CHAPTER NINE

LICHTENSTEIN, HOLLAND, AND LACAN: AMBIVALENCE TOWARD THE SEXUAL BODY, COOPTATION, AND DEFIANCE

In this chapter I wish to examine the recent psychoanalytic revisionist theories of two more thinkers, Heinz Lichtenstein and Jacques Lacan. Lichtenstein's theory contains provisions which appear to be most favorable to the sexual body, perhaps the most explicit which have been made in the past twenty years within a large comprehensive theory. This explicit emphasis on sexuality is probably exactly what guaranteed that Lichtenstein would be either ignored among other psychoanalytic thinkers or that he would have his theory taken over, co-opted, by others who would de-sexualize it. The desexualization in fact took place in the one field where Lichtenstein has made an impact, that is, in the literary criticism of Norman N. Holland. Lacan's theory, on the other hand, appears to be flourishing even though—unlike Lichtenstein's—it is expressed in terminology that is thoroughly innovative and in language that is extremely hard to comprehend (as almost all his readers agree). Perhaps Lacan made certain that his theory would not be taken over or co-opted by those who might wish to bowdlerize it; he seems the perfect examplar, in fact, of C.S. Peirce's insight into the "moral aspect" of scientific terminology. Peirce maintained that if you do not want your theory taken over by "loose thinkers," then it should have a "technical vocabulary" which is "composed of words so unattractive" that only serious investigators will dare to adopt it (Peirce, quoted by Hyman, 1955, pp. 369-370). As Alderman points out, there is a strong tradition of semi-deliberate obscurity in European thought, especially in thought that aspires to impart radical

insights (Alderman, 1977). Lacan is certainly part of that tradition. But the flourishing of Lacanian theory is also due, I suspect, to its definitive and sophisticated effort to separate psychoanalytic thinking from the sexual body once and for all.

Lichtenstein's Truncated Human Identity

By 1970, when the distinguished psychoanalyst Heinz Lichtenstein published a new theory of sexuality in which the orgasm had a central adult role, the mainstream of psychoanalytic thought had long been turned in an opposite direction. The article, "The Changing Concept of Psychosexual Development" (Lichtenstein, 1977, pp. 263-279), argued that the typical perceptual change during ecstatic orgasm could be regarded as a temporary loss of "object constancy" (Reich called it a "dimming of consciousness"), by means of which the adult was able to renew contact with the deepest, pre-verbal bodily sense of his or her own existence. Lichtenstein was making an attempt to give a biosexual ground to his radical perception, rare among today's psychoanalysts, that what Western civilization would now regard as "normal" social behavior could well be mass illness. The orgasm is the adult's way of getting back to a basic sense of existence, one far more authentic than anything afforded by society's roles.

Lichtenstein's departure from the prevailing asexuality in psychoanalytic thinking is matched by his sharp awareness of the irrational condition of culture in a modern world that has undergone violent disruption, both through wars and social upheavals, and in its sense of values. Taking serious issue with Heinz Hartmann's ego psychology, which holds that human development may be presumed to occur within "an average expectable environment" that is basically favorable to healthy life, Lichtenstein would see that the child's basic need for love and caring is rather more brutally disappointed in today's technological and mass society than it used to be in earlier stages of history, when relatively small communities tended to maintain a kind of parental interest for any member throughout life (1977, pp. 327-331). By the 1970's it made little sense, Lichtenstein said, to tell young people that their adaptation to society's values would help them to fulfill themselves, when in fact "the average *expectable* environment has been transformed into an average unpredictable one" (1977, p. 327).

The radical elements in Lichtenstein's thought also included his position on aggression: unlike most psychoanalysts, Lichtenstein tended to regard aggression as a drive that is less than basic. Aggression is not an "independent variable" on a par with libido, Lichtenstein concludes; it *appears* to be a basic drive only when "the affirmative function of pregenital and genital libidinal satisfaction fails . . ." (Lichtenstein, 1977, p. 275). Indeed a surprisingly Reichian element in Lichtenstein is his belief that libido, far from being a

vague unobservable energy, "is relatively accessible to clinical observation . . ." (p. 271). In contrast to others who have labored to remove all trace of energy theory from psychoanalysis, he holds that problems of "energy transformation" within psychological make-up have been "indispensable" to psychoanalytic understanding "because they alone can give account of many important transformation phenomena both in mental development as well as in pathology" (1977, pp. 243-244). Lichtenstein also clearly recognizes that in Freud's "original conceptualization of psychosexual development, the independent variable in the complex processes of human individuation was unquestionably sexuality as it unfolded through the various libidinal stages" (1977, p. 268). Lichtenstein does not believe this emphasis on sexuality was decisively altered until late in the 1930's, when Hartmann proposed "several independent variables of a nonsexual nature" (Lichtenstein, 1977, p. 268). Lichtenstein's theories of sexuality, of its psychoanalytic primacy, and of the chronic disturbance of modern civilization, are enhanced by his awareness of the metaphysical underpinnings of theory, and his acknowledgment, indeed his claim, that psychoanalysis is not merely a psychology but part of a world hypothesis: psychoanalysis has moved "toward a general concern with the psychological fundamentals of the human condition" (1977, p. 365). It asks "more radical questions than any" comparable theory, and it is a tool for changing the world. "In a time of crisis, psychoanalysis should be on the firing line" (1977, p. 367).

On this note, Lichtenstein ends his book, *The Dilemma of Human Identity*. Yet none of his work along the lines just described seems to have had an impact on his own field. His more refined theory of human identity, however, which is offered in the same volume, has been a highly formative influence in a theory of literature developed by Norman N. Holland, who knew Lichtenstein during the latter's long residence in Buffalo. As Lichtenstein acknowledges (1977, p. x), a close relationship existed between Lichtenstein and the so-called "Buffalo School" of critics, and with the Center for the Psychological Study of the Arts at SUNY-Buffalo. Lichtenstein's theory of identity shows many of the problematic marks of theory I have been discussing; as such it provides a recent illustration of how in recent years, even the most radical psychoanalytic thought comes to represent its opposite. Not accidentally, the two elements of Lichtenstein's theory which give it its radical cast, his emphasis on orgasm and the importance of the sexual body in psychoanalytic thought, and his recognition that there is no "normal expectable" society any longer, are exactly what are omitted from consideration in the adaptations made from his work.

