in the emergency ward would not operate without getting a fee of \$25, which Bernard collected from relatives in small increments. The boy came to distrust doctors as greedy and incompetent. Over 60 years later, without evident signs of humor, Lee told me, “MD stands for medically deranged” and his son Jack remembers his saying “MD stands for mentally deranged.”

The doctors said that *if* the boy lived he either would not be able to walk or would walk with a pronounced limp and a cane, but Shneidman walked normally until his later 60s, when he began to have great trouble perambulating because of the medical interventions of his childhood. His nerves and veins had been rearranged and his skin pulled incredibly tight from the operations, one of which involved 300 stitches that he had trouble healing from. His skin was so scarred that it was hard for physicians to read an MRI. Since about age 70, he went to physical therapy twice a week to help with his back pain and walking difficulties.

Confined to a hospital ward without privacy or a radio, and often ignored behind a curtain, the boy read a great deal, turning to history to keep his mind active by fantasizing he was among the historical people in the books he read. Through the life of the mind, he moved beyond his Bronx hospital bed as he absorbed the content of newspapers and *National Geographic* magazines, and

studied history through stamp collecting. As a teenager he went to a museum exhibit on Mexico City, where the guide assumed he had toured the Mexican capital because he knew the details of its entire layout from studying it so extensively as a child in the children's charity ward.

In a hospital bed at about age eight, thinking of medieval Aragonese kings as "my friends" and doodling maps as he would for the rest of his life, Roma decided he would become a history teacher. Beyond his home education in radical ideas and self-education in history, Shneidman was educated in the New York City public schools, graduating from Stuyvesant High School prior to attending the Heights Campus of New York University (BA 1951), New York University (MA 1952), and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (PhD 1957). He would have liked to earn a doctoral degree in medieval Russian history, but that was not available at a decisive moment in his education, so he turned to the medieval history of Catalonia, a region which had come to his attention as a child hearing about the Spanish Civil War. Dr. Shneidman did postdoctoral study as a Research Candidate at Columbia University Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research, where they strictly forbade him to have contact with patients because he was not a medical doctor, and then at the Reuben Fine Psychoanalytic Institute where the instructors eventually insisted he see living patients. Eventually he dropped out because "I only wanted to analyze dead people." Lee Shneidman relished such ironies and inconsistencies in the world.

Dr. Jerome Lee Shneidman was an extremely erudite scholar, known to many as a contrarian and debunker. His intellectual life was shaped by his illness and competitive relationship with his father, who was engaged in "a power struggle" with him "from my [his] earliest memories." Bernard believed in education and the highest ideals of communism but, as Lee wrote, while taking a "hidden pleasure in my academic progress...had a vested interest in demonstrating my stupidity." Unable to compete with his father in other areas because of his elder's claims of extraordinary accom-

plishments and his own cancer-ridden body, Lee sought to outpace Bernard intellectually. Any claim of his father was checked and double-checked, so that Lee knew his father's arguments better than his father did. This led to Jerome becoming an excellent debater who won various awards. His "scholarship is thorough but polemical" with an unusual number of footnotes since he anticipated being challenged, as he always was by his father.

Young Jerome accepted the ideals of communism, but found the reality in Soviet Russia to be as far from these ideals as were the "greedy incompetent doctors" from their Hippocratic ideal, and as was his competitive father from his own humanitarian ideals. After the Soviet Union signed the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with its archenemy Nazi Germany, Jerome lost faith in Stalin and Soviet communism, to whose ultimate goodness his father clung. Bernard wanted to remake the world into a perfect communist society, while trying to rule his son by an "imperial-capricious system," while the son's commitment was to liberal reform working for incremental change, serving as a New York County Democratic Committeeman starting in 1970. His political advocacy was in English and Yiddish. As a consequence of his relationship with "the hospital" and his father, Lee reported having enormous authority problems that shaped many decisions of his life and strengthened his commitment to democratic constitutionalism, relationships, and society.

