

2008

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Recommended Citation

Lukes, H. N. (2008) "Latino Studies With Lacan," *Criticism*: Vol. 50: Iss. 2, Article 6.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/criticism/vol50/iss2/6>

LATINO STUDIES
WITH LACAN
H. N. Lukes

Dead Subjects: Toward a Politics of Loss in Latino Studies by Antonio Viego. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. Pp. 293. \$84.95 cloth; \$23.95 paper.

Freud called his positioning of the unconscious at the center of studies of the mind a Copernican revolution. In more humble terms, Antonio Viego's impressive new book, *Dead Subjects*, calls for nothing less than such a Copernican shift for contemporary Latino studies in the United States. Viego decenters what he sees as the reigning activist and academic ideal of a liberated and "whole" ethnic self by resituating the orbit of Latino critical inquiry around a subject destined to language, and thus bound to decompletion and loss. *Dead Subjects* traces how Jewish analyst émigrés fleeing Hitler brought to the United States, not the plague that Freud imagined psychoanalysis to be in an American context, but its even more noxious manifestation as curative practice advocating the ego's adaptation to a white, Protestant, and heterosexual way of life. Through close readings of diverse cultural texts and concise accounts of America's racialized misinterpretation and misuse of psychoanalysis, *Dead Subjects* explicates the subtle yet persistent violence of ego psychology in the United States while calling for the advancement of a Lacanian approach to the ongoing problematics of the psyche in ethnic studies.¹

Like many scholars currently reconsidering the ideological foundations of American studies and political theory, Viego takes aim at neoliberalism, the university's collusion with it, and the conflation

of emancipatory movements with discourse on rights. Whereas his contemporaries are turning increasingly to Michel Foucault's notions of biopolitics and governmentality, to Giorgio Agamben's painfully prescient work on bare life and states of exception, or to a kind of critical salvation of the terms *human* and *universal*, Viego wants to focus the conversation on the privative nature of language itself as a potentially political function undertheorized by ethnic studies.² In Viego's terms, the ethnic-racialized subject is dead on arrival if it is understood, on the one hand, as an autonomous self capable of cultural adaptation unto happiness or, on the other hand, as a mere effect of power relations and knowledge rendered through weak historicist applications of Foucault.

In the place of this dead subject, mortified in the realm of the ego, Viego evokes a living and livid Latino subject who suffers both historically specific Imaginary (i.e., "real world") power relations and the signifier as such; the latter rends the speaking human between Jacques Lacan's definition of the Real and the Symbolic. In this nexus, *Dead Subjects* makes the unlikely claim that ethnic subjects have not been allowed to lose enough. For Viego, the imperative to recognize loss and lack in the material world, coupled with the psychic burden of having to "play brown" for both racist and liberal multicultural regimes, has prevented Latino subjects from realizing the fundamental condition

of their humanity—that all (nonpsychotic) humans are beholden to language and thus sacrifice part of their being for the promise of meaning. Because language then fails to provide consistent meaning, the subject is doubly bereft and yet free of totalizing subjection. Recognition of this fundamental loss allows subjects to "traverse the fundamental fantasy" of their impossible completion, to articulate the history of their own unconscious as interwoven with the history of their world (24). Viego proposes, "The challenge for us would be to craft analyses that can read for the historical specificity and texture of loss that is constitutive of subjectivity in relation to those losses that can be attributed to the unequal distribution of social and material resources, losses that continually appear to accrue more on the side of some people than others" (50).

The necessity of including Lacan in Latino theory is hardly Viego's point; neither is his point the necessity of including "Latino" identity in psychoanalytic criticism. Rather, a critique of the very concept of *inclusion* functions as the leitmotif weaving through the book's interrogation of contemporary academic theory and identity politics. Viego follows other analysts of race by pointing out that in absence of a more nuanced model of human existence, racialized subjects may only appear as either uncomplicated primitives with special access to jouissance or as impossible bearers of all civilizations' discontents.³ Viego

asks: if no human can either fully symbolically *mean* or really *be*, then how is the racial subject required to perform meaning and being in a social spectrum that sees color only at either end, and what is he or she to do about it? The answer *Dead Subjects* offers is: let's get hysterical.

