The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house... Women of today are still being called upon to stretch across the gap of male ignorance and to educate men as to our existence and our needs. This is an old and primary tool of all oppressors to keep the oppressed occupied with the master's concerns.

In trying to work seriously on "equality issues" it is critical to understand how institutionalized responses to, and production of, "difference" function in the context of unhealthy communities so as to restructure practices into doing work that, paradoxically, engenders further oppressor attitudes rather than producing equitable social change.

Chandro Mohanty, writing about the "commodified nature of diversity," argues that, on university campuses in this period of right-wing backlash, the production of difference, multiculturalism and so-called equity policies function both to delegitimize, and hence to "manage," difference. As Mohanty observes, "The central issue, then, is not one of merely acknowledging difference; rather, the more difficult question concerns the kind of difference that is acknowledged and enjoined." It is instructive in this regard to see how difference is treated in "equity" initiatives, as something to be otherwise

Further Reading


Feather, Michael. (1980). Hereroin Baba. Being the recently dis

covered memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century heroin addict. New York: Cape.


Burchill, Simon Fraser University, Project Development Officer.


Perrot: And there's no point for the prisoners in taking over the central tower.

Pouschal: Oh, yes, provided that isn't the final purpose of the operation. Do you think it would be much better to have the prisoners using the Panopticon apparatus and sitting in the central tower, instead of the guards?

FURTHER READING


Bryson, Mary & de Causée, Simona. (In press). Reimagining equit

Father, Don't You See I'm Burning (You)?

By Jim Ellis


In spite of the vast intellectual and political gaps that separate them, Kaja Silverman's Male Subjectivity at the Margin and Robert Bly's enormously popular Iron John do engage the same common contemporary issues in masculinity. As with any crisis, of course, where you stand determines how you feel about it. Bly is attempting, through the invention of a new mythology centered on the heroic beast in every man, to reinvest the penis/phallus equation, while Silverman is intent on dismantling the murderous and repressive structure that has supported it. While Silverman's book will never achieve the popularity of Bly's, it will certainly prove important in work for the array of films studies, psychoanalysis, feminism and queer theory (rather than gay studies, toward which Silverman pays some lip service, but remains a little hostile, associating it with biographical criticism). Male Subjectivity at the Margin constitutes an analysis of what Silverman calls masculine masculinities in the work of, among others, S. E. C. Faulkner, Harry James, T. E. Lawrence and Marcel Proust. On the way, the text provides offers brilliant and always useful renderings of such concepts as Althusser's theory of interpellation and ideology, Lacan's discussion of the gaze, and its relation to female spectatorship, and Freud's analysis of feminizing masculinity. Silverman's flair for the target group Bly feels has recently been victimized - white, middle-class, heterosexual males. Her preferred method of attack is an undermining of their props. The basic premises of the book are Lacanian: that identity is external in origin, and that the basic condition for cultural subjectivity is lack. Her strategy is frequently to locate in male subject sexual characteristics, which are typically designated feminine, such as soliciting the gaze, acknowledging lack or castration, or assuming a passive or receptive role. In so doing she attempts to disrupt and denaturalize the categories of masculinity and femininity, and indeed, homosexual and heterosexual. Perhaps the most powerful chapter in Male Subjectivity at the Margin is Silverman's reworking of Lacan through the film of Faulkner, in which she rigorously distinguishes between gaze and look. Whereas the gaze, like the phallic, is something to which no subject can lay claim, the look of an individual subject remains within the realm of desire, and often functions as a signifier of lack. Feminist film criticism since Laura Mulvey has often argued that the penis typically functions as the object of the male gaze, and that women must work to turn the gaze around. Silverman argues instead that we all are always simultaneously subject and object of desire, and that the real problem with the dominant cinematic is that "masculine desire is consistently and systematically internalized with projection and control" (146-5). So too is the male look, a signifier of lack, often castrated with the gaze. "We have at times assumed" writes Silverman "that dominant cinema's erotic regime could be overturned by 'giving woman the gaze', rather than by exposing the impossibility of anyone ever owning that visual agency, or of him or herself escaping sexuality. "This, for Silverman, is what Faulkner's and Proust's films demonstrate over and over. "The insistently specularization of the male subject in Faulkner's cinematic homoeroticism is not only destructive to himself, but also to prevent any possibility of making his penis a positive sign, a relocation which is at the centre of Faulkner's aesthetics of penitentiary." In films such as A Farewell to Arms, the phallic male characters are inevitably caught in the same structures of seeing and being seen as the female characters. We are all always subjected to the gaze: like castration, it is a basic condition of subjectivity, a condition which is not strictly limited to women. As Thomas Elsaesser notes, in the films of Faulkner to be human is to be seen.

