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# Clio's Psyche

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

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Volume 5, Number 3

December, 1998

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## Washington's Obsession with Sex and Clinton

23 Authors Look at Clinton, Lewinsky, Starr, and the Impeachment Process

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### Analysts on the Couch: Part II: Fairbairn and Guntrip

Andrew Brink  
Psychohistory Forum Research Associate

*[Editor's Note: In our last issue we began Andrew Brink's indepth review essay on the psychobiographies of three famous analysts with his*

### Clinton's "Blind Spots" and "The Rorschach Presidency"

Paul H. Elovitz  
Ramapo College

In this introduction to our Special Edition, I suggest that "The Rorschach President" is an appropriate label for President Clinton -- and perhaps all Presidents -- because people tend to see in the 42nd President what they want to see based

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their own hopes, fears, and disappointments. In the following scholarly contributions, many issues are probed including the lifting of the prohibition on talking publicly about Presidential sexuality, Clinton's character and its defects, images of Republican "cannibalism," the self sacrifice of Clinton's double: Leroy Newton Gingrich, Gingrich's future prospects, comparisons between Nixon and Clinton and Nixon and Gingrich, Kenneth Starr's view of the world, Jefferson's DNA, and more. There are my own thoughts as a Clinton scholar and some references to the 23 articles and letters to the editor included in this issue. The introduction concludes with a brief discussion on the lack of limits in the current crisis in Washington.

Labeling William Jefferson Clinton has been a favorite pastime of watchers of this protean politician who keeps reinventing himself. In Arkansas in the 1980s he was known as "the Comeback Kid" to his admirers and "Slick Willie" to his detractors. Consistent distractors throughout his Presidency have been the vocal talk show hosts, who have spent the last six years denouncing him as a cowardly, draft dodging, dope smoking, lying, womanizing, morally corrupt, valueless, pro-homosexual, tax-and-spend liberal, posing as a moderate "New Democrat." They have seen him as especially dangerous because he co-opts conservative ideas, such as balancing the budget, NAFTA, law and order (more police on the streets and three-strikes-and-you're-out sentencing), and welfare reform. To them his liberal agenda includes plans to abort late term babies; socialize medicine; put the US military under the control of the UN; violate the constitution by taking guns away from ordinary citizens under the Brady Bill; save big, socialized government even after its collapse in the Soviet Union; and interfere with the free market and the military. Their contempt for and fear of his wife, Hilary Rodham, seems boundless, and causes her to be kept in the background during part of her husband's tenure in the White House.

Blacks are vocal and consistent advocates of the President while traditional Democrats are mostly quiet supporters. Women are inclined to be more supportive of Clinton than men in general partly because of his concern for children, education, social welfare programs, abortion rights, and a thriving economy. Political pollsters and many pundits have long emphasized his edge with

women voters which often relates to his weaknesses with other groups. For example, conservatives were livid when he publicly declared on several occasions, "I feel your pain," while many women felt he understood their issues. They also admire his concern for peace and find him handsome in the JFK tradition. Though traditional Democrats and women say negative things about his affair with Monica Lewinsky and his prevaricating attempt to cover it up, few of them see these as impeachable offenses.

Journalists, psychohistorians, and other scholars have not usually been great fans of William Jefferson Clinton the man. Though they may prefer him to the Republican conservatives and have admired his political success and survival instinct, over time they have usually not found his policies or character to be consistent. For example, David Maraniss of the *Washington Post*, who I found to be the sharpest of the reporters covering Clinton when I read his work and spoke to him during the winter/spring primary campaign season of 1992, has just written an unflattering volume, *The Clinton Enigma* (1998). This contrasts with his incisive and mostly favorable biography, *First in His Class* (1995). Stanley Renshon, a political scientist and psychoanalyst, has pointed out some of the serious character flaws of our President including his narcissism. Personally, I have written less on Clinton during the last two years because of my own disappointment in his character, a disappointment which focuses on his lack of core values, his inconsistency, and lack of truthfulness.

"Superego lacunae" (literally, holes in his conscience) is a term I came across in studies of adolescents during my decade of psychoanalytic training, and it has come to mind when I have thought of Clinton in the last two years. My thoughts focus on the ways in which this embodiment of the great American success story from a small town in Arkansas is able to delude himself, and often others, because he just does not "get it" at times. At some moments, in some areas he appears to have normal impulse control; at other moments and in other ways he has an inability to see or respond to warning signals. As various psychological studies have demonstrated, most people lie at times. Most politicians lie and cover up at times, but they seldom get caught in the process, while Clinton has been caught in a variety of questionable situations including avoiding the draft, extramarital sex, and smoking marijuana. In addition, he was caught lying about these actions.

He just does not seem to have that early warning system, the moral radar, that a consistent and reliable conscience provides.

Am I saying that the President is a psychopath who is incapable of recognizing right from wrong? That he is part of the one or two percent of the population who do not have the advantage of the early warning signals that a conscience provides? Certainly not. But I am saying he has significant lacunae, or what people commonly call "blind spots." For example, having Monica Lewinsky perform fellatio on him did not count as sex in his mind because only intercourse was sex. (After all, he only ejaculated twice according to her testimony, and several articles submitted to us suggested that the sex in the Clinton-Lewinsky affair was reminiscent of that of

17 year old boys in the 1950s! H. John Rogers writes that this is little more than heavy petting.)

The taboo prohibiting the discussion of sex and the Presidency, comparable to discussing the sex lives of our parents, has been lifted with a vengeance. Like all taboos, underneath the prohibition is an intense interest, one that becomes exaggerated by the prohibition. Lately the news has abounded with a story about a President having sex with a woman half his age and then having lied about it, only to have the truth exposed by DNA tests. The president was Thomas Jefferson, rather than William Jefferson Clinton, though the intensity of the interest was certainly related to interest generated by the DNA tests of the semen on Monica Lewinsky's dress which was established to be that of President Clinton.

The case of Thomas Jefferson, whose brilliant contributions are chiseled in the fabric of our society as well as on Mount Rushmore, demonstrates that great leaders also can be very flawed human beings. Jefferson had perhaps as many as seven children by his slave Sally Hemings, the half sister of his beloved deceased wife, and lied about it while professing to abhor miscegenation. Long before confirmation by DNA testing, Fawn M. Brodie, a brilliant pioneering psychohistorian, was pilloried by the Jefferson establishment for accepting the reality of this relationship and attempting to shed light upon it. (*Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History*, 1973) The Jefferson historical establishment fought ferociously to maintain that this brilliant founding father was a man of pure intellect and character who was incapable of having sex with a slave and then lying about it. Such sexual activity seemed to horrify them more than did his anti-miscegenation views and they did their best to kill the psychohistorical messenger while mostly ignoring the black historians who had long accepted the Jefferson/Hemings relationship on the basis of oral tradition. Some severe attacks on William Jefferson Clinton's Presidency on the basis of his extramarital sexuality seem to me to be based on as an idealized version of Presidential character as was held by the historians of Thomas Jefferson.

In 1992, Americans elected our 42nd President knowing that he had strayed sexually. Almost as soon as he had become a top contender during the primaries, Clinton had had to confront the issue of sexual scandal with Gennifer Flower's allegations of a 12-year-long affair. The Arkansan appeared on national television with his wife, who

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had obviously forgiven him and who denounced Flower's charges as "trash for cash" paid by a scandal sheet. Then came the allegations of Paula Corbin Jones which have continued to haunt his Presidency and which resulted in a four-year-long legal case. Jones -- with her lawyers and publicist financed by enemies of Clinton -- and would not go away. It was her charges which allowed the Independent Counsel, who has brought no charges relevant to the Whitewater, Travelgate, and Filegate activities that prompted his appointment, to link his investigation to the liaison with Monica S. Lewinsky. The Independent Counsel focused on what started as a consensual sexual relationship -- instigated by the young intern who flashed the President -- in his previously unsuccessful drive to find wrong doing on the part of Bill Clinton. (*The Starr Report: The Independent Counsel's Complete Report to Congress on the Investigation of President Clinton*, 1998) This new approach saved Starr from having to resign to become dean of Pepperdine Law School without even coming close to bringing down the President. As with most others who have moments of passion in the workplace with people other than their spouses, it was not long before Bill and Monica were lying and covering up their activities in the face of rumors and attempts to publicly humiliate the President.

Monica's orality is striking. First, she used her mouth to perform fellatio. One wonders what she hoped to suck out of Bill Clinton: Power? Love? A job? -- she joked about being made "Special Assistant in charge of Blow Jobs." Lewinsky talked compulsively about her affair to her "friend," Linda Tripp, to her mother, and to at least nine other people. Then she hired a lawyer named William Ginsburg who could not stop talking on television and radio until he was dismissed to the relief of tens of millions of eardrums. Lewinsky's flood of words continued to the Starr staff and today she is slated to speak on several talk shows including at least one of the "tell all" television stations for a sizeable sum of money. Her mother, in tears, was intimidated into repeating what she could recall of those conversations about her daughter's sexuality to the Office of the Independent Counsel. (I wonder what would have happened if she had flatly refused on the grounds of parent-child confidentiality in a matter that does not involve a plot to overthrow the government or something of similar weight.) When I saw a notice for a professional conference on the psychology of orality, I immediately spread

the word that I welcomed a paper on the subject relevant to the Lewinsky affair and I received the interesting response from Robert Samuels of George Washington University. Amidst all these words it is worth noting *what is not being said* or what is lost in the avalanche of verbiage.

In therapy it is often helpful to examine what the client/patient is *not talking about*. During this crisis it is noteworthy that the flood of words coming out of Washington proportionately has had little to do with the passing in October of a budget of 520 billion dollar. This budget was negotiated by such a small number of Republican and Democratic leaders that prominent senators and congressmen complained that they had to vote without knowing what they were voting for in this grab bag type of budget -- loaded with pork barrel legislation that could not have survived public scrutiny. Even though the public was annoyed by the constant political advertisements, few words addressed the flood of special interest money used by Republicans and Democrats in the campaign in violation of the spirit and sometimes the letter of the last campaign finance "reform." Public scrutiny has not been directed on the health care bill of rights or the phony balanced budget deal. It turned back to Iraqi violation of the arms inspection agreement with the United Nations only after the pro-impeachment forces suffered a setback at the polls on November 3. Clinton had to demonstrate that he was stronger at home before he could get Saddam Hussein to cooperate, however temporarily.

The November 3rd election represented a major disappointment for congressional Republicans whose leader had pumped an extra ten million dollars into last minute electoral advertising that sought to point out Clinton's moral leadership problems. The disappointed expectations brought about by the election would prove to be the downfall of Gingrich rather than Clinton. Since the Lewinsky Affair became a public issue, Republicans expected to win a veto-proof majority in the Congress. Instead, they lost five seats in the House of Representatives and saw Senator Alphonse D'Amato, a leading Clinton critic, defeated. Disappointed hope is a terrible thing, and the most conservative Republicans were determined someone had to pay. Since they were unable to feast on a weakened Clinton, they turned to devour his greatest rival who became their scapegoat.

Leroy Newton Gingrich did indeed feel

that he was facing a group of cannibals according to the information sent me from the Drudge Report -- "a Republican leaning Internet news service" -- forwarded to me by James Sturges of the Psychohistory Discussion List. Note the language that Gingrich selected when he told his fellow Republicans that he was blackmailed by Republicans who are "hateful. They're cannibals.... This will give us a chance to purge some of the poison that is in the system.... I'm not willing to preside over people who are cannibals." The Speaker's resignation comments bring to mind the resignation speech of former Speaker James Wright, who, upon being brought down by Newt Gingrich, declared that the Georgia Republican would be destroyed by his very own "mindless cannibalism." (Allen R. Myerson, "From One Fallen Speaker to Another" *New York Times*, November 12, 1998: A24)

The fall of Gingrich does not really change the leadership in the country which since 1994 has been amazingly Southern: Clinton (Arkansas), Gore (Tennessee), Gingrich (Georgia), Arme (Texas), etc.. When, in 1996, Dole of Kansas resigned to run for the presidency and Trent Lott from Mississippi defeated his fellow Mississippian for the leadership of the Senate, this Southern -- all Baptist -- domination seemed complete. The forced resignation of Gingrich soon led to the selection of Bob Livingston of Louisiana as Speaker of the House.

Though he grew up mostly in New Orleans with a struggling single mother, after his alcoholic father went off to Spain to avoid paying alimony, Livingston is from a family with a sense of history and without roots in the South. Nor is he a Baptist. Robert Linlithgow Livingston, one of 63 Robert Livingstons and the fourth with the middle name, Linlithgow, is from an Episcopalian blue-blooded, pre-Revolutionary, New York State family. Despite his bad temper, his colleagues say he is the type of leader who will allow House Republicans to publicly have Democratic friends, as was not the case with Gingrich.

It should also be noted that Julius Caesar (J.C.) Watts, Jr., of Oklahoma, the only Republican black in the House, was elected chair of the Republican Conference in an attempt to save the Party of Lincoln from appearing all white to an increasingly multi-colored electorate. Nor are the Republicans doing well with Jews. In the newly elected congress, Jewish Republican representation was reduced to one each in the House and Senate

as compared to 21 Democratic Jews in the House and 10 in the Senate. But let us return to the Clinton/Gingrich connection.

The relationship of these highly successful, controversial, Southern, marijuana-and-cigar-smoking, draft-dodging, womanizing, Baptist, politicians from dysfunctional families is worth noting. (See my article, "Taking Conservatives Seriously: Childhood, Punishment, Anger, and Rage at Politicians," *Journal of Psychohistory* Vol. 26 No. 3: 269-275.) The success of the Gingrich-led so-called "Republican Revolution" in 1994 resulted in the Speaker from Georgia being called in 1995 the most powerful man in the country. The media was soon referring to these two Southerners as twins: Bill as the "give-away-the-store" liberal Democrat, the *too good twin*, and Newt as the "starve-welfare-children-and-mothers-in-the-name-of-balanced-budgets" ideological *bad twin*. Gingrich arguably became the most hated man in America after his unsuccessful attempt to shut down the government to force the Contract for America on the Democrats and President. But until November, 1998, he remained popular with the Republican Party stalwarts for making them the congressional majority, and for being their most inspirational leader. In trying to weaken Clinton's Congressional allies, he brought about his own downfall as speaker.

Is Gingrich politically dead? Should I toss out my folders and news clippings on Leroy Newton Gingrich? Many journalists did this with their Richard Milhous Nixon files after he lost the race for governor of California in 1962 and angrily told them that they would "not have Nixon to kick around anymore." My answer is, "No." Like Nixon, Gingrich can give a rousing speech to the party faithful and he has a better financial base than did Nixon. Unlike Livingston, but like Nixon, he has a vision of America he can communicate very well. Goldwater's disastrous run for the Presidency in 1964 and the split of the Democrats over the war in Vietnam gave Nixon his opportunity, and Gingrich may hope that those galvanized by the Contract for America may miss their ideological North Star and long for his return. Perhaps essential to his chances is the Democrats' holding onto the White House in the 2000 election since it probably will take him more than two years to rehabilitate his reputation and a two-term Republican President might leave him, in the public's perception, as a man from another era.

But Gingrich is 55-years-old, six years older than Nixon was when he went into the political wilderness; moreover, today instant communications gives a much greater advantage to the political unknown than was the case in 1968. It will be interesting to see what transpires.

It is time to turn to why I have labeled Clinton the Rorschach President in this introduction. In examining the responses of the country to a national drama associated with the Lewinsky affair, as well as the 28 articles and letters submitted to us for publication, I noted that these responses often said more about their source than they did about the actual subject.

Within the country, Clinton's grand jury testimony and his acknowledgment of having been less than candid, set not only the talk show hosts, Republican critics, and the commentators talking, but also a large part of the citizenry. Much of the country reveled in the salacious facts released and the media searched for people who would publicly question Clinton's moral right to remain in office. Considering the volume of words and their intensity, little of consequence was said. People seemed to find in Clinton's behavior what they wanted to find, much like people taking a Rorschach Test. At times they seemed to be speaking of different Clintons, looking at his life as if it were as ambiguous in nature as cloud formations or ink spots. Liam Harte, an Englishman in America, even referred to him as a "chameleon" and the "Rorschach president." Though for years I have been referring to Clinton as being like a Rorschach test into which people project their own needs, it was only when I read Harte's piece that it became clear to me that "Rorschach president" was an important part of my title. This author's facile way of viewing Clinton as described by his enemies also brought more clarity to my thinking and reminded me of an article I wrote demonstrating just how much Nixon was defined and motivated by his enemies. ("Richard Milhous Nixon Revisited: The Haldeman Diaries," *The Psychohistory Review* Vol. 24: 99-111) In this case, hating Clinton helps to define the men and women who hate him, just as my hatred of Nixon helped to define me as a young man.

Providing a sampling from some of the fascinating articles which we were unable to publish may be helpful as part of an overview. A psychologist sent a fine article on shame without saying much about any shame Bill Clinton actually experienced. A retired psychiatrist/ psychiatric

professor delved into the Clinton marriage, finding sadomasochism as a central organizing principle. A mid-western professor had an interesting historical perspective on the rhythms and rhymes of witches and witch hunting in the 20th century. A professor from the Great Lakes region denounced, as an authoritarian fetish, the impulse of many to defend the Office of the Presidency. A prospective graduate student from Virginia sent us a very good, though non-psychohistorical, study of public reactions in Washington and rural North Carolina. An Argentine asserted that Clinton's actions were caused by his reaction to being circumcised, but really provided no reliable evidence that he was, in fact, circumcised. A Jungian professor with more brilliance than focus roamed from the fall of the Roman Empire to Marilyn Monroe. A West Coast university psychologist drew interesting and sharp distinctions between the reactions by baby boomers and the political pundits to Clinton as the first Baby Boomer President. The credentials of the authors were usually quite impressive, with submissions we were unable to utilize -- due to the decisions of our referees -- coming from various institutions including Brown, Central Washington, Loyola, Missouri State, and Wayne State.

The writings we do include are by a talented group of psychologists, political scientists, psychotherapists, and historians as well as literary and independent scholars from Hong Kong to Manhattan. We will let them speak for themselves. I will now turn to one of the emotions associated with observing the events in Washington.

*Schadenfreude* is a German word which can cast considerable light on feelings which came to the fore in the Lewinsky affair. It means the pleasure one feels at the displeasure of others -- in this case, the pleasure many conservatives, liberals, Republicans, and voters in general had in catching Clinton literally with his pants down and then having to admit to lying. After all, they have felt lied to by politicians in general and many especially felt lied to by Clinton who is a master at being all things to all people. At first, watching him squirm felt good to many, and to some it still feels good. It is the pleasure felt by grade school children who laugh when their classmate trips in front of everyone -- half the laughter is based upon relief that it is someone else who tripped up. (As adults many felt great relief that it was Clinton's affair and not their real or imagined affair that was exposed.) But just as some of those children feel

guilty when the teacher proclaims it not nice to laugh at the displeasure of others, so some of the public felt that "we" are engaged in inappropriate behavior in laughing at Clinton. So the story shifted somewhat to how children and grandchildren are being hurt by the salacious behavior of the President. Then it shifted to how the media is hurting the children with these salacious materials and how we should focus on the important Constitutional issues involved rather than the sex, with some pundits continuing to make the point that if the President cheats on his wife, won't he cheat on the voters and the country?

Throughout all this, stand-up comics and cartoonists are having a field day lampooning Clinton, Lewinsky, Ginsberg, Hyde, Starr, and whoever else was the main actor in the day's drama. Republican politicians were thrilled by Clinton's discomfort and the initial slowness of the White House staff and, especially, the Democratic congressional leadership, to defend the President from Hope. Democrats were equally pleased by the revelation that Henry Hyde of the Judiciary Committee and some other prominent Republicans involved in the attack on Clinton's sexual adventures outside of marriage were exposed as having or having had extramarital affairs. After comparing Watergate and the Clinton accusations, let us then turn to Kenneth Starr.

A well-known thought from Karl Marx fits perfectly here. He declared that events in history have a way of happening twice, the first time as high drama, the second time as farce. So, Napoleon the conqueror of Europe gave way to Napoleon III who brought France to its knees before the armies of Bismarck. A modern application of the same idea is a comparison of Watergate with Whitewater/Travelgate/Filegate/Lewinsky. The first comes across to many of us as a high drama and a fitting subject for Greek tragedy while the latter comes across as appropriate materials for a soap opera. Watergate started out as a minor burglary and rose to the level of a Constitutional crisis while the Whitewater/Travelgate/Filegate/Lewinsky scandals seem destined to remain at the level of soap opera. There are many acts, but no great scenes.

Most Americans, even the majority of the 38% who just voted, seem not to have greatly changed their opinion of William Jefferson Clinton. They are less surprised by all the events in Washington than the media would make them out to be. After all, they know they elected a

womanizer, and think that all politicians promise more than they can deliver and sometimes lie. As a group they are not enthusiastic about a witch hunt in the name of a purity crusade; after all, they know that they and their loved ones are less than perfect.

