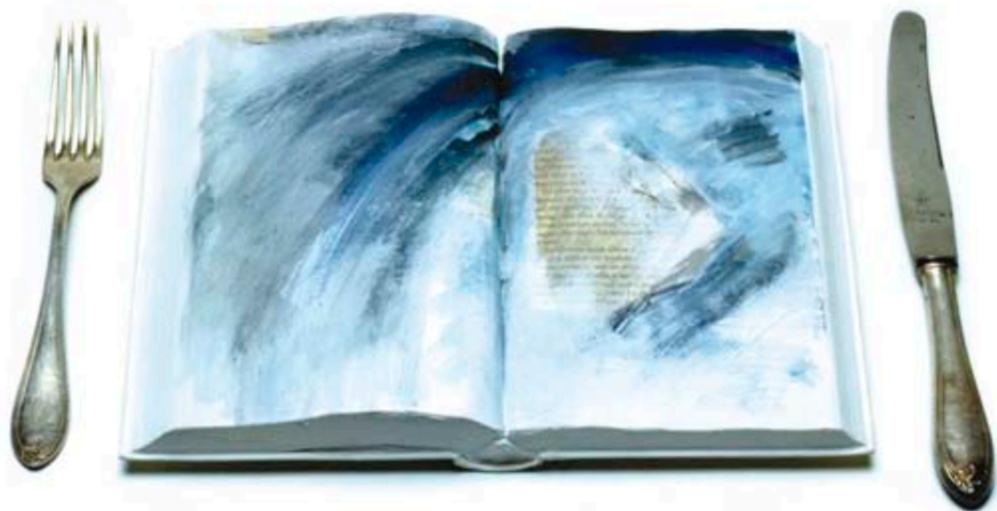


EVA ILLOUZ

SAVING THE MODERN SOUL



THERAPY, EMOTIONS, AND
THE CULTURE OF SELF-HELP

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The tragedy of the modern spirit consists in that it has “solved the enigma of the universe,” only to replace it with the enigma of itself.

Alexandre Koyre, *Newtonian Studies*

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ONE Introduction

To be sure, the concept of enlightenment must not be too restricted methodologically, for, as I understand it, it embraces more than just logical deduction and empirical verification, but rather, beyond these two, the will and the ability to speculate phenomenologically, to empathize, to approach the limits of reason. . . . Emotions? For all I care, yes. Where is it decreed that enlightenment must be free of emotion? To me the opposite seems to be true.

Enlightenment can properly fulfill its task only if it sets to work with passion.

—Jean Amery

By words one person can make another blissfully happy or drive him to despair, by words the teacher conveys his knowledge to his pupils. Words provoke affects and are in general the means of mutual influence among men.

—Sigmund Freud

Studies and critiques of therapy have steadily accumulated for the past three decades. Although differing in method and outlook, they agree that the therapeutic persuasion is quintessentially modern and that it is modern in what is most disquieting about modernity: bureaucratization, narcissism, the construction of a false self, the control of modern lives by the state, the collapse of cultural and moral hierarchies, the intense privatization of life caused by capitalist social organization, the emptiness of the

modern self severed from communal relationships, large-scale surveillance, the expansion of state power and state legitimation, and “risk society” and the cultivation of the self’s vulnerability.¹ Studies of the therapeutic discourse alone could provide us with a compendium of the various themes that make up the sociology (and critique) of modernity.

The communitarian critique of modernity argues that psychology expresses an atomistic individualism that creates or at least encourages the very ills it claims to heal. Thus, while psychology supposedly addresses and helps resolve our increasing difficulty in entering or remaining in social relations, it actually encourages us to put our needs and preferences above our commitments to others. Under the aegis of the therapeutic discourse, social relations are dissolved by a pernicious utilitarianism that condones a lack of commitment to social institutions and legitimizes a narcissistic and shallow identity.²

Commentators such as Lionel Trilling, Philip Rieff, Christopher Lasch, and Philip Cushman have interpreted the rise of the therapeutic worldview as marking the decline of an autonomous realm of culture and values.³ Thanks to consumption and therapeutic practice, the self has been smoothly integrated into the institutions of modernity, causing culture to lose its power of transcendence and opposition to society. The very seductiveness of consumption and therapeutic self-absorption marks the decline of any serious opposition to society and the general cultural exhaustion of Western civilization. No longer capable of creating heroes, binding values, and cultural ideals, the self has withdrawn inside its own empty shell. In calling on us to withdraw into ourselves, the therapeutic persuasion has made us abandon the great realms of citizenship and politics and cannot provide us with an intelligible way of linking the private self to the public sphere because it has emptied the self of its communal and political content, replacing this content with a narcissistic self-concern.

The most radical and probably the most influential critique of the therapeutic discourse has been inspired by Michel Foucault’s historicization of systems of knowledge. Foucault’s approach to the therapeutic discourse is less interested in restoring communities of meaning than in exposing the ways that power is woven into the social fabric vertically

and horizontally. Foucault notoriously unleashed a fatal blow to psychoanalysis by revealing its glorious project of self-liberation as a form of discipline and subjection to institutional power “by other means.”⁴ He has suggested that the scientific “discovery” of sexuality at the heart of the psychoanalytical project continues a long tradition in which, through confession, subjects are made to search and speak the truth about themselves. The therapeutic is a site within which we invent ourselves as individuals, with wants, needs, and desires to be known, categorized, and controlled for the sake of freedom. Through the twin categories of “sex” and “the psyche,” psychoanalytical practice makes us look for the truth about ourselves and is thus defined in terms of discovering that truth and finding emancipation in the search for it. What makes “psy discourses”⁵ particularly effective in the modern era is that they make the practice of self-knowledge a simultaneously epistemological and moral act. Far from showing the stern face of the censor, modern power takes on the benevolent face of our psychoanalyst, who turns out to be nothing but a node in a vast network of power, a network that is pervasive, diffuse, and total in its anonymity and immanence. The discourse of psychoanalysis is thus a “political technology of the self,” an instrument used and developed in the general framework of the political rationality of the state; its very aim of emancipating the self is what makes the individual manageable and disciplined. Where communitarian sociologists view the therapeutic discourse as driving a wedge between self and society, Foucault suggests, on the contrary, that through therapy the self is made to work seamlessly for and within a system of power.

Although this book cannot fail to have implications for the critique of modernity, I would like to skirt that critique altogether. Whether the therapeutic discourse threatens moral communities of meaning, undermines the family, oppresses women, diminishes the relevance of the political sphere, corrodes moral virtue and character, exerts a general process of surveillance, reinforces the empty shell of narcissism, and weakens the self does not preoccupy me—although some of these questions cannot fail to haunt some of the discussion to follow. My purpose is neither to document the pernicious effects of the therapeutic discourse nor to discuss its emancipatory potential, tasks that have been masterfully accom-

plished by many others.⁶ My intent here is rather to move the field of cultural studies away from the “epistemology of suspicion” on which it has too heavily relied. Or, to say this differently, I wish to analyze culture without presuming to know in advance what social relations should look like. Using Bruno Latour’s and Michel Callon’s sociological approach to scientific objects, I call on students of culture to adopt two principles: the principle of “agnosticism” (taking an amoral stance toward social actors) and the principle of symmetry (explaining different phenomena in a similar or symmetrical way).⁷ The point of cultural analysis is not to measure cultural practices against what they ought to be or ought to have been but rather to understand how they have come to be what they are and why, in being what they are, they “accomplish things” for people. Thus, despite its brilliance, a Foucauldian approach will not do because Foucault used sweeping concepts—“surveillance,” “bio-power,” “governmentality”—that have some fatal flaws: they do not take the critical capacities of actors seriously; they do not ask why actors are often deeply engaged by and engrossed with meanings; and they do not differentiate between social spheres, collapsing them together under what the French sociologist Philippe Corcuff calls “bulldozer”⁸ concepts, concepts so all-encompassing that they end up flattening the complexity of the social (e.g., “bio-power” or “surveillance”). As I hope to show, it is crucial to make such differentiations. A thick and contextual analysis of the uses and effects of therapy reveals that there is no single overall effect (of “surveillance” or “bio-power”). On the contrary, these uses and effects significantly differ according to whether they take place in the realm of the corporation, marriage, or the support group (respectively chapters 3, 4, and 5).

If all the critics of the psychological discourse agree that it has “triumphed” and if some remarkable studies now detail *what* in the therapeutic has “triumphed,”⁹ we still do not know much about *how* and *why* it has triumphed.¹⁰ In addressing this question, I part company with the critical approaches to culture that rely on the epistemology of suspicion in their systematic exposure of how a cultural practice accomplishes (or fails to accomplish) a specific political practice. Instead, I argue that a critique of culture cannot be adequately waged before we understand the mecha-

nism of culture: how meanings are produced, how they are woven into the social fabric, how they are used in daily life to shape relationships and cope with an uncertain social world, and why they come to organize our interpretation of self and others. As I hope to show, both the analysis *and* the critique of the therapeutic ethos take a new aspect when they are not predicated on a priori political assumptions about what social relations *should* look like. Instead, my analysis subscribes to the pragmatic insight that meanings and ideas should be viewed as useful tools, that is, as tools enabling us to accomplish certain things in daily life.¹¹

My study of the therapeutic discourse is thus waged first and foremost from the vantage point of the sociology of culture. Perhaps more so than for most other topics, the exploration of the therapeutic ethos is an ideal site for examining “how culture works.” This is true for several reasons.

First, for the student of culture, therapeutic language has the rare virtue of being a qualitatively new language of the self. Although it relies upon an age-old view of the psyche, this language has virtually no antecedent in American or European culture. In that respect, it represents a uniquely pristine possibility to understand how new cultural forms emerge and how new languages transform the self-understandings that infuse social relations and action. Recalling Robert Bellah’s insight regarding the Protestant Reformation, we may say that the therapeutic discourse has “reformulated the deepest level of identity symbols.”¹² Such reformulation is of particular interest to the cultural sociologist, for it occurred simultaneously through the specialized and formal channels of scientific knowledge and through the culture industries (movies, popular press, publishing industry, television). To the extent that the therapeutic discourse represents a qualitatively new language of the self, it enables us to throw in sharp relief the question of the emergence of new cultural codes and meanings and to inquire into the conditions that make possible their diffusion and impact throughout society. This book can be read as a fragment in the broader cultural history of introspection, that is, the history of the language and techniques we use to address and examine ourselves (through such categories as “desires,” “memory,” and “emotions”).

Second, no other cultural framework, with the exception of political liberalism and the market-based language of economic efficiency, has

exerted such a decisive influence on twentieth-century models of selfhood. Not only has almost half of the entire population consulted a mental health practitioner,¹³ but even more critically the therapeutic outlook has been institutionalized in various social spheres of contemporary societies (e.g., in economic organizations; mass media; patterns of child rearing; intimate and sexual relationships; schools; the army; the welfare state; prison rehabilitation programs; and international conflicts). Therapy under many forms has been diffused worldwide on a scale that is comparable (and perhaps even superior) to that of American popular culture. Whether it has assumed the form of introspective psychoanalysis, a New Age “mind-body” workshop, or an “assertiveness training” program, it has mustered a rare level of cultural legitimacy across a wide variety of social groups, organizations, institutions, and cultural settings. The therapeutic discourse has crossed and blurred the compartmentalized spheres of modernity and has come to constitute one of the major codes with which to express, shape, and guide selfhood. Moreover, through the standardization of academic curricula and the standardization of psychological professions, the therapeutic discourse transcends national boundaries and constitutes a “transnational” language of selfhood. If, as S. N. Eisenstadt put it, civilizations have centers that diffuse and embody ontological visions,¹⁴ the therapeutic outlook has become one of the centers of that amorphous and vague entity known as Western civilization.

Third, perhaps more than any other cultural formation, the therapeutic discourse illustrates the ways in which culture and knowledge have become inextricably imbricated in contemporary societies.¹⁵ As Karin Knorr-Cetina put it:

A knowledge society is not simply a society of more experts, of technological infra- and information structures and of specialist rather than participant interpretations. It means that knowledge cultures have spilled and woven their tissue into society, the whole set of processes, experiences and relationships that wait on knowledge and unfold with its articulation. This “dehiscence” of knowledge, the discharge of knowledge relations into society, is what needs to be rendered as a problem to be solved in a sociological (rather than economic) account of knowledge societies. . . . We need to trace the ways in which knowledge has become constitutive of social relations.¹⁶

Psychology is undoubtedly a body of texts and theories produced in formal organizations by experts certified to produce and use it. But it is perhaps primarily also a body of knowledge diffused worldwide through a wide variety of culture industries; self-help books, workshops, television talk shows, radio call-in programs, movies, television series, novels, and magazines have all been essential cultural platforms for the diffusion of therapy throughout U.S. society and culture. All of the above have been and continue to be central sites of diffusion of therapeutic knowledge, making that knowledge an essential part of the cultural and moral universe of contemporary middle-class Americans. This dual status of psychology as simultaneously professional and popular is what makes it so interesting for the student of contemporary culture; it offers an opportunity to understand how high and popular culture are saturated through and through by knowledge formations. Indeed, inasmuch as "knowledges have become decisive forces themselves in our economic and technological development,"¹⁷ they constitute an important aspect of cultural action in contemporary societies. The diffusion of this knowledge took place through mass media and multiple institutional arenas, in which psychological knowledge became a way of performing the self, which in turn explains why it took hold of definitions of the self in such a long-lasting and gripping way. Knowledge and symbolic systems have come to shape who we are because they are enacted within social institutions that bestow authority on certain ways of knowing and speaking and routinize them so that they may become the invisible semiotic codes that organize ordinary conduct and structure the interaction rituals of the self. This assumption informs the main strategy of this book as it examines how the therapeutic discourse has been incorporated into different institutional settings such as the corporation, the family, and ordinary practices of self-help (examined respectively in chapters 3, 4, and 5) and how it organizes social relations in each one of these spheres.

Finally, the therapeutic discourse is such a good site for cultural analysis because it has traversed the entire twentieth century, only gaining in strength and scope. How did the cultural structure of therapy survive and become reinforced throughout the American twentieth century? What is the process by which a cultural structure persists and endures?

As Orlando Patterson argues, cultural continuity needs to be explained, not simply assumed.¹⁸ The extraordinary resilience of the therapeutic discourse can be explained not only by its incorporation into central institutions of American society but also by the fact that it has been able to recruit a vast number of social actors and cultural industries (chapter 5).

For these reasons, I believe the therapeutic discourse is an outstanding, if daunting, object of study for the cultural sociologist. The purpose of this book, then, is not only to document the various aspects of the therapeutic culture but also to track down the emergence of a new *cultural structure*, a task that has been too rarely undertaken by sociologists of culture.

CULTURAL SOCIOLOGY AND THE THERAPEUTIC

Even if at times cultural sociology may seem to be a hopelessly fuzzy field, one may identify a number of propositions constitutive of the core of the discipline. The first is that culture matters a great deal for who we are. By “who we are” I do not refer to our objectives, interests, or material resources. Rather, I refer to the way we make sense of who we are through actions shaped by values, key images and scenarios, ideals, and habits of thought; through the stories we use to frame our own and others’ experience; through the accounts we use to explain our own and others’ failures and successes; through what we feel entitled to; and through the moral categories we use to hierarchize our social world. Our actions, narratives, accounts, and moral categories not only help us make sense of who we are but are central to the way we communicate ourselves to others, the way we mobilize their support, what we are ready to defend and fight for, and how we orient ourselves in the face of ambiguous choices. As George Steinmetz put it: “Culture is more than a conveyor belt for deeper, more fundamental, or more material forces.”¹⁹ The therapeutic discourse offers an entirely new cultural matrix—made of metaphors, binary oppositions, narrative schemas, explanatory frameworks—that throughout the twentieth century has increasingly shaped our understandings of the self and of others. To that extent, it represents an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to sociologists who still need to be convinced the centrality of meaning.²⁰

The second proposition made by cultural sociology is that meanings differ in their ability to constrain definitions of reality: some meanings are more powerful and binding than others.²¹ Traditionally, the sociology of culture has been interested in meanings that have had a great deal of institutional resonance, that is, meanings that are sanctioned by and enacted within powerful institutional frameworks. ("Individualism" is a good example of a meaning that has enormous institutional resonance in the sense that it is enacted in and sanctioned by a variety of institutions.) The study of culture is usually interested in meanings that are enacted in and through powerful institutional settings because these meanings are assumed to be more constraining and because they are most visibly connected to the social order. Contrary to the view (widespread among communitarian sociologists) that the therapeutic ethos privileges an anti-institutional and narcissistic self,²² I argue that the therapeutic discourse has mustered an enormous cultural resonance because it has been enacted within and through the main institutions of modernity. Far from instilling an anti-institutional attitude, the therapeutic discourse represents a formidably powerful and quintessentially modern way to institutionalize the self.²³

The third characteristic claim made by the sociology of culture is that culture does not cause our actions in the same way that the wind causes a leaf to fall from the tree. Even if many students of culture strive to identify those cultural variables that have an independent causal power, most of us working in the muddy field of culture view culture as so entangled with "the rest" that positivist causal models are, if not undesirable, at least uneasy. Indeed, what is taken to be the explanatory variable must, more often than not, itself be explained.²⁴ We may compare the relationship that culture entertains with society to the relationship between the rain and the soil on which it falls: even if we know that the rain has caused the soil to be wet, we are, more often than not, left only with "mud" that cannot be re-separated into soil and water. Similarly, while I try to trace the historical moment during which the therapeutic discourse progressively shaped the language of selfhood, it is now virtually impossible to isolate this language from other "master cultural" codes organizing selfhood, such as that of economic liberalism or contractual law. The challenge is thus to understand how culture constitutes social relations

without ever being completely autonomous from them.²⁵ The therapeutic discourse helps make a strong case for the claim that language is central to the constitution of selfhood in that it is a dynamic means of experiencing and expressing emotions. Language defines categories of emotions, establishes what an "emotional problem" is, provides causal frameworks and metaphors to make sense of these problems, and constrains the ways emotions are expressed, made sense of, and managed.²⁶

The fourth characteristic of cultural sociology is its attempt to systematically find connections (which are not reducible to causality) between meaning and social groups, whether as producers, carriers, or consumers of meanings. The connection between social location or material interests on the one hand and ideas, values, and beliefs on the other cannot be deterministic and mechanistic. However, it is and remains a vital task of the sociology of culture to identify the social carriers of ideas and symbols, even if this relation cannot be conceived of in a causal and deterministic way. What complicates such an inquiry, however, is the fact that the therapeutic discourse is a set of linguistic practices with a strong institutional base (it originates in university departments, research institutes, professional journals); it emanates from the professional class of psychologists and has found a particularly receptive audience among members of the new middle classes and among women; but it is also an anonymous, authorless, and pervasive worldview, scattered in a dazzling array of social and cultural locations (TV talk shows, the Internet, the publishing industry, the private practice of clinicians, business consulting, school curricula, prison training programs, social welfare services, and a plethora of support groups). In Lionel Trilling's words, the therapeutic discourse has become the "slang of our culture."²⁷ The therapeutic discourse is thus both a *formal* knowledge system that has distinct boundaries and rules of writing, is produced in formal organizations, and is carried through professional networks, especially through "knowledge producers,"²⁸ and an *informal*, amorphous, and diffuse cultural system present in ordinary cultural practices and self-understandings. Although this book focuses on the latter system, I try to stress the connections between the two realms.

To these four dimensions defining culture, with which, I believe, most

sociologists of culture would agree, I offer one or two additional dimensions of my own, unfortunately neglected by the sociology of culture. Cultural sociology has surprisingly failed to devote serious attention to what is perhaps the central missing link connecting structure and agency, namely emotion.

Emotion is the inner energy that propels us toward an act, just as it endows a particular "mood" or "coloration" to that act.²⁹ Emotion can thus be defined as the "energy-laden" side of action, where that energy is understood to simultaneously implicate cognition, affect, evaluation, motivation, and the body. Far from being presocial or precultural, emotions are cultural meanings and social relationships that are closely and inextricably compressed together, and it is this tight compression that gives them their capacity to energize action. What makes emotion embed this "energy" is that it always concerns the self and the relationship of the self to culturally situated others. Emotions originate in the subject's beliefs and desires and cannot be separated from the ways in which culturally encoded social relationships are lived in and by the self. When someone says, "You are late again," whether this provokes shame, anger, or guilt will depend almost exclusively on one's relationship to the person who said it. A boss's remark about being late is likely to be shaming, and a colleague's is likely to make one angry, but that of one's child waiting at school is likely to make one feel guilty. Emotion is certainly a psychological entity, but it is no less and is perhaps more a cultural and social entity: through emotion we enact cultural definitions of personhood as they are expressed in concrete and immediate but always culturally and socially defined relationships. The intense, compact compression of cultural meanings and social relationships also gives emotions their prereflexive, often semiconscious character. Emotions are deeply internalized and unreflexive aspects of action, not because they do not contain sufficient culture and society, but because they contain too much of them. For this reason, a hermeneutic sociology that aims to understand social action from "within" must pay attention to the emotional coloration or intonation of action because that is what actually propels it. Like religion, the therapeutic discourse offers symbols that create an overriding experiential reality and transform the very nature of action.³⁰ To account for

such experiential reality, we need to bring in emotions. I therefore subscribe to the view of culture as practice expressed in the words of Richard Biernacki: "Thinking and feeling are not preparations for action, they are action."³¹ Essential to my approach to culture is the pragmatic claim that meanings help solve practical problems in which emotional life figures prominently.

This book examines the way the language of therapy has reformulated the "deepest level of identity symbols"³² by viewing the therapeutic discourse simultaneously as a formal and specialized body of knowledge and as a cultural framework that orients self-perceptions and conceptions of others and generates specific emotional practices. It has become virtually impossible to disentangle "knowledge" from "culture," so a dual approach to the therapeutic discourse is necessary: because it is both an established body of scientific knowledge conveyed through formal institutions and a language through which selfhood, identity, and emotional life are shaped,³³ it demands that we mobilize and reconcile the "production of culture" approach (which explains the emergence of cultural material by examining the resources, organizations, and networks that agents mobilize) and the hermeneutic approach (which views culture as a set of meanings deeply encoded in conceptions of personhood).

THERAPY AS A NEW EMOTIONAL STYLE

Many will object to my unrestricted use of the word *therapeutic*, a use that includes eclectic objects such as the demanding practice of the "talking cure," commercial self-help books that are manufactured for quick-fix mental health, support groups, assertiveness training programs, and the television programs that provide "one-show" therapeutic counseling. The objection is serious and demands that we pause to consider whether the enterprise might include so many eclectic elements that the object of analysis dissolves.