Much of the second half of Male Subjectivity at the Margin deals with what are normally designated as feminines. Silverman devotes three chapters to various forms of masochism and a fourth to male homosexuality. The significance of these significations goes beyond the purely sexual (and indeed, Silverman argues ID, is a merely private, sexualizing reality, in that perversion "turns aside not only from hierarchy and gender sexuality but from the paternal signifier, into a male truth or right." Writers such as Jean Laplanche的生活和死于性学心理学的和Ferrari (The Freudian Rave) have taken to care for separate sadism from masochism, insisting that they are neither reversible nor complementary. Freud noted that sadism was completely compatible with heterosexual (and hinted that sadism was in fact a sexual component of it). Masochism, on the other hand, when it occurs in men, disrupts the economy of heterosexuality, often by foreclosing on the position of the father. (In Gilles Deleuze's account of masochism, derived from the novel of the same name, this is completely compatible with the writings of Freud, what is being bestowed in the masochist is the right to participate in the sadistic enjoyment of the father. Although certain elements of Silverman's and Deleuze's

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In her first chapter on masculinity Silverman provides a review of Freud's views on masculinity and other contemporary psychoanalytic accounts. The second chapter examines the role of femininity and the "mutation of masculinity." Silverman is at her best when discussing her confidant, woman, when her stern and completely humorless style becomes as perniciously threatening as Fassbinders's indestructible, pessimistic. In this stunning account of masculinity in *Berlin Alexanderplatz* and in *4 Year of Thirteen Moons* Silverman picks up Max Scheler's differentiation between heteropathic and idopathic identification. Idopathic identification is the model of identification usually encountered in psychoanalytic writings. It works on the model of assimilation of the other: a sort of psychic imperialism. Heteropathic desire, on the other hand, is re-creative: it takes the form of an execution of libids from the ego and a total identification with other's suffering and destruction of the other's body. This form of identification "burns not only upon the energies of the subjective identity, but also upon a pleasurably painful acknowledgement of the otherness of all identity" (94-95). Heteropathic identification is thus closely linked to masochism, and could be seen as an instance of what Bercalls calls "psychic stuttering" or "psychic de-tumescence." Silverman emphasizes that the ego's masochistic punishment and the punisher's masochistic subject-object: in the writings of Bersain, it is precisely the libidinal charged or "phallicized" ego that subordinates the other. In his own object: in the narrations of Bersain, it is precisely the libidinal charged or "phallicized" ego that subordinates the other.

For the first time here, Silverman argues that the essay with which Lawrence identified the other with his rather complex sexuality: a non-gender-based homosexuality that found its expression in extreme masochism. Lawrence's masochism is initially self-reflexive: he is both his punisher and the punished, who abuses himself before the ideal, and simultaneously partially identifies with it. This peculiar sort of masochism, argues Silverman, completely compatible with Lawrence's extreme virility and his egoistic zeal (or leadership, she calls it) in the public value of homosexuality and its potential for "self-shattering," which doubles the irony of this group who advocated the proud ideal of masculine subjectivity. In what might seem an unlucky move (as she herself acknowledges before her), Silverman deals with the utopian implications of Fassbinders's cinema. Drawing on the Marxist writings of Ernst Bloch, Silverman finds in Fassbinders a utopian yearning that depends on positing a "psychic elsewhere," one that is only glimpsed in moments of masochistic ecstasy. Wherever the utopia depends upon transformation of society, in the films of Fassbinders the transformation takes place at the level of the plebeian. Both however are based on a refusal to affirm anything in the present order. The form of utopia depends upon a complete forgetfulness of the past, and thus upon a renunciation of the paternal legacy. Fassbinders's utopia, then, presents a stark contrast to the pastoral or nautical utopian impulse of Bly, which inevitably involves a refiguring of the father. For Silverman and Fassbinders, reaching utopia involves the refiguring of the masculine ego and a killing off of the father once and for all.

The final chapter on masochism takes Silverman more fully into the realm of the political (although she continually insists that the sexual is always imbued with the political with a discussion of T. E. Lawrence's autobiographical works, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and *The Mint*). Silverman characterizes Lawrence's relation to the "Arab other" in a double manner: neither than employing the usual colonialist strategy of attempting to reproduce the colonialista within the colonized. Lawrence identified with the Arabs, seeking to become, in effect, the ideal Arab leader, who would then be re-produced in the other. Silverman argues that the ease with which Lawrence identified with the other was facilitated by his rather complex sexuality: a non-gender-based homosexuality that found its expression in extreme masochism. Lawrence's masochism is initially self-reflexive: he is both his punisher and the punished, who abuses himself before the ideal, and simultaneously partially identifies with it. This peculiar sort of masochism, argues Silverman, completely compatible with Lawrence's extreme virility and his egoistic zeal (or leadership, she calls it) in the public value of homosexuality and its potential for "self-shattering," which doubles the irony of this group who advocated the proud ideal of masculine subjectivity. In what might seem an unlucky move (as she herself acknowledges before her), Silverman deals with the utopian implications of Fassbinders's cinema. Drawing on the Marxist writings of Ernst Bloch, Silverman finds in Fassbinders a utopian yearning that depends on positing a "psychic elsewhere," one that is only glimpsed in moments of masochistic ecstasy. Wherever the utopia depends upon transformation of society, in the films of Fassbinders the transformation takes place at the level of the plebeian. Both however are based on a refusal to affirm anything in the present order. The form of utopia depends upon a complete forgetfulness of the past, and thus upon a renunciation of the paternal legacy. Fassbinders's utopia, then, presents a stark contrast to the pastoral or nautical utopian impulse of Bly, which inevitably involves a refiguring of the father. For Silverman and Fassbinders, reaching utopia involves the refiguring of the masculine ego and a killing off of the father once and for all.

