

interactions. Issues around conflict also come into the discussion of this chapter; they are, however, further elaborated in Chapter 5, where Britzman considers the interrelation of phantasy and theory, looking in particular at destruction and reparation. Drawing on both Klein's and Sedwick's work, Britzman examines unsettling questions around anxiety, learning, aggressiveness, curiosity, creativity and theories we never 'step foot in', to ultimately address the question: 'why do we have theory at all?' (p. 134). Loneliness is the last theme of the book and Britzman draws here on Klein's essay 'On the sense of loneliness' and Sedwick's self-analysis deployed in the 'Dialogue on love'. Loneliness is indeed the theme where the Freud–Klein controversies find a point of convergence, since in the work of both analysts, loneliness was thought of as an analogy relating phantasy to reality. In Britzman's conceptualization, revisiting loneliness in their work is a process of bringing together 'the psychoanalytic archive from which we can construct histories of learning after the experience of education' (p. 156).

I found myself being drifted away while reading this book and while I had a sense of not everything being coherent in the way the six chapters connect to each other, there was something of the pleasure of roaming the incoherent, a transitional space formed between 'what we can learn from the book' and what is pleasurable about it, albeit difficult to be identified as strictly educational or educative. Something, I suppose, of the taste of the elusiveness of after-education.

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CLASS BACK ON THE MAP

Class, self, culture. Beverley Skeggs, 2004. London: Routledge; ISBN 0 415 30085 1, 215 pp. £19.99.

Not much has been written recently about class. It appears to be a topic that has been missing from the research agenda over the past few years. This book successfully redresses the gap and, it claims, 'puts class back on the map'. Skeggs theorizes and explores the possible conditions associated with the concept of class. She sets out to show how class is constructed and given value through different cultures and categories and the many ways that culture is distributed and deployed as a resource and form of property.

The style of the book is surprisingly readable for a work that attempts to tease out meanings, clarify and analyse notions of class, self and culture at an academic and philosophical level. It is clearly structured and the reader is provided with signposts that direct and guide the text. Language is not overly jargonized and carefully and selectively referenced.

The structure of the book is based upon four central themes or processes, namely inscription, exchange, evaluation and perspective, that constitute class in our present society. Class is considered as a dynamic, subject to change, rather than a given.

The account examines the following: how certain bodies become inscribed; how categorizations of class are made in the contemporary; how it is spoken and known in a variety of ways. It suggests class is always made by, and in the interests of, those with power and it possesses circuits of symbolic distribution. This symbolic struggle then impacts upon value, national belonging, interpretation of experiences and the propertizing of culture. Culture is seen as a resource that is not equally available to all. Culture can be used by the middle classes as a vehicle to increase their exchange value, establishing a relationship with entitlement, but that same culture cannot be converted for the working classes.

Skeggs claims that value is attributed, accrued, institutionalized and lost and that there is an underlying assumption about who can have a self. Self is seen not as a subject position but as part of an exchange system in which class personhood is produced through different technologies such as narratives and discourses. Specific perspectives, theories and methods are promoted as morally good, generating a self only for the privileged; thus value can be produced through different perspectives.

It can be seen from the account how symbolic exchange enables culture to be used as a form of property, which cannot be accumulated by modern, possessive individuals, therefore increasing their value and ability to move across social space. These processes show how cultures are differently valued depending on who can deploy them as a resource and how the processes are reliant upon fixing some people in place whilst others can move. It challenges debates on reflexivity, risk, rational action, individualization and mobility. Skeggs make use of an analysis of Bourdieu's perspective on the symbolic economy (Bourdieu, 1986), offering a specific example as an application of these processes usefully concluding into an analysis of self-formulation and how this is integral to class making.

Overall, the book offers a selection of carefully written but comprehensive analyses and interpretations that demystify the notions of

class, self and culture and contextualize their meanings in the contemporary moment.

REFERENCE

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NOT JUST PRIVATION OR ADVERSITY

Therapy culture. Frank Furedi, 2003. London: Routledge; ISBN 0 415 32159-X, 245 pp. £14.99.

This book is about the expanding idiom of therapeutics in contemporary life. The central idea is that we are increasingly living our moral and political lives through affect, as the historic split between ‘reason’ and ‘emotion’ is reconfigured. We now, Furedi argues, make sense of the world through a prism of emotion, as the language and practices of therapy pervade all spheres of life.

Furedi’s main thesis is that every aspect of life, not just privation or adversity, has become a potential site for therapeutic intervention. The upshot is that social and political problems can now be re-cast in individual terms. They cry out, not for political remedies, but instead for the kinds of ‘support’ and treatment that only the new army of psychological experts can offer. What is new is not an interest in therapy – there have always been therapies of various sorts – but the ways in which contemporary public life has become emotionalized, with feelings operating as the main currency in cultural and political argument and action.

In this book, Frank Furedi takes us on a detailed tour of ‘therapy culture’. The book is packed full of examples that can not fail to convince us that there is definitely something a bit dubious, if not downright nasty, in the woodshed. From the enormous public outpouring of grief on the death of Diana, through the shock of 9/11, to the widespread sorrow and horror of the Soham murders, we are witnessing, Furedi argues, a new sensitivity to trauma, damage and the need for healing, as the therapeutic code overwhelms other codes of meaning. Traditional moral meanings attached to concepts such as trust, guilt and responsibility are wrenched from their bearings as the therapeutic ethos encroaches. Moralities are