

Clio's Psyche

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

**Special Issue on
Psychoeconomics:
Fiscal Crisis, Economic
Fantasies, and Denial**

**Binion European
Identity Symposium**

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627 Dakota Trail, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

Telephone: (201) 891-7486

e-mail: pelovitz@aol.com

Editor: Paul H. Elovitz, PhD

Guest Editor for Psychoeconomics: Bob Lentz

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The Psychoeconomics Special Issue on Fiscal Crisis Economic Fantasies, and Denial

Psychological Explorations of Economic Crises

Paul H. Elovitz—Ramapo College

Economics, finance, and fiscal policy are about psychology, not only according to psychohistorians, but also to Paul Volcker, the world-famous economist and former chairman of the Federal Reserve (1979-87), at least as on the occasion reported to me. When introduced at a cocktail party to the late psychologist and psychoanalyst Conalee Shneidman, Volcker said they both were in “the same business.” Figuring out unconscious motivation is a challenge for psychoanalysts dedicated to helping individuals out of their personal morass and economists attempting to lead society out of its economic depressions and recessions. Of course, working with the irrationalism of individuals who are motivated to come to therapy in the safety of a consulting room is much easier than working with the mass delusions and hysterias which overtake Wall Street, the world financial establishment, and our economic and political leadership.

The resistance to the psychological study of economics is intense, yet in the height of the current fiscal and economic crisis there has been some fleeting acknowledgement of psychological factors. For example, former chairman of Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisors (1993-95) and lead-

ing economist Laura Tyson declared on the October 23, 2008 "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," "there was a collective delusion" that the housing market would only increase in value. Occasional references to psychology in the frantic days of October did not appear to result in any sustained psychological interest in the subject. There were some accusations of denial by those in power and clearly some feelings of *scha-denfreude* in reference to the fall of some economic titans. However, the panel of ten so-called experts from business, finance, and academia sponsored by my college in October was noteworthy for the absence of psychological references, with the exception of a stigmatized economics leader being declared to be living in a world of his own fantasies. I came away from the presentation with the sense that the "experts" were as bewildered by the economic collapse as everyone else and that the positive function of the meeting was in assuaging the anxiety of those present by reassuring them that they were not alone in their economic losses and bewilderment.

Of late, I am finding a few references to behaviorist academic studies related to economics, such as Dan Ariely's *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions* (2008). Since the word "psychology," but not much real psychological analysis, is becoming an "in word" which sells some books, today's (April 19, 2009) New York Times Book Review includes coverage of *Animal Spirits: How Human Psychology Drives the Economy, and Why It Matters for Global Capitalism*, by George A. Akerlof and Robert J. Shiller. From the review, at least, it does not appear that the book by these University of California-Berkeley and Yale economists gets past discussing the "animal spirits" of confidence, corruption, and fairness leading to inevitable booms and busts.

The roots of the typical denial of serious psychological elements in economics are perhaps worth speculating

about. Despite marketing studies demonstrating the extent to which consumer behavior is driven by emotional considerations, people generally prefer to avoid facing the role of emotion and unconscious motivation in economic life. In good times the stock market is generally blindly trusted as a rational system maximizing economic well-being, and during extreme economic downturns it is viewed as an inscrutable entity beyond the capabilities of mere mortals to understand, or as a system subject to massive manipulation on the basis of the self-interest of many involved. Yet even a cursory look at “the Market” reveals that there is room for psychohistorical inquiry.

The role of mania and panic in economic activity is striking. Investors rush to buy the “hottest stock,” which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of economic success. To keep the commissions coming and the economic snowball rolling, investors from around the world are found, using mysterious devices such as securitized mortgages. (Investors who thought they were purchasing a solid piece of the American dream, mortgages in the homes of America, found themselves cheated, confused, and angry.) Of course, when the tide turns there is a self-fulfilling prophecy of economic decline, causing a panic. A crisis of confidence sweeps over the market like a tidal wave washing away the reputations of even magicians of the market like the “Oracle of Omaha,” Warren Buffet, who has recently apologized to his investors. As the economic community and country slip toward depression, the future looks too bleak to invest in.

In teaching college students about economic depression, I have always drawn an analogy to individual human depression. My clothes and hair dishevelled, speaking slowly in a discouraged, angry manner as I shuffle across the front of the classroom, looking at the floor, I ask the students to describe the mood and behavior of someone they have known who was severely depressed. In short order the class

discussion turns to the anger beneath the surface of the depressed individual. Before long we are discussing the depression of an entire society. As a consequence of this activity, the class comes to better understand the recent societal anger at those taking millions in bonuses while the government bailed out their companies and the appeal of those who offered leadership out of depression. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's rhetoric of "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself" was aimed precisely at breaking the cycle of gloom deepening the downward spiral of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Psychoanalysts know that mood swings and depression are not forever. The questions are how deep and long-lasting they will be and what can be done to end them and prevent future ones. Will our economic recession (dare I say "depression"?) last nearly as long as our manic phase? In recent American history I have noted a correlation between the end of a presidency and a decline of economic activity, which I have correlated with the country feeling a sense of abandonment by the outgoing president. Will the actions of the government and economic establishment shorten, lengthen, or make no difference to the length of the current economic slump? Twentieth-century history provides contradictory lessons. President Hoover, who had a great reputation as a humanitarian, mostly relied on market forces for recovery, which turned the fiscal crisis of 1929 into the Great Depression. FDR's use of massive government involvement and deficit spending helped provide government jobs for many and build the infrastructure, but it took World War II to fully restore the economy.

The language used to describe various aspects of the present crisis is vivid enough to make psychoanalysts and psychohistorians take notice. Billionaire philanthropist and investor George Soros warns that bailing out the banks could turn "them into 'zombies' that suck the lifeblood of the

American economy.” Others depict credit as the “lifeblood of the economy.” This imagery of zombiism and vampirism may represent a fear that the American economy could be among the living dead. Perhaps there is some basis for this fear.

In fact, the long-term health of the American economy is very much in doubt as manufacturing is exported to Asia, the American trade deficit continues, the country is dependent on foreign loans, and the younger generation is mostly concerned with consumerism, entertainment, finance, and sports. The focus has been more on the next quarter's dividends than on building for the future, without much concern about the societal results of the investments. Those with the strongest ideological commitment to capitalism focus on tax cuts for the rich as the path to economic growth at a time when our industry and infrastructure are rusting. Throughout the George W. Bush years they focused on weakening the government's social safety network on the grounds that this was a disincentive to hard work and personal planning, as well as because the private sector could do a better job. For example, the Social Security System was attacked as non-sustainable because it did not have the high returns individuals could get from the stock market—such arguments are not heard during this period of collapsing stock prices. Heralded by ideologues of capitalism since the Reagan years, American free market economics is, as I discovered in the course of teaching economic history, more myth than reality. In one of the great ironies of history, the Chinese communist government is overseeing vast development of its economic infrastructure, focusing on future growth. The divergence between the mythologies and realities of economic and political systems never ceases to amaze me.

For the last quarter century I have had an interest in the development of the paradigm of psychoeconomics, which this special issue is designed to help build. Regrettably, the

field is mostly virgin territory. However, the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society and the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis have scheduled meetings this year focusing on the current fiscal crisis. Although initially I am unimpressed by the psychoeconomic elements reflected in the presentation titles of the preliminary programs, I remain optimistic that people trained in the exploration of the unconscious will help develop our knowledge in this important area.

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, the editor of this publication, studied American economic history as one of his four Rutgers University doctoral fields of expertise and wrote his dissertation on the consequence of industrialization on the English working classes. Subsequently he did a major research project on industrial innovators and has taught a course on the economic development of England and America. Psychoanalytic training broadened his perspective on economic activity, leading him to the field of psychoeconomics. He may be contacted at pelovitz@aol.com.



Obama and the OctoMama

Dan Dervin—University of Mary Washington

A key paradigm for psychohistorians monitoring current politics is the tripartite role leaders are cast in by the public's subjective wishes organized into collective fantasies. Psychodynamically, leaders are assumed to deliver unspecified emotional goodies and perform sacrificial rites, especially when outcries for scapegoats arise after the promised bounty fails to arrive. The leader has three options: two good and one not so good. He can (1) locate for sacrifice external enemies to reassure the public of their own inner goodness or else (2) point fingers at domestic enemies. Failing these, he

(3) becomes the sacrificial victim. Thus, Reagan's Evil Empire and Bush's Axis of Evil, bolstered by a grab bag of Islamist fascists, kept the focus external. Bill Clinton's failure to target external or internal enemies that terminated in his unsuccessful impeachment is a lesson to this effect. Taking no chances, Karl Rove and Tom Delay provided backup by demonizing Democrats (see Paul Krugman, "Tea Parties Forever," *The New York Times*, April 13, 2009, p. A19). The fact that the hurling of shoes at Bush by an Iraqi journalist in the fall of 2008 made him a hero and scarcely garnered any outrage revealed Bush on the fast track to sacrifice. In the election, McCain played hide-and-seek with Bush's image and ended up taking the rap anyway.

But before Bush left office, the financial meltdown had begun. His \$700 billion bailout was the first of several major rescue and incentive packages that Obama continued in the early weeks of his presidency. His holistic and reaching-out approach favors cooperation over confrontation, besides brotherly roundtables over bullying allies and enemies alike into submission. Dropping the phrases "War on Global Terrorism" and "enemy combatants," he holds out the olive branch to the Middle East, declaring the U.S. would never wage war against Islam, and envisions a nuclear-free world.

All well and good. But wait: where is the public's need for enemies being addressed? True, there have been a few domestic targets floated: mostly anonymous bankers and lenders; a few CEOs like Rick Wagoner of GM; the Ponzi schemers, notably Bernie Madoff; and Rod Blagojevich, the former Democratic governor of Illinois who allegedly put Obama's Senate seat on the auction block. But when Obama spoke of putting aside childish things in his inaugural address, he apparently meant shunning the political habit of demonizing opponents.

Can he get away with it? Already Rush Limbaugh has called him a "Chicago thug" and hopes he fails; others on the Right are labeling him "Marxist/Socialist," murmuring he

is a closet Muslim and even the anti-Christ ushering in the End Times (see my article, "Violence Solves Everything," *Journal of Psychohistory*, [2009] 36:4, pp. 328-32). Yet to date, Obama enjoys high approval ratings along with fledgling signs of optimism about the economy. Has the country outgrown the paradigm of sacrifice? What seems to be changing is the makeup of the former enemies lineup; a new cast of characters is yet to appear onstage as the natives grow ever more restless.

As harbinger and stand-in for collective wrath, I have taken the phenomenon of the OctoMom, Nadya Suleman, who gave birth to octuplets in late January and instantly became a media celebrity (see her entry in Wikipedia). At the time, she was divorced, the 34-year-old mother of six other children (all 14 from in vitro fertilizations), living on worker compensation benefits for a 1999 back injury while working in a hospital. Appearing on talk shows, she spoke vaguely about supporting herself by acquiring an MA in counseling. A history of depression has been reported, but her public image projects an enthusiastic, buoyant young mother, thriving in all the attention. She hired a publicist, who left after receiving death threats and was replaced by two other PR firms, who also bailed out. She has entertained book offers and her own reality TV show.

But the public's fascination has quickly turned sour. Death threats were made, protesters showed up, her property was vandalized, and she had to go into hiding. Health officials hedged on her bringing babies into a house overrun with germ-ridden media vultures. In keeping with her new role as delegate of national dysfunction, her house was found in mortgage default and set to be auctioned off in May; her parents had filed for bankruptcy in 2008. Her father, Edward Doud Suleman, is a native of Iraq, where he plans to return as translator and driver; her mother is a retired teacher, who objects to being saddled with multiple childcare. Though off

the TV screen, Nadya has not been forgotten. In early April her minivan was vandalized. Over all, she continues to embody many of the country's sore spots and grievances.

Above all, she has become a poster girl for flagrant excess, blithe unaccountability, and piggybacking on a system running amok. Investing in new babies without being able to support the older babies became her own Ponzi scheme. Like our view of the recklessly credit-driven economy, she got in way over her head, and the rest of us, through no fault of our own, have to bankroll her overindulgent lifestyle. It is no stretch, therefore, to surmise how she might be chosen to embody national malaise and to serve as prime scapegoat to siphon off rage from the current leader in the White House. However, just as in primitive cultures one twin was often selected for sacrifice, the OctoMom offers subtle affinities with Obama. Both are of mixed race with foreign-sounding names. Obama's walnut complexion displays Caucasian features; Nadya's olive complexion displays stereotypical Negroid features. Moreover, Obama's Kenyan father was Muslim, and Nadya Suleman's Iraqi father would likely be Muslim or so-perceived. She may thus qualify in fantasy as Obama's demonic double. In any case, for now we've found a suitable scapegoat. Thank you, OctoMama; love you, Obama.

Dan Dervin, PhD, is a prolific psychohistorian. His publications include Enactments (1996), Matricentric Narratives (1997), Father Bosetti in America (2004), and numerous articles in these pages and elsewhere. He is a Research Associate of the Psychohistory Forum and a professor emeritus of literature at the University of Mary Washington. Professor Dervin may be contacted at ddervin@umw.edu.

Beyond Wall Street: Psychoanalyzing the Irrationality of Our Economy

Robert Samuels—UCLA

Everyday, newspapers and journalists interpret the ups and downs of the stock market as if these indexes represent a single, unified voice. For example, we often hear statements like the following: “The market went down today in response to the president’s speech.” This type of analysis assumes that “the market” is a single, rational entity, and that there is a direct cause and effect between a certain piece of news and the movement of stocks. In reality, markets’ movements are determined by millions of separate decisions made by millions of people for rational and irrational reasons. For instance, many investors decide whether to buy or sell stocks based on their fear about rumors other people have circulated. This system is thus a very irrational way of reading the health of our economy.

While some people see the stock market as the national economic thermometer, it would be better to imagine that the markets are like teenagers with a gambling addiction and a penchant for gossip. After all, most traders are not basing their decisions on a careful analysis of the fiscal health of the companies with which they are interacting; instead, people try to anticipate what other people are thinking about recent news and rumors. It is therefore highly strange that our economic system is so dependent on such an emotion- and rumor-driven structure.

In the case of our recent financial meltdown, irrational decisions were piled on top of other irrational decisions. Thus, people bought houses with loans that they knew they could not afford, and then banks securitized these

“toxic” investments. In other terms, banks decided to gamble on the ability of these bad loans to turn a profit, and these banks even took out their own bad loans to insure these initial bad investments. In turn, the government gave these losing banks billions of dollars so that they can continue to function. A fear of the unknown is driving these bailouts.

So what does psychoanalysis tell us about this irrational house of cards? One thing that we can posit is that people want to see a single, rational cause in a situation that is based on multiple, irrational causes. Freud himself wrote that the main reason why people deny the meaning and value of the unconscious is because they want to believe in a single, rational explanation, and they do not want to entertain the idea that many of our decisions are dictated by multiple, unconscious, and conflicting desires. In his *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), Freud opposes the over-determination of psychological events to the popular desire to find a single cause: “Indeed, they [psychoanalysts] are prepared to find *several* motives for one and the same mental occurrence, whereas what seems to be our innate craving for causality declares itself satisfied with a *single* psychical cause” (p. 38). Freud continues by asserting that due to the “arrogance” of consciousness, people reject the unconscious and the irrational and instead try to develop simple, rational explanations for mental events that require a much more complex understanding (p. 39).

If we see the stock market as an essentially unconscious, over-determined, irrational, collective system, we can begin to reject the simple interpretations that we find every day in the media. However, this step will only take us so far. The next move is to realize that it is very dangerous to base so much of our economic system on gambling, rumors, and speculations. What we then need is not only more regulation, but a way of weaning our system off our gambling habit. As a nation, we are addicted to the fantasy of easy

money, and part of this compulsion is derived from our identification with idealized models of wealth.

The media feeds our desire to identify with wealthy people who seem to get money through instant celebrity and not through hard work or sustained effort. Like adolescent children, we want instant satisfaction of our irrational desires, which are shaped by our identifications and idealizations. The reason then why seemingly rational adults have bought into the Madoff Ponzi scheme and so many other get-rich-quick schemes is that our entire culture has been reshaped to promote instant access and gratification.

Perhaps the scariest thing about this financial crisis is that even the people in the highest levels of government do not seem to be able to accept the reality of how bad the situation has gotten. There are trillions of dollars of "toxic assets" circulating around the globe, and no one knows how to value them or what to do with them. If we cannot clear away these financial time bombs, the markets will never feel secure.

In this state of generalized social insecurity, people have looked for President Obama to play the role of the idealized father figure who will solve all problems and save us from our own infantile helplessness. Once Obama fails at this impossible imaginary task, people will release their frustrations at him and our political system. Who knows what will happen at that point.

Bob Samuels, PhD, has doctorates in psychoanalysis and English. He teaches writing and media at UCLA. He is the author of six books, including Teaching the Rhetoric of Resistance and Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, and is currently working on a book that relates psychoanalysis to politics, culture, and technology. Professor Samuels may be contacted at bobsamuels_us@yahoo.com.

Economic Threat, Authoritarianism, and Political Crisis

Edward J. Rickert—Georgia State University

In *Escape from Freedom* (1941), Erich Fromm proposed a link between economic threat and repressive and punitive activities undertaken by individuals or groups against persons without power or status. These activities were often sanctioned by state authority. This linkage was mediated by both situational and psychological factors. The psychology component was explained by appeal to the notion of social character, a concept originating with Wilhelm Reich. Social character referred to behavioral dispositions that were common to a particular social class. Based on earlier research on the German working class, Fromm identified a trait shared by many of its members that he characterized as the sadomasochism character. Persons with this character were predisposed to submit to authority and to aggress against persons who lacked social standing or who were labeled by the authorities as dangerous or harmful to social order. Later Theodor Adorno et al. characterized this personality type as the “authoritarian personality” and the attitude and behavior exhibited by these individuals as “authoritarianism.”

Fromm suggested that this character type was predisposed to react aggressively under conditions of social and, particularly, economic duress. The analysis was largely historical, and it remained so until the seminal work of Stephen M. Sales, “Threat as a Factor in Authoritarianism” (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1973:28, pp. 44-57). Using archival data, Sales found a connection between economic threat and the adoption of punitive and repressive behaviors and attitudes. Comparing the 1920s, a period of low threat, to the 1930s, a period of high threat, Sales found an

increase in the social indicators of authoritarianism. Threat was defined in terms of high unemployment, low disposable income per capita, increases in the consumer price index, increases in major crimes, high levels of civil disorder, and increased likelihood of war. Markers for authoritarianism were greater levels of expenditures for police, and increasing incidence of hate crimes, number of executions, and length of sentences for those convicted of sex crimes. Implicit in Sales' work is that the social context as well as personality is crucial in promoting authoritarianism.

