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# Clio's Psyche

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

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Volume 11 Number 4

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## The Voice/Personal Experience and Psychology of Women at Work and in Modern Life Special Issue

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### **Nancy J. Chodorow: Psychoanalyst and Gender Theorist**

**Paul H. Elovitz**

**Ramapo College and the Psychohistory Forum  
and**

**Bob Lentz**  
Clio's Psyche

*Nancy J(ulia) Chodorow, PhD, was born in 1944 in New York City. In 1966 she received her AB summa cum laude in social relations/social anthropology from Radcliffe-Harvard. She did two years of graduate work in anthropology, and she received her MA in 1972 and PhD in 1975 in sociology from Brandeis University. She trained as an analyst at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute from 1985 to 1993, and was certified in Adult Psychoanalysis by the American Psychoanalytic Association in May 2000.*

*Professor Chodorow has been an active academic and clinician. She taught in the Sociology Department at University of California, Santa Cruz from 1974-1986 and since 1986 in the Sociology Department at UC, Berkeley. After 30 years of teaching, and clinical work since 1986, Professor Chodorow left the university at the beginning of 2005, where she is now Professor Emerita, to devote her time to her private practice and writing.*

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### **Introduction: Women in Society: Changes and Challenges**

**Nancy C. Unger**  
Santa Clara University

In 1905, Belle Case La Follette, the first woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, wrote to her husband, Senator Robert M. La Follette, that whenever she got discouraged, "I always think there is nothing I would rather be than your wife and the mother of your children and I have no ambition except to contribute to your happiness and theirs and to your success and theirs." Six years later she was a self-professed feminist, publicly advo-

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### **The "Jewish Mother" in Myth and Society: A Psychoanalytic Approach**

**Sari Goldstein Ferber**  
University of Haifa, Israel

#### **The Problem**

Throughout the decades a distinct personality style was related to Jewish mothers and embellished by the term "Jewish Mother." Literature in the early-to-mid 20th century (including fiction, movie scripts, and jokes) portrayed the Jewish mother figure in vivid colors and images as different from other maternal roles and behaviors known in the Western societies of that time. These portraits consisted of

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cating a very different view of women's work and position in modern life. She encouraged women to participate fully in society, urging them to free themselves from their parasitic dependence on their husbands, develop their talents, and be of service to humanity. She no longer saw her husband's various frustrating behaviors as indicators of her own failures but viewed them instead as qualities of his personality that she was entirely unable to change. Relieved of this great burden of guilt, she turned her attentions increasingly to advocating reform, especially the expansion of women's rights.

Women's views of themselves and their place in society as individuals and as a sex continue to evolve, frequently demanding psychological adjustments not only from generation to generation, but within a single lifetime. A century ago, La Follette's mindset changed profoundly over just a few years — society is still catching up to her vision of the proper

role of women within the family and in society as a whole.

In my own life, psychological adjustments concerning women at work and in modern life have been remarkably dramatic — and maddeningly slow. I am grateful to the women before me who blazed the academic trail, proving that women can not only hold their own in the various disciplines previously reserved for men, but make unique contributions that enrich those fields. Occasionally I feel at a disadvantage professionally because of my gender. The far greater threat of oppression I see among my colleagues and neighbors, however, stems from the attitudes by and towards "superwomen" who struggle mightily to juggle career and family and, like Belle La Follette before her transformation, suffer from guilt when they do not succeed at something in which they are doomed to fail.

My own career and family thrive not because I am a superwoman, but because I am a partner in an egalitarian marriage. The defining moment in our relationship came the day we brought our first child home from the hospital. My husband, an only child with minimum previous exposure to newborns, was holding our day-old son. When the baby began to fuss, my anxious husband prepared to hand him over to me. Part of me wanted to claim the power and authority implied in this act, but the wiser part inspired me to say, "You've been a parent just as long as I have, and you're doing fine." By resisting the temptation to claim any superior ability to comfort our son by virtue of my sex, I empowered my husband, giving confidence to his abilities as a father. From that day to this (that newborn son has just been accepted into college), we have shared equally in all household and child-rearing activities (our children were bottle-

fed), including laundry, homework assistance, and cooking.

Combining career and family is never easy. My husband and I, both busy professionals, found ourselves pushed to our upper limits on more than one occasion even as we shared all home duties and responsibilities. Had either of us prescribed to the prevailing mentality that, especially when it comes to housekeeping and childrearing, women are hardwired to carry out these responsibilities and should do so because they are better at them than are men, I would have felt overwhelmed, inadequate, and guilty.

The prevailing psychology damages women at work and within the family, and is self-perpetuating. A recent study reported in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reveals that the few men who take paternity leave perform much less child care than do their female counterparts. Rather than asking *why* women continue to carry out the majority of baby care activities, and encouraging a new psychology of parenthood as a series of equitably shared responsibilities (not to mention the accompanying joys), the study concludes only that continuing to extend paternity leave may be unwise, perpetuating and solidifying the superwoman myth.

At a recent public presentation, Gloria Steinem concluded, "I'll know when we're really succeeding when, after a talk at a campus like this one, as many men come up to me as do women, to ask, 'How can I successfully combine career and family?'" As long as that question continues to be asked primarily by women, and matters involving children and family continue to be perceived, personally and publicly, as "women's issues," the prevailing psychology will persist, exhausting "superwomen," and robbing both men and women of the satisfactions of genuine partnership.

What it means to be a woman continues to be redefined, however, as do perceptions of a woman's work and her proper role in society. This "Women in Society" issue of *Clio's Psyche* examines a broad range of women's experiences in the modern era, as influenced by a variety of factors.

This issue's Distinguished Scholar interview with Nancy Chodorow gives new insight into the thoughts of this enormously influential and innovative psychoanalyst. Chodorow's role as a leading theorist in psychoanalysis and feminist psychology is grounded not only in her comprehensive grasp of the

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psychoanalytic discourse, but also in her evolution of thinking about gender issues, particularly as they influence parenting. Her wide-ranging personal memories and professional observations frame and provide important context for the issue's essays, which examine an array of topics ranging from Martha Stewart to feminism in Israel.

The first essay provides a psychoanalytic perspective on the myth of the "Jewish Mother," highlighting the interrelationships between psychology, religion, linguistics, place, and culture. The next four essays concern the world of work and provide first-hand accounts by women (a computer specialist, a historian-military analyst, a psychohistorian, and a professor of physics and astronomy) training and working in professions previously reserved for men. The psychobiographical accounts of their pioneering efforts reveal what inspired them to reject prevailing gender stereotypes, how it felt to be viewed as "other," and the challenges and rewards of struggling to break gendered social barriers in order to pursue professional passions.

The next two essays provide psychological insight into the powerful interplay between gender, ethnicity, and culture across the generations. The first of these provides a view of women in Israeli society that is in sharp contrast to the earlier essay on the "Jewish Mother," as the author examines, through personal experience, the tensions between popular perceptions of Israeli egalitarianism and the realities of ongoing oppression. It is followed by a personal account of an elderly woman's Alzheimer's-induced decline and the emotions it unleashes in her daughter.

The final four essays bring insights to bear on more recent gender-charged events and personal experiences. This grouping begins with an investigation into the role of psychological dynamics in American women's political attitudes and voting patterns. It is followed by an analysis of the role of gender in the fate of Martha Stewart, especially as she exhibited dual gender role identities. The impact of persistent gender stereotyping on men as well as women is presented from the male perspective, preceding an account of the challenge to young women's self-esteem wrought by Western culture's current obsession with female appearance. The essays conclude with Paul Elovitz's far-ranging and cross-cultural thoughts about the effect of the remarkable gender transformations of recent years on both men

and women, and of the trials and triumphs emerging from the ongoing tensions and adjustments.

Taken together, the essays in this "Women in Society" special theme issue highlight the many areas in which psychological adjustments remain ongoing in response to the changes and challenges emerging from the powerful interplay between women, work, and modern society.

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## Finding My Own Pioneering Path

**Edryce Reynolds**

**Psychohistory Forum Research Associate**

When I entered the workforce in the early 1950s, women were not supposed to have anything resembling a "career." After World War II, women were encouraged to go back to the home from any factory jobs so that the returning veterans could work. Women were also encouraged to find a man, marry, and have babies. Any job after high school or college was considered temporary, often more of an opportunity to find an appropriate life partner. One way of categorizing the prevailing atmosphere could be that discrimination against women was built-in — part of the culture, similar to "coloreds only" in the South. In this environment, I felt somewhat lost. I could not relate to the women I worked with in my first two or three jobs because there was no one like me in the group. I wanted to work, I wanted to *do* something — something that would be meaningful to the world. I was not ready for marriage and did not want children. The idea that women could have more was not prevalent at the time.

After stumbling for a few years, searching, changing jobs, and moving from one coast to the other, I finally married because it seemed the only way to quiet the critics. But that didn't completely shut them up because then they started with, "When are you going to start a family?" There I really

balked: I did not want children; my husband did. So, divorce after three years opened up a new freedom for me. The critics were silent. They were embarrassed for me, a divorced woman, a failure. But I was free.

By my mid-20s I found my way into a really interesting job. Before it was considered a "field," I entered the world of computers. I also entered a world of men in which women were a minority. That was really new; the only men I had previously encountered at work were my supervisors. I remember deciding that if I wanted to be included in the general conversations, I would accept the language they used, the "bad" words I had been taught (as a "good Southern girl") never to say or even allow to be said in my presence. (Besides, I had always wondered why such language was considered so "bad," anyway!)

I loved learning about automation. I enjoyed the rapid pace of change. I felt accepted, along with the other women in our group, as equal to the men. We were all pioneers, learning and doing something new that made our group different from other work groups of the times, something that seemed important for the future. I learned later that there were very few people willing to consider jobs like ours, in part because of the requirement of a major in mathematics. (I had earned a double major in math and physics in 1949.) Our members came from all over the country, so I learned quite a bit about diversity. I was sheltered, though, from mainstream workers, so that when I left to pursue a management position, I had a rude awakening.

In those days classified ads were divided into "Help Wanted: Male" and "Help Wanted: Female." The ads that applied to my background were under the male section, so when I applied there would sometimes be interesting if not comical results. I clearly remember having a male interviewer tell me in the 1960s, "I know that you are qualified. I know you can do this job. But if I hired you, all my men would quit." Naturally that was disappointing. In today's world, that would be abhorred as outright "discrimination" and "sexism." My focus, however, was on finding a way to use my skills and interests. I was not a revolutionary (though later, in the 1960s, I applauded the new social awareness).

One area of life did become open to me: education. I found management positions first as the director of the computer center for a university and

later as the dean of a junior college. In those positions I used the knowledge I had gained by watching my own supervisors and deciding what I would do differently when I had similar responsibilities. I was also by then studying psychology in evening classes. I began to understand myself as well as society better. My path was not yet clear, but it at least seemed hopeful.

A second marriage and moving to Texas presented an opportunity to continue my education. In 1972 I obtained my doctorate in Counseling Psychology. I had long wanted to experience the entire spectrum of education, and this sojourn satisfied me. Working as an organizational development consultant later, though, led me to feel the need for more of a business credential, so I obtained an MBA in Managerial Leadership in 1992, from an institution where I was doing part-time teaching.

My intense desire to make a significant contribution eventually led me to teach for over nine years in a local prison. Nowhere have I felt my presence so appreciated. Inmates who wanted to improve their lives and live freely were wonderful students. I felt I had finally found an avenue for contributing to my society. I never felt threatened or that being female was a negative.

In the 21st century, my experience with gender discrimination may seem quite wimpy. Why didn't I fight it? Two main reasons come to mind. First, I may have the soul of a rebel, but I apparently do not have the courage of one. I wanted to find ways to make changes without fighting. I did not allow myself to feel discriminated against; I believed I could find ways to demonstrate my competence. Second, I saw men being discriminated against, too. One manager said he would never hire a man with a beard; another said pipe smokers were lazy. After all, we are in this world together.

I feel I was fortunate to experience a feeling of equality in an earlier era, when things seemed much simpler and less divisive than they are today. I still feel like a pioneer. Although I am of an age when I am supposed to be playing with grandchildren or traveling, I am working well past the age of retirement. I spent the entire year of 2001 in Beijing, China, teaching Foundations of Management and Information Technology at a university. I enjoy my work and my colleagues of both sexes. Somehow I feel that my contribution has been and continues to

be that I exist, in my mid-70s, with few scars and tremendous optimism about the future, and enjoy sharing with students and workshop participants my personal view of the world. Even more important, I get tremendous satisfaction in providing support for learners as they discover how exciting learning can be. I look forward to many more years of learning, exploration, and creating my own path.

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## My Experience in Fields Previously Reserved for Men

Jean Cottam

Independent Scholar, Ottawa, Canada

I was born in 1930 in Poland during the Depression as an only child. Though my middle-class parents were not affluent, they sent me to a private school when I was six. My environment was intellectually stimulating and I did well in school. By the time I was eight I read adult books. I was baptized and confirmed in a Protestant church though some members of my family were Catholics.

When World War II broke out in Europe I was nine. At the age of 10 I was forcibly exiled to the north of Russia with my immediate family. Both my parents were to die there in 1943 from malnutrition and disease. I was fortunate to be eventually transferred, in November 1943, to a model Polish children's home near Moscow where our diet included some American food. In the children's home there were caring staff and friendly children. We felt wanted and well cared for.

In 1946 I was repatriated to Poland and in 1947 I went to live in Warsaw with my mother's first cousin, an Anglican minister, married to a French-Canadian woman and doing post-war relief in Poland. Fearful of an arrest by the Communist authorities, my adoptive family abruptly returned to Canada in December 1948, and I followed them three weeks later.

A few months after my arrival, I graduated from high school. The process of my education had come to an abrupt halt, to which I was only partially

resigned. The attitude of my adoptive family toward the education of women was highly troublesome and unprecedented to me. My "half-sister," adopted as an infant, annoyed me tremendously by playing with noisy toys when I was trying to do my homework. An elementary school dropout, she was married at the age of 18.

By mid-1950 I was entirely on my own, working in a Montreal bank. I married in 1951, by which time I had secured a much better position with an insurance broker. In 1956, when the political situation in Poland improved, I resumed my correspondence with school friends in Poland, learning that by this time most of them had attended university and secured good jobs, including university teaching. Coincidentally, I inherited a small sum of money enabling me to enroll in the evening BA program at Montreal's Sir George Williams University (SGWU).

The encouragement of my history professors at SGWU to continue my education beyond the BA played an important part in my decision to pursue an academic career. However, the more typical attitude toward the higher education of women at the time (1957), which made my blood boil, was that of my professor of French, who did not take my long-term plans seriously. He suggested that women's university education was merely a means of offsetting the boredom of housekeeping and childrearing.

When I graduated with a BA in the spring of 1964 I ranked highest in a graduating class of over 300 and won several awards. Though nominated for a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, I didn't receive it. It was suggested to me that at the time that the fellowship was probably not intended for married women with two small children.

At the University of Toronto, where I enrolled in a graduate history program in 1965, I was the only woman in all of the graduate seminars I attended, with the exception of British History where there were three women pursuing an MA. Apparently, I was fully accepted by my fellow mostly male graduate students. Many years later, in 1980, at a Women's Studies conference at Concordia University in Montreal, one of the women participants told me that she was glad to finally meet me in person, as for many years her husband, who had been one of my fellow graduate students, kept mentioning me. As the sole woman participating in these graduate semi-

nars I was highly visible as to both my behavior and performance, and fortunately both seemed to have been viewed in a positive light.

However, I experienced some discrimination when looking for a university teaching job. Indeed, my timing was bad. Because of the ongoing Cold War there were many male candidates from the United States competing for Canadian university teaching jobs in my main field, Russian and East European history. But when I sensed I was being discriminated against I always fought back. As a result, I met wonderful people of both sexes along the way, especially well-known Canadian writers and poets, both inside and outside universities.

In 1971 I made the front-page news in the now defunct *Toronto Telegram*, where I was cited as saying: "Not every Tom, Dick, and Harry has a PhD degree in history from the University of Toronto." The name of Toronto's York University dean who was instrumental in rejecting me in favor of a male graduate student from Wisconsin with an incomplete PhD was "Harry." In a York University student newspaper my activities were also featured on the front page. It was ironic that both the York University President and I arrived in Ottawa roughly at the same time to take good government jobs. Meanwhile, toward the end of 1973, I produced a pamphlet on university hiring, which is still generating royalties.

While I was not prepared to easily give up my quest for a university teaching appointment in Canada and elsewhere — I once applied for a university teaching job in Australia, upon advice from a colleague working at an Australian University — I also pursued other employment options. I was conditioned by my upbringing to be stubborn and determined and not to behave as a "victim," as some North American feminists were prone to do.

While searching for appropriate employment in Toronto and elsewhere, I was again working as a claim adjuster for the same insurance broker who had employed me in Montreal. Only once did my personal situation depress me to such an extent that I followed a friend's advice to see a psychiatrist. This proved beneficial to me in a totally unexpected way. Witnessing this man's bullying a hapless female patient on the phone made me lose my temper, so I scolded the psychiatrist for abusing the woman patient. He became very apologetic and instructed his

receptionist that I needed no further appointments.

My perseverance in seeking professional employment paid off when in 1973 I secured a good job as a military intelligence translator/analyst in a civilian section of the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. Finally, I was a professional with a certain status and adequate salary. My life was completely transformed. Eventually I was able to do some part-time university teaching at the University of Ottawa, in addition to my regular government job. (I had separated from my husband in 1971 and was divorced in 1976.)

I was the only woman professional in my work section for a number of years. When my chief, a retired lieutenant-colonel, became seriously ill in 1979, I was appointed acting chief by the director, even though I had neither the required seniority nor appropriate experience. When I told this to the director, he impatiently retorted that he knew what he was doing when he selected me. With the help of both male colleagues and superiors, I successfully managed the section until my chief returned seven months later. I continued as acting chief during the chief's brief absences from the office, whether on business or during his vacations.

Having had the experience of teaching undergraduates on a part-time basis, I came to appreciate the advantages of my government job where I supervised adult men. Yet they were not just ordinary men — some were retired military officers and supposedly difficult to handle. The instructions from my superior were: "Call the military police, if necessary!" I never had to do this. The officers obeyed me unconditionally and proved far less troublesome to me than did a lowly woman clerk.

I have now been "retired" for nearly 10 years. Published since 1972, during my retirement I have contributed many items about women in the military to military encyclopedias and dictionaries, as well as publishing my latest series consisting of four books on Soviet women in combat in WWII.

I have no employment-related regrets, having had the satisfaction of leading a productive life and in a modest way blazing new trails for women. My advice for younger women is: Don't be victims — fight for your rights!

*Kazimiera J. (Jean) Cottam, PhD, lives in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. □*

## My Journey from Oxford to Psychohistory

Ruth Dale Meyer  
Pacifica Graduate Institute

In 1979 Corpus Christi College, Oxford, England, opened its gates to female undergraduates for the first time since its founding under the Tudors in 1517. The college is one of Oxford's smallest with about 230 students. With Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first female Prime Minister leading the country's government, a small group of 19 new female undergraduates huddled together for support on their first day at their chosen educational institution. I was one of them. I was there to study modern history, which focused mainly on Western civilization and in particular on traditional British constitutional and political history.

This article will trace my personal journey from Oxford University, England, to Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California, from undergraduate studies in traditional history to doctoral research in psychohistory. My memoir is inspired by fellow psychohistorian David Beisel's article in the *Journal of Psychohistory* (1978, Vol. 25, No. 4), entitled *From History to Psychohistory: A Personal Journey*. I discovered this article in 1998 when I was researching psychohistory in the classroom for my master's dissertation in history in education (*Is There a Place for Psychohistory in the Classroom?*) at the University of London, England. Beisel's work caused me to begin asking questions about my transferences toward history. He legitimized the value of telling one's personal story and of using the self as a research instrument.