But there was also within Lichtenstein an ambivalence of his own toward his radical side, a deep doubt about the sexual body and its potential value, which helped to defuse his innovations and render them harmless. The reversal begins not surprisingly within Lichtenstein's own formulations. His

key monograph, "Identity and Sexuality" (1977, pp. 49-122), was originally published separately (Lichtenstein, 1961) with the title, "Identity and Sexuality: A Study of Their Interrelationship in Man," indicating his work's broad, cross-cultural intent. The subtitle was later dropped. The first section is devoted to a consideration—prominently mentioned by Freud in his discussions of the nature of sexuality—of "nonprocreative sexuality" within the human species. In human biology, "sexuality becomes largely independent from the procreative cycles and begins to pervade all human behavior to a much more complete degree than seems to be the case in animals, particularly in the lower animals" (1977, p. 54). Such biological theorizing would seem to be an almost perfect introduction for the topic of psychoanalytic psychology, assuming that one wishes to emphasize its basis in the sexual body. However, within a few pages, Lichtenstein is busy getting sexuality out of the way: "Once sexuality has acted as a pace-setter" in early infancy, "the maintenance of human identity is accomplished by complex means, many of them of a nonsexual nature" (p. 59). It is in clinical findings on human identity that we will see this transformation. What we see in this main thrust of the monograph is, first, a review and fairly uncritical acceptance of the doctrine of infant-mother symbiosis established by Margaret Mahler (Mahler, Pine, and Bergman, 1975), and second, Lichtenstein's own theory of identity as a form of "imprinting." Each of these apparently biological approaches leads to the dubious biological postulate that the human animal alone of all creatures, is inherently imbalanced. "Man," Lichtenstein affirms at the end of "Identity and Sexuality" is "this particular living being whose fundamental biological imbalance can only be stabilized through a never ending process" of identity-making (1977, p. 120).

The assertions on symbiotic lines cannot be maintained in the face of evidence I have adduced from recent research. We can no longer assume, as Lichtenstein does,

> the fact that the relation between mother and infant does, from the infant's viewpoint . . . represent an inner state of oneness, in which there is no differentiation between the infant's I and the mother. (Lichtenstein, 1977, p. 65)

". . . I am inclined," Lichtenstein wrote in another passage, "to see in the early mother-child unit, and not in its breaking up, the primary condition for identity in man." It is "the very extremeness of the symbiotic relation of the human child to his mother" that "becomes the very source of the emergence of *human* identity" (1977, p. 72). This language, with its repetition of the intensifier, "very" and the "extremeness" that Lichtenstein assumes into the dyad, shows that Lichtenstein had not been taking into account the kinds of data I have discussed, where the process of fusion and separation is too flexible to even call for the notion of a "breaking up." In the light of more recent evidence, the idea of a symbiotic unity of infant with mother may now

be taken with several grains of salt. Lichtenstein's assumption that unconscious preverbal communication between mother and infant is evidence of the singleness of their two persons was not a logical necessity even in terms of his own theory at the time he wrote his essay. Indeed there could be no communication, strictly speaking, if the two are already fused. Early undisturbed infant-mother contact could make sense as support for a theory of undistorted communication between a mother and an infant who had some sense of being separate, prior to the infant's learning of language. But that would be something quite different than a single state of consciousness in two people.

The point at which Lichtenstein diverges from Mahler is in his explanation of the creation of human identity through the process referred to in ethology as "imprinting." Lichtenstein is aware that he is employing the concept of imprinting as an analogy, but seems unaware that it is, even in the animal kingdom, an abstraction—a metaphor in fact—of how identity passes from mother to infant. As Stratton now argues, psychobiologists themselves have come to realize that when we try to explain identity by means of imprinting, "this amounts to explaining one unknown by another, possibly even more obscure, mystery." It may now even be more feasible "to explain animal imprinting in terms of what we have discovered about human bonding" (Stratton, 1982b, p. 394).

Lichtenstein's ambivalence toward the sexual body stems in part from his intellectual roots in the European Humanist tradition. He is able to say that human imprinting results in an individual identity, whereas animal imprinting leads to a species identity without significant individuation. However, the very metaphor of the imprint serves to render this distinction powerless to delineate what is preciously human. Whereas the animal at least has at its disposal the adaptational repertoire of its species, the "unique" human identity would lock the adult into the range of behavior (allowing for the play of identity "theme") that was originally imprinted by the mother. The question might be raised, what function could the mechanical concept of imprinting have for a psychoanalyst who really wishes to stress psychosexuality and the irrational social world of the late twentieth century? I suggest that his emphasis on imprinting is a function of Lichtenstein's ambivalence toward the sexual body. I say this because, in his exposition, imprinting soon takes on a thoroughly mentalized aspect. It is as if the mother transmits a code by way of brain waves to the infant and imprints it. Needless to say, this idea interferes mightily with Lichtenstein's stated goal of avoiding decisively the Cartesian ideological bias of mind over body (Lichtenstein, 1977, pp. 67-68; 267). Indeed, Lichtenstein's admirable attempt to reintroduce the adult orgasm into his psychological theory is hampered by his simultaneous insistence that adult, sexual, ecstatic states are modelled structurally after the early fusion in contact of mother and infant: "In the primitive sensory interchanges taking

place between mother and infant one could see the precursor of adult sexuality" (1977, p. 77). However, if these early exchanges are pregenital, as Lichtenstein has acknowledged (1977, p. 207), then the change to genital contact in the adult is unaccounted for in this infantile precursor. Given the terms of the theory, it cannot be accounted for: within the theory of Lichtenstein, as he puts it, "man cannot ever experience his identity except . . . within the variations of a symbiotically structured *Umwelt*" (1977, p. 73). "Cannot ever" is a terribly long time, covering all of adult life as well as all human life throughout history.

These objections are not meant to deny the reality of whatever impact mothers have on the identities of their babies. Such effects surely are major. The point is that it is inept and even socially dangerous to state that the process is one of special human imprinting, and to pay no attention to the bodily, physiological qualities and conditions, nor to the qualitative differences between individual adult female bodies. Thus a mother who transmits an identity to her infant, whatever that process may really be like, but does so with her emotional capacity held back or hampered, will be doing a much different thing from a mother who enjoys a context of emotional well-being. The fact that both babies will survive except under the most extreme conditions, and that both will have "identity themes," tells us only what we can learn through the lowest common denominator, which is to say very little.

The qualitative differences might be highly affected by a process of the sexual body to which I referred briefly in an earlier context in Chapter Six: Suppose that it should turn out to be the case that the emotional bonding of mother and infant is more easily facilitated in cases where bodily contact is maintained for some hours just after birth. For this supposition we have some evidence, as Alice Rossi has argued (Rossi, 1977, p. 19), although this evidence is insufficient to warrant a claim of verification. Rossi suggested that the process of early bonding has an inherent relation to the fact that in pregnancy, estrogen levels increase by a factor of 10 while progesterone goes up to 100 times its usual level. These levels are still relatively high just after birth (Rossi, 1977, pp. 19-20). The hormonal levels then decline over a period of days or weeks, with varying rates, and with individual differences among mothers (Rossi, personal communication, August 8, 1983). It is one thing to say that the meaning of such hormonal data is as yet unknown; it is quite another to ignore the data and to speak solely about a single process of imprinting. What Lichtenstein does is create a metaphor for identity formation which seems to be that of the template. It is as though there were a preformed template within the mother's mind, through which an identity theme is transmitted to another receiving template in the infant, thus systematically bypassing any physiological variables. That the earliest mother-infant interactions are crucial to Lichtenstein's theory of imprinting could not be denied, but neither could the sexual chemistry. As Rossi points out, the

process is sexual for a long time: "The infant's crying stimulates the secretion of oxytocin in the mother which triggers uterine contractions and nipple erection preparatory to nursing" (Rossi, 1977, p. 6). It is during the months of the occurrence of this process that Lichtenstein proposes a biological principle at work which is unique to humans. If we choose to redefine reality despite the original psychoanalytic terms, and find that reality, especially that part which sustains human identity, is nonsexual, then we merely add to the reinvention of the asexual infant that I have discussed in an earlier chapter.