Since 1973, the real income of American workers has shown a precipitous decline with male workers with a high school education losing 30 percent of real income between 1973 and 1993. Even though the entry of women into the work force helped offset the declining standard of living, cushioning family income with a second breadwinner did not arrest the declining fortunes of the American family, as "two-earner" families in the lower 40 percent of the income bracket continued to experience declines in their standard of living throughout the 1990s (P. Gottschalk, "Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 1997:11, pp. 21-40). In order to maintain their living standard in the current decade, families have resorted to borrowing with credit cards and home equity loans. Declining home values resulting from the housing bubble and maximizing credit card limits have exhausted two major financing options for many Americans.

In an atmosphere of increasing uncertainty, authoritarianism will become more pronounced, even among those previously lacking such tendencies. A recent document released by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) lends support to these views. (See www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/14/extremism.report.) It forecasts an increase in the growth of political movements founded on chauvinism and exclusion concurrent with a worsening of the economy.

The DHS report attributes this growth to the financial melt-down, the election of an African American president, the bank bailout because of the influence of an imagined “cabal of Jewish financial elites,” and the loss of jobs due to outsourcing and competition from illegal immigrants for the remaining jobs. The features described in the report—racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia—reflect in an incomplete and distorted way a reality of inequality, powerlessness, and despair.

As economic conditions worsen and individuals grow more fearful, the authoritarian personality model predicts increasing aggression against those perceived as responsible for one’s plight. It takes many forms: opposition to legislation that extends benefits or rights to groups perceived as deviant or undeserving (for example, anger directed toward persons allowed to refinance “bad” loans and legislators who provided such relief); support for legislation and policies that restrict or deny benefits to stigmatized groups such as same-sex couples; and support for repressive measures that allegedly diminish threats to the social order. Unfortunately, if the criticism by nongovernmental economists is correct, current programs designed to remedy the economic crisis will prove insufficient, thereby exacerbating authoritarianism tendencies and strengthening a shift to reactionary politics and a political crisis.

Edward J. Rickert, PhD, holds a doctorate in experimental psychology with a graduate minor in economics and an MPH (Master of Public Health) in epidemiology. He retired in 2008 from the Department of Psychology at Georgia State University. One of Professor Rickert’s research areas is the relation between authoritarianism and social cognition. He can be contacted at drickert21@aol.com.



The Fallacy of Faith in a Future of More

Jonathan J. Goldberg—C. G. Jung Institute of NY

The myth of the frontier is alive and well in the American psyche, thanks to which our paradigmatic president remains Calvin Coolidge with his timeless words, “the chief business of the American people is business.” To Americans as a collective, leisure is time wasted, rental is ownership deferred, limitation is technological lag, and death is a residual inconvenience waiting to be neutralized by scientific progress.

A future that is fundamentally about having more—more income, more objects, more years—cannot at any level integrate the idea of the finite. Failure becomes viewed as temporary setback, even as grounds for new opportunity. Anyone foolish enough to even wonder whether tomorrow promises the certainty of a better day is to be pitied and ignored. Who can doubt that there is wealth to be garnered and abundance waiting to be claimed?

These attitudinal proclivities function as psychological dominants at all levels of economic decision-making. They have particular bearing on how credit is viewed, independent of the bearer being a Wall Street behemoth packaging an investment offering or a recently arrived immigrant putting together a \$10,000 deposit towards obtaining financing for a house. The fundamental principle underlying the idea of credit has to do with optimism about the future: indebtedness taken on today can be paid off tomorrow, either by growing prosperity or by additional debt.

Governed by the fantasy that increased wealth is inevitable, institutions and individuals lack the resources to manage declines. Here I am speaking less about insufficient

assets than about the ability to rein in, pull back, and reduce exposure. Just as a large firm is endangered when there is no one interested in buying what it sells (regardless whether the object is a product or financial instrument), so a person assuming that there will always be someone ready to buy his land or car has no backup plan for what has become unexpectedly valueless in the marketplace.

Suddenly, with no more credit available, an implosion occurs. Psychologically, the way this shift manifests is in the retreat from manic expansiveness to frozen fear. The fear carries the awareness, however dimly perceived, that the stability of the system, resting as it does on a faith about continuity, is no sturdier than a house of cards. The immobility of depression applies its stranglehold on the individual psyche.

At this juncture, a revelation takes place, which is too visible to be dismissed. The active energy of the societal—particularly governmental—institutions turn to injecting lifeblood (bailout funds) into failed companies that are deemed too large to go under. Never mind how mismanaged they have been, how irresponsible as caretakers of the monies they hold, they are treated like sacred cathedrals towards the maintenance of which the government offers high percentage tithes of taxpayer funds.

This orientation in the direction of institutional preservation comes at the expense of any real concern for the fate of private individuals. The typical employed person who made budgetary decisions founded on no more radical a basis than the continuity of employment, which had been assumed in the generation of his parents and who, when he loses his livelihood, is treated as though he had bet on the wrong horse or squandered his income on games of chance.

Any illusion about a social contract based on certain givens is shattered; size alone is shown to be the determiner of value. As the realization sets in for the individual who

witnesses how little he matters in the economic scheme of things, the inward-turned anger of depression becomes partly externalized as anger about unfairness. The energy of seeking revenge comes forward, cohering as outrage against bonuses paid to executives of bankrupt organizations. Scapegoating energy takes hold as an outlet for rage, feckless and beside the point. Howls of protest and a scalp or two put neither food on the table nor medicine in the cabinet.

Easily lost in the dialogue concerning stabilization of the credit markets is the dark side of what transpires when credit will again become available to businesses and consumers. There will undoubtedly be new regulatory structures in place to control excess and fresh attempts to make the issuance of credit more responsible. Yet, one of the fundamental truths taught us by depth psychology is that ego-based structures remain penetrable to the influence of unconscious elements from the moment that the ego boundaries appear to have rigidified and gotten in the way of nascent greed. The next credit crisis may be mediated by different parameters, but the urge to make huge profits at no matter what human cost will surely reassert itself. These are battles which the rational mind can never win for long, since the creativity of new trickeries cannot indefinitely defer to order.

Finally, it is vital to remember that mythic patterns are enacted in the realm of collective life. Psychoanalytic theory is uniquely qualified to delineate their broad strokes. The stability of social systems—even when they serve the interests of a tiny minority—is founded on keeping those who have little in the perpetual fear that they will lose everything. It is simultaneously a version of the child's fear of the all-powerful parent and of the patriarch devouring his children before they can overthrow him. In a moment of economic catastrophe that one might imagine would give rise to at least the occasional outburst of revolutionary fervor, business as usual remains the only dominant. Why revolt, after

all, when there is always the lottery?

Jonathan J. Goldberg, PhD, is a senior Jungian psychoanalyst who has been in private practice in New York City since 1969. He is a faculty member and supervisor at the C.G. Jung Institute of New York and was a member of the founding board of the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (NAAP) as its Jungian representative. He may be contacted at antenna721@gmail.com.

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A Deficit of Delayed Gratification

Daniel Klenbort—Morehouse College

The present level of civilization is the product of a long development in which people have internalized certain moral constraints, including delayed gratification. However, there is a tendency for those norms to fall away in a crisis, such as an economic mania or panic, both of which Americans have experienced recently.

Until the last 30 to 40 years or so, most were pretty adept at handling jobs and basic money matters. They showed up at their jobs on time, collected their pay, and gradually spent it on what they needed until their next payday, saving for a major purchase or an emergency along the way. Adults successfully adapted to the rigors of work discipline, working all day and following the directions of their supervisors, bending their inclinations to the demands of their highly regimented jobs. Labor discipline became general; it was considered natural. Prudent economic behavior became internalized and economic civilization became habitual.

In the last three to four decades, the U.S. economy

has changed in a manic way that made it more difficult for ordinary citizens to manage their economic responsibilities soundly. Previously, credit cards were uncommon; now they are nearly universal. Before, someone buying a house had to put up a down payment and satisfy a banker that they were a good credit risk; until recently, mortgages were available to people who had no down payment, and when house prices went up, second mortgages were easy to obtain. In the past, retirees had defined and secure pensions; now, most people have private pension plans, which they not only have to contribute to but manage as well. A generation ago, no one not in business was likely to know what a credit score was, let alone have one; today, credit scores are essential to how much they can borrow and what interest rate they pay. Cars can be bought with five-year (or longer) payment schedules. Higher education has become more expensive and often requires taking out large loans by both parents and students. Payday loans give workers advances on their paychecks for which they pay up to the equivalent of 400 percent per year in interest. Even phone service and air travel, once regulated, now require complex decisions.

Risk has been shifted from banks, insurance companies, corporations, and the government to ordinary citizens. People are now expected to manage credit and risk. Why is this difficult? The answer is obvious, even banal: temptation and lack of financial sophistication. The modern consumer is bombarded by enticements to spend, coming from advertisements, shopping malls, family, and friends. Easy credit demands a higher level of self-control, which not everyone can develop quickly. Just as the sexual revolution increased sexual choice, making sexual life freer but also more complicated, benefiting some and visiting new miseries on others, so also does easy credit place new and greater psychological and knowledge demands on people.

Because instant financial gratification became so

widespread, even the new mainstream, it was no longer seen as being on the margins, as behavior to be stigmatized. The social pressure of traditional economic civilization was not there to keep Americans in line.

Opportunities for a whole host of financial agents increase vastly when people have to make numerous, complicated decisions about credit and investing. The number of mortgage brokers, financial advisers, insurance salesmen, and other intermediaries increases, as does the opportunity for such promoters to take advantage of the ill-informed. These agents, many just good rationalizers and some dishonest, succumb to the temptation to sell dangerous and harmful financial products to the unsophisticated.

Operating successfully in an easy credit and high-risk economy requires not only strict impulse control but also financial acumen, which most people lack. At best, most people make suboptimal decisions about their finances; at worst, they are stripped of their savings and left deeply in debt. The new financial system demands a high level of economic civilization, or economic prudence, and many of us fall short.

Daniel Klenbort, PhD, took his doctoral degree in Russian history. His interests are now eclectic, ranging from violence in ancient Greece to the spread of modernization. He is an occasional contributor to Clio's Psyche and has taught at Morehouse College for more than 40 years. He may be contacted at klenbort@gmail.com.

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What psychological impact did September 11th have on you and those around you? Turn to page 105 to read our call for papers on this important subject.

Denial, Mania, and the Search for Saviors in the Fiscal Crisis

Patricia L. Gibbs—Psychoanalytic Private Practice

The current United States financial crisis can be usefully explained partly by probing various unconscious motivations including projective identification, manic denial, and the savior complex. These are especially useful in illuminating the destructive unconscious intrapersonal and interpersonal processes seen throughout the financial collapse. Primitive defenses can be observed in all individuals, even those having extended periods of high intrapsychic functioning, social accomplishment, and intelligence. All of us, then, are subject to the fluctuations between lower and higher psychic functioning across the lifespan—even where significant psychopathology is absent. For this reason, I believe this financial crisis has released enormous anxiety, as we attempt to face our human vulnerability to duplicity, exploitation, and insatiable greed. The savior complex is also present; in it the aggressive intent of financial exploitation is unconsciously denied, while a conscious self-perception of helpful benevolence is maintained.

Assessments of leaders within the financial sector regarding the crisis, some of whom have questioned the unraveling of regulatory mechanisms, are considered in this essay, which is based upon Kleinian and Jungian concepts. Regulatory systems, which rely on the constructive engagement of many individuals, are already embodied in the democratic principles of the United States. Rather than proposing new governmental or financial regulatory bodies, this paper proposes informing regulatory practices with an understanding of both the ubiquity of unconscious motivation, and the essentially social and related nature of humanity.

Individuals and institutions were widely supported for behaviors and policy decisions that were compellingly presented by conscious rationales. In many cases the intent to deceive was overshadowed and undone by a growing number of financial insiders and consumers endorsing the benevolent and prudent nature of sub-prime mortgage lending, chief executive officer salaries, and unlimited growth in the financial market. Here, I believe that the defensive use of idealization in those wanting to believe promises of unending growth and wealth clearly contributed to the enthusiastic “mania” seen in the market and culture—prior to the collapse. Michael Bienes eventually lost his entire savings to Madoff. Once Madoff referred to Bienes as family, this investor said: “he had me. We were *family*. Oh, my God! I was in! It really took me because he had a presence about him, an aura” (Quoted in J. Bandler and N. Varchaver with D. Burke, “How Bernie Did It,” *Fortune*, [May 11, 2009] 159,10: 57). The collapse of once-idealized persons and institutions—whether in the financial sector, professional circles, or families—is filled with emotional agony that will reverberate through many lives, often leaving them forever changed. To many this means that we can no longer believe anyone will save us, while to others it heightens their desire for saviors.

Manic defense involves the intrapsychic use of denial, grandiosity, and omnipotence to defend against a conscious recognition of depression, limitation, and loss. Manic defenses operate unconsciously to maintain the subjective experience of safety, power, and control, against the painful conscious acknowledgement of depression, impotence, and loss. At the bottom of the behaviors involving grandiosity and omnipotence, then, is a fierce internal struggle to *deny* both one’s own aggressive impulses and vulnerability to loss. Jeremy Grantham, in predicting the financial crisis, states: “the Fed was in denial, the Treasury was in denial, the bosses of Merrill Lynch and Lehman were in denial...there were

plenty of people warning that it was going to happen...It's the denial that's impressive" (Quoted in J. Light and J. Revell, "Can We Have a Little Perspective, Please?" *Money*, [November 2008] 37, 11: 106).

Imprudent financial decisions can easily be seen as derived from unconscious manic operations and the use of denial. Unconscious processes also maintained the apparently incongruent juxtaposition of the covert appearance of benevolence with the unconscious agenda to ruthlessly exploit, steal, and possess another's person or possessions. The eventual exposure of these dynamics brought widespread reactions of shock and betrayal.

Individuals projecting a persuasive "benevolent savior identity" were often associated with some of the most egregious financial exploitation. Interviews with Bernard Madoff's victims reveal a deep sense of betrayal: Madoff—once known as kindly and helpful—was quite the opposite. He betrayed others in the very way he convincingly claimed he would save them financially. As with all projections, eventually the truth of one's unconscious motivations are revealed. Far from being a benevolent savior, Madoff's behavior reveals the use of mania and omnipotence to deny and then project aggressive sadism. Such omnipotence and denial, initially appearing within a benevolent appearance to provide financial opportunity, eventually appeared across the American financial and cultural zeitgeist, revealing a society-wide "savior complex."

The disguise of the unconscious motivation to exploit within the fiercely defended savior complex makes the identification of these dark unconscious motivations difficult to detect. Often expecting malevolence to appear blatantly malicious, we can easily ignore the aggression hidden by unconscious processes. Bandler, Varchaver, and Burke conclude that investors clung to the belief that Madoff had escaped the "worst financial collapse since the Great Depression...Madoff

appeared to be his smooth old self” (*Fortune*, [May 11, 2009] 159, 10: 69). For the individual or society in the grip of the savior complex, every primitive defense of splitting, omnipotence, denial, and projection is marshaled to maintain the complex, and deny the destructive aggression fueling unconscious motivations.

Savior complex behaviors will be maintained until unconscious aggression becomes so overwhelming that the complex collapses into what in Jungian terms is its “shadow”—revealing the reality of the aggressive forces masquerading as benevolence. If it was a clinical situation, we would understand that a person severely splitting the benevolent conscious from the malevolent unconscious self was unable to accept and integrate sadistic aggression. Such individuals are then driven to unconsciously project their own aggression onto others, while maintaining conscious experiences of self-benevolence. Psychoanalytic experience, however, would remind us that the more one uses defenses such as mania and omnipotence to deny universal human aggressiveness, the more aggression will be expressed outside of conscious awareness and control. Painfully, we are all reminded of our own inescapable aggressiveness.

I believe that the necessity for us to understand unconscious motivation has never been more pressing. Andrew Campbell, Jo Whitehead, and Sidney Finkelstein underline this urgency when attempting to discern why good business leaders make bad decisions. Their conclusion: human decisions are made largely based on *unconscious* processes. They draw on research from contemporary neuroscience to explain this, identifying the presence of “inappropriate self-interest, distorting attachments, and misleading memories” (“Why Good Leaders Make Bad Decisions,” *Harvard Business Review* [2009] 87, 2: 64).

All of these mechanisms are outside of conscious awareness. Leaders, these authors conclude, need to rely on

others to identify potential “red flag” situations in order to safeguard against errors in judgment. It takes me just a few seconds to start looking for a way out of relying on others who will come to know my judgment errors. A subjective sense of exposure related to the reliance on others can foster individual isolation and reliance on primitive omnipotence. Now might be a good time to confess my doubts about self-analysis. My conclusion, then, is that meaningful, stable, and constructive human relationships appear to be the only way to curtail the individual’s inevitable tendency toward unconsciously destructive processes and behaviors.

According to Kleinian and Jungian psychoanalysis, the individual is a prototype for behaviors and trends seen in larger social groups such as the family, government, or financial organizations. Wilfred Bion has done especially noteworthy work in this regard (“Group Dynamics: A Review,” *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* [1952] 33: 235-47). An individual, then, can display behaviors based on manic defenses of grandiosity, omnipotence, and insatiable greed. So, too, can a culture or financial market display the same manic-based decisions and behaviors. Contemporary psychoanalysis has provided evidence for developmental and cognitive processes that rely on interpersonal interaction, such as attachment and the capacity to judge others’ intentions. I have argued that knowledge of unconscious motivation is necessary to understand destructive behaviors in both individuals and financial organizations. Further, I propose that anchoring our financial regulating systems within the knowledge of the inherent social nature of human beings will help to prevent exploitive financial practices.

Within the financial industry, regulation is now widely proposed as necessary to combat financial abuse. John Steele Gordon, a financial historian, advises a complete overhaul of financial regulatory practices (In Light and Revell). In the same vein, Joseph Stiglitz (Professor of Econom-

ics, Columbia University, and winner of the 2001 Nobel Prize for Economics), states: “Multiple conflicts of interest in our finance industry also have led to the rewarding of socially destructive behavior” (“How To Save Capitalism: Re-align the Interests of Wall Street,” *Harper’s Magazine* [November 2008] 317,1902:37). Going even further is William Pfaff, who declares that unregulated free market capitalism “killed itself by greed, vanity and excess.” He argues that unregulated free market capitalism reflects the “vacuity and perversity of market ideology, which contradicts human nature” (“The Fall: Original Sin in Free-market Capitalism,” *Commonweal* [October 10, 2008]: 7).

The need for financial regulatory oversight, then, is seen as an imperative. Regulatory processes based on many individuals working to provide oversight can prevent behaviors unconsciously organized by omnipotent greed or primitive denial. These regulatory processes are already embodied in American democratic principles, such as the Rule of Law, the Bill of Rights, and the safeguard of the common good. Informing financial regulatory practices with an understanding of the ubiquity of humanity’s unconscious motivation and social nature will offer protection against future financial crises.

Patricia L. Gibbs, PhD, is a licensed psychologist, trained psychoanalyst, and nationally registered, board-certified art therapist (ATR-BC). She has published several clinical papers as well as book and movie reviews, and is a lecturer at the Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute. Dr. Gibbs practices in Dearborn, Michigan, and may be contacted at patricialgibbs@aol.com.