All of this was anathema at Oxford, just as it was for Beisel in his graduate studies in the U.S. The self was to be kept out of research at all costs. Beisel goes so far as to say that in his early days as a history professor he penalized students who used the word *feel* in their exam books. Research by Jean Baker Miller, Carol Gilligan, and Mary Field Belenky suggests that women learn through developing a strong connected relationship with their work and through developing a web of empowering relationships with their fellow learners. Looking back, I think my greatest source of support through those years at Oxford was my friend Patti. We wrote poems expressing our frustration with our professors, which was a

great emotional release. But it did not solve the problem that I was unable to voice my true feelings and opinions about the history I was studying to the people who mattered: my professors and tutors. I suffered during my three years at Oxford from recurrent bouts of tonsillitis and painful sore throats.

The young men in my tutorials were addressed by their last names — a British public school custom — that further served to distance students and professors from one another. It also served to enforce a gender divide as the female students were addressed by their *first* names. All of my tutors were male. When I once summoned the courage to voice my feelings about the force-feeding of suffragettes in British prisons during the early 1900s, I angered my tutor. After that encounter, I rarely ventured a personal opinion on the history I studied. I was not fortunate enough to discover until much later, that my strong feelings about the suffragettes were evoked by a feeling of allegiance to fellow women pioneers, engaged like me in a struggle for survival in a male-dominated world.

Those insights came partly through psychotherapy in the 1990s and partly through a special class which I took at Pacifica Graduate Institute in May 2000 with the feminist writer, social historian, and poet, Susan Griffin. We were assigned Griffin's autobiographical work, *What Her Body Thought* (1999), in which she traces the complex web of connections between her own experiences of chronic illness and poverty and those of courtesans in 19th-century Paris. In her class, she encouraged us to recall a time we had felt undervalued and unheard. I went straight to my experience at Oxford with the suffragettes. Griffin made a suggestion which, had it come when I was at Oxford, might have empowered me to do valuable research into that topic.

She suggested I go back to my feelings at that time in my Oxford education and then look for parallels with the lives of the suffragettes. She suggested that I play with the material and see where it led. For example, if I was suffering from acute sore throats, what illnesses did these women suffer from? Did they write journals? What were their hopes and aspirations? Through first examining my feelings and then looking for parallels in the lives of the suffragettes, I would not only be gaining a different perspective on my own troubles, but I would also feel emotionally connected to the material and therefore

be more energized and revitalized by my research. But these valuable insights came over 20 years after my struggles at Oxford. I just remember feeling deeply inadequate as a historian and suffering from disturbing bouts of anxiety at the time of my finals in 1983.

On our first day at Oxford, all of the women remained together: sitting in groups, drinking tea in one another's rooms, and shopping for our black and white gowns and matriculation attire. Later a few of us ventured into the Junior Common Room — a cozy communal room meant for relaxation and reading newspapers, but we were put off by the awkward silences and strange looks whenever we entered. We felt vulnerable and on view. I discovered later that the male students were ranking us in order of sexual attractiveness and desirability for dating. My source for this information is my husband — who was then part of this group of gazing men.

Such attitudes may have come from the top down. Nothing had been done to prepare the community of young male undergraduates, professors, and college servants, or even the services and accommodations, for the arrival of women. The college president at the time, the classical scholar, Sir Kenneth Dover, recalls the arrival of women at Corpus Christi in his memoir, *Marginal Comment* (1994). He talks of the "civilizing effect" of women on the hard-drinking, glass-smashing rugby club set, but he devotes far more space in his memoir to describing the sexual problems which he sees as caused by the arrival of women. One young man was so obsessed with his female classmates that he could not concentrate on his studies and he had to take a year off. Dover was annoyed, he writes, to discover that some of the valuable college plaster had been pulverized by energetic lovemaking in one of the female undergraduate's bedroom. Loaded condoms were left on floors for college cleaners to pick up. Thus, in Dover's memoir, the complex phenomenon of the arrival of women in a previously all-male undergraduate student body is reduced to sexual peccadilloes. Nowhere is the arrival of women celebrated for the new insights women might bring to the educational process or for the diversity that their new ideas might offer to the cloistered environment of this tiny college.

On the practical side, little was done to accommodate our needs. All bathrooms, previously designed for men, were now shared. There was no

place in the toilets for the disposal of sanitary napkins and no place in the college where you could buy them. The only sport on offer was a place on the all-women's rowing team. The only woman in a position of authority whom I could talk to was the college nurse. Finally, there were no counselors and no where to go if you had psychological problems (as many of us did), other than the jolly old college doctor, who regularly dosed us with Valium.

I graduated from the University of Oxford with Honors and a BA in Modern History in 1983. However, it has taken me years to work through my experiences of alienation and disappointment. My first dream when I entered therapy was of a young girl lying murdered in an Oxford college quadrangle, with a pool of dark blood seeping from her wound. At the time of entering therapy, I was blocked in the writing of my master's dissertation. I found help from an older female therapist, practicing with a Jungian orientation in London. She worked through dreams and sand tray therapy. Gradually my dreams and sand tray figures moved from images of victimization, sickness, and death toward travel and research in libraries. She encouraged me to explore psychohistory as an exciting new avenue of research where I could combine my new interest in experiences of the unconscious with my passion for history. In 1998, I got my first computer and when I typed in the word "psychohistory," I discovered the work of Lloyd deMause and the *Journal of Psychohistory*. When I wrote deMause that I was researching teaching the Holocaust using psychohistorical insights, he invited me to New York City to present my research to the International Psychohistorical Association's (IPA) annual convention.

After a year of therapy in London, my writer's block regarding my dissertation was over, and I was deeply engrossed in teaching and writing about the Holocaust. The IPA invitation came at exactly the right time. I already knew that my interest in psychohistory was going to take me beyond my master's and I was looking for a PhD program. A colleague at the IPA told me about Pacifica Graduate Institute and I immediately began the long process of applying to study in the United States. I left my family and friends behind in England and came to the U.S. on a student visa.

As far as I was concerned, there was no comparable program anywhere else in the world. My ori-

entation in therapy was and still is Jungian, and I particularly admire the work of archetypal therapist and writer James Hillman. Pacifica Graduate Institute is unique in that it offers a PhD program in depth psychology with a strong Jungian and archetypal orientation. I was thrilled to take a class with James Hillman in 2000 and I have studied his personal papers, which are available at Pacifica's library for researchers.

The best part of studying in America is working in a supportive environment, where my opinions and insights are valued and honored. At Pacifica Graduate Institute, female undergraduates actually outnumber male. Many of my professors are vibrant women who value empathy and intuition as part of the research process — just as many psychohistorians do. If I have a problem, there is a clearly identified group of faculty available to offer help and advice. A key part of the American college education system, which does not exist in England, is the system of counseling. Looking back if I had been able to talk to an experienced counselor about my difficulties in understanding how to fit in to the Oxford system, rather than seeking help from the college doctor, I might have fared better.

I realize that much may now have changed at Oxford University since 1979. For example, the number of women attending the college has gradually grown over the years. There are also signs that other women are beginning to re-visit some of these experiences of gender discrimination. Shortly after I began working on this article, a fellow alumna contacted me because she was researching the question of women arriving at Oxford for an article in the annual college record. From our telephone conversation in December 2004 it seems that many of that first group of 19 are now ready to talk about their experiences.

At Pacifica Graduate Institute meanwhile, I am close to completing my doctoral research into historians who dare to embrace unconscious encounters in their work. The provisional title of my dissertation is *Clio's Circle: Historians Who Dare to Embrace the Unconscious*. Since so much of my early historian's life was spent in denial of my transferences to the material, I now have total fascination for those historians such as Richard Cobb and Simon Schama who discuss dreams and altered states of consciousness in their work.

Ever since I entered Oxford I have yearned to pursue doctoral studies, and so the journey from history to psychohistory is part of a long-cherished wish.

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## Physics and Pantyhose Days

**Kristine Larsen**

**Central Connecticut State University**

*"This is Quantum Mechanics, you know."*

*"Yes, I know."*

Although the exchange was 20 years in the past, I can still hear the words reverberating in my head as if it were literally yesterday. It was late January 1985, my first day of graduate school at the University of Connecticut (UConn). After finishing my undergraduate degree in physics in three and a half years, I had plowed straight ahead to graduate school, eager to achieve my life goal of achieving a PhD and becoming an astronomy professor by the age of 27, what I considered the earliest, realistically possible, date. Because I was starting mid-year, there were a limited number of courses open to me, so it was decided that I would sit in on a quantum mechanics course taught by Dr. Ronald Mallett, my thesis advisor and the main reason I was attending UConn.

The road leading to that moment had been a decidedly unconventional one. My earliest memory is of sitting at age three in the back seat of my family's station wagon on an agonizingly long ride home from the Bronx Zoo, a package of plastic dinosaurs clutched in a vise-like grip in my impatient fingers. I was under strict orders to not open my precious prize until arriving home in Connecticut. Within the next few years, paleontology had become my overwhelming passion, and the dinosaur room at the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University my own personal Eden, where, to the palpable embarrassment of my mother, who somehow never seemed to understand my science obsession, I would correct the tour guides with all the self-assured authority a first grader could muster. In those early days, my gender had not seemed an issue. Perhaps it was a tad

odd that I was more interested in reading dinosaur books or playing in my sand pile with my rather impressive collection of Tonka trucks than in dressing up Barbie and Ken, but it did not strike me as reason for concern.

With puberty came the realization that perhaps I had outgrown my desire to dig up bones for a living, but my love of science had not waned in the slightest. Understanding the universe had become my new *raison d'être*, especially black holes and the Big Bang. My individualistic personality had only become more so with the passing of years, and although my peers wondered why I seemed to insist on being the “class individualist,” there was certainly no ulterior motive involved. I was who I was, had the force of personality to pull it off, and the demonstrated scholastic achievement to demand respect from my teachers, despite the “heavy metal” exterior.

Despite the warnings from my mother and stepfather that they could not afford to send me to a private university, I applied to astronomy programs at Yale, Cornell, and Wesleyan, and was summarily passed over by all three. Thus it was that I found myself at Central Connecticut University, 10 miles from home, a physics major (due to the lack of an astronomy program), and a member of the first class of the university's Honors Program. It was at college that gender first became a noticeable issue, specifically in my physics and math classes. In my undergraduate University Physics 2 class I was one of only two women, and the male students treated us with disdain until after the first exam, when it was announced that we were the only two students to pass!

In the upper level courses, the physics majors became a tight-knit group, and although there were only three women in our midst, this was the largest number of simultaneous female physics majors the program had had up until that time. The faculty treated us all with equal respect, and although I did not have any female faculty mentors, I certainly did not feel as though I lacked guidance and encouragement. It was in college that I learned to “play the game” and to exchange “leather for lace,” as it were, and I dressed more professionally when working in the planetarium with the general public.

With graduation approaching, I had mailed out dozens of those postcards advertising graduate programs which lined the walls of our physics study room. One Sunday morning, I received a phone call

at home, from a faculty member from a physics graduate program from below the Mason-Dixon Line. Before he could get a word in edgewise, I excitedly babbled on about my GPA, experience working with a planetarium and observatory, and achievement in the Honors Program. When I stopped to take a breath, he admitted that the only reason his institution was interested in me was because I was a woman and from a Northern state. After making a hasty and polite end to the phone call, I seethed in righteous anger. I had worked too hard and achieved too much to become a mere “token.” I certainly could not tolerate being pandered to because of my gender. Fortunately, about that time I attended a physics seminar given by Ron, and based on his obvious brilliance, sparkling personality, and fascinating research, I decided to attend UCONN's graduate program in physics.

This was the road which had brought me to that first day of graduate school. Eager to make a good impression, I had decided to dress up, and thus it was that I was sitting in a classroom of approximately a dozen white males, wearing a lavender dress and heels. After a few moments of whispers and surreptitious stares, one of the young men had come over to me and, naturally assuming that this young blonde was decidedly lost, did his best to rectify the situation. I still remember watching the male students slink in their skins when Ron entered the room, beamed a broad smile at me, and we called each other by first names.

Afterwards, I recounted the exchange with Ron, and he was horrified. I was slightly amused with it all, as I had become used to being a “different face” in physics classes, and with the exception of that singular phone call from the misguided Southern professor, had taken it all in stride. As an African-American, Ron was also painfully familiar with the problems of being a minority in physics. He himself had once been confused with the janitor, and had taken to dressing impeccably to accentuate his authority role as a professor. As a short, blonde, 21-year-old woman who could easily fit into the bimbo stereotype — at least externally — I learned from Ron's example. Although I quickly fell into my usual college garb of jeans and concert t-shirts on most days, I became the only teaching assistant in the department to dress up on days I taught lab (my “pantyhose days”). It was a natural (and necessary) way to differentiate myself from the students I taught

(some of whom were a year or two older). As for those quantum mechanics students who had initially questioned my presence in their class, Ron decided that in order to “teach them some respect,” I would proctor all their exams for the semester.

Over the next five years, Ron and I attended a large number of conferences and seminars together, always impeccably and conservatively dressed. Many times we were the only islands of difference in a sea of similar white male faces. Upon entering a room, I would commonly see some of the middle-aged, pocket-protector-wearing physicists nearly sprain their necks trying to get a look at Ron and me, something I would recount later as similar to the head-spinning scene in *The Exorcist*. At a conference in New York City, Ron and I were introduced by name (but not titles) to an elderly Nobel Prize winning physicist, and the man stared at me with a puzzled look, apparently trying to ascertain whether I was Ron's secretary, wife, or student until I introduced myself further. At another conference in Maryland, I patiently waited my turn with a small group of people at the end of a question and answer period held by another famous physicist (who incidentally now holds a Nobel Prize). After one particularly long-winded exchange, the speaker turned and began gathering his things, apparently ready to leave. Not being a shrinking violet, I piped up with, “Excuse me.” He turned and looked at me with a quizzical expression and then said, apologetically, “Sorry, I thought you were with him,” referring to the object of his last conversation. In a rare display of my pent-up disgust at the obviously ingrained stereotypes I had found in the professional circles of physics, I replied non-too-gently, “No, I'm a graduate student, and I have a technical question for you....”

In an open display of the power of karma, I was offered two teaching positions in astronomy in 1989, a year before I finished my dissertation, thus fulfilling my life goal. The position I took, without hesitation, was at my alma mater, Central Connecticut State University. At 41, I have been a full professor for two years, direct the Honors Program in which I was once a student, look younger than my age, and when it is not one of my “panty hose days” am sometimes still mistaken for a student. I am widely known as an excellent and exuberant teacher, and a dedicated advisor and mentor to all my students, regardless of gender. I find great satisfaction in their achievements. My individualistic streak has

certainly waxed and waned over the years since college but has never disappeared. The tattoos collected since my mid-30s are in places which can be easily covered when the occasion dictates, but the eyebrow piercing remains my most obvious sign of overt rebellion against “the Establishment.” Childish, perhaps, but I have never felt the need to explain my personal choices to those who didn't understand.

In March 2004 I presented a talk at the annual meeting of the American Physical Society (APS) in Montreal. It had been 10 years since my last attendance at that perennially huge conference, but it saddened me to see how little had changed. The faces were predominantly middle-aged, male, and “pale”; the attitudes aloof; and I still garnered considerable stares as I threaded my way through the crowded halls. In a reception held by the Committee on the Status of Women in Physics, the only way to know it was the 2004 meeting rather than the 1994 one was the slight change in fashions. The same concerns and outright complaints were heard as were voiced a decade before. Although the number of women in attendance (especially among the graduate students and post-docs) was statistically higher, it did not appear to be significantly so.

Women have yet to reach a critical mass in physics when we can effectively bring about a change of attitude. We are still the “other.” Although I have made a successful and satisfying career out of being an individualistic personality, as I looked around that room in Montreal, I could not help but wonder how many of those young, enthusiastic faces would still remain in the field to return to the 2014 meeting of the APS. How many of them had the single-minded, internal driving force which had sustained me in my career? Unless significant changes are made in the culture of physics, my fear is the answer will be “very few.”

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## The "Jewish Mother" in Myth and Society: A Psychoanalytic Approach

*(Continued from front page)*

traits such as dominance, aggression, nurturance, and low social recognition and affiliation. The stereotype of the Jewish mother traditionally described her childrearing practices as over-nurturing, nagging, meddling, manipulating, domineering, and controlling through guilt.

Analysis of the "Jewish Mother" issue first emerged in the late 1950s and continued into the 1980s. It was conducted by the second generation of Jews in the U.S., the sons and daughters of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. When searching for their independence as young yet mature individuals, they started to question their own personality and behavior, level of socialization, and degree of achievements. When evaluating their childhood and comparing it to that of their American peers, their self-examination brought up neurotic or aggressive tendencies they might have had and as a result painted the picture of what was commonly referred to as a typical "Jewish Mother." (See, for example: M. Wolfenstein, "Two Types of Jewish Mothers," in M. Sklare, (Ed.), *Jews, Social Patterns of an American Group*, 1958, and S.F. Kriger and W.H. Kroes, "Child Rearing Attitudes of Chinese, Jewish, and Protestant Mothers," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 86, 1972, pp. 205-210.)

The most significant work of the "Jewish Mother" myth is *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969) by Philip Roth. Roth describes the type of mother who keeps her children dependent upon her through manipulation and a melodramatic style. The maternal psychological difficulty in this context is the unbearable burden of her children's own identity and their need to separate from the nuclear family. The explanations suggested to date for this maternal overriding of her children have been mainly sociological, attempting to see the conflict in the generation of sons and daughters. According to these explanations, the second generation felt a conflict between familial expectation to conform with Jewish tradition and their own quest for upward mobility through success in the American free society (M.K. Slater, "My Son the Doctor: Aspects of Mobility among American Jews," *American Sociological Review*, 34, 1969; T.

Pelleg-Sani, "*Personality Traits of the 'Jewish Mother': Realities behind the Myth.*" Dissertation, United States International University, 1984). Yet, an alternative explanation is that there may have been *psychological forces of conflict in the Jewish mother herself* as a result of her traditional positioning in the family and in the Jewish community during the previous centuries.

### The "Jewish Mother" Seen through the Prism of the Hebrew Language and Myth

Written Jewish tradition encompasses many diverse views, and yet as wide-ranging as it is, it reflects no more than a one-sided perspective, since it was stated, written, read, preserved, and studied by men alone. As described by R. Elior ("A Beautiful Girl without Eyes: Women in Language, Religion, and Jewish Culture," in D.Y. Ariel, M. Leibovits, and R. Mazor, (Eds.), *Blessed Be He for Making Me a Woman?*, 1999), the language leaves no doubt as to the essence of these positions: A woman is a female (*nekeva*), derived from the root word *nekev*, denoting a hole or space. Coitus is termed *tashmish*, stemming from the word *shimush* (usage). The plural form of women, *nashim*, is related to the term *nosheh* — a creditor who comes to collect his loan. *Erva* (nakedness) is associated with shame and disgrace, connoting unrestrained sex. Above all, there is the concept of *nida* — a menstruating woman — stemming from the word *nidui*, meaning excommunication and banishment. An examination of these commonly used words in spoken Hebrew up to the present time casts light on the patterns of Jewish women's physical and social presence throughout history, and the underlying causes for their cultural nonexistence and their absence from the spiritual dialogue and the world of creativity in Jewish tradition.