Akin to religious ideas—which at times may originate in the specialized discussions of theologians—concepts that are elaborated in the specialized and professional arenas of scientists shape our ordinary understandings of our social and natural environment. This observation is

especially pertinent to the science of clinical psychology, which has taken on the vocation of defining concepts (such as “intimacy,” “sexuality,” or “leadership”) that are at the interface between specialized institutions of knowledge and ordinary cultural practices. In suggesting a continuity between “professional” and popular psychology, I perform the same move that cultural studies does when it argues that highbrow literature and popular culture are equally revealing of the social conditions in which they are produced. Similarly, I argue that the boundary between specialized psychological knowledge and so-called pop psychology is porous in that both the professional language of psychology and its popular version address the self using similar metaphors and narratives.³⁴ This does not mean that I call for a disregard of the differences in the complexity of different cultural forms or that I am oblivious to the real differences that separate the painstaking (and costly) therapeutic consultation from the commodified quick-fix advice offered by self-help literature or workshops. But while we must acknowledge the discontinuities between the various organizational frameworks in which a language is deployed, we sociologists cannot accept at face value the “distinctions” guarded by professional practitioners in a given field. Such distinctions—between formal and informal knowledge—must be systematically examined, questioned, and even bracketed if we want to grasp the cultural continuities that exist beyond the established social divisions of knowledge.

There is another and perhaps more convincing reason justifying the seemingly cavalier move of blurring the specialized highbrow language of therapists and the language of popular culture. Starting with Freud himself (see next chapter), a significant number of professional psychologists have easily and happily crossed the boundary dividing specialized knowledge and popular culture and in fact have preferred to be located at the seam line between the two. For example, in the preface to his widely read book *On Becoming a Person*, Carl Rogers, the famous founder of humanist psychology, framed his enterprise in a way reminiscent of popular self-help guides: “It is my sincere hope that many people who have no particular interest in the field of counseling or psychotherapy will find that the learnings emerging in this field will strengthen them in

their own living."³⁵ Other popular books written by prominent psychologists, such as Aaron Beck's *Love Is Never Enough* or Albert Ellis's *A New Guide to Rational Living*, suggest similarly that well-known professional psychologists wanted to address the wide public as an undifferentiated mass of consumers of the publishing industry.³⁶ Conversely but symmetrically, many popular best-sellers present themselves as transcripts of therapeutic professional work. Countless self-help books have been written by certified therapists who share with a broad audience specialized insight they have gained in the course of their work, bringing case studies and even therapy transcripts to their readers.³⁷

In fact, from the very beginning of their profession, American professional psychoanalysts and psychologists turned to the culture industries to make their voice heard far and loud. By breaking down the distinction between the talking cure and the self-help book, I hope to show that the different cultural realms of professional and popular therapy are united by a common *emotional style*.

What is an "emotional style"? In her well-known *Philosophy in a New Key*, Suzanne Langer suggests that "every age in the history of philosophy has its own preoccupation. . . . If we look back on the slow formation and accumulation of doctrines which mark that history, we may see certain groupings of ideas within it, not by subject matter, but by a subtler common factor which may be called their 'technique.' It is the mode of handling problems, rather than what they are about, that assigns them to an age."³⁸ I call here *emotional style* the combination of the ways a culture becomes "preoccupied" with certain emotions and devises specific "techniques"—linguistic, scientific, ritual—to apprehend them.³⁹

An emotional style is established when a new "interpersonal imagination" is formulated, that is, a new way of thinking about the relationship of self to others, imagining its potentialities and implementing them in practice. Indeed, interpersonal relationships—like the nation—are thought of, longed for, argued over, betrayed, fought for, and negotiated according to imaginary scripts that fill social closeness or distance with meaning. Thus, as I show in chapter 2, Freud's greatest impact on culture has been to reformulate the relationship of the self to others through a new way of imagining the past (i.e., the personal familial past) and a

prospective freedom from that past. This reformulation was expressed in a number of key ideas and cultural motifs that would haunt American culture at large. Following the research agenda I outlined in previous studies,⁴⁰ I suggest that modern imaginings are especially likely to be formulated at sites where expert knowledge systems, media technologies, and emotions intersect.

The therapeutic emotional style emerged in the relatively short period from World War I to World War II and became both solidified and widely available after the 1960s. To be sure, this style drew on residues of nineteenth-century notions of selfhood, but it also presented a new lexicon to conceptualize and discuss emotions and self in the realm of ordinary life and new ways of handling emotional life. Given the extraordinary ubiquity of the therapeutic discourse, which ranges from professional treatises to *The Sopranos* via talk shows and self-help books, it is not easy to give a precise operational definition of it. I have opted for a conservative approach and have defined as “therapeutic” the body of claims proffered by certified psychologists and the body of texts in which psychologists and/or therapy appear and play a role (e.g., *The Sopranos*, the Oprah Winfrey talk show, Woody Allen’s movies). The cultural novelty of this emotional style was most apparent in the realm where it was perhaps least expected, namely the American corporation. Managers operating in the increasingly complex structures of the emerging corporate capitalism were eager to decipher the key to efficient control and thus avidly seized on a language and techniques that claimed to promote both harmony and productivity. As chapter 3 shows, psychology has profoundly transformed the emotional culture of the workplace in that it has made men and women’s emotional cultures increasingly converge into a common androgynous model of emotional conduct. This process has been equally at work in the realm of marriage. As I argue in chapter 4, under the influence of the new models offered by feminism and psychology, marriage called on women to become autonomous and assertive and on men to become emotionally reflexive and talkative. In chapter 5, I further argue that these new emotional models are performed in a gender-blind narrative of identity that is enacted in a wide variety of social sites, such as support groups and therapeutic workshops. In the final, sixth chapter, I

examine the effects of psychological knowledge on social structure. If culture is central to the sociological project, it is because it shapes the very structure of economic and symbolic resources. Psychology has transformed the resources that actors draw on in competitive arenas of struggle, creating new fault lines between social and gender stratification.

TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

I study the meaning of the therapeutic outlook by doing what ethnographers should typically do, namely immerse themselves in their data. But this immersion has taken the form of a cross-disciplinary dialogue between historical, sociological, and anthropological methods. With William Sewell I am convinced not only that “a deeper theoretical engagement between historians and social scientists could be mutually enlightening” but also that such engagement is necessary if we want to advance the study of culture.⁴¹

Given the overwhelming presence of the therapeutic ethos in contemporary culture, these data are dauntingly abundant and dauntingly eclectic. They include a sample of magazines articles written between the 1930s and the 1990s (237 in toto). The magazines were *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Redbook*, and *Parents*. I also used an eclectic sample of popular psychological self-help guides (most of which were best-sellers), novels, movies, autobiographies, and Oprah Winfrey talk shows. I read a wide variety of psychoanalytical and psychological theorists, such as Sigmund Freud, Karen Horney, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Erik Erikson, Alfred Adler, Stephen Mitchell, and Elton Mayo, as well as *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* and various textbooks in clinical psychology. To understand how the discourse of therapy transformed definitions of professional competence (see chapter 3), I conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with men and women working in corporations in the United States or studying in a prestigious MBA program (eight men, seven women) and another three interviews with corporate managers who were retired. To understand how therapy has transformed intimate relationships and marriage, I interviewed another fifteen middle-class people, many of whom had undergone extensive

therapy or who were themselves therapists (chapters 4 and 6); for the purposes of comparison, I also conducted six interviews with working-class men who had never undergone therapy. Over five years, I kept a diary of the turns of expression, stories, and self-understandings of friends and family that resonated with the therapeutic mode of thinking. Finally, to form hypotheses about how the discourse of therapy is deployed globally, I conducted an ethnographic analysis of two workshops in Israel, one on “emotional intelligence” and one offered by the Landmark Education Corporation. I conducted several informal conversations with the participants of these workshops. I also interviewed six Israeli organizational consultants as well as ten Israeli men and women who had undergone therapy (seven women, three men). The eclectic character of these data also indicate that my methods of analysis vary, ranging from historical to participant observation, to in-depth interviews, to the semiotic analysis of texts.

This array of data and methods is not fortuitous, for, as I argue throughout, culture is located in texts as well as in strategies of action. In fact, it is impossible to analyze psychological culture without being struck by the overwhelming importance of textuality in that culture. Psychology is a cultural formation in which a mass of written texts come to organize and structure the practices and modes of speech of oral interactions. In that sense, it compels the sociologist of culture to wrestle with the role of texts in the formation of contemporary selfhood. However, I do not view these two sites—the textual and the interactional—as equivalent or interchangeable. In fact, I believe that one of the crucial tasks of cultural sociology is to elucidate the relationship between texts and society, and more exactly to understand how and where texts affect action and how semantics and pragmatics connect to each other, to use Jeffrey Alexander’s words.⁴²

Most of cultural sociology has skirted or dismissed the question of the impact of texts on action either by collapsing action under texts (as in poststructuralism), by viewing action as the mechanistic deployment of meaning inscribed in objective structures (as in structuralism), or by deflecting the importance of texts as such. Reception theory, for example, focuses on the various and varying strategies used by readers to interpret

a single specific set of texts (a TV program or literary genre).⁴³ In this way, reception theory implicitly assumes that texts are reducible to or subsumed under their interpretive strategies and that if they have any impact it consists in activating preexisting meanings, usually reflecting the social positions of actors. The “production of culture” paradigm ignores altogether the question of the relationship between texts and their social effects by focusing on the institutional appropriation of texts and by viewing meaning as resulting from social power and organizational structure.

This book would like to bring the problem of the relationship of texts to action to the forefront of cultural sociology, where texts include both expert and popular knowledge systems formalized in visual and textual genres and propagated by the mass media. But how shall we study the vexed question of the relationship of texts and action? Following Durkheim’s central insight that the basis of social life is simultaneously moral and emotional, I understand the self as an inextricable ensemble of cognitions and emotions.⁴⁴ Similarly, I argue that texts insert themselves into action in two main ways: through cognition and through emotions. As Paul Ricoeur has argued, texts introduce a distance between the immediacy of experience and the self and, in that distance, codify experience. Texts are “communication in and through distance,”⁴⁵ and within that distance communication becomes formalized, a matter of codes, conventions, and stable representations. But if texts were only frozen codes, they could not draw us in. If cultural materials such as novels, movies, self-help literature, or television programs have any impact on us, it is not only as hermeneutic devices helping us make sense of our world but also as cultural devices that tap into, elicit, and channel complex emotional apparatuses (such as indignation, compassion, longing for love, fear, and anxiety). The significance of the novel, of contemporary advice literature, or of much of media culture lies primarily in their capacity to draw the reader in through a set of emotional responses. Both novels and advice literature, each in different ways, offer scenarios through which actors can cognitively rehearse their emotional experience and reflect on others’ emotional transactions and expressions. By doing so, actors make sense of their own (and others’) feelings, subtly prescribe

rules to manage emotions, and provide a vocabulary and a method of introspection. This is exactly how psychological texts insert themselves into action.

My method of interpreting cultural material is motivated by two main concerns. First, I try as little as possible to read “into” the meaning of practices, that is, to read “above” the shoulders of social actors. Instead, I opt for a strategy that refers to the literal meaning of texts (whether self-help literature, interview transcripts, or actual verbal exchange during social interactions). In doing so, I am better equipped to pay attention to the differences between what actors intend to say and the unintended consequences of their speech (see chapter 3 for an example of this strategy, where the intended meaning and the consequences of the human relations movement are clearly differentiated). Second, I look for systematic patterns and connections between various cultural sites. Although my analysis does not always make explicit how systematic a finding is, I have focused only on the repetitive and the systematic and have left out those elements that seem only loosely integrated into a pattern.

CULTURAL CRITIQUE AND PSYCHOLOGY

By insisting that the therapeutic lexicon “depoliticizes” problems that are social and collective, many sociologists have made it difficult for themselves to understand why the new middle classes and women have enthusiastically endorsed the therapeutic discourse—other than by presuming, somewhat implausibly, that theirs is a “false” consciousness or by presuming that modern societies are governed by a seamless process of surveillance equally embodied in computerized control of citizens and in the therapist’s office. Indeed, the therapeutic discourse can only fall short of satisfying the Marxist or feminist call to become aware of structures of exploitation. Sociologists’ critiques of psychology obscure the more challenging question: How can we explain the extent and power of that discourse without tautologically explaining it by “hegemony,” “patriarchy,” “symbolic violence,” or “surveillance”?

I do not ask whether the therapeutic injunction to narcissistic “self-realization” erodes moral commitments or whether the therapeutic con-

fession is subjection to power “by other means.” This task has been accomplished by others, and I prefer to examine the therapeutic discourse from the standpoint of what it is called upon to perform, namely to build coherent selves, procure intimacy, provide a feeling of competence in the realm of work, and facilitate social relations in general. We should ask why and how the therapeutic language has come to define languages of selfhood and what makes it a *cultural resource*, a way for actors to devise strategies of action that help them implement certain definitions of the good life. This implies, quite simply, that I analyze (and ultimately criticize) the therapeutic discourse from within its own horizon of presuppositions and claims, a model of critique I have called elsewhere *immanent critique* (see chapter 6).⁴⁶ Immanent critique must emerge from a “thick” understanding of people’s desires and goals and cannot bracket the actual understandings and strategies of lay actors.

I offer the hypothesis that the most successful ideas—as psychoanalysis has undoubtedly been—are those that can satisfy three conditions: they must “somehow” fit social structure, that is, make sense of actors’ social experience (e.g., rapid economic transformation, demographic patterns, immigration fluxes, downward mobility, status anxiety); they must provide guidance about uncertain or conflict-ridden areas of social conduct (e.g., sexuality, love, or economic success); and they must be institutionalized and circulated in social networks. I call this approach to culture “pragmatic” because it argues that ideas and meanings can become dominant not only when they undergo institutionalization but also when they help us “do things,” that is, cope with and resolve practical questions. Ideas become successful not only when they can address social experience and when they become incorporated in what William Sewell calls “institutional nodes” (sites that yield a high amount of resources, such as the state or the market) but also when they offer symbolic and practical ways of action. Successful cultural ideas are thus those that enable the self to integrate various bits and pieces of its environment in narratives, frames, and metaphors that “work” in given institutional contexts.

Following in the footsteps of pragmatism, the sociology of culture should ask two central questions: which “objective reality” lies behind

culture and why certain meanings “work.” To be efficacious, a discourse must accomplish certain things for the people who believe in it and use it (see chapter 2). A discourse will keep functioning and circulating if it accomplishes certain things that “work” in people’s everyday lives. A pragmatist view of culture invites us to inquire about why some ideas are viewed as true and how they are used in everyday life. To quote William James: “A new opinion counts as ‘true’ just in proportion as it gratifies the individual’s desire to assimilate the novel in his experience to his beliefs in stock. It must both lean on old truth and grasp new fact. . . . The reasons why we call things true is the reason why they are true.”⁴⁷ William James invites us here to understand what in “new” ideas makes us call them true, what makes them convenient and workable tools to address experiences. Further, as John P. Murphy summarizes James’s thought, “Ideas verify themselves by their ability to run novel experiences into funded experience ‘most felicitously and expeditiously’ (with ‘a minimum of modification,’ ‘a minimum of jolt,’ ‘a minimum disturbance,’ and ‘a maximum of continuity’). . . . Ideas are said to verify themselves by mediating between funded and new experiences most felicitously and expeditiously.”⁴⁸ Cultural shifts do not occur in the same way as scientific paradigmatic shifts, for the former often incorporate and recycle—rather than reject, as the latter do—old cultural material. Cultural change is “messy” precisely for that reason: because new ideas, values, and cultural models coexist with, incorporate, and rework preexisting cultural material. In that sense, culture is always a palimpsest in which the new is superimposed upon the old. The central question raised in the following chapters is what the “old truths” and “beliefs in stock” rearticulated by psychoanalysis and psychology are.

TWO Freud

A CULTURAL INNOVATOR

What were ducks in the scientist's world before the revolution are rabbits afterwards. The man who first saw the exterior of the box from above later sees its interior from below.

—Thomas Kuhn

In 2006, *Newsweek* ran a cover story on the enduring legacy of Freud and asserted that he had been “the great engine of an ongoing middlebrow bull session that has engaged our culture for a century. Without Freud, Woody Allen would be a schnook and Tony Soprano a thug; there would be an Oedipus but no Oedipus complex.”¹ How and why did the Freudian outlook, which after all started as a scientific theory of the mind, become a pervasive and popular language seized and endlessly recycled by the commodified realm of mass media? How did psychoanalysis—“Freudian, neo Freudian, and post Freudian”—become “woven into all aspects of American life”?² And what is the process by which this happened? I argue, perhaps immodestly, that only the combined perspectives of the sociology of culture and of emotions, with their focus on institutions, meanings, and inner life, can help us adequately address these vexing questions.³

Robert Wuthnow argues that there are three ways of explaining social and cultural change: the first bestows importance on the emergence of new classes; the second views social change as the progressive adaptation to increasing complexity; and the third, the theory of Weberian inspiration, attributes a great deal of power to charismatic individuals.⁴ While this list does not exhaust the range of explanations we might provide to address the question at hand, our starting point must be the charismatic character of Freud's enterprise. Before it became a profession, the psychoanalytical enterprise was the enterprise of a single individual.

In the contemporary intellectual context of the social sciences, such claims can be made only in a highly conditional way. Lest we go back to the infamous era when history was understood as the outcome of individual actions and decisions, the search for cultural patterns and structures that has dominated (and continues to dominate) the sociology of culture usually dismisses the role of innovative individuals in the creation of new cultural codes.⁵ Thus, when "inventiveness" is evoked in current sociology, it usually takes the benign meaning of acting freely, that is, "in a non-deterministic way."⁶ "Inventiveness" has become nothing more than the ongoing creativity with which actors deploy their intentions and strategies.⁷ Ironically, while sociologists have focused on the creativity of routine action, they have also worked toward highlighting the routine character of (artistic or scientific) "creativity," typically viewed as the outcome of social networks, conventions, allocation of resources, and organizational structure.⁸ In other words, sociology's strategy has been to make "creativity" into an ordinary social activity by subsuming it under the structural, organizational, or social resources that it mobilizes so that it may become socially relevant and transformative.⁹ Yet even if in the American context the therapeutic persuasion emerged from the tangled history of private life, from the organization of American medicine, and from newly emerging cultural industries in search of new messages, we cannot overlook the fact that a single social actor—Sigmund Freud—dazzled the imagination of his contemporaries with metaphors and narratives that made a bridge between the specialized practice of psychology, neurology, psychiatry, and medicine on the one hand and the realm of popular and high culture on the other. As Jurgen Habermas put it: "The end of the nineteenth century saw

a discipline emerge [psychoanalysis], primarily as the work of a single man [Freud]."¹⁰ Sigmund Freud's theories and their impact on American culture thus compel us to reexamine the role of creative actors in history, provided that we understand these charismatic actors not as free-floating agents but as pointers to emerging social structures and cultural codes.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A CHARISMATIC ENTERPRISE

Charisma is a property of individuals. According to Weber charismatic power—contrary to rational or traditional authority—derives from extraordinary personal powers, such as endurance, strength of will, and dedication to the welfare of others.¹¹ As one of Freud's best-known biographers, Paul Roazen, put it, "Freud was an inspiring teacher, on the model of a Greek philosopher or a great rabbi. His writings, his lectures, and his therapy, added to the magnetism and force of his personality, attracted and retained loyal followers, not only in his own lifetime but today as well."¹² If psychoanalysis has been frequently compared to a cult, it is because it revolved closely around Freud's personality and demanded from its practitioners total loyalty to the teachings of the master. It also issued a body of strict disciplinary rules that kept the wide network of practitioners tightly bound together. As Max Graf wrote about the early meetings of the psychoanalytical circle in Vienna, "There was an atmosphere of the foundation of a religion in that room. . . . Freud's pupils were his apostles."¹³ Or, as another of Freud's followers, Wilhelm Stekel (later to become a dissident), put it: "I was the apostle of Freud who was my Christ!"¹⁴ In other words, psychoanalysis was not only a body of ideas; it was a new creed that revolved around a person who was able to command discipline as well as love from his followers. Moreover, if, as Weber suggests, "Charisma knows only inner determination and inner restraint,"¹⁵ Freud would entirely fit the bill. As another biographer of Freud put it, "Freud possessed an air of disciplined power, of tremendous energy harnessed to a single purpose: psychoanalysis."¹⁶ Throughout his career he displayed an extraordinary determination to push his ideas forward, despite early rejections of psychoanalysis, dissensions within the group, and dramatic ruptures with mentors and colleagues. In

fact, Freud used these rejections and ruptures to reinforce the cohesiveness of his group and his ideas.

Another aspect of the charismatic leader is that people perceive him as caring for the salvation of others. To quote Max Weber again: "The charismatic leader gains and maintains authority solely by proving his strength in life. . . . Above all . . . his divine mission must 'prove' itself in that those who faithfully surrender to him must fare well."¹⁷ Freud's revolutionary ideas did in fact have one main focus—psychic suffering—and offered unprecedented techniques to remedy and alleviate such suffering. Charismatic leaders exert a particularly powerful influence if they assume the role of healers and offer cultural strategies to cope with suffering. The Freudian enterprise provided a new arena to voice and discuss suffering and thus in many ways assumed characteristics of a (folk) salvation religion.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the charismatic leader has, or at least is perceived to have, a connection to "some very central feature of man's existence and the cosmos in which he lives."¹⁸ Indeed, as I show below, Freud and the incipient discipline of psychoanalysis tapped into the key concerns of modern identity—sexuality, the passage from childhood to adulthood, and the nature of parenthood. As an interpreter of Weber, Johannes Fabian, adds, "By defining charisma as the substrate of processes of routinization/rationalization, [Weber] indicated that an understanding of cultural change has to focus on the emergence, formulation, and manipulation of 'Sinn' [meaning]."¹⁹ Freud, as I show below, provided what was to become the most important cosmology of the modern self by connecting it to ideals of autonomy, self-knowledge, and the pursuit of happiness.

Reflecting on charisma, Talcott Parsons further suggests that charisma is a property that "attaches to men and things by virtue of their relations with the 'supernatural,' that is, with the non-empirical aspects of reality, insofar as they lend teleological meaning to men's acts and the events of the world."²⁰ In other words, charisma originates in actual individuals but can at a later point adhere to objects or to ideas. In this view, then, psychoanalysis itself could become a charismatic object in its capacity to transform all aspects of everyday life into meaningful events to be deci-

phered. Not only was Freud a charismatic figure, but psychoanalysis itself, in its capacity to connect ordinary life to a realm of “supernatural” symbols, became a charismatic enterprise.