One of the legacies of the near-death experiences and physical disability of his early years, and being surrounded by children in the hospital who died, was that Professor Shneidman never wanted to write about societies in decline. In speaking at a 1987 Psychohistory Forum Work-In-Progress seminar, "Psychological Factors in the Development of an Historian," he told us that some of his friends thought he was counterphobic when it came to death and decline. Thus, his research energies went into the growth of the Catalan kingdom, the early American Republic, and the promise of the Kennedy administration (his co-author wrote about JFK's failures and death). He steered the *Communism: The Dream* that

Failed Research Group toward the origins of this movement, rather than the reasons for its failure, which I would have preferred focusing upon. As a devoted believer in participatory democracy, Lee insisted that the Psychohistory Forum's research group meeting at his home be one based upon consensus, rather than have a formal leadership structure. His interest in Russian history was based on his parents' origins in the Russian Empire, his father's devotion to the communist experiment in Russia, and the language of his home being Russian along with English and Yiddish.

Behind the Professor's intellectualism and contrarian tendencies was a warm, generous human being who formed many friendships. The Shneidmans had a most active cultural life as they enjoyed the ballet, museums, music recitals, opera, and theatre of their city. They also had a rich variety of friends whom they loved to entertain. The atheism of his left-wing upbringing did not keep Lee from being quite an active member of his synagogue. Throughout their marriage of four and one-half decades, Lee and Connie shared yearly travel to Central and South America, many countries in different parts of Europe, North Africa, China, Malaysia, Thailand, and India where Lee delighted in going to the Taj Mahal that he had dreamt about as a boy in the hospital. Weekends from Memorial Day through October, as well as during their August vacation, they mostly enjoyed at their Fire Island retreat. Despite the geographic distance, the Shneidmans of New York City maintained a very close relationship with his brother Daniel in Milwaukee and his family.

The Shneidmans had an impressive ability to make adjustments to the limitations that came with advancing years and declining health. Hosting the Psychohistory Forum meetings made it possible for Lee to participate even when he could not readily go elsewhere, especially early in the day since his body did not work as well in the mornings as it did later in the day. In their 70s the Shneidmans increasingly traveled on small cruise ships, which minimized having to walk any distances or go on and off conveyances.

Lee was a passionate stamp collector who also wrote numerous articles for the *American Philatelist* and a variety of other stamp journals. He delighted in the stamps that came from our members in the U.S. and around the world, insisting that no stamp was too commonplace, since he would send duplicates on to wounded veterans and others who found themselves hospitalized, so that they might be encouraged to develop the hobby, which did so much to broaden his own bedridden childhood perspective.

Connie and Lee had a close marriage. He and his family assumed he would die before his beloved spouse because of his lifelong health problems. At her sudden death on January 22, 2007, he was utterly shocked and bereaved. Though devastated by this terrible loss, he put on a brave face, continuing to host the Forum's Research Group for as long as he could, finishing his manuscript on Jefferson's foreign policy, and beginning the search for a publisher. His sons, brother, extended family, and friends rallied around him.

He greatly enjoyed smoking a pipe, and when the dangers of all secondhand smoke became quite apparent, Lee mostly restricted his pipe smoking to a narrow office, lined to the high ceiling with books and manuscripts. There he spent countless hours working on manuscripts, articles, and stamps, while the smoke he inhaled formed a cancer in his lungs. Although in his last months his energy waned quite quickly, he welcomed visits from family and friends.

Professor Shneidman had many varied interests in scholarship and became an accomplished and respected scholar. Among his over 100 various publications were such diverse subjects as Aaron Burr, Alexander Hamilton, Karl Marx's alienation, Catherine De Medici, Ivan the Terrible, his own motivation and patterns as a historian, historical philately, Jewish history, and psychohistorical methodology. Some of his psychobiographical work was co-authored by his clinical psychologist/psychoanalyst wife, Conalee Levine-Shneidman, who raised questions a historian would not necessarily ask. Their most acclaimed and cited joint article was "Suicide or Murder? The Burr-Hamilton Duel" in the Fall 1980

