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Psychoanalysis and the Postmodern Impulse: Knowing and Being Since Freud's Psychology by Barnaby B. Barratt. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press. Pp. xvi + 262. $38.50.

Barnaby Barratt's book appears at an inauspicious—or perhaps it would be better to say untimely—moment. Just when many leading intellectuals are calling for a return to humanism and there is an increasing consensus that the present critical age is one of "post-theory," Barratt resolutely informs us that the modern era, which has held sway for the past four centuries, is built on "crumbling foundations" and in "an irreversible process of collapse" (xi), and holds aloft the banner of postmodernism. Although it would be rash to infer that the waning of the fashion for postmodernism constitutes a decisive argument against its validity—any more than its hegemony during the past two decades could have been counted as proof in its favor—Barratt's assumption that the cultural wind is blowing in only one direction does not inspire confidence in his abilities as a weatherman.

Psychoanalysis and the Postmodern Impulse is in many ways a remarkable book, and although I began to read it with distaste and skepticism, I came away strongly impressed by its sweep and rigor. Barratt writes with uncommon passion and conviction, and his case that psychoanalysis has at its root a radical inspiration similar to that of Derridean deconstruction is certainly one that can and should be made. Part of what makes Barratt's book distinctive is its idiosyncratic style, which initially struck me as pompous and jargon-ridden, but I grew increasingly to accept it as an appropriate vehicle for conveying his argument and to admire for its ability to express complex and difficult ideas with clarity if not ease.

The entire work, it must be said, is extremely abstract. It amounts to a *sui generis* treatise of psychoanalytic philosophy seeking to prove "not only that life is composed of different dimensionalities of meaningfulness—semiosis and desire—but also that this ontic composition is formed by the inherent and unsurpassable contradictoriness between these manifest and immanifest dimensionalities" (46). (This sentence, with its preference for the coined word "immanifest" over the more common "latent," provides a representative specimen of Barratt's prose.) Semiosis and desire subtend Barratt's guiding polarity of "knowing" and "being," and it is in his view the great achievement of Freud's discovery of free association to have exhibited the inescapable contradiction between these facets of human experience.

The abstruseness of Barratt's concerns and the density of his style make it seem unlikely that *Psychoanalysis and the Postmodern Impulse* is destined to reach a wide audience. It is difficult to imagine that many of his colleagues in the International Psycho-Analytic Association, for example, will be up to the challenge of scaling Barratt's prose. The book contains only the sparest of clinical vignettes and is entirely unrelieved by literary examples of any kind. Still, Barratt's principal readership will almost certainly be professional students of literature, and for those of a postmodern bent his combination of an original argument with a guided tour through the history of philosophy—in which Hegel figures centrally, and there is likewise a trenchant critique of Lacan—is bound to prove heady and exhilarating. It is one of the irritants of Barratt's style that his references are almost invariably not to specific page

numbers in the works he mentions, but simply to the works themselves, and even anthologies with many different contributors are cited globally by the name of the editor. (The name of Irigaray is always misspelled "Iragaray.") Nonetheless, Barratt is learned, and his accounts of complex issues in the history of ideas and the positions of individual thinkers are reliable and authoritative.

My own orientation in psychoanalysis, which is humanistic and in the tradition of object relations, is antipodal to Barratt's, and he would have no difficulty in disposing of me as one who has renounced the essence of the psychoanalytic discovery. Naturally, I am reluctant to accept this characterization, and the sense that my own position is under attack causes me to respond by emphasizing what I take to be flaws in Barratt's thought and presentation. These include, above all, a tendency to rigid polarization between good and bad forms of psychoanalysis and everything else. He signals this proclivity in the preface, where he distinguishes "between psychoanalytic process as the revolutionary science of discourse and systematized 'psychoanalysis' as a normalized and normalizing doctrine" (xii), and establishes the convention of referring to the type of psychoanalysis he dislikes in quotation marks. Now, there may be much truth in Barratt's indictment and validity to his distinction between psychoanalysis as a system and a process, but I submit that for him to reify it as he does runs the risk of simply reinscribing what he calls the "totalitarianism" of the modernist "masterdiscourse" that allegedly "excludes or forecloses any otherness that is not its own, the otherness of the undesignated and undesignatable" (166).