But ideas and meanings, however charismatic, can be diffused only by being transmitted through an organizational structure (the very process by which charisma gets routinized). How ideas are diffused and how actors who receive these ideas are mobilized are crucial for understanding how and why these ideas are incorporated into social institutions.

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF FREUDIAN CHARISMA

Scientific knowledge is simultaneously embedded in cultural forms and cultural organizations that ground it in a specific place and time.²¹ Thus we should identify the social identity of the groups of people who received and processed Freud’s ideas, my assumption being that this is crucial for our understanding of their acceptance and diffusion.

Sociologists of culture are particularly sensitive to the question of the location of culture, that is, for whom and by whom an idea is appropriated. Indeed, no matter how much a cultural form resonates with structural features of society, widespread transmission depends, first and foremost, upon organization and institutionalization. Freud’s success in America was a consequence of his constructing a grand theory in Europe on a solid organizational structure that made possible the quick diffusion of psychoanalytical concepts and practices and their appropriation by key actors in the scientific and cultural establishment. Freud was a supreme organizer who knew how to institutionalize psychoanalysis through organizations and social networks.²² Understanding the process by which ideas are institutionalized is crucial, for only then does a new conceptual language exert a “powerful influence over the ways in which people can formulate their desires and work to attain them.”²³

Three features of the organizational structure of early psychoanalysis contributed to the successful inculcation of its influence: the tight cohesiveness of a small group of devotees around Freud; the dissension of some of its prominent members; and the international organizational structure of early psychoanalysis.

Between 1902 and 1906, Freud set up "Wednesday evenings," informal gatherings designed to maintain close contact among the newly recruited disciples of psychoanalysis and to generate new ideas. The presentation of a paper was a semiformal rite of initiation after which a new member was accepted. Freud encouraged open discussion as well as revelation of one's emotions, fantasies, and dreams for interpretation by the group attending. The Swiss Max Eitingon, the first foreigner to visit the group, attended the gathering to receive advice in 1907. He later became one of the most persistent advocates of psychoanalysis in England, thus illustrating that the initial core could and did radiate worldwide. The Wednesday meetings maintained and expanded the core of Freud's followers.²⁴ Another illustration of the strong cohesion of the psychoanalytical group was that in 1928 an official curriculum to train psychoanalysts was created in Berlin, where the same methods of candidates' discussion of theoretical and methodological problems relating to their cases recreated the Wednesday Society. The organization was then emulated all over the world, undoubtedly an early example of what DiMaggio and Powell have called isomorphism, or the capacity of organizations to imitate one another.²⁵ Its command of a wide social network and its adoption of a core standard practice and curriculum explain why, from the outset of the psychoanalytical theory, "the Freudian group . . . was both national and international."²⁶

In the same year, 1928, the group evolved into a professional organization, and the Wednesday Society was renamed the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, which in turn set the stage for the first international congress (in Salzburg), a move that undoubtedly contributed to the dissemination and expansion of psychoanalysis throughout the world. Forty-two psychoanalysts attended, mostly from Austria and Switzerland but also from the United States, England, Germany, and Hungary.²⁷ The group expanded its scope when the International Psycho-Analytical Association (IPA) was founded. The international organization was to be an association of local (national) psychoanalytic societies, to be directed by members approved by Freud. Thus Freud could exert wide-ranging supervision over the international network of members. It is interesting in this respect that "psychoanalysis was the only profession to have an interna-

tional base before local organizations were in place, which permitted the Freudians to ignore local and national customs."²⁸

The IPA was specifically geared toward the diffusion of the message of psychoanalysis. Indeed, creativity can become a social currency only when it "travels in groups."²⁹ This is consistent with the sociology of social networks, which has shown that professional networks are used to circulate information and knowledge through formal meetings, journals, and informal networks, all of which were very efficiently used by the Freudian group.³⁰ Indeed, the IPA met at biannual congresses and engaged in intense communication through mail, sharing ideas, results, and questions. Not only did colleagues diffuse the precepts of psychoanalysis, but also former patients were charged with the mission of spreading it across the globe, thus greatly increasing its power and distribution.³¹

The expulsion of such prominent dissenters as Alfred Adler and Carl Jung signified that the early organization was determined to establish unity and retain control over the elaboration of the doctrine and practice of psychoanalysis.³² Paradoxically, these dissenters further disseminated the psychoanalytic or psychological worldview, for they accepted and distributed some of its fundamental premises: that the self could be transformed and shaped by and through the relation with a therapist, that the psyche was composed of many layers in need of understanding and mastery, and that language played a decisive role in self-making. Because psychologists are caught in the classifications and institutional structures of their profession, they may not see what the sociologist can see, namely that despite the violent disputes that alienated Jung, Adler, and Rank from Freud, they shared with him many assumptions about what constituted the proper locus for the study, improvement, and transformation of people. In the United States, the disputes generated by Karen Horney and Erich Fromm's secession contributed only to increase the visibility of psychoanalysis and to better establish some of its key concepts. Indeed, these very struggles helped establish and consolidate the boundaries of the social field in which they were taking place. These intense and vehement disputes ended up reinforcing, rather than undermining, the cultural core and coherence of psychoanalysis as a professional practice.

Dissensions not only strengthened the psychoanalytical core but also

diffused some basic elements of its message more widely. The dissenters had the effect of making Freud rely on a small committee of people who acted both as the guardians of the original faith and as his direct emissaries to spread the gospel. Karl Abraham, Ferenczi, Rank, Sachs, Jones, and Eitingon would all become prominent and fervent psychoanalysts in their respective countries, thus extending the diffusion of psychoanalysis through newly constituted social networks.

But these general remarks about the organization of psychoanalysis still leave unanswered the question of why these ideas were so quickly adopted on the American continent. Freud's invitation to deliver lectures at Clark University in 1909 was as important to psychoanalysis as it was to American culture, which absorbed avidly, though selectively, some of Freud's ideas. As Peter Gay notices, the voyage to the United States confirmed for Freud that "his movement was now a truly international affair."³³ Moreover, Freud's lectures at Clark University "made him famous overnight."³⁴ Edith Kurzweil laconically explains this by invoking the American propensity to welcome anything new. However, as there have been sufficient "new" things that Americans did not welcome, we should probe further into why American culture was such propitious terrain for the reception of psychoanalytical ideas.

FREUD IN AMERICA

Any attempt to explain the extraordinary resonance of psychoanalysis in America must account for a variety of simultaneous factors that have to do with the social organization of medicine in America, its relationship with psychotherapy, the groups and networks that diffused psychoanalysis, and, finally, the very nature of psychoanalytical ideas.

The Context of American Psychoanalysis: Struggles between Medicine and Spirituality

No country was as receptive to Freudian ideas as America. Many elements explain this receptivity, but the most visible one had to do with the fact that "when Freud first set foot on American soil, psychotherapy was already integrally woven into the fabric of American culture and Ameri-

can medicine."³⁵ At the turn of the twentieth century, psychology was a relatively well-established academic discipline. The American medical establishment was receptive to psychotherapy in a way that did not exist in Europe. The medical discourse addressed such psychic problems as neurasthenia, "railway spine," and hysteria. Along with the medical interest in and treatment of such disorders, nonscientific practices of healing were performed, for example, by the mind cure movement, the Emmanuel movement (initiated by a group of Boston physicians and Episcopalian ministers), New Thought, Christian Science, and other groups with strong affinities with spiritualist or religious worldviews.³⁶

America provided a particularly fertile context for the reception of psychoanalysis because methods of healing "through the mind" were well established and had been the object of intense public controversies inside the medical profession before Freud set foot on American soil. In the opening decades of the twentieth century, the medical profession fought tooth and nail to snatch mental patients out of the hands of the clergy and a wide variety of healers of all persuasions, claiming that these patients would be better cured by conventional medicine. Academic psychologists were also divided on the status and validity of the methods of healing used by religious precursors of psychotherapists.³⁷ Like physicians, they accused popular movements such as the Emmanuel movement of practicing neither good medicine, nor true religion, nor effective psychology.

The paradoxical result of these controversies was to strengthen the idea that mental therapies were both necessary and efficacious. "On the eve of Freud's historic visit to the United States in September 1909 a substantial plurality, if not outright majority, of American physicians were now willing to defend vigorously their exclusive right to employ a method that many in the profession had previously maligned and a substantially greater number had simply ignored."³⁸ Indeed, "resistance" to cultural outlooks can and often does end up strengthening the very outlooks it opposes because resistance implies "recognition of their centrality."³⁹ Thus cultural dominance is not necessarily produced by gaining assent; rather, it is produced by generating cultural activity *around* a particular cultural object, an activity that may well take the form of a controversy.

In short, because mental healing had been an object of controversy dividing the religious clergy and the medical profession, Freud's language and categories were received in a cultural context where mental cure and healing were already visible and significant categories of public discourse.

The Reception of Freud's Ideas and Cultural Elites

The immediate context of reception of the Clark lectures—which were the first encounter between Freud and the American continent—also played an important role in the immediate diffusion of Freud's ideas. The Clark lectures, delivered in 1909, were attended by members of varied cultural elites who, because of their access to networks and resources, could spread Freud's ideas to different arenas of social life. Elites are also crucial in that they can bestow authority and legitimacy on new ideas. Whereas in Germany Freud's theories had been ignored or dismissed, in the United States members of the academic establishment gave their seal of approval and scientific legitimacy to Freud's pathbreaking ideas. Freud's Clark lectures were attended by important members of the psychiatric and neurological establishment (such as Stanley Hall, William James, James Putnam, E. B. Titchener, and Adolph Meyer). The neurologist Morton Prince, who had used hypnosis, was particularly interested in Freud's use of hypnosis to reveal the unconscious. Putnam, a neurologist who had worked on the idea of the subconscious, was similarly interested in Freud's development of the unconscious and in its therapeutic value. As early as 1904, when already enjoying an unmatched prestige among his colleagues, Putnam declared the usefulness of psychoanalysis. His positive evaluation of Freud's ideas only increased at the Clark lectures, and, given his key status in American neurology, he proved to be a decisive influence. Like Putnam, Abraham Brill, another physician who had been trained in Zurich, fulfilled the role of translating, organizing, and popularizing psychoanalysis both for doctors and for the larger public. Adolf Meyer, a famous psychiatrist, was receptive to the idea of infantile sexuality and found in psychoanalysis material to sustain his claim that insanity did not result from brain lesions or from inherited predispositions.⁴⁰ William James, perhaps the most famous psychologist in

the United States, attended Freud's lectures, and although he was skeptical about some aspects of psychoanalysis, he was both interested and hopeful that psychoanalysis might make some breakthrough. Although his social legitimacy derived mainly from his acceptance among physicians, Freud appealed to other elite groups as well, intellectuals and feminists.⁴¹ For example, Emma Goldman, the intellectual and political activist and leader of the anarchist movement, also attended Freud's lectures; she emerged even more convinced that women's sexuality needed to be liberated. She described Freud's theory as an irrefutable argument against the "hypocrisy of Puritanism."⁴²

As the study of the reception of texts has shown repeatedly, ambiguous texts are more readily incorporated into a variety of points of view, values, and needs, thus ensuring their success with a wide variety of audiences. Freud's lectures lent themselves particularly well to such multiplicity of interpretations. Thus Freud's lectures were both sufficiently broad and sufficiently ambiguous to enable the appropriation of the topics they covered by various sectors of the scientific and cultural American elites, represented by such institutions as Harvard University as well as by feminists and radicals. These various fractions of elite groups in turn could use Freud's ideas to further their own struggles.

The Medicalization of Psychoanalysis

Americans' receptivity toward and institutionalization of psychoanalysis were increased by the fact that it was accepted by the prestigious medical establishment and even made into an elite medical specialty. This was because the organizational boundaries of the American medical profession in the 1920s were far more fluid than in Europe. The profession was still open to innovation because "its pattern of research and ties to universities and government were just becoming fixed."⁴³ Physicians such as Brill and Putnam were indefatigable in their attempts to promote psychoanalysis within the larger public and thus acted as cultural entrepreneurs and even proselytizers, promoting and legitimating psychoanalysis. Brill, for example, became a trained psychoanalyst and a very active spokesman for psychoanalysis by making Freud's writings available in English.⁴⁴ He also lectured to a variety of professional and lay groups. He

addressed women members of the Child Study Association, the Authors League, and various artists, philosophers, and militant unionists gathered in the salon of Mrs. Mabel Dodge.⁴⁵ Brill eventually became the leader of the psychoanalytical movement in New York.⁴⁶ Moreover, the American physician was, in Nathan Hale's words, a popularizer who wrote for magazines, for the elite as well as for the general public.⁴⁷ Thus it was through medicine that psychoanalysis swiftly acquired legitimacy and prestige and became diffused through popular culture. This could be felt as early as 1915, when the widely popular and conservative magazine *Good Housekeeping* published an article about Freud.

The Organization of American Psychoanalysis

Freud's extraordinary organizational skills were immediately visible on the American continent. Freud, Ferenczi, and Jones remained in contact with their American followers and urged them to establish an independent organization. In response, the New York Psychoanalytic Society was founded in 1911, and then, under Putnam's direction, the Boston Psychoanalytic Society in 1914. In a relatively short time, the American Psychoanalytic Association was founded, rallying several of its dispersed adherents. This association was crucial in circulating information and in establishing psychoanalysis organizationally, with resources, networks, and knowledge. As Magali Sarfati Larson put it, an informal indicator of organizational strength is "the emergence of a professional association recognized as representative by the public authorities or by a significant sector of the public."⁴⁸

From the start, American analysts were better integrated into their society than their European counterparts. Their patients included not only members of the upper middle class but a greater proportion of factory workers, secretaries, and artists. The American psychoanalysts also quickly established their own academic publications such as the *Psychoanalytic Review* and the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*. Because of the particular medical history of the United States, which was concerned with denouncing imposters, quacks, and spiritual healers with medical pretensions, APA members pushed for uniform professional criteria. For these reasons, psychoanalysis found propitious organizational terrain in the

United States. Moreover, when psychoanalysts successfully treated bombshell trauma during World War I, the profession acquired not only self-confidence but also more status and legitimacy. The Second World War would also offer extraordinary opportunities for the establishment and expansion of psychology when psychologists were massively recruited in areas as diverse as personnel administration, propaganda, morale, and mental health.⁴⁹

The disorganization in which European psychoanalytical associations found themselves during and after World War II enabled the increasing centrality of the American Psychoanalytical Association. Between 1946 and 1960, "thirteen psychoanalytic societies, eight institutes, and four teaching centers were officially recognized in the United States. . . . By the end of the 1960s, the APA reported that its membership included 1302 individuals, twenty-nine local societies, and twenty-one approved training institutes."⁵⁰ After 1945, the number of clinical occupations grew significantly.⁵¹ For example, membership in the American Psychological Association "grew by more than 1100 percent, from 2739 in 1940 to 30,839 in 1970."⁵²

The introduction of psychology into university departments helped constitute psychologists as a professional group. The university enabled the standardization of psychological knowledge and practice and legitimized psychologists' claim to universal expertise.⁵³ As Sarfati Larson put it, professionalization is secured by binding together two elements: the first is a type of knowledge abstract enough to generate both scientific debate and applications; the second is the market.⁵⁴ The American case offered a cogent illustration of this process: psychoanalysis was quickly institutionalized in a highly professionalized way and leaned on the powerful profession of medicine to establish its authority. Indeed, for a significant amount of time only medical doctors were allowed to be trained in psychoanalysis and were allowed to practice it. In the field of scientific knowledge, clinical psychology of various persuasions has increasingly occupied a privileged position, commanding major institutional control of research funds, creating the largest professional associations in social sciences, and producing large numbers of PhDs.⁵⁵ After World War II, because psychology was both a research discipline and a

profession devoted to the practical improvement of human condition, its sources of funding grew at an unprecedented rate, thus reinforcing professional and intellectual self-confidence.

Psychoanalysis enjoyed not only the authority of a prestigious medical profession but also wide popularity among the “lay” public. Of all the social sciences and sciences, psychology was undoubtedly the most popular, that is, the most attuned to and in touch with the broader public.⁵⁶ Organizational or institutional perspectives alone cannot explain why psychoanalysis was so enthusiastically embraced by popular culture and by the public at large. In the following, I claim that if we want to understand the essence of such popularity we must understand the *cultural meaning* of psychoanalysis.

THE FREUDIAN CULTURAL MATRIX

Neither a theory of charisma nor a theory of institutionalization alone can explain the success of Freud’s ideas. This book is committed to the view that if culture matters, it is because of the ways it shapes and orients the meanings and interpretations with which we carry on daily life and make sense of the events that disrupt daily life. Genius, as Stephan Fuchs put it, “is not the cause but the retrospective outcome of major ruptures and transformations in culture.”⁵⁷ However innovative or well organized, cultural material does not transform social relationships by “injecting” into them—as a needle would—new cultural ingredients. Cultural change is the meeting point of contingent and creative components of action and of the recasting of preexisting social problems or structures into new codes, which, in that very process, change the structure of the problems addressed. Freud almost single-handedly created a new language to describe, discuss, and manage the psyche, but in doing so he addressed what had become one of the most dominant and problematic features of modern life, namely the private sphere, thereby transforming it. Freud formulated new cultural codes that, more than any other cultural system available at the time, could make sense of the transformations family, sexuality, and gender relationships had undergone during the second half of the nineteenth century and provide new interpretive

frames to organize these transformations. Freudian psychological models spread throughout society, not only because they addressed central problems of American selfhood, but also because they expressed them in a hybrid language that combined the tropes of popular healing and myth with the legitimizing language of medicine and scientific rationality. Further, they addressed the private sphere, a sphere that was facing new strains due to the democratization of gender relations. This, in a nutshell, is the reason for Freud's uncanny popular success in America.

When inquiring into the Freudian contribution to American culture, we are immediately confronted with the famous slipperiness and complexity of culture. Freud's ideas worked at several levels: they confronted prevalent sexual *norms*; they offered new *narrative models* to make sense of and shape life stories; and they deployed a battery of *metaphors* to grasp the nature of human conflict. Freud's ideas worked simultaneously at the most formalized level of theory building and at the level of ordinary cognitive templates. I propose to treat these levels together by invoking the broad but convenient notion of "emotional style," discussed in chapter 1. This style can be conceptualized through an understanding of how the themes, metaphors, binary oppositions, and narrative models offered by Freud explained human action, offered prescriptions for the self, and made people imagine their emotions and their relationships in a radically new way.

To identify the semiotic core of Freud's ideas, I focus on two key texts: the five lectures Freud gave at Clark University in 1909 and the *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, published in 1915.⁵⁸ I chose these two texts because both provide us with a panoramic overview of Freud's ideas and, even more importantly, because he himself *intended* these texts to be a platform to popularize psychoanalysis. The Clark lectures—which marked the introduction of Freud's ideas into the United States—contained themes (slips of the tongue, dreams, infantile sexuality, and the unconscious) already present in two books that Freud had previously published and that had been more successful with the lay public than with the medical profession, namely *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.⁵⁹ But the Clark lectures also anticipated some of the key themes of the *Introductory Lectures*. The reiteration thus

indicates what Freud intended to be viewed as the key ideas to be communicated to a nonspecialized broad audience, whether in the United States or in Vienna. Another reason for focusing on the Clark lectures is that these lectures constituted American culture's first serious encounter with Freud's ideas. Nathan Hale's study of the American reception of Freud confirms that the Clark conferences "launched psychoanalysis."⁶⁰

In these five wide-ranging lectures, Freud presented, before an eclectic audience, the major ideas of psychoanalysis, or at any rate those ideas that would find a resounding echo in American popular culture, such as slips of the tongue, the role of the unconscious in determining our destiny, the centrality of dreams for psychic life, the sexual character of most of our desires, and the family as the origin of our psyche and ultimate cause of its pathologies. In analyzing these dense and rich texts, I try to understand which image of and program for the self emerge from the themes, metaphors, norms, values, and ideals contained in these texts and how the Freudian outlook provided new strategies to bestow meaning on changing social relations and conditions. I am therefore less interested in "Freudian thought"—of which there are a plethora of excellent studies⁶¹—than in the cultural models of the self that the lectures contain.

What, then, are the key aspects of what I suggest calling the psychoanalytical imagination, and how did that imagination formulate a new emotional style?

Focus on Everyday Life

First, both the Clark lectures and the *Introductory Lectures* aim at presenting and making psychoanalysis a science of interpretation that will simultaneously decipher symptoms and lend meaning to everyday occurrences. Using themes Freud had already developed in *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *Introductory Lectures* marks the beginning of "a new science" by presenting what seems to be at face value a banal, unscientific, and microscopic phenomenon: slips of the tongue. We are so thoroughly Freudianized that perhaps we cannot appreciate the tour de force contained in the fact that Freud inaugurated a new science and a new form of social imagination, not with elaborate theories or spectacular psychiatric cases, but with what must have seemed to his listeners trifles,

namely mindless substitutions of words, acts of forgetting or omission. Freud's argument is that banal slips of the tongue (parapraxes), confusions, and lapses of memory have a meaning, that is, they serve a purpose and an intention. As Freud put it in his third lecture at Clark University, the parapraxes are "acts and gestures which individuals carry out without noticing them at all, to say nothing of the fact that they attribute no psychological importance to them."⁶²

Freud's focus on parapraxes is inscribed in the broad cultural shift that had been in the making since the eighteenth century, the relocation of identity and selfhood in the realm of everyday life. As defined by Charles Taylor, everyday—or ordinary—life "designate[s] those aspects of human life concerned with production and reproduction, that is, labor, the making of the things needed for life, and our life as sexual beings, including marriage and the family."⁶³

In focusing on such banal occurrences, Freud radicalized the broad cultural shift to everyday life, but he did so by bestowing on it a new and unprecedented "glamor." If everyday life is the realm of what Stanley Cavell calls the "uneventful,"⁶⁴ the Freudian outlook would resolutely make that realm full of events worthy of notice, attention, interpretation, and memory-work. Freud suggests that the uneventful and banal realm of daily life is the most significant site where the self is made and unmade. His cultural move is thus very clear: it consists in making the un-meaningful, the trivial, and the ordinary full of meaning for the formation of the self.

The significance of this is obvious in light of the fact that up until the eighteenth century there was no moral discourse in which everyday life appeared as a realm worthy of significance and investigation.⁶⁵ Everyday life was the realm of domesticity and femininity and could not provide worthy ideals with which to fashion the self. In that sense, Freud represented Marx's perfect cultural counterpart: where Marx located human value and struggle within the realm of labor, Freud located it in the realm of domesticity. Freud thus provided new cognitive tools and schemas to think of and imagine selfhood in the domestic sphere and, more broadly, to make the realm of daily life the supreme arena for the formation of the self.