In conclusion, a few paragraphs on Kenneth W. Starr seem appropriate. The Office of the Independent Counsel under Starr has turned out to be the Office of the Independent Prosecutor, or, in the eyes of the less generous, the Office of the Republican Special Clinton Prosecutor. Starr, after getting much bad press for his handling of the Lewinsky affair as well as other things, was given an extraordinary opportunity to make his report to the House Judiciary Committee chaired by Henry Hyde. Though his presentation and response to questions was cheered by the applause of the majority Republicans, its prosecutorial nature led to the resignation of Starr's ethics advisor, Sam Dash of Watergate fame.

Starr, who has plenty of political motives, also has personal ones. He is a talented lawyer with the instincts of a prosecutor who divides the world into the moral and the immoral. So, Clinton is immoral to him and he sees everything Clinton does with the zeal of the moralist turned prosecutor working under the banner of Independent Counsel. What many others see as an inept cover-up of personal behavior on Clinton's part, he sees as a well-coordinated plan. This true believer is bound and determined to bring Clinton to the bar of justice -- no matter what the cost to the nation. As he demonstrated at the end of his November 19th testimony, he sees himself as a public servant persevering at the cost of his own career. He appears oblivious to the many people he hurts in his intense drive to get Clinton. He seems totally cut off from his own, intense competitive feelings towards Clinton and the President's associates.

If I read him correctly, Starr not only splits the world into "our team" and "their team," the good and the bad, but he also shows signs of a reaction formation. By this I mean a very early cover up of feelings that leads him to not understand his own underlying feelings. Jimmy Carter has such a reaction formation -- it causes him to smile nervously at times when he is quite angry as well as to look for ways of avoiding war since he is quite uncomfortable with his own aggression. Note that I am not saying that a reaction formation is in itself good or bad, just that it is a factor in analyzing a person's personality.

Kenneth W. Starr's handling of what many Republicans called Sam Dash's betrayal is a point in case. The facts are that at the pinnacle of Starr's career, his ethics advisor publicly denounced his appearance before the Congressional Committee as inappropriately, and aggressively, prosecutorial. Instead of denouncing Dash, Starr publicly thanked him, declaring, "Sam Dash is a man of total principle. I love Sam, I respect him, I admire him, I think he's a total man of principle." In responding this way to the older man, he denied all of his own feelings of anger at what his staff called a betrayal and instead focused on his affection in a way Americans seldom do -- as one man loving another man. This is not what is usually done in Washington. Sam Dash's connection to the Watergate hearings -- incidentally Hilary Rodham was a staff lawyer as well -- reminds me that we should not forgo a Nixon/Clinton comparison.

The Nixon impeachment hearings loom over the activities of the House Republicans. Nixon resigned rather than face impeachment and for awhile some Republicans hoped that Clinton would do the same. But a comparison of Nixon and Clinton's psychodynamics and political situations reveals radical differences. Nixon was far more self-defeating than is the risk-taking Clinton, and Nixon's cover-up, which was far more orchestrated than Clinton's, involved a political rather than a personal act. When Nixon had driven away his closest allies he felt trapped and abandoned -- and at that point he assumed the role of martyr in the summer of 1973. Bill Clinton, after apologizing to everyone who would listen in late August and September, has never felt as guilty, abandoned, without major allies, or caught up in a wave of popular enmity as Dick Nixon felt. Furthermore, the country was torn by Nixon's rear guard efforts to continue the Vietnamese war as long as possible after being elected with the promise of ending it.

Other comparisons with 1973 are in order. As I write these words I hear an interview with former New Jersey Representative Peter Rodino who headed the committee overseeing the question of the impeachment of Richard Milhous Nixon. He describes having joint responsibility with the ranking Republican minority member on the Committee and having adopted the rules of evidence and procedure unanimously. This is totally at odds with the way in which 1998 Republicans have used their majority on the Judiciary Committee to force their will on the

Democrats while claiming to be bipartisan and fair. Rodino said that, on the basis of the facts thus far before the Committee, the evidence does not rise to the level of an impeachable offense. He also describes, upon having led the House to vote for impeachment, brushing everyone aside and going off to privately weep as he spoke to his wife on the telephone. Today, no such reverence for the Office of the President appears to exist. Instead, Republican strategy seems dominated by the right wingers who will only settle for Clinton's demise.

In psychotherapy, patients learn how to better understand themselves and reality and to take responsibility for their own lives. The careful setting and keeping of limits of time and appropriate behavior is a central value of therapy that yields long term benefits in helping to achieve these goals. One of the most disturbing aspects of the entire crisis in Washington is the failure to accept limits. President Clinton would not accept the limits imposed by his office. He failed to ignore or laugh off a seductive intern. He then failed to stay within the limits of truth and had his staff lie for him on what was a personal matter that he should probably not have spoken about on the grounds of personal privacy. The bonds of friendship have been broken by Linda Tripp and others. Likewise, Ken Starr sees nothing wrong with ruthlessly hounding people, trying to get them to turn against the Clintons to save their own skins. Witnesses have been threatened, a mother has been forced to testify against her daughter, a therapist has been called in to speak about what was said in session. (Dr. Kassorda with Monica's permission) Paula Corbin Jones does not accept the limits of her case being dismissed by Judge Johnson for lack of limits and recently was granted \$850,000 by Clinton's lawyers so she would stop appealing it. While this kind of thing may be the case in all scandals and witch hunts, Washington politics is sounding more and more like our television exposé programs while the business of the nation is ignored. We hope the reader will take away a deeper sense of understanding after reading the many articles and letters by our authors. After all, there really are no limits to what we can learn from the folly of humankind.

*Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, has been applying psychohistorical knowledge to the personalities of Presidents since 1976 when he went to Plains, Georgia, to probe Jimmy Carter's childhood and values. He is the Co-Director of the Psychohistory Forum's Research Group on the Childhood and*

*Personality of Presidents and Presidential Candidates, and is the Editor of this publication. After doing graduate work in political science, he took a doctoral degree in English and European history. In 1971 he became a Founding Faculty Member at Ramapo College after previously teaching at Temple, Rutgers, and Fairleigh Dickinson universities. He trained in psychoanalysis for a decade and has published extensively on a variety of subjects. His most recent book is the co-edited, Immigrant Experiences: Personal Narratives and Psychological Analysis (1997). □*

## The Clinton-Starr Show

**Daniel Dervin**

**Mary Washington University**

"His store of pleasures must be sauc'd with pain."

- Mephistopheles in Marlowe's  
*The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus*

When faced with a bewilderingly unique situation in American political life, pundits often search for linkage in fiction's more familiar storehouse. Thus, Whitewater Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr has been associated with Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor as well as Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt and his fire-breathing fundamentalist, Elmer Gantry. For me, the peculiar pairing of Clinton and Starr (always together yet never in each other's company) evokes the uneasy bond between Faust and Mephistopheles. Although Faust is usually portrayed as an archetype of Scientific Man, whose joining of knowledge to power is achieved by selling out to the Devil, his agenda was considerably more kinky. He wanted power, yes, but to launch space-time travels in order to enjoy quality time with Helen of Troy ("Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships...?"). In celebrating beauty's power, Faust was a libidinal voyager, transgressing boundaries and thus given over to such wishes from the depths of the self as can only be negotiated by an extraordinary facilitator. The ultimate role of Mephistopheles, however, is of moral enforcer, reminding Faust that everything that goes around comes around. Like the primitive superego in intimate proximity to the id, he may be temporarily and willingly bribed by the pleasure principle, but ultimately he is not appeased until his deadline is met.

As is often the case, ostensible oppositions conceal underlying affinities, at least up to a point. In "Dueling Sons of the South," Peter Applebombe notes the two adversaries were "born months apart in Hope, Arkansas, and Vernon, Texas. Both were bright and ambitious, headed to Washington for college, went on to law school ... [and] share a conspicuous religiosity," and display the "sort of compulsive accent on manners that still defines the South." (New York Times, September 13, 1998) But, Applebombe continues, while both stem from Protestant stock focused on human sinfulness, Clinton's Southern Baptist style fosters grace and forgiveness, while Starr's Church of Christ favors a sterner and more judgmental Calvinism.

As well as religious differences, there are profound psychological ones between them as well. The constant theme that plays through the often discordant melodies of Clinton's childhood and earliest relationships is a confusion over boundaries and subsequently over self-identity and roles. His putative biological father, W.J. Blythe, a traveling salesman from Texas, practiced serial marriage with impunity. Virginia Cassidy, Clinton's mother, was his fourth wife. For Blythe to play his part in conception before being shipped overseas by the Army, her pregnancy had to be cut short a month. (David Maraniss, *First in His Class*, 1995, also the source for the following biographical data) After the war, Blythe died speeding home to his pregnant wife, Virginia. William Jefferson was thus born a posthumous child.

As a nurse, Virginia was easygoing and notoriously flirtatious. As a mother she was intensely possessive, and when she brought Bill home to share his raising with her parents, an intense rivalry arose with her own mother, also a nurse and also flirtatious. Clinton's grandfather, who had been an iceman, enjoyed a reputation in Hope congruent with the iceman's easy accessibility to local residences (and later he ran an easy-credit grocery store). Clinton's early years were thus spent among doting women and an undemanding paternal figure. He also suffered maternal abandonment in his second year when Virginia returned to her studies in New Orleans.

Against family advice and in the face of custody threats from her mother, Virginia in 1950 married a womanizing car salesman, Roger Clinton, who was abusive, alcoholic, and extremely jealous. By age fourteen, Bill was performing active oedipal roles in standing up to

Roger and testifying against him in divorce court. Once Roger was out of the house, Bill took the improbable step of assuming the excluded and disgraced stepfather's name, ostensibly to affiliate with his half brother Roger, Jr.. But as a family portrait places elder son Bill dominant over Virginia and little Roger, Bill Clinton had staked his legal claim to his mother as wife. "I was the father," he said of those years (Maraniss, p. 40); but inscribing the father's name could only be a poor substitute for internalizing the paternal role. Roger, Sr., moreover, did not cooperate in his own obliteration and, after hanging around outside the house for extended periods, prevailed on Virginia to remarry him within months of the name change.

Growing up with boundary confusion and generational role-reversal, Clinton evidently experienced high levels of maternal stimulation and libidinal entitlements without the counterbalancing restraints and guilt feelings negotiated through on-site, good-enough fathering. Clinton's furtively kissing Monica Lewinsky in the Oval Office with his eyes on the door captures this condition of an external or externalized conscience. Enter Starr, figuratively if not literally, at that kissing moment, for it is into this vacuum that Clinton's Mephistophelean double strolls, and it is Starr's authority, despite evasions and occasional protests, that Clinton is forced to concede.

As Clinton's externalized conscience, Starr has been on the job almost as long as Clinton has been in the White House and promises to hang on indefinitely. Clinton may infer that Starr's apparent ineptitude enables him to pursue his libidinal entitlements as before, under Starr's distracted gaze. For Starr, having been around his Faust for too long, has begun reversing roles. In moonlighting his services, according to Frank Rich, (*New York Times*, June 6, 1998) he has sold out to the tobacco interests, whose goals are to impede justice and avoid accountability. Others closer to Clinton have maintained he had a closed-minded agenda to get the President from the outset, and in this sense the image of justice he embodies suffers not so much from blindness as from tunnel vision. As Independent Counsel, his loose policies on issuing subpoenas and leaking secrets to the press play the Faustian knowledge-is-power game; above all, he has been lured from his original Whitewater mandate to wander far afield after his subject's Trojan beauties, displaying the child's voyeuristic fascination in his subject's primal scene.

Was Monica's the face that launched a thousand subpoenas? Both men appear to have set their gaze elsewhere than inward -- if not on Monica, then on each other. The predicament leaves Clinton without an adequate superego attachment. If he needs an authority to reign in his transgressions, Starr has succumbed to overkill; if he needs to convert Starr into a libidinal co-conspirator, his own political energies are being dissipated in dangling erotic bait before Starr's gaze. Either way, Starr so far seems willing to comply, and Clinton is left to settle for the masochism of repeated public confessions, shaming exposures, and humiliating punishments. Congress, phalanxes of lawyers, the media, the clergy, the mental health community, and the American public are now called upon to function as substitutes for psychic agencies that either were not instilled or were subverted. In the end, while we may never fathom what motivates Clinton or Starr, we are unable to avoid dealing with the consequences of those motives.

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## Risky Behavior by Clinton and Kennedy

Herbert Barry, III  
University of Pittsburgh

Efforts to impeach President Clinton express a recent tendency to expose and condemn sexual misconduct by national leaders. This new attitude is related to reports of frequent adulterous behavior by President Kennedy, published after his death. A comparison between these two Presidents of the United States may contribute to our understanding of both of them.

The similarities of Clinton and Kennedy are striking. Risky behavior is a prominent characteristic of both Presidents. Kennedy in 1952 ran against a popular and highly publicized Republican Senator, Henry Cabot Lodge, and in 1960 against the well-known Richard Nixon. Clinton in 1992 ran for President when the incumbent, George Bush, was at the height of his popularity following the triumphant Gulf War. Kennedy and Clinton are Democratic Presidents who replaced Republican Presidents and then adopted some traditionally Republican policies.

Kennedy drew some sharp criticism when he introduced a federal income tax reduction. Clinton risked alienating Democratic voters when he downsized the federal government and advocated welfare reform.

Sexual misconduct is risky, especially in the limelight of the Presidency. The risky sexual misconduct by Presidents Kennedy and Clinton is partly attributable to frequent temptation. Many women are eager to have a sexual liaison with the President of the United States. The temptation was maximized because both Kennedy and Clinton came to the highest office as young, attractive, and charming men.

A further connection between the two Presidents is that Clinton as a high school student shook President Kennedy's hand when a delegation of Boys Nation visited the White House. This experience contributed to Clinton's ambition to become President. The strong identification of the only Arkansan President with the last Massachusetts President (Bush was born in Massachusetts but raised in Connecticut) may also have led to his wanting to emulate Kennedy's risky sexual misconduct.

But there are also differences in the sexual misconduct of Kennedy and Clinton. Kennedy's sexual misconduct indicates a compulsive need to prove his sexual prowess. His adultery was frequent, with a large number of different women, including a suspected East German spy and a girl friend of an organized crime leader. A model for Kennedy was his father, a successful businessman who was a notorious philanderer. Jack Kennedy grew up in the shadow of a highly assertive and esteemed older brother with whom he competed. He developed outstanding social charm and sexual attractiveness. A special incentive to test his sexual prowess was his chronic health problems. He had several severe illnesses in childhood, and his wartime injuries resulted in persistent back pain and Addison's disease.

In my opinion, for Bill Clinton, sexual behavior is motivated by a search for love and affection missing in his childhood rather than as a proof of his masculine prowess. His father died before he was born, and his mother was away much of the time in his early childhood, leaving as his principal caretaker in his early years his maternal grandmother, who appears to have been punitive and who had an antagonistic relationship with his mother. When he was six years old, his mother married a man who was an alcoholic.

Bill Clinton learned to cope with turmoil in his family, becoming highly achieving and popular in school where he had many girl friends prior to his marriage -- and some afterward. His sexual misconduct while President has been sporadic and usually cautious. In my opinion, his intimate contacts with Monica Lewinsky were not adulterous in the sense that he did not have sexual intercourse with her. They stopped at the level of heavy petting, most of which was by the woman. Clinton's alleged perjury and conspiracy were attempts to maintain privacy, for the benefit of his family and Lewinsky in addition to himself.

There have been very different consequences of the sexual misconduct of these two Presidents. Kennedy escaped public condemnation of his frequent adultery. Many people knew about it, but they did not publicize it widely. A separation between public performance and private sexual misconduct has, until recently, been a national tradition. Reporters, therefore, have generally refrained from publicizing sexual misconduct by government officials. Another reason was Kennedy's extraordinary personal charm. His political colleagues and the reporters liked him and helped to conceal his sexual misbehavior. During his presidency his girl friends apparently were loyal to him and exposed his sexual behavior only after his death. Another reason for tolerance of Kennedy's sexual misconduct was his celebrity status. He was rich, had a famous father, was a war hero, and was a friend of movie stars such as Frank Sinatra. Many people expect and even approve sexual license by celebrities.

Clinton, on the other hand, has a lower middle class background. His Southern Baptist religious affiliation is moralistic and strongly condemns sexual transgressions. Another disadvantage for Clinton was the effect of the revelations of Kennedy's frequent adultery while President. Sexual transgressions by politicians thereafter have been more publicized and disapproved. Gary Hart in 1988 was forced to withdraw as a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination because of a sexual escapade and Clinton may not have run in 1988 partly for that same reason. Clinton as a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1992 was confronted with allegations of sexual misconduct. Instead of emulating Gary Hart's admission that he had committed adultery, Clinton shrewdly limited his confession to the statement

that he had caused pain in his marriage. Clinton's candidacy survived that episode, but it sensitized the public to the possibility of sexual misconduct during his Presidency.

Other disadvantages for Clinton are the Republican majority in Congress since 1995, the persistent investigations by the Independent Counsel, Kenneth Starr, and the moralistic emphasis of Starr and many Republican members of Congress. In a Southern Baptist tradition, when Clinton's sexual misconduct was exposed, he therefore felt compelled to declare, "I have sinned."

The intensity of the attacks on Clinton associated with the Lewinsky affair leads me to the question of the future prospects of President Clinton and the Presidency. I expect that Clinton will complete his second term as President partly because his chaotic childhood experiences taught him to cope successfully with difficult situations. He has great ability to conciliate colleagues, including Republicans. The majority of the public and many of the Republican members of Congress prefer to let him finish his second elected term as President. In conclusion, sporadic episodes of sexual misconduct, and attempts to conceal them, fall short of the criterion for impeachment of a public official, which is to be found guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

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## Oedipus Reborn in Washington, DC

**Paul Hamburg  
Harvard Medical School**

The events in Washington bring to mind Edgar Allen Poe's short story, "The Purloined Letter," which epitomizes the human drama of desire, gender, and generation that psychoanalysis

has mythologized as the Oedipus complex. Though I am unable to make a systematic comparison in the space allotted me, I will make some comments about recent events with Poe's brilliant story in mind.

Kenneth Starr occupies a place equivalent to Poe's investigator, the defender of order swept off course by his own desire. While other details of the Lewinsky Matter differ from Poe's story in that it is the President -- not the Queen -- whose affair with the Intern threatens his own power and there is an absence of the conspiratorial personage of Poe's minister, the compelling parallels are the vicissitudes of desire, power, and powerlessness that continue to characterize human drama.

Each character in this extraordinary Washington theater work-in-progress plays out and exceeds a role fraught with power and powerlessness. The Leader of the Free World (President Clinton), the last superpower potentate upon the planet, falls prey to his own sexual predilections, thereby moving from a position of dizzying power and desirability to becoming a mere furtive quarry for his enemies. His phallic moment has come and gone. The Intern (Monica Lewinsky) also rises from youthful anonymity to a position of unimaginable potency as she alone can fulfill the desire of the most powerful man in the world -- only to fall quickly into a position of abandonment, ridicule, humiliation, and terror. She becomes "that woman" who has lost her name and is driven from the White House, betrayed by lover and friend, hunted by detective Starr.

The Queen in this story (Hilary Clinton) moves from a pitiful position of cuckolded wife toward a strange and irreplaceable dignity. She becomes a mysterious figure of womanly power beyond the reach of ordinary sexual discourse. And, of course, there is Starr, that most dangerous and ridiculous detective whose own passion, never mitigated by ordinary loneliness or lust, becomes the most destructive engine in the entire plot. No longer a guardian of the order he was hired to protect, Starr becomes jackal and hyena, so burdened by his own murderous desire that he would destroy a government in the dubious name of sexual and moral purity. The House Judiciary Committee, too, finds itself moving all too speedily from protestations of solemn, Constitutional dignity into purely partisan malice and vindictiveness. This drama transforms its participants into helpless advocates of impossible positions.

Of course, there are many other places in this elaborate structure: voyeuristic, moralistic, apologetic, etc. And perhaps none of us can keep from falling periodically into the grip of competing waves of desire. At one moment, we might pity the President as victim of an intrusive investigatory machine ("Doesn't the poor man deserve some personal privacy?"). At another, we might become enraged at him as a symbol of supreme paternal deceit ("How could he lie so often and so blatantly to so many of his closest advisers, to his friends, to his family, and to us?"). Some of us sympathize with Monica as the intern treacherously seduced by her boss who should have known better, or we vilify her as a selfish schemer ready to destroy a Presidency for the sake of her adolescent fantasies of romantic conquest.