The same penchant for either/or thinking surfaces in Barratt's reiterated contrast between (bad, orthodox) "right-mindedness" and (good, subversive) "left-mindedness," where the denunciation of "the illusion of a self-critique" in the "analytico-referential episteme" that "gives us one right-minded way to think or speak and renders all else impossible" (114–15) is unmitigated by any inkling of the hubristic self-righteousness that afflicts his own formulations. With inadvertent irony, Barratt insists that "in analytico-referential thinking, dichotomies prevail" (102) and underscores in his conclusion that "always against the subversive implications of Freud's discovery, such 'psychoanalysis' refuses to interrogate its own assumptions" (221). But where has Barratt shunned dichotomies or interrogated *his* own assumptions?

The culmination of Barratt's assault on humanism is his unfortunate assertion that its coordinates "lead necessarily to the extermination of genuine otherness, to the death camps, to the rape of women and children, to the ruthless exploitation of human and natural resources, to the oppression of minorities and the third world, and to the technological holocaust" (111). I do not mean to minimize the contradictions that have haunted Western humanism from the Greeks to the present day; Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* eloquently anatomizes our anguished legacy as Americans of "living in a nation of people who *decided* that their world view would combine agendas for individual freedom *and* mechanisms for devastating racial oppression" (*Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992], xiii). But it is imperative to recognize that the tragic evils of slavery and racism (and the rest) have existed in defiance of the ideals of humanism, and that their eradication depends on upholding

those values that Barratt would impugn and deride. Barratt's contention that it is humanism that built the death camps of Nazi Germany is beyond simplistic; it is one more instance of the inability of postmodernists—the names of Heidegger and de Man come to mind—to make elementary political and moral discriminations.

In the same vein, albeit on a less cosmic scale, Barratt collapses the distinction between "authoritarian" and "reflective" discourse, claiming that "all conversation involves the positing of interpretations and thus cannot escape the motif of exhortation or coercion" (114). But, at least to my way of thinking, this is a dangerous exaggeration, comparable to saying that there is no difference between democracy and dictatorship since both forms of government involve the exercise of power. Only someone who had not suffered under the oppression of genuine tyranny could permit himself the luxury of such disdain, and—whether in the domain of political institutions or intimate relationships—the antithesis between arrangements based on domination and those based on freedom and respect for the other is fundamental to human life.

Despite the flaws stemming from its ideological fervor—and the critique I have offered could be extended to Barratt's rejection of "any faith we may place in personal life as a continuous, constant, and cohesive story line" (170) and his insistence on "the repressiveness of discourse itself" (177)—*Psychoanalysis and the Postmodern Impulse* is a thought-provoking book from which there is much to be learned. Although Barratt disclaims the label of humanist, and has only uncharitable things to say about psychotherapists, his account of the psychoanalytic process as occurring within a human relationship of unparalleled "*intimacy, safety,* and *freedom*" is assuredly one that any empathic clinican would be prepared to endorse, just as his remark that "the patient must be able to feel both the *caring* and the *strangeness* of the psychoanalyst in every moment of their discourse" is profound, if scarcely novel (196). Notwithstanding Barratt's own desire to open an unbridgeable chasm between humanism and postmodernism, there remains a great deal of common ground that psychoanalytic thinkers of different persuasions can profitably explore together, and in this undertaking *Psychoanalysis and the Postmodern Impulse* is a valuable companion, a contemporary "book of the it" filled with otherwisdom that helps us to think otherwise.

University of Florida Peter L. Rudnytsky

Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century Literature by Laura Brown. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993. Pp. x + 203. $31.50 (cloth); $11.95 (paper).

It has taken academic literary criticism a long time to acknowledge empire as a central historical and cultural reality of Britain from at least 1660. When Gayatri Spivak insisted in 1985 that "it should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the representation

of England to the English," work on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century ramifications of Britain's Second Empire was under way. The First Empire, centered in the Atlantic and Caribbean but already aggressively targeting India, Africa, and the Pacific, has only recently received comparable attention. Laura Brown's is one of the first full-length studies to take up this important project in a theoretically sophisticated manner.

In the introduction to the 1987 anthology, *The New Eighteenth Century* (co-edited with Felicity Nussbaum), Brown polemicized against the conspicuous conservatism of eighteenth-century studies, its often too comfortable espousal of a gentlemanly perspective. Her new book again challenges this bias with historically grounded analyses of works by Pope, Swift, and Defoe, as well as Behn, Otway, and Rowe. The figure of the woman, Brown argues, carried considerable ideological freight during England's commercial expansion from 1688 to 1730. The adorned woman is associated with consumption and commodification, "the mystifying process of fetishization, and . . . the related problems of identity and knowledge, artifice and reality, dissembling and truth, where the effort of seeing past the objects of accumulation becomes a kind of cultural obsession" (18–19). But woman also figures difference, "the radical heterogeneity of sexual, racial, or class dissimilarities"; as such "women are connected with sexual instability, class instability, natives, the colonized, and the potentially threatening, unassimilable other" (19).