Health care in America is a matter of life and death yet there is little discussion of the psychological obstacles to reforming it. See page 103 for a call for papers on this vital subject.

Depletion: Capitalism's Unwanted Legacy

Tom Ferraro—Private Practice

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV)* defines “culture-bound syndromes” as “recurrent, locality-specific patterns of aberrant behavior and troubling experience” that may be linked to a specific *DSM-IV* diagnosis. The signs and symptoms of our new culture-bound syndrome are clear enough. Many Americans are overworked, exhausted, anxious, and angry. They will frequently attempt to self-medicate this condition with overeating and drug use. This then produces obesity and sleep disorders. Many Americans are chronically dysthymic, or depressed, and feel dissatisfied with their life. Welcome to the primary cultural syndrome of the 21st century. I suggest that we name this new culture-bound syndrome, the “depleted American.”

As is true for all neuroses, the cause of this syndrome is complex and hard to find. But this should not stop us from trying. In fact, this cultural syndrome has reached such a crisis that it is best described as a psychotic breakdown. Neurosis is something we can function with, but by definition psychosis is far more serious. The global collapse of capitalism is a psychotic breakdown of the worst kind. Indeed, these things do happen.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s we witnessed Communism, the other great social experiment of the 20th century, collapse and die. The fall of the Communist system was best symbolized by the collapse of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989. The collapse of the Wall is an apt metaphor for the breakdown of the system of thought that is no longer viable. It marked the end of the great totalitarian Communist experiment. The system produced too much apathy, dependency,

ennui, and despair in its citizens. Its time was over.

Now, 19 years later, free-trade capitalism faces its greatest challenge. The world has failed to produce a global system of economic thought and practice as a balancing counterpoint to capitalism. Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a violent attempt to respond to Western capitalism, but it is unlikely that religious fundamentalism is a viable economic option. Fundamentalism has tried to function as a War on Terrorism opponent to democracy, but it will surely fail to defeat capitalism. But as capitalism becomes shaken from within, the fact that we are now such a global world makes the consequences far more serious and far reaching.

The cause of capitalism may be found in its very success. It is simply impossible to resist the amazing beauty and variety of the free marketplace and its products: the wonderful assortment at a Whole Foods supermarket, the amazing elegance of a new Lexus, the style of a Louis Vuitton handbag, the entertainment appeal of Hollywood films, the multitude of television and radio stations. These products and services are irresistible and highly addictive. When you add a financial industry that knows how to capitalize on these addictions, you have the ingredients for our inevitable exhaustion and breakdown.

The cure for this cultural syndrome of depletion will probably be found in increased governmental regulation, which is exactly what the Obama White House is doing. The greed and amorality of the corporation and banking system was left unchecked and proved to be dangerous to everyone. The compromise position will provide for regulation, which hopefully will protect the consumer from the excessive greed of free market capitalism. The bailout is Obama's attempt to keep this system alive until it can be ministered to adequately.

The fact that capitalism produces such captivating products is an ironic danger to us all. Many of us have become like drug addicts, who have tasted this beautiful drug of consumerism. We sense it can kill us if we indulge too often but somehow we seem unable to resist its charms. President Obama said in his inaugural address that we must learn restraint and responsibility. He is right about this, but it is not clear that we will be able to do so. Till then, we must rely on government regulation to control this beautiful beast called Madison Avenue, Banking, and Wall Street.

We will eventually need to learn restraint. This depleted American cultural syndrome is real and all around us. We have been taught that we can find joy and satisfaction in the mall, but this is not at all true. There has got to be a better way to live life. "Restraint," "renunciation," and "discipline" are the catchwords of our new era. But there is no way a politician can use them very often. It is a sure way to lose an election. Just ask Jimmy Carter how he did when he suggested this to us in the 1970s. All that did was sweep into the White House Ronald Reagan, who promised us the American Dream through unregulated capitalism. It heated up the financial world for us, but then it nearly killed our economy.

Tom Ferraro, PhD, a psychoanalyst in private practice on Long Island, researches and publishes on behavioral economics and sport psychology and other issues. He can be reached at drtferraro@aol.com.

We Wish to Thank Our Prompt,
Hardworking, Anonymous Referees
and Diligent Editors

Psychology's Collusion in Conventional Financial Delusions

David L. Smith—Duquesne University

Everyone knows that to practice medicine without a license violates the law of the land. But how are we to judge professional psychologists who dispense financial advice in a time of worldwide financial meltdown? That is just what the president of the American Psychological Association does in the March 2009 issue of the *Monitor on Psychology* (Vol. 40, No. 3, p. 5; online at www.apa.org/monitor/2009/03/pc.html). Dr. James H. Bray says that even though “flush with cash, they [consumers] will not spend it, hire new people or buy new equipment or household products because they are uncertain about ... the future.” He makes an appeal to his constituency to employ their expert know-how and therapeutic techniques to motivate the American public “to create a confidence virus to spread throughout the land to change the attitude and behavior of the American public” so that they will spend and borrow and “turn consumer confidence around.” He assures us that “the repeated message from many experts is that a major contributing factor to the economic downturn is a lack of consumer confidence about the economy.” Might “consumer confidence” not be a mass delusion on the state of the economy?

The first problem with basing psychological advice upon “many experts” is that the *other* experts do not agree with them. When asked about the “confidence factor,” CNN’s financial guru, Susie Ormond, replied that it contributed about one percent to the financial crisis. To confirm my suspicions, I consulted with one of our professors of finance in the Duquesne School of Business and he assured me that “consumer confidence” plays an insignificant role compared with the housing bubble, overvalued assets, the bundling of

bad loans, the credit crunch, lack of regulator oversight, rampant greed, and outright fraud.

Even apart from who is right and who is wrong on the financial issue of consumer confidence, a deeper question needs to be asked: Is it appropriate for psychologists to use their professional expertise to influence matters not directly germane to their field? Might not Dr. Bray's proposed agenda be an instance of what Philip Rieff has dubbed "the triumph of the therapeutic": the propensity of modern psychology to collapse all domains of knowledge into its own categories?

As ethical psychologists, before prescribing any therapy, we must always ask: Will it help or harm the client? In response to a letter by John Tierney in *The New York Times*, "Oversaving, a Burden for Our Times" (March 24, 2009, p. D1), Lester L. Tobias of Hillsboro Beach, Florida wrote, "To Pinch Pennies or Not?" (*The New York Times*, March 31, 2009, p. D4). He cautions the author of the earlier letter to give a second thought before trying to persuade his parents to spend more freely. To bolster his point, he reminds us that, "There is a significant body of evidence that suggests that happiness does not improve with spending. Furthermore, there are millions of [Aesopian] 'grasshoppers' now suffering the consequences of over spending in good times. Mr. Tierney would do better to teach his parents' wise example to the countless people who too often succumb to the empty temptation of the consumer society."

This letter seems to challenge an implicit assumption of Dr. Bray's advice. Human beings are more than primarily producers and consumers. Rather than challenge the basic assumption of the consumer society, Dr. Bray appears not only to buy into it, but even to promote it, to the possible detriment of the individuals involved. What right do psychologists or any social scientists have to encourage their clients to run possible financial risk and ruin?

Fortunately, President Obama seems to be more sen-

sitive to this ethical issue. At a press conference in London on April 1, when asked if he would like to see the American public spend more, he responded with evidently great caution. While expressing the hope that people would spend, he offered no general prescription. Rather, he qualified his advice: “Each family must look at their circumstances and make that decision” (CNN interview, April 1, 2009). The next day the President was quoted in *The New York Times* as saying that America was unlikely to return to its role as a “voracious consumer market” (April 2, 2009, p. A1).

Psychologists are already well aware of the widespread curse of consumerism. Faced with millions of individuals struggling to conquer their depression and fill the existential void by compulsive spending, psychologists must take care not to foster the pathology.

Dr. Bray’s well-intentioned advice should serve as a cautionary tale for all of us psychologists. In our noble desire to be of service to our fellow-human beings, we have the ethical obligation to pause, stand back, and question our own implicit philosophies and hidden assumptions. Before proposing the use of psychological know-how and therapeutic techniques for social, political, or economic purposes, we need to closely examine what might be the unintended consequences. For instance, let us say that with the best intentions in the world, legions of psychologists set about the task of motivating millions of Americans to spend more liberally. What might be the impact on the environment, on the already impoverished in our country, and on the people in the developing nations of our world? In a world of limited and un-renewable resources, what monsters might a return to conspicuous consumption and compulsive spending ultimately produce? Certainly an ethical psychology has more to offer a suffering society than the excesses of greed and consumption that have brought us to our present sorry state.

A person’s confidence should never be manipulated by a psychologist. Consumer confidence depends ultimately

on a sense of trust, and trustworthiness is an attribute that must be earned.

David L. Smith, PhD, is a professor emeritus of the Department of Human Science Psychology at Duquesne University and the former director of the Duquesne Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center. Smith has published in the Humanistic Psychologist, the Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, the Journal of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry, and the Josephinum Journal of Theology. He can be reached at smithdavid@duq.edu.



Economic Disaster—Psychological Disaster

Harriet Fraad—Private Practice

The vast changes to America's economic landscape are accompanied, as always, by their deformed Siamese twin brothers, psychological despair and dysfunction. The U.S., unlike our European counterparts, does not have organized mass political and social movements that serve as socially constructive outlets for the rage and despair engendered by economic crises. Americans take control into their own hands. In a recent development enraged men are shooting people. First, I will present some economic background.

Between 1820 and 1970 real wages (what your wage could actually purchase) steadily increased for 150 years, leaving a psychological expectation of every generation gaining prosperity over its predecessor. The American dream of ever-rising wages also helped Americans to define life success in terms of consumption. That stopped in 1970 when wages froze as profits increased. The U.S. went from being the Western nation with the most equal distribution of wealth

in 1970 to the Western nation with the least equal distribution of wealth in 2008 (OECD, www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality). As wages froze, workers could no longer consume on an increasing scale.

During the economic disaster of 2008-09, the economy has been in free fall. About eight hundred jobs are lost every hour, 20,000 jobs are lost every day, and 140,000 jobs are lost every week. Men's jobs, which pay more, are also cut more. Four out of five jobs lost since 2007 are men's jobs (*Harper's Magazine* [May 2009], p. 13). Men who have lost jobs and/or families are frequently alone and prone to depression, addiction, and violence. Loneliness is a predictor of mental illness.

Americans have been passive while their jobs, their homes, their families, and their dreams are taken from them. This is remarkable. Not France, Greece, Germany, or Britain has yet suffered the percentage of job and home losses that the U.S. has suffered. Yet, a million French people participated in each of two general strikes in France. They locked in their offices the management of Caterpillar and 3M, who refused to negotiate with them, until those managers "changed their minds." Thousands of Greeks paralyzed Greece for two weeks to protest their center-right government's priorities. Tens of thousands of Germans took to the streets in protest. Thousands of British citizens clashed with the police in London in protest. Why have Americans remained silent?

The answer is complicated. However, it involves a general political, social, and civic isolation here that others do not share. One in every four Americans has no one to talk to even in their greatest need (J. Olds & R. Schwartz, *The Lonely American* [Boston: Beacon Press, 2009], p. 2). Organizations from community groups to unions have weakened. Americans work on average 20 hours more per week

than their European counterparts. They enjoy fewer benefits for all their labor. They get neither quality free health care, nor childcare, nor vacations. Yet, we do not have vital anti-capitalist parties that mobilize citizens' anger, such as the Anti-Capitalist party in France or *Die Linke* (Left) party in Germany. Our unions are not militant and politically organized to protest government policies. Americans have become socially isolated in overwork and the hard work of maintaining fraught personal lives.

Americans are exhausted and in despair about what has happened to their economic and emotional lives. The latest report from the World Health Organization for the Mental Health Foundation found that economic and social inequality has the most profound impact on mental health. Our people lead in mental health problems (Lynne Friedli, *Mental Health, Resilience, and Inequalities* [World Health Organization, 2009], pp. 22-42). More than 11 percent of women and five percent of men are taking antidepressants (C. Barber, *Comfortably Numb: How Psychiatry Is Medicating a Nation* [New York: Pantheon Books, 2009]).

There is another recent psychological and social phenomenon that distinguishes us as a nation in tough times: that is mass shootings. Between March 10 and April 25, 2009, 80 people have been murdered by 14 assailants. Of those 14, all were men.

Let us try to understand these murders through the lens of changes in American life. The celebrated and ostensibly "traditional" nuclear family consisted of an arrangement leaving the wife subservient to her husband. The woman produced domestic use values, such as meals, cleanliness, childcare, care for the sick, and emotional and sexual services. Her husband, by virtue of his birthright as a male, had the obligation to financially support his wife and children in this traditional household. He also had the right to appropri-

ate and distribute his wife's products. These patterns have changed. The women's liberation movement and contraception have eroded the basis of men's rights in the household. But part of the legacy of the traditional household lingers on: the "right" of men to express their anger physically.

Six of the 14 men were already known to have been violent with their families. Six had been abandoned by wives or girlfriends or had been denounced by wives or girlfriends who talked back. Eight killed wives, girlfriends, children, and/or other family members. Six were unemployed or about to be unemployed. Four who killed police officers felt that their rights as men were being trampled by the law: in one case, the right to own automatic weapons; in another, the right to a non-humiliating parole officer; in a third, a search by police of his apartment; and in the fourth, the right to beat his wife. The men were asserting control in an area of presumed entitlement at a time when they felt enraged over losing their manhood through unemployment, their wives or girlfriends leaving them or talking back, and/or state interference with their rights. None of the men tried to reach out and connect with others emotionally or socially. Were these men French or Greek or German or British, they might have taken their anger to a connection with others to address their fury at being jobless and without emotional support.

During the last great depression people connected and organized to demand jobs, freedom from debt, and social safety nets. We will see what happens in America's new psychological landscape.

Harriet Fraad, PhD, is in the full-time practice of psychotherapy and hypnotherapy practice in New York City. She has published frequently in the Journal of Psychohistory and RM. Her essays on emotional labor and family gender role transformation appear in Critical Sociology and several anthologies. Her book, Bringing It All Back Home, which

she co-authored with Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff, will be revised and republished by Palgrave in 2010 under the title, Home Fronts. Dr. Fraad may be contacted at hfraad@aol.com.

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The Anxiety of Not Knowing What to Do

Ruth Neubauer—Private Practice

Watching the news the evening of February 20, 2009 was an easy segue from FRONTLINE's deliciously available, understandable piece the previous night, explaining the economic problems we face.

There is the very emotionally conflicting experience of watching Barack Obama offering us hope and watching Jim Lehrer giving us facts: the actual picture, domestic and international. It is clear that the economic situation is serious, daunting, and depressing. Jim Lehrer's program was no-nonsense; you could see it in his face.

Lawrence Summers spoke the exact same double-talk/not-obviously-honest picture of reality until the time I was writing this. Neither Summers' words nor his occasional smiles fit the facts. As I heard that, I sat there and could only breathe deeply, not knowing what to do and knowing everyone I know isn't sure what to do.

Paradoxically, our government falsely imagines that if they actually started to advise the public and deal directly with the anxiety the public is containing right now, it would only cause greater panic. Psychologically speaking, it is not the case that giving advice or promoting a plan will heighten anxiety, but just the opposite. Our anxiety levels increase

with not knowing, while having a plan helps ease anxiety. Our government starting to help people plan in any way at all would help diminish and contain the anxiety, as well as make our public more productive and allow for greater creativity. Psychic energy would be available for innovative solutions to real problems rather than being caught up in the anxiety itself.

So, please, Mr. President, help us by formulating something people feel they can do because people feel better when they do something—anything—rather than when they do not know what to do. We are not good at tolerating “not knowing,” though as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist I would say this is precisely what we each need to work at most of all.

Ruth Neubauer, MSW, is a psychotherapist in private practice in Denver, Colorado. She may be contacted at www.rneubauertherapy.com.



Psychological Survival in the Economic Crisis

Hanna Turken—Private Practice

We had the Twin Towers trauma followed by Iraq and Afghanistan, and now we have an economic crisis. For the past eight years, we have attempted to cope with the uncertainty of whether we were safe from foreign attack, only to be attacked from within. After 9/11 we developed coping mechanisms as to some degree we dulled our fears of danger from outside enemies, but we were utterly unprepared for an assault by our own people. The uncertainty of the ability of the economy to sustain and provide for our daily existence will not only reactivate the previous fears of our enemies but,

because of the betrayal of trust in the government institutions that were put in place to protect us, will also test our psychological resources to their maximum.

This psychological stress and its consequences are yet to be defined. We do know that when there is an upset in what could be considered a steady psychological state, there is an ensuing crisis condition. In a state of crisis, free-floating anxiety becomes habitual because adaptive maneuvers and problem-solving activities are not adequate to return the individual to his previous, balanced equilibrium. The situation requires a solution, which is new in relation to the individual's previous life experience. If the solution is found within a manageable time for those who are structurally stable, life moves on, but it can be traumatic for the vulnerable, the young, the old, and, at present, those who have lost their financial nest eggs and/or their homes. If trauma remains un-integrated, it expresses itself in various ways, such as psychosomatic disorders, conversion, depression, depersonalization, withdrawal, alexithymia (inability to express emotions with words), substance abuse, identification with the aggressor, and fixation to the trauma. Without a tangible resolution in sight, the longer it takes for an economic recovery, the more we will see the acting out of unintegrated effects in an attempt to master the anxiety induced by the uncertainty.

Underneath the gray cloud over our heads, and in spite of some antisocial acts going on at present, many are working together to mobilize resources. Our first group act was to elect a president whose message of hope, honesty, and hard work will hopefully get us out of the untenable position we are in at present. Studies after the Second World War ascertained that the group experience of working together in a common effort prevents a deeper traumatization, and that the sooner individuals are able to talk to a professional about their fears and anxieties, the better and faster the recovery. We observed this once more after the fall of the Twin Tow-

ers. I also believe that the parallel process of both therapist and patient experiencing the same psychological stresses is a contributing factor to the quality of care and speed of recovery. With this in mind, it is important to remember that there are two components in the recovery from psychological states of crisis: involvement in group activities in public service and the availability of mental health services to all who are in need.

Hanna Turken, NCPsyA, LCSW, BCD, is in the private practice of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in New York City and is a senior member of the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis (NPAP), as well as a Research Associate of the Psychohistory Forum and a member of the board and supervisor in the New York State Society for Clinical Social Work. She has published and presented papers at national and international conferences on sexuality, culture, the role of the father, sexual addiction, and other subjects. She may be contacted at hjlturken@verizon.net. □

The Binion European Identity Symposium

What Made Europeans European?