As is well documented, white female hysterics gave birth to psychoanalysis by talking back to Freud, telling him to shut up and listen. Feminist readings of hysteria have underscored how these women got off on the "talking cure" while also complicating mandated images of themselves in the mirror of bourgeois Anglo-European society.⁴

Viego's chapter 4, on hysteria, argues: "Insofar as Latino studies critique stands to bring some noise regarding how the production of knowledge is conceptualized in the university—the role of knowledge, its purpose, whom does it serve—I liken Latino studies critique to Lacan's 'hysteric's discourse.' Latino studies gets off on knowledge and gets off on undermining the master just as much as the hysteric does" (113). Viego offers that Latino and Chicano "border subjects"—given their inherently reflexive positionality relative to the "barred" condition of the Lacanian subject—function as hysterical poltergeists in the mirror of social *and* theoretical systems in the contemporary United States.

Viego also indicates that such productive hysteria is already fomenting in the works of scholars including Walter Mignolo, José Esteban

Muñoz, Emma Pérez, Chela Sandoval, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto. Even as he earmarks the need for further conversation about Latino appropriations of Chicano studies' conceptualization of the "border," Viego's book reads the effects and affects surrounding this common conflation of Latino and Chicano in dominant renderings of the future (and once) "Latinization" of the United States (122–23). In *Dead Subjects* this presumed demographic shift in the United States (projected to make it "the third largest Latin American nation" by 2050 [108]) brings with it a purloined, *Spanglish* verbal function that suggests a discomfiting, dislocated, and perhaps unlocatable object. For Viego, Latinos are less identities than those always already objectified subjects who nonetheless "get off" by disarranging "America" and its demand for ethnic assimilation; those who hystericize the concept of race; those subjects who conflate and complicate the voice and the gaze of the Other in their bringing of "noise" through the cacophony attending, for example, the "pachuco's/a's and zoot suiter's response to the hailing 'Hey you, Mexican American'" (142). And in these examples one might realize that the brilliance of *Dead Subjects*—the uncontainable *thing* of it—appears in its close readings and its demonstration that history need not be at war with the textual.

Following this last example, Viego transfigures standard interpretations of the zoot suit as a

recalcitrant and excessive use of cloth in the context of U.S. World War II rationing into a psychic protest addressed to racist and egoistic regimes: "I would say that the clothes do not disguise an identity from the state as much as they reveal identity as a disguise itself" (145). Later, Viego reveals that the material symptom of the zoot suit is what African American poet Gwendolyn Brooks dubs the "wonder-suits in yellow and wine . . . All the drapes . . . hysterical ties / like narrow banners for some gathering war" (Brooks, "The Sundays of Satin-Legs Smith," quoted in Viego 146). According to *Dead Subjects*, this "gathering war" indicates neither just a historically specific riot nor the synecdochic logic that would locate an uprising as a harbinger of revolution. Rather, zoots' clothes and pachucos'/as' threatening moves are "symptoms [that] won't yield up their meaning, and even when an interpretation is offered, the pachuco/a and zoot suiter, like Lacan's hysteric, produces another symptom to take its place, more knowledge and thus more need for interpretation" (148). Viego outlines zoot hysteria as a tactico-unconscious dispersion of force through what Brooks herself locates in shifty signifiers, including *wonder*; *all*; *ties*; the linguistic function of *like* itself; and even the term *narrow*. In this case study, a Borromean knot forged by a Latino literary critic, an African American poet, and the sartorial sages of the barrio allows Viego to drape himself

in a second critical skin, wherein he admits both his distance from and his imbrications with/in archives past.