These two ranges of association can obviously pull in different directions. Brown is most interested in the interactions between them, especially when these result in fracturing the coherence of mercantile capitalist ideology. She sets out to recover points of resistance to that ideology, conceptualizing it as not monolithic, but "potentially fissured" (12); her critical method emphasizes articulation, the "dialectical relationships among positions of oppression" (11). She laudably aims to help wean New Historicism further away from its early fascination with power centers "by calling attention to marginal positions" (12).

One relevant question is to what extent this can be achieved just on the basis of oppositional analyses of canonical literary texts. "I center each chapter around a canonical text or author," Brown asserts, "not to enhance the appreciative reception of these texts, but to examine their function in the contemporary crises of cultural difference and economic expansion. . . . [M]y purpose . . . is not to explicate but to 'read'—in and through the texts—a series of significant and significantly interrelated issues in eighteenth-century literary culture" (17–18). Reinterpreting the canon is clearly one major task in writing the history of the culture of empire. But what is our best means of negotiating between the narrowly monumental landscape of canonical literary studies and the more extensive horizon we envision for such a history?

Brown relies heavily on her materialist feminist methodology, with its "self-conscious politicization and explicit theorization" (12). Related recent work chooses somewhat different tactics to investigate ideologies of empire. Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* (1992), for example, focuses on texts from the subliterary genre of travel writing, with their fractured redaction of encounters in the "contact zone" at the geographical margins of empire. Moira Ferguson's massive and uneven *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670–1834* (1993) culminates with an analysis of a slave nar-

rative, *The History of Mary Prince*, charting the differences as well as the overlap between a slave's language and that of her abolitionist supporters. Reading canonical with noncanonical and literary with nonliterary texts is by now standard practice among historicist critics. Its greatest usefulness seems to me to lie in the productive juxtaposition of different modes of textuality. We learn not just by analyzing thematic and ideological intersections between, say, tragedies and broadsheets, or novels and economic treatises, but by comparing the discursive and generic systems through which meanings are produced.

One valuable effect of such reflection has been to blur the boundary between aesthetic and extra-aesthetic, questioning the category of literature itself, the supposed basis of our discipline. Brown's chapters take up texts in a range of genres, from novels to tragedies to satires. Though they problematize the ideologies that inform these texts, this does not finally seem to affect the privileged status of literature. Indeed, Brown finds in literary texts the power to generate, or at least enable, resistance to the dominant ideology she reads through them: the instabilities and "failure of coherence" disclosed by such texts allow the critic to identify, or produce, "sites of resistance" (63).

A somewhat troubling example is Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, the topic of Chapter 2. The novella's two seemingly disparate sections—the heroic romance of Oroonoko in Africa and Behn's account of life on a colonial slave plantation, framed by catalogues of imperial merchandise—are mediated, Brown argues, by the figure of the woman. "This narrative must have women, and it generates . . . female figures at every turn, as observers, beneficiaries, and consumers of Oroonoko's romantic action" (40). Of these women, Brown focuses on the articulate, ambiguous narrator, thereby colluding with Behn's text to silence the other female protagonist, Oroonoko's bride Imoinda. Women are marginal and subordinate, but they "provide the occasion for the superimposition of aristocratic and bourgeois systems—the ideological contradiction that dominates the novella. And in that contradiction we can locate a site beyond alterity, a point of critique and sympathy effectually produced by the radical contemporaneity of issues of gender with those of romance and race" (48–49).

Oroonoko is ambivalent toward slavery, exalting the "Royal Slave" but buying into the attractions of colonialism. Brown locates "a deeper critique of slavery" in the implied analogy between the gruesomely executed Oroonoko and the martyred Charles I, through which the narrative finds its way to the slave's historical experience of mortal suffering. This complicated argument has taught me a great deal about the density of cultural signification in *Oroonoko*, but I was not entirely persuaded by the conclusion. It sent me back to Brown's introduction, where she ponders the pun of her title: "I cannot confidently claim, in the end, to be able to separate a text that serves the purposes of empire from the effort to put a stop to it, in the past or the present" (22). Must politically motivated critics claim to make such a separation? Nowhere else does Brown find it necessary (and nowhere else does she discuss a woman-authored text). The remaining chapters analyze ambiguities without needing to resolve them in favor of resistance.