As opposed to a man's, a woman's honor was contingent on her absence from the public domain, regarding which it is stated, "All honor of a king's daughter is directed inward" (Psalms 45:14). A woman typically led a sequestered life within the confines of her home, living under the dominion of her father or her husband, her very autonomy and existence controlled by these two figures. Traditionally, a woman was perceived as a physical entity that must be disciplined, while a man was seen as an entity that has contact with that which is holy and sacred, and thus is placed in charge of the social order. In the past, a woman was associated with nature's

cyclical, unbridled, eruptive, and, hence, unclean forces, which must be purified and domesticated. This view is predicated on identifying a woman's honor with modesty, reticence, and obedience.

A somewhat different view was proposed by the Jewish myth of Lilith. This story spawned the legendary images of the independent, rebellious, licentious, and destructive Lilith, who engaged in luring and killing. The contention was that the protections designed to maintain a woman's reticence and obedience benefit her in that they shield her and accord her dignity, but in effect they only serve to perpetuate the balance of power that determines a woman's positioning in nature, necessitating control and keeping women out of centers of power as well as preventing their involvement in matters of culture. A woman was stripped of her dignity as an autonomous individual entitled to conduct life as she sees fit based on liberty, freedom of movement and access, equal rights, and freedom of choice. Her value and standing were determined largely by reproduction and fertility aspects. She was seen as contributing to the succession of generations and the continuity of life, defined within a physical-sexual context controlled by men.

### **The "Jewish Mother" in Biblical Law**

Biblical law portrays a woman as a man's property, a view manifested mainly by marriage and divorce. The man initiates the relationship, while the woman plays a passive role: "When a man taketh a wife..." (Deuteronomy 24). Moreover, the man is the one who can annul the marriage: "Then it cometh to pass, if she find no favor in his eyes ... that he writeth her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house" (Deuteronomy 24). Another expression of this conception is to be found in the law that regards the rape of a young girl as a transgression for which the penalty is a fine, however, this fine is paid to the father (Deuteronomy 22). A woman is also dependent on a man economically; she does not inherit and does not own property, and cannot exist without the livelihood a man provides. This is evidenced by the great concern shown by Biblical law for the widow and by its call to assist her through gifts and charity. Family purity laws reveal the conception that a woman is impure for significant periods in her life, resulting in numerous restrictions in her contacts with others and in her relations with her environment.

This brief summary conjures up the image of a very limited woman, lacking economic and personal autonomy, perceived as a danger to the community's purity (N. Shashar-Aton, "Jewish Woman, Who Will Know Your Life?: A Brief Historical Review," in Ariel, Leibovits, and Mazor, (Eds.), *Blessed Be He?*). Biblical stories of women — among them prophets, warrior women, and manipulative and cunning mothers — give no impression whatsoever that the community respected the lives and independence of women. Such accounts were more like a depiction of the potential embodied all the years in the female gender, which would come to light during a time of distress for a father, warrior, prophet, or king, in the form of a woman who dared. Evidence from the Mishnah and Talmud literature, and from literature of the period following the fall of the Roman Empire and from throughout the second millennium, do not enable one to conclude that the Jewish community let women get involved in social, intellectual, or spiritual centers of power.

### **Developmental Guilt, Children, and Adult Guilt Feelings — A Psychoanalytic Explanation**

In effect, a Jewish woman is caught between two males: her father and husband. In her article "Feminine Guilt and the Oedipus Complex" from 1990 (in C. Zanardi, (Ed.), *Essential Papers on the Psychology of Women*), Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel writes that the girl at the Oedipus complex stage admires the father's powers and abilities, a sentiment that emerges amid the disappointment experienced during development with regard to the primary love figure — the mother. The girl comes to see the fact that the father is endowed with a phallus, which both she and her mother lack, as something representing power. The internalization of the paternal power which the girl entertains in her fantasy engenders guilt feelings that are eventually resolved with the developmental understanding that when she grows up she will be able to do things like her father, and she returns to loving her mother as a figure to identify with. A woman who is not able to admire her father in childhood, because he was too authoritative, resulting in the impairment of the father's behavior in the girl's fantasy, remains with a guilt feeling regarding her fantasy intentions towards her father, despite her being unaware of the connection when reaching maturity. This guilt feeling is the basis for the neurotic inhibitions in the area of creativity and actions, according to this writer.

I postulate that the Jewish woman found it difficult to admire her father and his exclusive functions in the family as well as the authoritativeness that came with fatherhood according to the Jewish tradition. Hence, she was left with guilt feelings regarding her greatness fantasies and, consequently, also with a social impotence. She returned to identifying with her nonautonomous mother, ultimately grasping that her function in this world would be limited and remain within the family domain. But so that this function should not be so limited, the Jewish woman saw in her family and children the "be all and end all," hoping that the children would turn into her source of power in the absence of sources of power outside the family, within the community. The guilt she felt was projected onto her relations with her children, through manipulations that eventually generated guilt feelings toward her with respect to their desire to distance themselves and move away.

It is proposed here that the mother projected her ancient and unconscious guilt through projective identification and created guilt feelings in her children to defend her ego from the conflict between the grandiose fantasies of power and the traditional demands. Guilt and grandiose fantasies are adequate emotional responses in the advanced Oedipus complex at toddlerhood. However, as the complex is being purely resolved due to the presence of an authoritarian father, who blocks the opportunity of normal resolution, these emotional responses remain the property of the young girl's self with neurotic vicissitudes at older ages. Grandiose fantasies over power that was not internalized during childhood persist during adulthood as a counter-reaction to inferiority in real life.

In American society of the 20th century there were new opportunities for freedom and independence. Therefore, it might have been the case that as the guilt over her grandiose fantasies was (apparently) developing during centuries in the presence of real inferiority, the Jewish mother in the 20th century was trying to turn over the power relations in the family and succeeded in weakening the husband, while becoming the strongest figure in the family. This was a rebellion for all the centuries of dependence and shame. The maternal conflict between the inter-generational guilt and the traditional tendencies assumed the characteristics of American society and culture, since it evoked the fantasy that anyone could succeed. The Jewish mother wanted to succeed in

her own fashion, by influencing her children and planning their lives, while keeping them close to her. The children, on the other hand, sought to succeed without her, because of their embarrassment at being immigrants and their embarrassment at the impotence of her "Jewish Mother" image in social life and at work. On the other hand, the children felt guilty towards her for abandoning her, and for the fact that American society, rather than the nuclear family, was the source of their own grandiose fantasies. Such conflicting sentiments gave rise to neurotic tendencies.

Revelation of the widely accepted "Jewish Mother" concept from the 1950s shed light on the proclivity of the mother in Jewish society to create dependence and bonding with her children as a source of alternative power, in the absence for centuries of any ability to influence outside the family sphere. This explanation places the source of the conflict squarely on the mother and not the children, who strove, as guided by their developmental instincts and urges, to separate and individuate. American society came to be regarded as a generalized father figure possessed of many opportunities and great influence, whereas the father in the Jewish family was gradually diminishing in influence compared to the dominant mother. The overt manifestation of this in American society came in the 1950s, when tradition was rapidly losing ground to American liberalism, with the father's power increasingly measured in terms of the livelihood he could provide rather than by his ability to study bible. Jewish mothers, also influenced by American liberalism, rebelled as they had never done in previous generations in Europe. However, this rebellion was accomplished by harnessing the guilt they felt regarding their grandiose fantasies, for which the conflict had not been properly resolved in childhood, and by using the children who were their main occupation. This explanation goes a long way to making clear that *a nonegalitarian population that discriminates against its women will surely pay a price in its children's development*. This elucidation differs from previous explanations in that it focuses on the individual and on the intrapsychic conflicts caused by the milieu in which one lives. Accordingly, unlike earlier explanations, this one sees the root of the problem in the mother's conflict and not the children's. The Jewish mother was prepared to release her children to lead their independent lives only with a change in the prevailing attitude

toward her in U.S. Jewish society and the new Israeli society.

### **Changes within American Jewish Religious Communities in Their Attitude toward the Woman**

In the U.S. in recent decades, Jewish women have increasingly been allowed to assume religious functions in the synagogue and community previously restricted to men. The Reform Movement categorically rejected the Talmud notion maintaining that "He who teaches his daughter Torah, it is as if he has taught her lechery" and issued an instruction to teach Judaism in co-ed frameworks. The Movement also refused to reconcile itself to the inequality in the marriage ceremony and decided to change this. Toward the end of the century, a handful of congregations allowed women to become members independently of their husbands, thereby enabling their participation in decision-making. Although many women opposed spiritual leadership by women, in the 1970s women began to be ordained as rabbis. In the wake of changes by the Reform Movement, the Conservative Movement struck from the prayerbook those statements offensive to women's honor, such as "Blessed be He for not making me a woman." According to M. Meyer, about two dozen female physicians serve today as circumcisers in U.S. Jewish congregations ("God of Abraham and Sarah: The Status of the Woman in the Jewish non-Orthodox Society," in Ariel, Leibovits, and Mazor, (Eds.), *Blessed Be He?*, pp. 179-188).

### **The Social Changes in Israel and the Prevailing Attitude toward the Jewish Mother**

The partnership between men and women in founding the Jewish nation brought about a change in the nuclear family, and, in turn, also in the Israeli mother's attitude to her children. However, these things happened gradually from the start of Jewish settlement in Palestine. The Zionist revolution focused on masculinity. A delineation of the new woman's characteristics depicts one with a dual image: on the one hand, a new image embodying the yearning for equality, and on the other, the traditional image of feminine commitment to husband and children. The first, liberal image opened the gates of instruction to women, although within the emerging community women were kept out of public life.

According to Margalit Shiloh, the first lesson of the second wave of immigration during the 19th

century was akin to a revolution in Jewish settlement life ("The New Hebrew Woman," in Ariel, Leibovits, and Mazor, (Eds.), *Blessed Be He?*, pp. 227-252). Theodor Herzl's national vision greatly influenced many spheres of activity. The spirit of Zionism was joined by the spirits of liberalism, secularization and socialism. The period provided fertile ground for the emergence of a new feminine figure — that of a woman undergoing emancipation. It was in the shadow of the hardships and frustration during the second *aliya* that the new woman's image began to take shape — one with self-awareness, fighting for her standing and advancement. The egalitarian education at the Hebrew Gymnasium founded in Jaffa in 1905 sought to impart to young girls the same attributes it wished to instill in its young boys. The school gave rise to the new Israeli intelligentsia and even realized the vision of the new Hebrew woman. Favoring the public's needs over those of the home and family was just one facet of the revolution the young girls aspired to carry out.

During the British Mandate period, the concept of friendship supplanted the notion of the extended family, with friends forming the basis for group reference. The revolution during those years was characterized by the worship of body, youth, nature, and secularism. However, the quest for a new feminine model swung between women's internalization of masculine values and the internalization of men's demands of them. The model of a self-emancipating woman primarily suited single women and mothers caring for their children on their own. This changed during the 1948 War of Independence, when war was perceived by women as a defense of the home, leading them to fight alongside the men. The men, for their part, felt that an army unit without women was not a true home. The involvement of women in the defense forces was further evidence that a new society had been formed in Israel. In the nascent state's initial years, both medicine and young parents were influenced by American trends, and with the admission of fathers into the delivery room during childbirth arose a keen desire to participate and help in childrearing. In addition, women increasingly entered the world of work outside the family. The model of two working parents who are equal partners in bringing up the children has been the prevalent model in recent years within the secular sector.

### **A Mother and Her Daughter in the New Israeli Literature**

The story "Apples from the Desert" by Savyon Liebrecht, an Israeli woman writer, (*Apples from the Desert*, 1998 (first English-language edition), pp. 65-72), is one example of many in modern Israeli literature of the emotional resolution of the female self. The story tells of Victoria, an ultra-Orthodox mother from Jerusalem, who travels out to visit her daughter, Rivka, who has left home in favor of life with a reserve army officer on a secular kibbutz. En route, the mother plans different ways of bringing her daughter back home. But when she arrives, a conversation (translated from the original Hebrew by this author) develops with her daughter, who is not yet certain she wants to marry the officer. The conversation sparks a metamorphosis in the religious mother. Victoria says, "You didn't love your father and your father didn't love you." Rivka ignores her remark, but then, following a brief silence, responds, "At home ... I wasn't worth much." "And here?" asks Victoria in a whisper. "Here, more." Later, when the conversation gets underway again, Rivka insists on knowing, "Why did it take you six months to come here?" "Your father didn't want me to come." "And you have no will of your own?" – for which the mother has no answer. On returning home, Victoria confides to her sister, "Sarika, we have spent our lives alone, you and I, with our marriage ceremony. My youngest daughter taught me something. Remember how we thought she was a bit retarded, God forbid? How I would cry over her? No charm, no splendor, no wisdom, no talent, tall as a giant. We wanted to wed her to Yekutiel, and they had the nerve yet to do us a favor, as if Abarbanel's daughter wasn't good enough for them. And look at her today ... milk and honey. And smart, too. And laughs all the time. And perhaps, with the help of God, she'll even cause us satisfaction."

The daughter Rivka in the story symbolizes the metamorphosis undergone by the modern Jewish woman. She is not dependent on her man or on her father. The metamorphosis undergone by the mother symbolizes the change in the mother's dependence on her children. The mother accepts her daughter despite the separating distance, and does not manipulate her to bring her back to her and to her former lifestyle, although that was her plan.

### **The Resolution of the Guilt**

The termination of the Oedipus conflict is marked by an end to guilt feelings and the understanding that the girl will have influence and power just like her father when she grows up. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the Jewish mother no longer needs her children to feel sources of power in relation to her husband and does not feel guilty about her fantasies of a grandiose self in which she receives her man on an equal basis. From the moment she attains equal power with her husband in the family system, as well as social status, she can release the children from her manipulateness aimed at not losing them as sources of power. The concept of the "Jewish Mother" was apparently based on mothers stifled by an all-consuming fantasy trying to attain a position of power, to survive in a nonegalitarian society. The liberation of the woman in this sense was the liberation of her children and the safeguarding of their normal and non-neurotic development.

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### **Being a Feminist in Israel**

**Nurit Gillath**

**Citizen Advice Bureau (Retired)**

**Haifa, Israel**

A committee of five men reviewed my doctoral dissertation proposal five years ago. They did not understand what was so unique about my topic,

"Women's Service in the Israeli Army 1948-1967." "Everything is known," they said. Is it really? No one has ever written the history of the Women's Force, so how can everything be known?

Was I surprised by this attitude? No, not at all. Being a native-born Israeli enables me to reflect on Israeli society with both love and pain. In the eyes of the world Israel always seemed as fighting for and implementing gender equality. The story of the first settlements (*kibbutzim*) where women worked with men shoulder to shoulder and the world-famous pictures of women soldiers carrying arms might give the impression that Israel has achieved what very few other nations have: a society of gender equality. But the truth is that Israel has always been a very "macho" society. By "macho" I mean that in Israel militarism has overlapped onto civilian life. A militarized society is a male-oriented society, and issues concerning the lives of women are therefore secondary: equal opportunities at work (salary, promotion, fringe benefits), marital laws (marriage, divorce, inheritance), violence against women, welfare (for poor women, single mothers, and older women), and better integration and participation in politics.

Israel was and is a society torn because of a precarious military situation as well as political rifts between Left and Right, clerical and secular, women and men, Ashkenazi (European) population and Mizrahi (Middle Eastern). We are still so far from achieving so many of the goals that are the basis for an equal opportunity society, one of which is equal rights for women. Men never saw equal opportunities as a topic on their political agenda; the problem is that neither did most of the women.

Israeli women have struggled from the beginning of the 20th century for their right to be included in all spheres of life: politics, the economy, and education as well as the military. It was a fight that was never really won – there were just small victories from time to time. An example is the story of the Women's Union for Equality in Eretz Israel, founded in 1919 by an American woman, Dr. Rose Walt Strauss. This political party took upon itself to integrate women into the political life of the Jewish population in Palestine. It participated in several elections in the 1920s and 1930s with immense success. Unfortunately, the achievement was not to be repeated. The party disbanded when the State of Israel was founded in 1948. Contemporary Israelis

never heard about this party and its achievements until 1977 when a group of us decided to establish the Women's Party. One of our members found a small dusty book about the Women's Union in a corner of the library of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. We published the book again and now all the school-books tell the story of the first women's party.

The years after the State of Israel was established were stormy. The image one gets from the media and other sources is that a woman's main role was to be a good daughter and then a good wife and mother. A woman was penalized if she stepped out of that role and rewarded if she stayed "in line." She could even be called "a whore" if she did not comply with the rules. But if women felt any discontent, they did not express it. When a group of Israeli and American women assembled at the beginning of the 1970s with the idea of forming a feminist group, it was a curiosity but not yet a threat. When more women joined, the press started to be a bit hostile: "bra-burners," we were called. Whenever I entered a room, fingers were pointed at me: "Here comes the feminist!" But we had a mission: to make women see their subservient situation. It was a very difficult task because most Israeli women would not listen. They were nearly as hostile as the men — we were rocking their boat.

The Feminist Movement of the 1970s was a small but radical movement that was pressuring the nearly all-male hegemony in Israeli politics. The devastating war of 1973 and the absolute helplessness of women then, raised for the first time critical questions about the insignificant role women played in times of war. Some articles were written and the discontent was heard. In the elections of 1974, one of the parties offered a seat in parliament to one of the leaders of the Feminist Movement. The Prime Minister consented in 1976 to establish a committee to look into the status of women in Israel, a first step toward a change in a society with conservative values. In 1977 a part of the feminist group founded a political party that ran in the elections with a radical platform. We did not win, but we received a lot of positive publicity and reached people we could not reach until then.

Among the issues the feminist movement did not deal with was an issue we never really argued about: the issue of women serving in the army. We felt that women cannot demand equal opportunities if

they do not fulfill their military service obligation. Compulsory conscription for men and women is a law and not serving in the army, we thought, might damage the status of women in Israel. On the other hand, in a country engaged in so many wars, where fathers, brothers, and sons fought and died, many women felt that it was wrong to talk about equality — there never was any. I think that after 56 years that is not a relevant excuse anymore. In the last 20 years, the issues of Israel's security and the fate of the settlements in the occupied territories forced more women into the streets to demonstrate than ever did any feminist issue. An example is the formation of the first anti-war movement in Israel, organized totally by women in 1982, which called for the withdrawal of Israeli soldiers from Lebanon. Most of these women were mainstream middle-class women, who had university degrees and had served in the army but did not declare themselves as feminists. They felt they had something to say about war and security as women and mothers. Many men felt threatened by this new phenomenon of Israeli women protesting against a war. They said that women do not understand security matters. This argument does not deter women today. They protest and demonstrate on various political issues but not, unfortunately, feminist issues that are not considered "important enough."

I served in the army and so did most of my friends. We felt proud to fulfill this national duty. When I talk to other women about their army service, I hear mixed feelings. Many fondly remember their service but usually tell of tedious, boring, and unrewarding jobs. Men and women were assigned to different roles: women got genderized roles that were set for women from the beginning when a list of 12 jobs was published. Most were clerical, teaching, and nursing roles — not fighting like the men — there was no feeling of achievement, no heroics. Even women officers either had administrative jobs or were in charge of women soldiers, looking after their welfare. A professional military career was not possible because there were no advancement possibilities — you could not become a high-ranking officer without field experience (combat training and commanding). However, now women have many more roles open to them, even some combat roles like pilots and trainers of combat soldiers.