The confusion caused by the unacknowledged template metaphor is not relieved by referring to body surfaces, that is, to the series of touch contacts that goes with the transmission of identity, since this merely makes the entire body into a template—an elaborate information processing machine with nothing to account for the fact that it runs, and that it can run in radically different ways. We still have to distinguish what it is that makes some transmissions warm and emotionally sustaining while others are emotionally crippling and produce a rigid personality incapable of change or growth.

Holland's Denial of Adult Experience

Lichtenstein's theory of human identity has found a reception in literary criticism. Norman N. Holland, who has adapted the theory of the "identity theme," is the preeminent theorist of a network of recent psychoanalytic critics of literature. Social psychologists would do well to take note of the phenomenon of the growth, within the nominally unscientific field of literary study, of a theory such as psychoanalysis which has not been able to establish strong institutional support within the domain of academic psychology. Indeed one of the strengths of the psychoanalytic criticism network is the sense of community generated within a group of individuals who have undergone (in many cases) considerable psychoanalytic therapy and self-analysis, and thus have found themselves profoundly in accord with psychoanalytic assumptions; yet they perceive themselves as under continual attack from most of their colleagues on grounds that are pre-Freudian, that is, "off the board" as far as theory is concerned. Such a group may be predicted to work cooperatively and intelligently to protect and promulgate its own view of the world.

A leader like Holland, who offers a way out of traditional literary analysis by reducing reading experience to whatever it may mean within the individual's private "identity theme," can serve not only to meet the needs of such a group, but to attract many additional professional readers of literature who might be otherwise troubled by literature's radical social illuminations (Efron, 1968). Holland's approach has the further advantage, not available to clinicians, of denying that psychoanalysis has to meet any test of effectiveness: by making "identity theory" central to psychoanalytic theory, "psychoanalysis

need no longer try to present itself in a medical package of diagnosis, procedure, and prognosis." Identity theory has no connection with the classical topics, now exhausted, "of early clinical generalization—Oedipus complex, penis envy, castration anxiety, neurosis." Instead, identity theory aligns psychoanalysis "with the strong tradition of psychological experimentation on perception" (Holland, 1978, pp. 466-467). The earlier distressing topics, with all their reference to the sexual body, thus may be left behind, in favor of a new focus upon the "higher mental processes" through which humans construct their realities. This focus, however, harbors ill for any continuation of the psychoanalytic tradition, which has stressed the unconscious motivations rather than the so-called higher processes. Moreover, the phrase "higher mental processes" is taken by Holland from Neisser's *Cognitive Psychology* (Holland, 1978, p. 467, quoting Neisser, 1967, pp. 10, 305). That Holland is drawn to Neisser's branch of cognitive theory accords well with the use of Lichtenstein's identity-theme concept to deny the possibility of adult change. One of the difficulties with Neisser's theory is precisely its inability to account for the incorporation of new, dissonant, "information" into the mind. For Neisser as for Holland, "people only learn what they have schemata for and ignore everything else" (Iran-Nejad and Ortony, 1984, p. 200, referring to Neisser, 1976). The trouble is, people who are not totally defensive can be observed to take startled notice of many perceptions which do not fit their preestablished schemata and which are for that reason troubling, challenging, or delightful. Holland's move toward a cognitive emphasis in the late 1970's prefigured his recent further deemphasis of psychoanalytic theory in his book *Laughter* (Holland, 1982) and in his article with Kintgen (Kintgen and Holland, 1984); the latter is almost free of psychoanalytic thought, attitude, or terminology, even as it continues to argue for the controlling force of individual identity in the reading processes.

In this transition out of the psychoanalytic world hypothesis and into cognitive psychology, the major problem for the perspective of the sexual body occurred through Holland's mode of extensive borrowing from Lichtenstein. Although he relies almost exclusively on the monograph "Identity and Sexuality: A Study of their Relationship in Man," Holland writes as if the identity theory had no connection with sexuality. Identity becomes a largely cognitive matter, although unconscious processes remain important. This is no small job of bodily and genital excision, inasmuch as Lichtenstein's monograph centers on the case history of a woman patient who was deeply involved with alcohol, prostitution and lesbianism. These sexual body dimensions simply disappear in Holland's appropriation of Lichtenstein's theory, as does all of the sexuality. In an empirical study of how different readers respond to literary works, Holland holds that "bodily derived drives are far from fine enough" to tell us anything worth knowing about the reading process (Holland, 1975a, pp. 53-54). His statement illustrates my contention

that "the drives" are convenient straw men for theorists who would prefer to dispense with the sexual body. Holland's long-term associates at Buffalo, Murray Schwartz and David Willbern, believe that psychoanalytic theory and the literary criticism deriving from it underwent "an advance" as the theory shifted its focus and its base, "from a somatic to a social world" (Schwartz and Willbern, 1982, p. 210). Schwartz and Willbern refer to "Lichtenstein's and Holland's uses of 'identity themes'" (p. 211) as if there were no distinction to be made between the two thinkers, and without mentioning that for Lichtenstein, identity was inextricably bound to sexuality.

Holland's adaptation of Lichtenstein's theory is explained in terms which are themselves highly cognitive in orientation, despite his use of an analogy from music: "We can be precise about individuality by conceiving the individual as living out variations on an identity theme much as a musician might play out an infinity of variations on a single melody." The theme, however musical, can be deduced ("we discover" it) "by abstracting it from its variations" (Holland, 1975b, p. 814). The origin of this theme is to be found in the mother-infant interactions during the first year of the infant's life. Despite attention in some of Holland's formulations to the needs of the *infant's* "style" (a theoretical decision which allows for the inconsistent notion that a precursor of identity already exists prior to the imprinting of the "primary" one), as well as to the style of the mother (Holland, 1978, p. 452), the direction of imprinting is entirely clear: from mother onto infant. "The mother . . . imprints on the infant . . . a 'primary identity'," which remains "invariant" throughout all the experiences of life, providing "an unchanging inner form or core of continuity" (Holland, 1975b, p. 814). Overlooking the implications of his own terminology here, Holland also stipulates that the *unchanging* core is capable of "infinite" variation. In the adult, Holland also assumes "such an invariant identity theme," which can again be deduced from its variations to reveal "the invariant sameness," or "an unchanging essence" of the human being (Holland, 1975b, p. 815). How an "invariant sameness" can have "infinite" variations is hardly clear, although the quest for certainty (Dewey, 1929b) in the "unchanging essence" is clear enough. It is also clear what we are to do, according to this theory: as we read a work of literature, "all of us" use the new work to reconstruct once more the old theme; we use the work, not only to symbolize ourselves, but "finally to replicate ourselves" (Holland, 1975b, p. 816).