A chapter on the "she-tragedy" of Otway and Rowe examines the conversion of a feminine sexuality staged through passivity and suffering into the

commodification that increasingly dominates the representation of the female figure in the early eighteenth century. An intriguing chapter on Pope's aesthetic writing explores in the metaphor of female dress, applied to problems of nature and artifice, a connection between aesthetics and gender which is complicated by the association of female adornment with the fruits of overseas trade. When dress becomes a synecdoche for commercialization, representations of women can mediate between aesthetics and capitalism. Celebrations of trade effect a "reversal of object and agent" (118) in which "the agency of the acquisitive subject and the urgency of accumulation are concealed and deflected through the fantasy of a universal collaboration in the dressing of the female body" (116). This insight strikes me as brilliant, especially when Brown juxtaposes "the naked female body . . . barely concealed" behind the aesthetic metaphor of dress (111) with the male anxiety personified in Pope's *Sober Advice from Horace* as "an animated penis, the only one I have noticed in Pope's corpus" (124). The protestations of this "honest Part" connect questions of sexual preference and practice, gender and class, with an anxious ambivalence toward the commodity fetishism emblematized by the ornamented woman.

The final two chapters of *Ends of Empire* are its strongest. In "Amazons and Africans" Brown considers the possibility that the misogyny directed toward autonomous women like Defoe's Amazonian Roxana "stands in the place of an explicit critique of empire" (157). Again imperial acquisitiveness and violence are embodied and punished in a female figure. Swift poses this paradoxical link between misogyny and anti-imperialism in a fuller form (though in presenting him as an anticolonialist, Brown does not consider his role in internal colonialism in Ireland). His political writings, scapegoating Irish women's love of imported luxuries for Ireland's economic plight, suggest that the anger toward women in his scatological poems may feed on his animus against mercantile capitalism. The "hideous corporeality" of those poems' women reappears in the Yahoos, "the prototypical women of Swift's works" (184); but these hairy, stinking beings also correspond to contemporary descriptions of Africans. Gulliver's relation to both women and Yahoos is unstable, a "dynamic of aversion and implication, difference and incorporation" (196) that culminates when he looks in the pool and sees himself as a Yahoo indeed.

This thought-provoking chain of associations fulfills Brown's declared intention of finding concrete methods to reconceive the self/Other binarism that has limited much postcolonial criticism. Her study's most valuable contribution to analyzing the culture of empire is the historically specific way in which it confronts "the necessary intimacy of structures of oppression and liberation" (174). Despite my reservations (and despite the occasionally somewhat schematic feeling of the analysis), *Ends of Empire* is worthwhile reading for students of colonialism as well as those interested in feminist and historicist critical methods.

University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign Elizabeth A. Bohls

Philip Larkin by Andrew Motion, New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1993. Pp. 370. $35.00.

Is this a sad story? Is it a repulsive story? Does Andrew Motion, Larkin's friend and fellow poet, unwittingly do Larkin in? This large biography, and the *Selected Letters*, published about the same time, have called up forces on both sides of what may be called "the Larkin question." Could such a man have been, as he was generally thought to be, the best British poet since Auden? Poets' lives are seldom prettier or more exalting than the lives of non-poets; nor should we expect them to be. Ian Hamilton's *Robert Lowell* and John Haffenden's *The Life of John Berryman* can fill us with terror and dismay. Did we know that Lowell's manic states were that destructive to other people? Did we realize that Berryman's alcoholism had such unfortunate effects upon himself and others? We might have guessed, and, anyway, some lovers of poetry expect their poets to be either mad or drunk. Larkin was neither, though he drank enough. He was merely *selfish* and, the letters show, narrow and prejudiced.