Rudolph Binion—Brandeis University

My subject is European identity in historic perspective. But alas for clarity, which I prize, the word *identity* can mean either of two quite different things. It can signify, first, what identifies Europeans collectively, what is specifically European about them, their distinctive common traits, common institutions, or common practices such as justify a de-

scriptive, rather than a purely geographic, use of the word *European*. Or alternatively that same term *European identity* can denote the feeling among Europeans that they are not just Spaniards or Swedes, Belgians or Bulgarians, but Europeans too, if to a lesser degree—a shared sense of kinship among them over against non-Europeans, and of concordant interests among them despite their frequent bloody conflicts, which hurt them the more for feeling like family quarrels. It is primarily this native sense among modern Europeans of their being European that I hope to trace to its historic origin, its generative source, while also showing how that generative source is still active within it. But first, observe how very peculiar a feeling it is! No other continent besides Europe can even begin to match it. The single exception proves the rule: the one-nation continent of Australia. Over the past century, some African states have taken to calling themselves African for political purposes, but Cairo and Cape Town feel no cultural or psychological kinship with each other, nor does either of them feel any with Kinshasa in between.

Why, then, should the dozens of diverse peoples scattered around just the European continent, just that one jumble of mountains and peninsulas and islands that juts out to the west of the huge Asian land mass, feel a common secondary identity such as no other continentals feel? To get to the bottom of that singular dash of likeness or even sameness felt by Europeans, fragmented though they are ethnically, linguistically, and politically, we must approach European identity as the piece of live history that it is, and approach it in both of its aspects as they intermix: both what is distinctively European when viewed from the outside, and the Europeans' gut feeling of continental affinity over and beyond their stronger local and national ties. I hope to be able to sort out these two aspects of Europe's identity—its perceived identity and its felt identity—and to add what needs adding to the conventional historic picture in order to explain the second and more

elusive of the two: the feeling among Europeans deep down that they share a common inborn heritage and, as a consequence, a common fate.

Histories of the idea of Europe considered as a single entity, as a distinct existential unit, generally hark back to the Roman Empire as a sort of prototype of European oneness, as the first broad political sovereignty to have begun to approach Europe's geographic contours as we know them today, a kernel of European oneness that moreover has left behind conspicuous monuments and mementos of itself both tangible and intangible, including most prominently a network of roads and a body of laws. In reality, however, the Roman prototype was none. It is true that in the early third century of our era all free men in the Empire were proclaimed citizens of the Empire and were thereby united under a common language and a common governance. At its core, however, the Roman Empire was Mediterranean, not European. Territorially it was no more in Europe than in Africa or Asia. Besides, the prototype of European identity, whether of perceived identity or of felt identity, can hardly have been a political construct, which the Roman Empire was. For ever since Rome declined and fell, Europe has sported a tangle of volatile political sovereignties that have resisted all efforts at subjecting them to a single higher authority.

The Frankish conqueror Charlemagne came closest to imposing such an overlordship around the year 800—ephemerally, however, and within a relatively narrow territorial compass. Though his Carolingian empire was all contained within geographic Europe, it included even less of Europe territorially than did its great Roman predecessor. He once quaintly called his realm Europe, but like the ancient Greeks, who coined the name, he meant no more by Europe than just the lands that he ruled. Moreover, his realm held together from top to bottom by personal fealty, not by any

territorial or imperial loyalty, let alone any continental spirit. Soon after its founder's death, his Frankish kingdom split three ways among his legitimate sons and heirs, surviving thereafter only as a stale memory in its eastern, Germanic third—which nonetheless in the tenth century claimed imperial succession from ancient Rome through Charlemagne, styling itself the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

This grand-sounding, shadowy empire vied with the Church of Rome in affirming its universal (*not* European) dominion. It lost all of its dubious power and dusty prestige long ages before it signed its own death certificate in 1806. At the time of its official demise, Napoleon in his turn was attempting to unite the continent by force, or at least to unite the continental mainland against England—self-defeatingly as it turned out, for the result was an upsurge of nationalisms on all sides, which proved that upstart emperor's undoing. Hitler's later, cruder attempt to unite Europe by force on racial principles met with swifter and even bloodier failure. Nor have dynastic marriages succeeded in consolidating much of the European family for long. When the champion dynast, the early-sixteenth-century Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, claimed to rule Europe through its royal bed-chambers within his purview, he thereby only confined the term *Europe* to his own limited European domains, like Charlemagne seven centuries before.

Nor, finally, have the diverse European states been able to get their political act together by mutual consent: projects for a voluntary, sovereign European union keep proving visionary. Western Europe's present common market, common parliament, and common currency have gone farther in this direction than any earlier efforts at confederation. Still they stop well short of continental inclusiveness, let alone supranational sovereignty, and they are evidently not about to move much closer to either: witness the French, then the Netherlandish, electorate's rejection in 2005 of a proposed

constitution for Europe that was less than comprehensive territorially and only barely integrative politically—besides having been mostly of French inspiration at that. In sum, whatever it is that makes for Europeanness, not only is it not political, but it resists being politicized.

That unpolitical family feeling among Europeans is frequently said to have built up in medieval Europe out of certain existential basics that spread far and wide within the continent and then evolved together into a unique European civilization. As this argument runs, the foundations of that distinct European civilization were, to start with, a *lingua franca* or common language (Latin) and Roman law. Next allegedly came Christianity, feudalism, and somewhat look-alike villages each clustered typically around a fortress, a marketplace, a church, and a burial ground. Then the twelfth and thirteenth centuries purportedly saw a whole new European order emerge on these foundations, one that featured chivalry and courtly manners among the nobility; self-governing communes; guilds, fairs, and banking; a bourgeoisie, indeed a whole status society, with family estates transmitted wherever possible from fathers to eldest sons; canon law, courts, and juries; Romanesque, then Gothic, art; universities steeped in scholastic learning; heroic poems and romances each recited and later penned in several increasingly refined European vernaculars at once. Surely the feeling of being European developed across the continent out of this vast ensemble of distinctively European facts—or did it?

One problem with the argument from alleged all-European distinctiveness is that most of such supposedly singularizing European facts were mainly, or even exclusively, west-European and did not even hold for all of western Europe at that. But a bigger catch to the argument is logical: common institutions and usages cannot very well generate and sustain a shared consciousness unless by the same token their gradual disappearance tends to erode that shared con-

sciousness. Take Latin as a unifying European language, or *lingua franca*. When Rome had ruled around the Mediterranean, the only written language in Europe outside of the Greek peninsula and islands had been Latin. Afterwards, although Latin spread in the Dark Ages as the language of the Church, it fell into disuse overall as literacy receded. Charlemagne revived it for purposes of government and scholarship, yet in high and folk culture alike it gradually yielded to local vernaculars. Had Latin underpinned European consciousness, then European consciousness would have been confined to the Latinate elites even at its height. More, it would have gone extinct by the turn of the eighteenth century, when what was left of the Latin tongue fell silent even in its last stronghold, the universities.

Or take feudalism. Not only was feudalism primarily west-European, out of sync from region to region, and even more ephemeral than Latin among the literati; still more to the point, feudal serfs could not have felt themselves to be European on the strength of their distinctive credentials as feudal serfs except by contrasting their status in feudal Europe with that of farm laborers elsewhere—a manifest absurdity, for in general all that a serf could see beyond the horizon was a universal blur. Again, if Roman law was one of the foundation stones of Europe, that foundation stone too crumbled as the remnants of Roman law in Europe came to be increasingly adulterated by local codes. And again, Gothic architecture was indeed exclusive to Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it radiated gloriously within range of its native northern France even while fusing with regional styles that slowly supplanted it. But then early modern Europe disowned it as gross and ugly. Gothic cathedrals still mark some points of Europe's urban landscape distinctively, but they hardly impress a sense of kinship from town to town where they are, let alone where they are not. As for those components of the purported medieval model of

“European civilization” that have survived with a flourish into modern times, such as universities, banking, and the bourgeoisie, they tend to be just the ones that are least specifically European. In sum, it remains to be shown how a felt European identity can have derived from the “European civilization” of medieval vintage that historians have delineated after the fact.

Among the identifying features of medieval Europe that historians most often cite, Christianity holds pride of place with its common faith, its numerous colorful rituals, and its ubiquitous symbols beginning with the cross. Yet neither in its origin nor in its self-conception was Christianity European. It was at the start an Oriental cult that claimed universal validity and that spread from Asia to Africa before it reached Europe. When the Roman emperor Constantine converted in the early fourth century, it was in Asia (in Nicaea) that he convened a council to standardize Christian dogma. More, he moved the imperial capital to Byzantium at the tip of Asia, renamed it Constantinople, and had it rebuilt with symbolic flourish to straddle the two continents of Europe and Asia. Afterwards, however, as the empire disintegrated, Christianity did spread within Europe in particular—inside the imperial cities first, more slowly to the countryside and among the pagans come from the east, finally beyond the former Roman provinces northward and eastward into uncharted territory.

The more Christianity prospered in Europe and retreated outside Europe, moreover, the more Europe ignored the Christian emperors in Constantinople, especially after the Moslems started conquering the older Christian areas of Asia and Africa. The Pope, or Bishop of Rome, crowned Charlemagne emperor of a Christian Europe in opposition to the professedly universal Christian emperors in Constantinople. But then Charlemagne’s proud empire split up after his death and decentralized into feudalism, its remnants ravaged by

pagan marauders until the fiercest of these, the Northmen and the Huns, eventually settled down and converted. In 1095, European Christianity, newly emboldened, embarked on a series of military expeditions, or crusades, to deliver the Holy Land from the Moslems and, in the process, to subdue the Eastern Empire. The venture failed—but inside Europe meanwhile Christianity did gain ever more ground by the sword as the Moslems in Spain were pushed southward under the sign of the cross and the Baltic pagans were conquered and forcibly converted (in the Baltic area only Lithuania, the largest state in Europe, converted freely). With Christianity thus triumphant in Europe, the Eastern Empire embattled, and the few, scattered Christian enclaves elsewhere in tatters, churchmen and cartographers alike took to equating Christianity with Europe as then delineated. The European way of life was no issue here, for this new equation of Christianity with Europe still held even after the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453 and subdued south-central Europe, absorbing the Christians there culturally. Indeed, after this conquest *Christian* and *European* were illogically more synonymous than ever: it was in the 1460s that Pope Pius II popularized the adjective *European* as a variant of *Christian*.¹ Thanks to the continuing Turkish peril, the notion of a common European Christianity even survived the early-sixteenth-century Reformation, which split the cult into multitudinous sects. Indeed, the terms *Christian* and *European* continued to be used interchangeably now and again until the cosmopolitan, secular Enlightenment of the eighteenth century set the two asunder once and for all.

Christianity taught spiritual oneness among believers, who were said thus to constitute an “invisible church.” That Christianity actually realized such spiritual oneness in Europe was, however, a later, Romantic myth about the Europe that the French Revolution destroyed. As a rule, Christianity was in fact imposed by authority throughout

Europe, so that it penetrated the hearts of initially reluctant converts only slowly and imperfectly. By the late Middle Ages, much of nominally Christian Europe was still only poorly Christianized at best. The common Christian creed in Europe comprised at most an all-knowing, all-powerful God, an omnipresent, nasty devil, a fearful Last Judgment, and God's all-loving son, Jesus Christ, by an infinitely compassionate human mother. On the other hand, the Christian saints, processions, masses, festivals, and icons in western Europe contrasted sharply with their relatively stiff and stylized eastern, Byzantine counterparts. On neither side of that east/west divide, moreover, was a common felt Christendom, or community of the faithful, ever much more than an elitist preachment. The battle cry of the defense of Christendom or of Europe might rally western knights in armor against a common heathen threat from Muslims, Saracens, Mongols, Seljuks, or Ottomans, but the image of Christian Europe as a besieged continental bastion of the true faith did not thereby imprint itself on the souls of commoners anywhere. And even among clerics or knights-at-arms, the view of Christendom fending off the infidel could hardly acquire stable continental contours so long as the Popes in Rome urged the capture of Jerusalem or the liberation of Christians in Turkey and points east, not to mention the Popes' standing claim to spiritual dominion over the world as a whole, *urbis et orbis*. For all that—even forgetting the Christians outside Europe and the non-Christians inside, forgetting Christianity's oriental origins and universal pretensions, and forgetting the often radical differences in beliefs and practices from one Christian to another inside Europe, especially from west to east—a Christendom loosely congruent with geographic Europe did constitute a rudimentary collective unit by the twelfth or thirteenth century. At the same time, the bottom line of that rudimentary collective unit needs to be underscored: *Christendom*, like *Europe*, was then at most a term of outer identification and not of inner bonding—about like *Occidental* as dis-

tinguished from *Oriental*, a conceptual couple likewise in common use by the twelfth or thirteenth century, and one that worked at cross purposes with the notion of a unitary Christian Europe in that the so-called *Orient* included south-central Europe even before the Turkish conquest Orientalized that whole area as never before.

Far more of a piece than Christianity, and more inclusively and exclusively European, were Europe's great cultural movements from the Renaissance on, principally Classicism, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism. Though they too flourished mainly among west-European elites, they did nonetheless engulf the whole continent, penetrate the folksy countryside, and seep down recognizably to the lowliest cultural levels. Rural folk culture on its side also tended to cross all national borders within Europe, and within Europe alone. A most impressive token, or even symbol, of this trans-European cultural harmony was a new European *lingua franca* of sorts that emerged at the tail end of the Renaissance: the major and minor tonal structure of European music—that is, of music throughout Europe and nowhere outside Europe except as a European export.² These facts and artifacts of an all-European culture from the Renaissance on were unmistakable signs that a European unity of spirit had set in by then. But just as unmistakably those signs of a European unity of spirit were not its cause. For never in its history did Europe attain anything like the cultural, not to mention religious and political, commonality of, say, modern South America, which is much more of a solid geographical block besides, yet South Americans have no inkling of a continental identity. Obviously, then, something more than what has already been mentioned was needed in Europe to account for the deep-lying sense of continental identity that coexists among Europeans with intense countervailing nationalisms on all sides.

What was that something more?

That something more, I submit, was a European trauma, a mass trauma of epic proportions, one unexampled in its magnitude and severity since the ice age: the Black Death.³ This ghastly, pitiless pandemic came from Asia Minor to Sicily at the end of 1347 and thence spread to the continent proper, where it promptly advanced in all directions. Strictly speaking, it was not exactly a European trauma when it first struck Europe, given the lack of a full-fledged European consciousness at the time of its fearful initial impact: even the most widespread or typical reactions to its approach tended to vary regionally. But it pulled Europeans together psychologically as it fanned out among them, and this already several centuries before their resultant sense of being European reached full consciousness. That resultant sense of being European was, then, originally a sense of having been targeted together to deadly effect; indeed, it remains at bottom a sense of *being* targeted together to deadly effect, for such traumatic moments stay present-tensed where historic memory runs deepest. But the term *Europe* was not inherent in the grim experience itself. A geographers' term above all, it was used less frequently than its companion term *Christendom* by the time the Black Death struck and may even have fallen into relative disuse by then.⁴ The vague contours of the continent that it evoked varied from map to map, never reaching very far north or east. Yet in identifying themselves in common as Christian victims, the plague-stricken picked up on that rudimentary European identity that had been invoked together with *Christendom* in the face of earlier alien threats from the outside. *Christendom*, I repeat, denoted the body of the Christian faithful the world over; it nonetheless carried European territorial connotations in practice, though it was never systematically restricted to just Europe or extended to all of Europe. I am laboring these points somewhat redundantly in order to drive home the traumatic essentials, which were these: In 1347-1352 a continent open-ended to the north and east that was the territorial stronghold of Chris-

tianity, and that was threatened by the Oriental infidel on its south-central edges, was stricken with a deadly pestilence out of the Orient that hit suddenly, unexpectedly, swiftly, and indiscriminately in all walks of life, and that did to death horrifically about one inhabitant out of two in its first, gigantic onslaught,⁵ only to recur regionally again and again thereafter. It spread across Europe straight off even farther than Europe was then seen by any cartographers to extend, ending up in Russia long before other Europeans agreed that the Russians were Europeans too. By the time it recessed in 1352, it had precisely traced the entire present-day map of Europe, Iceland alone excepted.

I have said that the traumatic impact of the Black Death pulled Europe together psychologically, even if not at once under the name of Europe. My designation of the Black Death as Europe's formative trauma involves two concepts that have emerged over the years from the study of history in its psychological dimension—from *psychohistory*—and that may need defining for present purposes. One is that of psychological coherence within a group such that its members can act or react together without realizing it, as a rule when their core concerns as a group are on the line. Psychohistorians call this phenomenon *group process*. It has been closely observed by naturalists since antiquity in animal societies as they adjust collectively to changing conditions of life. At the same time it has been largely ignored in human affairs because of the long-standing human conceit that, unlike other animals, humans behave as individuals only, and only for conscious personal purposes at that. However, psychoanalysis has shown that, even in acting for conscious purposes, individuals may be pursuing other ends than they know—unconscious ends. Similarly, the historic record shows that, even in acting for their own purposes, individuals may be pursuing the unsuspected agenda of a group to which they may not even know they belong. If this sounds mysterious,

well, it still *is* quite mysterious in all of its fundamentals. I, who have written a whole book on group process in human history,⁶ do not even know how, in physical terms, autonomous human groups cohere and remember, or even how they form except that, at the one extreme, some, such as nations, form out in the open, self-aware, while some at the other extreme hardly even suspect their own existence. Among these latter, largely un-self-aware, groups are those born of a trauma suffered in common, the way Europe was born in the mid-fourteenth century. In such cases, those persons traumatized together internalize an outer identity, however feeble, around that integrative trauma and somehow pass that internalized common identity down to their descendants. Initially, the outer identity seized upon by the plague-stricken of Europe in 1347-1352 was more Christian than European, for they saw the pestilence in its first flush as the Christian God's punishment for their iniquity—unless alternatively (and equally Christianly) they blamed it on the Jews. But the group's felt identity went from Christian to European as the pestilence spread throughout the continent among Christians, Jews, and pagans alike and, within the Christian community, among saints and sinners indifferently, with some of each kind surviving, so that manifestly it was neither God's righteous doing nor the Jews' dirty work, but a deadly secular fate that had befallen them all together from the outside.

The other tricky concept on which I have drawn in tracing Europe's felt identity back to the traumatic Black Death is that of *trauma* itself over and beyond its narrow received meaning. The word *trauma* (from the Greek) originally denoted a purely physical wound, then by extension also a crippling mental blow. Psychiatry has lately tended to confine this second sense to experiences of violence or abuse perceived as life-threatening and anxiously recalled night and day or else, alternatively, pushed out of conscious memory with pathological consequences. Psychohistory has mean-

while brought to light other, more insidious effects of trauma, such as its victims' tendency to construe it initially as a punishment due, the way Europeans first construed the Black Death. But far and away the most momentous aftereffect of a trauma in the psychohistorical repertoire is for the traumatized individual or group to relive it unawares—often in superficial disguise, and in a wholly different walk of life—driving it anew to its disastrous outcome, which may even be magnified in the process for good, or bad, measure. Such so-called traumatic reliving, though far more the exception than the rule, has been the driving force behind much of history, and particularly of its most demonic episodes.