We are inexorably drawn into the drama, just like its protagonists. Only the collective Greek Chorus of the American consensus has appeared to maintain some steadiness of perspective like Poe's ideal investigator: a sense of proportion, of humor, and even a refusal to plunge willy-nilly into any single passion. Each of us carries our personal scars from the family drama of generation and gender deeply embedded in our subjectivity, so it should be no surprise that this story keeps grabbing hold of us as players in the eternal oedipal theater. What is most to be learned as the Lewinsky Matter begins to fade into history is that the fundamental drama of the Father and the Mother and the Son and the Daughter, in all of its possible permutations and unconscious swings of significance, remains alive and well at this moment near a new millennium. For those who think Freud is dead, or outdated, or less useful than he was a century ago, I would say: it is time to take another look.

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## **Starr as Oliver Cromwell**

**H. John Rogers**

**Psychohistory Forum Research Associate**

Unfortunately, Clinton committed his sexual peccadilloes during the reign of a spiritual descendant of Oliver Cromwell. Judge Starr (as his proponents uniformly refer to him) is a lifelong

member of a little-known fundamentalist Christian sect that makes Jerry Falwell look like a theological liberal. This is the Church of Christ, a 1.6-million-member denomination primarily based in the rural sections of the South and Appalachia.

Theirs is a fundamentalism so thorough and complete that, for example, no musical instruments are permitted in their churches solely because the Bible does not specifically mention music in conjunction with either Jewish or Christian worship. (They overlook David's lyre and the frequent prefatory words to many of the Psalms. For example, Psalm 65 begins "Lamnatseach Mizmor," which is, "For the conductor (or choir master) with musical accompaniment.")

They hold a closed communion service and no one other than members of the sect are permitted to participate in "the Lord's Supper." What this means theologically is that they make being a member of their church coextensive with being Christian. The unstated subtext is that everyone else -- Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics (for them, the "great whore of Babylon" in the Book of Revelations) -- is on their way to the everlasting bonfire. Being a member of the elect perforce produces a quantum of self-righteousness.

The only way to avoid damnation is to repent, be baptized, and join "and be accepted into" their denomination. The median educational level of the congregants is definitely below the 12th grade, so having an educated professional like Ken Starr in their midst is somewhat of an anomaly. In *The Status Seekers*, Vance Packard felicitously entitled the chapter about the economic stratification of the Protestant churches, "The Long Road from Pentecostal to Episcopalian." Some four or five decades later, the fundamentalists in Judge Starr's church still share the lower rungs with the charismatic Pentecostal. Their faith in their own rectitude, though, would place them at the top of the Protestant denominations.

A person like Judge Starr, affiliated by birth and by choice with such hard-core fundamentalism, may well harbor a deep and visceral loathing towards an avuncular, hedonistic "Bubba" like our President. Like other fundamentalist sects, the Church of Christ's teaching focuses heavily upon sexual conduct. As a practical matter, this reaches fullest flower in the castigation of libertines outside the fold.

It is the President's great misfortune that

his Independent Counsel is a man who considered a little hanky-panky and its natural by-product, the covering lie, to be the equivalent of treason and bribery. Lawrence Walsh, the Independent Counsel in the Iran-Contra case, has generally given the impression in his published statements about *l'affaire* that he would have exhibited a bit more sangfroid than Judge Starr has if he had, say, received evidence that Ronald Reagan had been frolicking with the upstairs maid in Mrs. Reagan's absence. And even if Reagan had denied his folly in a sexual harassment suit, I suspect that Judge Walsh, an Episcopalian as I recall, would have considered a sidebar investigation into this sort of thing beneath his dignity in addition to being outside of his charge.

*H. John Rogers is a Harvard-trained West Virginia attorney and minister with some psychoanalytic training and a profound interest in politics. □*

## The Taliban of the Beltway

**John V. Knapp**  
Northern Illinois University

*[Editor's Note: Among so many diverse viewpoints on Clinton, Starr, Lewinsky, impeachment, and the situation in Washington, we welcome a change of pace. This selection is the first piece of poetry submitted to our publication. It draws from both Caliban, Shakespeare's grotesque and brutish slave in the Tempest, and the Taliban moralists in present day Afghanistan who are busily trying to eliminate sin and modernity in the name of an older, religiously sanctioned standard of morality.]*

The Taliban of the Beltway  
Went riding out that day  
To see if Willy had sinned again;  
He'd make that President pay.

Two 'lections were no reason, thought he,  
With Starrs in his inquisitive eyes,  
To not check every nook and crook he could  
see

'Cause Willy kept "telling him lies."  
"Confess, confess, this awful mess,"  
Quoth he with determination grim,  
"Or else that dress's spot, I swear  
Will do your Presidency in!"

Meanwhile, back at the House that day,  
Came a Congressional rondelet.  
Three others, Tripped up by Talibaic code,

Confessed, confessed their own sweet lay  
Far from their domestic abode.

These Calibans with cubes of brass  
Gave the following hedge of all hedges:  
"Twas long ago and far away,  
And unaffects constitutional pledges."

But the Taliban of the Beltway,  
Uninterested in Calibanic sex,  
Pressed on, pressed on -- past Caliban  
To bring down Clinton Rex.

Then, many another high-morality fan,  
Called Newt, and Orin, and Tom,  
Hatched up a simple yet marvelous plan,  
For the country t'would serve as a balm.  
Just ask, said they, for forgiveness,

And we'll promise you immediate surcease,  
Then no one'll talk of impeachment,  
To trouble so honest a man.  
So Bill reluctantly gave his voice lease,

But sounding, said Caliban, more like Ed  
Meese.

As confession followed confession,  
And nothing would give Bill promised  
peace,  
The Taliban just smiled -- and rached up  
his obsession.

'Twas rather remarkable, this confessional  
mode;  
And had an effect like campaign spending  
reform.

Calibans grouse 'bout spending cash by the  
load

Then toss election reform law into the cold.

So the Taliban and the Caliban, a duo of The  
Right,

And the "objective" networks -- talked well  
into the night

About Willy, the sinfulest man in all of DC  
Who deserved to be whupped 'neath the  
liberty tree.

Our constitutional framers --  
If speak they could from the past --  
Might shake their heads at the blamers  
And the Taliban's relentless blast:

Is this government by the moralistic worst?  
Are political minds just 'slippin'?  
Give each Pol his(her) just desserts,  
And who 'scapes a real good whippin'?

So, Congress, our native criminal class,  
Take these, my words, to consider,

Else no bills will seemingly ever get passed  
Your watchful and partisan dither:

"Enough," in English, I say. "Basta!" and  
even "Assez";

On Zippergate my comment is: "NO MORE  
-- PLEASE!"

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## Why Powerful Men Risk It All for Sex

Ronald F. Levant  
Nova Southeastern University

Stories involving men, sex, power, and scandal have been catapulted repeatedly into public awareness over the past seven years. On the day the news about President Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky broke, I received five phone calls from journalists asking the same question: Why would he do that? Why would someone who is doing so well risk it all for a sexual liaison? Why would Bill Clinton take the risk of having a sexual affair, with Paula Jones' lawsuit staring him in the face, with its "pattern of sexual harassment" twist that would allow Jones' lawyers to investigate Clinton's sexual past and present?

While on the surface this was but another chapter in the story of "Bill Clinton's character" that has dogged his Presidency since the beginning, at a deeper level this is part of the story of men, sex, and power -- a story that periodically bursts into public consciousness, and then disappears before its complete meaning has been fathomed, usually with the conclusion that "he" (fill in the blank here: Clarence Thomas, William Kennedy Smith, Mike Tyson, Magic Johnson, Woody Allen, Bob Packwood, Hugh Grant, Dick Morris, Marv Albert, Michael Kennedy, the men of "Tailhook,"

Okinawa, or the Aberdeen Proving Ground, or those of Mitsubishi or Wall Street) had a flawed character or deep psychological problems, and was therefore different from the rest of us who (it is assumed) would never contemplate doing such a thing.

But, in fact, a great many of us contemplate such things, and many actually do them. The difference is that few of us men are well known enough for our actions, if exposed, to create a national scandal. For 25 years as a psychologist specializing in the psychology of men, I have worked with many powerful men -- bankers, lawyers, physicians, politicians, investment professionals earning seven figures, and Fortune 500 corporate executives -- who have risked losing it all for a brief moment of sexual ecstasy. These are men known and respected in their localities, states, and professional communities, who have spent 25 to 30 years building their reputations. From this base of experience I have developed some understanding of the story of men, sex and power. To begin to understand this story we must first grasp how powerful sex can be in men's lives.

For most of us, sex is a core theme in our lives, a "default setting on our computers," to which we endlessly return. We contemplate it every day, several times a day or more. It is often the first thing that enters our mind whenever we see an attractive woman, in any context -- business, social, or simply random encounters on the street. What man has not found an attractive female body so compelling that he could not not look? Some of us specialize, and look at only certain female body parts: breasts, buttocks, legs. There is a way women's bodies cross our visual fields and become intrusive images, propelling us from a state of peace of mind to one of agitation as we encounter the host of disturbing thoughts that occur upon our discovery that we find this woman sexually attractive. In addition, we have the unjustified sense that we are entitled to look, as if an attractive female is public property, or at least that we -- as men -- are authorized to look. Madison Avenue surely knows that the best way to capture a man's attention is to show an image of a scantily clad shapely young woman, which is why they use these images to pitch such male-targeted products as beer and cars.

What do men experience when they have sex? Clearly, we experience the release of our sexual urges, the gratification of our sexual fantasies, and the fabulous sensation of orgasm.

But imbedded in our fantasies and sensations are other needs, hidden from our conscious awareness. During sex we gratify our needs for closeness, caring, connection, intimacy and affection -- needs that many of us are uncomfortable openly acknowledging to others (or even admitting to ourselves). We also satisfy ego needs -- that is, we reassure ourselves about our adequacy as men when we have sex, continuing a tendency that developed in our adolescence, when we learned to prove our manhood by "scoring" with girls. Power combines with sex.

Thus, however compelling it may be, men's appetite for sex does not completely explain why some men risk everything for sex. Power is also a central element in the current sex scandals. Power, of course, sets Bill Clinton (or Packwood, Kennedy, Thomas, and many of my clients) apart from most of us. Power, in complex ways, tends to drive men to take risks for sex. It increases opportunity for sex partners while not exempting powerful men from a nearly universal need to continually prove their manhood; and there is no better way to prove oneself than by demonstrating one's sexual prowess. It also fosters a sense of invulnerability that allows these men to deny the downside of risk.

Power, and the fame that goes with it, confers choices and possibilities that are not available to the common man. Power is a magnet to the star-struck, which dramatically increases the availability of potential sexual partners. Young women tend to be drawn to famous musicians, actors, politicians, athletes, and other celebrities. When Magic Johnson (who reported having "thousands" of sexual relationships) announced that he was HIV-positive, newspapers provided vivid accounts of the post-game ritual, where hordes of young attractive women lined up to meet the basketball players as they exited the stadium. Bill Clinton apparently had similar opportunities according to the Starr Report, which stated that he told Monica Lewinsky that he had "hundreds of affairs." A recent story in the *Chicago Tribune* put it very well: "The ultimate in power is that you can have not only power to make important decisions, but the power to go and pick any woman you want, when you want."

Many, if not most, men experience a need to keep proving themselves. This often lasts for a lifetime. Why is this? A recent anthropological study found that, across a wide range of cultures from the neolithic to the modern, manhood is

viewed as an achieved state, one that requires the passing of a series of tests. But, most significantly, the tests for manhood are never considered finished. It is thus impossible for a man to feel that he has found a permanent place among the community of men. In fact, Native Americans referred to manhood as "The Big Impossible." Most men believe, consciously or unconsciously, that they can always slip back over the line, losing their manhood and suffering shame and disgrace by failing the next test, which gives rise to a never-ending need to prove oneself. Powerful men are not immune from this, which seems quite paradoxical because, one would wonder, after attaining high government office or sports immortality, what else is there to prove?

Finally, a sense of invulnerability that comes with power may shield powerful men from considering the consequences of their actions. Powerful men often survive setbacks in their rise to power, which helps develop the conviction that nothing can harm them (this may be the case with Bill Clinton, who earned the reputation of being the "comeback kid"). In addition, the trappings and amenities that go with high status positions serve to reinforce the feeling that no negative consequences can befall them. Consequently, although risk is implicit in these actions of powerful men, the sense of invulnerability allows these men to rationalize or deny the dangers, freeing them to court it for the thrill that a high stakes poker player experiences. Relatedly, powerful men often experience a sense of self-importance, by which the man feels entitled to special privileges or exempted from the rules that others must follow. This can lead them to trauma which I shall next discuss.

Sex and power are a heady combination. Together they can account for the behavior of many men who take risks for sex. But there are some behaviors that cross a line at which even powerful men might hesitate, such as repeatedly having oral sex with a person thirty years younger in a busy office setting while being sued for sexual harassment. Deeper dynamics are usually at work in such cases -- dynamics which may be the result of childhood trauma.

Like Bill Clinton, some of the powerful men that I have treated have experienced a traumatic childhood. For many, the trauma resulted from the loss of one parent through divorce or death, or the uncivil war of the two estranged parents, or the uprooting from the

community they grew up in that divorce so often brings in its wake. For others, it resulted from the effects of their mother's remarriage to a stepfather who set new rules and may have been abusive, or perhaps new half-siblings who got all of the attention, or a general feeling of not being wanted. For still others, it resulted from parental alcoholism, mental illness, neglect, or abuse.

Regardless of the cause, this traumatic set of experiences is rarely addressed and worked through, but rather is carried intact into adulthood, leaving my clients vulnerable to a wide range of psychological problems. One theme stood out, however, and that is that many of those clients who suffered a traumatic childhood grew up to be adults with a profound sense of "entitlement" -- the unconscious belief that people in one's adult life are required to make up for one's childhood losses or traumas. I think that this sense of entitlement is the driver that pushes some men across the line that others fear to tread.

Together, these effects of sex, power, and trauma -- the looming obsession with sex, the availability of women, the need to prove oneself in that most elemental of ways through exercising the power to have any women you want, the sense of invulnerability, the adrenalin rush of the risk itself, and the sense of entitlement wrought in childhood trauma -- allow men to cross the line and act on those thoughts that the rest of us share in some degree but don't dare act on.

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## Clinton Needs Psychotherapy

Hanna Turken

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What is it with Clinton?, is what we keep asking ourselves. Why does he persist in sexual

behavior that lands him in so much trouble? It was not enough that he got into trouble once with Gennifer Flowers; then he got into trouble again with Paula Jones. Was he so grandiose that he thought he would not get into trouble with another sexual adventure? He certainly took greater risks with Monica Lewinsky by engaging in "wrongdoing" under his own roof in the White House; he says he knew that sooner or later she would make it public. Then why did he persist?

It has been suggested that he has an addiction to sex. Is his addiction so out of control that he needed the entire country to stop it? Is he so much in need of love that the nation needs to prove their love for him through their acceptance of his bad self again and again? A majority of the public seems to feel that they will do that for him again, but this time not unconditionally. The general consensus is that he has made it clear that he has a problem dealing with his sexuality and that it is time he takes care of this problem and gets on with the job of governing.

I fully agree with this assessment and believe that he needs psychotherapeutic counseling. The first thing that needs to be defined is whether this symptom is encapsulated or generalized; that is, can he perform in his capacity as President, or is he so preoccupied with sexual thoughts that it impairs his performance? As a psychoanalyst I would have to assume that anxiety about fear of losing something that is psychologically important to him is at the base of his repetitive symptom. If this is so, I would have to assume that losing the Presidency is not as important as losing this other something. The function of symptomatic behavior is to distance awareness from that which we are afraid to lose. His repetitive behavior seems to communicate a wish to be remembered as a sexually potent President, and this unconsciously seems to be more important to him. Consciously he denies that his thoughts are or were on sex ("I did not have sex with that woman") and that the only important thing to is to be an effective President.

It has been my clinical experience with men who engage in sexual escapades at the risk of losing something important that the casual encounter takes place when the integrity of the self is threatened by some disappointment, some frustration, or what is perceived as an unavoidable but unfair demand. In essence, the unconscious aim of the sexual encounter is both a soothing and an obtaining something from another that is a

compensation for what they had to put up with or what they have been put through. If one looks at President Clinton's actions one can imagine the enormous amount of stress a President is under; and if we add to that the constant opposition and scrutiny from Congress and the Independent Counsel, he must sometimes feel that he deserves time out to play. The sexual encounter can restore a sense of lightness when he is feeling overburdened, a sense of entitlement when feeling depleted, a sense of restoration of his power when his power or potency has been systematically eroded.

It could be, in psychoanalytic terms, a regression in the service of the ego. When there is a regression in the ego, the omnipotence and grandiosity, which we manage to control as we mature, reappears. At one level there is awareness that there is danger, but it becomes intellectualized and split off from the feeling ego. Prior to the moment of sexual involvement the ego experience is one of depletion; with the sexual encounter it returns to a place where it can feel stronger and soothed. From there the ego reconstitutes itself and returns to a more normal level of functioning, thus creating a temporary feeling of well being. If this is so in President Clinton's case then this form of soothing had to be discovered some time back as the only possible way to cope with painful or threatening stimuli.

As we proceed developmentally, coping mechanisms undergo transformations and adaptations to the demands of the adult world. It is also possible for some of them to evolve but not others, thus creating an encapsulated infantile pocket. What is wrong with Clinton could be precisely this: an encapsulated coping mechanism that he needs to change in order to stay out of trouble.

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## Let's Not Criminalize Human Folly

**Aubrey Immelman**  
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With Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's report to the House Rules Committee, enormous attention in the current White House crisis has

been directed to the debate on whether President Clinton's misconduct rises to the level of an impeachable offense. The Starr report has revealed little that we had not already known or suspected about this President. Most conspicuously absent from the referral was what some pundits promised would be "mountains of evidence" establishing a clear pattern of abuse of power. In my judgment, the President's fate will ultimately hinge more on public perception and the question of character than on narrow legal considerations. So, what exactly is the nature of the President's character, what are its weaknesses and strengths, and how does the character issue impinge on the impeachment question?

Psychobiographic studies of Bill Clinton have converged around two major personality themes. The first, spotlighted by Stanley Renshon in his book, *High Hopes* (1996), is the narcissistic character. In *The Clinton Enigma* (1998) David Maraniss, too, comments on the President's narcissistic qualities. Healthy narcissism includes many traits related to effective leadership, including ambition, self-confidence, and persistence in the face of adversity. Bill Clinton is amply endowed with all of these.

The other dominant theme emerging from studies of Bill Clinton's personality is extraversion. Steve Rubenzer, Tom Faschingbauer, and Deniz Ones, for example, at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association in 1996, reported that President Clinton ranked third among the 42 U.S. Presidents on extraversion, surpassed only by the Roosevelts, Theodore and Franklin. Extraversion is a facet of the histrionic character, whose adaptive variant incorporates the politically desirable traits of sociability, personal charm, and high achievement drive (sustained by a need for validation). Once again, these traits are an integral part of Bill Clinton's personal political style.

Not as widely recognized with reference to the President's present predicament are the psychological consequences of a mixed narcissistic-histrionic character structure. According to personality theorist Theodore Millon, the distinctive feature of this amalgam is an erotic orientation. Evidently, the underlying character expressed in the President's considerable political skills and talents serves also as the basis for his sexual indiscretion. If character is to be accorded a role in determining the President's fate, the most relevant consideration is that misconduct in this

personality type, which Millon has called the "amorous narcissist," is rarely hostile or malicious in intent.

Ultimately, it will prove difficult on grounds of character to make a convincing case that President Clinton's sexual risk-taking portends a broader recklessness in discharging the duties of his office. All clues to Bill Clinton's character point to a pattern of self-indulgence rather than malice aforethought or abuse of power. This assessment provides a theoretical basis for Robert J. Samuelson's op-ed claim in the *Washington Post* (September 24, 1998) that removing the President from office would be tantamount to "criminalizing ... the excesses or errors of much of ordinary life, politics and government."

I am left with a nagging feeling that our elected representatives have embarked on a course that risks reducing impeachment to the precarious act of punishing a duly elected President for being, ironically, true to his own self. To criminalize human folly in this way would set a bad precedent, weaken the Office of the Presidency, and undermine our democratic, federal form of government.

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## Clinton: Surviving a Death in Life

**Francis V. O'Connor**  
**Independent Historian of Art**

Recent work on the psychology of artists who were victims of traumas as children, suffered "deaths in life" at a very early age, and came to resolve the resulting conflicts in their artistic imagery, have led me to notice similarities in President Clinton's current plight and resultant public repentance. At the National Prayer Breakfast on September 11, 1998, the President made the following statement:

First, I will instruct my lawyers to mount a vigorous defense, using all available appropriate arguments, but legal language

must not obscure the fact that I have done wrong. Second, I will continue on the path of repentance, seeking pastoral support and that of other caring people, so that they can hold me accountable for my own commitment. Third, I will intensify my efforts to lead our country and the world toward peace and freedom, prosperity and harmony, in the hope that, with a broken spirit and a still-strong heart, I can be used for greater good.