A feature of Holland's theory especially relevant to the energy functions of the sexual body is the stipulation that the reader must also employ the "particular pattern" of defensive mechanisms and adaptational strategies, fully consistent with the identity theme, "that he keeps between himself and the world" (1975b, p. 817). In Holland's reasoning, this defensive layer is what enables the experience to take place at all. From my own Deweyan assumptions, it is that very buffering which is guaranteed to neutralize new

experience—whether literary or other (Efron, 1977). To insist on keeping something between oneself and the experience is ultimately to deny its qualitative impact. In literary experience, the defensive barrier prevents any aspects of a literary work which might not fit comfortably with the established, unchangeable identity theme from reaching the reader's self. A defensive buffer maintained in human relations would make it impossible to have anything like spontaneous interaction or direct human contacts.

The facts of infantile psychology and development are again at stake here. Following Lichtenstein, Holland assumes that identity is noninstinctual: "In animals, identity is expressed in fixed instincts . . . . But we are not given an identity by instinct. Rather we are seduced into becoming ourselves by the love and nurture we receive in infancy" (Holland, 1978, p. 468). This is far too sharp a distinction, however, to accord with what is now known of animal or human identity: we could as well say the young mammal or bird has no instinctually given identity because it will not develop normally (perhaps will not even survive) unless given maternal attention (not just feeding), and that the attentions given by Harlow's mother monkeys to their young are a way of seducing and loving them into becoming themselves. It is not out of the question to suppose that monkeys too have their identity themes; a theory which holds that an infant *homo sapiens* needs love and nurturing so that it can develop identity is perhaps no more than a partial restatement of Prescott's findings of the importance for human development of affectionate somatosensory contact. Whether one wishes to refer to "instinct" or, tendentiously, to "fixed instinct," within the somatosensory contact processes is a secondary matter. The prime point is that the body is integral to identity, whether in the infant or the adult. In the tradition of Freudian psychoanalysis, the body also is sexual.

Holland often contrasts the cognitive life, the creation of meanings and the maintenance of identity, with all that is instinctual and physiological. Identity is not a matter of "physical and chemical laws" (1978, p. 468). Yet despite his denigration of such laws, Holland refers in adjacent paragraphs to the incorporation of chemical processes such as the triggering of brains cells in perception (1978, p. 468) within a "holistic" approach. This is a somewhat confusing combination, but it is an acknowledgment, however subordinated, that physical and bodily processes must be included in any psychology that hopes to be persuasive. It remains extremely doubtful whether any psychoanalytic psychology can dispense with the sexual body. In this respect, it is worth noticing that Holland retains a certain amount of reference to anality and (especially) orality, from the classical Freudian developmental stages in his work, and he also refers favorably at one point (Holland, 1975a, p. 258) to the bodily correlations of psychoanalytic concepts developed by the psychoanalyst Franz Alexander in the 1930's. But Holland's own thinking about the body is undeveloped. Despite his affirmation of the "holistic" approach, he is still

confident that there are "fixed, transpersonal entities like pancreas or femur," but these contrast in their fixed nature with the processes of human identity (1978, p. 467). His own preference for such terms as "invariant" and "exactly matched" and "replicate" to describe identity deprive this contrast of its rhetorically intended effect. More important, the facts of the human body do not sustain the contrast either, even though the body is generally made to seem "dumb" by cognitively oriented theorists. Thus, to take the example of the femur: far from being a fixed entity, there is evidence that like all human bones it is part of a bioenergetic process. Emotions affect bone processes, and those processes include the formation of blood within the marrow. Ladenbauer-Bellis, a Yale biochemist working in the department of orthopedic surgery, has given a preliminary description of the relation between bone and emotion. Bone is crucial to movement and posture, and hence to any psychology that takes the body seriously. Its calcification processes are not independent, but require muscle activity. Armoring, in Reich's sense, is pertinent here (Ladenbauer-Bellis, 1980a, 1980b) since it could interfere with these processes. The bioenergetic therapist Curtis Turchin has described a method of "Working with Bone" (1979, p. 68).

Two highly effective statements of Holland's theory are given in his examination of the identity themes of George Bernard Shaw and Robert Frost (Holland, 1975b, 1978). Both studies may serve to illustrate my own argument that psychoanalytic theory now aims to deny adult sexual reality and the related radical social insights of the early psychoanalytic revolution itself.

George Bernard Shaw's Desexualization

Using psychoanalytic theories of orality, Holland gives a certain amount of attention to Shaw's bodily life in early childhood and infancy; Shaw had a lifelong interest in eating and orating. A neglected child, "his life-style might be a response to an absent mother and an empty mouth" (1978, p. 479). From such considerations, Shaw's identity theme is duly abstracted, and what it gives Holland is an astonishing sense of certainty: "an unchanging inner core with which *I can understand how Shaw shaped every phase of his life from the most public to the most personal*" (p. 457, emphasis added). The hazards of reducing Shaw's many plays to the dimension of Shaw's own motivation, his need to reassure himself that his absent mother had neither abandoned him nor mis-nurtured him, do not worry Holland: "we have got what was wanting, a way of talking *rigorously* about the individual human being" (Holland, 1978, p. 465, emphasis added).

There seems to be no reason to take seriously Holland's claim that he can understand the shaping of "every phase" of Shaw's life, since such a feat would imply an understanding of the literary creations in Shaw's plays, and of their complexity as explorations and criticisms of Western culture. But if the

identity theme has the merits claimed for it, then at least we *should* have here a valuable way of talking about Shaw the man if not of Shaw the artist. In Holland's own practice, however, the infantile derivation of the theme is only imposed over Shaw's adult sexuality. The crux of the problem is Shaw's statement on sex to Frank Harris, analyzed by Holland:

> I liked sexual intercourse because of its amazing power of producing a celestial flood of emotion and exaltation of existence, which, however momentary, gave me a sample of what may one day be the normal state of being for mankind in intellectual ecstasy. I always gave the widest expression to this in a torrent of words, partly because I felt it due to the woman to know what I felt in her arms, and partly because I wanted her to share it. (Shaw, quoted by Holland, 1978, p. 457)

In Holland's analysis, Shaw is credited with virtual contempt for "physical, not mental, ejaculation . . ." (p. 457); Shaw has that "frank lack of emotion in a man who is at home only with fantasies, puppets, disguises, and applause" (1978, p. 464). To be sure, Shaw in the statement quoted above is describing his habitual manner of promptly translating sexual experience into an augury of social-utopian intellectual ecstasy, and of "sharing," that is imposing, this view on the sexual partner. From virtually any psychoanalytic perspective, including the Reichian, there is an indication in this intimate account by Shaw of sexual disturbance. However, the fact is that Shaw obviously knew that he could only get this great peak of "emotion and exaltation of existence" through physical lovemaking or "sexual intercourse." Sex therefore was not some mental puppet which could be used to perform certain identity functions, nor was it merely a fantasy without sexual body participations. On the contrary, it is a sexual body experience which makes possible an elaboration in fantasy that Shaw cherished. Holland introduces the misleading consideration that "Shaw did not prize sexuality as an end in its physical self" (p. 457). But no one who has examined the function of the orgasm would prize it for that either, if by "physical" is meant the exclusion of emotion. Thus, Holland's claims for the all-knowing power of the identity theme falls to the complexities of adult sexual experience.