issue of the *Journal of Psychohistory*. Lee did almost all of the actual writing in longhand or on a typewriter. (After years of resisting the use of a word processor with complaints that the words disappeared at the end of the line, he finally embraced it in his final years.) Among the numerous journals in which his articles appeared are the *American Historical Review*, *American Philatelist*, *Annale Medievale*, *Clio's Psyche*, *Hispania*, *Historica Judaica*, and the *Journal of Psychohistory*. He was a member of about 20 different professional organizations including the Board of Collaborators of the *Indice Historico Español* of the University of Barcelona since 1965 and the Aaron Burr Association. His books are *The Rise of the Aragonese-Catalan Empire: 1200-1350* (2 volumes, 1970, translated into Catalan); *Spain & Franco: Quest for International Acceptance, 1949-1959* (1973); *John F. Kennedy* (1974, with Peter Schwab) and *Leading from Weakness: Jefferson's Overt and Covert Relations with Spain and the Barbary States: 1801-1807* (completed and in need of a publisher).

Dr. Shneidman had a distinguished academic career at Adelphi University for 40 years, after having taught at Brooklyn College, the College of New York, Fairleigh Dickinson University, and the University of Maryland at Frankfurt A/M in Germany and Libya. In 2001 he became emeritus at Adelphi, although he continued to teach a historical methodology course for some time afterwards. He relished teaching, especially his many international and immigrant students. In 1965 he joined the "Seminar in the History of Legal and Political Thought and Institutions" of Columbia University, serving as chair from 1985 to 2002. In 1973 and 1975 Lee served as a Scholar-Diplomat for the United States Department of State. Among his numerous honors was being an "Invited Participant" of the American Psychoanalytic Association's Interdisciplinary Colloquium on "Problems of the Psychoanalytic Theory of Aggression" from 1979 to 1996.

For a number of years, beginning in 1986, Shneidman edited the *Bulletin of the International Psychohistorical Association*. Lee Shneidman joined the Psychohistory Forum as one of our earli-

est members, becoming an important contributor to our intellectual community. In 1991, when we created the Psychohistory Forum's Communism: The Dream That Failed Research Group, Drs. Shneidman insisted upon hosting it in their elegant home on West 86<sup>th</sup> Street. They were the most gracious of hosts, providing a delightful spread purchased around the corner at Barney Greengrass—"the Sturgeon King"—a landmark New York Jewish delicatessen/restaurant. Holding his pipe, Lee held forth at the head of the table, sharing his great erudition and strongly held opinions. When after the subjects of the origins and main personalities of communism were exhausted, this group turned its attention to autobiography and psychobiography.

Over 100 people attended a most moving memorial tribute to him at the Riverside Chapel at 76<sup>th</sup> Street and Amsterdam Avenue. As Lee would have liked, in a beautiful setting his family and friends lovingly mentioned his foibles as well as his impressive accomplishments and humanity.

We at the Psychohistory Forum would like to express our condolences to his sons Jack and Philip of Manhattan, Daniel and Doris Shneidman of Milwaukee, his extended family, colleagues, and numerous friends. We are all the poorer for this terrible loss.

*Paul H. Elovitz's biography can be found on page 230. He would like to thank the Jack Shneidman and the Shneidman family for their assistance with the memorial. □*

## **A Father Remembers**

Dear Editor,

I would like to offer my compliments for the wonderfully sen-

## Letter to the Editor

sitive and informative issue on death and dying. In particular, Marilyn Charles' comment about the difficulty of responding to the question, "How many children do you have?" resonated with me. My daughter has been gone for almost thirteen years and I still find myself answering that question rather clumsily, with something like, "I have four sons and I used to have a daughter but we lost her a while back."

Patricia was born in 1949. All through her teen years she had difficulty with her endocrine system, and by the age of 20 she was hypoglycemic and it was discovered that she had a tumor on her pancreas, requiring surgical removal of half of that organ. She married and had a son and a daughter. Her daughter was born with a deformed foot; thanks to the work of a skillful orthopedic surgeon, few people are aware that my granddaughter was born handicapped.