I would suggest that Clinton is undergoing psychologically what can be called a "death in life." While the human life course ends in literal death, the path to that finality is often marked by figurative deaths, when things get so bad, one's old life must be abandoned and a new one -- whether inner or exterior -- invented. Whatever the circumstances, the death is mourned and it is to this process of mourning that I will now turn.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross has provided a psychodynamic model for mourning one's own demise, and historians, psychologists, and religious counselors have adjusted that model to understand not only the stages of dying, but the process through which refugees, victims of natural disasters, and repentant sinners proceed in resolving their figuratively fatal traumata. That process involves five overlapping stages of varying length: *denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance*. For those displaced or disgraced in life, the fourth may be presumed *passim*; the fifth, to be more or less provisional.

William Jefferson Clinton is not an introspective man, inclined to see his actions in psychological terms. He is a man of the *polis* -- a political genius at analyzing its psychology -- and by all accounts not a little amoral, which fits in with his electoral success being based on his appearing to be all things to all people who vote. Furthermore, no politician dares to wear his psyche on his sleeve, let alone seek therapy. Clinton seems rather to see himself in terms of religious dichotomies: good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and sin -- and seeks what counsel he can from the clergy (who cannot be subpoenaed and rarely keep notes), but who are exceptionally well informed about the human dynamics of mourning fate -- or sin.

If you are mourning the loss of your homeland or of all your possessions in a flood, or if -- like Clinton -- you mourn having been caught in flagrantly lying to the country and hairsplitting

with a jury about an adulterous affair, *denial* comes first. That the precinct of your privacy has been violated, that your last vestige of probity has been destroyed, that you are now potentially naked to your enemies, is totally unacceptable and thus cannot be happening. For Clinton, his notorious finger-pointing statement that he never had a "sexual relationship" with "that woman," and his subsequent public and private reiterations of a misleading if legal "term of art" as to what sexual relations meant for him, constituted his long drawn out *denial* phase.

Certainly his capacity for both *anger* and *bargaining*, can be seen in the testimony before the grand jury on August 17, 1998, when he finally admitted what he publicly denied. While studiously self-controlled on camera, his withering criticism of the motives of Paula Jones' lawyers, not to mention those of Kenneth Starr's investigators, came across clearly and forcefully. His capacity to turn *denial* into *bargaining* was displayed by explaining the legalisms used to deflect or deny perjury. Another aspect of his *bargaining* was his apparently successful attempt, knowing that the videotape would ultimately be leaked and seen by everyone, to sell his national audience on his plight, pain, and penitence over the heads of Starr and the grand jury. Here one finds the overvaluing of new circumstances that follows the *denial* phase of exiles. They at first mourn for and rage at the loss of familiar ground -- then, often unrealistically, accept a new terrain -- just as Clinton accepted the legal, if politically untenable, verbalisms as a way out of an otherwise impossible perjury trap.

The evening of his grand jury testimony, his brief remarks admitting his relationship "inappropriate" and "wrong," and his having lied to the people, were more an angry expression of his not unjustified hatred for his political tormentors than a humble confession of fault. That *anger* had built up during the *denial* and *bargaining* phase, and was now out for the world to see -- and deplore. The expected abject apology turned out to be a tirade deemed not sufficiently contrite.

Yet, contrition comes in two stages. One is first contrite out of profound self-interest, and that can be seen as its *bargaining* stage: convincing others of one's sorrow at having been caught and made subject to punishment -- hell here being impeachment or resignation; purgatory, censure. The second stage consists in sorrowfully realizing

one's predicament to be the result of flagrantly breaking accepted standards of morality and decorum that cause serious injury to others: family, one's immature lover, colleagues -- and uniquely with Clinton: his high office and the country he governs.

This second stage of Clinton's contrition was articulated, if not manifestly achieved, in his talk to the National Prayer Breakfast. Contrite, in its root meaning of "broken in spirit" and seeking atonement, he declared himself to have repented: resolved to sin no more, to seek help toward that goal, and to retain a spiritual refuge, an inner paradise, even if the earthly one must be surrendered.

Clinton admitted that he had sinned, he accepted his responsibility, he abjured further failings, he asked God for a "clean heart." Listening to him deliver this talk, one was convinced of his sincerity, if only because his journey to this point seemed psychologically right. Whether it was a permanent resolve, or of the moment, remains to be seen.

The difference between literal death, and a figurative death in life, is that finality is exchanged for potentiality. *Depression*, resignation, and final *acceptance* in the face of extinction are instead superseded by the hope of the displaced: the place of exile offers hope (he's in the White House and the Senate doesn't have the votes for impeachment); the insurance company offers hope (his reassuring approval rating in the polls stays the same); and God offers hope for absolution and renewal (three ministers mend his broken spirit). Better still, the mid-term election offers some hope of a political sea change.

Death in life thus offers potential new life -- and for a repentant politician of Clinton's ilk, that is the main chance. He is on the verge of losing in disgrace what his life has been about. The key to his survival of this figurative death is in the hope-fueled strength with which he manages its renewal. As one commentator put it: Clinton has embarked on his last campaign. That compulsion to repeat old victories may save everything -- or nothing.

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## The Most, or Least, Powerful Man in the World?

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President Clinton is the most powerful man in the world. Yet a look at his daily routine poses a serious challenge to this statement. From dawn till dusk his every waking moment is filled with interpersonal tasks in which the power, far from emanating from him, lies with others. He is told what to wear, where to run, whom to meet and what to say. His daily life is bound up in collective forms of decision making, where the balance of power lies more with the other side, even if they be members of his own team advising him. Nominally the most powerful man in the world, in actuality he is so stripped of power that he must virtually ask permission to go to the men's room (and might seek advice on this for security purposes). Even the spatial arrangements of the White House offices with their myriad doors opening into offices with doors which open into other offices make solitude and privacy near impossible. For him, the desire to initiate actions - any action -- must be sublimated into calls for help, advice, suggestion.

Enter Monica. Her story of how she became attracted to Clinton the man is now well known. His is becoming known in fragments, through details he is forced to reveal under various kinds of duress -- again, after taking the advice of others. His account is framed largely in terms of a moral fault, a lapse of judgment for which he claims remorse and forgiveness. This is the line taken by those in the media that seek to judge him, and by the Starr investigation that seeks to uncover a strategy of lying for political gain. But none of these accounts deal with that momentary decision whereby he allowed himself to go from being caught up in a stream of fantastic possibilities -- when he first found himself becoming enamoured of the charms of the young, adulating, Ms. Lewinsky -- to being caught out enacting them.

Embarking upon an affair is a hazardous undertaking. Yet thousands of consenting adults do this each and every day. People's reasons vary, but

in most instances room is inevitably found for maneuver, of time, and place, and occasion. Although many might confess to being moved by the heart, it is the mind that arranges the timetable. A calculus is quickly set to work, juggling weights in an equation of desire that aims to balance, if only transiently, the libidinal costs (of guilt and the fear of being found out), with the returns (of momentary, joyous, illicit pleasures). Ultimately the equation becomes more complex. Other circumstances get factored in; emotional resources are allotted elsewhere. The affair is brought to an end or moves to a different register as people confront their options and exercise choice.

Clinton's affair on this account is not unusual except insofar as he is ordinarily denied the opportunity to make decisions for himself. When an opportune moment came -- albeit with a heavy libidinal investment attached -- in the space between adjacent offices, between consultations with informed counsel, he chose to enact a fantasy. This was a unique act in an environment of otherwise assembled engagement. It would have (and properly should have) remained a private experiment. It was clearly short-lived. One suspects his desire was dissipated as much in the act of realizing that such action -- carefully engineered under the most difficult of circumstances -- was possible, as in the sex itself. This was a desire not frustrated in its aim. In ending the affair with Lewinsky, President Clinton was not indifferent or uncaring but took steps to ensure her continuing welfare and well being. If other forces had not gathered, he might have remained secure in the knowledge that he is capable of the momentary individual act against or in spite of the collective weight of moral exhortation to do otherwise. Perhaps that is clue to where his true Presidential power lies. As it is, he is obliged to mount a daily defense against his critics as his very private affair is subjected to obsessive scrutiny. Once more he is back listening to others, heeding advice, performing on cue. Stripped of power. The most powerful man in the world.

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## Clinton as Sacrifice

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University of Maryland

It is pretty easy to explain Bill Clinton's current troubles in terms of Freud's myth of the primal horde. The leader who seems to have sexual access to any woman (not so different from every woman) must be destroyed by the band of brothers. Yet, even though sex seems to be at the center of the Clinton story, it might be a good idea to step back a little, and think about the story in terms of sacrifice.

Sacrifice is the primal political drama, the sacrifice of the leader is its greatest expression. Oedipus killed his father and slept with his mother, but he is sacrificed in order to save the city of Thebes from a dreadful plague. It worked, at least for a while.

We sacrifice our leaders in order to prevent the outbreak of a cycle of group violence that knows no limits. It is the primary purpose of leaders to offer themselves as sacrifices to the group. The leader dies, or goes into exile, so that the group may live. Not every leader is sacrificed, but every leader must be prepared to be the sacrifice. That is the point. I am following the thinking of Rene Girard here, in *Violence and the Sacred* (1977), but it is a story as old as Moses and Jesus.

What is unusual about Clinton is the way he seems to offer himself up for sacrifice, eagerly sticking his neck onto the chopping block, only to pull it back at the last minute. He does it again and again, at once the most willing of sacrifices, and the man who seems most able and willing to resist the people's desire to sacrifice him.

It is no accident that Clinton is widely regarded as being at his best at funerals, elegiast for those who have sacrificed themselves for the public. About this he speaks from the heart, one who knows exactly what is expected of public figures. To die, so that others might live. Only he always stops short of our complete satisfaction, a trope of his apparently, Clinton as sacrificial tease.

Gennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Monica

Lewinsky -- one might think about Clinton's eagerness to sacrifice himself in terms of his sexual risk-taking, never very far from the public eye. But perhaps the real dynamic is simpler and more basic than that. Clinton always comes back for more. He will, he has said, throw himself against a brick wall a thousand times. He will, we know, survive a thousand brickbats. He never quits, and he never gives up. It is, I think, exactly what we want, a leader who knows his role as sacrifice, while resisting our efforts to sacrifice him. "Bubba Bounces Back," said a tabloid headline the day after his videotaped grand jury testimony played on TV. We were proud.

Why we want this is clear enough, at least in principle. It is the same thing we want from our parents: that they be able to withstand our rage and our hatred. We need to destroy mother a thousand times in our minds, only to discover she is still there. Only then can we learn something about our own limits. Only then can we learn to contain ourselves, because we have been contained.

What is less clear is why this resistance to sacrifice has become the leading attribute of our President, what we seem to require above all else. It must have something to do with a collective fear of our own greed, our own rage that whatever we will be able to acquire in this magnificent economy will not be enough to satisfy. Too much is never enough.

Clinton, it is widely assumed, survives in office because our economy prospers. This is true, but not just in the sense usually attributed to it: that we are satisfied with the economy so we are satisfied with Clinton. We are satisfied with the economy, but we are still unsatisfied, so we must have Clinton to sacrifice. But only if he will not die, taking all this goodness with him.

Sacrifice, says Girard, is the alternative to bloody civil war. In the United States today this does not apply. But there are other ways in which nations may be torn. We are torn between the values we preach, the values we practice, the values we don't believe in any more, and the values we dare not disbelieve, lest there be nothing left.

We are torn between generations, Clinton representative of a generation that is not necessarily less moral than the previous, but certainly less confident in its morality. In this world, Clinton is the sacrifice to our own inability to make the splits upon which public life depends: between man and office, between what we say and

what we do, between what we know and what we cannot let ourselves believe.

Splitting is not much esteemed these days, and for good reason. Still, we should not forget the leading lesson of Melanie Klein, who first elaborated (not discovered, but elaborated) the concept. While depressive integration is good, the more profound danger is "inadequate" splitting and idealization. The result is confusion, the inability to distinguish good and bad, and terror: that in our confusion we might destroy the good. We are now seeing what happens when the splits fall apart, and we can no longer keep apart what is properly held separate.

Reenacting the confusion between good and bad, right and wrong, the pure and the abject -- this is what sacrifice has always been about. Sacrifice reenacts the confusion that occurs when traditional distinctions fail, in the hope of reestablishing these distinctions on a clearer and firmer basis. Sometimes it works, but sacrifice is always risky business, always in danger of merely reenacting the confusion rather than reestablishing traditional boundaries. The sacrifice of Clinton is becoming risky. If he is removed from office, we will, I think, become not less but more confused over the distinction between public and private, upon which liberal democracy depends.

Liberal democracy is classical liberalism, the liberalism of John Locke, in which government serves the individual. Totalitarianism is the opposite, private life is nothing but a resource for the public. Clinton crossed the line in the first place, taunting us with his affairs -- or so it sometimes seems, with no little help from the media. In making his sexuality public, Clinton has caused us to become more confused. This is his great sin against democracy. But if my analysis is correct, the successful sacrifice of Clinton will only enhance the confusion.

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## Orality and Our Postmodern President

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When Ross Perot declared during the 1992 election that he could hear a giant sucking sound coming from south of the border, he could not have known the truthful nature of his own words. Of course, Perot was speaking about the potential loss of jobs that NAFTA would cause. However, can't we read in his words a strange prophetic message? Aren't we now dealing with the echoes of this sucking sound? And what does this type of oral activity have to do with the psychoanalytic concept of orality?

From the very start of his Presidency, Bill Clinton has been attached to a series of oral activities: 1) he can't stop speaking; 2) he loves to eat fast food; 3) he smokes cigars; 4) the Starr report shows him to be a "breast man;" and 5) he is fond of having oral sex performed on him. What I would like to examine is how this orality functions in our current age of cyberspace and global capitalism. In other words, how does the "oral object," in the form of the breast and the voice, relate to our subjective presence in a world that constantly undermines all forms of subjective control?

One of the defining aspects of this time period is the pure production of symbolic knowledges and information that seem to circulate without any level of subjective control or political authority. Thus, in the case of the Internet, we find a global mode of communication that does not respect national or ethical boundaries (and certainly does not respect the privacy of any public figure). Moreover, the distribution of the Starr report on the World Wide Web has shown how the production of new knowledges can result in a crisis of cultural legitimacy. One never knows in cyberspace who is really behind the information that this system circulates and, thus, one is never sure if this information is reliable or not.

Another defining aspect of our culture is the global spread of the mass media and multinational advertising. Both of these forces work by producing a combination of knowledge and desire. In many ways, the media not only tells us what we want but it also tells us where and how to get it. Thus, as Lacan argues, our desire becomes the desire of the social and cultural Other.

But we must still ask who is in control of this production of desire? Is it the ruling class? I believe that our answer to these questions is that no one single force or ideology is in control; rather, we must see ideology in fragmented and multiple ways. Moreover, the knowledge and information that is produced in postmodern culture does not lead to a state of belief or certainty, but instead to a lack of belief and a lack of certitude. Therefore, one of the basic ways that we can determine the difference between modern culture and our current postmodern culture is that in the modern period, knowledge leads to belief, while in the postmodern period, knowledge leads to disbelief. In the case of the publishing of the Starr report, most people interviewed stated that this production of knowledge only made them more uncertain of who is right and who is wrong. Likewise, with the distribution of Clinton's grand jury testimony video, there seemed to be a mixed reaction of both fascination and horror.

According to Freud, one of the ways that people react to this type of increase in feelings of loss and disbelief is by clinging to the first objects of desire and, within this theory, these objects are predominantly oral objects. In this sense, we can read the President's orality as a sign of the times and a symptom of a culture that has lost all of its fundamental groundings and beliefs. Thus, in this structure of cynical ideology, the American public states that they believe that the President is doing a good job but they still do not believe that he has been telling the truth. By accepting a lying leader because the economy is doing well, the public has proclaimed that they would rather vote Dow Jones instead of Paula Jones, and this points to another major aspect of postmodern culture. We live in a period where the universalizing and amoral aspect of capitalism is becoming the guiding force for the entire planet. I believe that psychoanalysis can offer an important intervention into this political crisis by connecting larger social forces to the subjective actions of the President. In other words, as psychoanalytic cultural critics, we must see the President's orality as a national symptom that indicates a real sense of subjective and cultural

emptiness. For a culture that spends its time looking passively into computer and television screens, the quest for an oral object may represent a desire to find something real in a flux of digital information. Perhaps the President's symptoms can get us all to examine the underlying sense of emptiness that accompanies a society dominated by abstract and alienating technologies.

In order to turn this crisis into a positive event, we need to begin to openly discuss the relationships among sexuality, public discourse, and private space. Psychoanalysis should offer one of the strongest sources for this endeavor because analysis is constantly dealing with the intersection of sex, public knowledge, and private experiences. In order not be deafened by the giant sucking sound that has engulfed the country, we must determine what is the hole that this sound is trying to fill. The next time that the President bites his lip in an act of masochistic contrition, we should ask ourselves if his oral fixations are not related to the emptiness that we all feel when we live in a culture that is dominated by the constant production of meaningless objects of desire.

*Robert Samuels received his Doctorate in Psychoanalysis from the University of Paris VIII. He is currently an Assistant Professor of English and the Associate Director of the Human Sciences at George Washington University. He is the author of Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: Lacan's Reconstruction of Freud (1993) and Hitchcock's Bi-Textuality: Lacan, Feminisms, and Queer Theory (1998). He is the Associate Director of the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society. He is currently working on a book on the topic of postmodern psychoanalysis and the teaching of writing. □*

## Boomerang Effects in Partisan Politics

Catherine Chambliss  
Ursinus College

Social psychology has long offered cautionary tales about the boomerang effects that result when efforts to persuade are not sufficiently well crafted. Given these warnings, those wishing to exert political influence by fully exploiting the potential the electronic media offers for pervasive, persistent, and saturating exposure of an enemy's missteps should proceed carefully. Weighing the risks of various unintended consequences can reduce the odds of pursuing counterproductive

### Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting

Saturday, January 30, 1999

Charles Strozier

"Putting the Psychoanalyst on the Couch: A Biography of Heinz Kohut"

interventions.

Over recent months we have witnessed massive efforts to sway public opinion before the November, 1998, elections. The Republicans hoped to fix their congressional majorities for years to come through a massive turnout by conservative voters agitated by the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal and from mass demoralization among the Democrats. However, public opinion polls indicated that the release of Kenneth Starr's Report to Congress was not followed by an overwhelming withdrawal of public support for Clinton's Presidency. The polls actually registered increased support for Clinton in the days following viewing of the videotape.

Indeed, the Democrats achieved historic election gains in the November election, perhaps in part because of the "boomerang effects" against the Republicans. The Democrats gained five seats in the House of Representatives and held even in the Senate, despite the fact that the Republicans had raised nearly \$100 million more than the Democrats. In the 20th century, in the sixth year of an President's tenure, the "out" party has averaged gains of 38 House seats and 6 Senate seats. Further, this was the first time since 1934 that a President's party won seats in a mid-term election and the first time since 1822 that a President's party had gained House seats in the sixth year of a President's tenure. Finally, that most partisan of Republican politicians, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, was forced to resign as Speaker and from Congress.

The Republican-supported attempts to influence public opinion against Clinton by widely disseminating the detailed Starr report and the videotaped grand jury testimony were ultimately counterproductive for six main reasons.

1. Hyperbolic previews of information tend to produce contrast effects. The perceived negativity of information is reduced when the audience has been led to expect even worse. Hype leads to a letdown that minimizes the potential damaging impact of a critical message. The dire predictions of unanimous outrage that served as prelude to the release of both the Starr report and the four-hour videotape established a basis for dismissal ("Is that all?") and impaired the credibility of some of Clinton's attackers. Comments suggested that many viewers of the videotape felt disappointed by the lack of extreme behavior they had been led to expect, and expressed mild annoyance at those who had

"oversold" the tapes.

2. Providing complete, explicit details about potentially objectionable behavior reduces the impact of the audience's exaggerating imaginations. Since each member of an audience can best craft for himself an individualized picture of scandal, providing specifics may actually weaken the effectiveness of an attack. Without complete information, vague allegations enable people to entertain endless thoughts that offend their own idiosyncratic sensibilities. The facts leave less room for fantasies to be embellished and made more personally relevant and reprehensible.

3. The tendency to identify with the victim elicits sympathy and anger at the aggressor when attacks are perceived as too extreme. Exposing vulnerabilities that are too personal and private tends to make the attacker seem shameless and cruel, which shifts the burden of moral breach away from the target. Public outcries against Kenneth Starr's tactics and the scope of his investigation increased following the Internet posting of his report, as did expressed desire for more stringent delineation of the Independent Counsel role.

4. The tendency to identify with the aggressor can backfire if audience members begin to feel guilty about attacks that go too far. Enjoying the "moral high ground" of the role of harsh judge is only possible if the criticizing is done within moral bounds. If the process of attack obviously victimizes ancillary innocent individuals, those initially on the side of the attack may begin to feel defensive and apologetic. This seems to be what happened to Gingrich in 1996, following his emergence as an extremely aggressive leader of the Republican House majority who published his Contract with America in 1994. When demands for reform come across as mean-spirited, the would-be reformers' moral authority becomes tarnished.