This book is structured by such "hysterical ties" and thus intervenes on aesthetic, political, and epistemological levels that are equally yet asymmetrically in accordance with the author's shifting cultural material. The hybridity of *Dead Subjects* presents the best of drapes, as Viego moves gracefully from early psychoanalytic and neurological studies; to the writings of Frantz Fanon and Gloria Anzaldúa; to films including *Giant* and *Mulholland Drive* (in which he isolates *Latinidad* rising from white filmmakers' productions). Employing Lacanian psychoanalysis allows Viego a system of homology that is more oblique, evocative, and ethical than the analogous logic attending standard recognitions of "difference" in ego-based identity politics. Whereas multicultural mandates for pluralism at best privilege the relationship between representing and represented subjects, Viego situates unknowing yet also unknowable subjects who manifest unpredictably in culture through formations of "structure" and "discourse" within psychoanalysis. *Dead Subjects* works in a mode of oblique recognition akin to Lacan's functional preposition *avec*, as seen in his essay "Kant avec Sade," indicating what Kenneth Reinhard calls a form of "comparative literature otherwise than comparison."⁵

In keeping with its dispersed content, the structure of *Dead Subjects*

dodges and swerves through time. Although Viego's account of post-World War II ego psychology is the centerpiece of his historiography, his book spans well before and after the mid-century without subscribing to a telic narrative that would produce ethnos as the proper subject of community, history, or inquiry. The immigrant inflection of ego psychology in the United States at once meets and exceeds the demands of an American melting pot, just as it at once shapes the future of psychoanalysis in the United States and segues with belated versions of nineteenth-century "good old-fashioned American pragmatism" (41). For example, Viego reads the seeming categorical impossibility of African American "insanity" in the context of late nineteenth-century struggles between alienists and neurologists as a racialist construction of "mind" that reemerges in Dr. John E. Lind's 1913 claim that African Americans cannot metaphorize like white subjects but merely form "the dream picture as a faithful representation of a wish" (30–31, 43). Yet we cannot receive the true import of Viego's reading of fin de siècle psychology unless it is read *avec* his critique of current psychiatric trends that, toward clinical sensitivity to cultural differences, deploy sociological typologies as virtual market research for selling analysis to ethnic subjects who are presumed to be otherwise too burdened to engage in self-searching (210–20). In other words, Viego

writes large the biopolitics attending historically shifting understandings of mind and mental illness in relation to race without conceding to historicist cultural determinism.

The logic, or rather the logistics, of *Dead Subjects* lingers on the idea of time and the ego as out of joint for the political subject. And so Viego quotes—many times, in a radical form of critical repetition complex—Richard T. Ford's line: "It may be that the price of providing our descendants with a world free of social stigma and oppression of identities such as race, a world that we could be proud to call more just, is that they would not share our identities, that they would be our heirs but *not* our descendants" (quoted first in Viego 107). And so Viego sits, as an heir, with Lacan's statement: "What is realized in my history is neither the past definite as what was, since it is no more, nor even the perfect as what has been in what I am, but the future anterior as what I will have been, given what I am in the process of becoming" (Lacan, quoted in Viego 163). And so Viego humorously fantasizes the future icon of his shrunken head on one of his mother's home *altares* in a reversal of ancestral time—what I take to be an homage to both the young men who died of HIV-related illnesses in the decades that precede his book and to the syncretic spirituality and endurance of his own mother, whom he mythologizes as "being made of equal parts iron and stone" and yet beholden

to the “irritating responsibility” of dealing with his postmortem debts; his “mangy, nasty” cat and dog; and the reading of his “shabby last will and testament against the grain” (108).