When her children were in high school, serious difficulties between her and her husband caused Pat to move out, revert to her maiden name and establish an independent household. She and I were both completely convinced that both her medical problems and those of her daughter were a consequence of my having participated in salvage operations in the Atomic Bomb tests at Bikini in 1946, and after she left her husband we cooperated in efforts both toward trying to get recognition for radiation victims and toward nuclear disarmament.

In 1992 or 1993 Pat was stricken with a malignant brain tumor. The tumor was successfully removed, but in 1995 we learned that she had lung cancer. It is not clear to me which cancer was primary and which was secondary.

When Pat passed away, in a Florida hospice on February 27, 1996, I was in Washington, DC, testifying about my experience and my research about the consequences of participating in nuclear weapons experiments, at a hearing sponsored by the Department of Energy. The invitation to testify had come just when family members were making plans to be with her in her "final hours." Pat's words to me were, "Go, Dad; what you have to say is too important."

Because of her own directive to me, I was not with my daughter in her final moments, but there is hardly a day, all these years later, that she is not in my thoughts. She worked with developmentally handicapped people and I was always amazed at the wonderful rapport she had with them. With her death a great talent was lost.

Sincerely,  
F. Lincoln Grahfls, PhD

*F. Lincoln Grahfls, PhD, after more than three decades of teaching sociology and anthropology, retired from the University of Wisconsin Centers in 1988. Dr. Grahfls grew up and was educated in New York City and served in the U.S. Navy in World War II. Since his retirement, his major efforts have been directed toward peace and nuclear disarmament, although in 1997 he found himself to be missing the classroom interaction and spent the next five years as an adjunct professor at St. Louis Community College. He currently serves as treasurer of the National Association of Atomic Veterans. Among his publications are Voices From Ground Zero: Recollections and Feelings of Nuclear Test Veterans (1996) and Undaunted: The Story of a United States Navy Tug and Her Crew in World War II (2002). Professor Grahfls may be contacted at [flg17@sbcglobal.net](mailto:flg17@sbcglobal.net). □*

## **BULLETIN BOARD**

**CONFERENCES:** The next scheduled **Psychohistory Forum Work-In-Progress Saturday Seminar** will be **March 28** when **Ken Fuchsman, David Lotto**, and others will present **“About Soldiers, Stress, and Suicide: The Legacy of Violence and War.”** The Psychohistory Forum has organized a panel at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Psychohistorical Association (**IPA**) at Fordham Law School in Manhattan on **June 10-12, 2009**. The National Association for Psychoanalysis (**NAAP**) annual conference will be in Manhattan on **October 17, 2009**. The deadline for the NAAP's 2008 **Gradiva Awards** is April 30. The **July 13-17, 2009** International Society of Political Psychology (**ISPP**) conference will be at Trinity College in Dublin. **PUBLICATIONS:** Congratulations to

**Norman Simms** on the December publication by Academic Studies Press of *Marranos on the Moradas. Secret Jews and Penitentes in the Southwestern United States*. **Rudolph Binion's** book on traumatic reliving is scheduled to be published by Karnac in the summer of 2010. **NOTES ON MEMBERS: Richard (Dick) Booth** recently retired from full-time teaching, while continuing as Adjunct Professor of Behavioral and Social Sciences at the University of Maryland University College. He will return to the private practice of psychology, in addition to continuing to write and create continuing education courses for mental health professionals. **Joseph Dorinson** of Long Island University who is a well-known historian and humorist with a long association with psychohistory, under the auspices of the New York Council for the Humanities, is giving the lecture series, "Political Humor: A Look Back in Anger Mixed with Mirth." **Joseph A. Dowling**, a Scottish-born member of our Board of Editors and emeritus professor of history at Lehigh University, is returning to live in Pennsylvania after spending four years in the university city of Leuven, Belgium. **Flora Hogman's** "Adoption Traumas" was published online in February in the *Trauma Psychology Newsletter* of Division 56 of the American Psychological Association. In January she also presented at the United Nations Non-governmental Government (NGO) Organization Committee on Mental Health on "Overcoming Shame and Humiliation: The Hidden Legacy of Trauma." **DEATHS: Henry Ebel** (July 5, 1938-April 4, 2008), a prominent member of the Institute for Psychohistory in the 1970s, Editor of *Behavior Today*, an early member of the IPA, and a retired academic administrator at the University of Hartford and George Washington University, died as a consequence of numerous mini strokes which gave the appearance of Alzheimer's Disease. **NEW MEMBERS:** We welcome **Andrea Fox**. **CORRECTIONS:** In the December 2008 issue Daniel Rancour-Laferrriere's name was misstated and in the last paragraph the German word "Hakenkreuz" was mistakenly spelled as "Hakendrez." **OUR THANKS:** To our members and subscribers for the support that makes Clio's Psyche possible. To Benefactors Herbert Barry, David Beisel, David Lotto, Terence O'Leary,