5. Intense public attacking permits the object of scorn to showcase his or her resilience. The ability to carry on competently in the face of extreme vilification may strengthen support for the target of attack. Continued effective performance of duties establishes the irrelevancy of personal attacks, and efficiently makes the case that there is a distinction between functioning in the public and personal domains. Clinton has seemed to use "coping well" as part of a strategy to combat negative publicity, often to excellent effect. When footage of Clinton receiving a standing ovation at

the United Nations was aired immediately after excerpts of his grand jury testimony, the television audience was offered undeniable evidence of his ability to perform "Presidentially," even in the face of unimaginable stress. Throughout October, 1998, with the threat of impeachment looming, Clinton managed to achieve a budget deal he favored, contribute to productive Middle East peace talks, and join in the celebration of astronaut John Glenn's return to space. Under widespread attack, he performed admirably.

6. Coercive attempts to persuade tend to produce reactance. In an effort to reassert their freedom, members of the audience may come to support a contrary position. The more that people are exhorted to feel one way, the more they activate opposing sentiment. Public opinion about Clinton rebounded after the grand jury videotapes were broadcast. Citizens apparently do not want to be manipulated, and their resentment is found in oppositional responses to information.

The operation of these and other factors help to account for why public political attacks often backfire. Armed with the latest in information technology, Clinton's worst enemies may have quite inadvertently functioned more as best friends.

We should make judicious use of our newfound ability to launch information worldwide with a couple of keystrokes. Is doing so really free of cost and consequences? The love letters of Warren G. Harding to Nan Britton, his mistress while he was in office and the mother of his illegitimate child, born while he was in office, cannot, by court order, be released until the year 2014. What is the happy medium between waiting 95 years and 3 seconds for public access to dirt about our leaders?

*Catherine A. Chambliss, PhD, is Professor of Psychology and has chaired the Psychology Department at Ursinus College in Collegeville, PA, since 1989. In 1981 she received the Lindback Teaching Award and in 1990, the Laughlin Professional Achievement Award. Dr. Chambliss is a licensed psychologist who has published and presented over 200 research papers. Her book, Group Involvement Training (1988), has been used in a variety of mental health settings. Allyn & Bacon will publish her Psychotherapy and Managed Care: Reconciling Research and Reality in 1999. □*

## Forgiveness and Unforgiveness

C. R. Snyder and  
Laura C. Yamhure  
University of Kansas, Lawrence

President Clinton's September, 1998, marathon of asking for forgiveness touches upon a question that we have been exploring through research. Namely, how does forgiveness "work"?

We believe that forgiveness begins by ascribing some degree of "badness" to a transgression. The key to forgiving, however, is to stop thinking about the transgressor and the ill deed and to cease being emotionally upset. By forgiving, we do not let the transgressor steal our precious feeling and thinking time. There is an adaptive cycle in forgiving: as we give each transgression some thought and come to a verdict about its "badness," we free ourselves to think and feel about more important topics.

Americans are grappling with President Clinton's transgressions and will probably conclude that his actions were bad in varying degrees. However, whether "judgments" of the President's deeds are extremely negative or less so, eventually people will forget and move onto thoughts and feelings related to other matters.

The act of forgiving would accelerate this

### Letters to the Editor on Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr

natural process of forgetting and "moving on" so that we can resolve the "Clinton episode" and be free sooner to experience thoughts and emotions about other topics. There is a historical precedent to forgiveness here. Recall when Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon. Even though some people still harbored negative thoughts and feelings about Nixon, forgiveness became possible with the pardon, and the American people no longer had to focus constantly on Nixon and Watergate.

Polls in October of 1998 suggest that many Americans would like to focus less on the President's sexual misadventures and more on other topics. Moreover, by implication they are suggesting that such forgiveness can be attained without impeachment. On the other hand, the media and some politicians are purposefully

arousing unforgiveness in the service of their goals -- higher ratings and sales for the media, and (re) election for politicians. Unforgiveness -- concentrating continually on the badness of the President's and others' actions, as well as our resulting feelings of anger, hurt, victimization, and resentment -- prevents us from getting on with our lives.

*C. R. Snyder received PhD in clinical psychology from Vanderbilt University in 1971. Since 1980, he has served as Professor and Director of the Clinical Psychology Program in the Psychology Department at the University of Kansas. Among his books, the one that is most related to the present topic is Excuses: Masquerades in Search of Grace (1983), which was co-authored by his colleagues Raymond Higgins and Rita Stucky.*

*Laura C. Yamhure is pursuing a PhD in clinical psychology at the University of Kansas, where she is the Research Coordinator of the Heartland Forgiveness Project. This project is funded by the Templeton Foundation and is designed to explore a new theory of forgiveness. □*

## "No!" to Impeachment

To the Editor,

I have observed the events in Washington not through the eyes of a psychohistorian, but rather through those of a traditional historian of Colonial America, the early Republic, and our Constitution. And I keep coming back to one question: Should William Jefferson Clinton be impeached for the crimes alleged by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr? My reading of the Constitution and *The Federalist Papers* provides a clear answer, "No."

The Constitution states,

The President, Vice President and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

Treason is defined in the Constitution as "levying war against them [the United States], or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." Bribery, while not defined in the Constitution, has a clear legal meaning: the taking of money or other valuables for some service rendered in an official capacity. The Starr report alleges no such crimes and, so, the acts that may

constitute grounds for an impeachment must fit the definition of "other high crimes and misdemeanors." Do they? No.

In discussing impeachment, Alexander Hamilton declared in *The Federalist Papers* [Number 65],

The subjects of its jurisdiction are those offenses which proceed from the misconduct of public men, or, in other words, from the abuse or violation of some public trust. They are of a nature which may with peculiar propriety be denominated POLITICAL, as they relate chiefly to injuries done to society itself.

None of the acts alleged in the Starr report rise to that level. Even if President Clinton is guilty of the perjury and obstruction of justice alleged, his conduct involved a private matter, violated no public trust, and was not injurious to society. A sexual affair, lying about it and trying to cover it up, while morally offensive, demeaning, and embarrassing, is not directly harmful to Americans even if the guilty party is the President.

Of course, the House of Representatives might still vote to impeach the President. Hamilton recognized the potentially partisan nature of the process: he feared that the President might be exposed to "the persecution of an intemperate or designing majority in the House of Representatives." He cautioned that "it ought not to be forgotten that the demon of faction will, at certain seasons, extend his sceptre over all numerous bodies of men." The demon appears to be in season and some are ready to equate lying about private sexual misconduct with treason and bribery. Surely, a vast leap, but demons jump far.

"No," to impeachment. Let's get back to government by flawed men and women who are judged by their public, not private, actions. I leave it to psychohistorians and others to attempt to understand Bill Clinton's motivation, but please leave me out of anything to do with impeachment.

**Edward Cody  
Ramapo College**

*Edward Cody, PhD, is a Founding Faculty Member at Ramapo College of New Jersey where he has held major administrative responsibilities including the position of Financial Vice-President.*

**Who and What  
Interns in Washington Know**

To the Editor,

Independent Counsel Ken Starr's investigation of President Bill Clinton increasingly seems to amount to who did what to whom, for whom, and why, in the President's relationship with Monica Lewinsky. Commentators ranging from CNBC's "all Monica all the time" talk show hosts to New York *Times* op-ed page columnists have speculated, as if perplexed, how this young woman could have garnered the attention and support of such powerful men as Bill Clinton and Vernon Jordon unless some kind of sexual cover-up were involved. As one who was a Washington intern from Harvard and knows first-hand something of how that part of our system works, I raise a different, psychohistorical question: why is there such a need to question the ethics of public officials who are continuing a generous tradition of service to the next generation?

My first Washington internship was in the United States Senate, at the recommendation of civil rights leader Whitney M. Young, Jr., who preceded Vernon Jordon as Executive Director of the National Urban League. My second internship was at the Democratic National Committee, at the recommendation of a Wellesley College political science professor. Was the Senate internship more or less legitimate than the DNC internship because the former came from a prominent public figure? Should either have implied a pay-off to silence me? One thing is for certain: neither of these "plum" assignments would have occurred without direct recommendation from respected sources. In my experience, young people who obtain highly competitive Washington internships tend to be people who know well-positioned people, or who know enough to become known by them, and who know to continue to cultivate mentors who can help them protect their jobs, build their careers, and advance.

Monica Lewinsky originally became a White House intern through her family's political connections. Why do we then conclude that her use of political connections to move on could only have been a sexual pay-off, in a town where using connections is as commonplace as the networking it is called in New York or Los Angeles? Would Lewinsky's New York job offers have been more or less legitimate if recommendations had been made by former teachers or, once again, through family connections -- neither of whom, unlike President Clinton or Vernon Jordon, had knowledge of her performance on the job?

If I were to list all persons who have extended themselves on my behalf throughout my career, it would be a very long list indeed. You would recognize many and perhaps all of the names. Some approached me. Some I found the courage to take the initiative to seek out, Vernon Jordon among them. None turned me away. Quid pro quo was never even hinted. From these extraordinary and generous people, I learned that careers are often built by one person at a time seeing potential in and making introductions for another. We advise junior colleagues of this reality, teach it to students as networking, and continue the tradition by mentoring them both.

**Susan Eisner, MPA  
Ramapo College**

*Susan Eisner, MPA (Harvard University Kennedy School of Government), is a management professor and consultant with more than 25 years senior experience in major organizations in national politics, civil rights, television, and health care. She teaches at Ramapo College of New Jersey and as adjunct faculty at New York University, and is recognized in World Who's Who of Women and Who's Who Among America's Teachers.*

## **American Erotophobia**

To the Editor,

I do not see why some Americans have to make such a complicated mess about sex and their prurient version of Christianity. When French President Mitterand died, both his wife and his mistress were at the funeral, and France did not make a vulgar exhibition of the fact. When Edward VII was dying, Queen Alexandra sent for Mrs. Keppel to be at the dying man's bedside. This was seen as compassionate and sensitive.

There are decent and there are perverse ways of dealing with some personal situations. Think how you Americans look from outside. Is it any wonder that Chancellor Kohl of Germany [written before the October elections] said that the behavior of your politicians made him nauseous. When it slowly dawns on Americans that your political system does not inspire universal respect for its weird erotophobia, then you might get more respect.

**Professor Robert Gregson  
Canberra, Australia**

## **The American People in the**

## Clintonian Phase of Its Identity Crisis

To the Editor,

Contemporary American culture is overwhelmingly, perhaps essentially, discursive; and, if any word is overworked in contemporary American discourse, it must be "American" itself. The word is far more than a geographical description. It is heavily redolent of a heritage of American exceptionalism and suggests that, in grasping American-ness, one will grasp a peculiarly unified phenomenon. As an adjective, the word can be, and is applied to any aspect of the culture, such as business names: glamorous "American Airlines" or prosaic "American Auto Body."

I suspect that this frequent use of the word "American" is a key word -- a master signifier -- rising to the surface of therapeutic babble, especially since it comes at Americans every day through the mass media in references to that most anonymous but most ubiquitous group: "The American People."

At least since the time of the Continental Congress, when federalists and republicans struggled over the character of the infant nation, America has been locked in a psychic struggle with itself. Is it a frontier inhabited by rugged individualists, or a republic of virtuous citizens? Who speaks for the American People? Which philosophy is really "us"? In other words, then, America has always been undergoing a process of subject-formation. It is, quite literally, trying to establish its own self-identity out of an essentially split subjectivity: *E pluribus unum*. Given its history of exile, colonization, conquest (whether military or commercial), mass immigration, capitalism, and cultural imperialism, America is not only far more likely to have such a crisis of split subjectivity than any other country, but also to feel it far more keenly than any other country would. This is especially apparent in the current climate of "culture war" that pits, at one extreme, conservative re-entrenchment in traditional family values against, at the other, multiculturalist re-evaluation of America's manifest destiny. Are the American People One Nation Under God, or a patchwork of different peoples who have no more in common than a system of economic exchange? Is each of us a unique, integral person (an individual), or a nexus of different affiliations (an X-American)?

The many-faceted Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr

scandal is playing out the latest installment of this Great American Identity Crisis. These days, the American People usually gets to indicate its presence by responding to polls, and President William Jefferson Clinton has become a consummate political chameleon, adapting both style and substance to what the *vox populi* demands. Consequently, many, if not most, Americans would find it hard to say exactly what his basic political principles are. With respect to the brouhaha over Clinton's "inappropriate relationship" with Monica Lewinsky, and his alleged perjury to both the grand jury and Paula Jones' lawyers, the polls have indicated, with remarkable steadfastness, that approximately 60 per cent of the American People neither want him to resign nor to be impeached. If these polls are credible, then a much greater proportion of the American People wants Clinton to stay in office than actually voted for him in either the 1992 or 1996 elections. On the other hand, almost exactly the same proportion of poll respondents have stated, with comparable consistency, that they do not think Clinton is morally admirable. He is the American People's leader, but not their moral exemplar, it seems. Why is this so?

In my view, it is because this phase of the American People's identity crisis could not have had a better lightning rod than William Jefferson Clinton. Reactions to him nearly always say far more about their authors than about Clinton himself. Depending on which source one pays attention to, Clinton is:

- The American Dream personified: the poor boy from Hope, Arkansas, who got a Rhodes scholarship, graduated from Yale Law School, became the governor of his home state, and went on to be President;
- A relic of the sixties: the draft dodger, dope smoker, womanizer;
- A J.F.K. wannabe who, somewhere in mid-career, began co-opting conservative ideas while managing to look as though they had been his own all along;
- A tax-and-spend liberal who, in cahoots with his domineering femi-nazi wife, tried to force socialized healthcare on the American People.
- A sexual predator.

It is worth focusing on one particular viewpoint called forth by this Rorschach president, since it shows up the identity crisis most clearly. Conservative culture warriors have insisted that

character is always an issue where allocating positions of responsibility is concerned, and that only men made of whole cloth are worthy of those positions. To quote H. Ross Perot: "If a man cheats on his wife, he'll cheat on his country." But, while traditional valuers are going blue in the face asserting that true men are seamless garments, what does Clinton do? He says that he's going to put the Monica Lewinsky scandal "in a box" and get on with the work that the American People -- who else? -- elected him to do.

During the individual statements given by the members of the House Judiciary Committee on October 5, Representative John Conyers, Democrat of Michigan, asked, on behalf of the American People, "Who are we? And what do we stand for?" Back comes the answer to the first question: Bill Clinton, for the moment. That is, everyone and no one. Left unanswered is the second question, "And what do we stand for?"

**Liam Harte**  
Chicago, Illinois

*Liam Harte was born in England in 1962 and is now in the final stages of obtaining a PhD in Philosophy from Loyola University of Chicago, where he also teaches.*

### **Subversive Sex: The National Soap Opera**

To the Editor,

What strikes me in connection with the ongoing "Fornigate" enactment is its farcical rather than its tragic dimension. I must confess to enjoying the spectacle immensely. I haven't enjoyed following politics this much since the days of the Watergate hearings and Nixon's demise. It's hard to write about this subject without the puns and double entendres spewing forth.

What I find so enjoyable about "Zippergate" is the subversive nature of what is happening to the power structure of this country. Our President as well as some of the leading Republican opposition have become international figures of ridicule after being pressured by the media into publicly confessing their past sexual indiscretions.

When I examine my motives in trying to understand the deep pleasure and satisfaction I felt as Nixon tumbled, along with the milder enjoyment in seeing Clinton squirm, there is little doubt that revenge, witnessing the suffering of one's enemies, lies at the root of it. Seeing Nixon -

- who started his career appealing to the baser instincts of voters by red-baiting and defaming Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas and ended it by escalating and prolonging the war in Vietnam causing needless death and suffering to many thousands -- humbled and humiliated by the Watergate scandal provided some vindication for the many evil actions for which he was responsible.

Many find it disconcerting that William Jefferson Clinton, OUR PRESIDENT (Potus himself) and the OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY are being attacked and demeaned. This seems to make a lot of people anxious, even people who don't support him or his political positions. My sense is that this discomfort, which has been expressed particularly strongly by some European leaders, is closely related to the powerful and fundamentally conservative position that strong, firm authority is a good thing. Those who hold this view fear that if Presidential authority is undermined things will "get out of control," that "nobody will be in charge," or that there will be a loss of "respect for authority." In psychohistorical language, there is a group fantasy that "strong leadership" is necessary to reduce the group's anxiety level.

I find myself much more anxious with the ordinary situation in which leaders, governments, and nations exercise their supposed legitimate and rational power and authority; an occurrence which routinely results in many cruel, unjust, and exploitative actions perpetrated by the stronger on the weaker. For example, I find the abuse of Presidential power recently shown by the cruise missile attack on the pharmaceutical factory in the Sudan (which manufactured medicine for large numbers of Sudanese people, with no clear evidence of direct connection to Osama bin Laden or to the manufacture of poison gas) more upsetting than an attack on the Presidency. The timing of the attack, just before Monica's grand jury testimony, which suggests that part of the motivation was to shift public interest away from the scandal, makes it that much worse.

Clinton may not be guilty of committing an impeachable offense -- close, but no cigar -- but from here on whenever I see him pontificating on matters of state in front of the cameras, such as his recently telling us that his administration had done such a good job in creating a budget surplus, it will be hard not to think about what other kinds of jobs might be on his mind. Sex can be a wonderfully

subversive force. Less respect for the Presidency might be a good thing for the world. Monica (who supposedly joked to her friend Linda that she thought she might be in line for an appointment as Special Presidential Assistant in charge of Blow Jobs ) may go down in history (the putative title of Monica's autobiography according to Paul Krassner) as a heroine of democracy.

**David Lotto**  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

*David Lotto, PhD, is a psychologist and psychoanalyst in private practice who publishes in the Journal of Psychohistory and **Clio's Psyche**.*

### **Nixon and Clinton**

To the Editor,

It has been suggested by Norman Simms on the Psychohistory Discussion List (e-mail <ph-l-subscribe@sooth.com> to subscribe) that President Clinton's alleged illegal actions were only petty crimes and were only in response to the investigations of the Independent Counsel. It has also been suggested that partly because of this, there is no similarity between the Clinton ordeal and the events surrounding former President Nixon and his Administration. But if the former statement is true, then the latter statement cannot also be true.

If one argues that Kenneth Starr created a monster for his office to chase, then one would have no choice but to agree that the late President Nixon as a Constitutional threat was a creation of those investigating the petty burglary at Watergate. If there had not been an investigation of the original crime, there would not have been a cover-up. There would have been no lies, no obstruction of justice, no abuse of power -- there would have been no investigation of President Nixon himself, nor of Clinton, for that matter. This is the Kenneth Starr as Devil approach.

"The Devil made me do it" excuse is one that we tried as children (though it never worked for me). Just as we got into trouble and tried to squirm our way out, Clinton got into trouble and tried to weasel his way out. We don't seem to hold it against him. But why should Clinton as President be allowed to use the "Devil made me" defense, unless, perhaps, we all see him as the child we once were?

Why were we less willing to excuse and forgive Nixon than Clinton? Perhaps it is that when Nixon finally felt caught and then abandoned

by most of his political allies, he felt guilty and took the role of the martyr and resigned. Clinton is not as guilty, not without major allies, and not swamped by a tidal wave of discontent generated by a lost war. Nixon represented the bully big brother, parent, or schoolmate, or the evil side of ourselves, that we wanted to purge. In removing him, we were able to exact revenge upon the oppressors from the time of our childhood.

**Stan Pope**  
Detroit, Michigan

*Stan Pope of Tanco, Inc., is an entrepreneur and National Service Manager - Island Sun and Health Systems.*

### **At a Glimpse of a Female Undergarment**

To the Editor,

Allegedly, the very first time Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky were alone she performed the female analogue of what Clinton supposedly did to Paula Jones: she "flashed" him. It is difficult to think of another President who would have thrown all caution -- and perhaps his Presidency -- to the winds because of a glimpse of a female undergarment. Harry Truman may have laughed, I suppose. Ike would have had her removed forthwith. FDR might have asked her to sit on his lap. JFK? I suspect that Ms. Lewinsky would have been a bit too *zaftig* [pleasingly plump] for him, and he may have been put off by her aggressiveness, but this one is really too close to call.

**H. John Rogers**  
New Martinsville, West Virginia

### **Clinton's Con-Man Identity and US**

To the Editor,

When Bob Dylan eulogized Alan Ginsberg as "a con-man extraordinaire," he was praising the late poet, one American to another, acknowledging that which makes us American. And he was also putting his finger on exactly that which the Republicans find so maddening about Bill Clinton, the reason he remains, despite everything, so popular with the American public and riding so high in the polls.

Clinton, after all, has been caught, literally, with his pants down. He has been shown to have been a liar and a cheat. When Republicans look at Slick Willy, all unctuous and sincere, they scream in despair at the rest of us, "Can't you see what a

fake he is?"