Motion has two problems. He's writing about a selfish man and he is telling the story of a *librarian's* life that cannot be filled with high drama. As though in compensation for the lack of dramatic events, Motion takes too much space with Larkin's love life in which he sometimes seems as entangled as Larkin himself. Only in the story of Monica Jones, whom most readers will feel Larkin should have married, do we get close enough to the poet for these details to matter. An interesting photograph in the book, taken by Larkin himself, shows Monica Jones in a flowery dress sitting in her garden in a late Victorian moment that is both tender and stylized, private and traditional. Jones, who lived briefly with Larkin in the last months of his life and who obeyed his instructions to destroy his diaries, comes through as the most vivid of Larkin's loves, but we understand early on that, like Flaubert whom he surprisingly resembles in his devotion to his art, he was not likely ever to marry. Yes, he was, like Flaubert, married to his mother! It is startling to realize that Larkin never wrote a substantial poem after his mother's death, though he outlived her by eight years. His ordinary, cranky, often wittily observed and fussed-at mother was probably his muse after all. Later biographers take note.

As a librarian, Larkin was conscientious, thorough, and always professional. Neither Rilkean angels, nor Yeatsian voices interrupted the tenor of his working life. From Wellington to Leicester to Belfast to his settling at Hull in 1955, where he spent his last thirty years, Larkin was as faithful to the library as Stevens was to his Hartford insurance company. Despite his famous lines about the toad, work, squatting on his life, he seemed to have swum adequately in that pond. He was not unaware of how he appeared. Larkin, with his stammer, balding head, and lack of star-power, contrasts his image with that of Ted Hughes on a visit to Hull: "Hughes filled the hall and got a great reception. I was in the chair, providing a sophisticated, insincere, effete, and gold-watch-chained alternative to his primitive, forthright, virile, leather-jacketed persona." It is not surprising that Larkin, in the wake of the Dylan Thomas road show, gave no public readings.

In his marvelous early poem, "Deceptions," from which he took the title of

The Less Deceived, Larkin addressed the rape victim he encountered in Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*, "Slums, years have buried you. I would not dare / Console you if I could." Larkin is not a consoling poet and his life is not a consoling story. The usual picture of his development from Yeats to Hardy, from magic to humanity, has some truth in it, but I think Motion is correct in his qualification: "If he had abandoned Yeats as completely as he tells us he did, he would be strictly half the poet he is." The struggle between the impulse to grandeur and the fall back to human suffering gives his best work its marvelous contrast of tone, fusing the ordinary, often desolate, life with the yearning beyond it. In "High Windows" the snarling sexual jealousy of the speaker who hates those Yeatsian generations at their song contrasts with the melancholy he sees though the glass of the church:

> When I see a couple of kids
> And guess he's fucking her
> And she's taking pills or wearing a diaphragm
> I know this is paradise
>
> Everyone old has dreamed of all their lives—

But the poem ends in the high depressive note of absence and loss:

> . . . and immediately
>
> Rather than words comes the thought of high windows:
> The sun-comprehending glass,
> And beyond it, the deep blue air, that shows
> Nothing, and is no where, and is endless.

It is to human suffering and meaninglessness that Larkin turns, but he did not need Hardy to bring him here. The later chapters of the biography relate movingly Larkin's struggle with illness and his stratagems to keep his gift alive. In "A Life With a Hole In It," he laments:

> When I throw back my head and howl
> People (women mostly) say
> *But you've always done what you want.*
> *You always get your own way.*
> —A perfectly vile and foul
> Inversion of all that's been.
> What the old rat bags mean
> Is I've never done what I don't.

Early on Larkin asserted that "beneath it all, desire of oblivion runs," and his last great poem, "Aubade," written over three years, moves from complaint to confrontation. The nakedness of tone in this poem is striking, and the bitterness unavoidable. The desire of oblivion has turned to fear:

> . . . Courage is no good.
> It means not scaring others. Being brave
> Lets none off the grave.
> Death is no different whined at than withstood.

The last lines of "Aubade" recall an image from the 1953 poem "Days," where the question of what days are for "Brings the priest and the doctor / In their long coats / Running over the fields." By the time of "Aubade," 1977:

> The sky is white with no sun.
> Work has to be done.
> Postmen like doctors go from house to house.

But can the doctors heal?

Larkin reminds us most of Housman, who is not a consoling poet either. And where is the consolation in Hardy's Immanent Will? The bumptious historian, A. L. Rowse, who knew Larkin later at Oxford, wrote to the biographer, "What the hell was the matter with him? He was *tall*." I don't know how tall Housman was, but John Berryman was correct when he referred to "Tiny" Hardy. Tall or short, all these poets will stand together as long as we will care about such things.