For its meta-critique of Latino studies and the status of ethnic subjects in the university and U.S. commodity culture alone, *Dead Subjects* is a powerful intervention, and in this regard the book is deeply influenced most specifically by Rey Chow.⁶ But make no mistake: Viego is here to tell the good news about Jacques Lacan. Yet unlike Slavoj Žižek, the apocalyptic evangelist currently most associated with the name Lacan, Viego is more like the itinerate preacher who takes in the problems of the cultural locations he visits while returning gently but firmly to the Scripture. Viego does not conform to the form of the polemic—explicit in Lee Edelman’s queer Lacanian *No Future* and implicit in the tone of most of Žižek’s work.⁷ I found *Dead Subjects* refreshing in its patience of persuasion, especially as it presumes neither its readers’ knowledge of its many archives nor the transparency of its complicated theoretical interventions. Viego’s vision is a dark one, a form of Foucault’s “pessimistic activism” (13), but only inasmuch as he wants to push the “border subject” of Chicano and Latino studies to *and into* its limit, to the bar of the Lacanian signifier, where one might find “generative metaphors of possibility, even excess[,] and not metaphors of

scarcity and lack and the placid gloom of renunciation” (24).

Given that Lacanian psychoanalysis has been widely critiqued as a metaphysics of lack, this claim to generation over scarcity and renunciation seems counterintuitive.⁸ Viego, in fact, studiously avoids the term *lack* after his introduction and instead diverts attention to the concept of *loss*. Certainly, the idea of fundamental human lack appears as a crass abstraction in the face of racialized subjects’ historical suffering of violence and privation. By contrast, loss has struck a common chord with recent analysts of marginalized identities’ social and psychic subjectivity.⁹ Yet Viego joins Juliet Flower MacCannell in outlining how racialization produces the want of privileged (white, imperial) subjects as an eternally insatiable and infinitely complex *desire* over, above, and on the backs of subalterns, whose wants are reduced to the mere fulfillment of animal jouissance (MacCannell 109, referenced in Viego 24). If, according to Lacan, the “analysand” is generalized as the neurotic who approaches the psychoanalyst as the subject-supposed-to-know (*sujet-supposé-savoir*), then, Viego asks, how does a racialized analysand, a *subject-supposed-to-enjoy*, a subject who might not care less about the analyst’s knowledge, receive the potentially useless hermeneutic of psychoanalysis now, or ever?

For Viego, if border subjects were to admit themselves as barred

subjects without succumbing to retrograde universal humanism, then Latinos might exploit their position as already recognizing that both the Other and race do not exist, a realization that marks the end (and ends) of analysis, according to Lacan. As Viego writes: “[T]he subject at the end of analysis is no longer a slave to the demand seen to issue from the Other; the subject learns to assume responsibility for herself by becoming her own cause, as it were” (201–02). If the aim of analysis, according to Lacan, is to get the subject to “enjoy her symptom,” then the racialized *sujet-supposé-jouir* might enjoy psychoanalysis itself as a historical symptom of the Other for which she is the cause, inasmuch as she is already beyond and before psychoanalysis as a white bourgeois field of knowledge. Thus the point of *Dead Subjects* is not that Latino subjects simply need to take their issues to the couch; rather, the couch needs to take political and psychic issues to the streets, as Frantz Fanon did, according to Viego’s reading of Fanon’s “revolutionary position that wants to mine in psychoanalysis material that might compel a real intervention in changing racist structures” (209). For Viego, psychoanalysis is not a hermeneutic but an ethics. Once turned inside out, psychoanalysis may indeed produce “generative metaphors of possibility, even excess.”

This generative quality distinguishes Viego from his fellow travelers in queer theory. Viego identifies

with Lee Edelman’s and Tim Dean’s appropriations of Lacanian psychoanalysis as “queer theory *avant la lettre*” by himself claiming Lacan as an implicitly antiracist theorist whose “position significantly overlaps with some of the basic positions in the best critical multiculturalist, antiassimilationist work” (5). Yet unlike these white queer theorists’ deconstructive polemics against a future bound to reproduction and a sexuality bound to identity, Viego’s critique admits a fantasy subject, a *sinthomestiza subject*, who finds enjoyment-in-meaning *après la lettre*, who recognizes that racialized subjects are always already submitted to discourses of identity politics and reproductive technologies (Viego 160–63). Edelman’s *sinthomosexual* in *No Future* is a figural nonidentity that functions as an absence relative to “the Child” as transcendental political identity. By contrast, Viego’s *sinthomestiza* is always too much *there*—in history, on the corner, and as an infinitely reproductive identity that crosses borders of both geography and temporality. *Dead Subjects* subtly reads white queer misrecognitions of the difference between descendants and heirs by showing up the backhandedly presentist and egoist logic of queer theory’s best boys, those who will lash out against their inherited privilege while also subscribing to a secular time already stitched up in whiteness, modernity, and masculinity.