Kenneth Starr, like so many others on the religious right, is deluded into believing in his own righteousness. He, at least in his own mind, is not a con-man. He, in his own imagining, is the real thing. Thus he is shocked, as are they all, that the

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rest of us cannot see that Clinton is a sham, or, seeing it, are not as appalled as Starr is.

Of course, we do see, and that is part of the reason we continue to support Clinton. He is one of us, not the real thing, not the fully realized persona of our idealizing, but a flesh-and-blood con-man, playing a part to the hilt on the stage in front of millions, and pulling it off. We Americans are all *con*-structured men and women. We are all playing games, acting parts, not being but presuming, and deep down we know that. And this is why we continue to stand behind the loveable con-man, the rascal in the White House.

We have to fake it, to pretend, like Benjamin Franklin who boasts in his *Autobiography* of *con*-structuring an entirely fake identity and doing very well by it, thank you: "I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the Reality of this virtue; but I had a good deal with regard to the Appearance of it." So we who are not yet there, who are not yet righteous, who don't believe we are at one with the Truth, know that we are, in the old language for this, "sinners." And so is Bill, and he seems to know it, too. That is what makes the con-man, the *con*-structured man, like Huck Finn's Duke and Dauphine, such loveable rascals. Look at popular culture and you'll see the trend: we Americans love our con-men. The

crowd, it has been said, knew that P.T. Barnum's two-headed mermaids were fakes, but they gladly paid their nickel to be part of the show.

But to be an American is to be, as Dylan said of Ginsberg, a "con-man extraordinaire." And as long as Clinton pulls it off, then the rest of us sinners, unlike Starr's holy self-righteous legions, will support the dirty dog. As Pogo said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

**David R. Williams**  
Loudon County, Virginia

*David R. Williams is adjunct Professor of English at George Mason University, and obtained his PhD in American Studies from Brown and his Master's of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School. He is the author of Wilderness Lost: The Religious Origins of the American Mind (1987). □*

## Interview

### **East Meets West: The Psychohistory of Sudhir Kakar**

**Paul H. Elovitz**  
Ramapo College and the Psychohistory Forum

*Sudhir Kakar, a psychoanalyst and a writer, met our editor two decades ago while lecturing to psychoanalytic and academic audiences. Rita Ransohoff and other Psychohistory Forum scholars have utilized his work in their own research. We are pleased to be able to bring his ideas to a larger psychohistorical audience.*

*He was born in Nainital, India, northeast of Delhi, in the Himalayas, in 1938. He earned his PhD in Economics from Austria, received his psychoanalytic training as a candidate of the German Psychoanalytic Society at the Sigmund Freud Institut in Frankfurt, from 1971 to 1975, and then graduated from the Indian Psychoanalytic Society in 1980.*

*Doctor Kakar's working language is English and all his books were originally written in English. His major works include The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978); Shamans, Mystics and Doctors (New York:*

A. Knopf, 1982); *Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); and *The Colors of Violence: Cultural Identities, Religion, and Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

Professor Kakar's academic appointments include Lecturer in General Education and Research Fellow in Social Psychology of Management, Harvard University, 1966-67; Professor and Chair, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, 1976-1977; and Visiting Professor, Committee on Human Development, Divinity School and the College, University of Chicago, 1988-92.

Among his many honors and awards are: the Boyer Prize for Psychological Anthropology, American Anthropological Association, 1987; the Goethe Medal, Goethe Institute, Germany, 1988; Fellow, Institute of Advanced Study, Berlin, 1994-1995; and National Fellow in Psychology, Indian Council of Social Science Research, 1992-1994.

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We wish to thank the following for their help in arranging the interview: Mary Chin, PhD, of the University of Hawaii's Center for South Asian Studies; Shyamal Gupta of Calcutta; and Professor Ashok Nagpal of the Department of Psychology, Delhi University.

**PHE:** Please tell us about your background.

**SK:** My father was a civil servant, my mother, a housewife. The family religion was Hindu and my parents' social class was upper middle. My only sibling, my sister, is five years younger and a schoolteacher. My mother died when I was 37 and my father when I was 45.

**PHE:** How do you define yourself in professional terms?

**SK:** I define myself as a psychoanalyst and a cultural psychologist who is engaged in the study of mental representations. In the first case, the mental representations are primarily of the individual's bodily life and family relationships while in the second case they are the representations of the individual's culture and its history.

**PHE:** What brought you to the study of the unconscious?

**SK:** I think what brings one to the

unconscious is always the sensing of its presence in one's own person. For me this took place in early youth, facilitated by the reading of literature, for instance, the fiction of Dostoyevsky and then Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*.

**PHE:** When did you first encounter psychohistory?

**SK:** I first encountered psychohistory orally rather than in the written form. This was in conversations with Erik Erikson over the winter of 1964 in Ahmedabad where he had come to do his book on Gandhi. Of course, I did not know that what I was listening to, with a mounting sense of excitement and fascination, was psychohistory. I read Erikson's *Childhood and Society* and *Young Man Luther* just after I met him in 1964.

**PHE:** What was the immediate and long-term impact?

**SK:** The impact of both the man and his writings was dramatic. With his help and encouragement I decided to change my profession from economics to psychoanalysis. It was to be a version of psychoanalysis that is much more receptive to the history and culture of the individual's community than is normally the case in analytic therapy and writing. Over the years I have come to appreciate how unique Erikson was by being the foremost proponent of cultural relativism in the profession.

**PHE:** What were Erickson's strengths and weaknesses in examining Gandhi?

**SK:** The great strength of the Gandhi book lay in its methodology, implicit in Erikson's earlier book on Luther and explicit in *Gandhi's Truth*, that, to understand the meaning of a historical event or "action" it has to be studied in the four-fold complementarity of the individual's developmental history, his present stage of life, the present state of the individual's community, and the history of these communities. There were other methodological advances in the book such as a delineation of the dynamics of the psychohistorian's own unconscious involvement in his subject, with his witnesses, and in the very process of history. Its weakness was that Erikson's empathy with his subject sometimes slipped into idealization, his counter-transference reactions preventing the highlighting of some of the dark corners of Gandhi's mind.

**PHE:** How do you define psychohistory?

**SK:** To me psychohistory is the study of

the influence of mental representations, conscious and unconscious, individual and collective, on the behavior of actors in a historical situation.

**PHE:** What is the importance of childhood to psychohistory?

**SK:** If the recognition of recurrent motivational themes in a historical actor's life and the demonstration how they influenced his actions is important for a particular psychohistorical work, then childhood, the period where the themes are first articulated, becomes significant.

**PHE:** You were about 10 years old when India obtained independence from Britain. Do you have any childhood recollections of Gandhi and the times. If so, did any influence your becoming a writer and a psychoanalyst?

**SK:** I have vivid childhood recollections of the time of independence, especially of the riots between Hindus and Muslims which broke out at the partition of the country into India and Pakistan. I have described these memories in detail in *The Colors of Violence* [reviewed in this publication, December, 1997]. In this book, a psychohistorical account of violence between Hindus and Muslims, I became aware how my extended family's "war-stories" from the riot towns of Pakistan had become the core of my memory of "the Muslim," and that the ambivalence of fear and fascination from my past with which I regarded Muslims had not vanished. I became aware that in my interviews my first impulse was to defend myself against the threat the Muslims posed to my boundaries by strengthening and fortifying them as Hindu. Then, in a kind of reaction formation, my tendency was to move in the opposite direction by consistently placing a more positive gloss on Muslim statements and actions than on Hindu ones. The confrontation with my childhood memories, I discovered, was essential for my present research.

**PHE:** Please list some people who you think have made the greatest contribution to psychohistory/psychobiography in order of their contribution.

**SK:** Erik H. Erikson, Bruce Mazlish, Peter Lowenberg, and Peter Gay

**PHE:** What training should someone wanting to be a psychohistorian get today?

**SK:** I can only talk about one essential element: an experience of the unconscious through a personal analysis. Such an analysis, depending on the individual, need not be long but it is vital

that the psychohistorian discover psychoanalytic concepts and theories at a level other than that of intellect.

**PHE:** Which mentors helped you with a psychodynamic approach to biography and history?

**SK:** Besides Erikson, Abraham Zaleznik at the Harvard Business School (HBS) was my guide when I was writing my psychodynamic biography of Frederick Taylor. I was further influenced by the work of Bruce Mazlish at MIT and by Alexander Mitscherlich of the Freud Institut in Frankfurt where I trained. I found Mitscherlich's psychohistorical accounts of post-World War II Germany, such as his *Die Vaterlose Gesellschaft* [*Society Without the Father*, 1969], fascinating.

**PHE:** Zaleznik is not well known in psychohistorical circles even though I remember being quite impressed by one of his articles on the uses of failure by businessmen. Would you tell our readers some more about this individual, his ideas and publications, and how he mentored you?

**SK:** Zaleznik was Professor of Social Psychology of Management at Harvard Business School for many years as well as a Faculty Member at the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute. The focus of his work at the HBS was on the role of irrational factors in business decision making. With the help of many case studies he showed how the leadership style of business leaders was influenced by their personality development and their unconscious conflicts. His book *Human Dilemmas of Leadership* (1966) was quite influential in the study of leadership and organizational behavior. I attended his seminar, Psychoanalytic Psychology and Management Theory, and in 1967 he arranged for a Research Fellowship at the HBS for me to write a psychohistorical study of Frederick Taylor, the "father of scientific management." I still continue this particular interest by teaching every year in a three-week program for top management, called "The Challenge of Leadership," at INSEAD, the European Institute of Business Administration in Fontainebleau, France.

**PHE:** Your work on time and motion pioneer Frederick Taylor has had an impact on professors of business and other academics, but I never hear it mentioned by psychohistorians despite my own enthusiasm about it. What are your thoughts on it after all these years?

**SK:** My book on Frederick Taylor, with

the subtitle *A Study in Personality and Innovation*, was published in 1970. It was not only my first book, thus giving it a special place in my affections, but it was also one of the early works in the emerging field of psychohistory. I found the interplay of psychological motivation and historical fact in Taylor's life and work fascinating, and I remember that the book was received quite generously by critics. I think the book was very successful in showing how Taylor's defenses; the control of his instinctual life by mechanistic means, activity, and attention to external detail; and his ambivalence to authority were reflected in his system of "scientific management," and how his theories also met a pressing historical need of his times. I don't think I would change much in the book if I wrote it today except, perhaps, tone down "Eriksonisms" in its language, to which I was then partial.

**PHE:** How would you describe the progression in methodology and focus of your four major books listed in the introduction?

**SK:** Whereas the first of these, *The Inner World*, was modeled on Erikson's classic *Childhood and Society*, the subsequent works were much more comparative and contained a large amount of anthropological fieldwork.

**PHE:** What has been your experience with clinical practice?

**SK:** Psychoanalytic experience with patients has been invaluable for my written work. It checks any tendency toward a mechanical application of concepts and theories and, of course, infuses a sense of humility and relativity in face of the complexity and range of the human mind.

**PHE:** How extensive is the impact of psychoanalysis and psychohistory in India?

**SK:** The impact of psychoanalysis and psychohistory in India is minimal. The reasons are many. Psychoanalysis is looked upon as a Western import with little relevance for a society with different family patterns and religious traditions. It also goes against the grain of spiritual "idealism" which characterizes the Indian approaches to the mind. Aurobindo, a respected mystic-guru reflected this orientation when criticizing psychoanalysis six decades ago: "The secrets of the lotus cannot be found in the mud in which it has its roots."

**PHE:** Psychoanalytic ideas and concepts are encountered in everyday speech and writing in my American culture. Do you think this is helpful

or does it primarily add to an intellectualized defense against really combining thoughts and feelings?

**SK:** I think the use of psychoanalytic ideas and concepts in everyday discourse contributes to intellectualized defenses in therapy. Western patients often use abstractions such as "hostility" against, say, a brother. I always try to bring them nearer to concrete, bodily feeling by saying, "I don't know what you mean by 'hostility'. Do you want to hit him, strangle him, or what?" Lacking a psychoanalytic vocabulary, Indian patients have a quicker access to the emotions underlying concepts.

**PHE:** As a dream group leader, I am curious as to whether Indian men are more open to probing the unconscious through dreams than Americans or Germans?

**SK:** Yes, I believe they are, once the analyst conveys his interest in this kind of exploration. One reason is that the communication of psychic events, including mental distress, through narration of dreams is a well-known device on the Indian subcontinent. Popular manuals of dream interpretation are avidly consulted by millions. These manuals list hundreds of objects and situations occurring in dreams and ascribe each a standard meaning. A second reason is the relatively undeveloped defense of intellectualization.

**PHE:** How is the USA viewed in India today? How do Indians respond to our current obsession with Clinton, Lewinsky, Starr, and impeachment?

**SK:** The USA is viewed with a degree of ambivalence. It is the promised land for the educated middle class, greatly admired for its democratic institutions and the opportunities its open society affords immigrants. On the other hand, its hegemonic intentions are resented. Like the newspaper-reading European, the Indian is baffled by the American obsession with Clinton and Lewinsky, and there is great deal of sympathy for the President. Sexual excess is generally accepted as the prerogative of the powerful.

**PHE:** What changes have you seen in both Germany and the USA since you first came to these countries as a student?

**SK:** The biggest change is in the increase of openness to non-Western Cultures. Non-Western art forms and foods are accessible to more and more people, even though Germany sometimes

seems to have to be dragged kicking and screaming into greater multi-culturalism. Another big change is in an increasing interest in spirituality and the spiritual aspects of traditional religions. This is particularly striking in Germany.

**PHE:** How do you explain the growth and psychology of fundamentalism?

**SK:** Here I would highlight the identity-threat that is being posed by forces of modernization and globalization in many parts of the world. There are the feelings of loss and helplessness accompanying dislocations and migrations from rural areas to the shanty towns of urban megalopolises, the disappearance of craft skills that underlay traditional work identities, and the humiliation caused by the homogenizing and hegemonizing impact of the modern world, which pronounces ancestral cultural ideals and values outmoded and irrelevant. These are all conducive to heightening the group aspects of identity as the affected (and the afflicted) look to fundamentalist religious groups to combat their feelings of helplessness and loss, and to serve as vehicles for the redress of injuries to self-esteem.

**PHE:** What are your thoughts on the psychodynamics of violence in our world?

**SK:** I think we need much more work on the psychodynamics of group violence. The old Freudian argument that as personal identity disappears in a crowd, the residue is some regressed, primitive state where the violent side of human nature is unleashed, is not convincing. Identity in a crowd only seems to get refocused from a personal to a group identity. This refocusing is certainly dramatic and full of affect since a crowd amplifies all emotions, heightening a feeling of well being into exaltation, fear into panic. There is no regression to a primitive level but behavior, including violence, is molded by the group's norms, values, and historical traditions.

**PHE:** Turning to the spread of nuclear weapons in South Asia, do you see much danger of nuclear war between India and Pakistan?

**SK:** At the moment, no, though this may be a judgement based on wish fulfillment. I hope that with the danger of nuclear war staring the leadership of both countries starkly in the face, the tensions between the two can at last start being reduced. Perhaps it is indeed true as the poet Roethke observed: "In a dark time, the eye begins to see."

**PHE:** What are you working on now?

**SK:** I have just finished a work of "psychohistorical fiction." Located in 4th century India, it is the imaginary biography of Vatsyayana, the author of the *Kamasutra*. In the USA, it will be published in January, 2000, by Overlook Press.

**PHE:** Why call it "psychohistorical fiction" rather than a biographical novel?

**SK:** I call it psychohistorical fiction since the re-creation of the *mentalité* regarding sexual mores was as important as the fictional life of novel's protagonist. Its distinguishing characteristic is its fictional evocation of ancient Indian sexuality and an implicit comparison with modern sexuality. The advantages [of a more fictionalized form of expression] are a greater play of hunches, intuitions and the like, and of not having imagination fettered by facts.

**PHE:** What are your thoughts on the future of psychohistory?

**SK:** I feel the future of psychohistory in North America and Europe is very much linked to the future of psychoanalysis in these parts of the world. In contrast to Europe, psychoanalysis has had a roller coaster ride in the USA, from an exaggerated expansion in the 50s and 60s to an equally exaggerated contraction in the 80s and 90s. Both psychoanalysis and psychohistory will occupy a small but well carved out space in their fields. This space will remain contested, but there is no replacement in sight for the particular strengths of these two disciplines. In India and other parts of Asia, psychoanalysis and psychohistory will both expand to fill out their "natural" territorial space which is still unoccupied in this part of the world.

*Paul H. Elovitz is Editor of this publication. □*

## Analysts on the Couch: Part II

*(Continued from page 69)*

*study of three famous analysts with his thoughtful essay on Brett Kahr's study of Donald Winnicott. In Part II, Brink exams the lives of Fairbairn and Guntrip, and concludes with some insightful comments on writing psychobiography.]*

*Review essay of:*

*Jeremy Hazell, H.J.S. Guntrip: A Psychoanalytical Biography. London: Free Association Books, 1996. ISBN 1853433330 (pb.), xiii, 356 pp., \$22.50*

*Brett Kahr, D.W. Winnicott: A Biographical Portrait. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1996. ISBN 0823666840, xxix, 189 pp., \$40*

*J.D. Sutherland, Fairbairn's Journey Into the Interior. London: Free Association Books, 1989. ISBN 1853430595 (pb.), xiv, 191 pp., out of print.*

### Sutherland's Fairbairn

The most speculative of the three psychobiographies under review is Sutherland's of Ronald Fairbairn (1889-1964) because Fairbairn's rare psychosomatic symptom was obscure in origin. The challenge was to explain Fairbairn's painful urinary retention from which he was unable to get relief after onset in 1934. It is sobering to realize that for all his psychological curiosity and powerful intellect, Fairbairn was incapable of modifying this "hysterical" symptom whose origin he assigned to early trauma. No simple physiological cause was found for inability to urinate, especially in public, from which his father had also suffered. In analysis, or self-analysis, Fairbairn did not sufficiently recover his distressed feelings about his father's weakness and his mother's domination to accept and integrate them. Sutherland's interpretation of the symptom is coextensive with his understanding of Fairbairn's personality, a highly gifted only child formed in late Victorian Calvinist Edinburgh. As the symptom proved to be invasive, governing Fairbairn's ability to travel and appear in public, it is well worth the attention given it.

Sutherland's view is that the symptom became dominant upon re-traumatizing by a convergence of life events. Fairbairn's wife, who was impatient with his psychological preoccupations, had verbally attacked him at the same time as colleagues in the psychology department were persecuting his "unscientific" interest in psychoanalysis. He then suffered an acute renal colic with haematuria, painfully passing a stone. Bad relations with his wife awakened early attachment anxiety and, sensitized by reading Melanie Klein on the child's interior fantasy to feelings he did not know he had, Fairbairn seems to have regressed, losing the intellectual control by which he usually managed his life. Sutherland comments,

Clinical experience would at once suggest that the symptom had arisen from a sharp splitting off in his self of a deep sadistic rage against his internal bad mother. (p. 36) ... We can assume his block to be the

essential depressive one, that is, how to make restitution of the inner parents destroyed by sadistic attacks when it was the invasions of these fantasies in his own inner world that were troubling him. (p. 54)

With no analyst to help Fairbairn negotiate unconscious sadistic fantasies, he was left to split off his hostility if creativity was to be preserved.

All his ideals and principles led him to contain this situation, though the stress was expressed in the urinary retention symptom which constituted by now a more persistent manifestation of his serious conflict. In an entirely negative environment, it is doubtful if he could have kept his creative self active in any other way. (p. 54)

Fairbairn was certainly interested in creativity, including artistic creativity. His "Prolegomena to a Psychology of Art" (1938) detects a struggle with "a combination of sadism and restitution" in the Surrealist Salvadore Dali's paintings of dismembered women -- especially a picture called "Spectre du sex appeal" in which a small boy contemplates "a colossal" yet "deformed, and mutilated" female form, with various missing body parts. The picture helped Fairbairn to recognize and accept his own sadism (and wish for repair) that went with ambivalent feelings towards his controlling mother who had shamed his earliest sexual interest in touching his body.

Fairbairn was shrewd enough to assign his suffering to traumatic events in early childhood, as his self-analytic notes show. The notes of 1939 state mainly that his mother's ambitions had "strengthened his narcissism," conferring a sense of special destiny and even putting him in a feminine role, so close had he been to mother and distant from father. The urinary symptom may have had something to do with wishing to be female, as well as non-identification with his father. By 1950-1955, however, the notes focus more on his aggressive wife's replicating "castrating" mother, with supporting father figures (university colleagues) now in a hostile role. "He felt strongly he was not treated by his mother as a person in his early years," Sutherland writes. (p. 81) Not only was there mother's early censorious attitude to touching his penis, together with warnings about sexual feelings for "bad women," there had been the traumatizing incident of witnessing his father's urgent need to urinate while riding in a railway carriage. This too left Fairbairn

with hostility for the embarrassment and "a secret satisfaction from his suffering." (p. 71) Other traumatic incidents are remembered: unwanted touching by a man in a park and the death of a little girl in a road accident for which he felt responsible. Sutherland does not fully sort these out any more than Fairbairn had been able to do, but he convincingly shows just how much guilty self-persecution and hidden aggression had been engendered by unassimilated early experience.