In Israeli society today there is a backlash to the achievements that we feminists worked so hard

for. The only TV program dedicated to women's issues from the feminist point of view and chaired by a feminist-oriented woman for half an hour once a week was recently reformatted after five years. Now it's a joint venture of a feminist and a cynical male journalist. In 2001 the army abolished the post of Woman Commanding Officer of the Women's Force and made the top woman's position a consulting role to the Chief of Staff. Recently there was an attempt to eliminate even this post, but women's organizations protested and the position remains, for now.

The press in Israel claims we are in the "post-feminist era," which I doubt, though the picture is mixed. The feminist movement as such disbanded in the early 1980s, but many other feminist organizations emerged. Women realized that being nice is not enough, that much more had to be done to have equal opportunities. More women joined the work force: in 2003, 69 percent of women aged 15-54 worked. Many women have earned university degrees and developed careers. But they still have many children, 2.73 total fertility rate per woman, the highest rate among Western countries. (This might prove that family is still the center of women's lives in Israel.) Young women are still asked when applying for a job, "How many children do you plan to have?", even though it is illegal, and many women risk being fired from their jobs during pregnancy, even though employers need to get permission from the Ministry of Work and Welfare. There are sexual harassment laws and trials and heavier punishment than formerly, but wife-beating and murdering have increased. Women are a large percentage of the poor in our country. Women are still blamed: if poor single mothers, it's because they live on welfare and do not work; if sexually harassed or raped, "she asked for it" or she used her complaint to get even with some man.

Did we 1970s feminists make a difference? Yes, I believe we did. Saying "I am a feminist" today in Israel is socially accepted, unlike 30 years ago. We brought the feminist agenda onto the social and political agendas. Many issues were raised by us and other women's organizations which followed us. An example is of the feminist member of parliament, who in 1976 declared that there were hundreds of beaten wives in Israel. The parliament roared with laughter, but the first shelter for beaten wives was opened in 1977. Today this issue is no laughing matter. We gave lectures all over Israel in schools, universities and other institutions. We attracted media

attention to feminist issues. Considering how few we were, it's amazing to look back on the past 30 years and see the changes in Israeli society, mostly among the younger generation of women which takes our hard-won achievements for granted. But I am sure they feel, like we "veterans," that the way to full gender equality is still a long, arduous journey.

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## Remembering My Mother

**Judith Harris**  
**Catholic University and**  
**George Mason University**

Before my mother died at 79, she had lost her memory in a postmodern game of scrabble. She seemed to look at things as if they were suddenly there for the first and the last time. Alzheimer's, a complication of her Parkinson's disease, had seized pieces of her memory as if cut out of a cardboard background, which she could switch around like letters of the alphabet, spelling out new combinations for words. This fact enabled her to recognize some people who were familiar, but her reference points were becoming increasingly blurred. She could no longer perpetuate memories and so the past became simultaneous with the present in which all perspectives are flattened and equidistant and finally shown in the same instant and the same special terrains. She was searching amidst the rubble of objects and ideas already broken, trying to piece together some order and some clarity. My mother lived in her mind like a contemporary archeologist picnicking on the Roman ruins. More tragically, she stared out straight ahead for most hours of the day, as if she had lost all of her interest in what surrounded her.

In that last year, however, her self-consciousness about not remembering abated, and she seemed happier even when she was delusional; she liked making up her stories and only became reticent when someone pointed out the illogic. My fa-

ther always stayed to one side of her and translated for her. She looked to him the way the early pagans must have looked to the heavens for some sign of divination. When she was moved to the Hebrew Nursing Home, no one wanted to tell me. I would call the apartment and my father made excuses for why she couldn't come to the telephone. He did not want to admit his defeat; that he could no longer take care of her, or tolerate her falling down or inject her with insulin. Slowly, it dawned on me that she was either dead or missing. I confronted him with the question of what exactly had happened to my mother. He had taken her, after a couple of visits to the psychiatric ward of the county hospital, to the Home, which had a special unit for the patients suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's. I did not want to go there to see her — knowing I would have to see her in the condition that had warranted her being there — I did not want to see the nurses sniffing around her like she was an old casserole — or the cheerless cheerfulness with which the female residents who were parked in the social parlor on Saturday afternoons, some still replete with evening dresses and swishy oyster pearls.

But I got used to it, just as she did. When my father took the cell phone on his daily visits, he would call me and put the phone to her ear. There was always a baffling sound of crackling hair and short breaths as she tried to figure out which ear to put it to, and how to say something into the receiver. She opened the conversation with a little phrase that she used when I was young and had wandered into her room or the kitchen, "What's cookin'?" She asked that as if she were hungry. I remembered a little notepad she kept by the telephone with the insignia of a pot belly stove and the script squiggled out of smoke, that asked precisely the same question, "What's cookin'?" In the last six months of her life, the only thing she seemed to remember about me was that I wrote poetry. She had forgotten everything else spoonful by spoonful: that I was married, that I had a daughter, that I was separable from my sister whose name she often mistook for mine or mine for my sister's.

During that last year, I had to come to terms with the possibility of losing my mother and realized that I had been losing her most of my life; indeed she was a faint but glamorous presence who understood her part in motherhood but also liked the idea of having her own career. When I was five years old, she

declared she was going to work. She had skills as a stenographer and typist, and wanted to make use of them. So, unlike the other mothers in the neighborhood who stayed home, she suddenly dispatched her maternal duties to a babysitter. As a result, I became an intensely dependent and desperate child, constantly testing her faithfulness, her maternal instincts, and her devout but missing sympathies. Now, losing her all over again in her late stages of dementia, I tried to adapt to her fragmented world, to the vacant spaces she disappeared into and reappeared from, the way I had to when she left each fall morning, in her high heels and reversible raincoat, to catch the bus to downtown. I would stand a long time by the window, watching her make her way down the street until she turned the corner. Now I resented her silence as if it meant she was deliberately abandoning me.

I had always counted on my mother to be at least reassuring, even when I knew she was unsteady in her thoughts. Somehow I thought the fact that she was my mother might transcend her uncertainty. Even if she was uncertain about the weather or which way to hold a phone or a water glass, I still wanted her to treat me with the deference a daughter deserves. But my mother was no longer reassuring because she had no sense of what to reassure me about. She calculated absence — the occasions my father wouldn't show up at the Home — and she chastised him for it, but she didn't understand, or appreciate, his presence as much. In lucid moments, she talked about her frustration that there was no cure for Parkinson's and this belied her poignant faith in doctors and researchers. She lived in a dark, hoarding, and howling place, from one rationed pill of dopamine to the next.

I have tried to think what it would be like to forget the past the way my mother had. It is an impossible exercise. It doesn't matter if it was a good or bad past; it is there as the essential foundation for understanding where one is now, and why. My mother's parents were immigrants who never learned English. I don't know if that was insolence or impatience on their parts. Her father had come to this country as a stowaway in the belly of a Russian passenger ship. He was a fur maker who was often unemployed through the Depression years. They were unapologetically poor. My mother did everything American: kept her hair blonde, wore perfume, did not make chicken stock from a bone, and had her own mink coat. There was much friction between

my mother and her mother — perhaps because her mother favored her brothers and wanted her to give up her rights to everything because she was a girl. When my grandmother died, my mother insisted that they raise the lid of the coffin, even if it was sacrilege, so that she could see the old gray face. She said if she didn't see her she wouldn't believe her mother was really dead because she was so ingrained in my mother's consciousness. She was moored there, like a small and empty boat. She could not differentiate her moods and dreams from what her mother's were and she feared that she would forget who she was without her. My grandmother had deprived my mother of affection and so my mother had to learn how to give it to her own children, which she did with all of the hesitation involved in uncovering a lost language. I tried to express her feelings for her, which she had held in. Did I know as a child that my grandmother's influence had made its way into my mother's psyche too?

My mother's condition left her seemingly unable to emote, to love, to even animate herself. She appeared blank. My sister always warned me before we saw her: "She isn't in there anymore." It wasn't that she failed to remember, rather, that she could not construct a memory that would place us within the realm of her nearby awareness. She saw me both as the child who was always standing outside her own omnipotence and as the competent adult who flitted in and out of consciousness, upon whom she could depend to get her robe off or her button buttoned. I was aware of the fact that my mother could no longer recognize her own image in the mirror, let alone mine.

Unfortunately, I tried to identify with her illness and see myself as impaired and unable to perform tasks I had done just a year ago. It was a means of both feeling close to her and compensating for the possibility I might surpass her. If my mother was degenerating, I felt I must be crumbling somewhere, too. "Are you writing?" she'd ask. I know that my mother had no idea what I wrote but that she had observed a kind of noisy thinking in me, some process that magically gets results but remains out of sight: like the contraptions that press and wrap up dry cleaning and send the bodiless clothes around their moveable cables. It was my inner space to which she had no access, just as I had no access to hers. Yet if we couldn't read each other's thoughts we still could intuit them, finding more or less a kind of familial

resemblance, like the trait of worrying too much, or being allergic to fake gold, or starting mystery books with the last chapter.

"Do not touch the face of an angel; the flesh is so fragile it will rub off on your hands." I remember my mother bringing out an album of old black and white photographs. She called it her family album and kept it in the nightstand of her bedroom. By the time she died, most of the photographs had disappeared from the black pages, perhaps dislodged by various moves.

In Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (1982), the author searches for his own identity through family photographs dating from before he was born. He remembers a kind of stupefaction in seeing someone familiar being dressed differently. He focuses in on a single photograph of his mother standing with her brother in a winter garden. Bridging the gap between his five-year-old mother and his own mourning her, he realizes the only material traces of an irrecoverable past, and how these traces derive their power and their cultural role from what they have embedded in family life. But more important, the photograph is a memorial. As Barthes concludes, "By giving me the absolute past of the pose, within the family, the photograph tells me death in the future. What pricks me is the discovery of the equivalence" (p. 60).

I am obsessed with seeking out pictures in the album. I keep looking at the pages in order to fit together her life — to give her a past — and to breathe myself into it, to mother her again so that I know I am the child. I see her in front of doors, waving a hello or goodbye. Here's a snapshot of her in the park in the midst of autumn, a baby buggy parked under the leaves. I think she has just turned halfway around to hear a human cry.

What pricks me is the equivalence. Even in seeing my mother's photographs from when she was three years old to when she took her trip to Israel in 1999, I know that the eyes that look out are the same eyes that greeted me as a child, the same eyes that stared expressionlessly at me when I visited her just a year ago. My parents believed in taking photographs. They believed in the world of the photograph as a memorial season. Of course, in any familial four-cornered world there is always someone missing: someone who is snapping the picture, someone who is guiding the gaze.

Strangely, I have always had an aversion to family photographs as well as a secret attraction. I could gaze for a long time at each frame, each context of my mother's former life in which I so desperately sought an image of my own cohesion. I wanted to see her in remnants of happier times in which I was not present.

Along with the album, I then drew out her old high school yearbook and studied the little tiles of faces of unknown, anonymous teenagers as if they could tell me something more meaningful. These are the boys who will go to war and don't know it. These are the girls who will wave flags on Armistice Day. There were overworked quotations underneath their names and club memberships in italics: "Class clown," "Will see her name in lights," or "Most likely to succeed." My mother's photograph shows her large teeth and impeccable smile, her democratic good will and her skeletal feminism still forming. My mother's class suggested she would become a member of congress; but instead she worked to put her brothers through law school and did not begrudge them too much. My mother was such a broad-cheeked Slavic girl with cornflower blue eyes. I look at the slogans under each school portrait like epitaphs — doomed as the early magnolias that put out their blossoms as the first sacrificial stars of spring.

*Judith Harris, PhD, teaches at Catholic University of America and George Mason University. She is the author of Atonement: Poems (2000) and Signifying Pain: Constructing and Healing the Self through Writing (2003) (see the review in this issue on page 156). Dr. Harris' new book of poems, The Bad Secret, is forthcoming in early 2006. She dedicates this essay to Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, "who has written so beautifully on motherhood and psychoanalysis." Dr. Harris may be contacted at jlha@gwu.edu. □*

### **Nancy J. Chodorow: Psychoanalyst and Gender Theorist**

*(Continued from front page)*

*Our Distinguished Scholar is the author of The Reproduction of Mothering (1978; 2nd Edition, Updated with a New Preface, 1999); Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory (1989b); Femininities, Masculinities, Sexualities: Freud and Beyond (1994); and The Power of Feelings: Personal Meaning in Psy-*

*choanalysis, Gender, and Culture* (1999) (see Works Cited for full citations), as well as numerous articles, chapters, presentations, reviews, and interviews. Of particular interest in terms of her intellectual and personal biography are "Born into a World at War: Listening for Affect and Personal Meaning" (2002a), "Psychoanalysis and Women: A Personal Thirty-Five-Year Retrospect" (2004c), and "The Sociological Eye and the Psychoanalytic Ear" (2004d). Since her last book, she has written several articles on gender: "Glass Ceilings, Sticky Floors, and Concrete Walls: Internal and External Barriers to Women's Work and Achievement" (2002b), "Too Late: Ambivalence about Motherhood, Choice, and Time" (2003c), "Hate, Humiliation, and Masculinity" (2003e), and "Beyond Sexual Difference: Clinical Individuality and Same-Sex Cross-Generation Relations in the Creation of Feminine and Masculine" (2004b); on sexuality: a new Foreword to Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (2000) and "Homosexualities as Compromise Formations" (2003b); and on psychoanalytic theory, history, and practice: "From Behind the Couch: Uncertainty and Indeterminacy in Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice" (2003a), "The Psychoanalytic Vision of Hans Loewald" (2003d), and "The American Independent Tradition: Loewald, Erikson, and the (Possible) Rise of Intersubjective Ego Psychology" (2004a).

Dr. Chodorow's book honors include the Bryce Boyer Prize of the Society for Psychological Anthropology in 2000 for *The Power of Feelings* and the Jessie Bernard Award of the American Sociological Association in 1979 for *The Reproduction of Mothering*, which was also named by *Contemporary Sociology* in 1996 as one of "Ten Most Influential Books of the Past Twenty-five Years." Recent honors include the Liebert Lecturer at the Columbia Psychoanalytic Institute and Association for Psychoanalytic Medicine (Fall 2004), Honoree of the Committee on Special Research and Training (CORST) at the Meetings of the American Psychoanalytic Association (June 2004), and the Award for Distinguished Contribution to Women and Psychoanalysis of the Section on Women and Psychoanalysis, Division 39 (2000).

Dr. Chodorow is the Book Review Editor for North America of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* and a Founding Associate Editor of *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*. She is on several

committees of the American Psychoanalytic Association, where she also participates frequently on panels, and is active at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute. Dr. Chodorow (NJC) was interviewed by e-mail and phone in February by Bob Lentz and Paul Elovitz for Clio's Psyche (CP). She may be reached by e-mail at [chodorow@berkeley.edu](mailto:chodorow@berkeley.edu).

**CP:** Dr. Chodorow, for 30 years you've been a pre-eminent scholar of individuality, gender, sexuality, culture, and society. Your parents were Marvin Chodorow, a professor of physics, applied physics, and electrical engineering at Stanford, and Leah (Turitz) Chodorow, a social worker before she had a family and, afterwards, a community leader and well-known volunteer. Born in New York City in 1944, in 1947 you moved with your family to Stanford, which was "traditionally Western, semi-rural, ... emphatically not-Jewish" (2004c). How have your early life and your parents influenced you?

**NJC:** I believe what I call my clear-eyed thinking — my capacity to see the logic of an argument and put all the parts together — comes from my father, who, as he told me, could see widely disparate theories in physics as having particular relationships in terms of designing particular instruments or tubes. Perhaps being on the margin, or cusp, or in-between, as I always see myself (an intersubjective ego psychologist; a psychoanalyst-social scientist interested in where inner meets outer, or self meets world, as I say in the Introduction to *The Power of Feelings* (1999)), comes from my move to California and being Jewish in such a non-Jewish world, even today with one part of my identity in New York City and the other very much in the outdoors of California. So, being somewhat of an outsider-insider gave me a capacity to see structure and logic in what I read and to put things together.

My maternal lineage is familial and cultural as well as personal. My mother is of the 1890s-1920s cohort that had more education and professional participation than women before or after them. Five of my six aunts were professionals, social workers or music teachers. All the women in the community in which I grew up in had had careers before they became mothers — teacher, social worker, librarian, scientist — and they were mainly strong descendents of pioneers and farmers. They were housewives and homemakers but not what you would call "stay-at-home mothers." When you go hiking now

on the San Francisco Peninsula, most of the land preserves and trails originate in the volunteer work of those women. My mother took her social work training to a very undeveloped San Francisco Peninsula — it is hard for anyone who has been to Palo Alto or Silicon Valley in the last 30 years to have any idea what it was like there in the late 1940s and early 1950s — and she founded a school for autistic children, served on symphony and concert boards, raised money for schools, and was a fundraiser for the Stanford Institute for Research on Women and Gender.

**CP:** In *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), you call for “equal parenting” (p. 218). Would you still issue that call today as you did then? How real is equal parenting in modern society? What can be done to more fully achieve it?

**NJC:** Well, I think you put it exactly right: “issuing a call.” It was a naïve call, though I know that many people feel grateful to me for having suggested it. As I have said in the 1999 preface to the second edition of *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), it is a sort of social engineering call that is really undermined by the heart of the book itself, which is about the development of maternal desires, subjectivity, and capacities, and the importance of the mother-child relationship for both mother and child. The entire argument of the book implies that fathers are not mothers and, as I have done clinical work, and myself become a mother, I know that more strongly than before. The call for “equal” parenting comes from two sources. As I note in “Born into a World at War” (2002a), I am of the generation of war babies who were the subjects of all the “father-absence” studies — fathers were off at war or doing war work, and, after the war, working hard in the beginning of a boom economy, while women were “returning” to the home. But the wish for more father involvement is not the same as a call for equal parenting. I translated this cohort experience into a political call, but you don’t need equal parenting to have men participate in child care. This call is characteristic of my political generation — an absolutist claim for how society ought to be transformed, without a lot of attention to the subjectivities, feelings, and wishes of the people themselves whose causes we were advocating. The implication, that there are no differences between mothers and fathers, has also been used against women by fathers’ rights movements, and, as I describe in “Too Late” (2003c), it is used by my patients and students, in what I call a cul-

tural trope that obscures intrapsychic conflict about becoming mothers.

I believe that what I should have advocated as a result of the book’s argument were the kinds of social programs that would foster mothering and maternal as well as child well-being — parenting leaves with guaranteed job security (that are really, 90 percent of the time, as they should be, for mothers), family supports, job sharing, and other social policies, of the sort that we find in Scandinavia especially, that foster mothering and then end up making it much easier for fathers to spend more time with children as well. I think the fact that educated women were able to use that “call” is beside the point: the fathers of their children should have been willing to help without the need of a manifesto about how to overthrow male dominance.

**CP:** What has being Jewish meant for your thought, work, and life?

**NJC:** You know, it’s interesting and a bit surprising to read your questions, since they presume that one can summarize these things, like what does it mean to be Jewish, or a woman, or the child of particular parents, in one or two sentences. But of course, you as psychobiographers know, and I as a clinician know, that you can’t answer those questions in such short form: they are years of analysis and self-analysis, or 500 pages of psychobiography or autobiography. When you do answer them in short form, those answers are what we could call surface, probably obscuring as much as they reveal, or revealing not what it means to be Jewish, or Western, or a woman but some other affective meaning.

**CP:** Your undergraduate mentors at Radcliffe College were Beatrice and John Whiting in culture and personality anthropology, and your graduate mentor at Brandeis was Philip Slater (*Glory of Hera*, 1968) in psychoanalytic sociology. Were there others who significantly influenced your scholarly development?