Focus on the Family

In this new imagined cultural space, which took everyday life as its background and as the very stage on which the dramas of the self would be played, the nuclear family now occupied a central place. In the psychoanalytical imagination, the family is the point of origin of the self, the site within which and from which the story and history of the self can begin. Where the family had hitherto been a way of "objectively" situating oneself in a long chronological chain and in the social order, it now became a biographical event symbolically carried throughout one's life and uniquely expressing one's individuality. Further, it became the cause and foundation of one's emotional life. It is ironic that at the same time that the traditional foundations of marriage began to crumble, the family came back to haunt the self with a vengeance, but this time as a "story" and as a way to emplot the self. The family played a role that was all the more crucial for the constitution of new narratives of selfhood, as it was both the origin of the self and the institution from which the self had to be liberated.

Thus, as has been frequently noticed, the psychoanalytical discourse is first and foremost a family narrative. In that sense, the origins of its success must be found in the structure and contradictions of the nineteenth-century family. Asking why Freudian ideas became so successful in America, the social historian John Demos offers an explanation that is all the more interesting for taking into account the stylistic features of the psychoanalytical discourse.⁶⁶ Demos locates the history of the psyche within the family, and his explanation positions the dramas of the psyche within the triangular structure of the Oedipus complex. Suggesting that Freud was so successful in America because of the fit between Freudian language and the transformations in the American family during the second part of the nineteenth century in the United States, Demos presents a model of the family that he dubs "the hothouse family."⁶⁷ The hothouse family that emerged in America around that time was characterized by a decrease in birth rate, an ensuing greater age gap between parents and children, a clearer demarcation between parents and children, a specialization of gender roles, and an intensification of the emotional bonds

between mothers and children. The specialization of roles inside the family and the marked generational gap had the consequence of making parents more structurally and emotionally distinct from children. The “couple” emerged as a functional unit that assumed a role clearly demarcated from the rest of the family. Moreover, women were increasingly defined as mothers because so much of the work they had done inside the home was now executed by outside industries, thus increasingly making their role an emotional one.⁶⁸ Finally, because middle-class families brought up their sons with the hope that they would raise the family’s social position, competition between sons and fathers was structurally embedded in the middle-class family. Thus the structure of the family became more triangular and emotionally intense and featured a built-in competitiveness between fathers and sons.

The above family structure preceded the rise of psychoanalytical discourse proper but was strikingly resonant with its key narrative, the Oedipus complex. The Oedipus narrative naturalized the fact that identity was now formed around the family, that family bonds were intensely emotional, and that family relationships were inherently ambivalent in that they mixed love and competitiveness. Moreover, it naturalized the fact that gender distinctions had become rigidified—increasingly defining women as mothers and men as actors whose primary identity was outside the home. In Demos’s view, psychoanalytical discourse mirrored, captured, and adequately described the triangular structure of the middle-class family and its dense emotional texture.⁶⁹ The cultural narrative of Oedipus could be appropriated by culture because of its “fit” with the preexisting structure of the hothouse family. In that sense, it became simultaneously a model of and a model for the family, a descriptive language mapping the position of the self in the new family and a prescriptive language suggesting how the self should understand its relationship to the family.

Salvation Narrative

Another of Freud’s major contributions to culture consisted in offering new ways of plotting the self while relying on an older and more fundamental narrative of selfhood. In her study *The Religious and Romantic*

Origins of Psychoanalysis, Suzanne Kirschner argues that psychoanalysis quickly gained recognition not only among the practitioners of mental health but also among the wider public because it fit with “culturally constituted views regarding desirable attributes and capacities of the person.”⁷⁰ In Kirschner’s view, Freudian narratives of selfhood resonated with an age-old and enduring narrative of Western culture, the narrative of salvation. This narrative had been reworked in Protestant narratives of the self and in the Romantic version of religious-biblical narratives. The biblical narrative has four characteristic features.⁷¹ First, it is linear and finite, with a sharply defined beginning, middle, and end. Moreover, rather than being continuous, its key events are unforeseen and make a significant and dramatic difference in the protagonists’ lives. Second, the biblical narrative deems the present to be imperfect and wanting and thus looks toward the future: it displays an eschatological direction, with the story striving toward the best possible end (through divine design). Third, the biblical narrative presents a dilemma: Given that God is just and omnipotent, why do the virtuous suffer and the wicked prosper? Finally, the characters of the biblical narrative are God, mankind, and the soul, and the soul is at the center of dramatic developments and conflicts.⁷²

These primitive narrative templates are present in what Kirschner calls the “developmental psychological narrative of the self” propounded by psychoanalysis.⁷³ The narrative continuity is not merely formal but also substantive, in the sense that the narrative itself spells out the meaning of life, the importance of suffering, and the evil character of certain aspects of creation. The psychological narrative of development views such events as “separation, loss, disappointment, frustration, imperfection, and reactive or innate destructiveness” as “evil.”⁷⁴ The ends of the developmental trajectory are individuation (a process by which one develops both autonomy and authenticity) and intimacy (associated with “play, healthy narcissism, and creativity”).⁷⁵ Against the background of such narrative of salvation, the Freudian cultural matrix offered a new way of saving the self through the twin cultural categories of pathology and normality.

In the two texts examined here, Freud presented psychoanalysis as the science of the psyche in general, whether sick or healthy, and not simply

as a method to cure mental diseases. This becomes most apparent when Freud discusses dreams: "Dreams are themselves a neurotic symptom, which, moreover, offers us the priceless advantage of occurring in all healthy people. Indeed, supposing all human beings were healthy, so long as they dreamt we could arrive from their dreams at almost all the discoveries which the investigation of the neuroses has led to. Dreams have become a subject of psychoanalytic research: once again ordinary phenomena, with little value set on them, and apparently of no practical use—like parapraxes, with which indeed they have in common the fact of occurring in healthy people."⁷⁶ Both dreams and parapraxes have in common the "little value" placed on them and their occurrence among all ordinary and even healthy people. Freud thus performs a very important move: he connects the realm of the "everyday" with the concept of health, which will quickly become an ideal. Even more significantly, he links in a single etiological chain health and pathology, thus establishing a body of knowledge with the aim of addressing *both* pathological and healthy people. This is why dreams are of such cardinal importance to Freud's cultural edifice; as he puts it in the *Introductory Lectures*, they show "the greatest similarity and internal relationship to mental illness but, on the other hand, they are compatible with complete health in waking life."⁷⁷ In the same way that Freud suggests that ordinary occurrences found in every normal person are the stuff of which pathology is made, he shows that sexual perversion is far closer to normality than his contemporaries thought it to be. Freud simultaneously locates identity within the realm of everyday life and blurs the distinction between pathology and normality.

Thus Freud locates the psychoanalytical project of the self in the realm of everyday life, yet proceeds to defamiliarize this realm. By presenting the slight disturbances of everyday life as contiguous with extreme pathologies, Freud ushers in an important change in the perception and categorization of both normality and deviance. Freud claims that the realm of ordinary life is contiguous with the most severe psychic disruptions of everyday life and that "normal" and "abnormal" mental development proceed along the same pathway.⁷⁸

Freud uses the same theoretical and rhetorical strategy when dealing

with homosexuality, only there it is reversed. "Unless we can understand these pathological forms of sexuality and can co-ordinate them with normal sexual life, we cannot understand normal sexuality either. In short, it remains an unavoidable task to give a complete theoretical account of how it is that these perversions can occur and of *their connection with what is described as normal sexuality*" (emphasis added).⁷⁹ Freud's argument is that homosexual impulses are present in every neurotic person and that the choice of someone of the same sex as an object of love is a very frequent occurrence. "The claim made by homosexuals or inverters to being exceptions collapses at once when we learn that homosexual impulses are invariably discovered in every single neurotic."⁸⁰ Theoretically, Freud added, there is little difference between normal (i.e., heterosexual) sexuality and homosexuality, even if in practice there remain some differences.

The above strategy had one major effect: it abolished the distance between normality and pathology and made "normal" and "pathological" behavior the two simultaneous objects of this new science. As Philip Rieff rightly observed, Freud's "dictum that 'we are all somewhat hysterical' [and] that the difference between so-called normality and neurosis is only a matter of degree, is one of the key statements in his writings."⁸¹

Historically, we may qualify Freud's method as having had a dual impact: it made everyday life a glamorous project to be painstakingly achieved, yet it simultaneously queered everyday life. As defined by sociologist Steven Seidman, to "queer" is "to make strange or 'queer' what is considered known, familiar, and commonplace, what is assumed to be the order of things, the natural way, the normal, the healthy, and so on."⁸² By linking perversion and normality and placing them on a continuum, Freud destabilized a key cultural code regulating the boundary between normality and pathology, a move that had momentous consequences for ordinary narratives of the self (see chapter 5).

The straight line that Freud repeatedly drew between "normality" and "pathology" put the notion of (emotional) "health" and "normality" squarely at the center of culture. Normality, Freud argued, was a highly precarious state, the end point of a complex and rather infrequent process of maturation. As Peter Gay suggests in his biographical and philosophical portrait of Freud, "What everyone is used to calling 'normal' in sex-

ual conduct is really the end point of a long, often interrupted, pilgrimage, a goal that many humans may never . . . reach. The sexual drive in its mature form is *an achievement*" (emphasis added).⁸³ Freud's extraordinary cultural achievement was both to enlarge the scope of the normal and of the pathological and to problematize normality. Contrary to Foucault's claim that the nineteenth-century psychiatric discourse instituted a rigid boundary between the normal and the pathological,⁸⁴ I suggest that the Freudian discourse incessantly blurred it and made normality a highly elusive cultural category.

As cultural categories, "health" and "normality" differed from traditional moral categories (e.g., "sexual purity") in an important way. Traditional moral categories work by providing strong classificatory systems, that is, drawing boundaries between prohibited and commendable behavior and by providing relatively unambiguous normative prescriptions (e.g., "premarital sex is impure; abstinence, self-control, and virginity are pure"). The categories of health and normality, on the other hand, lacked a clear signified and did not function in a system of symbolic boundaries that clearly delineated desirable and undesirable behavior. What made "normality" such a powerful cultural category was that its referent and signified were left unspecified. Because the categories of psychological health and pathology lacked clear empirical referents, they shaped behavior not by ascribing a clear normative content to it but rather by not ascribing any. In other words, at the same time that "health" and "normality" were posited as the goals toward which narratives of selfhood should be shaped, the very conceptual structure of psychoanalysis prevented ascription of clear cultural content to these two categories, with the result that they were able to accommodate any and every individual or behavior. If the boundary between neurotic and healthy behavior was irretrievably blurred (after psychoanalysis all of us became neurotic overnight), then all desires and actions might signify a problematic, immature, conflicted, and neurotic psyche.

The above analysis illustrates something important for the sociology of culture. Ideas may be particularly forceful precisely when they do not have a clear empirical content and when they work negatively, that is, when their meaning derives not from what they prescribe but from the

incessant play of oppositions they create. Mental health was significant not as a norm in itself but for the variety of neuroses and dysfunctions it would create *a contrario*. To posit "health" as the end goal of the psyche was to create *a contrario* a large reservoir of dysfunctions. Some cultural terms are more Derridean than others because they function exclusively by virtue of the negative contrasts they generate. Health and normality were powerful in this way because they were *negative cultural categories*.

Hermeneutic Stance

The Freudian refusal to isolate normality from pathology, and the Freudian claim that the two were irremediably contiguous, entailed a hermeneutic of suspicion vis-à-vis ordinary conduct. Indeed, what made dreams and parapraxes so worthy of Freud's attention was that they were endowed with a meaning to be patiently and painstakingly uncovered. The examples he gave in his *Introductory Lectures*, he claimed, made it probable that "parapraxes have a sense, and they show you how that sense is discovered or confirmed by the attendant circumstances."⁸⁵ If parapraxes made sense, it was because beneath the seemingly ordinary character of everyday life they were invested with meaning: "Thus neurotic symptoms have a sense, like parapraxes and dreams, and, like them, have a connection with the life of those who produced them."⁸⁶ Indeed, the essence of psychoanalysis lay in the activity of sense making and meaning making, which Freud had embraced at the very inception of his collaborative work with his early mentor Joseph Breuer. As he said, "I follow Breuer in asserting that every time we come upon a symptom we can infer that there are certain definite unconscious processes in the patient which contain the sense of the symptom."⁸⁷

The Freudian outlook calls on us to act as the interpreters of our own lives by acting in everyday life as (lay) psychoanalysts. "For him [the psychoanalyst] there is nothing trifling, nothing arbitrary or accidental in mental activity."⁸⁸ In taking this stance, Freud widened the sphere of religious hermeneutics or, rather, transposed it to the realm of ordinary life through metaphors that had a resonance with earlier forms of religious hermeneutics. "If it was possible for parapraxes to have a sense, dreams can have one too; and in a great many cases parapraxes *have* a sense,

which has escaped exact science. So let us embrace the prejudice of the ancients and of the people and let us follow in the footsteps of the dream-interpretors of antiquity."⁸⁹ Freud's injunction to engage with the riddles of ordinary life was all the more effective in that he deliberately dignified with the rhetoric of science the popular tendency to attribute supernatural meaning to dreams. As he asserted in his third Clark lecture: "Even today the lower strata of our society do not make the mistake of underestimating dreams; like the ancients, they expect dreams to reveal the future."⁹⁰ Making everyday life the object of hermeneutic suspicion was intimately connected to Freud's tripartite model of the psyche. For Freud, repression of instinctual desires could destroy the ego's capacity to assert its authority. The remedy was to seek the hidden sources of the conflict and thereby to discover the conditions under which the ego could recover its power. This search for the "unconscious" sources of conflict was, from a cultural standpoint, highly productive in the sense that anything and everything could become meaningful. Since one did not need to be conscious and aware of a feeling for it to play an important role in one's psychic life, almost endless possibilities for interpretation of the self (and others) were opened up.

The Freudian concepts of "resistance" and "denial"—which would enjoy extraordinary success in the popularization of psychoanalysis—helped create a new narrative of selfhood in which precisely what people did not think about, talk about, or do would define the narrative crux of self-identity (see chapter 5). In this way, any behavior or emotion—or lack thereof—could be a mark of neurosis and hence in need of interpretation (and transformation). Exuberance or shyness, chatter or silence, sexual promiscuity or sexual abstinence, arrogance or humility would now equally entail a need for self-interpretation. In other words, resistance and denial enabled the generation of meaning even (and perhaps especially) when one refused to impart that meaning. Through these hermeneutic rules, Freud offered not only new narrative forms but also an ongoing process of narrativization of the self set in motion by an incessant project of self-interpretation. Past and present events, spoken or unspoken problems, figures of the past and current relations would now all be connected in a seamless narrative of identity in which the self

would seek its lost “origins,” neuroses, and secret desires. The process of telling the story of one’s self would be the process of exercising a new art of personal memory, transforming the past into a ghost that perpetually haunts, structures, and explains the present.

In his Clark lectures, Freud advanced another idea (absent from his “European” writings) that created resonance between the hermeneutic of suspicion and a powerful American narrative of selfhood, namely the meritocratic and voluntarist narrative of self-help. Toward the end of his fifth and final lecture, Freud offered a highly American version of what it meant to look for and find the lost self: “The energetic and successful man is he who succeeds by his work in transforming his wishful fantasies into reality.”⁹¹ In this way the Freudian quest for a lost self could subtly ally itself with the quest for social success. By the alchemy of tautology, emotional health would be read into social success; conversely, lack of social success could point to a lack of emotional maturity, an idea that Abraham Maslow and others would elaborate upon (see chapter 5).⁹² This connection between the ideal of success and emotional health would provide a powerful narrative frame that would become intensively commodified by the culture industries.

I would argue, then, that the Freudian ideal of health did not normalize conduct, as has sometimes been asserted. Rather, it pathologized conduct and made psychological hermeneutics—the suspicion that deep meanings are hidden in the self—a routine feature of social action.

Focus on Sexual Pleasure

A cultural model is all the more likely to guide behavior if it pertains to social arenas that are riddled with uncertainties. As Ann Swidler and others have argued, periods of flux and uncertainty generate increased ideological activity.⁹³ The Freudian outlook was a form of “ideological activity” focused on the family, and it was especially intense because his ideas dealt with social institutions, behaviors, and norms that were undergoing deep transformations and about which little guidance was available. The Freudian language could help make sense of new cultural anxieties related to the transformation of sexual relations, gender identities, and the formation of identity. As William Sewell suggests, at certain historical

moments there arises the “possibility of a *disjunction* between” what Clifford Geertz has called the “model of” and “model for” aspects of symbols, and this disjunction “opens up for actors a space for critical reflection about the world.”⁹⁴ Indeed, accelerated social transformations and new forms of social experiences can make languages of the self obsolete. This is so because the world can resist our interpretations of it, and the fit between a given language and culture can also be put into question. A new language can emerge when there is a loosening of the fit between social structure, social experience, and cultural accounts of experience. This “loosening” was nowhere more felt than in the realm of sexuality.

Discussing the bourgeois family, Peter Gay suggests: “No other class at any time was more strenuously, more anxiously devoted to the appearances, to the family and to privacy, no other class has ever built fortifications for the self quite so high.”⁹⁵ Throughout the nineteenth century, the range of authorized sexual behaviors had narrowed (“petting,” for example, which had been allowed in the early 1800s, became unacceptable). By the 1870s, some popular marriage manuals advocated female frigidity as a virtue and sexual coldness as a desirable condition.⁹⁶ Yet in Peter Gay’s words, the nineteenth century was also the century of the “discovery of the self”: confessional autobiographies, self-portraits, diaries, letters, and sentimental and self-referential literature all pointed to a vast interest in the nature of inwardness and subjectivity.⁹⁷ The middle-class family favored introspection and an intense emotional life. The result was a peculiar cultural tension between emotivity and rigidity, self-control and self-exaltation. The tension between these two cultural and emotional idioms was particularly felt in the realm of sexuality as an increasing tension between prevalent models of restrained sexuality and a new search for sexual expressiveness.

As the declining birthrates throughout the nineteenth century suggest, there was an increasing separation between sexuality for reproduction and sexuality for its own sake—erotic sexuality.⁹⁸ In both sets of lectures, Freud reflected these transformations as he offered the important distinction between sexuality that aims at reproduction and sexuality for the sake of pleasure. In providing a grand narrative of the relationship

between individual pleasure and collective restraint, Freud's ideas made a forceful case against sexual restraint. "The significance of Freud, Ellis, and other twentieth-century theorists involved more than their advocacy of sexual expression. The shift from a philosophy of continence to one that encouraged indulgence was but one aspect of a larger reorientation that was investing sexuality with a profoundly new importance. . . . Theorists attributed to sexuality the power of individual self-definition."⁹⁹ But Freud was significant not only because he questioned sexual self-control but also because he put erotic sexuality squarely at the center of selfhood by making it the inner, secret, and true engine of action. The disentanglement of sexuality for pleasure and sexuality for reproduction had been already discussed and promoted by such writers as Havelock Ellis, whose works Freud was familiar with. Freud, however, offered what no other sexologist of the time could provide, an all-encompassing narrative of self in which sexual pleasure was legitimized and turned into the primary site of the formation of the psyche as a whole.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the two sets of texts discussed offered key notions through which narratives of selfhood would be rewritten. These notions were infantile sexuality, sexual conflict, the denial of sexual desires, and the idea that the sexual instinct was a structural aspect of civilizations and of their development.¹⁰¹

Against some feminist critiques of Freud, I would argue that what was new and appealing about Freud's ideas was his treatment of gender and his legitimation of women's sexuality.¹⁰² As the enthusiastic endorsement of Freud by the feminist anarchist Emma Goldman and the playwright and activist Lillian Hellman suggests, there was a basic affinity between Freud's ideas and the politics of sexual liberation. Even if he would later declare pleasure and "civilization" to be incompatible, with the latter necessarily overpowering the former, Freud frequently encouraged freedom from sexual repression and the search for pleasure.¹⁰³ Fuller Torrey, in his book *Freudian Fraud*, (disapprovingly) quotes Freud as having encouraged a woman to leave her husband for her psychoanalyst—Horace Fink. Freud subsequently justified his advice by saying: "I thought it the good *right* of every human being to strive for sexual gratification and tender love."¹⁰⁴ This sentence can be read as justification of

the patriarchal power of (male) psychoanalysts over (women) patients, but given the cultural context in which it was pronounced it makes more sense as a justification and even encouragement of women's sexuality, even if that entailed a rejection of the normative requirements of the institution of the marriage.

Freud's view of the psyche and of the libido transformed cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity in that it androgynized sexual identity. By claiming that the psyche of boys *and* girls is sexual, by positing similar basic mental processes that lead to neuroses, by claiming that both men and women had homosexual impulses,¹⁰⁵ Freud contributed to simultaneously sexualizing women and bringing them closer to their male counterparts. In this way, the Freudian imagination not only sexualized identity but also expanded the scope of the realm of possible sexual identities for men and women. If the psyches of both men and women contained homosexual tendencies, then heterosexuality itself became contingent, a matter of choice rather than destiny.

Rational Method of Self-Knowledge

Finally, as I have argued elsewhere,¹⁰⁶ cultural ideas are most likely to become popular when they reconcile social contradictions. The extraordinary success of psychoanalysis may be explained by the way in which it seamlessly combined, and in this way reconciled, two central and contradictory aspects of modern selfhood. First, the self was now turned inward, in search of its authenticity and unique individuality within the confines of private life. Second, the self was summoned by the culture and institutions of modernity to be rational.

From the preceding analysis, it should be clear why psychoanalysis became the privileged site for the expression of the inner self as well as a site that encouraged introspection, a focus on feelings, and most of all, a search for the lost and true self. Less emphasized but no less important is the fact that psychoanalysis is a rational method that enjoins self-knowledge through the use of a detached gaze on oneself in a process of self-examination that ultimately bestows freedom and self-mastery.¹⁰⁷ As Jeffrey B. Abramson asserts, Freud "put great store on the morality of the honest and autonomous will."¹⁰⁸ If repression was a problem, it was

because it “isolated instinctual desires from reason.”¹⁰⁹ As in the Socratic project, the purpose of therapy is to create conditions in which the rational ego might take control of psychic life. As Steven Marcus suggests, on one level psychoanalysis may be regarded as a “culmination of the particular tradition of introspection which began with the adjuration of the oracle at Delphi to ‘Know thyself.’ This rationally governed method of self-examination takes as its principal object of scrutiny everything within us that is not rational—our affects, our instinctual strivings, our fears, fancies, dreams and nightmares, our guilt, our endless reproachfulness, our sexual obsessions, our uncontrollable aggressions.”¹¹⁰ Marcus even suggests that by going back to the Greek myth of *Oedipus Rex* Freud brings the “organic line of cultural evolution” to a decisive conclusion. Thus, far from being antithetical to the ethic of rationality, psychoanalysis underwrites it. What triumphs in Freud’s thought is a particular historical project of disengaged reason that takes the self, the inner life, and the emotions as objects of scrupulous scrutiny and investigation.