Robert Frost's Clarification of the Suffering of the Body

Holland's treatment of Robert Frost brings up a problem of a different order. Frost, in a statement on poetics which Holland himself regards as highly characteristic of the man and his identity theme, said that a good poem, after beginning in delight, assuming direction, and running "a course of lucky events," then

> ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion. (Frost, quoted by Holland, 1975b, p. 820)

The problem here is not only whether this statement can be made to fit within Frost's identity theme, nor even if Frost's poetry entirely fits that theme, but whether, given the terms of that theory, there could be room for any "clarification of life," even one that is a purely momentary "stay against confusion." In terms of Holland's theory, these words of Frost would be part of the poet's efforts to "avoid emotional and cognitive dissonance" (Holland, 1975b, p. 818), a task for which the identity theme is, presumably, well equipped. However, if "clarification" is meant to *refer* to anything in cultural, historical, or social life, the identity theme theory has only reductive force. We can imagine through considerations of identity how Frost might have been transforming a personal infantile fantasy into a "total experience of esthetic, moral, intellectual, or social coherence and significance" (Holland, 1975b, p. 818); but Holland, as a reader immersed in his own theory of the identity theme, is obliged simply to transform that cultural significance back to its meanings within Frost's infantile needs. In this, Holland is an exemplar of the results of psychoanalytic theory's own immersion in the fantasy-beseiged infantile body for more than half a century (see Chapters Three and Six, above).

To bring out the implications for the perspective of the sexual body in Holland's theory of the literary artist when it is applied not to the man but to the man's work, I would like to consider briefly Robert Frost's "A Masque of Reason," composed in 1943 (Frost, 1949, pp. 587-606). In this work, Frost attempts a "clarification of life"—*human* life and not only his own identity—through a reconsideration of the ancient Biblical drama of the trials of Job. By virtue of its scope, this work challenges the identity theme Holland ascribes to Frost, namely, to deal with "*huge unknown forces of sex and aggression by smaller symbols*," or "*to manage great unmanageable unknowns by means of small knowns*" (Holland, 1975b, p. 818; emphasis in original). Frost's direct presentation of God, the Devil, and Job (as well as the creation of Job's wife, Thyatira) does not fit the formula of dealing with the great unknowns by means of smaller scale symbolization. "The Masque of Reason," furthermore, was regarded by Frost as a major work: Frost once confided that the "Masque of Reason" is his central work: "All my poetry is a footnote to it" (Frost, quoted in Nitchie, 1978, p. 151).

The first extended speech in the poem, as Thompson and Winnick (1976, p. 118) point out, is "God's Speech to Job." God undertakes to thank Job for his services to God. But God also explains why it has taken some one thousand years for him to say this to Job.

> I have no doubt
> You realize by now the part you played
> To stultify the Deuteronomist
> And change the tenor of religious thought.
> My thanks are to you for releasing me
> From moral bondage to the human race.
> The only free will there at first was man's

Who could do good or evil as he chose.
I had no choice but to follow him
With forfeits and rewards he understood—
Unless I liked to suffer loss of worship.
I had to prosper good and punish evil.
You changed all that. You set me free to reign.
You are the Emancipator of your God,
And as such I promote you to a saint.
(Frost, 1949, pp. 589-590)[1]

We may fairly consider these lines as part of an attempted "clarification of life," in which the subject matter is the relation of Man and God in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The clarification attempted here consists of an exhibition of arbitrary contradictions within that arrangement. Frost conveys a certain gratification in making this exposure, and we may join with the poet in this feeling. But the *significance* is not his identity theme. Indeed, this poem challenges the validity of the theme Holland constructs: is Frost avoiding "emotional and cognitive dissonance" (Holland, 1975b, p. 818) here, or is he actually creating it? Using Holland's theory, the latter possibility cannot even be considered. For one thing, the identity theme theory requires that the literary production be a unified product of both unconscious fantasy and conscious literary effort. But the theory thus loses the possibility of unconscious meanings, unintended by the author, which sustains "emotional and cognitive confusion" as a positive aesthetic experience. In "A Masque of Reason," such unconscious intention did have a powerful effect on the play. Thompson and Winnick (1976, pp. 117-121) leave no doubt that consciously Frost did not intend the play as a criticism of God nor of any of the traditional cultural arguments which justify the suffering of human beings. He intended just the opposite. Yet God's speech to Job unavoidably suggests a satiric, highly critical attitude toward these very justifications. In fact, Lawrence Thompson, who was later to become Frost's authorized biographer, wrote a review in 1945 of "A Masque of Reason" in which he commented on the irreverance and unorthodoxy of the play. Frost was infuriated; he soon took Thompson aside and attempted to explain the basic "piety" of the play to him (Thompson and Winnick, 1976, p. 401). But the literary text refused to obey Frost's conscious specifications; indeed a few years later, an anthologist included "God's Speech to Job" (but none of the remaining passages in "A Masque of Reason") in a section on "Satire" for a book on modern poetry (Rodman, 1951, pp. 113-114). It would appear that Frost's unconscious need, the intention most relevant to psychoanalytic thinking, was not to create emotional and cognitive coherence through the play on Job's ancient sufferings, but to express dissonance for his readers and for himself.

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[1]From *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, edited by Edward Connery Lathem. Copyright 1945 by Robert Frost. Copyright © 1973 by Leslie Frost Ballantine. Reprinted by permission of Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Publishers.

Let us return to God's speech to Job. Obviously God is saying things in this extract which offer an experience of "emotional and cognitive dissonance": God's thanks for having part of the Bible stultified, God's recollection that in the bad old days, God had no choice but to follow Man, and God's mentality of the corporation world, by which he can "promote" Job to a higher position in the organization. This is a God who enjoys ruling as a purpose in itself, without moral pretensions. The implication is that Job's bodily sufferings, both in his own body and in the cruel loss of the fruits of his generation, his children, were for the pleasure of this God. As God goes on to say:

> I'm going to tell Job why I tortured him
> And trust it won't be adding to the torture.
> I was just showing off to the Devil, Job . . . .
> (Frost, 1949, p. 600)

Although God goes on to explain further that there was a serious purpose in this "showing off," the dissonance is never overcome. Perhaps, given Frost's own life experience of bodily suffering, it could not have been: Frost had lost his first child, a son, to an infantile illness, and later on, in the years prior to writing "Masque of Reason," "a daughter, wife and son within a space of six years" (Thompson and Winnick, 1976, p. 118). Even if we grant the truisms that Frost derived personal gratification from writing God's speech to Job, and that Frost had a certain type of personality which set limits to just what sort of poetry he would find satisfying, we have done nothing to confront the satiric significance of the poem. What would be needed for such consideration would be a theory that permitted the relating of cultural historical themes and conflicts to the poet as an adult with a sexual body, rather than the reduction of the conflicts to a mere function of the infantile identity theme. In this regard, it is unfortunate that Erik Erikson's epigenetic theory (Erikson, 1982) is not a theory of the sexual body. Erikson realized that to understand *psyche* and *soma*, mind and body, it is necessary to think of their context within *ethos*, the cultural forces, some of which might be seriously rejected by the creative artist. By foreclosing the possibility of cultural criticism Holland simply avoids contact with the problem that has confronted the originators of psychoanalysis from Freud onward: how to deal with the implications of a psychological theory that fundamentally challenged civilized morality.