**NJC:** Philip Slater was a great influence in terms of the kind of work that he did. I am forever grateful to him for when, after reading “Being and Doing” (1972), my first graduate student paper, he told me that I could never understand socialization and development if I didn’t read psychoanalysis. But he actually was disengaging from academia during most of my graduate career. I continued during my graduate work to be in contact with the Whitings, and

I was in touch with Bea Whiting until a couple of years ago and saw her just a few months before she died. I could see that my going off into psychoanalysis, even though she and John were such behaviorist child observers, fulfilled a latent identity for her: in her introduction to a special issue of *Ethos* in her honor, she called her contribution, "Freud in the Field." While at Brandeis I also took several courses from and was influenced by a Harvard Senior Lecturer, George Goethals. George introduced me to object-relations theory — Winnicott, Fairbairn, Guntrip, Balint — which was so influential in my early work.

My other influence, who perhaps helped me most in how I think, though not in what I necessarily think about, was my thesis advisor, Egon Bittner. Egon was an extremely careful theoretical thinker, who taught his students how to read a text carefully, how to think about it, how to unpack it from within. That has really been the skill that I've been able to bring to whatever I work on. So, when I went to work on psychoanalytic theory, the early writings on women, when I tried to bring together all those diverse writings, and also to bring in anthropology, cross-cultural studies, and social theory — a Durkheimian perspective on the social and individual, Parsons, Marxian critical theory — it was because of Egon Bittner that I could do this. Egon's own field, ethnomethodology, focused on pretheoretical assumptions that underlay everyday life and social thought, and my writing has almost always begun from noticing pretheoretical taken-for-granted — women's mothering; heterosexuality; the idea that meaning comes from without rather than from within.

**CP:** You took your doctoral degree in sociology from Brandeis, an institution that has been quite open to and productive of psychoanalysis and the psychosocial. Would you elaborate on Brandeis as a cradle of these fields?

**NJC:** I can't talk about Brandeis today. Then, the Brandeis Sociology Department, unlike most departments, had several people interested in psychoanalysis. There was also a connection to the History of Ideas program, which was a center for Freud-Marx-Frankfurt School theory. But in my time, the late 1960s and early 1970s, you had to make your own way. Many of the faculty were more involved in anti-war politics or in counter-cultural psychology movements than in academia. The very

large exception were the social theory faculty, mainly Jewish refugee intellectuals, who, I think, believed that intellectual work and disciplined reflection were especially important in politically troubled times. So, I did participate in some serious coursework in psychoanalysis, but other courses thought you should learn psychoanalysis through encounter groups or through talking about how you felt about the theory rather than understanding what the theory *said*. Those classes sometimes left me (and others) in tears, and that countercultural ethos led me to seek out my subsequent psychoanalytic learning either at Harvard or from the wonderful courses offered for graduate students by the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute (BPSI). There, Bennett Simon was one of my teachers, and after the two-year sequence was finished, I was given a dissertation mentor, Malkah Notman, who read through all the draft chapters of the dissertation that became *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) with the experienced clinical eye that I, of course, did not have. Both Bennett and Malkah continue to be close colleagues and friends. The other debt I owe to that BPSI course is that they assigned Loewald's "Separation, Internalization, Mourning, and the Superego," which began my lifelong passion for Loewaldian thinking and writing.

**CP:** How do you assess Freud?

**NJC:** How can I answer that in a sentence? I'm teaching a three-week overview on Freud starting next week, at the Psychoanalytic Institute of Northern California (PINC). In my syllabus for that course, I say, "Freud is not only the founding thinker and practitioner of psychoanalysis; he is one of the few most influential thinkers of the 20th century ... There have, of course, been many developments and changes in psychoanalytic theory and practice since Freud, and our field has operated between the temptation to preserve and adulate every word he wrote and the assumption that almost 75 years of post-Freudian developments have made him obsolete. What can be said, I think, is that there is nothing that Freud wrote that is not interesting, even when it is wrong, and that even if we each have one favorite exception, there has never been a rhetorical stylist in our field like Freud. It is worth investigating Freud's writings in themselves, and it is impossible that doing so will fail to enrich your own work."

**CP:** About the profession of psychoanalysis, you wrote in a note to *Feminism and Psychoanalytic*

*Theory* (1989b), "...the current decline in the profession – its fall from grace within psychiatry, its marginalized and minor relation to other psychotherapies, the continuing controversies about its founder. ..." (p. 222, Note 20). How do you view the current status of and prospects for the profession?

**NJC:** There is psychoanalysis in the academy and clinical psychoanalysis. We all know that clinical psychoanalysis now lives in a field with many other therapies and approaches, but I think it can be said that most of them incorporate dynamic thinking. The institutes themselves continue to attract candidates, including many psychiatrists who want the dynamic skills that they did not learn in residency, but of course it will probably never have the hegemony it had in the United States in the 1950s. In terms of substance, it is very exciting to be an analyst today – there is so much ferment, so many rich writings (many of which I see as the Book Review Editor of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*), such exciting synthetic theoretical thinking. Analysts, I feel, are so committed to their practices, to thinking about their patients with colleagues, so deeply devoted to understanding and helping them, it's not really only a question of numbers. In the academy, I am more pessimistic. Although psychoanalytic thinking is influential in the humanities, this tends to be non-clinically based, even anti-clinical, to go for the high – Lacanian, especially. Except for a small but vibrant psychoanalytic anthropology, there's nothing in the social sciences, which means that this important science of the individual, which could counter social determinism, is ignored.

**CP:** In the 1980s you researched, interviewed, and wrote about second and third generation women psychoanalysts in "Varieties of Leadership among Early Women Psychoanalysts" (1986), the classic "Seventies Questions for Thirties Women: Gender and Generation in a Study of Early Women Psychoanalysts" (1989a), and "Where Have All the Eminent Women Psychoanalysts Gone? Like the Bubbles in Champagne, They Rose to the Top and Disappeared" (1991). In "Psychoanalysis and Women" (2004c, Note 7) you remark "how radical and generative ... not only for her time but for ours" was Judith Kestenberg. What is the status of women psychoanalysts in America today?

**NJC:** That was such a wonderful project to do, because I got to meet with so many of those pow-

erful professional mothers (I have called this project my "professional reproduction of mothering"). As I describe in recent writing, after the decline of numbers and prominence of women analysts in the United States in the 1950s-1980s, until non-medical analysts could train, there are today many women, who play roles in every arena. I think all of those early women analysts were radical in one way or another – some politically, some culturally, some by becoming professionals, some by combining work and motherhood, but my particular tribute to Kestenberg was because she did really important theorizing about female (and male) development, and this work was pretty much ignored or misunderstood (by me among others).

**CP:** You've recently written about Erik Erikson in "The American Independent Tradition" (2004a). Did you know Erikson personally or study with him?

**NJC:** I think that Erikson is an extremely important thinker, in his keeping in mind psyche, culture, society, history, all at the same time, both in his early clinical papers and of course in his later founding psychobiographies. Reading *Childhood and Society* (1950), right after my freshman year at Radcliffe, first got me into psychoanalysis, and the psychosocial and the psychocultural. It addressed me exactly where my intellect and affect met. I am really sorry that I did not take Erikson's "Life Cycle" course when I was an undergraduate. I was mainly taking graduate anthropology courses, and I had a sort of snobbish idea that if 500 undergraduates wanted to take it, it was too popular. As a graduate student, I was able to participate in the small seminar on "Ritualization" that he gave along with his Harvard Norton lectures, and I interviewed him and Joan a couple of times for my women analysts project.

**CP:** In "Psychoanalysis and Women" (2004c), you write, "In trying to articulate a theoretical and technical identity that fits diversity and individuality ... I have invented the term, and in some contexts consider myself, an *intersubjective ego psychologist*..." Would you please explain intersubjective ego psychology for our readers?

**NJC:** That's the hybrid term I coined for what I call the "Loewaldian" school – except that Loewald did not found, and did not want to found, a school. I am trying to capture something that is neither, in terms of the contemporary terrain, relational,

nor traditionally ego psychological, with ego psychology's focus on close process or compromise formations coming from the individual. I worry that the relational focus, with its insistence on everything being co-constructed, and everything expressed by the patient coming from the here-and-now situation with the analyst, does not give enough theoretical recognition – though of course, when you listen to relational analysts they do this – to, really, what the patient brings, what's there from their earliest development, and their deepest, immutable, intractable, unique subjectivity. As someone who comes also from the social sciences, in which everything comes from the sociocultural, I worry that relational theory can lead to too much extrapsychic determinism. I want to take — as is not surprising, given my training, from the great strengths of classical ego psychology and classical Freud — the attention to individuality, to conflict and unconscious fantasy and how it shapes everything. But I also want to see the analytic encounter as created by two equally complex subjectivities, not as an encounter in which an analyst is the objective interpreter and describer of the patient's reality. Intersubjective ego psychology is the best I can do to express this hybrid.

I think among that generation of Americans, Loewald is the person who most fully holds both this “one-person” ego psychological view that he gets from Ernest Hartmann and from his deep rooting in Freud, and the complex understanding of the “two-person” transference-countertransference, of the analyst's role as transference and real object rolled into one, and new object as well, of how this all begins early, when the ego creates itself along with its reality, its drives along with its objects, in which development happens intrapsychically but also happens in the mother-child matrix. I tried to elaborate these ideas in my “The Psychoanalytic Vision of Hans Loewald” (2003d), and I tried to compare this hybridness with the British Independent tradition in “The American Independent Tradition” (2004a).

When I think of intersubjective ego psychologists, I have in mind analysts like Dale Boesky, Judith Chused, Theodore Jacobs, James McLaughlin, and Warren Poland, who are all ego-psychologically trained, but who have all worked in this middle terrain, of how to hold in mind patient and analyst as unique selves but also uniquely related, resistance as necessary in both patient and analyst for analysis to progress, transference-countertransference, the pa-

tient's reality taking primacy over the analyst's reality, countertransference enactment and analysis of the self but using this self analysis for the analyst's own thinking, not for putting it forth for discussion between patient and analyst, as is more the relational tradition. I see intersubjective ego psychology as a not “more-than-the-sum-of-the parts” two-person psychology — there are very much two separate people, with two separate histories and psyches, in the room — as opposed to the relational folks, whom I consider to hold a “more-than-the-sum-of-the-parts” two-person psychology. Things like “co-construction,” or the “analytic third,” or the “potential space” are more in this latter camp.

I think of intersubjective ego psychology as a sort of American equivalent of the British Independent tradition, with people like Winnicott, Fairbairn, and Balint, who tried to find a middle place between Klein and Anna Freud. It is not surprising, I think, that some of the contemporary British Independents, like Michael Parsons, also draw from Loewald. I also take Winnicott very seriously, and a lot of the British Independents, like Nina Coltart, Marion Milner, Parsons, and Christopher Bollas, who are right in there with the unfolding of the true self in the potential space of the analysis.

Now, as I make these fine-tuned distinctions, I should probably say that I'm doing violence to just about everyone — the contrasts I'm making are mainly between ideal types of ego psychologists and relational psychoanalysts. You no sooner make these kinds of distinctions than someone whom you're describing does something that undermines the distinction.

**CP:** You trained at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute from 1985 to 1993, have taught at that institute since 1994, and were certified in Adult Psychoanalysis by the American Psychoanalytic Association in 2000. Will you share with us when you were in personal analysis? How might your thought and work in the 1970s have been different if you had had psychoanalytic training earlier?

**NJC:** I think it's kind of a miracle that in my mid- to late-20s — I was in graduate school from 25 to 30 — I was able to write my *The Reproduction of Mothering* dissertation without analytic training and without being a mother. But I did have a personal analysis at that time, so I think I had some feeling-sense, as opposed to thought-sense, of what these

analytic categories and ways of thinking were about. But I did think, when I finished that book, that I could not go further in understanding the psyche without psychoanalytic training, and I still think I was right: training has been absolutely essential to all the further psychoanalytic scholarship I have been able to do.

**CP:** Though your writing about the reproduction of mothering at such a young age without parenting experience or psychoanalytic training was remarkable, I (Paul Elovitz) think it is important to explicitly make the following point: having a personal analysis is the most important single step in encountering psychoanalysis. Taking psychoanalytic courses, seeing patients, and case supervision are enormously beneficial yet secondary to the analytic experience as a patient. Though I greatly value my own training as a historian, and its value as an academic union card, all of these parts of psychoanalytic training are far more valuable than the typical process of getting a typical doctoral degree in academia. What are your thoughts about my assessment?

**NJC:** Well, I don't agree with you that the personal analysis alone can do it, which is what I think you are implying. I think you are minimizing what it means for your understanding to actually work with patients. I do agree with you, however, that analytic training may be more necessary to understanding people analytically than, perhaps, academic post-graduate training is to being able to do academic-like work: there are plenty of independent scholars around who do splendid research and writing in history, or sociology, or biography, based on no more than an undergraduate degree. You can't be self-taught as an analyst or analytic thinker about people's minds in the same way.

**CP:** I do not mean to be implying that personal analysis alone is enough nor to minimize the enormous value of seeing patients which deepens one's own understanding. Of which of your works are you most proud? What projects are you working on now?

**NJC:** The "big books" are *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) and *The Power of Feelings* (1999). I think those are both, in their own way and, as Erikson would say, for my own developmental stage, major achievements. For the time being, my focus is thinking about patients and private practice; I am not engaged in academic writing.

**CP:** You're now emerita in Sociology at Berkeley. Your master's and doctorate were in sociology, and you taught it for 30 years (1974-2004). Have you now left it behind? Sociology was a growing field when I (Paul Elovitz) was an undergraduate, but its importance in academia has appeared to decline. How do you explain this and what is its current state?

**NJC:** It needs to be stressed that I was never, in any conventional sense, a "sociologist." I have a sociology PhD, I've taught in sociology departments, and I'm a knowledgeable and original social theorist. But I've never been interested, other than as a citizen, in "the social." I'm interested in "the individual," and there are no departments of individuality, or "individualology," in the academy. So I've gone from one formal training to another, staying centered on the individual, in all her internal complexity and all the complexity of how she interacts with the sociocultural surround. One of the main arguments of *The Power of Feelings* (1999) concerns problems with socioculturally determinist fields, like sociology and feminism, and I've written about this as well in "The Sociological Eye and the Psychoanalytic Ear" (2004d). Of course, when I turn my attention to psychoanalysis, I am also critical of psychoanalysis for ignoring the social and the social sciences, a point I developed in my Liebert Lecture, "The Question of a *Weltanschauung*: Ethnographic Observations Seventy Years Later" (2004e).

**CP:** You theorize and are a theorist. What are the most important elements to theorizing about the psychosocial? In Fall 2004 you taught a course on your work, "Chodorow on Chodorow: Theorizing and Theory." What was it like to do this and how did students respond?

**NJC:** That course was my final course in academia, and it was a privilege to teach and to have wonderful students. I had the opportunity to reread my work cover to cover, and to articulate for the students how theory works. I was able to give them a first hand sense of my dead ends and my emotionally driven patches as well as of my breakthroughs and theoretical mind. It demystified "theory" for them.

**CP:** On the book jacket to *The Power of Feelings* (1999), you talk about how, in the middle of the last century, scholars like Erik Erikson, Norman O. Brown, Herbert Marcuse, Lionel Trilling, Philip Reiff, and Paul Goodman suggested that psycho-

analysis is really a grand theory about human possibility. Can you elaborate?

**NJC:** That's what the power of feelings and the "doubled vision" of Hans Loewald are all about. Psychoanalysis is the only major theory we have about individuality, the only science of the individual. Its practice addresses all elements in the individual human, and uses general theory to allow an individual to understand and integrate himself, to put together personal meaning and feeling, drives, passions, conflicts, and a deep relationship to another. The practice of analysis itself models intersubjectivity.

**CP:** You wrote about and expressed your indebtedness to American psychoanalyst Hans W. Loewald (1906-1993) in the Introduction to *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (1989b, p. 12). You've more recently written articles about him in "The Psychoanalytic Vision of Hans Loewald" (2003d) and "The American Independent Tradition" (2004a). In "Psychoanalysis and Women" (2004c) you write that "Loewald is the single theorist who best enables us to address clinical individuality...." Regrettably, Loewald is not mentioned once in the index to my (Bob Lentz's) daughter's university introductory psychology textbook. What has his legacy been and why has he been at the margin of psychoanalysis? Did you know, work with Loewald personally? Would Loewald the man, the person be an interesting subject for a biography?

**NJC:** I only met Loewald once, in the early 1980s, so the influence is entirely through his works. But can I use this opportunity to take a little stand here about psychobiography? Like everyone else, I find psychobiography very interesting to read, but I think it can sometimes substitute for thinking about a person's work itself. I think if you look at Freud's life, to take a well-known example, the biographies are so fascinating, but there has been also such a misuse of biography, where the man has been thought more important than his work, or it has been thought that his life can be used to judge his work. So, I would turn the question back to you, and wonder, why would this be one of the first questions that occurs, rather than thinking about how important it might be, for example, for *Clio's Psyche* to do a special issue on Loewald's writings?

Loewald is not marginal. He didn't found a school or engage in schisms, like Klein, or Kohut, or

Winnicott, or go off on his own, like Erikson. He is widely respected, and there is a growing literature on him and increasing references to him in the journals. Loewald was a committed practicing clinician, who was also a deep thinker, and wrote about what he thought. He was a central figure, teacher, and supervisor in Western New England. He was just not a public figure of claim and counterclaim.

What is so important about Loewald is his capacity to take everything into account and his wonderful attention to the analytic encounter, the transference-countertransference, the way that the analyst is just at the edge of what the patient can absorb and helps the patient to absorb this. He begins, like the ego psychologists, from the surface, but he interprets, like the Winnicottians or the Kleinians, the unconscious rather than the resistances. In Loewald what I have called a complete subjectivism, in which the individual creates ego and reality, self and object, drives and object, at the same time, meets a complete intersubjectivism, where no one develops as a child, or analytically, outside of an intersubjective matrix and surround. Loewald describes both the great complexities of intrapsychic development and experience, and at the same time he is a foundational thinker about the analytic encounter, therapeutic action, the analyst's role, transference-countertransference, and so forth.

**CP:** You have written about violence in "The Enemy Outside" (1998) and "Hate, Humiliation, and Masculinity" (2003e). How do you understand the psychology of political terrorism?

**NJC:** In those works, I ask why it is almost entirely men who are violent – terrorists, suicide bombers, committers of vicious acts of ethnic cleansing. I suggest that there are two "faultlines of masculinity" – tectonic plates that shift threateningly, or the crystalline structure we find when the crystal shatters. These are the need to be not-a-woman, that I had elaborated in the *Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), and the need to be not-a-subordinate-male in relation to a superordinate male — the humiliation and shame dynamic between men. This latter, the superordinate-subordinate humiliation dynamic, is, I think, key to geopolitics, war, power struggles — whether Bush's invading Iraq or Serbian ethnocide in Bosnia or Kosovo — and to the cultural-political humiliations that seem to justify terrorism. I hope that analysts will look much more closely at this male-

male superordinate-subordinate dynamic. Ken Corbett's marvelous article, "Faggot = Loser" (*Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, January 15, 2001 2(1), pp. 3-28) is one of the best accounts of this. Much of Ethel Person's writing addresses the male vulnerability to shame and humiliation as well.

**CP:** You're in private practice and have written about it recently in "From Behind the Couch" (2003a). You say that you have "a predilection for listening to" the patient (p. 478). Would you please elaborate?