Viego’s immaculate reconception of Latino politics and academic

inquiry admits that for racialized subjects the Lacanian future anterior involves both a becoming and an always already *having to be for others*, but not necessarily for the Other. I would argue that the accidentally gathered members of the so-called anti-relational school of queer theory—including Lee Edelman, Leo Bersani, and Tim Dean (despite their crucial differences)—position themselves in the place of the historically and theoretically necessary structure of the pervert, he who disavows sexual difference, castration in language, and psychoanalysis itself, while also bolstering the logic of lack that attends these laws.¹⁰ Viego's identification with the hysteric speaks to his refusal of perversion's will to disavow yet also invite the law. And herein lies the difference for *Dead Subjects*: between loss and lack, a concept that in spite of its nonappearance in the text nonetheless anamorphically emerges.

Viego announces the presence of such absence on a performative critical plane with his introduction's title: "All the Things You *Can't* Be by Now," a riff on Hortense Spillers's titular appropriation of Charles Mingus's jazz piece "All the Things You Could Be by Now If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother." The underappreciation of Spillers's 1996 demand to embrace Freudian/Lacanian psychoanalysis as the "missing layer of the hermeneutic/interpretative projects of an entire generation of black intellectuals now at work" (Spillers, quoted in Viego

237) could indeed be called Viego's *cause*, in both the political sense and the Lacanian sense of cause as a lack so structuring as to take on the status of an object of desire. Mingus's song title frames missed opportunity as at once impossible and absurd, but also uncannily productive on the plane of fantasy: Anna Freud did, in fact, enjoy all that she could be as the child of Sigmund and his wife—and suppressed her father's archive in order to forward ego psychology as a psychoanalyst in her own right. But that is not what Mingus is asking. Rather, he and Spillers and Viego ask an implicitly racial, historical, and incestuous question: what *are* you now if you are at once your mother's child but also your master's baby? What if you could fuck your mother, or Freud's wife, or the master?

Spillers's "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book" answers this quandary by tracing the matrilineage of slave kinship that underwrites(rights) this discourse of race and recognition.¹¹ But why has the academy not taken up Spillers's radical critique, even as some scholars reference her intervention in passing? Viego's point is not that ethnic studies lacks Lacan but that it has missed an opportunity presented by Spillers. In missing there is loss, and historically speaking this oversight will inevitably convert this lack of a critical apparatus into a loss that should not be mourned but rather made into a melancholic structure of critique.

Although Lacanian psychoanalysis does in many ways function like a proselytizing fringe religion in the U.S. university, perhaps an addiction metaphor is more apt in describing this academy's nervous address to this hard theory qua hardcore drug. In Lacan's own terms, "[I want] to leave the reader no other way out than the way in, which I prefer to be difficult."¹² And so tarrying with Lacan has always felt like a slippery slope for American academics who are committed to accessible intellectual work and social justice outside the ivory tower. On the one hand, evoking Lacan even in passing tends to elicit from leftist cultural studies camps a rolling of eyes at best and an accusation of reactionary phallogocentrism at worst. On the other hand, any scholar seriously engaging Lacan these days is no doubt wincing with the expectation of being attacked for inaccuracies and a lack of critical commitment from a camp trained in the era of the Slovenian invasion. When it comes to Lacan for the United States, the Alcoholics Anonymous saying applies: one's too many and a hundred ain't enough.