THE ROMANCE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND POPULAR CULTURE

The themes and styles of reasoning evoked above were avidly seized by American popular culture for two main reasons: they addressed new uncertainties and anxieties pertaining to the self, and they helped establish and consolidate the themes and genres of emerging media industries. Psychology penetrated the realm of popular culture through three main arenas: advice literature (in books and in magazines), film, and advertising.

Advice Literature

Psychologists took on (and were willingly granted) the right and the authority to speak on a wide variety of social problems about which they claimed expertise. But they differed from other experts (such as lawyers or engineers) in that, as the century unfolded, they increasingly assumed the vocation of guiding others in virtually all areas, from education and child rearing to criminal behavior, legal expert testimony, marriage, prison rehabilitation programs, sexuality, racial and political conflict,

economic behavior, and soldiers' morale.¹¹¹ From the outset of their professional careers, psychotherapists addressed a broad public and in that process transformed the concepts that had been forged in the specialized arenas of academia, professional associations, and journals. That process of "popularization" made their status ambivalent, oscillating between that of experts and moral guides. As experts they were endowed with technical and neutral knowledge, while as moral guides they would instruct others on the values that should shape their behavior and feelings. Advice literature emerged from the unique duality of their roles and provided the key for psychologists to enter the market.

In the 1920s, advice literature, like the movies, was an emerging cultural industry, and it would prove to be the most enduring platform for the diffusion of psychological ideas and the elaboration of emotional norms. Advice literature combines a number of exigencies. First, it must be, by definition, general in character: that is, it must use a lawlike language that confers authority on it and enables it to make lawlike statements. As T. S. Strang, David Strang, and John Meyer suggest, "The diffusion within cultural categories is accelerated and redirected by their theorization. By theorization we mean the self-conscious development and specification of abstract categories and the formulation of patterned relationships such as chains of cause and effect."¹¹² Because theorization expresses ideas in a general and decontextualized way, it makes them better able to fit a variety of social contexts, individuals, and needs. Psychological advice could be diffused widely precisely because it took a theoretical and general form, speaking about the universal laws of the psyche. Second, if advice literature is to be a commodity consumed on a regular basis, it must vary the problems it addresses. Third, if it wants to address various segments of readership, with differing values and viewpoints, it must be amoral, that is, offer a neutral perspective on problems having to do with sexuality and the conduct of social relationships. Finally, it must be credible, that is, proffered by a legitimate source. Psychoanalysis and psychology were gold mines for the advice industry because they were wrapped in the aura of science; because they could be highly individualized (fitting any and all individual particularities); because they could address a wide variety of problems, thereby enabling

product diversification; and because they seemed to offer the dispassionate gaze of science on tabooed topics. With the expanding market of consumers, the book industry and women's magazines avidly seized a language that could accommodate both theory and story, generality and particularity, nonjudgmentality and normativity. While advice literature does not have a straightforward impact on its readers, its importance in providing a vocabulary for the self and in guiding the perception of one's social relations has been insufficiently acknowledged. Much of contemporary cultural material comes to us in the form of advice, admonition, and how-to recipes, and given that in many social sites the modern self is self-made—drawing from cultural repertoires to take a course of action—advice literature is likely to have played an important role in shaping the public vocabularies through which the self understands itself.

Movies

Hollywood became a central cultural arena to propagate the image of the psychologist, some of the central concepts of psychoanalysis, and therapeutic narratives of self. Hollywood producers and movie makers were interested in psychoanalysis, often undergoing therapy themselves. Fuller Torrey quotes Otto Freidrich in *City of Nets: A Portrait of Hollywood in the 1940s*: "Hollywood was full of neurotic people who wanted the meaning of their lives explained to them and who had lots of money to pay for the explanations."¹¹³ For example, David Selznick, the enormously powerful movie producer who contracted Hitchcock, underwent psychoanalytical treatment. Probably as a result of his analytical treatment, he conceived of doing a movie with Hitchcock based on psychoanalytical ideas (*Spellbound*). Based on the novel *The House of Doctor Edwards* (by Francis Beeding), the film script was written by Ben Hecht, who was also undergoing an analytical cure. Hitchcock's famous movie presented to a wide audience the notion of the unconscious, the importance of dreams, the mechanism of repression, and the importance of language in the analytical cure.

But the impetus for introducing psychology and psychoanalysis in the movies had to do with the fact that the movie industry was looking for

recipes and formulas to improve their emotional grip on the audience. As early as 1924, the moviemaker Sam Goldwyn solicited Freud's services (to be handsomely rewarded with the hefty sum of \$100,000) to assist him in writing "a really great love story."¹¹⁴ The social historian Eli Zaretsky recounts that in the following year, "Karl Abraham, Hans Sachs, and Siegfried Bernfeld were approached by Goldwyn and by the German film producers UFA for help in making a psychoanalytic film."¹¹⁵ The film *Secrets of the Soul* was produced by G. W. Pabst with Goldwyn's financial backing.

It is not difficult to offer explanations as to why psychiatrists and psychoanalysis were so avidly used by cinema. As Karin Gabbard and Glen Gabbard have eloquently summarized, therapists as movie characters "can conveniently provide the forum for exposition and character development. They can also supply the legitimation of actual themes, the rationalist contrast to supernatural 'truths,' the secular salvation of troubled souls, the romantic interest for misunderstood individuals, the convincing explanation for mysterious behavior, the commonsense solution for domestic crises, and the repressive opposition to free-spirited heroes."¹¹⁶

Psychoanalysis was particularly suited to the movies because it could generate new visual symbols¹¹⁷ (e.g., so-called phallic symbols), help introduce interesting variations to well-known genres (e.g., the psychoanalyst becomes the detective, and the clues to be deciphered are dream fragments), give added psychological depth to characters (as when the psychoanalyst interprets a character's psyche), and bestow on the movie a new (fantastical) aesthetic through dream sequences. Alfred Hitchcock was not the first in the history of the cinema to utilize psychoanalysis, but he was certainly the first to have so thoroughly developed it, both visually and thematically.¹¹⁸

Advertising

Psychologists were present in the realm of advertising in two main ways: they served as advisers to the new profession of advertising and helped advertisers package products as bundles of meaning that could tap into the unconscious desires of consumers. Moreover, advertisers used psychological themes to justify the sale of their products. For example, in

1931 an advertising campaign for Wrigley chewing gum suggested that the gum provided “a facial work-out [that] alleviated the stress and anxiety of modern living, restoring mental composure and personal well-being.”¹¹⁹ Advertisers used psychological themes and fears to promote a wide array of commodities. But commodities were also promoted in more positive ways, as having the power to help realize the hidden potentialities of the self on which psychologists were increasingly becoming the experts. As Kathy Peiss put it in her study of the history of cosmetics in America at the turn of the twentieth century: “A woman, who fails to update her looks, destroys those potential personalities that psychologists tell us are lurking behind our ordinary selves. Psychoanalytic terms began to course through the trade press. Those ‘who are conscious of their poor appearance’ suffered from an inferiority complex, one psychiatrist judged. But help was literally at hand, industry spokesman Everett McDonough promised, for ‘many a neurotic case has been cured with the deft application of a lipstick.’”¹²⁰ Peiss further suggests that advertisers of beauty products often used and referred to such notions as the “unconscious” or “self-confidence” to describe their work:

In this way, the simple act of putting on lipstick or foundation became even more aligned with therapeutic claims than it had been in the 1930s. Psychologists and social scientists weighed in, warning women that too much paint reflected the unresolved psychodynamics of childhood, a misplaced effort to attract father and attack mothers. One psychiatrist called makeup female pathology, a form of “extreme narcissism” through which women “reduced themselves to a symbol of the genitalia.” In one article on “mentally healthy beauty care,” stories of average women using cosmetics were illustrated with photographs of patients in mental institutions, both groups gaining a psychological lift through makeup. Advocating a “middle road,” psychiatrists advised each woman to use all the cosmetic aids possible to create the appearance of her real self.¹²¹

After the war ended, the psychological view of cosmetics found fresh ground. As Peiss posits, movies, advertising, and advice literature all suggested that the return of men—husbands or boyfriends—from the front was bound to traumatize women and to expose them to difficult “inner conflicts.” The response of the cosmetic industry to this psycho-

logical crisis was to offer an escape into a world of beauty.¹²² In short, the three main emerging cultural industries—self-help literature, cinema, and advertising, each for its own intrinsic reasons—seized on psychoanalysis to establish and codify their mode of action in culture.

CONCLUSION

To become binding and to generate new practices of knowledge, self-observation, and self-transformation, a language must be enacted within and by powerful social institutions. As Bourdieu and Foucault have differently but equally persuasively established, a discourse becomes powerful when it is located within and emanates from social institutions that bestow on it their power and legitimacy.¹²³ A discourse will become performative, that is, carry its own capacity to name and transform reality, when the bearer of the discourse is a representative of the “symbolic capital” accumulated by the group that he or she represents.¹²⁴ Psychologists are representatives of a complex group at the crossroads of multiple identities and roles: “scientific” experts whose speech derives its authority from the institutional and economic power of science; representatives of a form of knowledge sanctioned by and incorporated in programs of the state; and popular leaders with a traditional charismatic authority to heal and to care for the “soul.” Thus their authority is engendered within various social arenas. Psychologists not only drew the contours of a new science of the mind but also claimed to understand the relationship between the individual and society, to have deciphered the mysteries of religious faith and of mass political movements such as fascism, and to deliver the techniques and the guidelines for sexual fulfillment, success, and happiness.

What is most interesting, however, is not the psychologists’ extraordinarily successful quest for power but the fact that the therapeutic discourse has become a cultural form, shaping and organizing experience, as well as a cultural resource with which to make sense of the self and social relations. Psychologists became powerful legislators of various domains of social life because they offered symbolic “tools” and categories with which to address the ambiguities and contradictions of

modernity. These symbolic tools and categories combined the old and the new, thus enabling both cultural innovation and continuity. I would suggest that what has made psychologists the arbitrators and guides of the soul in so many institutional manifestations is that they have performed massive "cultural work." Cultural activity is particularly intense during "unsettled periods,"¹²⁵ a vague term that includes such diverse phenomena as the collapse of traditional social roles and role uncertainty, the demise of established patterns of life, the multiplication of values, and the intensification of social anxiety and fear, all of which can explain why individuals search for ways to explain the behavior of others and shape their own behavior. The twentieth century was marked by much greater normative uncertainty, generating intense ideological and cultural work, a significant part of which has been the prerogative of psychologists, at least in the American context.

Psychology commanded an extraordinary amount of institutional resonance that could in turn organize cultural practices around a common cultural core. Culture is most powerful when it provides what Ann Swidler calls a "line of action" that attaches meaning to the self.¹²⁶ Culture influences action by shaping the selves, skills, and worldviews out of which people can build life strategies. In the next chapters I explore this basic insight, examining how the Freudian and therapeutic semiotic code of selfhood was appropriated in diverse institutions and used to shape new strategies of action.

THREE From *Homo economicus*
to *Homo communicans*

What an enormous price man had to pay for reason, seriousness, control over his emotions — those grand human prerogatives and cultural showpieces! How much blood and horror lies behind all “good things”!

—Nietzsche

The impact of capitalism on social relations has been *the* central puzzle of classical sociology, with most of the founders of the discipline agreeing that capitalism posed a serious threat to our capacity to create meaning and maintain social relationships. Cultural sociology has ambitiously undertaken the task of unraveling the tangled points of intersection between the material and symbolic constituents of action and has exposed a far more complicated picture than that painted by early sociologists. As Jeffrey Alexander suggests, “Because both action and its environment are indelibly interpenetrated by the non-rational, a pure . . . rational world cannot exist.”¹ Where the concepts of “commodification” and “rationalization” assumed that the capitalist economy impoverished social relations and subsumed them under instrumental rationality writ large, cultural sociologists have argued that economic transactions are

embedded in cultural meanings and that interpersonal emotional transactions, far from being inimical to the market, can be facilitated by it. For example, in a series of groundbreaking works, Viviana Zelizer has shown that monetary transactions and intimate relationships are co-produced and mutually sustaining and that there is no simple opposition between particular concrete relationships and so-called impersonal exchange, between rational and so-called irrational action.² Moreover, as the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins has powerfully argued in his *Culture and Practical Reason*,³ in contemporary capitalist societies the economy is the main site of symbolic production and is a major source of metaphors and narratives to think about the social world. This chapter builds on such insights but tries to go three steps further. First, it shows that under the aegis of psychologists who started to massively intervene in the American corporation from the 1930s onward, the deployment of rationality inside economic organizations counterintuitively went hand in hand with an intensification of emotional life. Second, the chapter argues that psychologists, acting simultaneously as professionals and as producers of culture, have not only codified emotional conduct inside the workplace but more crucially made “self-interest,” “efficiency,” and “instrumentality” into valid cultural repertoires. Finally, the chapter argues that in becoming cultural repertoires of action, “self-interest” and “efficiency” actually generated and organized new *models of sociability*, most noticeably the model of communication. Psychological cultural frames drew from and merged with the cultural matrix of the market and thus came to orient the self, provide it with strategies of action, and, perhaps more crucially, shape new forms of sociability.⁴ Building on the works of Frank Dobbin, John Meyer and Brian Rowan, and Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio, I argue that “rationality,” “calculation,” and “efficiency” are not impersonal economic imperatives; rather, they function as cultural repertoires shaping professional identity and definitions of professional competence. This is because the cultural motives of self-interest and instrumental calculation have been historically intertwined with the language of psychology, a language that foregrounded and codified emotions, self, and identity. Psychologists, entering and acting within economic organizations, used and combined their own professional scripts

(in which the reflexive management of emotions was paramount) with scripts directly derived from the market, such as rationality, productivity, and efficiency. Thus this chapter makes a number of claims. One is that “rationality” and “self-interest” are not pre-given self-evident categories of social action; rather, these categories were painstakingly codified and promoted by psychologists. That is, it took an enormous amount of cultural work on the part of psychologists to convince workers and managers to act according to their interests. Moreover, far from being opposed to emotions, the categories of self-interest and rationality were closely intertwined and coterminous with them. Psychologists offered models of rationality *at the same time as they elaborated models of emotionality*. Finally, far from corroding *sociability*—the models and practices by which people forge and maintain social bonds—rationality and self-interest, here conceived as cultural frames, reorganized social and hierarchical relationships inside the corporation and ultimately redefined power within it.

Throughout the twentieth century, under the aegis of the therapeutic discourse, emotional life became imbued with the metaphors and rationality of economics; conversely, economic behavior was consistently shaped by the sphere of emotions and sentiments. The rationalization of emotions created its own converse, which could be characterized as the “emotionalization of economic conduct.” This reciprocal process points to a broader cultural process that I dub *emotional capitalism*.⁵ In emotional capitalism emotional and economic discourses mutually shape one another so that affect is made an essential aspect of economic behavior, and emotional life, especially that of the middle classes, follows the logic of economic relations and exchange (see chapter 4). Market-based cultural repertoires shape and inform interpersonal and emotional relationships. Knowing how to forge and maintain interpersonal relationships becomes central to how economic relationships are thought of and imagined. What I call emotional capitalism is a cultural process through which new scripts of economic relationships are formulated and intertwined with interactional-emotional scripts, as illustrated by the prevalent cultural frames of “cooperation” and “teamwork.” These scripts, born of the professional language of psychologists and of the corporate language of

efficiency, have reshaped the ways actors conceptualize horizontal and vertical hierarchies, power, and even, to a limited but definite extent, gender relations. Nowhere has this reciprocal influence of psychological and economic discourses been more apparent than in the key cultural motif of “emotional control.”

EMOTIONAL CONTROL IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF ORGANIZATIONS

While emotions have often been absent from economic sociology, they do appear in the sociology of organizations, though in a negative form, under the heading of “emotional control.” Studies of the corporation have consistently found that the twentieth-century American workplace demanded a much stricter control of emotions than its predecessors, the nineteenth-century shop floor or factory. C. Wright Mills’s *White Collars* and William Whyte’s *Organization Man* were among the first works to draw sociologists’ attention to the new emotional requirements of economic organizations.⁶ Inspired by the disquieting Weberian vision of the domination of faceless bureaucratic structures, these (and other subsequent) studies suggested that in the course of the twentieth century large corporations exerted a new kind of pressure on their employees to “manage” their inner life and emotions. Arlie Hochschild’s seminal study of airline flight attendants extended this line of thought by suggesting that a considerable amount of emotional control (“emotional work”) goes into attendants’ interactions with passengers as they are encouraged to adopt the company’s ideology regarding how they should feel in a variety of situations.⁷ Hochschild suggested that women working in the service industries were the most likely to become “emotional laborers,” workers who had to repress their emotions in order to sell the image of their company. In a similar vein, Gideon Kunda’s study of the culture of a “high-tech” corporation argued that modern corporations exert “normative control,” attempting to control the “minds and hearts” of their employees.⁸ According to Kunda, contemporary corporations have deepened and broadened control in the sense that it has been extended from behavioral to emotional performance. To give a last and significant example: in

their rich and nuanced account of the long history of attempts at anger control in America, Carol and Peter Stearns suggest that the U.S. corporation has successfully suppressed anger but that this in turn threatens “individuality” and spontaneity and marks the ultimate victory of “faceless bureaucracies” dominating our lives.⁹

In these accounts, emotional control is a variant of social and economic control. Hochschild, Kunda, and the Stearns all suggest that emotional control has a strong cultural affinity with the sphere of capitalist economic activity, not only in the Weberian sense that it is a precondition for the rational and dispassionate pursuit of gain but also in the sense that it reflects contemporary modes of social control inside the capitalist workplace. All authors assume that emotional control was enforced because actors passively accepted the organization’s authority. Most sociological accounts presume a somewhat direct relationship between the social and economic power to issue commands on the one hand and individuals’ exercise of emotional control on the other. In this view, individuals are (somewhat incoherently) both passive recipients of orders and sophisticated actors who can wear masks and lie to others and to themselves about their “true” selves. Moreover, implicitly contained in these studies is the idea that emotional self-control represses the truly “human element” of interactions because it inscribes economic rationality at the very center of relations inside the organization. This view has been complemented by feminist perspectives on organizations, which have argued that the ideal of rational self-control consecrates attributes of male identity and excludes women by rejecting care-oriented and emotionally expressive female styles of management.

My approach here significantly differs from all of the above. First, I argue that we cannot understand the emergence of the emotional norm of self-control inside the American workplace without understanding the broader models of social competence with which self-control has frequently been associated. Indeed, one element consistently overlooked by the sociology of organizations is that emotional control figured in our moral vocabulary long before the emergence of capitalism and that it has come to stand as an extended metaphor for self-mastery, self-possession, and moral autonomy, all marks of a properly groomed selfhood.¹⁰ Being able to control one’s bouts of anger, lust, or depression is not simply the

effect of the “commodification of emotion” (as Hochschild and others argue); it is an essential element of social competence writ large. As Erving Goffman astutely observed:

During any conversation, standards are established as to how much the individual is to allow himself to be carried away by the talk, how thoroughly he is to permit himself to be caught up in it. He will be obliged to prevent himself from becoming so swollen with feelings and a readiness to act that he threatens the bounds regarding affect that have been established for him in the interaction. . . . When the individual does become over-involved in the topic of conversation, and gives others the impression that he does not have a necessary measure of *self-control over his feelings and actions* . . . then the others are likely to be drawn from involvement in the talk to an involvement in the talker. *What is one's man [sic] over-eagerness will become another man's alienation.* [emphasis added]¹¹

One might argue that Goffman takes for granted and naturalizes what are in fact highly gendered emotional attributes of masculinity. But such a view itself reproduces the pernicious and erroneous stereotype according to which women have little or no control over their emotionality. Goffman refers here to a (relatively) gender-blind form of social competence shared and endorsed by men and women, even if its modalities vary from one gender to the other. Moreover, the exercise of such competence cannot be easily distinguished from the repressive self-control that sociologists of organizations have analyzed.¹² Following Norbert Elias's thesis in his monumental *Civilizing Process*, we may view emotional control as the result of the modern (i.e., since the seventeenth century) differentiation of functions and of networks of interdependency that thus orient the self toward a greater number of social interactions. As these interactions increase in frequency and variety, the individual is compelled to adjust his or her conduct to an increasing number of others, thus making the self more self-regulated and predictable.¹³ According to this view, emotional control has become a dominant way of shaping one's emotion, not only because it is a form of corporate control and because it naturalizes male identity, but also because it mobilizes forms of social competence made more necessary by the multiplication and lengthening of chains of social interactions.

Finally, while all sociologists of organizations and of emotions (Elias

included) treat emotional control as a monolithic category, I argue that there are many different forms of emotional control, for the simple reason that emotional control draws primarily on culturally shaped conceptions of the self. The flight attendant's self-control is a far cry from, say, the Stoic's *ataraxia*. As I show in the following analysis, the therapeutic self-control advocated in economic organizations is characterized by its mix of rationality and emotionality, by its very capacity to make emotions central to the self, and by its inclusion, rather than exclusion, of women's point of view. Such a historically new form of emotional control does point to a transformation of the mode of control inside the organization, but, as I argue, this transformation is distinctly different from the one traditionally envisioned by sociologists of organizations.