In 1940, Fairbairn began to delineate what he called "schizoid" pathology, to which he later added a reconfigured bipolar ego. He had recognized and could tolerate his feelings enough to conceptualize them into a brilliant new model of endopsychic structure no longer depending on discharge of instinctual tensions arising entirely within the child. He saw internalized conflict as the product of defects in the mother-infant relationship, redefining developmental stages and the defenses. Replacing oedipal pathology with the primacy of bad mothering, Fairbairn postulated an ego split between "libidinal" (exciting) and "antilibidinal" (persecuting) internalizations of the mother. As he had little to say for a "death instinct" other than that it was a masochistic relationship with an internalized bad object derived from mothering, he challenged both Freud's and Melanie Klein's claims as to the source of infantile hate. Indeed, Sutherland rightly calls Fairbairn's papers revising endopsychic theory (published in 1952 as *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality*) a "Copernican change" by showing with clarity why "object seeking" rather than drive discharge is primary in human experience. Fairbairn attributed all psychopathology to splitting of the self in early maternal relations, thereby bringing forward trauma as the primary pathogen. He thus set the stage for far more empirical studies of development than had been possible with Freud's model. Sutherland's achievement is to show the difficult passage through an unresolved "creative illness" that nonetheless produced a set of brilliant insights for others to build upon.

### Hazell's Guntrip

As the story of psychological regeneration, undoubtedly Hazell's *H.J. S. Guntrip: A Psychoanalytical Biography* is the most remarkable. It is the most detailed and best documented of the three biographies, and it portrays a personality intrepid for self-truth that reminds us of the great crusading efforts of English Nonconformity that began with soul-searching and

conversion. It is a "Pilgrim's Progress" from entrapment in bad childhood -- a neglectful and persecuting mother and remote father -- to liberation to becoming a deeply understanding and caring psychotherapist. Indeed, Harry Guntrip (1901-1975) had begun his search in institutional Christianity, in Methodism, the Salvation Army, and eventually as a Congregational minister. But his wish to help others only disclosed his own incapacity and need for psychological healing. Like the early Puritans, Guntrip assiduously kept detailed records of his emotional and physical sufferings, together with the increasingly effective determination to find help in psychoanalysis. He was to learn that the way to personal truth was not through some supernatural intervention, or even through the direct agency of an authoritative therapist, but by taking account of dreams as opening the pathway to authentic feelings about childhood attachments. The quest was to set in motion natural healing forces, inherent in his own psyche, recognizing that this was only possible through submitting to the discipline of transference to an analyst. Guntrip was extremely fortunate to find analysts of the caliber of Fairbairn and Winnicott, both discontented Freudians establishing adult "object relations" as the product of actual mother-child interactions at the start of life.

Readers of Guntrip's most influential books, *Personality Structure and Human Interaction* (1968) and *Schizoid Phenomena, Object Relations and the Self* (1968) may not realize the cost at which they came. Hazell's achievement is to make this personal cost entirely clear, as Guntrip himself wanted it to be. Never again will it be possible to dissociate the author's emergence from psychological distress from his theoretical statements. Blending science with the arts (and not forgetting therapy as an extension of ministry), Guntrip's version of psychoanalysis was about discovering authentic personhood beyond the compromised strategies for survival used by badly parented children. He himself had been brought to a standstill by inexplicable bouts of exhaustion. Tension, hyperactivity, and insomnia led him in 1936 into therapy in London with the Freudian doctors, Crichton-Miller and Clifford Allen. They rather moralistically diagnosed "mother-fixated Narcissism," finding him trying to resist his father's passivity. (p. 27) But oedipal theory alone could not discover the true roots of Guntrip's trouble.

Discovery of his own schizoid pathology through analysis and work with patients was the opening that Guntrip needed for theoretical advances. The cause was not alone the trauma of his loved but rivaled infant brother Percy's dying when Guntrip was about three. Guntrip himself had become dangerously ill from maternal neglect after this death, and an amnesia formed around the events which persisted until a dream in late life brought out the feelings. The real source of schizoid emptiness was his manipulating and dismissing mother, who herself suffered an unhappy childhood and never really wanted children of her own. At most, her caregiving had been adequate only for a brief period of Guntrip's infancy, after which she became angry and punitive, and on occasion beat him. Guntrip thus realized that he was less caught in oedipal rivalry (he longed for his good but remote father more than for his mother) than in fear of guilt and even non-being when his mother refused to respond to his need for attachment.

It was essentially an attachment phenomenology of the "anxious-avoidant" type that Guntrip was constrained to investigate in himself and to theorize, though that term would be introduced later after more refinement of "object relations" theory. Nevertheless, what happened was a massive shift away from drive theory to recognition of the primary reliance of infants on their mothers and the fear-inspiring consequences of dismissive or inconsistent mothering. As Hazell writes of a realization when in therapy with Winnicott, "the 'vital heart' of Guntrip's personality was simply unevoked, unrelated, and dissociated, entirely dependent for life upon someone's recognition." (p. 240) Guntrip came to feel that Fairbairn had not fully appreciated the depth of emptiness he recognized, insisting too much upon internalized persecutory "bad objects," and not enough on unevoked potential; his mode of analysis had been too oedipal. Winnicott, on the other hand, had allowed penetration to the core of depersonalized unreality, but he too clung to a classic id theory that barred the way to the most accurate formulation of the schizoid problem. It was finally Fairbairn's theory of internalization that Guntrip sought to augment as he wrote about the medium of personal relationships in which a child must grow or fail to grow. His predicament was that of the child withdrawing from a persecuting mother into a protective schizoid state which, while it decreased vulnerability, increased a sense of isolated, un-lived life. Hysterical and

obsessional defenses were powerless to mitigate this deep state of deprivation, which had to be reached and replenished as Winnicott's re-mothering therapy tended to do. The upshot in 1959 was that Guntrip suggested to Fairbairn that his endopsychic theory would benefit from recognizing the deepest split of all

in which part of the hungry, angry, clamouring "libidinal ego," in addition to turning against itself by identifying with the rejecting object, "gives up the struggle and just withdraws from pressure and deprivation, and becomes a 'Regressed Ego,' detached and schizoid." (p. 188)

The suggestion was accepted, although by then Fairbairn's poor health prevented revision of his published views.

Hazell makes the point that Guntrip's insights were won out of personal struggle to encounter disowned feelings and accept them as his to work with. There is no minimizing of the difficulties of overcoming resistances in himself, of his personal, family, and professional relations, not to mention the sometimes severe emotional setbacks in the course of analyses. No amount of intellectualizing could deliver him from the schizoid predicament, with PhD studies in psychology only a useful professional adjunct to the real work in analysis and experience with patients. (A remarkable feature of Guntrip's story is the exceptional understanding of his wife Bertha, who admirably accepted stresses that might have sunk a lesser person.) Guntrip also showed an unflinching wish for repair in the alliances he made both with therapists and colleagues who understood what he was after. Of course, he was misunderstood by some colleagues in the University of Leeds Department of Psychiatry and, like Fairbairn, he was driven onto a lonely course. The greatest recognition came from America, where he effectively lectured at the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry and elsewhere. It is not surprising that his remarkable trove of journals, self-analytic notes, and other papers should find safe deposit in the Menninger Library in Kansas, where Hazell had complete access.

Today Guntrip would be recognized as an emotionally and physically abused child and the mystery of his suffering would not be so difficult to penetrate. It is important to realize the expenditure of energy it took to find help to initiate self-healing by freeing dreams which enabled

reconfiguring of the past. Collapse after the trauma of seeing infant brother Percy dead in his mother's lap had been preceded by a still earlier illness when his developing being was not responded to and later assailed by guilt-making discipline. It was necessary to bring together this entire picture before permanent healing could begin and, through much of the 20 years of analysis, Guntrip did depend greatly on his analysts for sustainment.

When freeing came in later life, it resulted in a directness, purposefulness and even exuberance remarkable for its authenticity. He was zealous to promote "object relations" and his own contributions to the theory, but there was no misplaced confidence. He was a shrewd realist, generous and ready to exchange ideas and feelings with no suggestion of professional superiority. I found Guntrip about the most honest, direct, and penetrating person I have ever met, and he was exceptionally helpful in supporting the ideas about creativity in the arts I was then trying to form. Freeing life-affirming creativity, after all, was what his entire quest was about. He was under no illusion that "cures" in the medical sense were possible in psychoanalysis. His statement is:

There is no such thing [as a cure]. What does happen is that one is put in a stronger position internally to experience, with fuller understanding, the ways in which the old ingrown bad-relation patterns are aroused and disturbed by present day affairs.... If the past is never totally outgrown, neither is the whole personal self static ... while a genuine therapeutic relationship is being experienced. (pp. 314-5)

Reparative transformation would be a better term than "cure," and of this Guntrip gave living evidence. It was dismayed that cancer took him at 74 during the height of his powers.

### Comments

It is important to discuss these psychobiographies together as the careers were interconnected, for the most part productively. The linking figure is Harry Guntrip, analysed first by Fairbairn, then by Winnicott. Fairbairn was educated in philosophy and medicine, and had analysis with E. H. Connell. He spent his entire professional life in Edinburgh where, in 1949, Guntrip went for treatment. This was not Guntrip's first attempt at psychological healing, but it was his real starting point as Fairbairn had developed the idea of internalized persecuting "objects" from bad

mothering. Guntrip had 736 sessions with Fairbairn, lasting five-and-one-half years. By 1954, however, Guntrip's struggle with his bad internalized mother was not responding as well as he had hoped to Fairbairn's style of analysis, which was more Freudian than his theory would indicate. In 1962 he began analysis in London with Donald Winnicott (1896-1971) completing 152 sessions by 1969. Thus Fairbairn's and Winnicott's theories of how emotional disorder develop, while not entirely compatible, both contributed to Guntrip's original thinking about schizoid states. It is worth remembering that, when Fairbairn first published his object relations theory of the personality in 1952, Winnicott and Masud Khan attacked it in a review for "knocking" Freud. Alarmed by Fairbairn's move away from drive theory, they neglected to acknowledge his profound respect for Freud's original work and its compatibility with their own work.

Conventional biography too often merely sketches in the subject's family background, noting parentage and birth, before going on to education and entry into adulthood. Detailed examination of early attachment experience is neglected, even with evidence available. When there is psychopathology which cannot be dodged, biographers may try to account for it, but the attempt is apt to be inexpert. By contrast, the analytically trained biographer relies on a working theory indicating "what to go for" in assessing dislocations of early maternal and paternal attachments. The theory sets out to explain adaptations and defensive maladaptations to parenting, resulting in a more objective account of personality formation. Sometimes the theory is explicit, sometimes implicit, and it must not be worked too hard, as mercifully it isn't in the psychobiographies under review. The matter is especially sensitive in the cases of Fairbairn, Winnicott, and Guntrip as they were themselves such farseeing innovators in the field of object-relations, prefiguring John Bowlby's attachment theory and its more recent refinements. The psychobiographers' problem is to convincingly relate their attempted adaptations to early childhood stresses to the psychodynamic theories they elaborated after becoming acquainted with their inner worlds of conflicted feelings. Sutherland, Kahr, and Hazell turn back on their analysts and mentors the very theories, and clinical skills, they learned from them. They try convincingly to account for the stunning originality of these post-Freudians in terms of the urge to

generalize beyond the therapeutic release from the closed defensive systems to which pathogenic parenting had consigned them. For all their tough-mindedness, they show respect and compassion, with results quite different from the idealization, adulation, or ironic detachment characteristic of students remembering their mentors.

The prototype is, of course, Ernest Jones' *Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (1953-57). Jones aimed at the truth about the personal and scientific origin of Freud's ideas, but the first psychoanalyst had not helped. "Let the biographers chafe; we won't make it too easy for them," Jones's introduction quotes Freud as having said. Jones was restricted to an oedipal interpretation of the origin of Freud's teachings and did not fully enter the then speculative area of early attachment experiences. Jones' insufficiently critical biography has been repeatedly reworked, as requirements for the "flawless integrity" (p. 283) Jones attributed to Freud have become more stringent. It is unlikely that the psychobiographies under review will be subjected to such determined revisionism. As they are not limited by oedipal theory but broadly informed by research in the psychopathology of child development, their findings may be augmented and adjusted but are unlikely to be challenged. The best heading under which to consider each of them is what Henri Ellenburger called the "creative illness," that is, safe passage through the rigors of discovery of the origin of inner conflict which yields general truth about emotional suffering.

Psychohistorians with their psychobiographical bent will be heartened by these outstanding examples of the craft. Claims for a developmental history of childrearing could not be more strongly put as each of these analysts exemplifies the consequences of maternal intrusiveness at the end of the Victorian era. Evidence appears for a mother, or caretaker, saying in effect "You can have love when I have full control over you," as deMause puts it in his "Psychogenic Theory of History." Each was a prophet of more enlightened child-rearing, having nearly succumbed to the psychological hazards of manipulation in too tightly organized families with pathological elements in them. Psychoanalysis as rescue was too urgent to permit the orthodoxy of Freudian drive theory when it was evident that psychological pain resulted from bad "object relations." The interest of Melanie Klein and Anna Freud in the pre-oedipal phase opened the way for

Fairbairn, Winnicott, and Guntrip to explore this phase of development because it was there they recognized the source of their suffering. They became practical prophets of the Helping Mode of childrearing by discovering therapeutic reparative techniques for disorders they themselves suffered. This is the strength of the biographical contribution to their already well-known theories. Sutherland, Kahr, and Hazel establish an unbreakable link between personal experience and concepts considered by many as difficult to grasp. In respect of willingness to be known first as suffering persons, these British analysts are perhaps unique. Their candid reporting in journals of personal struggles, and the clarity of language in which they theorized, differs markedly from say the French followers of Jacques Lacan, whose often opaque intellectualizing has so invaded the Humanities.

Will the Humanities benefit from these psychobiographies? It seems that they are too much terra incognita to make much difference at present. Analysts will read them, but few potential biographers of leaders, or creative or innovative persons, will. Were they taken seriously, there would have to be a shift away from hyper-intellectual abstractions in literary studies, from conventional ideas of causality in politics and history, and from dominant cognitive assumptions in philosophy. There is little evidence that the discovery of the unconscious as the primary formative force in human motivation is about to revolutionize teaching and writing in the Humanities. Were it to be so, the mainly defensive purpose of most discourse would have to give way to a "connected" discourse, true to the inner being of the persons using it. As such an achievement is not among the objectives of graduate school training, we must hope that those few academics fortunate enough to have dual training will write books that cannot be ignored. Smatterings of psychoanalytic terms and ideas will not help much in academic writing, but the thoroughgoing experience of self as agent of truth-seeking could revolutionize the academic pursuit. The "wounded healers" Fairbairn, Winnicott, and Guntrip exemplify what is needed if integrity is to be restored to the quest for truth in human affairs. This is a high demand to place on anybody, and it has to come mainly from within.

There are useful cautionary guides as to how psychobiography should be used and not used, for instance, William McKinley Runyan's *Life*

*Histories and Psychobiography* (1984). Alan C. Elms' *Uncovering Lives: The Uneasy Alliance of Biography and Psychology* (1994) shows in practice the principles of careful and discerning psychobiography, along with consideration of basic principles. A rare attempt to align the unconscious of the biographer with his chosen subject is made in the collection edited by historians Samuel H. Baron and Carl Pletch, *Introspection in Biography: The Biographer's Quest for Self-Awareness* (1985). Excellent though much of this material is, it is only exploratory, with the full-scale study of psychoanalytic method in biography waiting to be written. Discussion of principles and practices should not be left to research psychologists alone. Yet even the most historically informed among analysts would probably shy away from such a project in the riven and often inflamed arena where psychoanalysis operates. There is much critical consolidation of basic theory to get through before more rarefied questions of biography can be addressed. Meanwhile it would be helpful if readers of these biographies of leading British analysts would ask themselves about implications for studies in the Humanities, which have been drifting away from questions of human interaction into disconnected abstractions. It may be too much to ask, say, convinced deconstructionists, to reconsider the relevance of abusive child-rearing to the choice of subject matter for fiction, or the quest for power in political leadership. Regrounding of Humanities studies in actual human developmental experience is desperately needed, but academics at present seem incapable of this, despite its being the only way forward.

*Andrew Brink, PhD, is a scholar of creativity who has published extensively. Prior to devoting himself totally to research, writing, and publishing, he taught literature at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and then headed the Humanities and Psychoanalytic Thought Programme at the University of Toronto. Brink has an abiding interest in the British "object relations" theorists and the durability of their ideas about personality formation and psychopathology. His most recent work is The Creative Matrix: Anxiety and the Origin of Creativity, the first attempt to apply John Bowlby's work in attachment theory to understanding artistic creativity. □*

## Nightmares and

## Collective Psychology

Jerry Kroth  
Santa Clara University

A study of Southeast Asian refugees reported 123 deaths from intense nightmares. Healthy Asian men are described as suddenly screaming out in their sleep from what appear to be nightmares and dying in paroxysms of panic; autopsies reveal their hearts appeared to have "shorted out," as if overstimulated, overagitated. (San Jose *Mercury News*, February 18, 1991)

Nightmare death was heretofore unknown, and even classic works on the subject like Ernest Hartmann's *The Nightmare: The Psychology and Biology of Terrifying Dreams* (1984) do not mention patients dying from their dreams. Hartmann's research does tell us a few things however: frequent nightmare sufferers have weaker defenses, score in a more psychotic direction on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), experience "dreams within a dream" more often, and seem to have experienced depression in adolescence more than others, yet do not appear to suffer from phobias and fears in any atypical manner.

Some earlier work, however, shows that nightmare sufferers have overall higher levels of anxiety. Last year I published an empirical study in the *Journal of Perceptual and Motor Skills* (Vol. 85) and similarly noted that individuals who experienced recurrent nightmares showed higher scores on agoraphobia, dreams about death, blood injury phobia, and total phobia scores. An even more important finding was the highly significant positive correlation between "splitting" and recurrent nightmares. These scores on splitting imply that when you deny an experience and try to dissociate yourself from it, the repressed "returns" in the form of repeating nightmares. The nightmare, then, is probably a vessel which preserves repressions that are not being abreacted or worked through consciously. As Hartmann observes with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

This trauma is encapsulated or "separated off." It is still there and emerges at night and occasionally in the daytime (flashbacks). The patients make an effort not to think about the trauma or anything connected with it and they try never to let themselves get into a vulnerable position in

which they could get hurt in such a way again. (p. 242)

In Pol Pot's revolutionary Cambodia we had an opportunity to look at an unprecedented collective Skinner box of terror. The trauma experienced by some of these more fragile internees may have been too severe to be worked through or catharted, resisting even the most primitive efforts of denial and splitting. Perhaps then victims of nightmare death were trying to distance themselves from their memories only to find themselves fatally overcome by these terrors instead.

Clearly, as psychohistorians we are always concerned with the collective dimension of this, so our first question must be, "Do societies, cultures, or peoples experience nightmares?" And, "Are there such things as collective nightmares?"

If we consult Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1961) we are alerted to the fact that at the collective level, the analog to the dream is a myth. If a people experience nightmares, such events are not reported in individual dream logs, but find their way into folklore, literature, and even movies. In these venues, they are reenacted vicariously in the same manner in which an individual may stand in witness of his own traumas repeatedly acted out in the nightmare.

Just as a soldier in combat develops PTSD with its attendant nightmares, a people, like the Japanese, crushed by a devastating assault from a nuclear superpower, may find themselves with a collective case of PTSD. This time, however, the complex and its recurrent nightmares are transferred to a mythic stage.

Godzilla is an excellent example. Beginning in the early 1950s, Godzilla films acted out recurrent attacks by a superpower-monster born as an aberration from American radiation experiments. The 22 Godzilla movies show a recurrent symbolism and point obliquely to the real trauma suffered at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In every film, there is an ever-present theme of panic induced by being chased and crushed by a powerful, alien being. Indeed, Hartmann discovered that the most frequent theme in the nightmares of PTSD victims is panic induced by being chased.

Clinical psychology helps us understand how a soldier from a traumatic war may experience a nightmare of being pursued by a tiger, then a lion, and then *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Perhaps

collective psychology, a far more infant discipline, can help us understand how peoples who suffer trauma may unconsciously reenact mythic analogs as well.