Meeting this challenge has proved to be extraordinarily expensive in reducing the scope of psychoanalytic interest. The criticism of cultural authority evoked by the brief passage I have quoted from Frost's "Masque of Reason" is nothing by comparison to the whole wealth of radical social thought that the psychoanalytic revolution originally implied. Holland's revision of the theory removes its troubling contents and transports it into cognitive psychology.

But once the sexual body was excised from the theory which Holland took over from Lichtenstein, it became easy for psychoanalytic thinking, in his hands, to avoid contact with the radical critical element.

Nor is Holland's project a narrowly specialist or "literary" one. Holland is well aware that his new mode of psychoanalytic theory is actually a whole way of viewing the world; he even suggests extending the theory to scientific theories in general, and calls for their incorporation within identity themes (Holland, 1978, pp. 468-469). "Psychoanalysis enables us to go *through* science, as it were, to a psychological principle that itself explains science . . ." (1975b, p. 821). As a world hypothesis, identity theory convicts itself on the grounds of inadequate scope (Pepper, 1942, pp. 74-77): implicitly it calls for the narrowing of human cognition, from that which is adequate to warrant knowledge in the face of all the evidence—which is Pepper's interest in the cognitive value of root metaphors—to the concentration on a fixed, personal constellation of responses, repeated and elaborated through one's life, designated one's "identity theme." The inadequate scope of Holland's theory is the result—though also perhaps the intended function—of its denial of the adult sexual body.

The New Psychoanalytic Mystification of the Natural Body

Holland's success in adapting and de-radicalizing psychoanalytic theory within literary criticism does not seem to have closely matching analogues in the other arts and art criticisms. A less violent adaptation is that by the distinguished British art critic, Adrian Stokes. Because the central issue of his theory might be said to be the human body, it will be worth taking up briefly here. Ostensibly, Stokes is continuing the early psychoanalytic insistence on body energies, libido, and on instinctual drives which were placed theoretically at the borderline where psyche is rooted to soma. Thus Stokes (1972) writes: "There is a sense in which all art is of the body." But what he meant by that remark is, in his own words, that the various art media "represent . . . the actualities of the hidden psychic structure made up of evaluations and fantasies with corporeal content" (1972, p. 122). The body can be permeated with mental significance, with fantasies, in other words, and then talked about with some sophistication, but this is a long way from looking at the body. Stokes, however, would have had a tough time looking at it, judging by his assertion a page or two earlier that "almost every product of the body . . . continues to revolt us" throughout our adult life (Stokes, 1972, p. 120). My point of course is not to make a personal accusation. By putting Stokes' readers into contact with the body rejection that informs his sense of the self, I hope to reinforce my argument that present-day psychoanalytic theory attracts this kind of unresolved body rejection *because* it no longer has a viable concept of the sexual body in its own assumptions. Or rather, it does have an unacknowl-

edged concept of the body, one that regards it with pre-Freudian disgust and hatred. We can see in a new way what it means for Stokes to say that what art preserves and restores—and this is true no matter what form of art we are talking about—is "the mother's body." That, in theory, automatically should mean the human body itself, but there is a gap evident in Stokes' language (p. 120). He is referring to the symbiotic union of infant with mother in which the sexual body is enveloped, or thoroughly obscured. Nonetheless, Stokes, like all psychoanalytic theorists including Holland, is still obliged to refer to the sexual body in some way.

Lacan and the Fragmented Sexual Body

The great advantage of Jacques Lacan's theory is that alone among the psychoanalytic variants, it does not fudge the issue: Lacan in fact has a theory of the body, but not of the natural body; his theory, moreover, would have it that we constitute our selves in terms of an "Other," but this is not merely the biological mother. It is the mother, to be sure, but this "Other" is also the inscriptions of culture through the medium of language upon the early infantile psyche that form identity. Moreover, the identity so formed is no stable, invariant "identity theme," but a constantly endangered and unstable alloy of conscious and unconscious components. The result is never a unified "Self" such as virtually all other theories presuppose as the desirable and possible ideal. Self-formation in Lacanian terms can only be tenuous; human nature is a divided nature, and hence any world hypothesis that presumes to deal with the human being as a unified organism, or as a mind that makes up a "unified subject," is engaging in fabrication, and dangerous fabrication at that.

The conceptual and semantic difficulties of Lacan's theory are so formidable as to have already called for several lengthy explications. A "reader's guide" to nine essays selected by Lacan for the English edition of his *Écrits* (1977) runs to 433 pages (Muller and Richardson, 1982); the commentary and explanation are thus longer than the *Écrits* volume itself, which has 338 pages. Other books explaining Lacan include works by Lemaire (1977), Schneiderman (1980, 1983), Clement (1983), and Smith and Kerrigan (1983). Chaitin's review of the last work (Chaitin, 1984) makes it evident that with all the explication, substantial difficulties of interpretation remain. My own understanding of Lacan is heavily indebted to the writings of Ellie Ragland-Sullivan (Ragland-Sullivan, 1979, 1981, in press) to which I refer the reader.[2] It should be anticipated, however, that no interpretation of Lacan will have a consensus among Lacanians today. My reliance on Ragland-Sullivan's interpretation is

[2]I am most grateful to Dr. Ragland-Sullivan for allowing me to read the full manuscript of her major work on Lacan, *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis*, and for her replies to several inquiries concerning Lacan. The book is scheduled for publication in late 1985.

almost certain to be judged a somewhat arbitrary decision, and it may also be faulted for simplifying her argument. The purpose of the present discussion, however, is not to supply a comprehensive reading of Lacan or his commentators, but to focus on issues concerning the sexual body.

Lacan's Theories of the Neonate and Infant

In the 1930's, when Lacan began his theorizing, he had already been impressed with studies by Henri Wallon of "imprinting" in animals (cited by Ragland-Sullivan, in press), but unlike Lichtenstein, he placed the stage for human imprinting from mother to child at a point several months into life, reserving the first six months for a period of unawareness and radical cognitive insufficiency, regarding body and self. Prior to reaching the famous "mirror stage" (Lacan, 1977, pp. 1-2), where the crucial shift is begun from this early insufficiency to the delusive unified identity of civilized existence, Lacan has a definite theoretical supposition of the neonate's body upon which he relies as if on a firmly supported empirical finding: the infant can only experience its own body as a "fragmented" one (Lacan, 1977, p. 4). Within this fragmented corpus, the infant, insofar as it has any feelings of its body prior to reaching the mirror stage, has only experienced the "turbulent" movements of energy within it. The term pays homage to the influence within French child psychology of H. Wallon's book (1925), *L'Enfant turbulent*, where the supposition that the neonate could have a functioning representation of its own body was considered absurd. In Lacan, the postulated turbulence is felt by the neonate as chaotic, formless; in no way is it regarded by the very young mind as valuable.

Despite the cognitive insufficiency with regard to its own body, however, the infant can receive language at once, in the form of sounds and phonemes, in such a way that these begin to structure the psyche. What the infant does not become aware of, however, is that these traces of language, now a part of itself, are not its own, but are fused with the emotional needs (the "Desire") of the mother, who is the major (but not the sole) early representative of all that is Other; nor does the infant realize that it originally took on a firmer identity only in order to paper over, as it were, an original radical gap in itself. But this gap remains, actively operating as a dynamic force throughout life.