The Black Death was relived undisguised in the first instance in that it recurred locally across Europe over the centuries with much the same symptoms, albeit with generally declining death tolls and diminishing frequency. As a rule, its recurrence has been seen as the work of a nasty pathogen striking again and again, whereas the disease was perforce the interaction of a pathogen with a host now more, now less receptive or vulnerable. That pathogen has been wrongly identified more than once; it remains elusive to this day.⁷ What is known about it for sure is that initially it played no favorites among its victims: wherever the pestilence first struck, everyone urban or rural, rich or poor, young or old, fat or thin, was equally vulnerable. About half the exposed population survived the first strike of the pestilence, including an estimated one-third of those infected. Hence about half of those left alive after the first strike had escaped infection through natural immunity, while the other half had contracted the disease and pulled through, acquiring nonheritable immunity in the process. Had those natural and acquired immunities both still held when the pestilence first recurred in this or that locale some ten years after the traumatic pandemic, the only new victims would all have been under ten years of age--and, with heritable immunity now

running at one-half of that junior gene pool, the overall death toll of the second strike would at most have come to one-half of the local population aged under ten. In fact the new overall death tolls ran ever so much higher than that, however markedly down they were from the first strike, whereas the age distribution of the new victims was only somewhat skewed toward childhood.⁸ Chroniclers' comparable accounts of successive regional waves of the pestilence argue fairly conclusively against any radically new strain of the pathogen from one episode to the next. The indication is, then, that Europeans of over some ten years of age were losing, or suppressing, immunity between episodes even if data on survivorship do not suffice to enable even tentative inferences as to which kind of immunity (natural or acquired) was being lost or suppressed. In sum, the traumatic Black Death was not simply recurring independently of all human agency; rather, Europeans were recycling it.

In their new-found collective identity, Europeans could henceforth act in concert without even realizing it, let alone exchanging signals to cue each other in. Such "synchronicity," as it has been called,⁹ was clamorously manifest in the convulsive social violence—in what the Great Chronicle of Saint-Denis aptly called "the plague of a rebellion"¹⁰—that spread as if by contagion in the wake of the Black Death from the Mediterranean coast up through France to Flanders, England, the Empire, and points east, ultimately engulfing the entire continent by the mid-1370s much like the first wave of the grim pandemic a generation before. Prior to 1347-1352 there had been sporadic local popular protests in Europe with no overlap of calendars or agendas from one to the next. The plague then spawned an accompaniment of plague-related mass violence that was both Christianized and leaderless: penitential processions, flagellants scourging themselves together in public, so-called chorisants dancing themselves sick in unison, ritualized burnings of

Jews absurdly blamed for the plague, all with no class cleavages and no concrete worldly goals. These morbid religious jitters yielded in turn to popular rebellions with definite political, economic, and social aims right after the first wave of the pandemic. A mounting trend by the mid-1350s, these fierce and bloody uprisings reached a crescendo of popularity in the mid-1370s with a common thrust against social privilege, or towards human equality.¹¹ Just as this social contagion reflected the plague both in its deadly brutality and in the way it spread, so did its egalitarian thrust throw back to the plague theme of social equality before death--of "Death the Leveler," as the phrase then went. To be sure, those bloody insurrections were all grounded in local conditions of life and labor, of property and power. They nonetheless replicated the Black Death trauma of mass mayhem within the rules of traumatic reliving: in disguise, with active perpetrators replacing passive victims, and with a vicarious overlay of purpose and meaning onto the original senseless hecatomb.

Europeans relived the traumatic Black Death figuratively too, in high culture and folk culture alike, above all through the wildly popular and singularly grisly Dance of the Dead. The plague often attacked the nervous system, inducing muscular spasms *in extremis* that looked like macabre dancing. This so-called Saint Vitus Dance was no doubt the source of the imaginative vision of the plague as a Dance of the Dead. Evidently the Dance of the Dead was first performed to the tune of churchyard sermons, then also set to poetry all across Europe, before being engraved and painted as well. In the end it had been traced on the walls of all the churches and charnel houses of Europe besides being circulated in numberless prints, chapbooks, and books of hours. Germany and France dispute the literary priority for it; the stronger claim is for a south German authorship (by Dominican monks) shortly after 1348, but the French text that fast

followed inspired the most foreign imitations. In its basic early form, stock figures from the Pope, Emperor, or King all the way down the medieval social scale were brusquely danced off to damnation one after the other, each by a different mummified or skeletal emissary of death fiddling or drumming, trumpeting or piping, deaf to all protestations or supplications. In this simplistic scenario of wholesale serial perishing, the replay of the plague trauma was transparent, notwithstanding departures from the historic original such as are fairly routine in traumatic reliving. Already by reconfiguring the plague imaginatively in dance and music, verse and image, Europeans took imaginary control of the massive catastrophe that had in fact caught them short. They also scaled up its death toll to the limit in that the stereotypical victims representing all social categories thereby stood for not just anyone, but everyone—for European society as a whole. And each victim was danced off to hell no matter what, with no room for reprieve and no Last Judgment ahead: in this brusquely fantasized Christianization of the plague, sudden death was escalated to sudden, universal damnation. To the opposite effect of tempering the traumatic blow, as is equally characteristic of traumatic reliving, the Dance assimilated the Black Death on a rampage to the ineluctability of death no matter what—to death as our fated common lot, plague or no. Finally, built into the Dance of the Dead as into all traumatic replays was a failing effort to ward off the traumatic blow, in this case to hold real death at bay magically by its emblematic presence. The dance motif in particular had this magical purpose, dancing being superstitiously regarded as a specific against death. Indeed, that graveyard Dance of the Dead threw back to the so-called dance of love, a venerable fleshly frolic at pagan funerals that was meant to counteract or cancel the particular death at hand. Beneath its grim exterior, then, the Dance of the Dead sneaked a sexy pagan revelry into cruel death—and indeed, over time the mummified or skeletal emissaries or agents of

death in the Dance of the Dead grew weirdly jocular in popular engravings, as if they shared in some naughty, roguish secret. They also grew less impudent toward the newcomers to death in that they contracted in time from sinister, cynical dance partners one-on-one into a single sermonizing dance master. With this, the Dance of the Dead evolved into an abstract Dance of Death sounded on a universal note, into a metaphoric image of dying now wholly detached from its implicit traumatic referent,¹² before it lapsed from the cultural agenda by the 1530s--until further notice.

A late spinoff of the Dance of the Dead that briefly eclipsed it in popularity was Death and the Maiden. This even more elemental and more macabre motif emerged in German art around 1500. At its most naïve, it consisted of a lush lass in the nude about to be, or even already being, grabbed by a grinning mummified or skeletal rapist devoid of the anatomical wherewithal to follow through. The crude and stunted eroticism at the heart of Death and the Maiden peaked in a 1517 engraving by Niklaus Manuel Deutsch that hangs in the art museum of Basel: there the bosomy Maiden is clad for a change, but she makes up for it by guiding the hideous, leering bone man's hand up her skirts. Artists otherwise left more to the imagination in keeping with the celebrated Rhenish folk rhyme of the time, "Death and the Maiden in the Flower Garden," which carried only a muffled hint of deathly sexual traffic and next to none of luscious female flesh. In that ravishing Rhenish flower garden, "Grim Death," armed with a scythe, will not let the tender Maiden off the hook for love or money. Just join the dance, he tells her: the worms are waiting to devour your carcass in all its earthly, earthy pulchritude. Scorning her tears, he grabs her "in the middle, where she was weakest," and hurls her to the ground, there to die writhing.¹³ That tender Maiden's grim fate brought this sadistic, misogynic offshoot of the Dance of the Dead to a nearly full halt. Indeed, the entire artistic rep-

ertoire spawned by the Black Death fast sank into near oblivion along with that hapless Maiden until—curiously—the recurrent pestilence itself was laid to rest at long last.

The recurrent pestilence was laid to rest in 1772, with over 100,000 new victims, right where it had first halted in 1352: in the area of Moscow. But Europeans thus terminated their physical reliving of the mass trauma pestilence only to resume their figurative reliving of it left in abeyance, or more exactly to relive that figurative reliving in its turn. Beginning punctually in 1773, the year after the plague stopped recurring, with a mock medieval folk ballad (Gottfried Bürger's *Lenore*) featuring the Dance of the Dead three times over, followed in 1775 by a beguiling rewrite (signed Matthias Claudius) of the folk rhyme "Death and the Maiden," the whole cultural legacy of the Black Death revived item for item, though with the items all singly and collectively overhauled. That is, it revived with variations galore on the original motifs in a new vein of free and loose fantasy play, devoid of all the old biblical resonances or social implications, as if emboldened now that it was at a safe remove from its bygone, real-life referent of pus boils, sweat, fever, stench, and decay. In particular, the eroticism latent in the spectral two-step of the old Dance of the Dead, after having been tabooed anew as soon as it had surfaced around 1500 in *Death and the Maiden*, now swept the field as over the whole long nineteenth century, from the Romantics to the Decadents, death was eroticized in all the arts. High culture and low reveled equally as the Dance of the Dead and its companion Black Death themes were now variously decomposed and recomposed, twisted round and about and topsy turvy, and infused with a new sexy morbidity. Death was no longer a terrifying spiritual event; on the contrary, the cultural legacy of the traumatic mass massacre of 1347-1352 was reconfigured as a pornography of death verging on spoof. In the visual arts specifically, death and dying ceased being stylized as

in the Middle Ages, idealized as in the Renaissance, or dramatized as in the Baroque; instead, the imagery of human rot in the raw was pushed to a shocking extreme of crass matter-of-factness wherever the artistic heritage of the Black Death was not being re-edited in a vein of ironic levity, or black humor.¹⁴ Less tongue-in-cheek than this inventive reprise of the cultural fall-out from the traumatic European mass contagion was a spectacular update of the political and social revolts, or “plague of a rebellion,” that had followed in the wake of the physical contagion: Europe marked the five-hundredth anniversary of the Black Death with an epochal new “plague of a rebellion,” the epidemic of popular revolts and revolutions that duly broke out in Sicily in late 1847 and swept the European mainland beginning in early 1848.

Such was the symptomatic precipitate of Europe's traumatic formative experience, the Black Death: periodic literal reissues of the contagion, social and cultural re-enactments of it, then re-editions of those re-enactments once the contagion itself was extinct. Those centuries-long running aftereffects of the massive Black Death trauma attest to its singular intensity. Of greater import for Europe today, however, is the indelible birthmark that Europe's constitutive trauma left on the continental consciousness that it created. The pandemic spread its poison throughout Europe in all walks of life indifferently, threatening the very survival of the population that it thereby joined together psychologically. Accordingly, the lasting bond that it created among Europeans amounts to a crisis solidarity in the face of a deadly common danger—a crisis solidarity operant on the deepest existential level of Europe's population as a whole. The workings of that traumatic solidarity are invisible to the naked eye, but they are sharp and clear when seen through the prism of group process. To consider a single, vivid instance of those workings, they were the moving force behind the so-called European fertility transition, or massive curtailment of fertil-

ity across Europe that began in the mid-1870s. France alone in Europe had cut down on births before then, at the time of its great Revolution; this, though, was a separate, national development with its own dynamic, and the French fell in no less with the later, broader transition. This later transition has rightly been called European ever since its massive contours were first delineated, and it has increasingly been explained by historic demographers in terms of homeostasis, that is, of the tendency inherent in human, as indeed in all animal, populations to adjust their fertility to changing conditions of survival. It remains only to recognize that, as the adjustment that began in the mid-1870s was all-European and only European, its author was ipso facto Europe as a whole, meaning Europeans acting collectively.

During the earlier decades of the nineteenth century, Europeans had reduced their death rates, child mortality foremost, to the point where, despite a steady, massive emigration overseas, their total numbers were headed for a sixfold increase within another three generations—a literally unendurable prospect. This demographic groundswell in the offing, or imminent European crisis of survival, fell in with the European crisis solidarity induced by the Black Death. What resulted was no new traumatic replay, but a salutary defensive measure instead. Europeans defended collectively against the looming demographic danger in a simple, direct, yet revolutionary way: they cut back on births by normalizing birth control within marriage in all walks of life alike and in every corner of the continent. They did so roughly in unison, with Russia again last as when the Black Death had come and again when it had gone. Most significantly, they did so by group reflex, with no couples restricting births for Europe's sake as far as they were aware: that is how group process works. Previously, natural fertility in marriage had been a universal moral imperative in Europe as far back as the historic records go. So it should come as no surprise in

retrospect that, during the fertility transition, Europe's novelists and dramatists all competed in exposing marriage with its shrinking issue as hypocritical, degenerative, and immoral—as, in a word, guilty.¹⁵ Nominally, this guilt attached to the reproductive act then first being widely performed for its own non-reproductive sake within marriage. At the same time, this new guilt over contraceptive marriage was a remote, dreamlike reflection of the old guilt felt by Europeans when they construed the Black Death as God's punishment for their iniquity. As against that senseless old guilt, the new guilt made pseudo-sense in that Europe had itself generated the demographic threat that it met by marital birth control, whereas in 1348 Europeans only imagined that they had brought the Black Death upon themselves.

History dies hard, if ever. Europe's present, faltering effort at political integration reflects the traumatic historic source of felt European identity. For one thing, the current, ill-starred initiative for political integration, like all its predecessors, came from western Europe, where the plague hit first. For another, that initiative has followed the plague's own trajectory from west to east. More, the inspiration for it was one of repentance for Europe's deadly sins on the precedent of the Black Death—notably for the two world wars, which were European in origin and which heaped up cadavers cruelly and senselessly like the Black Death itself. The nationalisms impeding European integration are reminiscent of the cities and regions of Europe quarantining themselves in 1348 against an advancing plague that nonetheless bound them together psychologically. Europeans' widespread instinctive mistrust of Turkey as a candidate for admission into federative Europe has a conspicuous referent in the trauma of 1347-1352 in that it was by way of what is today Turkey that the plague came to Europe. Project Europe is further reminiscent of plagued Europe in being egalitarian toward Europeans, like Death the Leveler, but anxiously defensive to-

ward the outside world whether the menace from without is seen by Europe as military or commercial, whether as political intimidation or as cultural corruption, whether as terrorism or illegal immigration or even as pandemic disease. Overall, then, Europeans' gut feeling of being European, for all its fine civility, is mired in the deathly trauma whence it issued. Nor, finally, is this European traumatic legacy of 1347-1352 distinctive in kind. In fact, in its protean afterlife it can be seen as the very model of the traumatic pathology to which human history as a whole is prey, and the more dangerously on balance the longer such pathology goes misunderstood, overlooked, or ignored.

Rudolph Binion, PhD, is the Leff Professor of History at Brandeis University (USA). He has published widely on European political, cultural, and demographic history. His most recent book is *Past Impersonal: Group Process in Human History* (DeKalb IL 2005).

¹Peter Burke, "Did Europe Exist Before 1700?", *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 1 (1980), 23.

²Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (New York 1996), 118.

³Denys Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh 1957), dated the idea of Europe from the time of the Black Death without, however, drawing a causal connection.

⁴Burke, op. cit., 23.

⁵Ole J. Benedictow, *The Black Death 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge 2004), 245-384.

⁶Rudolph Binion, *Past Impersonal: Group Process in Human History* (DeKalb IL 2005).

⁷Samuel K. Cohn, *The Black Death Transformed: Disease and Culture in Early Renaissance Europe* (London 2002), and "The Black Death: End of a Paradigm", *American Historical Review*, Vol. 107 (2002), 703-38, has conclusively refuted the previous identification of the nineteenth-century rat-and-flea-borne Asian plague *Yersinia pestis* with the Black Death.

⁸For patterns of plague deaths: Cohn, op. cit., 188-219.

⁹Michel Mollat and Philippe Wolff, *Ongles bleus: Jacques et Ciompi: Les révolutions populaires en Europe aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris 1970), 143, 271.

¹⁰ Quoted *ibid.*, 180. For earlier comparable instances of this usage see William H. TeBrake, *A Plague of Insurrection: Popular Politics and Peasant Revolt in Flanders, 1323-1328* (Philadelphia 1993).

¹¹ The best source for patterns of labor revolts in the period of the Black Death is Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200-1425* (Cambridge MA 2006), 205-27.

¹² Hellmut Rosenfeld, *Der mittelalterliche Totentanz: Entstehung, Entwicklung, Bedeutung* (Cologne 1954), 83. Rosenfeld remains the best of the numerous sources for the Dance of the Dead overall.

¹³ The folk lyric, which was included in the first volume of Ludwig Achim von Arnem and Clemens Brentano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, is reprinted in L. Erk and F. M. Böhme, eds., *Deutscher Liederhort* (Hildesheim 1963), vol. 3, 850-52. Erk and Böhme date the song from about 1600, but the text appears to be a good century older.

¹⁴ On the heady sex-death mix in the arts in Europe during the long nineteenth century, see my *Love Beyond Death: The Anatomy of A Myth in the Arts* (New York 1993) and "Europe's Culture of Death" in Jerry S. Piven, ed., *The Psychology of Death in Fantasy and History* (Westport CT 2004).

¹⁵ Binion, *Past Impersonal*, 14-31 ("The Guilty Family").



Commentary on Binion

David Beisel—SUNY Rockland

One day a prominent historian of German and Austrian history and I were talking about the historian's craft when he suddenly asked me, "Who's the most European of the European historians you know?" We thought for a moment then said, almost in unison, "Rudy Binion."

The snap judgment of two lone historians 15 years ago is hardly enough to credential a current project, but it does bring to mind Professor Binion's many contributions to European intellectual, cultural, artistic, political, social, demographic, epidemiological, literary, diplomatic, and political history, not to mention his pioneering work in psycho-

biography, group process, and psychohistorical method while still somehow having time to become our premier scholar of historical trauma, all talents in dazzling display in this new essay on European identity.

The question he asks is of central importance, though I have not thought of it in years. Since it is one of those givens worked out long ago and mummified in our textbooks, it is rarely or never addressed by historians, thus making its unexpected revival here seem both original and familiar. As with any provocative essay, Binion challenges us to reorder the paradigm.

The essay's sweep is, of course, majestic and audacious, nothing less than a multidisciplinary, multilayered interdisciplinary romp through a few thousand years of European history—with some thoughts on the East thrown in for good measure. This is somewhat unusual in the body of Binion's work, since many of his essays, even ones dealing with major topics like the significance of dreams, or romanticism, or reductionism, or issues of fertility, or late-19th century European families, are more narrowly focused in time and place, most often explored through a particular individual or historical event. The current essay by contrast sweeps across a broad topical, geographic, chronological, and developmental stage. Regardless of how one ultimately comes to think about the essay's conclusions, Binion pulls off some impressive multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary magic few could match. Not that there is any sleight of hand; the architecture of the argument is clear enough.