and Peter Petschauer; Sustaining Members Dick Booth, Judith Gardiner, Peter Petschauer, and Jacques Szaluta; Supporting Members Sander Breiner, Tom Ferraro, Jacqueline Paulson, Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, Lee Solomon, and Martin Quitt; Members Andrea Fox, Harry Keyishian, Marvin Leibowitz, Doris Pfeffer, and George Victor. Our special thanks for thought provoking materials to Jeffrey Berman, David Beisel, Sander Breiner, Don Carveth, Paul Elovitz, Tom Ferraro, Ken Fuchsman, Jane Goldberg, Lincoln Grafhl, Jean Hantman, Irene Javors, Edmund Leites, Peter Petschauer, Vivian Rosenberg, Eli Sagan, and Jacques Szaluta. Our appreciation to Flora Hogman for hosting our January meeting. To Guest Editor Ken Fuchsman for the Love/Hate/Attachment Special Issue, Bob Lentz for editing and proofing, and Herbert Barry for proofreading. To Caitlin Adams for editing, proofing, and Publisher 2003 software application. We also wish to thank [\_\_\_\_??\_]for proofreading. Our special thanks to our numerous, over-worked referees, who must remain anonymous. ▣

***Call for Papers***

**Psychoanalysis of Love and Hate: A Retrospective**

Review Essays of Texts on the Psychoanalysis of Love & Hate

**Special Issue, March 2009**

*Some possible texts to be reviewed include:*

- Sigmund Freud - *Psychology of Love*
- Ian Suttie - *Origins of Love and Hate*
- Melanie Klein & Joan Riviere - *Love, Hate & Reparation*
- Erich Fromm - *The Art of Loving*
- Theodor Reik - *Of Love and Lust*
- Michael Balint - *Primary Love and Psychoanalytic Technique*
- Rollo May - *Love and Will*
- Reuben Fine - *The Meaning of Love in Human Experience*
- Jessica Benjamin - *Bonds of Love*
- Ethel S. Person - *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters*
- Jonathan Lear - *Love and Its Place in Nature*
- Martin Bergmann - *The Anatomy of Loving*
- Jane Goldberg - *The Dark Side of Love*
- Otto Kernberg - *Love Relations*
- Ilham Dilman - *Love: Its Forms, Dimensions and Paradoxes*
- Stephen A. Mitchell - *Can Love Last?*
- David Mann (editor) - *Love and Hate*
- Andre Green & Gregorio Kohon - *Love and Its Vicissitudes*
- Mario Mikulincer & Gail Goodman (editors) - *Dynamics of Romantic Love*
- Joseph Lichtenberg - *Sensuality and Sexuality across the Divide of Shame*
- Leo Bersani & Adam Phillips. - *Intimacies*

**Due January 10, 2009**

Articles of 1000-1500 words (and two long pieces) are welcome, as are additional suggestions. Contact Guest Editor

Professor Ken Fuchsman at  
ken.fuchsman@uconn.edu.

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