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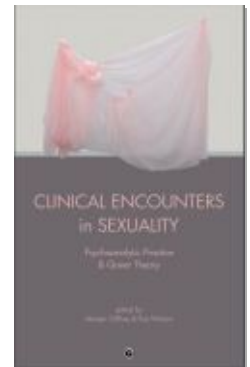
Published by

Noreen Giffney and Eve Watson.

Clinical Encounters in Sexuality: Psychoanalytic Practice and Queer Theory.

Punctum Books, 2017.

Project MUSE. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/book.76528>.



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[148.135.83.86] Project MUSE (2024-11-21 22:47 GMT)

CLINICAL ENCOUNTERS IN SEXUALITY

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR
CLINICAL ENCOUNTERS IN SEXUALITY

“In this terrific book, the psychoanalysts and the queer theorists—who are sometimes the same person, but usually not—are less in “conversation” about sexuality than they are pondering whether they have the same desires for sexuality. Is it perverse enough, is it dirty enough, is it ecstatic enough? Is it available to be “used” to cure as well as to make shattering bearable; to imagine as well as to capture truth? There is a lot of talking across each other in this book—sexual difference takes shape so many ways, as does the relation between structures and norms. But if interdisciplinarity is rarely achieved, there is also a lot of generous listening and imagining on both sides, about what it would be like to want cure and care where the object sexuality and its subject are only ever provisionally stable. It’s thrilling and frustrating to read this, and I am so glad I did. It will be great for teaching.”

—**Lauren Berlant**, University of Chicago, author of *Cruel Optimism*, *The Female Complaint*, and *Desire/Love*.

“No book in psychoanalysis could be more timely than *Clinical Encounters in Sexuality*. Here, psychoanalysis, often accused of heterosexism, is challenged to rethink its approach to sexualities. The accusation is justified, at least historically, and the responses here by leading analysts and theorists from a variety of orientations are as diverse as they are illuminating. There is the guilty-as-charged response which calls for a rethink of analytic concepts. There is the response that explores the tendencies in new discourses to idealise sexuality and ignore the crooked wood from which this most difficult of relationships is carved.

The collection is very rich and raises the debate over the place of psychoanalysis in contemporary sexualities to a new level. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in psychoanalysis — clinicians and theorists alike.”

— **Russell Grigg**, Psychoanalyst in Melbourne, Australia, author of *Lacan, Language, and Philosophy*, and co-editor of *Female Sexuality: The Early Psychoanalytic Controversies*.

“The relationship between psychoanalysis and sexuality has long been in need of a shake up. This remarkable collection of essays re-draws the lines of this encounter, offering provocative, exciting challenges to both its contributing authors and its readers. In a series of deft and insightful moves, Giffney and Watson have created a project that dares to speak to complexity by weaving together voices that utter the unexpected and harness experience to theory and practice. The result is often breathtaking, offering a compendium of personal, clinical and critical reflection that is both charged and compelling. The reader is invited in to grapple with the queer imperatives of the volume, so that the tapestry becomes ever more intricate. This is an important, passionate book, one that, by turns, tantalises and assuages as it interrogates the messy intimacies of multiple desire.”

— **Caroline Bainbridge**, University of Roehampton, author of *A Feminine Cinematics* and *The Cinema of Lars von Trier*, and Film Editor of *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

“Given the centrality of sexuality to theories of psychoanalysis, it is striking how little it is actually taught in institutes. This unique and creatively organized book seeks to remedy this lack, by creating a layered dialogue between academics writing queer and sexuality theories, practicing clinicians, and psychoanalytic theorists. The chapters pull the reader into an exciting liminal space where cultural, societal, and clinical discourses intermingle, creating embodied experiences of gender, sexualities, and sex. As editors, Giffney and Watson curate an encounter between queer theorists, clinicians and psychoanalytic theorists. But the experience of the encounter includes the reader, who has

the invaluable opportunity to be a fly on the wall as these cross-disciplinary conversations unfold chapter by chapter. Reading this book is not a passive experience but one requiring active participation in an examination of the ways cultural discourses of sexuality shape transferences and clinical engagement. Most exciting was the historical register, where established theorists glance back to their own individual romances with psychoanalysis, sharing their initial hopes for the radical potentials of clinical theory and practice to transform our experiences. This radical potential of psychoanalysis is rekindled through the layered dialogues and passionate encounters captured in *Clinical Encounters in Sexuality*.”