**NJC:** I divide analytic writers and presenters into two groups, and analytic work into two necessarily interacting phases. I call these "listening to" and "listening for." Any good analyst does both, but I think we can see tendencies in clinical presentations and in the literature. Those who "listen for" are more theory-driven — I'm thinking of the Kleinians, the Kohutians, the Lacanians, the close-process ego psychologists. As you read them or hear them present, there's often the sense that they know, are even looking for, what they're going to find. Their theory guides what they hear. Much of Freud, and the early analytic writings, of course, are like that, too, especially where they talk about getting the person to see their Oedipus complex or penis envy.

Then there are those who "listen to," who, although they have theory in mind, seem to range more freely across theories and to focus with a more open ear and mind on the particularity of the particular patient, and perhaps that the patient at different times can be best understood by different theories. Of course, I put the eminently synthetic Loewald in this camp because he so focused on listening to the patient and since you can find elements of Freud, Klein, Kohut, Winnicott, Erikson, and Mahler in Loewaldian thought. Along with the Loewaldian intersubjective ego psychologists. Also in this group are the British Independents, not so much when they're looking for or insisting on the analytic third, or potential space, but when they're really focused on the unique unfolding of the true self, as in Milner, Coltart, or Winnicott. Evelyn Schwaber really opened the territory, with her insistence on the patient's, as opposed to the analyst's, reality being primary, and Haydee Faimberg, who invented the term "listening to listening." She argues that you don't know what you said to a particular patient at a particular time until they tell you what they heard. I

think as a listening-to analyst in terms of what I call, in that paper, "curiosity as an undertheorized technique" or surprise as an important experience for the analyst, as Henry Smith puts it. Or I think about listening to the patient as a unique other, in Poland's terms.

By the way, I think this distinction between listening to and listening for also holds in many academic fields as well, certainly in terms of how one listens as a sociological or anthropological interviewer or observes as an ethnographer, and I imagine as one does historical research as well.

**CP:** In reading "Psychoanalysis and Women" (2004c), we sense that you've evolved over the decades from a researcher/teacher to a clinician, from somewhat of a radical feminist into more of a mainstream psychoanalyst. How do you understand your intellectual journey? What will be Nancy J. Chodorow's legacy?

**NJC:** I was a political feminist, but not, in the terms of that time, a "radical feminist." I came to psychoanalysis to understand women and male dominance, and I now am interested, as I put it in the "Preface" to *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (1989b), in psychoanalysis for its own sake. But I was never intuitively a 1960s person; it was more that I followed a psychocultural tide. It was really always the internal individual that moved me. I think you only get a legacy as a clinician if you begin in the ranks in your 20s or 30s, and that is certainly not the case for me. My legacy will definitely be as a theorist. I would like to think it will be as theorist of the intertwining of the intrapsychic and the extrapsychic, because I feel that understanding those interconnections is so important, but as a sociologist of knowledge and cultural observer, I would have to assume that my legacy will always be in terms of my gender theories.

**CP:** Thank you for an interesting interview.

*Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, is Editor, and Bob Lentz is former Associate Editor and Guest Co-editor for this special issue, of Clio's Psyche.*

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\*(These nine articles are in the course reader for "Chodorow on Chodorow: Theorizing and Theory," available as *Soc 202B Fall 2004 Chodorow* from Copy Central in Berkeley, (510) 848-8649, for \$29.28 incl. shipping and tax. Bob Lentz, [lentz@telusplanet.net](mailto:lentz@telusplanet.net), has a copy he will start circulating upon request.) □

## Women's Changing Social Roles and the Gender Gap in Voting

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The gender gap in which women vote for Democratic candidates to a significantly greater extent than men do became a permanent feature of the political landscape in the United States during the last two decades of the 20th century. This difference in voting of approximately eight-to-ten percentage points first appeared in the 1980 presidential election when Jimmy Carter was supported by 45 percent of women but only 36 percent of men, creating a gender

gap of nine percentage points. Subsequently, it has marked all presidential contests since then, with the largest gaps of 11 and 12 percentage points occurring in the 1996 and 2000 presidential elections, respectively. In 2004, the gender gap in presidential voting narrowed somewhat to seven percentage points, probably because of the changing effects of security issues on women's voting after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Before 1980, in sharp contrast, there was little systematic difference in how women and men voted. The few significant gender gaps that did occur (for example, for Dwight Eisenhower) were based on women's greater support for Republicans.

This gender gap in voting can be traced to the dramatic changes in women's economic and social roles that occurred over the second half of the 20th century. Women's new social position, in turn, set off important psychological dynamics that culminated in women becoming more liberal than men in their political attitudes and voting patterns. The 1950s and 1960s witnessed momentous social and economic change affecting the status of women: women's rising levels of education, greater participation in the labor force, increased control over fertility, and higher divorce rates. As a result of these socioeconomic changes, women became more independent both economically and psychologically from men, leading them to become more active and independent politically as well. This represents what Diane Fowlkes has termed *countersocialization* ("Developing a Theory of Countersocialization: Gender, Race, and Politics in the Lives of Women Activists," *Micropolitics* 3, 1983, pp. 181-225). That is, women's changed social positions and roles created challenges and opportunities that changed the underlying psychology and values of many of them. Previously, in contrast, they responded fairly similarly to men to the socioeconomic and political contexts that they faced.

Many scholars, especially feminists, view the Feminist Movement, which began in the late 1960s, as the principal agent of the changes in women's gender *consciousness* that ultimately gave rise to the gender gap in political attitudes and voting (Ethel Klein, *Gender Politics*, 1984). From this perspective, the gender gap resulted from the growing gender consciousness among women as the Feminist Movement became increasingly successful in articulating new social and political norms to which, over time, more and more women subscribed. The Feminist Move-

ment, in short, drew on the more educated, independent, and mobile women who had been created by socioeconomic change to challenge the constraints of America's patriarchal culture and to articulate a truly autonomous political agenda for women. This vision, then, created a second level of explicitly intellectual countersocialization on which women in the broader population could draw.

Another psychological perspective links the gender gap to the assumption that women have significantly differently values from men's (Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 1982). According to this theory, women, compared to men, place more emphasis upon "connectiveness" in personal and community relations rather than abstract rights and power considerations, and upon personal collaboration and issue resolution rather than competition and confrontation. While the broader psychological foundation of Gilligan's theory has been strongly challenged, its implications for women's political attitudes seem less controversial. That is, women should have significantly more *compassion* than men, making them relatively liberal on issues affecting the less fortunate in society. Consciousness and compassion are at least indirectly related, moreover, since as women became more involved in politics, they began to realize that their basic, family-derived values applied to a broader range of issues, such as helping the less fortunate, supporting racial equality, protecting the environment, and, most especially, demanding equal rights for women. The sudden emergence of the gender gap in 1980, therefore, can at least be partially explained by the preceding success of the Feminist Movement in raising the "consciousness" of women about the political relevance and implications of their "compassion."

Finally, social change in the postwar United States was far from entirely benign for women. In fact, such factors as the rising divorce rates (which exposed many more women to the adverse economic consequences of divorce under the American legal system), when coupled with the falling welfare expenditures of the Reagan era, created what has been called the "feminization of poverty." This cost-bearing, consequently, gave many women an additional "self-interest" in being liberal on social welfare issues, thereby contributing to the aggregate gender gap.

This change in voting patterns since 1980

reflects a complex sequence in which women's changing social roles created countersocialization that led to changed attitudes. These new perspectives helped stimulate the rise of gender "consciousness" associated with the Feminist Movement which, in turn, led an increasing number of women to realize the political relevance of their values of "compassion" and of the "cost-bearing" entailed by the feminization of poverty.

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## Martha Stewart: Dual Gender Roles

**Amanda Eron**  
**University of Michigan**

Martha Stewart combines traditional ideas of femininity and masculinity, two seemingly contradictory roles, in a powerful way that challenges many different ideas about gender roles. By incorporating these two very different gender roles, Stewart has jumped headfirst into an experiment in contemporary feminism by error and trial. She has emerged from this unintentional experiment as a figure more powerful than some elements of our society can tolerate. Achieving success while presenting home in the context of work, or female in the context of male, she has challenged the unwritten list of what types of work can bring women fulfillment and dignity. It would be interesting to probe her childhood and motivations sufficiently to come up with a psychobiographical explanation for her behavior. Since a comprehensive psychobiography is not yet possible, I will attempt an overview with what resources I have available and hopefully prepare the way for a more in-depth study.

As if guiding you through setting up a greenhouse in your basement to sprout next summer's tomato plants isn't enough, Martha Stewart has also helped reinvent the way we see gender roles. Stewart is clearly a unique businesswoman in today's society because she expresses two traditional gender roles simultaneously: one female, embodied by her cooking and decorating tasks, and one male, as we see in her positions as former CEO of her own multi-million dollar company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Inc.; former member of the board of directors of the New York Stock Exchange; and centerpiece of the 2002 corporate financial scandal investigations. Her female role has been widely emphasized by the media through creative nicknames like "diva of the kitchen" in *The New York Times* and "celebrity homemaker" on the Associated Press, though none of these names can capture the essence of this intriguing ex-stock broker.

I initially began to wonder why Stewart possesses two traditional gender roles because of my personal experiences growing up with a stay-at-home stepfather who liked to make his own pizza dough. Hugo owned a bookstore until I was about 11 years old, after which he worked part-time as a caterer. His office was at home, so he was able to prepare all of the meals for my mother (the principal breadwinner) and me, drive me to my various after-school activities, and help me fish my retainer out of the trash at school on one of the many occasions when I had thrown it out with my lunch tray. Though stay-at-home fathers are usually stereotyped as being feminine, subservient, disinterested in traditionally masculine activities, and wearing aprons around the house, such is not the case with Hugo. He is very interested in traditional male activities and shows many stereotypically male characteristics in his activities outside of work, such as driving a large SUV, watching sports, and repairing things around the house. In his work, however, Hugo is traditionally feminine: he is very artistic and spends much of his time cooking, decorating, and shopping.

Hugo and Martha Stewart both exhibit dual, though inverse, gender roles. Stewart is traditionally feminine in the aspects of her work in the home, which she advertises, and traditionally masculine in those character traits that helped her to become a success in business. Both Hugo and Stewart are counter-stereotypical and important during a time in which businesswomen with androgynous personality traits

and communication styles are successful and women who speak politely and are seen as exhibiting "appeasing gestures" are frequently left behind at promotion time.

Androgyny is nowhere apparent in Stewart's image, however. Because she reaches a mass audience, she has rejuvenated the art and craft of the most "feminine" work of the last century – homemaking – and restored its validity and importance. During the post-World War II era, as Betty Friedan pointed out in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), housework was glamorized mostly to draw women out of "men's jobs." Stewart has worked hard promoting traditional female tasks to become the authority on gracious living. Her magazine, television show, books, and image have become wildly popular during a time in American history when there exist many upwardly-mobile Americans who are susceptible to the lifestyle and decoration industry upon which companies like Williams-Sonoma, Pottery Barn, and Crate & Barrel have prospered. (Interestingly, the CEOs of all of those companies are men.) Stewart's success and unique personality style are apparent, but the question remains of how she developed both of her gender roles.

There is a common misperception that Stewart was born into a wealthy New England family. In fact, Martha Kostyra was born on August 3, 1941, in Jersey City to a Polish-American family and grew up from the age of three in a working-class neighborhood in Nutley, New Jersey. At an early age her father taught her to garden and she was trained in the domestic arts throughout her childhood. Martha, with the help of her mother, even sewed her own wedding dress when she was 20. These hints from her background begin to suggest the foundations of her ability and desire to compete in the world of men. Stewart's father was temperamental and demanding, while her mother was cold and unhappy. As the eldest girl and second oldest of six children, she was instilled with a strong sense of independence and competitiveness, especially since resources were scarce when she was a child. From a young age, Stewart was a voracious reader, with strong aspirations for knowledge as a path to empowerment, as well as a means to experience worlds beyond her own. She has always exhibited a great desire for and need to exercise control (Christopher Byron, *Martha Inc.: The Incredible Story of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia*, 2002). All of these influences have

shaped the modern Stewart: an independent, power-seeking, competitive person skilled in the domestic arts and driven by unflagging aspirations for success. Recently, the greed that encouraged her insider trading led her from the classy lifestyle she worked to promote to a jail cell.

The media attention she received for this transgression only made clearer the complexity of her character. In my research of the investigation and trial of Stewart, I found a number of photos in *Newsweek* and *The Economist* that showed more of her body than did similar photographs of other, male CEOs being investigated for wrongdoing. Through calculating a numerical value (length of face in millimeters divided by length of face+body), I found that more attention was drawn to Stewart's gender than to the gender of the other CEOs. This observation points out the conflict that Stewart's dual gender roles present for the media and the public. Certainly many people hope a successful woman will fail; the media took advantage of Stewart's gender and celebrity status to feed that need. The fall of Martha Stewart certainly made good press.

I also found surprising differences in the fluctuations of her company's stock value and that of the other companies investigated. Stewart's company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc., suffered great losses after allegations on June 7, 2002 that Stewart received insider information from her broker, falling 16% from \$19.01/share to \$15.96/share in the two days after the announcement. It is logical that the value of her company's stock would fall with the announcement of a scandal involving the chief executive officer, but, surprisingly, two other companies with similar scandals during the same period did not experience proportionate drops in their stock values. When Tyco International was announced to be under investigation for an accounting scandal on February 17, 2002 their stock price actually increased by \$0.20/share, or 0.7%. When the Securities and Exchange Commission announced its inquiry into accounting procedures at Qwest Communications International on March 11, 2002 Qwest's stock price dropped by \$0.76/share, or 7.8%, during the next two days. Thus, the drop in Stewart's stock seems disproportionate, especially given the disparity in the other executives' transgressions: Stewart's wrongdoing saved her only \$57,000, while Tyco CEO Dennis Kozlowski's involved \$600 million. This may be partly a result of Stewart's company being heavily

based on her image, but it also suggests that because she is a woman, Stewart received unequal, gender-biased, media attention.

Martha Stewart's combination of femininity and masculinity challenges many prevailing ideas about gender roles because she has emerged victorious in her headfirst style of contemporary feminism. Yet while Stewart herself has profited by her "masculine" business sense, is it possible that the "feminine" homemaking advice and skills that she has brought to her audiences have not alleviated the pressure on women to choose between a feminine focus on the home and a masculine, aggressive pursuit of workplace success? That is, do the high standards for housekeeping that Stewart has set in her pursuit of individual success hold women back even more? At any rate, the whole of Stewart's being appears to be greater than the sum of her two roles: Martha Stewart became more powerful than some elements of our society could tolerate. Whether consciously or unconsciously, she has perceived a way to garner power by presenting home in the context of work and vice versa – female in the context of male and vice versa – thereby challenging the stereotype of the successful woman.

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## Feminist Battles on the Home Repair Front

**Tim Myers**  
Santa Clara University

I don't know squat about mechanical things, but my wife has an affinity for the supposedly male realm of "do it yourself." This is "feminism in the streets," believe me — because when we go to a hardware store or home-supply warehouse, it never fails: the guy behind the counter always tries to talk exclusively to me.

The American world of home repair traditionally inclines to a strict separation of the sexes, and even to the "purification" of the male sex — I've got-

ten many a contemptuous look from clerks who clearly deemed my ignorance about carpentry and wiring as unmasculine. Employees of the various suppliers, it seems, tend to split the world into the domains of women and of men. Then they deny reality to hold onto their preconceived notions. The following experiences illustrate this tendency.

My wife will say, "I need weather stripping..." and the clerk will nod, then swing toward me like a baby bird looking for dinner. "What do you need it for?" he'll ask. Since I didn't even realize we needed weather stripping to begin with, I can't contribute much. But he just looks at me, waiting for an answer.

I've tried several strategies. The first seemed obvious. "I don't know anything about this stuff!" I'd say cheerfully. "You'll have to talk to her." Sometimes I'd even have to point directly at my spouse.

"Ah," the guy'd say, turning to her and repeating, "What do you need it for?" (Some, I swear, even say it a little slower).

"I want to seal my garage doors, to keep the rain out..." she'd say. But like iron to magnet, sunflower to sun, he turns again to me. "So we're talking weather stripping..." Right back where we started.

Then I tried standing there without saying anything. But this was just too hard on the guy. As I waited out the awkward silence, he'd *try* to look at her — but his head kept snapping back to me, as if his neck was rigged with a big rubber band. Sometimes I almost felt sorry for him — he acted confused, like a dog when he sees another dog on TV.

At times I'd even do that old comedy bit, nodding my head surreptitiously in my wife's direction, rolling my eyes toward her, maybe even pointing behind my other hand... But no. So my strategies evolved. I'd pretend to look at other things in the store — but then I seemed like an expert checking out the merchandise, so I was still the one to address. For a while I'd actually walk up to the counter and turn my back once my wife began to speak. But as she told me later, he just kept looking desperately at the back of my head.

More than once I was ready to grab a shirt-front and growl, "Talk—to—her!" Or scream out, "Didn't anybody see Marisa Tomei in *My Cousin*

Vinny?!” My wife fantasized about taking hold of the man’s jaw and actually turning his face toward her — or chanting the kindergarten teacher’s rhyme, “One, two, three — eyes on me!”

So our basic strategy has evolved even further. These days I tend to remove myself from the whole situation. When we walk into one of those places, my wife says to me — sometimes a bit curtly — “You just go look around!” But I don’t mind; I’m above the macho stuff.

So I idly inspect hammers and drill bits, and then wait for her near the registers. Last time there was another guy waiting too. “What’d you come for?” he asked pleasantly. Another Tim Allen fan? Or might he be a secret know-nothing like me?

I couldn’t take that chance. “Weather stripping,” I said in a knowing voice. “You know — seal those garage doors...”

I wanted this article to make a serious point. But when a term is bandied about as often as “sexism” is these days, it sometimes loses its force. So, as a writer will, I looked for some alternate form of expression in order to re-invigorate the idea — in this case, humor.

Not that there isn’t some natural humor here. I grew up with an absent father and a mother who’d just sit down and take the toaster apart when it was on the fritz. It never occurred to me that I had any responsibilities in that area, and it soon became clear I didn’t have any talent either. My wife is just like my mother, so my dependence on female fix-it artists has continued unabated.

I see humor here to begin with because, though I have a lot of traditional male qualities — I was a very successful football player, for example — my ineptitude as a handy man flies so completely in the face of gender expectations. I suppose the blatant if unconscious sexism my wife keeps running into at Home Depot and elsewhere will always strike me as both funny and serious. Serious because I’ve seen the terrible costs sexism has exacted from us all, and continues to. But funny as well, because the truth of male-female equality is something sexism simply can’t cancel out. Those male clerks incapable of imagining my wife as a fix-it person remind me of the dog whose master has just pretended to throw the Frisbee. The dog looks around in confusion; he simply doesn’t understand. His intellectual limits make

us laugh.

Of course it’s somewhat easier for me to find humor in this than for my wife to. Her response to the clerks’ behavior is a bitterly enunciated “Maddening!” And yet, when she read my article, she laughed. I think it’s because we share the belief that things are getting better — however slowly. At the car dealer’s a few days ago, the sales guy looked at me once or twice, saw I was looking away, saw that my wife had all the information, realized she was leading the delegation, and from that point focused his attention on her.

My wife and I find deep joy in the idea that millions of women, by their very presence in the working world and their expanded definitions of themselves, are already pulling American society toward a better future. So we can laugh — because we know it’s just a matter of time.