The seriousness of Lacanian belief in the initial confusion of the neonate is indicated by this remark by the Lacanian psychoanalyst Michèle Montrelay: for the neonate, the perceptual world is one of "confusion and coincidences: hearing is very close to the eye, which is seen [sic] by the child as an eye-ear, an open hole" (Montrelay, 1980, pp. 82-83). During this highly confused phase, mental representations or "images" do occur through the pressure of verbal-visual impact, and these Lacan has specified to be approximately the same catalog of horrors familiar to Melanie Klein: castration (for both girls and

boys), mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring, bursting open of the body, and so forth" (Ragland-Sullivan, in press, chap. 1). At another level of his theory, Lacan posits certain "objects of Desire" which the infant makes use of in an effort to fill the gap of its own insufficiency, sometimes called an "organic insufficiency" by Lacan (Lacan, 1977, p. 4); some of these objects are again familiar ones within psychoanalytic speculation, such as the breast, the phallus, excrement and urinary flow, but others are his own innovative additions, based on his highlighting of the functions of "language" considered in his special sense: "the phoneme, the gaze, the voice—the nothing" (Lacan, 1977, p. 315).

How would a Lacanian accommodate the recent explosion of findings concerning the cognitive capacities and behavioral competencies of neonates? Ragland-Sullivan actually sets out to achieve that accommodation, commenting on a number of findings that I sent her in an earlier version of the present study. Unfortunately, I was still unaware at the time of the research by Meltzoff and associates (Meltzoff, 1981), which strongly indicates just the opposite of the Lacanian expectations of infant confusion of the sensory modalities, such as hearing and sight. On the contrary, "intermodal matching" in the newborn permits it to correctly combine perceptions of visual origin and translate them back into bodily movement that has been visualized, even after some delay has occurred between the presentation of the stimulus and the onset of the imitative movement. Ragland-Sullivan's ways of incorporating the recent research findings on infant competence seem to fall into three categories, or strategies: (a) claiming that they match Lacan's theory; (b) denying that the newborn human body is ever free of "language," and hence is not susceptible to consideration as a biological fact; and (c) conceding that present-day cultural mistreatment of newborns may indeed pose a problem for the Lacanian theory of aggression (Ragland-Sullivan, in press, chap. 1). The first of these categories is the important one for the present discussion. If we consider such findings as the newborn's very early responsiveness to voice, and shortly thereafter to the sound-spectrum of its own mother's voice (Condon and Sander, 1974a, 1974b), we may take this responsiveness as evidence that indeed the neonate is being structured by language, in Lacan's sense. However, the qualitative conditions for this assertion are not only lacking, but seem to be counter-indicated by all the research. That is, the baby who responds to its mother's voice is not having fragmented bodily experience; it is undergoing early, affect-laden experience of a highly synchronized order involving the whole body. It is completely unwarranted to imagine that there is any cognitive confusion or organic insufficiency involved. As for Ragland-Sullivan's second strategy, empirical findings may indeed tell us that the neonate can experience some aspects of language even prenatally (the fetus may be able to hear some spoken speech, for example) as Lacan rather supposed, but this does not eliminate the preponderantly natural condition of

a newborn person. Even though mental life begins prenatally, as much evidence now leads us to suppose (Milton Klein, 1981b, p. 79), it does not begin as some sort of bodiless mind. Outside of the most rigid Marxist theory, a baby is not a "product" of culture in the same sense that anything else is a product. As Ragland-Sullivan recognizes, the biological facts of infancy do have to fit, empirically, with an adequate psychological theory. These facts constitute a huge area of interdisciplinary inquiry, much of it of immediate importance for the perspective of the sexual body. This field is not subsumable within a theory which would hold that all the bodily aspects of infancy are either evidences of psychological fragmentation or products of cultural formation.

Despite allowing some positive connotations for "jouisance," or sexual pleasure, Lacan is forced by the overall dimensions of his theory to thoroughly foreshorten the potentials of adult sexual union. An experience of real orgasmic gratification would have to be devalued as one more illusion of the unified subject, because in Lacanian theory "Desire" is *in principle* ungratifiable. That is, I may think that "I" am satisfied, but what I am really after is filling the original gap of insufficiency, and the only way I actually could do that would be to have the Other as my Self in bodily fact, not as delusion or fantasy. Desire is "of the Other" (Lacan, 1977, pp. 281-291), which is to say that it cannot be brought to consummation within myself, nor for that matter, with actual other people. Nor does Lacan's formulation refer to the orgasmic energy "superimposition" of male and female, as Reich would have thought; it refers to "the Other" in its fully cultural meanings.

Eternal division is implied for the adult sexual life in Lacan's reading of Freud's sexual theories as well. Lacan interprets Freud's momentous essay, "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love" (Freud, 1912), in such a way as to make it a matter of the human archetype, rather than a description of a common pathological deformation in civilized adulthood. The adult male described by Freud could have sexual contact with a woman he loves, but could not be fully engaged with that woman emotionally, because he is disturbed by fantasies of another woman, a purely sexual object who is not loved and who cannot be loved. Lacan's contribution is to imply that basically nothing can be done about this situation (Lacan, 1977, p. 290); it is the haunting of sex by the Other. It is important to see, however, that these built-in disparagements of adult sexual gratification (which Lacan carries to the logical end of declaring that the adult *never* really "perceives" his or her body as a complete entity) (Lacan, 1975, p. 200), are required by the theory itself. They are unfalsifiable, not because they are ambiguously stated, but because any subjective experience of the subject, no matter how it feels to the subject, is less important than what the theory demands.

Probably haunting the Lacanian structure is an "Other" of its own: a deeply introjected hunger for the absolute. In French intellectual history, a sense of

certainty has taken root through the prominence of the concept of the Cartesian ego. Lacan will have none of that concept. But his theory is infused with deep disappointment that the human subject is never an entity absolutely unto itself. Early infantile dependency must always offer the suggestion that our selves have been formed on the basis of weakness, or rather, on *what will always be interpreted to be weakness by those who find such dependency a threat in principle to the human self*. The biological predispositions of the infant are as nothing, when weighted in Lacanian terms against this inherent position of weakness. Reich's theory of human biological self-regulation is thus ruled out, implicitly, by not allowing that the self may be significantly biological. To say, as the Reichians do, it is "essential that the child's own organic rhythms of functioning were respected and allowed to develop naturally" (Boadella, 1973, p. 220) becomes nonsense in the language of Lacan. It becomes nonsense however, not because of a lack of evidential support, but because the language of Lacan has no other way of conceiving a theory that aligns self-regulation with the biology of the sexual body.