THE POWER OF CONTROL AND THE CONTROL OF POWER

The period from the 1880s to the 1920s has been dubbed the golden age of capitalism, during which "the factory system was established, capital was centralized, production standardized, organizations bureaucratized, and labor incorporated in large firms."¹⁴ Most conspicuous was the rise of the large-scale corporation, employing thousands and even tens of thousands of workers, thus making corporations bureaucratically complex and hierarchically much more integrated.¹⁵

In his seminal study on the rise of the corporation, Reinhard Bendix has suggested that during the nineteenth century managers' rhetoric was a mix of self-help (inspired by religious Puritanism) and (Spencerian) theory of the "survival of the fittest." Managers were managers by virtue of their merits, and these merits could not be questioned. Similarly, those who were in subaltern positions lacked, by definition, physical, moral, and intellectual qualities.¹⁶

As the volume and pace of industrial production began to swell, the sheer mass of work and workers that were to be supervised grew.¹⁷ As they grew, the organization became faced with what it saw as the increasing complexity of managing people who had to produce efficiently and quickly. From the increasing number of workers and the need to discipline them emerged a managerial class who were neither owners nor

workers and who viewed themselves as vested with the social mission of increasing production by managing workers, who were viewed as basically stupid, immoral, dependent, and the main source of society's ills. Against the backdrop of labor unrest and in an atmosphere of antagonism between workers and capitalists, Frederick Taylor's theory of scientific management promised to secure material wealth and social harmony. Taylor's aim was to remove the "cause for antagonism," and to that end, as he famously claimed, a "revolution in mental attitude" was demanded.¹⁸ He asserted that "the man at the head of the business under scientific management . . . [must be] governed by rules and laws which have been developed through hundreds of experiments just as much as the workman, and the standards which have been developed [must be] equitable."¹⁹ Taylor has been frequently pilloried for inventing an inhuman system of management ultimately serving capitalists' interests. But from a cultural standpoint the reverse is true, for his use of science served to undermine the traditional basis of legitimacy of leadership and to establish the foundation and perceived need for psychologists' intervention, which would in turn attempt to codify and formalize the "human" element in the corporation. Thus, instead of regarding success as self-explanatory (success being the proof that a man was deserving in the first place), Taylor's theories suggested that the duties of managers needed to be (re)examined.

This had the effect of subtly changing the definition of what constituted a good manager. Beginning with the well-known program of intelligence tests in the army during World War I, the individual worker came to be considered a conglomerate of traits that could be measured and tested. It did not matter whether these traits were considered innate or acquired. As Bendix puts it, what mattered was that tests were all that mattered and that they could be used to evaluate workers. By the 1920s American employers and managers had turned their attention to the attitudes and feelings of employees. "By so doing they were inadvertently questioning the basis of their own authority."²⁰ As long as they had regarded success as a sign of merit, no further justification of industrial leadership was necessary. But Taylorist views of management suggested that failures were not an unavoidable outcome of inherent and inborn

incompetence. Instead, the causes of failures had to be investigated and prevented through the development of appropriate managerial policies. As Bendix has suggested, there was a subtle but significant change in the image of the worker: from a person who had to be taught virtue and proper manners, he had become an object of scientific scrutiny and interrogation whose aptitudes and attitudes had to be tested.²¹ In that process, the definition of success and leadership also changed: while in the nineteenth century success had been a self-evident sign of one's social superiority, which was then self-justified, leadership gradually became a more elusive category, a quality to be proven rather than a quality inevitably and tautologically bestowed. This in turn implied a new degree of uncertainty regarding what constituted a good manager. Compared to its predecessors, the religious or Darwinian legitimation of leadership, management theory seems to have created a process of collective scrutiny and questioning, thereby creating new social forms of uncertainty and anxieties, which in turn would generate new forms of organizational control. The new cultural anxiety about the nature of the good worker and the idea that the deployment of adequate knowledge could help find solutions to improve workers' performance constituted the backdrop for the growing intervention of psychologists inside the corporation.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ENTER THE MARKET

By the 1920s, 86 percent of all wage earners were employed in manufacturing.²² Even more conspicuous was the fact that, as Yehouda Shenhav notes, the American firm had the largest proportion of administrative workers worldwide (eighteen administrative workers for each hundred production workers).²³ The expansion of firms went hand in hand with the consolidation of management theories that aimed to systematize and rationalize the production process. Indeed, the management system shifted the locus of control from traditional capitalists to technocrats. Using the rhetoric of science, rationality, and general welfare to establish their authority, technocrats claimed that the interests of both the employers and the employees would presumably be met. Shenhav views this transformation as the seizure of a new form of power by engineers who

acted as a class of professionals. A new ideology of management was imposed that conceived of the workplace as a "system" in which the individual would be eradicated and general rules and laws would be formalized and applied to the worker and to the work process. In contrast to capitalists, who had frequently been portrayed as greedy and selfish, managers in the new ideology of management emerged as rational, responsible, and predictable and as the bearers of new rules of standardization and rationalization.²⁴ Yet if until the 1920s the engineers' rhetoric of the workplace as system prevailed,²⁵ soon afterward psychologists initiated another discourse that paid a great deal of attention to individuals and to their emotions.²⁶ At the same time that corporations were trying to figure out how to maximize the production process and make it more efficient, psychologists were struggling to establish themselves as a professional group and thus offered a competing lexicon for making sense of problems of productivity.

Under the impetus of John B. Watson's innovations in behavioral psychology, experimental psychologists had been solicited by managers to find solutions to the problem of discipline and productivity inside the corporation.²⁷ World War I provided a great impetus for psychologists. Psychologists, some of whom were inspired by Freudian psychodynamic views, proved particularly successful in their work with the military, helping recruit soldiers or heal war-related trauma. It was during the Great War, under the leadership of Robert Yerkes, that psychologists developed group intelligence tests and what would come to be known as personnel psychology.²⁸ Yerkes proposed ways of screening recruits for mental deficiency and assigning selected recruits to army jobs. He also set up committees of psychologists who investigated soldier motivation, morale, physical incapacity and related psychological problems ("shell shock"), and discipline. In 1918, in the aftermath of efforts by military intelligence officers, psychologists, and doctors, the Morale Section of the Training and Instruction Branch was established. Its purpose was to "stimulate and maintain military morale."²⁹ This unit eventually built a nationwide network of ties with both the military and civilians. The Morale Branch established official connections with such groups as the Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations, the Knights of Colum-

bus, the Jewish Welfare Board, the American Library Association, the Commission on Training Camp Activities, the Committee on Education and Special Training, and the Bureau of Public Information.³⁰ These connections suggested that the work on morale had spread beyond the army and that, whether by mimetic or normative isomorphism, it was spreading to the nation at large. In the 1920s, doctoral degrees specializing in industrial psychology began to be offered at U.S. universities,³¹ in turn suggesting that industrial psychology was one of the first branches of psychology to be institutionalized.

Given psychologists' success in the army, managers were hopeful that psychologists could replicate their success inside the corporation. Psychologists were asked to come up with tests to identify and hire workers with high productivity. To that end, psychologists produced a battery of tests to find out whether intelligence was correlated with productivity. The results consistently suggested that the relationship was so trivial as to be insignificant. However, psychologists did find that character traits such as honesty, loyalty, and dependability were significantly related to productivity.

Elton Mayo was one of the first in a long list of management theorists to provide guidelines for shaping the identity that managers sought. However, Mayo must be given a place of honor in any account of management theory because "there can be few disciplines or fields of research in which a single set of studies or single researcher and writer has exercised so great an influence as was exercised for quarter of the century by Mayo and the Hawthorne studies."³² Despite the wide theoretical gap separating the work of experimental psychologists and Elton Mayo's revolutionary theory of human relations, there was continuity between the two bodies of work in that Mayo essentially suggested that *personality* was paramount to success in the corporation. As the historian of management theory Daniel Wren writes, "The outcome of the Hawthorne [Mayo's] groundbreaking research was a call for a new mix of managerial skills. These skills were crucial to handling human situations: first diagnostic skills in understanding human behavior and second, interpersonal skills in counseling, motivating, leading, and communicating with workers. Technical skills alone were not enough to cope with the

wrong behavior discovered at the Hawthorne Works."³³ If the skills in human relations were skills in handling persons *as persons*, then successful management depended substantially on managers' ability to understand others and to handle human relations in general. Managers would now be evaluated not only according to their skill and technical competence but also according to diffuse and imprecise criteria such as "having the right personality," "knowing how to handle human situations," and "knowing how to resolve conflict." However, where experimental psychologists had viewed moral qualities such as "loyalty" or "reliability" as important attributes of the efficient personality, Mayo's famous Hawthorne experiments (conducted from 1924 to 1927) paid historically unprecedented attention to emotional transactions per se, for their main finding was that productivity increased if work relationships were characterized by care and attention to workers' feelings. In place of the Victorian language of "character," Mayo used the amoral and scientific language of psychology to conceive of human relations as technical problems to be alleviated by proper knowledge and understanding.³⁴ In other words, because American corporations were struggling to increase their productivity and because they delegated the solution to this question to people who had been trained in the emerging science of psychology, a new cultural category emerged: that of the "human relationship." Like no other group, psychologists made "human relationships" into a cultural category and into a problem.

In this respect, what is perhaps most interesting is that in Mayo's first experiments at General Electric the subjects were all women. Unbeknownst to himself, Mayo's initial findings were highly gendered. An analysis of the cases addressed by Mayo is instructive both of the ways in which his approach to work conflicts was influenced by a psychological worldview and of the ways in which the problems he unraveled among women workers were gendered. One example from his report states, "One woman worker . . . discovered during an interview that her dislike of a certain supervisor was based upon a fancied resemblance to a detested stepfather. Small wonder that the same supervisor had warned the interviewer that she was 'difficult to handle.'"³⁵ Two other women workers were offered a transfer to another and better section. But, as Mayo observes,

to accept would mean leaving their group and taking a job in another department: they refused. Then representatives of the Union put some pressure on them, claiming that, if they continued to refuse, the Union organizers “might just as well give up” their efforts. With reluctance, the girls reversed their decision and accepted the upgrading. Both girls at once needed the attention of an interviewer: they had liked the former group in which they had earned informal membership. Both felt adjustment to a new group and a novel situation as involving efforts and private discontent. From both much was learned of the intimate organization and common practices of their groups, and their adjustments to their new groups were eased, thereby effectively helping to reconstitute the teamwork in those groups.³⁶

As a final example:

The interviewer was able to establish that a woman’s performance was suffering because her mother had pressured her to ask for a raise. She talked her situation out with an interviewer, and it became clear that to her a raise would mean departure from her daily companions and associates. Although not immediately relevant, it is interesting to note that after explaining the situation to the interviewer she was able to present her case dispassionately to her mother. . . . The mother immediately understood and abandoned pressure for advancement, and the girl returned to work. This last instance illustrates one way in which the interview clears lines of communication of emotional blockage—within as without the plant.³⁷

Notice how these analyses put interpersonal relationships and emotions at the center of the cultural imagination of the workplace. But they also point to the ways in which *women* experienced the workplace. Because their social role was primarily defined as that of breadwinner, it is doubtful that many men would have felt torn between a raise and their friends or that they would have preferred to give up the former over the latter. If the question of how to form and maintain social bonds inside the corporation became a key motif for Mayo and subsequent theorists, it is because his initial findings were (unknowingly) gendered, reflecting women’s emotional culture, in which nurturance, care, display of affection, outward expressions of support, and linguistic communication were central to social identity and to the performance of social bonds. Mayo’s subsequent experiments with men only further confirmed his views that

gentle supervision and an atmosphere of trust were conducive to higher productivity.

Mayo's very method enabled the "discovery" that work relationships had an essentially human, interpersonal, and emotional character. Indeed, few have noticed that Mayo's interview method had *all* the characteristics of a therapeutic interview except the name. This is how Mayo defines his method of interviewing:

Workers wished to talk, and to talk freely under the seal of professional confidence (which was never abused) to someone who seemed representative of the company or who seemed, by his very attitude, to carry authority. The experience itself was unusual; there are few people in this world who have had the experience of finding someone intelligent, attentive, and eager to listen without interruption to all that he or she has to say. But to arrive at this point, it became necessary to train interviewers how to listen, how to avoid interruption or the giving of advice, how generally to avoid anything that might put an end to free expression in an individual instance. Some approximate rules to guide the interviewer in his work were therefore set down. These were, more or less, as follows:

1. Give your whole attention to the person interviewed, and make it evident that you are doing so.
2. Listen—don't talk.
3. Never argue; never give advice.
4. Listen to:
 - (a) what he wants to say
 - (b) what he does not want to say
 - (c) what he cannot say without help
5. As you listen, plot out tentatively and for subsequent correction the pattern (personal) that is being set before you. To test this, from time to time summarize what has been said and present for comment (e.g., "is this what you are telling me?"). Always do this with the greatest caution. . . .
6. Remember that everything said must be considered a personal confidence and not divulged to anyone.³⁸

I do not know a better definition of a therapeutic interview. Because Mayo was using the conceptual tools of psychology, he could elicit a form of speech that was essentially private and emotional. Moreover, because the subjects of his milestone experiments were women, he inadvertently

initiated a process in which the emotional attributes of women were incorporated into the workplace, which was then still largely dominated by the male workforce. Thus if, as many feminists have claimed, masculinity is implicitly inscribed in the instruments of classification and evaluation inside the workplace, surely Mayo's findings are an example of the reverse, namely the inscription of femininity in seemingly "universal" claims. Mayo used a "female method"—based on speech and on the communication of emotions—to unravel women's problems, that is, problems that had a fundamentally interpersonal and emotional nature, and applied them to highly gendered male organizations. In so doing, Mayo had initiated a process of redefinition of masculinity inside the workplace, a redefinition that would entail a different way to think of the self in relation to others and that essentially mixed and combined a lexicon of emotionality with that of productivity.

A NEW EMOTIONAL STYLE

Mayo's findings were applied to defining an adequate work environment not only for workers but also for management. Who would be a successful manager? According to Mayo, the "new" leader was someone who acted as an investigator of social sentiments and who could further collaboration between managers and workers to achieve organizational goals.³⁹ Mayo revolutionized management theories because just as he replaced the moral language of selfhood with the dispassionate terminology of psychological science, he replaced the engineers' rhetoric of rationality that had hitherto prevailed with a new lexicon of "human relations." By suggesting that conflicts were not a matter of competition over scarce resources but rather resulted from tangled emotions, personality factors, and unresolved psychological problems, Mayo constructed a discursive *continuity between the family and the workplace*. Thus, because the psychologists hired to increase productivity worked with a terminology derived from studies of the family, the language of and solutions to conflicts in the workplace typically emerged from that realm.⁴⁰

According to Mayo, conflict was the result of emotional transactions, and harmony could be reached by the acknowledgment of such emotions

and mutual understanding. Thus in many ways Mayo's theory of management succeeded in reconciling the conflicting interests of capitalists and workers. His theories acted (or at least seemed to act) as conduits for workers' critiques of their work conditions.⁴¹ But they also offered techniques to quell those critiques. For example, when workers voiced grievances, Mayo and his team noticed that the simple fact that a manager would listen to someone angry and let the person express anger would assuage the angry person. In the same vein, conflicts at work were reconceptualized as stemming from personality problems and a troubled childhood, not from the defective structural organization of capitalism. For the first time, each single individual and his or her emotions were scrutinized, and the language of productivity became slowly intertwined with that of the psyche. Further, being a good manager meant being able to display the attributes of a psychologist: it required that one grasp and deal with the complex emotional nature of social transactions in the workplace.

Mayo's object of study and his objectives were in many obvious ways radically different from those of clinical psychology. Yet by insisting on the human factor in the workplace, on such intangibles as emotions and human relations, and on an invisible thread linking the family and the workplace, Mayo's theories made actors working in corporations far more receptive to the new definitions of leadership propagated by the discourse of popular psychology. In the context of new uncertainties that were created by the insecure economic environment of the 1930s, success in the corporation was made to depend on having the right personality and therefore on one's correct management of emotions. Consequently, by making the notion of "personality" central to economic behavior, psychologists could not only form new connections between the language of the psyche and that of economic efficiency but also ascertain and legitimate their authority in the corporation and in society at large.

Even when theories of management subsequently moved away from Mayoist thought, this basic outlook survived. When later in the 1950s the Mayoist consensus about human relations was challenged by the new view that conflicts of interest between labor and management were natural and inevitable, the language of emotions and human relations per-

sisted, for it had become part of the conventions that psychologists and management theories had successfully established. The texts of the 1940s and 1950s still typically postulated that the “feelings” of people were more important than the “logic” of organization intangibles, such as charts, rules, and directives. In 1948, writing in the respected *Personnel Psychology*, Ross Stagner claimed that “a thorough understanding of the phenomena of industrial conflict requires an exploration of the psychological aspects of this problem.”⁴² Some ten years later, in 1959, an author in *Personnel Psychology* stated that “‘attitude of mind’ . . . accounts for American superiority in production. ‘Attitude of mind’ . . . includes attitudes toward job mobility, cooperation between stewards and foremen, a friendly and relaxed atmosphere in labor negotiation, a social viewpoint in industry, an acceptance of the principle that rewards must parallel contributions to productive efficiency.”⁴³ As the historian Daniel Wren put it, “In general, the texts of the early 1950s emphasized feelings, sentiments, and collaboration.”⁴⁴ In the 1960s, under the influence of the immensely popular psychology of Abraham Maslow, this tendency only deepened with new approaches, including “industrial humanism” or “organizational humanism,” that sought to offset the authoritarian tendencies of organizations and to integrate individual and organization goals. The extraordinary cultural power of psychology thus seems to have resided in its capacity to inscribe the individual—his or her needs, claims, and critiques—within the very structure and culture of economic organizations.

The point of this rather cavalier overview is obviously not to retrace the complex and contradictory history of management.⁴⁵ Rather, it is simply to suggest that amid the variety and complexity of management theories, one central cultural repertoire emerged: traditional work relationships based on authority and even force were criticized and rejected and were recast as emotional and psychological entities, thus enabling a (seeming) harmony between the organization and the individual.

These new cultural repertoires are most salient in the popular advice literature on management and leadership. In the following, I will focus on the popular literature as it articulates most clearly the semiotic code of selfhood and cultural repertoires that psychologists devised to formulate new theories of leadership.⁴⁶ Addressing an “ideal-type” manager (or

would-be manager), popular psychologists left the intricacies of management theory per se and assumed instead the broader cultural role of articulating the type of selfhood that could deliver the key to corporate success. Although the texts of popular psychology cannot straightforwardly inform us of the practical uses of therapeutic language, they do point to the publicly available languages that shape self-understandings and help interpret the behavior of others. As a historian of sixteenth-century books, Roger Chartier, has argued, there is a continuity between the mental or cultural schemas that structure a text and the mental or cultural categories through which viewers grasp the world of a text.⁴⁷ This is all the more likely to be the case with advice literature, which, by definition, issues commands and injunctions that address cultural zones riddled with uncertainties (e.g., leadership or sexuality). Advice literature invites a mode of appropriation of texts that literary scholar Louise Rosenblatt has identified as “efferent transactions,” understood as “readings that are motivated mainly by a search for something to ‘carry away.’”⁴⁸ Even more than in the case of fiction, readers consuming advice literature look for practical guidance, or for what Wayne Booth calls some “useful ‘carry-over.’”⁴⁹ People working in large corporations and faced with numerous uncertainties about their worth and about the criteria for advancement are likely to turn to advice literature to make sense of an uncertain environment and to devise long-term strategies of action to cope with that environment.

One caveat is called for here, however: these texts are likely to tell us something about the public cultural frameworks orienting the selfhood of lower- and middle-ranking managers and may be less useful in informing us about the ethos of top-ranking managers. Guidelines for success are particularly likely to be sought by lower or middle managers, who depend on others for advancement and therefore need to decipher others’ behavior to ascertain their position.⁵⁰

EMOTIONAL CONTROL

One of Mayo’s teachings, endlessly recycled by popular psychologists, was that anger needed to be banished from the workplace and that emo-

tional control was a precondition for being a good (middle-ranking) manager. The norm of anger control, inspired by a Puritan view of the family, had always prevailed in the American family.⁵¹ During the nineteenth century, such standards of anger control remained the bulwark of the family but do not seem to have been observed in the workplace, or at least not as strictly as they were in the family. The new injunction of emotional control captured the corporate imagination because it recast the old Puritan norm of anger control in the double psychological language of emotionality and of economic efficiency. New cultural scripts promoting emotional control could gain quick legitimacy because the link between rationality and emotional self-control had had a long and venerable history and because it reflected one of the most important organizational myths, that of rationality. As Frank Dobbin suggests in his analysis of the emergence of new forms of economic behavior, "New practices must conform to the wider understanding of what is rational."⁵²

In *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, Mayo suggested that angry reactions were like nervous breakdowns in that they necessitated appropriate measures and that one of the chief problems of proper management would be to control or prevent them.⁵³ The human relations movement increasingly suggested that the *control* of anger was an attribute of leadership because it was a prerequisite for higher productivity and efficiency. In their history of anger, Stearns and Stearns documented how, from the 1930s onward, corporations developed an organizational apparatus to train their personnel in the art of this new emotional ethos, not only for the sake of higher efficiency and productivity, but also because handling workers' emotions would presumably help reduce the level of workers' anger and therefore the incidence of discontent and strikes as well.⁵⁴ A frequently used strategy to cope with anger was to claim that complaints and anger had nothing to do with the workplace but were simply reenactments of early family conflicts.⁵⁵

The injunction to emotional control was directed not only at workers but perhaps first and foremost at managers. Foremen were commanded to listen to workers' grievances and to hold their temper in close check. "The foreman's checklist: do I correct the mistakes of my workers considerately, and in a manner to indicate that I am more interested in help-

ing them to avoid future mistakes than I am in the opportunity merely to 'bawl them out'?"⁵⁶ In the 1950s, T-groups (sensitivity training programs) bombarded foremen with examples of the bad old days of "foremen who shouted, put down worker grievances."⁵⁷ In these groups, foremen learned that they should be "friendly but impersonal" and that remaining "cool" was an important attribute of competence.⁵⁸

Studies of the contemporary corporation amply confirm that the ethos of self-restraint has become pervasive.⁵⁹ For example, in his study of managers, Robert Jackall argues that the most important managerial quality is self-control and that in the contemporary corporation self-control is a crucial asset for those in the lower ranks who wish to signal their candidacy for leadership or professionalism, a fact confirmed by Kunda's study of high-tech corporations and Hochschild's study of airline flight attendants. Or to give another example from popular advice literature: "Expressing anger spontaneously . . . usually means losing control. That reflects badly on you—no matter how justified your outburst may be. There's something about seeing a colleague out of control that shakes up everyone. You're breaking office rules, breaching professional decorum."⁶⁰

In feminist scholarship, the kind of impersonal self-control that has been increasingly required of men by the American capitalist corporation has often been viewed as a typically male attribute, which in turn discriminates against women in making their emotional style seem hysterical and hence unprofessional.⁶¹ My interpretation of these findings differs, for several reasons. First, the gender gap in expectations for emotional control has been narrowing since the nineteenth century.⁶² Second, as already mentioned, Mayo's findings unknowingly transposed women's emotional culture to the workplace and legitimized it. As the social historian Stephanie Coontz suggests, the new approach to emotions and to emotional control softened the character of the foreman. Indeed, "The qualities men . . . needed to work in industrial America were almost feminine ones: tact, teamwork, the ability to accept direction. New definitions of masculinity had to be constructed that did not derive directly from the work process."⁶³ From the 1920s onward, managers had to unknowingly revise traditional definitions of masculinity and incorporate into their per-

sonality so-called feminine attributes, such as controlling their negative emotions, paying attention to emotions, and listening to others sympathetically. This new type of masculinity was closer to the self-conscious attention to one's own and others' emotions that had characterized the female world, yet its descriptions simultaneously expressed an anxiety about warding off attributes of femininity.⁶⁴ Whereas Victorian emotional culture had divided men and women along the axis of the public and private spheres, the twentieth-century corporation tended to undermine hegemonic definitions of femininity and masculinity because, among other reasons, the service economy, in which both men and women were employed, was person centered. In the 1920s, "department store personnel programs increased their efforts to make sales clerks conform to norms of middle-class demeanor. It was at this point that advice books for would-be secretaries (male as well as female) began to emphasize the need for emotional control, shifting away from the stress on honesty and punctuality that had dominated behavioral sections of corresponding manuals in the 1880s."⁶⁵ This suggests that men and women increasingly, though imperfectly, converged toward a common model of emotional conduct. In the contemporary corporation, men and women are given the same emotional injunctions: "Feelings and emotions represent value statements of your colleagues, subordinates, and boss. . . . Effective managers can pace emotions and manage the meeting more effectively."⁶⁶

One could argue, as Kathy Ferguson's milestone work has, that the gender-blind injunction to self-control in economic organizations is the result of the fact that in large and complex bureaucratic structures men and women are both feminized, that is, equally made to manage their powerlessness.⁶⁷ There is undoubtedly a grain of truth in this view, but, again, it misses some important aspects of the cultural transformation of self-control. One of them is that emotional self-control has been and continues to be forcefully advocated by psychologists as a way to empower women. For example, a 1980 article in the woman's magazine *Redbook* quotes Dr. Peter Brill, director of the Center for the Study of Adult Development in Philadelphia, as saying, "Anger, tears, defensiveness, excuses—any kind of emotional reaction—puts you in a bad light. You'll get stuck with some sort of negative label—highly sensitive, overemotional, an aggressive fem-

inist, a pushy broad—all of which boil down to the demeaning stereotype ‘behaving like a female.’”⁶⁸ Even if some columnists urge women to take advantage of their “natural” skills in dealing with their emotions, the main message is that women should be in full control of their emotional expressiveness to be better able to secure their interests.