— **Katie Gentile**, Director, Gender Studies Program, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY and co-editor of the journal *Studies in Gender & Sexuality*.

“This great collection of essays fills an important gap in the often contested relationship between psychoanalysis and queer theory. Clinical cases presented here illustrate how people struggle with questions about their sexual identity and how troubles related to desire, drive, and *jouissance* attest that there is something inherently queer in human sexuality as such. For the first time we have a volume which opens a dialogue between different psychoanalytic schools and its perceptions of sexual identity. This book is essential reading for anyone who is dealing with the riddle of sexual difference. And who isn’t!”

— **Renata Salecl**, Professor of Psychology and Psychoanalysis at Birkbeck, University of London, and Senior Researcher in Criminology in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her books include *(Per)versions of Love and Hate*, *On Anxiety*, and *Tyranny of Choice*.

“‘Rightly,’ writes one of the psychoanalysts in this volume, ‘Queer Theory has not always been respectful of psychoanalysis, and it is laudable that a serious attempt to engage with psychoanalysis has been promoted.’ This book arises from the recognition that each ‘partner’ to this engagement is itself based on encoun-

ters — the two-way event of the clinic and the multiple events of queer desire. It goes beyond both the couch and the bed. In its three sections, queer theorists present key concepts; clinicians respond; and ‘leading thinkers’ take an overview. The result is a fascinating patchwork of ideas which places reading upon reading. Tones of voice, levels of sympathy and understanding vary — this may be “a provocatively uneasy intimacy” — but in the main this volume is indeed, as a third contributor notes, ‘a rich repertoire of possibilities for getting creative with the differences that divide and connect us.’”

— Naomi Segal, Birkbeck, University of London, author of *Consensuality: Didier Anzieu, Gender and the Sense of Touch* and translator of Didier Anzieu’s *The Skin Ego*.

“Psychoanalysis and queer theory have a special interest in sexuality but usually follow diverging paths in framing its importance for human subjectivity. This volume brings together key scholars from both disciplines and engenders a fruitful encounter, with clinical and theoretical papers, as well as reflective essays. Enthusiasts of queer theory or psychoanalysis will find advanced papers relating to their interest, and will also be drawn to explore up-to-date viewpoints in each discipline. Students and advanced scholars alike will appreciate these subtle discussions.”

— Stijn Vanheule, psychoanalyst, clinical psychologist, Professor of Psychoanalysis at Ghent University, Belgium, and author of *Psychiatric Diagnosis Revisited: From DSM to Clinical Case Formulation, Diagnosis and the DSM: A Critical Review* and *The Subject of Psychosis: A Lacanian Perspective*.

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Fig. 1. Hieronymus Bosch, *Ship of Fools* (1490–1500)

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First published in 2017 by punctum books, Earth, Milky Way.
www.punctumbooks.com

ISBN-13: 978-0-9985318-5-4

ISBN-10: 0-9985318-5-5

Library of Congress Cataloging Data is available from the Library of Congress

Book design: Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei

Cover Image: Karla Black, *There Can Be No Arguments*, 2011. Polythene, plaster powder, paint, thread. 240 × 270 × 59 cm. Photo by Ruth Clark. Courtesy Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne.

CLINICAL ENCOUNTERS in SEXUALITY

Psychoanalytic Practice
& Queer Theory

edited by
Noreen Giffney & Eve Watson



For Nicole, three words: I love you

For Deirdre, you are, quite simply, the best