Wayne State University Daniel Hughes

Telling Glances: Voyeurism in the French Novel, by Dorothy Kelly. New York & London: Rutgers University Press, 1992. Pp. ix + 264. $50.00 (cloth); $18.00 (paper).

After reading Dorothy Kelly's *Telling Glances. Voyeurism in the French Novel*, one is struck by the ability of psychoanalytically based critics both to unveil difficult problems in literary texts and to raise new ones, as much from what the critical angle they adopt fails to address as from what and how it does. The organizational rigor of Kelly's book is quite evident as she immediately provides a succinct overview of the critical problematics and her approach (1–4), and then offers a concise opening statement of her understanding of psychocritical readings of literary texts, in "Voyeurism and the Primal Scene in Psychoanalysis" (7–11), as a way of introducing part I on "Voyeurism as Containment." Each of this part's chapters focuses on a specific psychoanalytical problem (seduction, castration, the primal scene of parental intercourse) in light of three texts (respectively, Diderot's *La Religieuse*, Balzac's *La Fille aux yeux d'or*, and Robbe-Grillet's *Le Voyeur*), chosen because Kelly finds them "relatively free from irony and questioning . . . present[ing] a somewhat simplistic scenario of voyeurism, in which the strategies at work in that scenario are easy to detect" (3). The goal here is "to show how both psychoanalysis and literature construct similar scenarios, and just what the ideological implications of these scenarios are" (3).

Then, in part II, entitled "Textuality and the Problematization of Voyeurist Truth," Kelly passes from the "simplistic" scenarios to the complex, repeating and yet re-writing them: French romanticism's "unveiling" of and inscription upon woman (ch. 5), realism's representation of the "artist's gaze at the woman" now embodied as difference (ch. 6), *fin-de-siècle* examples of the "elimination of difference" in male first-person narrative (ch. 7), and differ-

ence's recognition in the "space of identity" of women's writing (ch. 8). Kelly's concluding reflection on "the comic gaze" juxtaposes the diverse concepts previously deployed to two Anglophone stories of the Godiva legend, the medieval tale and Anaïs Nin's "The Unveiled Woman." Through this rapprochement, Kelly explains how recent feminist theoreticians have rearticulated problems of "mirroring," of distinctions between female and male identities, and of the construction and repression of meanings through representation. She suggests finally the importance of "differential doubling" in women's writing as a textual strategy through which women authors can mark their distance from a "preexistent 'place,'" both textual and socio-cultural (234).

This exposition should make evident the breadth, complexity and richness of Kelly's study, and not only for readers of French literature. The threefold deployment of her interrogative approach occurs in a smooth, interlocking fashion: starting from the fundamental problematics of voyeurism, Kelly draws on re-readings of psychoanalytic theory as a device for understanding specific literary texts, and then extends this theory and her own readings in order better to understand the nature of narrative. Moreover, Kelly's insights in the concuding chapter, regarding the role of distancing, irony and humor as constitutive of a "feminine writing," are especially important for the critical enterprise. For Kelly enlivens her able deployment of an impressive array of critical concepts and sources through her skilled reading practices that neither shirk asking hard questions, nor solely produce simple answers.

My qualms arise less from her fine analyses than from the limitations inherent to the adopted metacritical framework and from Kelly's positioning in regard to it. In the introduction, Kelly maintains that "psychoanalysis and literature are seen [by her] to be two parallel discourses that attempt to explain why things are the way they are. . . . [discourses] interested in the same questions about truth, knowledge and desire" (2). Then, after outlining the book's chapters, Kelly asserts that while perpetuating "the repressive structures of voyeurism," literature "contains moments of the questioning, doubting, and undermining of its voyeurist structures," thus acting "as if it were profoundly suspicious of the ideological foundations upon which its search for truth is based" (4). The question that these statements raise for me is one of agency, regarding both the authors examined and the reader. That is, on one hand, to what extent are these "parallel discourses" situated *within particular socio-historical moments*, responding to forces that influence the individuals who enunciate these discourses? On the other hand, to what extent do the "questioning, doubting, undermining" and suspicion that Kelly presumes to be inherent to a disembodied "literature" arise, in fact, from the reader's own voyeuristic and "writerly" gaze?