The first part of the essay, with its detailed point-by-point demolition of various traditional explanations, for those familiar with Binion's psychohistories, may end up producing a certain emerging tension as we—as I—begin to wonder when the real causal terrain will at last be revealed, the "something more" arriving finally half way through the pa-

per, and probably more convincing for it. There is nothing new in linking the plague to social unrest and bloody uprisings thereafter, nor to such cultural forms as Dance of Death re-enactments. What is new, of course, is connecting it to traumatic compulsion.

How can one quarrel with the universal centrality of The Black Death trauma and its comprehensive geographic reach? The only question is: Is it truly the only thing at work?

What about conflicts or other forces that create a sense of community besides traumatic commonality? I am not sure I am ready yet to entirely throw out the Islamic threat. Then, as analogy of how other things might work, there is Bismarck's efforts in the 1870's and '80's to forge a new national identity out of the regionalisms of the newly unified Second Reich by waging *kulturkampf* and declaring war against the socialists, delivering in their place revolutionary measures of benevolent state socialism. Is it too late a model, or does it have universal application?

I wonder too about the dialectical struggle for those so disposed who long for membership in an overarching humanity on the one hand and the fiercely regressive flight from it caused by the terror of losing the self in an amorphous undifferentiated abstraction and are defensively drawn to the appeal of an intense ethnocentric tribalism, the self pulled ambivalently in two ways, much like those multiethnic late-19th and early 20th century members of the Austro-Hungarian Empire who sought to both achieve *and* resolve their dual identities.

While on the track of the "prototype of European oneness," Binion's essay calls attention to the need to differentiate between "perceived identity" and "felt identity" and, later between "outer identification" and "inner bonding," important distinctions I think which need to be kept in mind and

further explored. He wisely avoids the separate but related question of what specific characteristics European identity contains. Sometime I would like to know his take on what those characteristics are.

But what is clearly at stake in being and becoming European are not merely issues of a continental-wide felt unity; they are at the psychological heart of deeply important identities—local, regional, and tribal—and how they interact. These predate and postdate the Black Death. Do traditional factors have some value as scene setters or foundation stones that cannot be entirely dismissed as unimportant? The Dance of Death took place in historical contexts formed after all by earlier processes that had a historical identity all their own, some of which were at least in part “European.”

The essay notes early on and in several places the crucial fact of family consciousness, hinting at the importance of family fantasies surrounding the notion of European-ness. These fantasies do not originate from Black Death trauma, and are projected idealizations from one’s own family and may become existentially important for later conceptualizations of European unity, as was the tragic case for the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig who suicided in Brazil in 1942 after witnessing his beloved Europe, as he said in 1941, tear “itself apart suicidally a second time in a war of brother against brother.”

Refreshingly, Binion’s essay avoids any reference to William Langer’s 1957 American Historical Association Presidential Address, “The Next Assignment” which links to the Black Death via Langer’s call for historians to integrate psychoanalysis across the board using the Black Death as his example. Langer’s address has a special place in the historiography of psychohistory, for in the subfield’s early days it was cited far too frequently by those who felt the need to legitimize their work by invoking the name of a well-respected

diplomatic historian from Harvard who also happened to champion their enterprise. In the event, it proved counter-productive, with Robert Wohl recalling the “snide remarks” made by many in the Princeton History Department in 1958 who “regarded Langer as a strange man lacking common sense.” Binion’s essay is better off without it.

As I read on, my associations kept returning to Timothy Garton Ash’s post-1990 essays in the *New York Review of Books* wherein he joined the central and eastern Europeans he was reporting on in their struggle to resolve the intellectual and emotional confusion over what constituted Central and Eastern Europe, and by implication Europe as a whole, after the dramatic political changes of the early 1990’s. Ash’s explorations were more a conscious question of geographic reality, but the debate itself is best seen as a symbolic disguise for the emotional upheaval occasioned by a triple trauma—a collapsing Soviet Union, a disintegrating Soviet Bloc, the sudden demise of communism.

Near the essay’s end, I selfishly wanted more examples of hidden and symbolic remnants of Black Death trauma in the art of the 19th and 20th centuries, not to convince but only to enjoy, and was happily reminded by footnote 14 where to look.

Binion has made a superb case for his argument, but my last thought here has to do with his essay’s language, particularly those turns of phrase, which artfully capture the conflicts and processes, conditions and dilemmas of traumatized victims. This seems especially the case when he writes about the nature, transmission, and ways of traumatic reenactment. I have in mind such renderings as, “the most momentous aftereffect of a trauma in the psychohistorical repertoire is for the traumatized individual or group to relive it unawares—often in superficial disguise, and in a wholly different walk of life—driving it anew to its disastrous outcome”;

or when he writes, “individuals may be pursuing the unsuspected agenda of a group to which they may not even know they belong”; or when he says, “built into the Dance of the Dead as into all traumatic replays was a failing effort to ward off the traumatic blow”; or, almost perfectly, “themes...now variously decomposed and recomposed, twisted round and about and topsy turvy, and infused with” whatever it might be infused with, in this case “a new sexy morbidity.” Leaving aside for a moment the question of how well Black Death trauma accounts for Europeans becoming European, phrases like these are methodological contributions in their own right, capturing as they do unconscious and semi-conscious scenarios in ways that offer trauma historians a model of how they might better frame such realities in the future.

David R. Beisel holds a Ph.D. in modern European history, teaches history and psychohistory at SUNY Rockland Community College, and is on the editorial board of Clio’s Psyche. As companion to his earlier book, Suicidal Embrace: Hitler, the Allies, and the Origins of the Second World War, he is currently completing a study of World War II’s traumatic impact on post-war politics and culture. He can be reached at dbeisel@sunyrockland.edu.

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Searching for the Origins of European Identity

Paul H. Elovitz—Psychohistory Forum

The vast erudition of Professor Rudolph Binion induces a feeling of awe in me and many other colleagues. The Leff Families Professor of Modern European History at Brandeis University has such a powerful intellect and is so incredibly knowledgeable that it is difficult to accept the as-

signment of evaluating his work. Indeed, several distinguished colleagues decided to withdraw from participation in this symposium for a variety of reasons: they felt themselves to be inadequately prepared to undertake it, they feared offending a scholar they hold in such high esteem, or because of the demands of their own scholarship. When I reported this to Rudy, anonymously of course, he urged me to assure these individuals that he welcomed the most severe critiques of his work. Regrettably, they did not change their minds.

Although I have taught European history at three different universities and Ramapo College since I was trained in Modern English and European History at one of the world's leading research institutions, I had to struggle with my own inclination to withdraw from this symposium on the grounds that I simply do not know enough about the fields of Medieval and Early Modern European history. However, despite my deficiencies of knowledge I have gone ahead on the grounds that we will only develop knowledge in general and psychohistory in particular by exposing our limitations as well as our capabilities. So we will let the reader and Professor Binion be the judges of any value in my comments.

My essential question is why start with the Black Death in the Middle Ages in pursuit of the origin of European identity. There is so much that has occurred between the 14th century and the second half of the 20th century when Western Europeans stopped killing each other regularly and instead felt sufficiently European to manifest their identity in a Common Market, a European Union, and common constitution in the face of being caught between America and Russia. I find it problematic to go back to such early origins. However, if one must go to the earlier period in the search for origins, why not start with the Christian Normans confronting Muslims during the Crusades?

Among peoples, a common identity is usually formed

in relationship to others who are seen as quite different—as strangers. When in the later 11th century Pope Urban II called upon Western European knights to stop fighting each other and to instead fight the infidel and to assist the Christians of Constantinople who were in danger of being overrun by the Turks. His call was based on a sense of the commonality of Western Christianity in opposition to the otherness of the Turks. Christians and Muslims viewed each other as enemies, with the Christians seeing themselves as Europeans. (Subsequently, crusaders in the pay of the Venetians would hasten the demise of the Orthodox Christians of the Eastern Roman Empire.) The idea of Western Christians taking time out from their internecine wars to fight the infidel was recurrent. Well after the end of the crusades, Henry VII (1485-1509) of England would instruct his son and heir to continue the fight against the infidel. The threat from Islam was a military danger to Western Europe as recently as the prolonged siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683, when the Austrian Empire was saved by the Polish army. Although Muslims have remained a presence in Europe to the present, the reluctance of the European Union to accept Turkey into membership is a reflection of this Islam country still being viewed as part of the “other.” Of course, among other things critics of acceptance argue that only a small part of Turkey is literally in Europe.

In modern history the people of Western Europe do not consider all of the approximately 6.8% of the world’s landmass referred to as geographic Europe as occupied by Europeans. For example, although the Russian Empire represented about half of the European landmass, Western Europeans often viewed Russians as more Asian than European. In studying 20th century European history I have come across a variety of scholarly books with titles like *Russia and Europe* (1945, 1973) representing a sense of separateness from Russians. Although many European rulers may have

literally been related, often through Queen Victoria, British ambivalence about being a part of the European family of nations is reflected in such books as *Britain in Europe: 1789-1914* (1945) by R. W. Seton-Watson.

The establishment of European identity through struggles with Islam is directly connected to suffering at the hands of the Turks and other Muslims, as well as the fantasies about them. Christian Europeans were terrified of Islamic armies, as well as their strange customs, laws, and religions. Christian crusading children were sold into slavery in Islamic North Africa and, as late as the end of the 19th century in the Ottoman Empire, taken from their families to be turned into Islamic soldiers or castrated to serve administratively in the Ottoman Empire. Perhaps the forced conversion of their children was most frightening to Christian Europeans. The surge of Islamophobia in the wake of Islamic terrorism in the early 21st century and a growing Muslim presence harkens back to these earlier dangers.

A few observations about the ethnocentrism of Europeans might be helpful. The narcissism of the Europeans led their geographers to decide that their corner of the Afro-European-Asian landmass was a separate continent, despite the lack of real geographic barriers. Their narcissism also led them to consider that when they were conquering, exploiting, and colonizing often older and equally complex civilizations around the world, they confused their own cultures, customs, languages, laws, and religions with civilization. This narcissism led them to start to set organizations to lessen their own internecine violence to see them as representing the whole world, thus the League of Nations, United Nations, World Court, and so forth. Consequently, some good things have followed from the presumptions of Europeans and their descendants in North America and elsewhere.

Despite my doubts about finding the origins of a

European identity in the Black Death and preference for viewing it as a development over many centuries in relationship to Islam and others, I commend Rudolph Binion not only for his enormous erudition and the logical exposition of his theory, but also for getting me and others to think about such a big issue, deepening our knowledge in the process. Once again he has demonstrated himself to be a pioneer psychohistorian and world-class scholar.

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, editor of this publication, may be reached at pelovitz@aol.com.



A Critique of Binion on European Identity

Joel Markowitz—Private Practice of Psychiatry

In speculating on “What Made Europeans European,” Professor Binion focuses on group-organisms (which are now nations) that differ in many ways from each other, yet have come to self-identify as European. We know that the French, the English, the German, and the Russian groups have behaved very differently from each other in history and their individuals have tended to behave in ways we roughly stereotype as French, English, German, and Russian. Yet all agree to call themselves Europeans.

I agree that the trauma of the Black Death (1347-1352) was of great psychic importance, and that it affected Europeans as Rudolph Binion suggests. What I find particularly important in this article is his emphasis on the influence of psychic trauma on group minds—a factor that virtually all other historians have ignored or minimized. This directly relates to my own research and writing. In 1965 and 1969, I wrote two articles and a book about formative trauma and

growth-stresses that shaped the minds of groups, very like the way that trauma and growth-stresses shape the minds of individuals. Also, group organisms (such as nations) are giant, potentially immortal, human organisms with minds very much like the minds of individuals, and with motivations that are their own (but which are very similar to our motivations), about how and why a group mind differs from the mind of any single individual, and although individuals create conceptual advances, it is group-minds that choose group-leaders and philosophies according to group-needs.

I discussed about how the group-mind and the interactions of groups shaped history. For example, how powerfully the thinking of French, English, and German groups (and their individuals) were shaped by certain specific traumas and growth-stresses such as the Hundred Years' War, the Thirty Years' War, and the remarkable influence of the longbow on the English and French thinking. Professor Binion's book, *Past Impersonal: Group Process in Human History*, extended some of those theories in detail.

Binion writes that the initial reaction to the plague was more Christian than European. He discusses some of the ways people tried to cope with it psychically—and how they tried to master it by magical modes. He discusses responses to the plague, through “dance, music, verse and image”—and how Europeans even “sneaked a sexy pagan revelry” into the process through the Dance of the Dead and the creation of the Death and the Maiden theme (with a skeletal rapist, and often a nude woman). Misogyny, sadism, and other elements were also enlisted in first coping and then in exploiting that trauma toward other purposes.

Rudolph Binion relates later “plagues”—of popular revolts and revolutions since 1847, and especially in 1848, as “social and cultural re-enactments of it, then re-editions of these enactments”—to the great plague of the Black Death. The Professor implies that the European collective mind was

unified enough to make such connections operative within Europe. He suggests that there was some relationship to birth control, first in France, then throughout Europe; and to the *guilt* with regard to sex for sexual pleasure rather than the use of sex for reproduction. He connects that guilt to the guilt of centuries before, when people believed that the Black Death was punishment for their sins. I entirely agree with his emphasis on guilt and the fact that it connected the many European groups.

There is only one significant point of disagreement with Binion's erudite article and it stems from our varying disciplines: Binion is primarily a historian focused on the period from the late Middle Ages to the present and I am a psychoanalytically oriented psychiatrist looking to the much earlier period and the psychic development of our ancestors. I am convinced that *Christianity* is by far the most powerful source of European self-identification. It was the remarkable successes of Christian European groups that led to that proud self-labeling as Europeans.

First, a little history of the evolution of the sense of being European. The pagan mindset gave way to the monotheistic one of the Jews. The pagan competitive-aggressive and competitive-sexual life—and that of their gods—was different than that developed by the monotheists.

But what changed history was the unique relationship between this new god and his people. The Jewish God monitored the conscious mind of every Jew. And he would condemn and punish any conscious evidence of the phallic fantasies and impulses that drove pagan behavior, which exists in all of us. Obsessive-compulsive characteristics came to predominate, leading to enormous success of the monotheistic civilizations of Jews, Christians, and Muslims. High levels of sublimation would heighten Christian successes. Much sexual pleasure also ended with that obsessive-compulsive control as sex was sacrificed for productivity and conquest.

The quality of individual life was sacrificed to the benefit of group successes.

The pagans had squandered enormous amounts of psychic energy (libido) in virtually automatic warfare, sex, spectacle, and other self-indulgence. Jews, Christians and Muslims *repressed* that energy—which thereby became available for other uses. Real and ongoing progress began as they increasingly used that energy to create complicated sublimations.

I believe that especially in this context we can appreciate Professor Binion's emphasis on the traumatic effects of the Black Death—and on its greater psychic influence on Christian groups than on pagans, Muslims, Buddhists, and others. As he implies, Christian guilt played a major role.

An interesting bit of presumptive evidence may support my suggestion that the self-identification of "Christian" was more fundamental than "European"—and not the reverse. We have intuitively labeled that period "The Christian Era"—and *not* "The European Era."

Joel Markowitz, MD, graduated from Columbia University medical school and is currently a psychiatrist in active practice. He has been writing and lecturing about the uses of Freudian thinking since 1965. He may be contacted at markowitzjoel@gmail.com.

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Reflections on Rudolph Binion's Essay on European Identity

Peter Petschauer—Appalachian State University

Professor Rudolf Binion argues in his essay about the commonality of Europeans that "they share a distinctive

sense of collective identity apart from their diverse national and regional groupings and loyalties” and that one of the key unifying experiences was the Black Death of the Middle Ages. His essay stands in contrast to Tony Judt’s *A Grand Illusion?* (1996). I read Binion’s argument with the same anticipation and satisfaction as I have read his other works; he knows the literature and has thought about its implications. My comments are meant as no more than a continuation of the conversation he has reignited.

Somewhat unlike Binion, I would like to argue that it is all the “pasts” put together that made Europe and the modern European, both the practiced union of the EU and the sense of Europeaness in many people’s minds. In my personal suspicion, it takes all these cultural pasts, from Madrid to Krakow, from Lubjiana to Birmingham, and from Naples to Bremen, to speak of the commonalities and not the differences.

Let me start by saying that Europeans recognize something like a common culture. If nothing else, they recognize that others, such as Russians and Americans, are different, maybe even *nix kulturny*, as a Russian would say it. That is, they do not share this common cultural background. We all know the Greek word for that other [barbarian]. To follow up, years ago when I worked in the fabulous Max Plank Institute for History in Göttingen, one of the preeminent European road specialists told me that the American Interstate Highway system is similar to that of the *Autobahnen* and *autostradi*. He was astonished that something similar to the European road systems could exist anywhere else; at the time it was not as well known as today that General Eisenhower brought the idea back to the U.S. from Europe after WWII.

There is another common European experience we sometimes overlook because of our own emphasis on being, maybe only supposedly, a melting pot. Europeans also have

this experience in their pasts; cross-migration is nothing new to them and may well have contributed to their sense of Europeaness. Allow me to use my own family name as a starting example. The name is Hungarian (the fencer Attila Petschauer, Budapest), Czech-Jewish (the actor and poet Wilda Petschauer, Prague), German-Yugoslavian (the author Erich Petschauer), and German (the academic Hildegard Petschauer, Berlin). Another example might be the Medode family that my friend Hans Josef Domsta traced in the Low Countries and Germany from the 16th century onward. In addition, and again these are only examples, we have the French names of the 17th century in Germany (the merchant Batee, Düsseldorf), the Italian names from the 18th century (say Brentano, Frankfurt), the Polish names from the 19th century (say Ebovitz, Düsseldorf), the Turkish names of the 20th century (Turgut Yüksel). These name placements point to the many inner-European migrations; that is, in spite of the post-Napoleonic nationalisms, a common European experience that lingered on from one generation to the next.

Then one may want not to forget the much earlier and equally intense church, institutional, and state sponsored migratory patterns that brought Austrians from the later northern Italy into what later become Slovenia in the 14th century western Germans into east-central Europe. One may even want to add the migratory patterns of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at least from the 16th century on; Hungarians moved to Austria, Czechs into Lombardy, later Italians moved into northern Yugoslavia; and, like in other parts of Europe, while some descendents were forcibly removed by after WWII, many of them are still there today.

These families migrated to obtain better living situations and to escape persecution, or were moved without choice, as did and do migrants of more recent periods. Among the most famous of these later migrants are the *Fremdarbeiter* of the 1940's, the *Flüchtlinge* of the 1940's

and 1950's, and the *Gastarbeiter* of the second half of the 20th century. Even if few of these workers and migrants wanted to be in their new environments and were reluctantly received in some of their new environments, I am thinking of the common experience of working across borders, and migrating and resettling as the emotional and the cultural bond that allowed for understanding the experience itself.