The Fragmented Self

Lacan's firm resolve, here and throughout his theory, is worth taking seriously precisely because it is a consistent working out of the psychoanalytic axiom that the human being is a creature of conflict. *In some sense*, intrapsychic conflict is basic to the theory. The problem is to determine whether this model of a mind in conflict with itself requires a radical, completely uncompromising interpretation, or if some ways of living can lead to a level of psychological health in which such conflict is controlled to the point where it is no longer causing a split in human consciousness between instinct and control, gratification and desire, body and mind, self and other-as-self. Reich thought such a level could be attained, though he did not propose it could be maintained at all times. The "genital character," as Baker points out, is not someone who has "ideal health"—a concept that has no correlate in the world of nature—but someone who "is well enough integrated and free enough emotionally so that he can sufficiently express and satisfy himself in life" (Baker, 1967, p. 101). The genital character "is able to solve his conflicts in an unneurotic way" (Boadella, 1973, p. 92) but does not represent a Rousseauistic ideal of "natural man" who never has to "defend himself against a hostile environment" (Boadella, 1973, p. 46). Anna Freud, on the other hand, concluded that "even the most revolutionary changes in infant care" cannot do away with "the division of the human personality into an *id* and an *ego* with conflicting aims" (A. Freud, 1968, p. 326). To suppose otherwise would be to deny human nature, or at least the theory of human nature which she had derived from the psychoanalytic world hypothesis. Thus she continued:

> According to the views presented here, the emergence of neurotic conflicts has to be regarded as the price paid for being human. (A. Freud, 1968, p. 326)

Yet the issue has not been settled, and can hardly be settled as long as there are basic questions of human nature not yet securely and empirically formed into "objects of knowledge" (Dewey, 1929b). Anna Freud herself continued to emphasize throughout her career the developmental needs of children; were she entirely convinced of the centrality of conflict, or were she fully centered on the sex-hating qualities I have located in her work above (Chapter Three), then she could never have been such a strong supporter of those needs. The unsettled debate over the issue of whether the split in human consciousness which psychoanalysis supposes must be taken radically or benignly is brought out by the work of Anna Freud's associate, Erik Erikson. Erikson, in accordance with his own idea of psychoanalysis, delineates a series of *oppositions* (such as basic trust versus mistrust) which every human being must live through, but never with the presupposition that these represent conflicts which are unresolvable in principle (Erikson, 1982). Lacan fastens upon a potential for unbridgeable intrapsychic conflict in Freud's work and makes the very most of it. He does this not through Freud's theory of sexuality or of the sexual body, but through Freud's insights into the hazards of consciously intended meanings in language. The unconscious, as Freud knows it, cannot but contradict and undercut conscious meanings and intentions throughout some great cross-section of mental functioning. Unintended associations of even a phoneme will undermine the meaning of the word of which it is a part. The resultant world is a surreal one, but Lacan, who had some connection with the Surrealist movement, is delineating such a world intentionally.

The Futures of Lacanian and Lichtensteinian Theory

The problem of the body, however, is the great obstacle in Lacan's path. The human body does not seem to provide a convincing metaphor for the permanently conflicted, divided subject. As more is known of the infant body, it will be less and less possible to pretend that the obstacle of the body has been removed from the theory.

Some of Lacan's followers, such as Schneiderman, celebrate the master's refusal to agree that "states of feeling and emotion" have a central place in "psychic reality" (Schneiderman, 1982). Once the body is regarded as a set of incoherent fragments, the devaluation of feeling and emotion follows apace. The Lacanian movement within psychoanalysis promises to fully carry out this logic, and therefore to provide a kind of limiting case of the animus toward physical sexual existence in psychoanalytic thinking.

Within its own terms, Lacan's theory is probably irrefutable. However, there may be a kind of linguistic time-bomb within those terms which will

cause trouble. It is plain that Lacan does not mean to focus on the body itself; for him, the phallus, for example, is an imagined object of unconscious desire, not to be confused with the penis or with any sexual body organs. Yet, in the logic of his own theory, the deeply embedded bodily associations of such a term as "phallus" (a central term in his theory of cultural authority) cannot be extirpated by stipulation, even with the most strenuous insistence. In the logic of the unconscious, such denial of the body in thinking about psychology stimulates its opposite. Lacan's concept of the "Law of the Name-of-the-Father"—his term for the cultural heritage of authority which he believes each infant must accept and incorporate into the mind in order to avoid psychological stunting within early, bodily-fragmented infancy—will similarly come under critical examination; the old questions of "Why Repression," "Repression for what purpose?", and "Repression at what cost?" will re-emerge precisely because they have been systematically denied in Lacan's theory. Abel, in fact, has pointed out that Lacan's generalized cultural concept of paternal authority obscures the difference between the socio-political sources of male authority and the internalized psychology of the Name-of-the-Father (Abel, 1984, p. 155). By merging these concepts, Lacan has obstructed the work of Feminism, Abel suggests (*ibid.*). For a Lacanian able to confront the evidence of Prescott's far ranging hypothesis of the critical difference made in psychological and social life through the presence of affectionate somatosensory contact, the doctrine of the Law of the Name-of-the-Father will come to be highly problematical. It will no longer warrant the term "Law."

Certain unspecified presuppositions of the "mirror-stage" would also suffer exposure from any Lacanian who refuses Schneiderman's interpretation of Lacan as one who held that emotions and feelings are not central to "psychic reality"; for the basic metaphor of a mirror entails the distancing of feelings. I can feel contact with another body, but Lacan will forever tell me that if only I understood the mirror stage I would see these feelings are of my "je" or my "moi" or of an illusory combination of the two. In other words, I may feel direct contact but that is an illusion. But the visual metaphor of a mirror *guarantees* his advice on this score, because what mirrors present is an image which cannot be a source of somatosensory, body-to-body feelings, such as those Prescott (1979) describes. A mirror also *automatically* provides a reversed image which is optically persuasive and yet systematically distorted. Although mirroring processes may have an essential role in even the deepest sexual contact (which Reich specifies must entail the "considerable ability to identify oneself with one's partner" [Reich, 1945, p. 122]), mirroring can hardly be equated convincingly with sexual gratification.

An even more troublesome Lacanian term and concept is that of "castration," which Lacan applies in a special and extremely broad sense to the psychology of Desire in both sexes. He does not mean what psychoanalysts

usually refer to as castration anxiety, although his complicated theory incorporates and repositions that theory. A coherent Lacanian sense of "castration" can again be stipulated so as not to commit an absurdity, but the long-term connotations of having women think of themselves (or about other women) as castratable in the same sense as men are castratable will contribute so much bodily confusion to the Lacanian theory that those who explore it fully, with a felt connection to their own bodies, will arrive at a point of beginning serious, potentially uprooting revisions aimed at giving the sexual body a positive role within it. Because of the massive series of categories, insights, metaphors, and levels of Lacan's theory, there is probably enough flexibility to allow for revision of the Lacanian theory of the body. However, if the basic issue ever becomes sharply focused, if the probability ever seems to be that the sexual body is not necessarily a set of perceptual fragments before the mirror stage, but a potentially unified psychosexual organism, then the life work of Lacan may have to be rejected, except for its value as great opposition to the sexual body.

It is more difficult to say what future there might be for Lichtenstein's theory of human identity, insofar as it is related to the perspective of the sexual body. Lichtenstein's own attraction toward the traditional "higher things," which Dewey saw in needless opposition to the flesh, has facilitated the bowdlerization of his work. But surely his linking of identity and sexuality deserves another look. In fact, it deserves a first serious look in the field of psychoanalysis, a consideration it has never been given.