On the first question, Kelly suggests that "in the cases of the texts of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, the literature of these earlier epochs is part of the soil from which psychoanalysis grows," whereas for late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century texts, "literature and psychoanalysis both grow out of a communal soil of European ideology" (2). This genealogy suggests that during the earlier periods literature functioned alongside other European ideological forces to produce psychoanalysis, but once budding and then growing, psychoanalysis grew alongside (and perhaps symbiotically

from) literature within the fertile bed of European soci-political "soil." Given these premises, the readings that follow should draw as much upon the socio-cultural history of the development of psychoanalysis as upon traits that bear upon interpretations of texts belonging to specific literary movements.

Unfortunately, rather than following this socio-historical path, Kelly defines voyeurism (in chapter 1) strictly in terms of a complex juxtaposition of Freudian, neo-Freudian and post-Freudian perspectives, continues to refine and adapt current perspectives by studying subsequently (in part I) the focal themes in linear fashion, and finds these same themes weaving throughout the more literary (i.e. less theoretically psychoanalytical) readings that constitute part II. My point is that this approach not only fails to exploit and develop the socio-historical dimension suggested from the introductory organic metaphor. Instead, while providing undoubtedly important reflections on problems of gender, identity and difference, these readings still beg the question of whether the critical problems raised through the focus of psychoanalytical criticism are problems *within* the literary texts examined or problems emerging *as effects* of the critical apparatus itself. For the array of authors that Kelly recruits to shed light on the psychocritical problematics are, in fact, situated within precise socio-historical situations, from late nineteenth to late twentieth century, from budding Freudianism to post-structuralist feminism and film criticism, all overdetermining the questions that may be asked of literary texts from within these problematics. Although Kelly is, of course, quite right to employ all contemporary perspectives at her disposal, the approach would have gained greatly, I feel, from more literary-historical and socio-cultural precisons. This not only would have helped Kelly develop her own original characterization of the psychoanalytical/literary relationship, it would have alleviated the often overbearing impression of psychoanalytic criticism's seemingly "timeless" interpretive power.

This observation leads to my second question, regarding the role of the reader/critic's "writerly" gaze. Kelly raises this topic herself at the conclusion of chapter 2, arguing in reference to *La Religieuse* that "the act of voyeurism itself is, in this text and in others, a means to dominate and control by secretly gaining the power of superior knowledge" (33). However, while she then explicitly defers discussion of the relation between "voyeurism and the act of reading" to the second part of the book, I was unable to locate any such direct discussion in the subsequent chapters. Yet, this intersection underlies her analysis from start to finish, and this relationship is nowhere more evident than at the junction between the first and second parts at the end of chapter 4, where Kelly states: "In these three texts (*La Religieuse, La Fille aux yeux d'or*, and *Le Voyeur*), which span three centuries, we see the relatively unproblematized persistence of the theme of the secret unveiling of the woman and the search for truth in fiction, a persistence that may work to continue the 'punishment' of women in reality" (70). Having drawn the reader in, through the use of "we," to her nearly unproblematized "writerly" intervention into the critical unveiling process, Kelly describes this intervention as studying, in the second part, "those places in literary texts where the ambiguity of textuality challenges the power of representational illusion and the fact of gender identity." Wishing "to avoid the one-to-one mapping of text onto meaning . . . that attempts to master the uncontrollable generation

of meaning by mutilating, 'cutting off,' otherness," Kelly proposes to turn toward voyeurism's "more purely literary problems" and away from "the technical, psychoanalytic aspect of the primal scene" (71). Yet, over the next 150 pages, the reader discovers a constant search for "meanings" (note the plural), some of which indeed undermine prescribed voyeuristic scenarios, but all of which fit neatly within the psychocritical thematics laid out in part I. These readings, then, are not the manifestation of some disembodied "literature" expressing the suspicions of ideological foundations, but rather the valuable contributions of a socio-historically situated subject reading from within a quite clearly defined and structured framework of interpretive practices.

Despite these criticisms, I do recommend these readings to those who are interested in understanding how contemporary feminist and post-structuralist reflections on identity and gender may be fruitfully employed from a psychocritical perspective to enliven an understanding of highly canonical literary texts. Indeed, Kelly is be congratulated for providing the informative insights that she does regarding texts already well explicated from an array of perspectives. Whatever one's critical allegiance, these readings stand as strong testimony to the vitality of theoretically informed interpretation and should again reinforce an understanding, at least for those willing to accede to the evidence at hand, that the news of the "death of theory" has been highly exaggerated. Not only are Kelly's applications of complex theoretical concepts quite sophisticated, her conclusions open new paths for further inquiry in domains that include, but are not restricted to, psychocritical readings of literary texts.

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