The same *Redbook* article, discussing how to receive criticism from others, instructs women that they can avoid the struggle of repressing hurt emotions by not reacting emotionally to begin with: “*Invalid* criticism is by far the toughest to handle. But there are sensible alternatives to quivering lips and moist eyes. You can bite the bullet, for instance, and ignore it. According to Dr. Brill, this approach is easier when you focus on long-term goals instead of on present difficulties.” In illustration, the article presents the case of a woman who was the butt of her fellow students for three years: “It took Brenda several visits to a therapist to realize that her best strategy was to ignore their gibes by concentrating on the diploma that would eventually establish her professional equality.” Also presented is the case of Lois, a twenty-eight-year-old customer service representative for a large retail chain:

Her goal was to move into the personnel department, but her boss was a bullying, manipulative supervisor with an unpleasantly critical style. He complained about everything: her handwriting, her perfume, her tone of voice, her judgment. In the beginning she fought back. “I’d tell him he was wrong, that I hadn’t done what he’d said or that everybody makes mistakes. Finally, I realized that every time he put out a hook, I grabbed it. I wanted to end the criticism, not prolong it, so I neutralized his ammunition by saying things such as ‘I can understand why you might feel that way’ or ‘you could be right.’ That satisfied him, and thank goodness I was eventually promoted.”⁶⁹

When they addressed men and women inside the corporation, psychologists used a gender-blind language and called upon men and women to adopt the same emotional style: to be moderate, to dose their emotions according to the imperative of office efficiency, and most of all to think rationally and strategically. In the well-known *Getting Past No*, William Ury addressed both men and women when he wrote: “In react-

ing strongly, in not thinking rationally, we lose sight of our interests."⁷⁰ What was unprecedented was the tight association between self-control, rationality, and self-interest: to be self-controlled signaled rationality because it signaled the capacity to discipline one's passions for the sake of one's self-interest.

The standard feminist interpretation of this is that the advice to control emotions ends up keeping women under men's dominion by erecting masculine models of emotional behavior.⁷¹ But again, such interpretation ignores the fact that the explicit intent of such advice has been to empower women. More crucially, this advice intends to make women creatures of self-interest, a key motif of feminist political thought and tactics. Moreover, in being made into an attribute of professional competence, the ideal of self-control marked a clear departure from traditional definitions of hegemonic masculinity, understood as a model prescribing men to be self-reliant, aggressive, competitive, oriented to mastery and dominance, emotionless, and, when necessary, ruthless. In contrast, the kind of emotional control commanded by psychologists combined two attributes: the capacity to be rational in the pursuit of one's self-interest and the capacity to defuse conflict and to create friendly relationships.

Empathy

The self-control advocated by psychologists does not entail the overall suppression of emotions. In fact, the contrary is true: empathy is as strongly advocated as self-control and is viewed as an essential addition to self-control. For example, in 1937, in the immensely popular book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie wrote: "If as a result of reading this book, you get only one thing—an increased tendency to think always in terms of the other person's point of view, and see things from his angle as well as your own—if you get only that one thing from this book, it may easily prove to be one of the milestones of your career."⁷² In 1956, Leonard Jarrard, then teaching at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, wrote in the journal *Personnel Psychology* that "empathy appears to be a necessary requisite for supervisory success."⁷³

Anyone familiar with the corporation knows that the emotional self-control advocated by organizational consultants and psychologists is a

far cry from the stern repression of emotions usually associated with its Victorian predecessor. In its therapeutic version, self-control must be manifested in an upbeat, smiling, agreeable attitude. From the 1930s onward, almost *all* guidebooks on successful management emphasized the value of positive talk, empathy, enthusiasm, friendliness, and energy, with the more recent guidebooks advocating a blend of spirituality with a therapeutic call to dispel performance anxieties, to nurture oneself, and to entertain positive thoughts about oneself and others. In his study of managers, Robert Jackall concurs with one of the managers he quotes as saying: "Happy people are nicer to be around. [To be a good manager] it's important to be an up person, and to keep an up perspective."⁷⁴ Indeed, positive energy, as marked by appearing to be problem-free and enthusiastic, is another important attribute of the manager, whose self-control must always be personable and friendly. The mix of self-control and empathy advocated by organizational psychologists aims at creating the conditions for what organizational researchers call "ingratiation" strategies,⁷⁵ strategies aiming at making one likable by projecting friendliness, a positive attitude toward others, and the capacity to acknowledge them. What is stake in the construction of such emotional personas is the capacity to establish trust and trustworthiness.

Thus the argument positing that psychology has strengthened managers' grip on minds and hearts or that the economy debases a genuine realm of emotions is simplistic. The capitalist workplace, far from being devoid of emotions, has been saturated with a kind of affect committed to and commanded by the imperative of cooperation. Because capitalism demands and creates networks of interdependence and has positioned affect in the heart of its transactions, it has also brought about a dismantling of the very gender identities it helped establish in the first place. In commanding that we exert our mental and emotional skills to identify with others' point of view, the "psychological ethos" orients the manager's self to the model of traditional female selfhood. It *blurs gender divisions* by inviting men and women to control their negative emotions, be friendly, view themselves through others' eyes, and empathize with others.⁷⁶ For example, one 1990s manual entitled *Social Skills at Work* states that "in professional relationships men don't have to be identified always

with 'hard' masculine qualities and women with 'soft' feminine ones. Men can and should be just as capable as women of sensitivity and compassion, . . . and of the arts of cooperation and persuasion, while women should be just as capable as men of self-assertion and leadership and of the arts of competition and direction."⁷⁷ Emotional capitalism has realigned emotional cultures, harnessing the emotional self more closely to instrumental action.

Of course, I do not claim that the injunctions and instructions of advice literature have straightforwardly shaped corporate life or that they have miraculously erased the harsh and often brutal reality of the corporate world and of male domination of women. What I am saying, however, is that new models of emotionality, formulated by psychologists and consultants in management and human relations, have subtly but surely altered modes and models of sociability inside the middle-class workplace and have redrawn the cognitive and practical emotional boundaries regulating gender differences.

As the self-appointed experts on relationships inside organizations, psychologists have introduced emotions into the discourse on management and productivity, claiming that pursuing one's self-interest is synonymous with emotional health. By linking professional competence with emotions, they have constructed managerial identity around the idea that "personality attributes" and emotional style are a legitimate basis for managerial authority, with the ultimate economic justification that they are conducive to cooperation and productivity. Psychologists have redefined the "moral fitness" of the leader as emotional competence, in which one signals and signifies the mastery of one's inner self simultaneously through distance from others (through self-control) and through an empathy and friendliness aimed at demonstrating one's capacity to cooperate with others. This redefinition has transformed the traditional male modes and models of domination inside the corporation.

Psychologists and the Transformation of Power

In *The Corrosion of Character*, Richard Sennett has argued that the ethos of teamwork now pervades the contemporary corporation and that it has redefined corporate relationships as containing "power without authority."⁷⁸ Sennett does not think that such power significantly differs from

previous forms of power, and he even suggests that it is worse. This view does not distinguish between different modes of domination, or, if it does, often ends up adopting the somewhat absurd position that the exercise of soft power is worse than the exercise of brutal and overt forms of power. This position in turn avoids an inquiry into the more difficult and challenging question of understanding the differences between different forms of power. Indeed, if psychologists transformed power relationships—and they undoubtedly did—and if their power seems more difficult to battle, it is because the leadership model they tried to instill was based on trustworthiness and cooperation.

Weber defined power as the “possibility of imposing one’s own will upon the behavior of other persons.”⁷⁹ In this view, power is a zero-sum game. A’s will must outweigh B’s will for it to be counted as powerful. But the therapeutic definitions of competence transform this traditional approach to power because for psychologists “real” power is established precisely by not engaging in power struggles and by keeping one’s emotions in check. According to one 1950s book of business psychology, for example, “It goes without saying that in order to help other people relieve emotional tension and to direct emotional stirrings into the desired pattern, the individual in charge of the situation must be able to keep himself under control. Displays of emotion tend to engender similar responses in other people. This means that if the person is to control the situation he must not allow himself to be stimulated by the emotionality of the other person.”⁸⁰

Here two agents, one in power and one receiving orders, can have their own will realized *by not reacting*: the employer establishes her authority by controlling her negative emotions, but the employee can also realize his strength by, say, not reacting to a bullying boss. Further, by avoiding an expression of anger or protest, an employee can be made to be the subtle victor of an interaction with a bullying boss. Not reacting becomes the mark of self-control, which in turn signals a hidden and subtle psychological power that can in fact bypass hierarchical status and power. In the psychological literature, overt reactions to others’ offenses are repeatedly and forcefully discouraged. In a famous manual for managers, *Getting Past No*, the Harvard Business School professor William Ury admonishes, “When you react, you are hooked.”⁸¹ The public defense of one’s honor,

understood as the social value bestowed on the self by others, is always systematically discouraged. This is because, according to the therapeutic ethos, the fully mature adult prefers to react strategically and defend his interests rather than his honor. People who are likely to prefer their honor over their interest are deemed emotionally “incompetent” and therefore lacking in “true” power. The person who really trusts himself—as countless psychologists since Heinz Kohut or D. W. Winnicott have argued—need not engage in defensive battles. We arrive at the following astonishing paradox: “real” psychological strength consists in being able to secure one’s interests without defending oneself by reacting or counterattacking. In this way, securing self-interest and power in an interaction is established by showing self-confidence, which is in turn equated with a lack of defensiveness or overt aggressiveness. Power thus becomes divorced from the outward display of hostility and from the defense of one’s honor, responses that have traditionally been central to definitions of masculinity. While premodern power might have been overtly and covertly hostile and aggressive, contemporary signs of power must bracket any such emotional display because, in the therapeutic literature, knowing how to secure one’s status signifies the ability to secure one’s interests, which are in turn established when one avoids direct confrontations. Self-control means that one is governed by calculated reason and that one is predictable and consistent in one’s interactions.

One example from my own research makes especially clear that a transformation in the cultural definition of power has taken place. In the course of my interviews, I offered respondents the following story:

Tom has been working in a firm for two years. He likes his job very much. His salary is very competitive, his work stimulating and interesting. However, his relationship with his boss is sometimes strained because his boss is not well informed about new techniques and strategies that could improve productivity and increase sales. One day, Tom suggests to his boss that they introduce some changes in the department because he believes that if they don’t the department will be in danger of losing money and sales will decrease. Tom’s boss refuses, telling Tom not to worry and saying that if anything happens he will take responsibility for it. But Tom’s worst fears come true: the department does lose money, Tom is blamed for the losses, and his boss does not step in to take his share of the responsibility.

All of the fifteen respondents whose age was below sixty answered that they would not confront their boss, and several suggested that they would simply try to leave the company. However, all three of the respondents who were above age sixty-five said they would raise the issue as a matter of principle. For example, Timothy, a seventy-two-year-old retired senior accountant, reacted to the story as follows:

TIMOTHY: That's not right. What the boss did is not right.

INTERVIEWER: Would you have done something about it? That is, if you had been Tom—

TIMOTHY: Well, that depends . . . but I think I would; I would have gotten angry and made sure he [the boss] knew about it. Maybe I would even go to the bigger boss.

Contrast this answer with the following given by Alexandra, a twenty-six-year-old middle executive fresh out of business school:

ALEXANDRA: Confronting my boss could be the emotionally satisfying option, but the worst one in terms of career management. I would either leave the company or try to do things behind my boss's back. But I would definitely not confront him.

INTERVIEWER: Can you say why?

ALEXANDRA: Because I would be concerned to look childish and unreliable.

Sociologists Roderick M. Kramer and Karen Cook argue that rationality and consistency are perceived to be conditions for building trust inside organizations.⁸² If they are correct, the conditions for building such trust in turn tend to defuse the emotional conditions for the overt display and contestation of power. Such definitions of power as self-possession are paradoxical: they tend to discourage the abusive displays of anger that we normally associate with the "bullying boss," but they also delegitimize the expression of workers' anger about other abuses of power that may be directed against them.

To conclude: as corporations grew bigger and created more layers of management between employees and upper management and as American society became oriented toward a service economy (on its way to the so-called postindustrial society), a scientific discourse dealing primarily with persons, interactions, and emotions was the natural candidate to

shape the language of selfhood in the workplace. The psychological discourse became prevalent in American culture for a number of reasons. One was that psychologists offered a language—of persons, emotions, motivations—that seemed to correspond to and make sense of the large-scale transformations in the American workplace. As Andrew Abbott put it: “The developing organizational society uprooted the work and personal lives of individuals and therefore required professionals who could adjust individuals to life within it. This problem of adjustment has been peculiarly poignant in the United States, where the symbolic ethic of rugged individualism enjoys incongruous persistence in a highly organized and structured society. The chief professions of adjustment have been the psychiatrists and the psychologists.”⁸³

Moreover, psychology claimed to provide new tools to orient oneself in the increasingly complex maze of American organizations and the American economy. As Karl Manheim put it in his classical study *Ideology and Utopia*, “It is not men in general who think, or even isolated individuals who do the thinking, but men in certain groups who have developed a particular *style of thought in an endless series of responses to certain typical situations characterizing their common position*” (emphasis added).⁸⁴ Because corporate hierarchy demanded an orientation to persons as well as to commodities, and because work in the corporation demanded coordination and cooperation, the management of the self in the workplace increasingly became a “problem.” It was only natural that the response to this “problem” would be addressed by psychologists. Psychologists acted as “knowledge specialists” who developed ideas and methods to improve human relations and who thereby transformed the “structure of knowledge or consciousness that shapes the thinking of laypersons.”⁸⁵

The therapeutic language quickly became popular because it met the interests of both managers and workers as it addressed the problem of productivity. With the recession of the late 1920s and the steep rise in unemployment rates that accompanied the recession, work was becoming more uncertain.⁸⁶ In this context, the discourse of psychology offered symbolic guidance and seemed to secure both labor’s and management’s interests. The language of psychology was particularly well suited for managers and corporation owners. Psychologists seemed to promise that

they would increase profits, fight labor unrest, organize manager-worker relationships in a nonconfrontational way, and neutralize class struggles by casting them in the benign language of emotions and personality. On the workers' side, the language of psychology seemed far more democratic than previous theories of leadership because it now made good leadership depend on personality and on the capacity to understand others rather than on social position. After all, in the previous system of control over the workers, "workers had to submit to the authority of foremen in issues such as hiring, firing, pay, promotion, and workload. Most foremen used a 'drive system,' a method involving strict supervision and verbal abuse."⁸⁷ In addition, psychologists paid attention to workers' critiques of the workplace and seemed to be unprecedentedly concerned with the satisfaction of their needs. While most sociologists have viewed the early uses of psychology inside the corporation as a form of subtle and hence powerful control, I suggest instead that it held a significant appeal for workers because, at least at face value, it seemed to give audience to workers' critiques and to democratize what had been relations of dominance and subordination between workers and managers (this is why Mayo's intervention at General Electric was so effective). Such seeming democratization was associated with the new belief that one's personality, deemed to be independent of social status, was the key to managerial success and that managers needed to attend to the human dimension of work relationships.⁸⁸

Finally, the psychological discourse shaped and framed the cultural repertoires through which both labor and management understood, communicated, and acted upon not only their emotions but also, and perhaps most crucially, their interests. Interests, like other motives for action, are culture bound. The idea that self-interest should guide action was not self-evident, for psychologists had to muster a battery of arguments and rhetoric to convince workers, managers, and would-be managers that they should act for its sake. Far from being pre- or acultural, interests are made meaningful through public vocabularies and indeed were instilled as a principle of action by the many experts and professionals who entered the corporate field (psychologists, organizational consultants, etc.). These findings accord with Weber's famous claim that "ideas have,

like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest⁸⁹ and that the dynamics of interests and ideas are closely intertwined. But they go even further and suggest that the very notion of "interest," far from being an invariant property of social action, was in fact intensively culturally elaborated by psychologists. In other words, psychologists not only made emotions central to the workplace but relentlessly codified the notion of self-interest itself, arguing that mature individuals are defined by their ability to secure their self-interest, in turn expressed by self-control and by the capacity to forego expressions of power.

THE COMMUNICATIVE ETHIC AS THE SPIRIT OF THE CORPORATION

Knowledge systems, no less than morality plays, stories, or myths, offer cultural prescriptions and models of behavior. In fact, one of the reasons why knowledge is such an intrinsic part of culture is that many knowledge systems offer an image of the good or worthy person as well as a set of the rules through which one is to become such a person. The different theories that were elaborated by popular psychologists writing guidebooks on management converged around the 1970s in one cultural model that has become widely pervasive and authoritative, namely the model of "communication." Psychologists increasingly refined the rules of emotional conduct by principally reformulating the cognitive and linguistic rules of interaction and by offering a model of sociability based on "communication." This model explains conflict and problems as the result of imperfect emotional and linguistic communication; conversely, it views adequate linguistic and emotional communication as the key to achieving desirable relationships. This model was not born *ex nihilo* with psychologists. It had its source in the democratic Deweyian ideal of "conversation" and "discussion" as key features of an enlightened citizenry. But psychologists gave this ideal a new lease on life by associating it with emotional self-management and with economic leadership.⁹⁰

To understand the nature of this model, the recourse to Foucault's conceptualization of "ethical substance" is called for. As summarized by

Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, ethical substance is what makes a subject constitute him- or herself as a moral subject.⁹¹ It is the relations one has with oneself through the available moral and scientific discourses. The first dimension of "ethical substance" addresses the question: Which aspect of myself is concerned with moral conduct? For example, are intentions, actions, desires, or feelings the locus for the expression of morality? The second aspect refers to what Foucault calls the mode of subjection, namely the ways in which a law is legitimated and enforced (examples are divine law, natural law, and rational rule). The third dimension pertains to the question: What are the means by which we can change ourselves in order to become ethical (e.g., moderate our acts, eradicate our desires, or channel sexual desire for reproductive aims)? This in turn constitutes what Foucault calls self-forming activity (*pratique de soi*). Finally, the fourth aspect is the kind of being we aspire to when we behave morally (e.g., becoming pure, immortal, or free) to obtain certain aims (e.g., having children).⁹² "Communication" has become an essential part of the ethical substance of men and women inside the corporation. In the cultural model of communication, the means to forge relationships are cognitive (they demand that one adopt a reflexive posture vis-à-vis oneself), emotional (they require that one pace one's feelings as well as those of others), and perhaps primarily linguistic (they require that one know how to use appropriate ways of speaking that do not threaten others and that even acknowledge them positively).

The model of "communication" aims at providing linguistic and emotional techniques to reconcile diverging imperatives: namely to assert and express the self, yet cooperate with others; to understand others' motives, yet manipulate oneself and others to reach desired goals; and to be self-controlled, yet personable and accessible. Communication is thus an "ethical substance" in which it is impossible to separate self-interest from attention to others, language being essentially the main technique through which the two are to be presumably reconciled.