Furthermore, Europeans have been determined travelers and for centuries have been in each others' territories and thus made Europe into one continent, whatever its economic, social, and cultural differences. I am thinking of the aristocratic students on Grand Tours in the 17th and 18th centuries, the middle-class railway travelers of the 19th century, and the hikers and bikers of the 20th century. While these travelers experienced the "other" Europe and made it part of themselves, one ought not to forget the famous travelers who wrote about their experiences. As much as they sometimes emphasized the differences from "their" part of Europe to "other" parts of it and beyond, they were aware whether they were traveling in Europe or beyond it. Two names must suffice: Lady Montague with her *Embassy Letters*, and Goethe with his *Italienische Reise*.

Then there was, of course, trade and the more recent industrial development; trade included the continuation of connections that began long before the 16th century. Here I am thinking of the 16th century Nuremberg merchant Balthasar Paumgartner and the 18th century Milanese merchant Pietro Brentano. They express these trade connections across territorial and national boundaries. As we know, all along they traded everything: fish, apples, fur, weapons, buttons, wool, silk, spices, and later coal, iron, and steel.

I cannot quite agree with Binion about the arts and music. From the Gothic cathedrals to the religious and secular edifices of the Baroque and Rococo, Europeans enjoyed a common artistic experience; and in some ways it was an

emotional experience. It definitely was for me as a child. I knew nothing of history then, but the Baroque churches felt “natural”; from Italy to Germany, and on to the Netherlands, I felt at home in “my” form of church. But that commonality reaches all the way forward into Art Deco/ Art Nouveau/ Jugendstil and the Bauhaus. With these came the turn to “modern” furnishings, in contrast to the American love affair with English antiques. As one might expect, as a child it did not occur to me that these styles were similar, if not the same, across these places and that they bound our European lives together.

The same is also true of the common musical experience, although not all Europeans were aware of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* from their start, Bach's cantatas were sung widely. Additionally, orchestras, at first small and later large, played Mozart, Beethoven, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Berlioz, Liszt, and opera houses offered Weber, Verdi and Wagner. Even less famous or less well-known composers are familiar to almost every European to this day. To stay with one example for a moment, one of the principal emotional uniting experiences would have had to be Mahler's *Second Symphony, Resurrection*; whether it was played in St. Petersburg, Paris, or Berlin, or is heard on a CD today. Let me also linger with the later famous European voices who united the continent: from Piaff to Dietrich, from Valente to Carreras, and from Mouskouri to Pavarotti. They evoke deep emotional responses to this day. Mouskouri still tugs at many a European heart and reminds me that it was this Greek chanteuse who sang the beautiful *Je chante avec toi liberté*.

If I were to choose a traumatic event that formed modern Europe, aside from the Black Death, it would be the war we now separate as WWI and WWII and which were really one war; it affected every European. To this day, every older European whom I ask about “the war,” immedi-

ately knows what I am talking about. Since we emphasize the Holocaust in this country—that is, the horrendous Jewish-European trauma—we tend to miss the common European experience of murder and devastation in which millions upon millions of men were sent to death in combat. Also, in 1945, whole countries lay in shambles; they remained there for years. As an 11-year-old, coming from Italy in 1950, a coal-fired train took me into Cologne; the image of street after street of devastation remains nearly as vividly for me today as was at first sight. Indeed, as Judt said so well not too long ago in his “The ‘Problem of Evil’ in Postwar Europe” the *NY Review of Books* (Volume 55, Number 2, February 14, 2008), Europeans all the way into Poland keep asking him: What about our trauma? What about our losses? From my perspective, almost surely every older Frenchman, German, Italian, Dane, etc. would ask the same question: What about our experiences—the rotting corpses in our streets, the miserable death of our brother, the complete destruction of our village, and the burning down of our Gothic cathedral? Germans and their other European helpers killed millions of Jews in camps, but they also eliminated the most vocal and intelligent among other Europeans.

Every older European was part of this calamity, and every younger European lives with its reverberations. Yes, the Germans started the unspeakable mess we euphemistically call war of the first half of the 20th century, but all Europeans experienced it in some fashion, including those who stormed into their neighbors’ homes and lives in 1914 and 1939. “*Nie Wieder*” was the lesson Käthe Kollwitz drew after WWI in one of the best-known paintings of the time, and she would have applied it to WWII if she had not died as it ended.

These common experiences, whether they originated with the herring trade, a magnificent cathedral, an excellent Handel opera, or even the beatings almost everyone experi-

enced in elementary schools all the way into the 20th century, united the continent and gave it a collective identity. Whether one rides in a train from Berlin to Warsaw or from Brussels to London, one knows one is in Europe. Interestingly, for the most part, people recognize each other as Europeans, or not, and feel that sense of common past whether it expressed itself in the pestilence of the middle ages and the recovery afterward, or WWI and WWII and the realization of the foolishness of war after that.

Yes, this is a piece by a Europhile; however, one who is fully aware of the differences between its various parts, be they economic, social, or cultural. But living away from there, I have come to appreciate the commonalities, including the emotional and psychic commonalities upon which Professor Binion elaborated.

Peter Petschauer, PhD, Professor Emeritus of History at Appalachian State University in the beautiful mountains of Boone, North Carolina, served Appalachian for 38 years, the last five as head of the Hubbard Center for Faculty and Staff Support. In addition to holding a named professorship for a number of years, he chaired the Faculty Senate at Appalachian in the early 90s and headed the Faculty Assembly for the University of North Carolina system. in the second half of that decade. Prof. Petschauer is an active scholar whose most recent book is about his father's disillusioning experience as an officer in the SS. He may be reached pet-schauerpw@appstate.edu.

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Binion's Reply to the Commentators

Rudolph Binion

My apologies to my four distinguished commentators

for this all-too-hasty reply to their probing commentaries: they deserve better. Agreed, Dave, the Black Death wasn't "the only thing at work" in creating felt European-ness; I meant only that it was the decisive thing. More, the "Islamic threat" was experienced as a threat to Christendom, not to Europe. And Bismarck didn't need to "forge" a German identity; on the contrary, he created a Germanic empire largely to defuse aggressive German nationalism. Of course, Paul, Russia is nationally distinct within Europe, as is every other country in Europe. But book titles on the order of *Russia and Europe*, however numerous, hardly suggest that Russians don't feel European, if only uncertainly or ambivalently. And again, when Christians fought Muslims, they did so in the name of Christendom, not Europe. Joel Markowitz may well be right that the Christian component of a Christian European is not just older, but "more fundamental" than the European component; my concern was only with what made Europeans feel European, not the relative depth of that feeling. Finally, Peter Petschauer provides nifty examples of European unity, especially cultural, which he sees as more homogeneous than even I do, and to the Black Death behind European identity he adds the two World Wars combined as a second traumatic bond reinforcing the first. All this is scholarly disputation at its most rewarding. May we argue our way to ever-deeper understanding.

[Editor's Note: Our thanks to Professor Binion who, unfortunately, could be given very little time to respond to the commentators' assessment of his important paper.] □

Health care in American is a matter of life and death yet there is little discussion of the psychological obstacles to reforming it. See page 103 for a call for papers on this vital subject.

After Crossing the Threshold: War, Stress, and Suicide

Kenneth Fuchsman—University of Connecticut

War brings death and destruction, danger and devastation. Amidst the carnage, some are killed or maimed; others suffer acute stress, while many find ways of surviving and functioning. For a good number of those who make it back, the aftermath of war and military service, the transition from combat to civilian life, can be hazardous.

A recent combat veteran of Iraq said there is “a defining moment for any soldier, but once you cross that point and stop fearing death, how do you change back to a normal person?” Also, “once you get home, you don’t want to give up that courage about death...You’re back, and you’re still fighting a war.”¹ What the soldier did not mention is that it is also the rage, the hatred, and the intensity of combat that are often brought home by soldiers, who are in one reality but still feeling that they are in another. Jason Haines, after returning from serving in Iraq, told a reporter: “I’m not afraid of going to war...I’m afraid of coming back home.”² While there is widespread familiarity with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and physical disabilities of veterans, the full range of the psychic damage of being in war and the military is not well known. This paper will detail the areas where disorders and dysfunctions are prevalent among those who served their country, explore the reasons for the suffering, and why some become emotionally wounded and others do not.

It is the period after the threats to life and limb are diminished that pent-up stress comes out. While many who serve in combat zones return home physically and mentally stable, others do not. Veterans of the military have higher

rates of certain disorders than non-veterans. For instance, according to a report by the government-sponsored Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT), 28% of Soldiers and Marines in high combat in Iraq experienced acute stress or PTSD.³ Other anxiety problems are present in veterans, whether or not they fought in a war. A 1999 Veterans Health Study discovered that 31% of veterans had depressive symptoms, which is two to five times that of the general public.⁴ Veterans make up 11% of the general population over age 18; but in 2007 they accounted for roughly 26% of the homeless.⁵ Wartime service, at least in Vietnam, led to issues for many soldiers on coming home, for example, 44.5% of male Vietnam veterans reported at least one significant postwar problem with readjustment. More than a decade after the 1975 fall of Vietnam, one in four of those who had served in Vietnam still had at least one serious adjustment problem. For those male Vietnam veterans with PTSD, at least one of their children is more likely to have behavioral problems than the offspring of male Vietnam veterans without PTSD.⁶ The sufferings of the fathers are passed on to the children.

The serious problems that haunt some soldiers after they are out of the military can lead to extreme actions. In data from 45 states in 2005, 120 veterans killed themselves per week, making 6,256 for the year. In that same year, the highest suicide rate for veterans is among 20- to 24-year-old population, two to four times the rate of non-veterans their own age, and higher than any other age group among veterans.⁷ These youthful suicides are soldiers who have served in the era of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Taking one's life is a problem that impacts soldiers from all periods. In a 2007 study comparing male veterans and male non-veterans in the whole population, Mark Kaplan and colleagues found that "over time veterans were twice as likely (adjusted HR 2.13, 95% CI 1.14 to 3.99) to die of suicide compared with male non-veterans in the general popula-

tion.”⁸ A 2003 study reported that over “30 percent of all suicides were committed by military veterans...In fact, the suicide mortality rate for veterans, 18 per 1,000, exceeds all other groups.”⁹ Serving in the U.S. military can be dangerous to your mental well-being; spending extensive time in war can be more risky than just fighting an enemy. One of the great paradoxes of human existence is that much of human civilization is an alternation between cooperation and conflict, diplomacy and combat. Warfare, historian John Keegan claims, “reaches into the most secret places of the human heart.”¹⁰ Gwynne Dyer asserts, “that war may be an inescapable part of our genetic heritage.”¹¹ Yet for all the ways that victory in war has helped cultures survive and prosper, set an example of heroism—brave men excelling in dire circumstances—it has come with the most serious emotional and health consequences for many immersed in war’s brutalities.

Why War Hurts

Tolstoy said that war is “the vilest thing in the world, and we must understand that...The aim of war is killing, the instruments of war are espionage, treason and...the ruin of the inhabitants.”¹² War is one of the more primordial experiences known to humanity. The imminence of being maimed or killed is ever present to combatants and enemy civilians. The threat of the instantaneous arrival of the dreadful means the soldier in a war zone is always ready. As the saying goes, in war it is the quick and the dead. It is not only the fear of your own demise that is frightening; in combat soldiers depend on each other, in a matter of life and death. Witnessing your buddy standing right besides being blown into little pieces can be devastating. Unwanted flashbacks and nightmares of these horrifying events can haunt many veterans for decades.

Amidst all the anxiety of combat, what focuses the soldier is the connection with the other soldiers in his squad.

The band of brothers in combat is envisioned as a protective united outfit. It is reminiscent of the symbiotic days of infancy when the mother was seen as nurturing and keeping the baby from being endangered. The wounding, maiming or killing of a "brother" in war is a repetition of the anxiety and outrage an infant feels when separated from his mother. The same fear of death and demise the youngster feels is now a reality in the death-drenched realities of combat. Being nurtured and being frightened of separation, loss, and extermination are often part of the same repeating dynamic.

Psychologist Jeffrey Simpson wrote: "Across all human cultures and even several primate species, young and vulnerable infants tend to display a specific sequence of reaction to separation from their...caregivers. Immediately after separation, infants often protest vehemently, crying, screaming, and throwing temper tantrums as they search for their caregivers."¹³ Ian Suttie says that self-preservative instincts lead the infant to be "dominated from the beginning by the need to retain the mother—a need, which, if thwarted, must produce the utmost extreme of terror and rage, since the loss of mother is, under natural conditions, but the precursor of death itself."¹⁴ The fury at the loss of the mother can be reactivated amidst the dangers of the battlefield. Disappointment, loss, anxiety, rage, and mortality weigh on many of us from infancy to our eventual demise. Warfare is where the imminence of death is ever present. The alternation between the fear of being attacked and the furious readiness to waste others is at the heart of war, and is at the dark edge of what it means to be human.

War is a haunting operation that can traumatize one emotionally and damage one neurologically. During war, the body adjusts to the fear of attack; it helps us survive mortal threats, but often at a cost. Physician J. Douglas Bremner explains that, "Our bodies have biological systems that respond to life-threatening danger, acting like fear alarm sys-

tems that are critical for survival.” When danger is imminent, “a flood of hormones and chemical messengers is released into our brains and bloodstream almost instantly... This stress-responsive activation of biological systems helps us” in “doing whatever it takes to survive.” Yet functioning under high stress is not easy. Bremner writes that, “The short-term survival response can be at the expense of long-term function.” This can include various kinds of neurological damage and trauma-related psychiatric disorders. The “same biological systems that help us survive life threats can also damage the brain and body.”¹⁵ Bremner adds: “Like a car engine that burns out on the excessive speeds of the Autobahn...our bodies can become irreversibly damaged by our own stress responses.”¹⁶

However, a puzzle remains: some men are susceptible to wartime trauma and others show few ill effects from the stress of war. A combination of genetic predisposition and experience impacts on the likelihood of negative responses to war. The brain levels of serotonin, a chemical messenger regulating thought and mood, are important in how a person responds to stress. Those who have the short transporter gene are more likely to be anxious when under pressure. Turhan Canli reports that in the absence of stress someone’s transporter gene did not budge depression. As the number of stressors increased among those with at least one short copy of the transporter gene, the chance of depression and suicidal thoughts increased. Canli writes: “after four or more traumatic occurrences, 33 percent of the subjects who carried at least one short transporter became depressed as compared with just 17 percent of those who bore two copies of the lengthier blueprint, suggesting that the long gene protects against depression in the wake of acutely negative experiences.”¹⁷ While genetic predisposition is important in protecting against depression, it is also connected to the level of stress. As the MHAT reports, the level of PTSD increased in

soldiers and marines depending on the intensity of combat they experienced and the length of time they spent in a combat zone. Those who served more than one tour were more likely to have PTSD than those with comparable exposure to danger who served shorter tours of duty.¹⁸ It is not only experiencing high levels of combat that matters, but what kind of combat a soldier experienced. Psychiatrist Judith Herman writes: "it was...the participation in meaningless acts of malicious destruction that rendered men most vulnerable to lasting psychological damage...Years after their return from the war, the most symptomatic men were those who had witnessed or participated in abusive violence. Confirming these findings, another study of Vietnam veterans found that every one of the men who acknowledged participating in atrocities had post-traumatic stress disorder more than a decade after the end of the war."¹⁹

Conclusion

Those who serve in the military are much more likely to die by their own hand, to be depressed, to be homeless, and to suffer from post-traumatic stress and for those with PTSD to have children with behavioral problems than are the general population. The impact of being in the military and war are long lasting, and for many, severe. You will not see these facts on any military recruitment poster or television commercial. As there are with cigarettes, there ought to be a warning on these advertisements: the military can be hazardous to your health. However, while there may not be any good reason for smoking, there can be justifications for war and for joining the service. Still, in too many instances, war has scarred people's lives and will continue to do so.

It is the shock of violence and the perpetration of abusive violence that upsets the balance of stress for many and produces these high incidences of depression, suicide, homelessness, and post-traumatic stress in veterans. Humans appear to have both a taste for and an aversion to the personal

experience of violence that is endemic in war. We are a paradoxical species in that for many men who survive war, it can both strengthen and traumatize them.

Kenneth Fuchsman, EdD, is a historian who teaches interdisciplinary studies at the University of Connecticut, where he has been faculty and an administrator. Dr. Fuchsman writes on the history of psychoanalysis, and the nature of the Oedipus complex. He may be reached at ken.fuchsman@uconn.edu.

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¹⁵ J. Douglas Bremner, *Does Stress Damage the Brain?* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002), 3-4.

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Heroes as Mentors and Role Models

Peter Petschauer—Appalachian State University

The persons who we choose as heroes say as much about us as about them. They may even be projections of our better selves or the hopes for these better selves. Our choices may also say much about the stage of life at which an individual has arrived and this stage's aspirations and hopes. No doubt, the selection of heroes has shifted as well because of the modern means of communication,

In a more traditional society the horizon most likely enlarged from childhood to adulthood, but today even at a young age heroes can be persons who are not necessarily close physically. In a traditional society young individuals tended to choose persons in their immediate surroundings; even adults most likely chose persons in these surroundings; and as seniors they fell back on admired persons of their childhoods while retaining the ones of the earlier adulthood. Because of modern means of communication, individuals can chose persons to be admired from their immediate environ-

ments and from another end of the planet.

We have heard often in conversations and in literature that modern individuals, especially the younger ones among us, do not chose heroes; and if they do, they tend toward the sort that we find not nearly as intriguing as they. Since 1990, I have found that bright high school students had already looked beyond themselves and every summer gave me a list of persons who are familiar to all of us, including figures from their parents to their teachers and ministers, from distant relatives to Gandhi and Mandela, and from the Dalai Lama to an American president or two. Although we thought that young people today would tend toward the unique figures highlighted on TV and in the Internet, for the most part, the students thought such "heroes" to be temporary phenomena and not worthy of being heroes for them.

I would like to argue that because I moved from Europe to the U.S., the selection of my heroes may be somewhat different and seem more modern and reflective of the more traditional choices of heroes and their fairly age-specific placement. In elementary school in Northern Italy, my hero was one of the female teachers. In the monastery schools that followed, the first hero was the prefect at the one in Euskirchen, Germany and then the prefect at the school in the Netherlands. But because I was not native to "my village" and sent off to monastery school, I also became exposed to persons beyond the immediate surroundings; in this case, Charlie Chaplin, whose movies we were shown frequently, and Julius Caesar whose Gallic Wars we memorized and translated with considerable determination. Once in the U.S., the heroes became once more local and distant at the same time. I admired several of the professors at New York University, especially William Blackwell, a Russian economic specialist. As Chaplin and Caesar receded, I discovered other heroes beyond me, among them the Russian emperor Peter the Great and the empress Catherine II; I wrote

several articles about Peter and my dissertation on Catherine as well as several articles on her.

Early in my career, Roy Carroll, my second department chair and later Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University of North Carolina (UNC) system, emerged as my most admired immediate figure. As heroes beyond myself, Erwin Rommel, the German field marshal who joined the conspiracy against Hitler and who killed himself at the dictator's behest in 1944, impressed me most. Another key personage beyond the immediate surroundings was Peter Gay, the European historian whose books about the Enlightenment, Freud, and his own life took me into an entirely different world, yet one that was somewhat familiar in that he grew up in Berlin, survived the Holocaust and emigrated to the U.S. Beyond my immediate environment as well, Nelson Mandela fit into my image of a hero because of his ability to stand up under unimaginable pressure and yet not let that pressure taint him with hatred and malice.