It seems difficult to reach a point where one might find a common consensus regarding Uomo Eco’s *The Limits of Interpretation;* and this is the concern in which the reader and the author could partake and develop according to a specific shared interest or motive. Although the book covers a truly colossal amount of material, ranging from the ancients (Aristotle to the postmodernists (Derrida); from the finest needle point of interpretation (now sixteenth-century authors such as Giulio Camillo Dalmiorno, or Cesare Roscill to television commercials and series (Simpson); from the medieval tradition of semiotics to the contemporary theory of media; from the simple "one-at-a-time", chordal, linear, pop-dichotomy of our time; one sense at least. I do a kind of emptiness in all of this. It is not due to the truly encyclopedia knowledge of the author, to his witty writing, or the book's overall sympathetic tone. What is it, then? Is it the fact that the book, although concerned with a central theme, is actually a collection of previously published essays which hardly follow out its "systematicity"? Is it his "mixture of styles"? which on the whole characterizes Eco - in a theoretical enterprise that we find here? Perhaps it is again the problem of how to find the definition of a position here.- But it is not pseudoschist that no position emerges from the "limits of interpretation," as the book title suggests. For parada is now taken the place of the film, disabling the film a particular position which would result in drawing a line between conflicting views. But since the attempt at articulating the opposites is today an effort of producing a "middle range" arrangement, it comes to mean that one finds his own way in the necessity of the day, and that this makes him a very acute reader of himself: proving that, at some point, the "unintelligibility" of an author can truly reveal some of his intentions after all.

This book is indeed a direct response to Eco's earlier book *Opera aperta* (originally published in 1962, and only recently translated into English as *The Open World*.) Echoing himself almost thirty years after the quite famous stance contained in *Opera aperta* (contemporary works of art evolve in a "undetermined" sphere of meaning, and do not assert any particular content out of the media of mass communication. The works that can be made of them) and taking advantage of the feed-back effect that a work of art itself has on the relation to the matter it brings to the matter, Eco now tries to trace the limits of its own previous intentions. The shift is startling, but not surprising, beginning of the book, when Eco explains the difference between the two concepts, and then on his point of view. His previous theory is perhaps the ultimate perversion: a borderless terrain that denies every identity a natural, coherent, stable status. Although the call to perversion that such the book in the Turkish leader (although there is some question whether this actually took place) Lawrence's masochism undermines a shift: he is not able to identify with his Turkish rapists and thus is unable to become his Turkish punisher. The self-reflection of masochism is subsequently reconfigured as feminine masochism, which is no longer compatible with leadership Lawrence, after the rape and after the war, withdrew completely from public life (despite numerous requests to take leadership role) and enlisted as an R. A. F. airman. The point of the analysis in this chapter is, perhaps, too great a foreboding of the past, and thus upon a renunciation of the paternal legacy. Fassbinders's utopia, then, presents a stark contrast to the pastoral or nautical utopian impulse of Bly, which inevitably involves a refiguring of the father. For Silverman and Fassbinders, reaching utopia involves the refiguring of the masculine ego and a killing off of the father once and for all.

**Eco: echoes**

By Jean-François Coté


**It seems difficult to reach a point where one might find a common consensus when reading Umberto Eco's *The Limits of Interpretation*; and this is the concern in which the reader and the author could partake and develop according to a specific shared interest or motive. Although the book covers a truly colossal amount of material, ranging from the ancients (Aristotle) to the postmodernists (Derrida); from the finest needle point of interpretation (now sixteenth-century authors such as Giulio Camillo Dalmiorno, or Cesare Roscill to television commercials and series (Simpson); from the medieval tradition of semiotics to the contemporary theory of media; from the simple "one-at-a-time", chordal, linear, pop-dichotomy of our time; one sense at least. I do a kind of emptiness in all of this. It is not due to the truly encyclopedia knowledge of the author, to his witty writing, or the book's overall sympathetic tone. What is it, then? Is it the fact that the book, although concerned with a central theme, is actually a collection of previously published essays which hardly follow out its "systematicity"? Is it his "mixture of styles"? which on the whole characterizes Eco - in a theoretical enterprise that we find here? Perhaps it is again the problem of how to find the definition of a position here.- But it is not pseudoschist that no position emerges from the "limits of interpretation," as the book title suggests. For parada is now taken the place of the film, disabling the film a particular position which would result in drawing a line between conflicting views. But since the attempt at articulating the opposites is today an effort of producing a "middle range" arrangement, it comes to mean that one finds his own way in the necessity of the day, and that this makes him a very acute reader of himself: proving that, at some point, the "unintelligibility" of an author can truly reveal some of his intentions after all.**