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## **The Beauty Myth: Young Women and the Culture of Appearance**

**Nancy C. Unger  
Santa Clara University**

Despite the innumerable ways feminism has liberated me, because I was born in 1956 I will always carry at my core some of the scars inflicted by living in an overtly sexist society during my formative years. It was for that reason that I was especially eager to offer, beginning in 1992, the history course, “Women in American Society.” I looked forward to learning from my young undergraduates what it’s like to grow up in a society free from many of the gender stereotypes imposed upon me as a girl. From that first offering at San Francisco State University to the present, at Santa Clara University, the students in my classes, primarily female, have been young,

bright, and beautiful, bursting with enthusiasm and a confidence I attribute to feminism in general and, in particular, to *Title IX*, the 1972 Civil Rights amendment that prohibits discrimination based on sex in any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. What I have learned from them, however, is that many of the old gender stereotypes that plagued me have been replaced with new cultural imperatives that are just as damaging, if not more so.

My students dutifully read the required materials: primary documents and scholarly articles on pre-Columbian Native American women, early European settlers, enslaved women, etc. They slog through women's contributions to various early wars and social movements. When we get to Victorian sexuality, their body language changes to reflect their increasing interest. They sit up straight, they lean forward. They become increasingly engaged as we move through the 20th century. Then we discuss Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* and the class explodes.

Published in 1991, *The Beauty Myth* asserts that the many successes women enjoyed in the 1970s as a result of the burgeoning feminist movement were effectively countered in the 1980s by the growing dictate that women must endlessly obsess over their personal appearance. In essence, Wolf argues that since women can no longer be legally barred from the boardroom, courtroom, and classroom, their effectiveness can be damaged and their inferior status maintained if they are distracted from the business at hand by an infinite, expensive, and time-consuming quest for impossible physical beauty.

While my male students look puzzled, my female students present endless examples of how this beauty myth consumes their lives. Students who've never contributed to class discussions raise their hands and, invariably, begin their comment with, "The first time I was hospitalized for anorexia..." My female students detail the self-loathing that comes because they haven't the discipline to endure the extreme diet, exercise, and beauty regimes they feel compelled to undertake. When I once asked if this was experienced universally, a lesbian student said to me with some exasperation, "Just because I'm out and overweight, do you think I *don't* say to my partner, 'Does this make me look fat?'"

My students are ashamed of their obsessions

with their appearance. They know they shouldn't starve themselves, shouldn't exercise to the detriment of their health and their studies, and shouldn't berate themselves for not looking like the airbrushed models in the magazines they read so voraciously. The men in the class point out how the myth damages romantic and sexual relationships. "How come," more than one has asked the class, "if beauty is the goal, my girlfriend gets mad at me when I tell her she's beautiful?" "Because," comes the group answer, "everything in society is screaming at her that you're lying."

My students are extraordinarily excited by the liberating notion that they have succumbed to the Beauty Myth not because they are weak individuals, but because, like the generations of women and men before them, they are the targets of powerful social prescriptions. Evidence of the internalization of Victorian sexuality, for example, suddenly makes more sense. History becomes potentially empowering. They leave class committed to throwing off these oppressive behaviors and poisonous thoughts. They return, shaken and perplexed.

They have said to their female housemates, "Let's not do this anymore. Let's not spend hours bemoaning our faults and striving to reach an impossible ideal. Think of the time and money and energy we'll save that we can put to other uses!" Their horrified housemates have rejected such heresy outright. Young women's culture is so bound to the Beauty Myth that most don't know how to proceed without it. Complimenting each other's appearance while bemoaning their own is the currency of my female students' culture. In this self-deprecating exchange, each is established as generous and kind to others, but never stuck up or self-satisfied. They strive to help each other "improve." A tall, thin, exceedingly and undeniably gorgeous blond once explained that even she found her place in this culture by constantly complaining that she is flat-chested while admiring her larger-breasted sisters. The Beauty Myth provides a shared value system that allows for an almost immediate and visceral sisterhood that transcends barriers of race, socioeconomic class, and sexual orientation.

A few years ago, a student about my age expressed his anger when he first saw *The Beauty Myth* on the syllabus. "At the end of a course like this you should be empowering these young women with

readings about reproductive rights and issues, rape and sexual harassment, about any number of key issues, and you've got them reading some pop psychology on beauty!?" I asked him when the course was over if he still thought my decision to include it was a mistake. Like me, he was horrified by how completely the women in the class had identified with the book, and was struck by how it had opened the floodgates of frustration, but also released the potential power of understanding.

The students' response to *The Beauty Myth* never varies; if anything, its intensity has increased since 1992. My initial impression of my female students as strong and confident was not completely false, however. My students tell me that growing up immersed in feminist rhetoric and enjoying equal access to education and other opportunities guaranteed by *Title IX* makes them aware of their many strengths and abilities. In particular, equal access to sports has made a real difference in their lives. The camaraderie, strength, and accomplishments provided by athletics have proven to be among the very few tools sufficiently strong to challenge the power of the Beauty Myth.

I am learning a great deal about the gender-based battles and challenges of this generation compared to those of my own. On the whole, it was easier to be victorious in the battle for equal rights than it is in the one ongoing for the power inherent in genuine self-acceptance. But my female students are fighting their generation's battle, and fighting it hard. They try to talk with their peers about things other than appearance. They recommend my class to others. They quit blaming themselves for their obsessions, and recognize the ads and fads in popular culture that are the most destructive to their self-esteem. However, for the generation that should be benefiting the most from the decline of various forms of gender discrimination, the culture of impossible female beauty — the Beauty Myth — remains powerful.

*See author credit on page 116.* □

**The Next Forum Work-In-Progress Seminar**  
**is on March 12, 2005 when Ken Fuchsman discusses**  
**"Freud's Discovery of the Oedipus Complex."**

## Some Concluding Thoughts from the Perspective of a Male Psychohistorian

Paul H. Elovitz

**Ramapo College and the Psychohistory Forum**

Sigmund Freud, who practiced psychoanalysis primarily with women patients, thought that the great unanswered question was "What does the woman want?" Elsewhere he declared that "anatomy is destiny" and that the "life of adult women is a 'dark continent' for psychology." Despite his bewilderment over the motivation of women, the founder of the psychoanalytic method went well beyond the frustrations of most men since he worked hard to listen to women because his work expresses openness to different explanations. Women, and men who are quite attuned to women, have been explorers into this "dark continent" of the female psyche.

While welcoming all contributors, and anonymously sending their papers to our referees, we especially sought women authors for this issue. Indeed, I felt rather ambivalent when asked to write a concluding essay for this special issue: shouldn't a woman be writing it? Perhaps. But there are things that need to be said from a historical, personal, and psychoanalytic perspective, and each reader can decide the value of this man's comments.

Our authors have done a fine job providing information on and analysis of the life experience of women. There is the historical perspective in the Introduction by Nancy Unger, who uses the wonderful example of Belle Case La Follette, a woman whose consciousness is transformed from holding the ego-ideal of total service to men and finding her place in the world through her husband and children, to becoming, within a few years' time, a feminist advocate of women finding their own way in the world. Included are the stories of an earlier generation of women like Edryce Reynolds and Jean Cottam, who made their way as professional women — perhaps it's no accident that divorce was a part of their journeys in the course of pursuing their goals in a world of men.

Kristine Larsen has felt like something of an outsider in the world of physics yet her career has progressed notably and she maintains a strong sense of her own femininity and individuality even if she

keeps her tattoos but not her pierced eyebrow hidden from the professional world. Her article helps answer the question of why there are not more women in science. On January 14, 2005 Harvard President Lawrence H. Summers suggested innate, biological differences as he tried to goad women into pursuing math and science — at least that's how he justified his "foot-in-mouth" difficulties. However, there is no need to search for genetic differences between the sexes when there are such obvious attitudinal and behavioral reasons: Larsen describes the "culture of physics" as inhospitable to women.

Role reversals cause considerable confusion in society while offering new options for it. They also take some pressure off men to be the sole family provider, protector, and home repair expert. Tim Myers provides some humor in his description of the reactions of traditional males to his wife's handling of home repair needs. House husbanding may be much more common now than it was in the world of our parents where the stay at home husband was seen as a failure, but it still can be very hard on the egos of those involved. For example, when I recently met the husband of a younger colleague who had just joined our faculty after getting her doctoral degree in California, he said he "just" stayed home with the three children. Conversation revealed that he was also working nights as a watchman to help support the family economy. To me this had the same ring as the comments from the large number of women I have met through the years who have informed me that they did not work. As mundane as this may sound, further inquiry made it clear that they raised children, ran households, provided essential support systems for husbands, organized school and community activities, cared for sick relatives, and usually had part-time jobs. Despite their lack of self-confidence, the experience of these women usually made them wonderful workers. Their male counterparts now face a similar struggle to establish a sense of self-worth.

Despite Nancy Unger's valuable references to the issue of women as superwomen, the dilemma of the modern woman who is told she can achieve everything in contradictory roles is otherwise not sufficiently covered in our issue. I understand the excitement occasioned by new possibilities being opened to women, but from observing and listening to them — women and gays seem most interested in gender courses — I am also aware of the cost. In teaching

"Childhood and Youth in History," "Sex Roles in Society," "Leaders, Passion, and Success," and "Manhood," I sometimes feel sad for young women who want to "have it all" and "do it all" without realizing the price involved. For most, there are not enough hours in the day or enough physical, mental, and emotional energy to achieve these things, especially if they pursue goals that usually require dichotomous attributes, values, and ways of thinking and acting. To be "superwoman" — perfect professional, perfect wife, perfect mother and daughter, to have all of the wonderful attributes of women while succeeding in the world of men, which is governed by very different attributes — is an impossibility even for most high-achieving women. Indeed, I know some talented high-achieving career women who have dropped out of the "rat race" to spend time with their children because they found more satisfaction in this than in focusing on their professions.

First Lady Laura Bush, with her new mission to help young men and boys at risk do as well as women in school and work, while avoiding addictions and gangs, is doing a worthwhile thing. But it should be noted that she is very much in the pattern of the woman who stands behind a man, that of woman-as-enabler. Nineteenth-century authors such as Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), who revelled in writing about high-achieving men, often gave credit to the woman behind the man. Like St. Augustine, Smiles believed that it was the mother who made the man. In the great, 20th-century age of the male-dominated corporatization of industry, in which women were relegated to the roles of wife, mistress, secretary, schoolteacher, nurse, daughter, sister, factory worker, maid, or prostitute, it was women who literally enabled men to look good: men could concentrate on pursuing success in the world of business because they had women buying their clothes, dressing them, and caring for their personal appearance, as well as managing their social lives and maintaining connections essential to upward professional mobility. The value of a wife as a "support system" making great success possible is what some high-achieving, successful professional women later came to realize and talk about when they said what they needed most was a "wife." Of course, successful female professionals also face the envy — and sometimes the sabotage — of secretaries and wives, who see them as a threat rather than an inspiration.

Only when American women and men are

willing to accept women as capable chief executives in their own right, rather than as wives of presidents who are content to pursue such crusades as literacy, will the U.S. be ready for the first woman president. Much of the country could not tolerate the Clintons' notion of a co-presidency. Similarly, in the 2004 election, Teresa Heinz Kerry was not well received as a strong, outspoken woman who refused to speak in a politically correct fashion or to abandon the name of her deceased first husband. It has long been my conviction that the first woman "allowed" to be president will be tougher than any of her male predecessors. (See my "America's Second Woman President" in the September 2000 issue, 7(2): 69-70.) It seems to be necessary to society that the first generation of women who run countries must be tested by war to prove that they are tougher than their male allies and political rivals, as were Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher, two women who made it to the top without the benefit of being the daughter or wife of a political leader. The relationship between women and war is an important subject. In the long run, the female "dark continent" is inclined to be less violent than the male "dark continent" because women are more prone to talk than to fight. Some of them may remember the birth pangs they suffered bringing into the world the lives lost in warfare.

Historically, men have not had much interest in young children or the early years of life. Males have taken pride at the sight of the newborn and briefly held it before handing it over to a wife, nanny, or wet nurse until it reached an age of interest to the male psyche — typically at puberty, though historically sometimes as young as six or seven years of age (the beginning of latency). By the late 1930s some psychoanalysts had begun to get past Freud's focus on the Oedipus complex to deal with the reality of the pre-Oedipal world, in which men are controlled by women more so than at any other time in their lives. This change in perspective was brought about in part by a number of brilliant women psychoanalysts, such as Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, Freda Fromm-Reichmann, and Helene Deutsch.

In practicing child and adolescent therapy for a number of years, I found that it was taken as a given that boys had a harder time growing up than girls. Girls could identify with their mothers, who normally have been a fairly consistent presence within the home, while boys had to identify with fathers who mysteriously went off to some unimagin-

able office, foundry, or other job that the boy could not readily visualize. This was in sharp contrast to the usual historical situation of boys seeing their fathers go off to the fields close by the home and joining them to assist in the harvest as soon as they were able. Carol Gilligan (see our March 2004 issue, 10(4): 121-131) has written, rather brilliantly, on issues of male, and especially female, identification, and, in the case of boys, dis-identification.

In the past, young children were often kept within the woman's section(s) of the home, or harem, until they reached the age of about five. Though in England and America there may not have been harems, a holdover of men's lack of interest in young children is revealed in early 20th-century photos that show boys as old as four or five in dresses as a reflection of their being within the domain of their mothers as well as the ease of toilet training in these clothes. Men often spend the rest of their lives demonstrating that they do not need the women who gave them life and nurtured them long enough to be prepared for the world of men outside of the home. The male inclination to say "We don't need women" is a denial of ever having been small and weak, and of the desire to return to the joys of being cared for.

In my experience as a historian, man, and psychoanalyst, the basis of much male denigration of women is the need to deny the dependency, weakness, and female domination of the early years of life. A well-educated and often generous, yet "rough around the edges" man comes to mind. Along with many men of his era, he demeaned women in general, saying that they were "just holes [vaginas], if you turn them upside down they are all the same." With other men, he shook hands hard to demonstrate that he was stronger than they were; he sometimes hugged women until it hurt: squeezing an outspoken older cousin of his wife so hard that he literally broke several of her ribs. He married a sheltered woman a decade younger than he was and kept her "pregnant and down on the farm [the suburbs]" while he worked quite long and hard building a business. He left for work before dawn. When he returned home, he said hello to his wife and children, ate dinner, and fell asleep immediately in front of the television set, only awakening long enough to go to bed. Meanwhile, his wife began to feel restive as she developed a sense of herself as a separate person. The response of this powerful man, who claimed women were interchangeable, when she brought up the idea of di-

voiced, was to collapse with all of the symptoms of a heart attack. He had to be rushed to the emergency room because, unconsciously, the threatened loss of attachment to a woman “broke his heart.” This happened several times before he “hardened his heart,” accepted divorce, and cut his former wife out of his life. His tough, “hard as nails” demeanor concealed a desperate need for a woman. With his second wife, he appears to have dropped his superior, denigrating manner and paid some more attention to her needs. He has a more stable marriage with a woman who appears to be more realistic about the man she married than his first wife had been.

In addition to the denial of the need for women on an individual level, all-male societies of boys' clubs, sports teams, armies, and so forth, are further “proof” to men that women aren't necessary. Of course, the locker room talk in these groups focuses on sexual triumph over women — men do love being on top in the struggle of the sexes. In most societies the “dark continent” of man's desire to subordinate, dominate, impregnate, use, rape, and defile women is protected from exploration by a common wall of denial. An important element of the Islamic fundamentalist revulsion toward the West is based not simply on satellite television images of scantily clad women drinking Coca-Cola and eating fast food. Rather, the threat of women becoming men's equals and bosses revives fears of male dependency on women. Western presentations of men and women as equals in society — even in images as seemingly innocuous as that of a woman driving a car — serve to dangerously blur the distinctions between gender roles. Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), an intellectual father of the modern Islamic fundamentalist movement, was an Egyptian who came to America in the late 1940s. In a town in Colorado, he had no problem attending a Christian church service. Though to his mind the minister was not properly enlightened as to how to worship God, Qutb remembered that Muhammad had told his flock to tolerate the two other monotheistic religions. However, Sayyid Qutb could not tolerate the church dance that followed, in which men and women held each other in their arms. This violated a fundamental tenet of Islamic puritanism and his sense of the appropriate relationship between the sexes. Incidentally, Muhammad himself seemed quite comfortable with women, and far more concern for women's rights is expressed in the Qur'an than in either the Old or New Testament (Subbush Inamdar,

*Muhammad and the Rise of Islam: The Rise of Group Identity*, 2001).

Mohamed Atta (1968-2001) is a good example of a Muslim who lived in the Western world, where he was quite uncomfortable with the relationship of the sexes. In his last will and testament, this leader of the September 11 suicide attacks on Manhattan specified that his body, in being prepared for burial, should not be touched (and therefore “defiled”) by the hands of a woman. Beyond the fantasy that there would be enough body left to be defiled by a woman's hands after the fuel-laden plane crashed into the World Trade Center, is the reality of Atta's unconscious desire to be cared for by a woman. Despite the protests of his father, a Cairo doctor who despises Americans and the West, Mohamed, until he went to college, would sit upon his mother's lap. To me, Atta is an example of male counter-dependency impulses being manifested in hypermasculinity and its subordination of women.

Western men like to denigrate their Arab counterparts for keeping women under the veil or having them walk steps behind them. Arranged marriages, honor killings, economic dependence, and restrictions on education and public appearance outside of the family are concepts that the West has, for the most part, left behind. Yet the same desire to keep women subservient exists in Western society. However much “modern,” educated Western men like to denounce others for their subservient treatment of women, they share the same impulses, though they carry them out in different ways. For example, in the hierarchies of power and status women are typically paid less money and kept in roles making them subservient to men. Rita Ransohoff (1916-2003), a longstanding psychoanalyst/psychologist member of our intellectual group, wrote about this cross-cultural phenomenon in her last book, *Fear and Envy: Why Men Need to Control and Dominate Women* (2001).

Women's liberation is a process involving not simply equal employment opportunities and pay, property rights, equal educational opportunities, and laws prohibiting discrimination, but also transformation within the minds of women, so that they are willing — and able — to question that which they have observed, been taught, and been rewarded for while growing up.

Lauren Gargani, a student at Ramapo Col-

lege, has noted that despite outward efforts to steer girls and young women toward leadership roles and the self-esteem necessary for aggressive competition in the workplace, there remains an abundance of poor role models for girls, and gender stereotypes still prevail in the playroom. She cites the ever-popular Disney "princess" films as prime examples of overwhelmingly passive female "heroines," whose greatest lesson to girls is that beauty is worth more than independence or intelligence. Nancy Unger, in her essay "The Beauty Myth," does a good job of bringing this to our attention, and points out (in personal correspondence) that in the popular *Shrek* series, intelligence and independence take precedence to beauty, though she acknowledges that this might be "the exception which proves the rule." The collective standard of perfection for female appearance is not merely time-consuming; it inhibits women from becoming involved in the rough-and-tumble competitive world. Men, in contrast, are much more concerned with pushing to victory rather than looking good, which turns out to be invaluable training for success in business and politics.

The female inclination to defer to men is reflected in a variety of ways, even in those who have moved beyond the home to the competitive workplace environment. Why do women feel so much pressure to be caring, nurturing, and considerate of others as their less talented male counterparts often walk briskly past them to the top positions in society? I'm reminded of a brilliant young colleague, who did some editing for this publication. After realizing how beautifully she wrote and edited, I asked if she might want to help out. She said "yes" and amazed me with her talent and ability. Though I greatly appreciated and was delighted to have the help, before long I "looked a gift horse in the mouth." Was she doing this because she genuinely wanted to do it, or was she having trouble saying "no" to an older colleague? After I got past her polite "glad to help you," I soon came to the not surprising conclusion that she indeed preferred doing her own publications, though she seemed to need my "permission" to say that. The Texas-born, traditional female secretary we had at our college years ago, who referred to her boss as "my office husband," was a marvelous facilitator for the work of her superiors. Though she loved her job and would have preferred staying in New Jersey where her adult children and grandchildren lived, when her husband, whom she did not seem to espe-

cially like, retired and decided he wanted to move to Oregon, she dutifully and tearfully said her "goodbyes."

