

Feminist Responses to Domination: Local, Secluded, Joyful?:
Chair: Linda Beth Flack

The Unconscious as the Site of Resistance and the Possibilities of a Political Psychoanalysis

- Ayse Batur (Centre For the Study of Theory and Criticism, University of Western Ontario)

The proposed paper will focus on the possibilities of political psychoanalysis and the problematic relations between the conceptualizations of the unconscious and the political. The debates of 1920s and 30s about the implications of the theory of psychoanalysis in relation to ideology frame the background of the paper, in which the import of the concept of unconscious in explaining the mechanisms of ideological processes in relation to subjectivities had been negotiated. Through the concept of the unconscious the split between the subject and the social, the relation of which political thought have aimed to explain, has been doubled: the split subject. On the one hand, psychoanalytic theory has resisted the politicization of the concept of unconscious, whereas on the other hand, political thinkers have tended to neglect the concept of the unconscious. It is, therefore, important to revisit the debates as a crucial moment of articulating the unconscious as a point of resistance together with the shortcomings of such attempts. It will further be argued that without taking sexuality into account, any attempts to reconcile the unconscious with the political would either reduce ideological processes to inhuman duping mechanisms or lean towards envisioning the unconscious as a site of resistance in a utopian fashion. Hence, the paper aims to provide the means to suggest that the problems and issues raised with respect to the psychoanalytic theory of sexuality is crucial to an understanding of the tension between the concepts of the unconscious and the political.

Penelope and Plurality: Cavarero's seclusion-based Model of Resistance

- Mark Kingston (Philosophy, University of New South Wales)

In her interpretation of the story of Penelope in Homer's *Odyssey*, Adriana Cavarero brings to light an interesting model of resistance to social normalisation and oppression. Based on a strategy of seclusion, this model is aimed at creating spaces for women that are disconnected from patriarchal society. In putting forward this 'small community' model of resistance, Cavarero provides a middle ground between models of resistance that emphasise large-scale social reform and those that advocate an individualistic independence from society. This paper also shows how Cavarero's strategy works as a critique of Hannah Arendt's concept of political participation. The result is a community-based model of resistance that is novel in its disinvestment in the public realm, and a key example of Cavarero's feminist appropriation of Arendt.

Crafting Resistance: Fighting Mass Produced with Pins and Needles

- Sherilyn Williams (Faculty of Information & Media Studies, University of Western Ontario)

This paper is an outgrowth of my MA in Media Studies thesis research and examines the history and recent revival of the act of crafting as a mode of resistance. The thesis focuses on the resurgence of a handmade movement and a culture of crafting and their relationship to third-wave feminism, specifically as a mechanism of resistance against corporate consumer culture. Two particular crafting websites, Etsy.com and Craftster.org, have multiple ties to the self-described third-wave feminist *BUST* magazine. These websites have recently emerged and seek to provide a means for crafters and purveyors of handmade goods to engage in trade, community building, and commerce with one another and with consumers in a way that exists outside of mainstream consumer culture. Built on a framework of feminist theory, consumption theory, and craft theory, this paper addresses the issue of how the resurgence of the handmade movement relates to the greater discourse of third-wave feminism in the context of production and consumption, the rejection of corporate profiteering, and the reclaiming of one's own labor through the handicrafts. As a part of the context of revival, *BUST* magazine's relationship to the crafting discourse present in third-wave feminism, as well as Etsy.com and Craftster.org's relevance to these issues are examined. Crafting and the production of handmade goods as a resistance mode are also examined in a historical context, as they have been utilized as resistance mechanisms several times in recent history.

Women's Leisure as a Site for Resistance to Gendered Ideologies: The Politics of Leisure

- Diana C. Parry Henry Svec (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo)

The purpose of this paper is to explore women's leisure as a site for resistance against gendered ideologies. Leisure is defined as those experiences that are freely chosen, pleasant in anticipation, experience, or recollection, and that are intrinsically motivating (Kelly, 1996). Whether approached from a structuralist, poststructuralist/postmodernist or interactionist perspective, the notion of resistance emerged in leisure research where women were found to gain a sense of empowerment from their leisure (Parry, 2005; Shaw, 2001). More specifically, leisure choices, activities, and experiences have been found to improve women's power by challenging dominant patriarchal power structures in society and the resultant gendered relations (Deem, 1999). This paper explores the two theoretical assumptions that women's leisure as resistance is based upon; "first, the idea of agency...which allows for the view that women are social actors who perceive and interpret social situations and actively determine, in each setting, how

they will respond” (Shaw, 1994, p. 15); and second, the notion that leisure experiences are relatively freely chosen. More specifically, two key characteristics of leisure, personal choice and self-determination, have been associated with resistance to traditionally prescribed gender identities, stereotypes, and roles propagated through dominant patriarchal culture by enabling women to exert personal control and power. In short, when conceptualized as resistance, leisure is seen as a site for women, either individually or in groups, to challenge ideologies that perpetuate unequal power distributions or the ways power is implemented within patriarchal society (Shaw, 2001). Under this premise, leisure becomes one arena where women’s power is gained, maintained, reinforced, diminished or lost. Thus, women’s leisure becomes a political practice and a context for individual and/or collective social change.

References:

Deem R. (1999). How do we get out of the ghetto? Strategies for research on gender and leisure for the twenty-first century. *Leisure Studies*, 18(3), 161-177.