Finally, toward the end of my career and into early retirement, the heroine in the immediate environment became Zohara Boyd, a colleague from the English Department and a hidden child in Poland during World War II, with whom I speak at schools throughout North Carolina and beyond. From a distance I admire today, especially after 2000 and the publication of his *Mein Leben* (2000), Marcel Reich-Ranicki, the profound critic of German literature.

While I still accept the earlier heroes, some of their immediacy has receded, and I now understand better why they emerged as persons to be admired in the first place; for the most part, they worked in my surroundings, and I was able to evaluate (note the value part in the word) them and respect them. Even the distant figures were persons about whom I thought and of whom I wrote because they exhibited qualities that seemed and still seems admirable. Probably because I am a man, most of the heroes are men, but I should

add that the four women in the household of my childhood in the mountains of Northern Italy exerted an enormous influence on my understanding of the world. For various reasons, my parents, even though I wrote about my father several times, including in *Der Vater und die SS (The Father and the SS)* (Brixen/Bressanone: Weger, 2007), never became heroes; nor did some of my friends whom I love dearly all the same. In the case of my parents, they were just that, parents and I struggled with their legacy, but the fashion in which I understand myself and the values I hold originated with others in my immediate and distant surroundings.

Oddly, few of my heroes are recent political figures; even more oddly, considering my tendency away from organized religion, several of the heroes were religious figures. Even more telling, while many of my heroes were and are persons in authority, a goodly number of them found discomfort with standing by established authority, and even struggled against it and lost their lives for their stance.

Let me stay for a few moments with Marcel Reich-Ranicki. He emerged as a hero for several reasons, each again saying as much about me, the admirer, as him, the admired. Reich-Ranicki was born in Poland 88 years ago to Jewish parents, attended gymnasium in Berlin at his mother's behest, experienced the Holocaust in the Warsaw Ghetto (as secretary to the Jewish Council, the *Judenrat*, set up by the SS). He was perhaps the only one, along with his new wife, who was able to walk away from the Warsaw Ghetto. He worked first in Poland for the secret police, then as a writer in East Germany, and finally as a literary critic in West and then the reunited Germany. Günther Grass asked Reich-Ranicki at a conference in 1958: "What are you really—a Pole, a German, or what?" Ranicki answered: "I am half Polish, half German, and fully Jewish" (p. 11). But he was not really happy with the answer because, as he put it: "I was never half Polish, never half German—and I had no doubt

that I would ever become either. I was also never in my life a full Jew, and I am not one today" (p. 12). In an interview he said later that he was a Jew living in Germany, and that his home was German literature.

I have no claim either to Reich-Ranicki's Jewish heritage, nor his profound intellect or success, but he appeals to me because he fits the image of myself as a somewhat misplaced person. Neither German, nor American, but both; a historian, but not generally welcome in "my" History Department; an intellectual, but always lured into working on non-intellectual projects. Aside from his enormous success as a literary critic with his own successful TV show, I understand Reich-Ranicki even more so as the quintessential Jewish-German intellectual, one of the last of that group, as he says somewhat arrogantly, but one has to acknowledge readily, Central Europe's finest accomplishments. He fits well with the Jewish-German authors, literati, composers, and painters we still admire today. As one of the last of that tradition, he represents everyone who was exceptional in that group and whom the Nazis destroyed relentlessly and without remorse. However ruthless he sometimes is in his evaluations of German post-war authors, he was often only saying what needed to be said. And his long-standing and apparently wonderful relationship with his wife Tosia tells us of another side of his personality.

This short progression shows that ones heroes are not necessarily ones friends or persons we simply admire. To my understanding, heroes are persons we chose as we move along in our lives and who reflect best our understanding of that point in our lives, the places in which we reside and the times in which we live. Then as now, for a young person, it may indeed be an admired teacher or minister, and an actor; for the adult a supervisor, a president, and a literary figure; and for an older person, heroes from life's past and individuals who speak to specific experiences of a lifetime, mine now

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- Fallen heroes: the psychological cathexis among former true believers, such as communists and cultists. The role of anti-heroes
- Role models up close and at a distance
- The psychology and complexities of mentorship: case studies
- A review in the light of current knowledge of Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship*, and the *Heroic in History* and his other writings on heroes and hero worship
- Cartoon, comic book, and animated movie heroes
- Presidents as role models
- The effectiveness of mentorship programs for inner-city children
- Psychobiographical sketches of famous people and their heroes, role models: role models of psychoanalysts, psychohistorians, et al.
- Comparing the heroes and role models of war and peacetime
- Reviews of the scholarly literature on role models and mentors

Due January 10, 2010

Articles of 500-1500 words (and two long ones) are welcome, as are additional suggestions. Contact Co-Editors Peter Petschauer at petschauerpw@appstate.edu or Paul Elovitz at Pelovitz@aol.com

being those of endeavoring to understand intellectuals, their displacement and understanding of their world.

Peter Petschauer, PhD's biography may be found on page 82. □

Probing Tolstoy's Search for Religion

Anna Geifman—Boston University

Review essay of Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, Tolstoy's Quest for God (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers), 2007, i-vii, 199 pages., ISBN 978-0-7658-0376-4, \$34.95.

Five years before the end of his life, the celebrated author and luminary of the Russian classical literature Lev Tolstoy (1828-1910) declared that “All of my life I have been concerned with religious questions, and outside of them I see no meaning in human existence.” Most admirers of his literary works would find this statement at odds with a standard opinion about Tolstoy's “obsessive religiosity.” It allegedly revealed itself abruptly and dominated primarily his old age, causing—sadly, many agreed—the renunciation of his own earlier masterpieces. For his part, Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, the writer's psychoanalytic biographer, adheres to his trade's number-one rule: to take at face value that which his subject chooses to expose of his inner world. His new book presents Tolstoy's entire adult life as a quest for a personal God.

Rancour-Laferriere the academic intellectual wants to be fair to Tolstoy the spiritual seeker. He does not conceal his personal skepticism—bordering on dismissive impatience—about what he sees as an assortment of the writer's “unfounded assumptions, paradoxes, contradictions, non sequiturs, irrelevancies, repetitions, historical inaccuracies, and

other serious problems.” Still, he grants that the great novelist was a very influential religious thinker in Russia and abroad (pp. 5-6). The scholar admits frustration with Tolstoy’s spiritual journey, during which he “cannot settle on some consistent doctrine or dogma about God” (p. 7); this is very unintellectual and unscholarly of Tolstoy, yet entirely consistent with his well-known diatribes against the professorial—“learned and stupid”—modes of inquiry. Finally, for the sake of objectivity, Rancour-Laferriere prefers to consider the novelist’s religious searching not via the depicted inner dilemmas of his literary characters in works such as *The Death of Ivan Ilich*, *Resurrection*, and late didactic stories, but by studying his “thinking itself, and as expressed by Tolstoy himself in his own person” (p. 6).

With this in mind—and with great erudition—Rancour-Laferriere scrutinizes with the eye of a psychoanalyst an array of primary sources, including Tolstoy’s published confessions, correspondence concerning matters of faith, and the 13 volumes of his diaries. The scholar finds them “introspective in the extreme, and therefore...of great psychological value.” According to Rancour-Laferriere, “many passages in the diaries demonstrate a considerable degree of psychopathology” (p. 2). In his previous publications, he has already employed a psychoanalytic approach to examine the writer’s character-formation and behavior patterns (as in *Tolstoy on the Couch: Misogyny, Masochism and the Absent Mother* [London: Macmillan, 1998]); now he confirms: “...like the medical student who must study cadavers in order to learn basic anatomy, I have over the years become inured to Tolstoy’s fixation on death, his preoccupation with violence/nonviolence, his grandiose narcissism, his manic-depressive mood fluctuations, and other disturbed Tolstoyan thinking that fuels the quest for God” (p. 7). For the author, Tolstoy’s creed is, in fact, *a symptom and a corollary of psychopathology*.

Tolstoy describes his religious journey as beginning with a childhood goal of self-perfection, which forced him “to seek guidance,” eventually “found in faith.” This path Rancour-Laferriere characterizes as “narcissistic in nature, that is, it very much focused on the self” (pp. 14-15). As a young man, the Russian pondered on spiritual meanings of his physical illnesses, finding in such exercise “obvious moral benefit” for himself. From a psychoanalytic viewpoint, says Rancour-Laferriere, this is a “characteristic twist of moral masochism” (pp. 15-16). So were, in his opinion, Tolstoy’s “chronic guilt feelings,” even if his list of recollected transgressions—none imagined—would by most ethical standards validate a tinge of remorse also in someone not prone to self-degrading blame: “I killed people in war, summoned others to duels in order to kill them...Lying, thieving, promiscuity of all kinds, drunkenness, violence, murder... yet...my contemporaries...still consider me a relatively moral man” (Cited on p. 43).

Rancour-Laferriere considers periodic loneliness and concomitant fears to be manic-depressive episodes, which Tolstoy utilized to enhance his faith, diagnosed as a regressive fantasy. His belief in God, the scholar qualifies, was “less and less dependent on mood, and will become established as a kind of mental fixture” and a lasting “antidepressant.” The writer’s famous crisis, in which he found himself torn between the intrinsic demands of his deepened belief and identity as a world-famous author, Rancour-Laferriere characterizes as “psycho-religious flux” of a disturbed individual in dire need to affirm and magnify his “narcissistic realm” (pp. 17-18, 20-21, 65, 167-168).

Tolstoy acknowledged “an inscrutable Source on which our life depends” and accepted “a reflection, or a particle, or a manifestation of this Source in oneself.” For Rancour-Laferriere it was yet another proof of the man’s boundless grandiosity, as if he were equating himself with the Infi-

nite when praying to merit the consciousness “not the whole of God, but only one of the manifestations of him, accessible to me” (Cited on pp. 2-3, 169-170). Tolstoy’s exalted claim to see divinity in others would be nothing but hypomania; his expressed ideal of loving God in others without being loved in return, would be “hypomania with a masochistic spin” (pp. 173-174).

To get to the root of the Russian’s multi-sided folly, articulated in religious idiom, Rancour-Laferriere refers to post-Freudian psychoanalytic studies, which link “adult experience of God and... early childhood experience of the mother.” On her the child depends totally, and later in life she serves as a mental representation of God. Tolstoy was cut off from the most essential source of security and love since, says Rancour-Laferriere, she “had the audacity to die on him before he was fully able to speak.” His “quest for God thus begins and ends with his quest for his mother” (pp. 37, 180).

One could arguably take this line of reasoning to the point of absurdity by applying it to any idealistic calling. A diagnosis for the officer-volunteer fighting for a just cause may be mental derangement, manifested by a choice of abnormal behaviors—from ritual-orientation (saluting), to compulsiveness (persistent exercise of self-protective techniques), to aggression (justified preoccupation with violence), to death-fixation and suicidal ideation disguised as martyrdom (selfless heroism). One’s conduct in combat may easily qualify as episodic narcissism with pronounced anti-social co-morbidity. Such psychoanalytic tagging, however erudite, would obviously not reveal one’s real motivations or experience. Similarly, a person can be plagued by guilt and low self-esteem, as certainly was Tolstoy, who undoubtedly also suffered from depressive moods; yet, no scientific method may logically preclude coexistence of these and other psychological predicaments with spirituality, which he

might have genuinely recognized within himself as *a reality, independent from any acquired mental condition*. In other words, no systematic mode of interpretation—psychoanalysis including—may legitimately apply itself to a sphere to which it has no direct access, except by usurpation and over-extension of aptitude.

Rancour-Laferriere emphasizes Tolstoy's "hostility toward scholarship, and toward scientific knowledge generally." He "believed that science was *opposed* to religion, and he opted in favor of the latter" (pp. 3-4), unlike his Freudian biographer, who makes the opposite choice. Tolstoy perception of life and its meaning "was religious by definition... Science was irrelevant. For example, the notion that religious behaviors and attitudes themselves might have been the product of Darwinian natural selection never entered Tolstoy's mind" (p. 5). Paradoxically, Rancour-Laferriere's position with regards to faith—at least as it is presented in his scholarship—is essentially analogous, albeit in the reversed sense: he adopts as his baseline the axiom that religious conviction is a derivative of a person's psychological makeup. The more pronounced is one's devotion (and its various manifestations), the more symptomatic it is of a detrimental mental condition. While Tolstoy indeed could not imagine that belief was a product of natural selection, Rancour-Laferriere leaves outside his sphere of intellectual concern a possibility that spiritual awareness may constitute a self-regulating experience, an intrinsic state, existing in its own right, autonomous from any particular set of psychological circumstances.

Tolstoy's Quest for God is timely and indispensable precisely because its fundamental argument underlines an imperative methodological issue scholars in the field of psychohistory face today—the need to reconcile research, based on the academic *modus operandi*, with its intricate subject matter. Admittedly, in the humanities and social sciences its

complexity often exceeds the scope of conventional intellectual discernment. This book exemplifies both—high achievements of the existing scholarship and our challenge to make a daring step beyond it, towards a new method.

Anna Geifman, PhD, is the author of Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917 (Princeton University Press, 1993) and Entangled in Terror: The Azef Affair and the Russian Revolution (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000). She is the editor of Russia under the Last Tsar: Opposition and Subversion, 1894-1917 (Blackwell, 1999). Her last major publication is a psychohistorical essay, La mort sera votre dieu: du nihilisme russe au terrorisme islamiste (Paris: La Table Ronde, 2005). Dr. Geifman is Professor of History at Boston University, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate classes on the history of imperial Russia, the USSR, and psychohistory. She may be contacted at annageifman@hotmail.com. □

BULLETIN BOARD

CONFERENCES: The **Psychohistory Forum Work-In-Progress Saturday Seminars** will resume in the fall. The **Presidential Research Group** of the **Psychohistory Forum** has organized a panel, with presentations on the Obama presidency by **Ken Fuchsman** and **Paul Elovitz**, at the 32nd Annual International Psychohistorical Association (**IPA**) at Fordham Law School in Manhattan on **June 10**. Other Forum members presenting include **David Beisel**, **Irene Javors**, **Henry Lawton**, **Denis O'Keefe**, and **Charles Strozier**. **Dominic** and **Mena Potts** will be presenting on historical dreamwork at the **June 26-30, 2009** International Association for the Study of Dreams (**IASD**) conference in Chicago. The **July 13-17, 2009** International Society of Political Psychology (**ISPP**) conference will be at Trinity College in Dublin. The Association for the Psychoanalysis of

Call for Papers
Psychology of Health Care and Reform
Special Issue - December 2009

Psychological insights on issues involving life and death:

- Anxiety and fear at the idea of health reform
- Comparing medical and patient responses to Canadian and European and the U.S. systems
- Why the American health care system is in some ways the best and the worst major system
- Ambivalence regarding health care services as a right and a responsibility
- Managed care's rhetoric and reality
- Privatization and innovation in health care
- Legal aspects of health care and its reform
- Obama's health care proposals and prospects for success
- The economics and politics of health reform
- Prenatal and baby care
- Hospice and other end of life care
- Assisted suicide struggles
- Legal and illegal drugs
- Health classification and self-identity: mental illness, hyperactivity and so forth
- The role of psychoanalysis in health care systems
- Probing the psychobiographies of leading health care leaders and innovators

Due October 10, 2009

Articles of 500-1500 words (and two long pieces)
are welcome

Contact Paul Elovitz at pelovitz@aol.com

Culture and Society (APCS) will meet on **October 9-10, 2009** at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The National Association for Psychoanalysis (NAAP) annual conference will be in Manhattan on **October 17, 2009**. **PUBLICATIONS:** Congratulations to **Tom Blass** whose book, *The Man Who Shocked the World: The Life and Legacy of Stanley Milgram*, has come out in paperback and has recently been translated into Japanese and Taiwanese. Prof. Blass remains grateful to Clio's Psyche for helping to make the connections resulting in the publication of his award-winning book. **NOTES ON MEMBERS:** Our appreciation to **Flora Hogman** for hosting our April 4th meeting. We welcome new member **Harold Kassel**. **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, Mary Lambert, Jacqueline Paulson, Daniel Rancour-Lafferriere, Lee Solomon, and Nancy Unger; Members David James Fisher, Dick Harrison, Henry Lawton, Vivian Rosenberg, Stanley Teitelbaum, and Howard Stein. Our special thanks for thought-provoking materials to David Beisel, Rudolph Binion, Dan Dervin, Paul Elovitz, Tom Ferraro, Harriet Fraad, Tom Ferraro, Ken Fuchsman, Anna Geifman, Patricia Gibbs, Jonathan Goldberg, Daniel Klenbort, Joel Markowitz, Ruth Neubauer, Peter Petschauer, Edward Rickert, Robert Samuel, and Hanna Turken. To Guest Editor Bob Lentz for the Psychoeconomics Special Issue. To Caitlin Adams for editing, proofing, and Publisher 2003 software application and to Marie Murray and Brian Todd for proofreading. Our special thanks to our numerous, overworked referees, who must remain anonymous. ▣

What impact have heroes, role models, and mentors had on your life and what is it like to be a mentor and role model for others? See page 96 for details.

Call for Papers
The Psychology of Remembering 9/11:
The Uses and Abuses of Trauma
Special Issue, September 2009

Psychological Insights on Various Topics Including:

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- The anthrax scare and other hysterias; possible "Swine Flu" comparisons
- The rituals and processes of mourning, healing, and (perhaps even) closure
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- The public's association of Saddam Hussein with Osama bin Laden
- Demonizing and pathologizing the enemy by academics, prison guards, etc.
- Psychology of terrorist organizations and individuals
- The impact of terrorism on children, survivors, and family members
- The September 11th Victim Compensation Fund: money for loss
- Nightmares and daydreams of terrorism
- The world's initial and subsequent responses to terrorism against America
- America's response to terrorist attacks in Spain, England, Indonesia, etc.
- Fear and bravado in the wake of the April 2009 Air Force One flyover
- Identification with the victims of terrorism and treatment of the victims
- Comparing/contrasting responses to airborne terrorism with ground terrorism
- Suicide bombing, "martyrdom operations," & terrorists as "freedom fighters"
- The weakening of civil liberties and the struggle to restore them
- How 9/11 impacted fictional terrorism found on film, the Internet, and TV
- Cycles of terrorism throughout history
- Comparing President's Bush and Obama in the struggle against terrorism
- Personal accounts of how terrorism changed lives
- Reviews of books on suicide bombers, terrorism, war on terrorism, etc.

Due July 10, 2009

Articles of 500-1500 words (and two long pieces) are welcome, as are additional suggestions. Contact Paul H. Elovitz, Editor at PElovitz@aol.com

Clio's Psyche
627 Dakota Trail
Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