It does not seem easy to be a woman. Is it because in part they have had to live with the results — namely, loss of virginity, and consequent pregnancy and childbirth — of sexual experimentation, as well as the threat of ostracism from society as a result of sexual behavior? For men, sexual activity has been proof of masculinity, and the likelihood of negative consequences has historically been far less than for women. Women limit their intake of liquids, and food for that matter, in ways that would be onerous to most men and struggle with body image to an extent that is unimaginable to most men (for the latter see Joan Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*, 1998).

According to the Old Testament, "the Lord sayeth, be fruitful and multiply." My former suburban students certainly are not listening. I am reminded of a massive volume called *The Fear of Being a Woman: A Theory of Maternal Destructiveness* (1964), in which Joseph C. Rheingold describes an enormous number of clinical cases involving women struggling with, and far too often overcome by, the fear of replicating their mothers' role when bringing a child into the world. I have sometimes observed this painful phenomenon in the struggles of women in my own psychoanalytic practice caseload. For example, a vivacious 38-year-old mother of three dreamt the night before the birth of her first child that her precious baby was in a cottage with her mother and she was locked out. Her manic bouts would result in hospitalizations during which her children would be left with her mother and she was locked out of their lives for periods of time — just as her dream foretold. Is the unconscious fear of stepping into the role of their mother by becoming a mother one of the factors in why our current generation of well-educated, prosperous, suburban women are having so few children?

Woman's liberation is both an internal and an external process. The internal process is about the intrapsychic process of a woman freeing herself from what she saw and was usually taught about the role of women. This internal liberation involves a girl or woman deciding what she wants. It means filtering through the impulses, messages, and social programming she had previously accepted as a given. Liber-

ating herself from the constraints of her first and primary role model is not an easy process. In "Remembering My Mother," Judith Harris provides valuable insights on intergenerational grandmother-mother-daughter transmissions and the common lack of clear boundaries between mothers and daughters and the lifelong force of these messages in the psyche. Indeed, part of the struggle results from the fact that liberation from early prohibitions appears to be a betrayal of the teachings of she who gave life itself. (The equivalent experience in a man is often the repulsion he feels at the thought of his country — to many emotionally experienced as the "motherland" — being attacked and betrayed.) The second, external process of liberation involves breaking loose from the constraints of society: the laws that treated women as property, rather than as potential owners of property, that enslaved women to their fathers, brothers, and husbands, and made them subjects, rather than citizens. This involves breaking down barriers to the education and employment open to men. Such external liberation often means going counter to the forces of family, spouse, and society. The price people have to pay is great. The external and internal processes of liberation are not easy.

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) is a wonderful example of a woman who was an important change agent because of her own personality as well as because of the new ideas and opportunities available to her. Diane Jacobs in *Her Own Woman: The Life of Mary Wollstonecraft* (2001) provides valuable data for the psychohistorical understanding of this feminist pioneer. As the second child and oldest daughter of a middle-class family with a doting, alcoholic father who was gradually losing the family fortune, she deeply resented that her elder brother was breast-fed and she was not, that her elder brother was formally educated while she had to rely primarily on informal and self-education, that he had property rights and she did not, that upon the death of their father he was the head of the family by virtue of his gender and she was not despite her greater capabilities, concern, and competence, and that he had a career while the only careers open to her as a genteel woman were companion to an older woman, or as a governess, or as a teacher of girls. She tried each occupation. Each paid poorly, and was seen as temporary — preparatory to marriage.

Mary was the type of girl, and then woman, who had no choice but to speak out — she could not

keep her mouth shut. As a teenager and young woman, she stood in front of her mother's door, blocking her drunken father — who would not hit his beloved daughter — thus preventing him from physically abusing his wife. When a married younger sister had a psychotic episode during a postpartum depression and found her spouse (a good husband by the standards of the time) to be totally repulsive and impossible to live with, Mary stood by her sister. She could make a home for her sister and fight for the right for the mother to have possession of her child, but could not change the laws and customs leaving the child in the custody of the father — the baby soon died from the lack of a mother's care. Similarly, Mary Wollstonecraft suffered grievously at the death of her best friend as a result of childbirth — a fate she herself would suffer. In her early books she wrote about the situation of women and the upbringing of children in a manner that reflected the mindset of an Enlightenment woman who had not yet questioned the basic assumptions of her era. Her way of viewing the world would soon change dramatically.

The French Revolution (1789-1799) was the thunderbolt to the consciousness of many, including Mary. When Edmund Burke denounced the Revolution and then Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*, she answered with her own *Vindication of the Rights of Man* (1790). She went to Paris as a revolutionary fellow-travelling journalist, eager to throw off the bonds of oppression on humankind. While standing up for the rights of man she also insisted on the rights of women, however much "liberated men" did not want to hear this. Mary came to see marriage as a form of legal prostitution and enslavement. In Paris, she fell madly in love with the Revolution and an American by whom she became pregnant: for her free love meant the equivalent of a totally devoted marriage without the bonds of legal marital "servitude." As her lover traveled more and pulled away from this strong woman whom he seems to have experienced as somewhat engulfing, Mary's response came in the form of two suicide attempts. On one occasion as he literally walked away without looking back at her, she threw herself into London's icy Thames River, from which she was unhappily saved by some boatmen. The disconnect between Mary's dreams of true equality and sharing between the sexes and the reality of her own desperate emotional needs and the standards of her times was enor-

mous. Fortunately, in the radical thinker William Godwin, she found a man with whom she shared not passion but a like-minded devotion to equality for men and women alike. Her early death left the world with the book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), an older daughter who committed suicide upon learning that Godwin was not her biological father, and an unhappy younger daughter who struggled with an unloving stepmother and pined at her birth mother's gravesite, dreaming of becoming as great a writer as the mother she never knew.

The death of Mary Wollstonecraft in childbirth was no accident. This path-breaking feminist was killed by an avoidable infection following the birth of her second child: childbirth fever was caused by the unwashed hands of a doctor who removed the afterbirth. This was a monstrous, pervasive, yet avoidable cause of women's death until the later 19th-century in Western society. It was only when doctors started consistently washing their hands and women stopped giving birth on an almost yearly basis, as well as being worked to death in child- and husband care, that Western women stopped dying before their male counterparts. It is no accident that girls, from birth, are more durable than boys and develop earlier in life. This had to be, in order for women to pass through the Darwinian type of struggle that the conditions of their lives inflicted upon them.

Among the reasons that enabled the teenage Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851) to literally dream up and write *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) were her experiences of childbirth, childcare, the death of an unnamed infant child, and the dream that her dead baby had come back to life. The creation of life without the birth process which killed her mother and brought pain and uncertainty to her own life was something far more likely to be on her mind than in the consciousness of her brilliant male literary companions Lord Byron and Percy Shelley in the contest as to who could come up with the best ghost story during a rainy June on a Swiss lake (see my "Nightmare, Dreams, and Creativity," in Paul Elovitz, ed., *Historical and Psychological Inquiry*, 1990, pp. 362-369).

The transformation of sex roles in America in my lifetime has been enormous. The unchallenged male chauvinism of my post-WW II childhood, just like the legal racial segregation of the same period,

has been confronted and is in retreat. Women are a part of society as never before. They have far more doors open to them, far more pressures on them, and far less certainty as to what they will do with their lives. The French may say *vive la différence*, yet throughout the globe, America represents a confusion of sex roles. This causes widespread bafflement, especially in certain areas of the Islamic world controlled by men devoted to the male subordination of women. To increase their options in whatever part of the world they live, women must undergo an intrapsychic transformation and their societies must allow economic, legal, and social changes. I wish them well in creating a world different and better than the one into which they were born.

In my essay I have endeavored to bring historical, personal, and psychohistorical perspectives to the understanding of the preceding essays. I want to conclude with a personal note. I marvel at the transformation in sex roles and rights in my own family and lifetime. How did we change from the world of arranged marriages and women-as-subservient-to-men to the present ideals of our educated elite? From the world of my grandmother, who was born in Eastern Europe and was married prior to World War I by arrangement to a man she saw as well below her social class because she was considered an "old maid" as she approached her mid-20s? She may never have liked her husband, and, in fact, did not share her bed with him for the last 35 years of their lives, but she remained a loyal wife because no other option appeared open to her; she had crossed an ocean to America in emigrating, but she was unwilling to cross the intra-psychic ocean which divorce would have required. Grandma may not have provided "spousal privileges," but she otherwise was a wifely caretaker and her spouse reflected his attachment to her by dying just months after she did.

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**Work-In-Progress Paper  
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## Book Review

### Healing Pain through Writing

Evelyn Sommers

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*Review of Judith Harris, Signifying Pain: Constructing and Healing the Self through Writing. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003. Paperback ISBN 0791456846, xv, 304 pages, \$27.95. This book is part of the SUNY Series in Psychoanalysis and Culture, edited by Henry Sussman.*

For decades I have carried out my own writing to heal, journal writing, in times of angst when I needed not a confidante but a reflective catharsis. This personal writing has yielded a record that has, with re-reading, alerted me to painful cycles that were in need of change. As I approached Judith Harris' *Signifying Pain: Constructing and Healing the Self through Writing*, I was already one of the converted. Needing no particular convincing, I took up the book while vacationing on the Amalfi coast. I was buoyed by heart-stopping views of the Bay of Salerno and the surrounding mountains, a garden elegant with roses and calla lilies, visits from a curious cat, and the distant notes of a flute. In this healing atmosphere, I began to read about Plath, Gilman, Keats, Kenyon and others, and their poetic journeys through pain.

Harris' premise is that poetry writing is like psychoanalysis in that it can facilitate both healing and a way of constructing a self. The written word is the material and the act of writing is akin to the process of psychotherapy that involves uncovering unconscious material as well as resistance to that process. Dr. Harris has assembled a series of essays into chapters that consist of "literary representations of psychic pain" and discussions of "pedagogical ramifications of using and teaching personal writing in academic classes." Harris says she did not intend to link the chapters but explains that the authors she cites are linked by "their willingness to expose themselves to the disorder of everyday life to make from it some meaningful order in a calculated art form" (p. xi). The book embraces two tensions: the academic in relation to the personal world and Harris' own journey — both academic and personal — through psy-

choanalysis.

Harris says that "(T)o heal, the poet or patient must learn to be present to the painful material she would ordinarily avoid" (p. 181). She challenges herself to do the same by including a chapter and afterword that describe her personal struggles with pain. About the process, she says, "Writers who write about states of mind, as well as being, do not avoid their own pain, but seek to signify it for others, as they do for themselves, and survive it" (p. 36).

Harris' personal story is very important to the book and to her work with students writing about pain. She is a woman and writer who has experienced her own journey through mental illness and who has fought breast cancer. Still, it seems she had difficulty exposing herself because, when in Chapter 13 she reveals some of her history of pain, she asks the reader not to consider the story of her mental illness to be confessional writing but rather a frank discussion of depressive anxiety. She defines confessional writing as a type of talking cure and a way of clearing repressed or traumatic material. I sense her struggle as she exempts her writing from that sphere, even as she discloses pain-filled parts of her life.

Harris has organized her book into three sections. Part I, titled "Speaking Pain: Women, Psycho-

#### Call for Book Reviews

Avner Falk, *Fratricide in the Holy Land: A Psychoanalytic View of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Madison: Terrace Books of the University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. ISBN 0-299-20250-X, pp. i-vii, 271, cloth, \$35.00

Jay Y. Gonen, *Yahweh Versus Yahweh: The Enigma of Jewish History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005. ISBN 0-299-20330-1, pp. i-xii, 183, cloth, \$29.95

Jerome A. Winer, James William Anderson, and Christine C. Kieffer, eds., *The Annual of Psychoanalysis, Vol. 32: Psychoanalysis and Women*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, [www.analyticpress.com/books/421-2.html](http://www.analyticpress.com/books/421-2.html), 2004. 286 pages.

**Reviews of 500-1500 words**  
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analysis, and Writing," includes essays on the healing effects of writing about pain in which she focusses on some women's resistance to psychoanalysis as it embodies patriarchal, oppressive figures. Harris says that the authors she discusses have "used writing as a therapeutic outlet, although that may not have been their intention." Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Sylvia Plath, who are featured in Chapters 2 and 4, were attempting to get out from under the shadow of patriarchal figures in their lives. Harris says that Plath was determined to "mine the quarry of her unconscious and get to the root of her anguish." As Harris noted, "not all personal writing is healing or assimilating for the psyche" (p. 12). It seems that this was true for Plath who, despite knowing well how to signify pain, and despite her attempts to heal through both psychoanalysis and writing, succumbed to suicide. Yet in her attempts to heal herself, she left behind a rich validating legacy for her readers.

As for Gilman, her health improved when she broke free of the isolation of her bedroom, to which she had been assigned as a cure for her depression. But was it the content of her writing or the act of freeing herself to do what she needed to do, that relieved the depression? Harris says that Gilman "was forthcoming about the therapeutic effects of her writing 'The Yellow Wallpaper'" (p. 8) and was one of the first to consider her writing to be therapeutic. Gilman's resolve to break free of her bedroom was probably galvanized through her writing.

Harris also writes about the case of Freud's patient, Dora, whom some say Freud pressured into accepting his interpretation. In discussing Dora, Gilman, and Plath, Harris is sensitive to the criticisms about psychoanalysis from the women themselves and from contemporary writers.

She proceeds with her analyses through the lenses of Freudian and Lacanian theory into Part II, "Soul-Making: Conflict and the Construction of Identity." This is an exploration of aspects of the construction of the self. Harris discusses the use of language as mask to give voice to something the poet could not express as herself and the notion of a mirror image as a model for self-identity. She discusses John Keats' adaptation of the myth of Cupid and Psyche and the cultural issues evident in the poetry of Michael Harper. She delves into the poetry of Jane Kenyon wherein Kenyon expresses her belief in the comforting presence of God as death approaches.

She explores the dimensions and layering of Kenyon's poetic voice as the poet grapples with the falling light of her own life.

In Part III, Harris switches her focus to her work as a teacher of creative writing and explores the theory and practice of this work. She says that her guiding principle for collecting the essays has been personal, not theoretical. She wants to discover what it is that links her isolated experience to that of others and she wants to reconcile her "history as a former patient with my [sic] work as a reader of Freud." She says she used her study of psychoanalytic theory to rise above her own condition. She notes her changing relationship to psychoanalysis over time, defending psychoanalysis in the end, saying that despite errors along the way it has opened dialogue for examining cultural and political issues. She says, "Social problems have psychological roots and all intervention begins with examining those roots" (p. 251). Her linking of social aspects with psychological trauma is essential, since trauma is the product of a social world that supports and promotes notions of power of a few over many.

Dr. Harris is a thoughtful and insightful scholar of literature and psychoanalysis, and relates her thoughts on the intersection of them with eloquence. She also has a personal story to tell that supports and furthers her thesis with an immediacy that academic writing, alone, cannot always accomplish.

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## Bulletin Board

The next **Psychohistory Forum WORK-IN-PROGRESS SATURDAY SEMINAR** will be on **March 12, 2005** when **Ken Fuchsman** (University of Connecticut) will present "**Freud's Discovery of the Oedipus Complex.**" On **April 2, 2005** **Anna Geifman** (Boston University) will present "**Profile of the Modern Terrorist,**" from her forthcoming book, *Death will be Their God*. **FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES:** Florian Galler has advised us that the **German Society for Psychohistorical Research** convention on "Fundamentalism in Politics, Econ-

omy, and Religion" will be March 11-13, 2005 in Zurich, Switzerland. Among the presenters will be Arno Gruen, Joe Berghold, Ludwig Janus, Peter Juengst, Winfried Kurth, and Juha Siltala. The convention language will be German. For further information visit [www.switzerland.net/Pw106775/programm.pdf](http://www.switzerland.net/Pw106775/programm.pdf). The **International Psychohistorical Association (IPA)** meets at Fordham University on June 8-10, 2005 and the **International Society for Political Psychology (ISPP)**, in Toronto, Canada, on July 3-6, 2005. At the ISPP, **David Beisel, Donald Carveth, Paul Elovitz, Ken Fuchsman, Anna Geifman, Bill Myers, Jerry Piven, and Jacques Szaluta** will be among the presenters on the two specifically psychohistorical panels. **CONGRATULATIONS AND NOTES OF INTEREST: Geoffrey Cocks' *The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History, and the Holocaust* (2004) was named an International Book of the Year in the December *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS). See the September 2004, Vol. 11 No. 2, interview, "Geoffrey Cocks: Historian of Film and Nazi Germany," for information on the author and the book. In May, Professor Cocks will be in Poland directing Albion College's Holocaust Studies Service-Learning Project in Wroclaw, which is helping to restore the New (1905) Jewish Cemetery there. **Flora Hogman** will be offering the course, "The Holocaust: An Evolving Memory," in the New York University Program in the Humanities. **Professor Jui-Sung Yang** of the Department of History at Chengchi National University in Taiwan has ordered all the back issues of *Clio's Psyche* in preparation for integrating psychohistory into some of his graduate courses. He has a strong interest in the issue of victimhood in the formation of national identity. **Nancy Unger** has accepted an invitation to speak in the Wisconsin capitol building at the celebration of Bob La Follette's 150th birthday. Our appreciation to our Forum meeting hosts **Mary Lambert**, as well as **Connalee and Lee Shneidman**. **OUR THANKS:** To our members and subscribers for the support that makes *Clio's Psyche* possible. To Benefactors Herbert Barry, Ralph Colp, and Mary Lambert; Patrons David Beisel, Peter Loewenberg, Peter Petschauer, H. John Rogers, and Jacques Szaluta; Sustaining Members C. Frederick (Fred) Alford and David Lotto; Supporting Members Connalee/Lee Shneidman, and Hanna Turken; and Members Michael Britton, Alberto Fergusson, and Richard Harrison. Our appreciation for this special issue to Guest Co-editors **Bob Lentz** and **Nancy Unger**, and to Advisors **Nancy Kobrin** and **Margery Quackenbush**. Our**

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**Call for Papers**  
**Teaching Psychohistory,**  
**Political Psychology,**  
**or Psychohistorically**  
**Special Feature, December 2005**

Some possible approaches to this topic include:

- Your Experience Teaching Psychohistory/ Psychobiography/Political Psychology/ or a Psychohistorical Component in a Course
- Teaching Case Studies and Theory
- The Dynamics of Online Pedagogy
- Resistances in Learning Psychohistory
- The Psychology of Home Schooling
- Interviews on Teaching with Professor/ Authors on Pedagogy: Beisel, Eichholz, Elovitz, Illick, Loewenberg, Renshon, Strozier, et al
- An Analysis and Survey of Current and Past Psychohistory Teaching
- Teaching Psychohistory in Around the World
- Covering Controversial Issues
- Adult Education/Elderhostel Instruction
- Your Experience with Psychological Insight into Subjects Such as Death and Dying, the Holocaust and German History, Trauma, War and Peace, and Women's Studies
- Teaching the Life Cycle in the Tradition of Erik Erikson
- A Pedagogical Bibliography
- A Collection of Syllabi

**Articles of 500-1500 words, due October 1**

These and Longer Articles May be Used in a Possible Book on the Subject

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