Viego's book is neither a casual use of Lacan, borrowing some key ideas as a theory-stencil set over his primary texts, nor is it a thorough introduction to Lacanian concepts. Arguably, Viego's "more Lacanian" approach is a better one. I for one, not being an expert in the field of Latino studies, and admitting a suspicious yet persistent readerly

relationship to Lacan, would like to think that interventions like Viego's would make for more, perhaps unexpected, discourse about the relationship between identity and critical inquiry. This book will be meaningful for anyone who might see the Latinization of the United States and its redefinition of identity politics as an opportunity to reconsider the subject and social justice as such, especially in our current "pharm culture" that would medicate away any discontent with civilization.

I am sure that even as *Dead Subjects* will serve as a guidepost, it will also serve as a lightning rod. Viego offers himself as an *objet a*, a cause for more talk. In the end, *Dead Subjects* offers and asks in equal but anamorphic terms: what would it mean to talk more, but less about identity? What if the "noise" of *Latinidad* had no ego, but rather provoked an agonistic care of the self that sounded nothing like the paranoia of "America"?

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NOTES

1. A number of scholars of American psychology provide the background for Viego's specifically political focus, some of whom he mentions: Philip Cushman, *Constructing the Self, Constructing America: A Cultural History of Psychotherapy* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1990); Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California

- Press, 1995); Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog, eds., *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
- Especially influential have been Michel Foucault's recently compiled and translated lectures, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France*, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), and *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974–1975*, trans. Graham Burchell, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (New York: Picador, 2004); Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), and *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Discussions of universality and the human have been central to broad reconsiderations of neo-imperialism and global human rights, but most relevant to Viego's discussion is Judith Butler's return to these terms. See especially Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek, *Hegemony, Contingency, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso, 2000); Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), and *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
 - Viego follows here the antiracist theses made by Lacanian thinkers, including Joan Copjec, *Read My Desire: Lacan against the Historicists* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), and Juliet Flower MacCannell, *The Hysteric's Guide to the Future Female Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
 - See Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (London: Allen Lane, 1974); Charles Bernheimer and Claire Kahane, eds., *In Dora's Case: Freud-Hysteria-Feminism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Mark Micale, *Approaching Hysteria: Disease and Its Interpretations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
 - Jacques Lacan, "Kant avec Sade," in *Écrits*, trans. Bruce Fink (London: Norton, 2007), 645–70; Kenneth Reinhard, "Kant with Sade, Lacan with Levinas," *Modern Language Notes* 110, no. 4 (1995): 785.
 - Viego consistently borrows from and extends Chow's Marxist understanding of "coercive mimeticism" for "ethnically racialized" subjects to a Lacanian paradigm. See Rey Chow, *Ethics after Idealism: Theory-Culture-Ethnicity-Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), and *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
 - See Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). For a discussion of queer futurity, polemics, and the limitations of psychoanalytic critique, see "Forum: Conference Debates. The Antisocial Thesis in Queer Theory," *PMLA* 121, no. 3 (2006): 819–27.
 - Influential critiques include Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983); Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," in *New French Feminisms*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schocken Books, 1981), 245–64; and Luce Irigaray, *Speculum and the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian Gill (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985). Judith Butler's work consistently interrogates this presumed Lacanian precept. For a review of her interventions and emergent trends in critical embraces of Lacanian lack, see Andrew Robinson,

- "The Political Theory of Constitutive Lack: A Critique," *Theory and Event* 8, no. 1 (2005).
9. Leading among these studies of loss are Judith Butler's work on gender melancholia in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), and David Eng and David Kazanjian, eds., *Loss: The Politics of Mourning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
 10. See Edelman, *No Future*, and also Leo Bersani, *Homos* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), and Tim Dean, *Beyond Sexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). For a reading of Bersani's relation to Lacan and perversion, see H. N. Lukes, "Is the Rectum das Ding? Lacan, Bersani, and the Ethics of Perversion," *Oxford Literary Review* 20, no. 1–2 (1998): 103–42.
 11. Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," in *African American Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed., Winston Napier (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 257–79.
 12. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (London: Norton, 1977), 146.