*Jerry Kroth, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology at Santa Clara University in California, where he teaches psychotherapy and personality theory, dreamwork and depth psychology, and research methods at the graduate level. His current interests focus on the 20th century's most numinous collective events: the Spanish flu of 1918, the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Dr. Kroth is interested in symbolic and foreshadowing events which precede collective catastrophes. His most recent book is Omens and Oracles: Collective Psychology in the Nuclear Age (1992). □*

## Stalin's Victims and Their Predator

Ralph Colp, Jr.  
Columbia University

*Review of Vadim Z. Rogovin, 1937: Stalin's Year of Terror, trans. Frederick S. Choate. Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, Inc., 1998. ISBN 0929087771 (pb.), 550 pp. \$30.17 (including tax).*

Vadim Rogovin is a Russian historian who is completing a six-volume history of the opposition to Stalin in the Russian Bolshevik party, from Lenin's final illness in 1923 to the assassination of Trotsky in 1940, that is based on archival documents that have only recently become available. The present book (the first of Rogovin's six volumes to be translated into English) is volume four of the history, recounting the horrendous events of 1936-1937, when Russians who were usually in one of two categories -- members of the Bolshevik party or high-ranking Red Army officers -- were accused of various anti-Bolshevik activities, arrested, often coerced into falsely "confessing" to these activities, and afterwards executed or imprisoned. These were events that in all of their different stages were inspired and organized by Stalin, and that marked the beginning of his political genocide against those who potentially or in fact presented an alternative to his totalitarian regime.

Rogovin divides Stalin's victims into two

groups: those who refused to give false testimony against themselves at public trials and those who gave this testimony on the promise that their lives would be spared. The members of the first group ranged from Stalinists who had been falsely accused, and who refused to accede to these accusations, to anti-Stalinists of varying political opinions -- including Trotskyists -- who were politically unbroken and not allowed to express their real views in an open court. While many members of this group were executed after being tried behind closed doors they avoided the shame of public "confessions."

Three prominent members of the second group were the Old Bolsheviks Nicolai Bukharin, Yuri Piatakov, and Karl Radek, who had first politically opposed Stalin, and afterwards capitulated to him and held responsible positions in culture, industry, and diplomacy. Here they repudiated their anti-Stalin pasts by making fulsome public statements of loyalty and admiration for Stalin. Then, during and after the August, 1936, trial, "confessions," and executions of their former Bolshevik comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev -- the first trial in which Stalin had killed Bolsheviks -- they savagely denounced the defendants as "people who [had] lost their last human characteristics." However, over the next two years, under the direction of Stalin, they were arrested and tortured by the secret police (NKVD), so that in two widely publicized trials they confessed to crimes that were largely fictitious, after which Piatakov and Bukharin were sentenced to death, and Radek to imprisonment. (The latter was murdered in 1939 by a criminal who was his cellmate, apparently on NKVD orders).

Stalin's actions may be explained (at least in part) as being motivated by a combination of feelings of envy towards others and realistic fears that various members of the Bolshevik party were plotting to overthrow him. Early in 1936, Bukharin, on the occasion of his last trip out of Russia, when he met and conversed with a Socialist acquaintance in Paris, described Stalin's envy as follows:

He is ... unhappy because he cannot convince everyone, even himself, that he is greater than everyone else, and this is his misfortune, perhaps his only human trait... But what is no longer human, but something diabolical is that for his "misfortune," he cannot help but get revenge over people, and particularly those who are higher in some

way, or better than him.

Since Stalin appears to have been regarded as being intellectually narrow and morally inferior, he was envious of those individuals who had these mental qualities, who included, along with Bukharin, Piatakov, and Radek, the politically defeated and exiled Leon Trotsky. He also mistrusted the loyalty of Bukharin and the other Old Bolsheviks who worked for him, regarding their denunciations of Zinoviev and Kamenev as the talk of "double-dealers."

Rogovin shows that Stalin in 1936, as the General Secretary of the Bolshevik Party, was confronted not only by party members who formed a potential opposition to him, but by other members who were actively in opposition and who appear to have had contracts with the exiled Trotsky. (Rogovin indicates that the evidence for this -- largely coming from some references in Trotsky's correspondence -- are fragmentary, and that much more needs to be known about the identities of these individuals and the nature of their activities). Stalin's response to this opposition was to develop a "grandiose mechanism of state terror," beginning with the Moscow Trials, followed by trials and executions of Red Army Marshals and generals in June, 1937, going on to a massive purge of the Red Army and to mass persecutions. It was a Terror which Stalin held, in the words of Rogovin, "under his unwavering and effective control." In carrying out his acts he showed a power for "the most refined calculations," along with a power for the most sustained assertiveness, that surprised both his supporters and victims.

Beginning with the Moscow Trials, instead of confronting his victims with the need to confess to a simple falsehood, Stalin confronted them with an "amalgam": what Rogovin has defined as a "maliciously deliberate weaving together" of ten percent of the truth -- anti-Stalin political contacts between individuals in Russia and perhaps with Trotsky -- and ninety percent falsehoods -- accusations that these individuals were terrorists aiming to restore capitalism in Russia, and that, above all, they were agents of the Gestapo. Early in the development of the mechanism of his terror, when he was sitting with members of the Bolshevik Party's Politbureau (its highest political organization), Stalin wrote out a document sanctioning the use of torture in extorting testimony from arrested people, and had everyone in the Politbureau sign it.

Stalin's Terror led to a double success. He destroyed political opposition that was real or potential; and he exacted what Bukharin had called his "revenge" against those Old Bolsheviks whom he envied -- a revenge in which, after debasing and killing the latter, he went on to destroy their writings and pictures, and to vilify their memories in his history of the Bolshevik Party.

However, in the years 1936-1937, when Trotsky was a major defendant in the Moscow Trials, Stalin could not fully exact his revenge because Trotsky lived in exile outside of Russia, first in Norway and then in Mexico. The latter thus became the only Moscow Trials defendant who could freely express his opinions. Rogovin delineates in detail how, during those years, Trotsky commented on the Trials in a succession of articles and books, especially *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, containing the testimony he gave to the Dewey Commission in 1937. In these writings, while remaining silent about his contacts with political sympathizers in Russia, Trotsky methodically exposed the ninety percent falsehood of the amalgams of the Trials; passionately proclaimed the superiority of his political views, where "the word *socialism* is not a hollow sound but the content of ... moral life," to the views of Stalin which were "compromising the very idea of socialism"; and predicted that "Stalin's regime is doomed."

Stalin carefully studied Trotsky's writings, and although he knew that because of his censorship these writings were largely unknown in Russia, he was still deeply afraid that their various exposures and ideas would become known and shake his regime. (George Kennan, in his 1960 book, *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin*, has stated the opinion that in the late 1930s, "Trotsky, and all that Trotsky represented, was Stalin's real fear," [whereas] "Hitler was largely his excuse for fear." Stalin's fear appears to have reached a new peak near the end of the Year of Terror, when in several public speeches to the Bolshevik Party he denounced the Trotskyists not as political opponents "but as criminals of the lowest order," and when the NKVD executed Trotsky's youngest son (who had never been interested in politics) and carried out its first mass execution of Trotskyists who had been prisoners in a concentration camp.

*Ralph Colp, Jr., MD, is a psychiatrist with a lifelong interest in Stalin, who plays an active role in the Psychohistory Forum's Communism:*

*The Dream that Failed Research Group. Charles Darwin is the main subject of his research and publication, with his book being on the naturalist's illnesses. Dr. Colp has been affiliated with Columbia University for most of his professional life. □*

## Books Shaping Psychohistorians

### Scholarship that Mattered

David Beisel  
SUNY Rockland

Straight out of the Navy and into college, I found myself for some reason interested in the philosophy of history, and was fortunate to discover Fritz Stern's newly published anthology, *Varieties of History* (1972, rev. ed.). "Why," I asked my history professors, did it contain no "psychological history"? The best they could offer was the Georges on Woodrow Wilson (*Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House*, 1964). It was not until I was well on my way to becoming a psychohistorian, years after my PhD, that I finally read Erik Erikson.

But it was essays more than books which marked my early journey from history to psychohistory. The first was Rudolph Binion on Hitler, which I first heard as a presentation at an American Historical Association Convention; then Mazlish on Nixon and Waite on "Hitler's guilt" in the first two issues of the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*; next deMause's "Evolution of Childhood" in the *History of Childhood Quarterly* (now the *Journal of Psychohistory*); and, finally, Peter Lowenberg's "The Psychohistorical Origins of the Nazi Youth Cohort" in the *American Historical Review*.

My favorite all-time psychohistory essay is Rudy Binion's "Repeat Performance: Leopold III and Belgian Neutrality," first appearing in *History and Theory* (1969), then reprinted in his collected essays, *Soundings: Psychohistorical and Psycholiterary* (1981). It is what good scholarship should be, and as psychohistory, rather than imposing a preordained (oedipal) theory, lets the documents reveal the real psychodynamic patterns underlying the lynch-pin event of pre-World War II diplomacy by showing how Leopold III used Belgian foreign policy to reenact his trauma of Queen Astrid's death by motorcar accident: he helped lead Europe into the catastrophe he was

most trying to "avoid." From the standpoints of style, argument, and documentation, the essay continues to break new ground in utterly convincing ways, and to my mind is a little psychohistorical masterpiece.

I would deliver description of these works to my students for "historiographical completeness" and to stimulate "their" interest, invariably closing with the narrative historian's disclaimer, "But, of course, we cannot psychologize the dead," little realizing that each time I did so I was convincing myself, a little more, that it was possible.

The opportunity to repeatedly discuss these essays semester after semester allowed me to work through some of my resistance. If I can only now remember to be patient with my students who can't be expected to do in a few classes what it took me years to accomplish.

*David Beisel, PhD, winner of the SUNY Regents Outstanding Teacher and other awards, teaches psychohistory, history, and multiculturalism at SUNY Rockland. In fact, at the rate of about 100 students a semester for the last 20 years, to the best of our knowledge, he has taught more students psychohistory than anyone else in the world. A prolific author of essays, Professor Beisel is a founding member and past president of the International Psychohistorical Association, a Research Associate of the Psychohistory Forum, and past editor -- for a decade -- of the Journal of Psychohistory. His long awaited book, The Suicidal Embace: Hitler, the Allies, and World War II, is at the typist. David Beisel was our first "Distinguished Psychohistorian" and in 1997 it was his idea to begin this "Books Shaping Psychohistorians" feature. □*

## Meeting Report

### The Rescuer Self in the Holocaust

Hanna Turken  
Psychoanalyst

The "Rescuer Self in the Holocaust" was the challenging subject of the overflow September 19 meeting of the Psychohistory Forum. Dr. Eva Fogelman shared with us her detailed research into the components of the rescuer's self, and many

participants asked intriguing questions on a subject that is important but often neglected.

The focus of Dr. Fogelman's research was on the first act of rescuing and on the postwar effects on the surviving rescuers, particularly as it affected the children. A distinction was made between resistance and rescuing: rescuing implies activities to help another individual survive at great self-risk, acts of resistance imply group efforts to get rid of the German occupation.

Rescuers faced extreme dangers to themselves and to their families. People were turned in for a bag of sugar or a bottle of vodka. In Poland, death sentences were given to anyone seen talking to or aiding a Jew. Neighbors knew everyone living in every house; a flushed toilet in an apartment when people were known to be at work could give everyone away, as could sickness, babies born while in hiding, and ration cards. Rescuers' children were no longer able to invite their friends over and became targets of physical abuse by other children.

How did rescuers manage to help without arousing suspicion? To maintain camouflage and concealment, everyone had to become an accomplished actor. Relatives were invented -- cousins, aunts, and uncles. Children, who aroused less suspicion, were often used as transports. Being a rescuer became a full time occupation.

Rescuers were not the most religious, richest, or most educated, nor the ones with the most resources. Nor was gender a factor. The decision to be a rescuer was made at an emotional, cognitive, and religious level. It was based on 1) moral grounds, 2) identification with the victim and/or their Jewishness, or 3) professional and group concerns. One type, the moral rescuer, when asked to help, had a strong sense of right or wrong,

#### Letters to the Editor

a sense that another person would die if they did nothing. Those with a strong identification with the victim and their Jewishness had a very early awareness of the danger to the Jews and helped get them out of peril very early. They made use of group efforts that jointly had set up mechanisms that allowed them to move quickly into action. When needed, they supplied housing, identification cards, etc., for places like Spain and Switzerland.

The outstanding personality attribute of the rescuer involved their ability to figure out that they could do something about it, that it was their

responsibility, and that they had resources they could put into action. Other factors were their spirituality, their greater capacity to manage their fear through action, their sense of independence ("I can do it without support"), and their tolerance for people who were different. Of the people interviewed, 80% had an altruistic role model for helping people in distress and 80% had a high tolerance for difference. They came from loving homes where they were disciplined through explanation of what they were doing wrong rather than by punishment. They did not fear authority. They were able to make decisions for themselves. Their sense of independence was praised as well as their sense of competence. Many had a loss or an illness in childhood and subsequently could empathize out of their own sense of vulnerability and experience of having been helped.

Raoul Wallenburg embodied many of these qualities. Wallenburg's father died before he was born and his grandfather became his role model. In letters to Raoul, his grandfather wrote that he wished him to become a useful member of society, to be able to stand on his own two feet, and to be a leader. Raoul was to develop diligence and a familiarity with other people, always with diplomacy and tact. Other factors contributing to Wallenburg's ability to carry out the task of rescuer were his sense of adventure and risk taking (e.g., hitchhiking), and his familiarity with Jewish culture and Hungary from his business trips to Israel and Hungary while working for a Jewish business man. In Switzerland he had first hand knowledge of what was going on in Germany from German Jews who escaped. Having been asked to go to Hungary, he accepted and showed no fear, even under dire circumstances. He was defiant of authority, even in the face of threats to his life by the German authorities and by the impending Russian advance into Hungary.

It was debated if Wallenburg, having been left out of the family's banking business, saw this opportunity as a means to demonstrate to them that he could take on a big organizational operation and be successful at it. Dr. Fogelman reiterated that Wallenburg accepted the task out of altruism and out of his strong feelings for the plight of the Jews. His grandfather had groomed him to do great things and it was his identification with his grandfather that influenced him in the decision to get involved.

There were questions as to why rescuers were not given more recognition after the war and

why it has taken so long to get it. (Holland did acknowledge and provide special welfare benefits to those known to have helped.) Rescuers did not want to be written about or maintain a connection with those they rescued because even after the war they continued to be in danger; some were even killed. In the case of rescued children, attachments had to be given up; the rescuers needed time to overcome the sense of loss. Jews and rescuers attempted to leave it all behind them. Rescuers suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome, but it was not attributed to their role as rescuers since there were no groups or forums in which to speak about it. □

### "Freud and Asimov"

To the Editor,

The special issue on "Freud and Asimov: Two Very Different 'Psychohistories'" (June, 1998) was certainly interesting, filled with insights into how another discipline looks at Science Fiction, which is always informative, and ironies, such as the title of Lloyd deMause's book, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, which, I assume, was not influenced by the *Foundation Trilogy*. I particularly enjoyed your article, even though my interpretation of Asimov's character and behavior differs in places.

One of my reactions was a kind of surprise that Asimov's *Foundation Series* and his psychohistory were taken by some as serious concepts rather than fascinating fictional speculations. Isaac (and, I think, the vast majority of his readers) looked upon psychohistory as a

**Call for Nominations**  
**Halpern Award**  
**for the**  
**Best Psychohistorical Idea**  
**in a**  
**Book, Article, or Computer**  
**Site**

**This Award may be granted at the level**  
**of Distinguished Scholar, Graduate, or**  
**Undergraduate.**

thought experiment -- that is, what would be the human consequences of the ability to predict mass

behavior and, thus, the general historical trends of the future -- and not an exercise in extrapolation or wish fulfillment. I don't think Isaac ever thought his psychohistory was possible, and I'm not sure he was even interested in its realizability. Like all of the early Science Fiction writers, Isaac avoided writing about the disciplines with which he was professionally familiar, in order to deal with such theoretical concepts as robots and psychohistory. He never dealt with the practical aspects of robotics (even though later roboticists, such as Marvin Minsky, credited his ideas with helping their efforts); rather, he only dealt with the "idea" of robots. So with psychohistory.

In addition, Isaac was interested in writing an entertaining story that John Campbell would be willing to publish in *Astounding*. Psychohistory and the Foundations provided the background for a series of stories that Isaac could count on to sell to Campbell, something Isaac confided to the Science Fiction Writers of America *Bulletin* in 1967 in "There's Nothing Like a Good Foundation" -- reprinted in Damon Knight's *Turning Points* (1977). Outside of the first two stories, the others were written as Isaac felt the need and the inspiration, the next in the series tacked on to the previous one like a tinker toy, an exercise in craft and ingenuity. But anything that came out of the whole was only unified by the authorship, not by prior planning and philosophical considerations, and critics should be cautious about assigning significance to ideas that developed over a period of ten years for the *Trilogy* and a return to the ideas 30 years later.

**Jim Gunn**  
Lawrence, Kansas

*James E. Gunn of the University of Kansas*

*is author of Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction (1982 and 1996, revised) and editor of The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction (1988), an accomplished science fiction writer, and the recipient of numerous awards. He may be contacted at <jgunn@falcon.cc.ukans.edu>.*

### **Clio's Psyche Publishes Only Original Materials**

To the Editor,

It has been brought to my attention that the book review of Volkan, Itzkowitz, and Dod, *Richard Nixon: A Psychobiography*, that I wrote for the *Journal of Psychohistory* Vol. 26 No. 2, gave the impression that I had written for the *Journal* first and published a shorter, recycled review in **Clio's Psyche**. Actually, the shorter

### **Forthcoming in the March Issue**

**Special Theme:**

### **The Relationship of Academia, Psychohistory, and Psychoanalysis**

**Additional papers are still being accepted. Contact Paul H. Elovitz, Editor - see p. 71.**

**Also:**

- **Interview with Arthur Mitzman, author of *The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber***

**The Psychohistory Forum is pleased to announce**

### **The Young Psychohistorian 1998/99 Membership Awards**

**John Fanton** recently received his medical degree and is doing his five year residency in Providence, Rhode Island. Currently, he is at the Children's Hospital, Women and Infants Hospital, and the Butler Psychiatric Hospital. His goal is to become a child maltreatment expert working in the area of Preventive Psychiatry. At the IPA in 1997 he won the Lorenz Award for his paper on improving parenting in Colorado.

**Albert Schmidt** is a doctoral candidate in modern European history at Brandeis University who plans to defend his dissertation in April when his advisor, Rudolph Binion, will return from Europe for the occasion. Rather than do a biography of SS General Reinhard Heydrich as originally intended, he is writing on the German protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia under Heydrich's dominance. In the last four years this talented young scholar has been awarded nine fellowships, grants, or scholarships.

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
Saturday, January 30, 1999  
**Charles Strozier**  
"Putting the Psychoanalyst on the Couch: A  
Biography of Heinz Kohut"

**Call for Papers**  
**Special Theme Issues**  
**1999 and 2000**

- The Relationship of Academia, Psychohistory, and Psychoanalysis (March, 1999)
- The Psychology of Legalizing Life [What is this???
- Psychogeography
- Meeting the Millenium

**Forthcoming in the March Issue**  
Special Theme:  
**The Relationship of Academia,  
Psychohistory, and  
Psychoanalysis**

Additional papers are still being accepted. Contact the Editor -- see page 71.

Also:

- Interview with Arthur Mitzman, author of *The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber*
- Ralph Colp, Jr.'s Review of Vadim Z. Rogovin, *1937: Stalin's Year of Terror*

**Call for Nominations**  
**Halpern Award**  
for the  
**Best Psychohistorical Idea**  
in a  
**Book, Article, or Computer  
Site**

This Award may be granted at the level of Distinguished Scholar, Graduate, or Undergraduate.

Letters to the Editor

The History of Psychohistory

Clio's Psyche's interviews of outstanding psychohistorians have grown into a full-fledged study of the pioneers and history of our field. Psychohistory as an organized field is less than 25 years old, so most of the innovators are available to tell their stories and give their insights. Last March, the Forum formally launched the Makers of the Psychohistorical Paradigm Research Project to systematically gather material to write the history of psychohistory. We welcome memoirs,

Forthcoming in the March Issue

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Awards and Honors

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Contact Paul H. Elovitz, Editor -- see p.

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year's subscription to Clio's Psyche free. Help us spread the good word about Clio.

- Having previously chickened out of the military, he demoralized it by integrating homosexuals into it. He disarmed the American People with the Brady Bill.

### Dreamwork Resources

The **Historical Dreamwork Method** is available to help the biographer better understand the dreams of the subject and other aspects of psychobiography. **Clio's Psyche** welcomes papers on historical dreamwork for publication and for presentation at Psychohistory Forum meetings. Contact Paul H. Elovitz (see page 43).

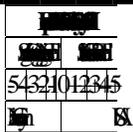
☆☆☆

#### Association for the Study of Dreams (ASD)

Web site: [www.outreach.org/gmcc/asd](http://www.outreach.org/gmcc/asd)

e-mail: [ASDreams@aol.com](mailto:ASDreams@aol.com)

1999 Conference: July 6-10  
University of California, Santa Cruz, CA



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