The main aspect of the self concerned with moral conduct is how one appears to others through language and emotional expression. According to the ethos of communication put forth by popular psychology, a prerequisite of good relationships with others demands that one evalu-

ates oneself “objectively,” which implies that one ought to understand how one appears to others. Numerous guidebooks on successful leadership prescribe that one become a Meadian actor, evaluating and comparing one’s self-image with the image others have of oneself. As an advice book puts it: “Without the management training course [a communication workshop] Mike’s career might well have remained stagnant, not because he lacks ability but because he *didn’t understand that he was giving other people the wrong impression of himself*” (emphasis added).⁹³ The advice literature on successful management incessantly requires that one examine oneself as if through someone else’s eyes, thus suggesting that one adopt another’s point of view to increase one’s chances at success. This self-knowledge enables one to manipulate and control oneself more skillfully without, however, inviting a cold or cynical approach to others. In fact, self-awareness is contiguous with the injunction to identify with others and to listen to them. As a book for leaders puts it: “This book is designed to help managers and staff members better understand why people do the things they do and feel the way they feel. The goal is to develop the skill of stepping outside the situation to ask, “what is really going on, and why?”⁹⁴ A publication of the Institute for Financial Education similarly states: “A powerful influence on perception is the self-concept. *Self-concept* is a kind of mental mirror that reflects how you view yourself Individuals’ concepts of themselves influence their perceptions of events and other people.”⁹⁵ The same publication further suggests that “an essential first step toward improving your perception skills and your skills as a communicator is to recognize that people have differing perceptions [from yours.]”⁹⁶ Multiperspectivalism is incessantly advocated as a skill with which to negotiate with others because “recognizing” and “empathizing” with another’s needs are essential components of the type of competence that is simultaneously professionally strategic and moral. Toward that end, a technique frequently recommended by psychologists in their interactions with their patients is equally recommended in manager-employee relationships: “In moments of great rapport [between manager and employee], a remarkable pattern of nonverbal communication can develop. Two people will mirror each other’s movements—dropping a hand, shifting their body at exactly the same time.”⁹⁷ Or to take another example,

The most powerful use of pacing and leading [two techniques taught by the book] occurs when you mirror the person you are trying to understand. You simply assume the body posture of the other person, mirror key movements, and consciously try to use their most important main words. In mirroring you seek to become one-in-harmony with the person you are trying to understand. Mirroring may be useful in understanding an employee who has failed or done poorly in an assignment, in negotiation when you find yourself about to lose control, and in any situation where your desire is to learn where the other person is "coming from." . . . Deliberate monitoring enables you to better enter the perspective of the other person. While you are calming down, you can gain perspective on the situation and the other person. Finally, those who mirror each other nonverbally tend to have higher levels of understanding and sympathy.⁹⁸

Mirroring and the capacity to entertain various viewpoints are techniques to forge relationships in which one is simultaneously preoccupied by oneself and aware of another's gaze. Mirroring and psychological multiperspectivalism enable the simultaneous advancement of the self and its interests and the apprehension of other, potentially conflicting points of view and interests. As an Internet site providing communication skills instructs:

Good communication skills require a high level of self-awareness. Understanding your personal style of communicating will go a long way toward helping you to create good and lasting impressions on others. By becoming more aware of how others perceive you, you can adapt more readily to their styles of communicating. This does not mean you have to be a chameleon, changing with every personality you meet. Instead, you can make another person more comfortable with you by selecting and emphasizing certain behaviors that fit within your personality and resonate with another. In doing this, you will prepare yourself to become an active listener.⁹⁹

Mirroring is mentioned in conjunction with listening, which is deemed crucial to preventing conflict and fostering more cooperation. Indeed, what is at stake here is building up social capital or trust, in the sense that the objective is to increase others' trust in oneself but also to make oneself trust others. As one book on anger management explains, "The strategies you have been learning about in the last few chapters will increase your sensitivity toward other people. From this base you can proceed to

develop empathy—the ability to project oneself into the consciousness of another person, to better understand the motivations of others and reduce the intrusiveness of mistrust when it comes to making judgments about their behavior.¹⁰⁰ Or as a book entitled *Making the Message Clear* puts it: “Developing communication style fit and flexibility increases both the amount and accuracy of the information you exchange. This exchange, or reciprocity, is the foundation of your work relationships. If reciprocity is enhanced, rapport, trust, and achievement of work-related goals will increase, permitting you to lead others to mutually beneficial outcomes. Successful communication demands fitting your style to another’s style and becoming flexible in your communication and thinking.”¹⁰¹

The form of listening described above does not imply passive listening (as in Catholic confessionals, for example); rather, it must generate what philosopher Axel Honneth calls “recognition,” or the intersubjective “positive understanding [that people have] of themselves.” Because “self-image . . . is dependent on the possibility of being continually backed up by others,”¹⁰² recognition entails an acknowledgment and reinforcement of another’s claims and positions on both the cognitive and emotional levels. Thus one training program on conflict resolution states that

the technique of active listening . . . has several functions. First, the listener permits the venting of emotion. The speaker feels heard and tension is released. The listener’s body posture and gestures, such as head-nodding, confirm for the speaker the sense of being heard. His feelings are reflected back by the listener (e.g. “It really was important for you that . . .”). She re-states or paraphrases what the speaker has said, again checking with him for accuracy. She then asks clarifying questions for further information. The telling-listening function is extremely important in conflict resolution. This is particularly true where a continuing relationship between the parties is necessary, whether it be divorcing parents or ethnic communities in Bosnia.¹⁰³

This last quote suggests that “communication” is a technique of recognition that can be transposed from the private to the public sphere and from the public sphere to the international arena because it contains the elementary forms of modern selfhood.

The concept and practice of communication, initially presented as a

technique and as an ideal definition of personality and selfhood, are now applied to characterize the ideal corporation by metonymical extension. For example, the giant corporation Hewlett Packard advertises itself in this way: "HP is a firm where one can breathe a spirit of communication, a strong spirit of interrelations, where people communicate, where you go towards others. It is an affective relationship."¹⁰⁴ In fact, communication has come to define the model of corporate selfhood in general: "In a recent survey of recruiters from companies with more than 50,000 employees, communication skills were cited as the single most important decisive factor in choosing managers. The survey, conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's Katz Business School, points out that communication skills, including written and oral presentations, as well as an ability to work with others, are the main factor contributing to job success."¹⁰⁵ Richard Sennett has argued that "the modern work ethic focuses on teamwork. It celebrates sensitivity to others; it requires such 'soft skills' as being a good listener and being cooperative; most of all, teamwork emphasizes team adaptability to circumstances. Teamwork is the work ethic which suits a flexible political economy. For all the psychological heavy breathing which modern management does about office and factory teamwork, it is an ethos of work which remains on the surface of experience. Teamwork is the group practice of demeaning superficiality."¹⁰⁶

But this view itself is superficial. This peculiar mix of self-interest and sympathy, of attention to oneself and manipulation of others, articulates a historically new type of selfhood that I dub *reflexive selfhood*.¹⁰⁷ A reflexive self has internalized strong mechanisms of self-control to maintain its self-interest, not through the blatant display of selfish competitiveness, but through the art of mastering social relations. A reflexive self occupies the space that makes up the modern idea of the "individual" but is a far cry from the Robinson Crusoe prototype because it incorporates the other's point of view by imagining and identifying with it both sympathetically and strategically. In his classical study of the corporation, Robert Jackall suggests that the manager's self is essentially reflexive in that it demands continual self-scrutiny and private monitoring, for managers must advance their interests, plan moves, build coalitions, negotiate, and assert themselves while acknowledging and listening to

others.¹⁰⁸ Reflexivity is woven into the very fabric of work in the contemporary corporation, which demands at once a dexterity with symbols and a fluency in transactions with others.¹⁰⁹ Managers operate in a complex hierarchy of signs and persons; they are managed by others and in turn manage others; they compete with equals but are constrained to build coalitions with them and to decipher the hidden cues of competitors or superiors. This dense hierarchical structure was codified by the therapeutic persuasion as requiring a reflexive self centered on the control of emotions, on the semiotic skills to decipher interactions, and on the capacity to signal (or hide) one's own moves through "communication skills." Psychologists have thus constructed personality as a form of symbolic currency, defined by its ability to *master, manage, and manipulate social bonds themselves*. Projecting a communicative selfhood signals at once self-mastery and the capacity to master others through a complex mix of linguistic clarity and the emotional capacity to blend opposites, such as assertiveness and recognition.

By a peculiar detour of cultural history, psychologists have articulated a language of selfhood that resuscitates Adam Smith's complex view of the self. In his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith posited that the self was split between what he called an "impartial spectator" and a self that could sympathetically identify with the plight of another.¹¹⁰ Two sociologists suggest that "[Smith's] idea that aggressive impulses are tempered by the internalized expectations of others creates the contemporary equation of honor and reason that help[s] pacify economic conduct."¹¹¹ In his *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith conceived of a model of society in which each person's pursuit of his own economic self-interest would be a source of social harmony, for in a society where labor is carefully and minutely divided, individuals would all need each other and would therefore enter a civil relationship with others on the basis of their own self-interest.¹¹² The ethos of communication taps directly into this model of social interaction by suggesting that it is in all people's best interest to control their emotions, to listen to each other, to communicate with each other, and to exercise empathetic feelings. The deployment of rational management of people in the contemporary corporation contributes to the constitution of a complex personality structure that both masters and

expresses emotions, that is both rational and sympathetic, that both masters one's self-image and is able to decipher others' motives. Thus, by an ironic twist of cultural history, the self-interested *Homo economicus* of Adam Smith has been recast by psychologists as a *Homo communicans* who reflexively monitors his words and emotions, controls his self-image, and pays tribute to the other's point of view.

The reasons why communication has become so central in the definition of competent corporate selfhood are many and have to do with the transformations of capitalism. With the changing normative structure entailed in the democratization of social relationships, procedural rules had to be set up to reconcile the increasingly hierarchical structure of corporate organizations with the increasing democratization of social relations. Moreover, the increasing complexity of the economic environment, the ever-growing pace of new technologies, and the consequent rapid obsolescence of skills made criteria for success changing and contradictory and had the effect of overburdening the self with tensions and uncertainties and of making it solely responsible for managing them. Communication has thus become an emotional skill for navigating an environment fraught with uncertainties and conflicting imperatives and collaborating with others. Finally, the flexibility demanded by the therapeutic persuasion has an affinity with the flexibility required in the so-called post-Fordist era. Indeed, in the 1970s and 1980s, capitalism moved toward customized production, decentralization of production, and the creation of a core workforce that had multiple skills,¹¹³ all of which placed much greater burdens on the self in an unstable economic environment.

EMOTIONAL, MORAL, AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Cultural codes exist not only in texts but also in practices. While it is difficult to demonstrate a direct causal link between the cultural codes fashioned by psychologists and the transformation of professional competence, we can look for the ways one gets converted into the other or, to use the words of the economic sociologist Frank Dobbin, for the ways convention becomes cognition. As William Sewell has argued, "System

and practice are complementary concepts: each presupposes the other."¹¹⁴ On the basis of fifteen interviews with managers working in firms of more than three hundred employees and with students in an MBA program often ranked as the top program in the United States, I would like to examine current definitions of professional competence and extrapolate on the role played by psychologists in shaping current views of professional competence.¹¹⁵

The therapeutic code has reformulated the connection between professional, moral, and emotional competence by conflating the three. This code is borne out in the ordinary conceptions that managers have of their work and of themselves. Let me start with Philip, a thirty-five-year-old manager who obtained an engineering degree from a top university in the Midwest. He is an operations manager, a position that puts him in touch with many resources, as he has to solve a variety of problems pertaining to the process of manufacturing. The nature of his work is to reconcile conflicting interests and to respond to the demands of different departments and aspects of the manufacturing process.

INTERVIEWER: In that process of "negotiating in the business setting," as you just said, what kind of emotions—if at all—would you feel comfortable showing?

PHILIP: Typically I would not . . . I don't feel there's much place for expressing emotions in a logical technical discussion, it just doesn't help at all. So typically, no, there are times when people express anger and generally I still wouldn't. If someone is angry with me, I try to avoid any direct confrontation.

INTERVIEWER: How does it make you feel when someone is angry with you?

PHILIP: Generally, in that setting, it doesn't bother me very much, I understand where the anger comes from, it's a sense of frustration, sometimes due to past experiences with other project managers or other things that the company has pushed on them, so . . . Generally I understand where it comes from and I don't take it personally. If someone is really yelling at me then sometimes I would get really upset, and generally rather than yelling back at the person I would suggest that we take a break and come back the next day or a few days later. . . . I have a project right now that I'm working on. . . . I am making some changes to a packaging process, in our world we have two types of processes, there is what we

call the processing part and then the packaging part, if you have food that's in a package, first you have to make it and then you have to put it in a package. I have a major project now, making modifications to a packaging process, and the modifications that I am doing are going to allow us to produce a lot more. However, historically in this area there have been some problems with the process, the making of the product. Those problems are really a separate issue; I'm making modifications to one segment of the process that doesn't have really any effect [on] the other segments of the process. However, the operation people are trying to get me to devote a lot of time and energy and financial resources solving this other problem, and I have had actually several meetings with the operation group, and in this particular area there is one person that tends to get very angry, and he has on several occasions expressed anger that I am not devoting the resources to solving those other problems. He is a very emotional person. It becomes very counterproductive, you can't get a logical exchange of ideas when it starts to get out of hand. . . . On a couple of occasions I had to say, "Let's stop." . . .

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean, "a very emotional person"?

PHILIP: He is very likely to express anger.

INTERVIEWER: Is that what the meaning of *emotional* is?

PHILIP: Generally, yes.

INTERVIEWER: So it's negative?

PHILIP: When I say that a person is emotional in a professional setting, yes, it's negative.

INTERVIEWER: And in a private setting?

PHILIP: (Seeming perplexed and hesitant) You know, that's interesting, I've never thought of that, but no, I would say that in a private setting to be emotional is good, even desirable. . . .

INTERVIEWER: What is your main objection to anger in a professional setting?

PHILIP: It doesn't lend itself well to clear thinking. So when you are yelling at me we're probably not making progress, we're not able to think logically, and it just doesn't help to get the work done.

INTERVIEWER: Most people around you at work manage to keep their anger under control?

PHILIP: Yes. Definitely.

This interview displays many of the essential elements of the therapeutic code as outlined earlier. First, it is interesting that this manager immediately describes the broad and vague expression "expressing emo-

tions in the workplace" as a negative trait. In fact, like *all* the managers or would-be managers interviewed, he views "being emotional" in the context of the workplace as negative. Second, although Philip claims that anger is an illegitimate emotion to express, he spontaneously insists that he is able to "understand" where others' negative emotions "come from." He immediately displays his capacity to empathize with, decipher, and understand others. Finally, Philip opposes rationality and productivity to unrestrained or spontaneous emotionality and views self-control and self-management as the precondition for efficiency and cooperation. Notice how this man views his ability to be emotionally detached from others and his ability to cooperate with them as compatible, the former being in fact the precondition for the latter. He also posits a strong connection between productivity and emotional control because he views emotional control as the expression and precondition for the exercise of rationality.

All these form the basic components of the therapeutic code of corporate selfhood. As Meyer and Rowan suggest, organizations are not simply the product of their own internal structures, rules, and networks; rather, they reflect the myths of their institutional environments.¹¹⁶ One of the most powerful and enduring of such myths is that of rationality. It is an old motif of Western moral and philosophical discourse that one can attain rationality by bracketing or suppressing emotions.¹¹⁷ As already discussed, because the legitimating core of corporations is their claim to "rationality," rational behavior—as expressed in the lack of emotionality and self-control—is a precondition to professional competence.¹¹⁸ In the interview quoted above, rationality is equated with the display of professional competence, which, because it is predicated on the defense of one's self-interest, requires emotional self-control. Yet clearly this matrix, in which rationality, professional competence, and self-control are all interconnected, does not exclude but on the contrary includes cooperation and teamwork.

Another interview, this one with Bill, a financial analyst in a large consulting firm, illustrates the ambivalent meaning of self-control.

INTERVIEWER: From what you just said I am not sure whether you think that "being emotional" is a positive or negative quality.

BILL: Negative.

INTERVIEWER: Negative. Why is it negative to be emotional?

BILL: Well, it might just be the word choice. We've taken the, uh . . . There are many characteristics we give to words. One word if you want to say the characteristic in a positive way and the other word—I would say you would use the word, *passionate* if you meant the good side of the word *emotional*. And, uh, you would say the word *emotional* for just not a particularly good reason to break down crying and yell and scream. So that's—I—I take the word *emotional* to be more the negative side.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

BILL: Um, it's unpleasant. You shouldn't—I shouldn't have to deal with this crap. I shouldn't have to walk—I hate—I can't stand it when a person becomes too emotional. It means you have to walk on eggshells. It is an imposition on those you're interacting with to have a hot temper because when you get very angry and start yelling and screaming, you make it unpleasant for everyone. And it's the case that because you have the tendency to do that, they modify their behavior and walk on eggshells, not to get you angry. Imposing that on the people around you is rude. Having the tendency to get easily angered is an imposition. It's—it's unfair.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Do you express your emotions, in general, in your workplace?

BILL: I tend to do it as little as possible.

INTERVIEWER: As little as possible.

BILL: . . . Sometimes you would worry about showing emotion because it's inappropriate.

INTERVIEWER: So what would you say is the most undesirable thing about showing your emotions at work?

BILL: It's unprofessional. It's, yeah. . . . Why? It's not relevant to work. Uh, I don't know. I mean. . . . They're exerting a tax on the co-workers. It would be equivalent to smelling very bad. It's, it's that all else equal it is less pleasant to work with that person because they're emotional. Because they're emotional, you have to put up with their being emotional. And "they don't have the right to do that to you" is essentially the attitude. That's what they mean by unprofessional.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me if I understand you correctly. Are you saying that showing your emotions is an infringement upon someone else's, let's say, comfort.

BILL: Yes. That's exactly it, which you do not have the right to do. There's a question of infringing upon other people—there are times when you have every right to infringe upon somebody else. I mean if that's the

case that wouldn't be the right word. But it's, again, I'm not into profanity, but "I shouldn't have to put up with this shit" is what you'll hear somebody saying.

Here again emotions are strongly associated with a lack of professionalism. But the meaning of emotional control points to an ambivalent relation between emotional control and power relations. Inasmuch as it points to a containment and restraint of the self for the sake of "harmony," it marks the limits of the manager's power. As this respondent suggests, emotional control is a way of preserving, if not the freedom, at least the comfort of the other person. Emotional control is far more impersonal than emotional expressiveness, and as such it facilitates cooperation because it creates the conditions for procedural relationships, focused on rules of exchange rather than on the content or object itself of the interaction.

Another meaning of emotional control is that of social power, namely one's ability to master the components of a situation, to master others' reaction to situations and therefore to legitimately command them. Here is an example of Scott, a midlevel executive, working for a large investment bank, who graduated with an MBA from the University of California at Berkeley:

SCOTT: . . . I guess I would say of myself when I have that anger I haven't felt that in control. I'm not sure I answered your question.

INTERVIEWER: No, no, you answered it perfectly. You don't like not being in control?

SCOTT: Yes. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you say why?

SCOTT: I think I've learned to like it. I admire myself for being effective, and being effective means being in control and, and. . . . when you know, if I get angry and I get 75 percent of the response I want to get but if by being in control I might have gotten 90 percent of the response that I wanted, then I don't feel like, well, at least I got the emotional release. I don't feel that payoff, of releasing that energy, um, emotional, is not high enough. Whereas, I do for the payoff I feel I get by being effective and being in control, um . . . and I think that just generally the fact that I don't do it very much—it may very well be that if I lived in a culture where I—I would learn how to do it so that even in the midst of getting

angry I knew where all the doors were and how to do it. And so I could kind of be in control and out of control at the same time. But when you don't have that experience it's hard to do.

INTERVIEWER: What comes to mind when I tell you that such and such person is emotional, what do you associate with the word *emotional*?

SCOTT: Some good and some bad. Good ones would be sensitivity and a certain honesty. Bad things would be weakness and unpredictability.

INTERVIEWER: It is weak to be emotional.

SCOTT: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you say why?

SCOTT: Yeah. No I—I—uh . . . because people who . . . I don't think it's because people who are emotional are weak as much as that people who are weak tend to be emotional. You see the difference? It's the expression of our culture where emotionalism is not prevalent. It's only allotted to people who lack control. [A weak person] is not . . . effective at anything because they are not able to organize themselves.

This interviewee summarizes some of following themes previously discussed: emotional control is here viewed as central to one's sense of self and competence. Emotional control is at once a pragmatic tool to reach efficiency and a (Darwinian) classification device to sort out the "strong" from the "weak." The category of "weak" condenses here both social and emotional attributes under the more general metaphor of "self-organization." *Weak* and *strong* are both emotional and social markers, with *weak* connoting psychic and social destitution.

Thus emotional control, inasmuch as it signals the capacity to master oneself, signifies, by metonymic extension, that one can dominate others. Whereas many premodern cultures would have viewed strong emotionality—especially the overt expression of anger—as associated with the exercise of power, Scott suggests, in conformity with the therapeutic discourse, that unchecked emotionality is the sign of a weak psychological and therefore social self. The upshot of all this is a change in how power is experienced and exercised. If the really self-confident person is one who is never humiliated, or, conversely, if the hurt or humiliated person is one who lacks self-confidence and therefore real power, this implies that the really powerful person must, almost by definition, not be hurt. Conversely, repeated experiences of hurt are likely to be translated into a

psychological deficiency. To get angry, jealous, or explicitly hurt is, as psychological guides to leadership state over and over again, to lack self-confidence, and therefore to lack real social power. Thus psychologists have—I believe successfully—drastically redefined power in emotional terms, as the capacity to hold in control one’s most “limbic” emotions.

The view that emotional control signals social superiority is shared by Gertrud, a thirty-seven-year-old woman who teaches mediation and negotiation in a top American business school and who has served as a senior mediation consultant in several important cases:

GERTRUD: [Emotional people] are silly, they’re a little silly. They’re a little . . . probably they weren’t taken care of. *Weak* is a good word for . . . I mean they’re not considered evil or . . . Yeah, they’re just sort of silly, as if they’re not taking care of everything. You know, they’re not . . . they don’t have everything under control, somehow. *Weak*. I’d say they are weak people.

INTERVIEWER: So not showing your emotions displays the ability to be in control, and this ability to be in control probably points to some other desirable, superior qualities, as being strong. Do I understand you correctly?

GERTRUD: Yes. Yes . . . [later in the interview] . . . [Emotions] are best not expressed, for my father; my mother was much more expressive than him. . . . You lose control when you lose your emotions, and that’s the message that I give to my students, which is how to be more appropriate in the business. That’s not to lose control.

The convergence between this and Scott’s answer is striking in that both suggest that emotional control signals strength, which in turn signals one’s professional and hence social superiority. As Donna Stanton put it: “To dominate the self is to dominate the other.”¹¹⁹

These answers thus suggest that the therapeutic definition of power in terms of emotional self-management is not limited to texts but has thoroughly permeated ordinary conceptions of worth, status, and power inside economic organizations. Emotional control as constructed by psychologists plays an ambivalent role in social relationships: to the extent that it means self-mastery and distance from others, it signals the ability to be out of others’ reach. However, as the ability to bracket the self’s

immediate involvement for the sake of long-term pragmatic goals, emotional control also signals the ability to build networks of cooperation and to privilege rationality.

CONCLUSION

The above discussion points to an important paradox. Bourdieu has suggested that one of the concepts most contrary to *interest* is not so much disinterestedness as *indifference*. Bourdieu's characterization of indifference corresponds quite closely to the kind of emotional life advocated by the therapeutic ideal of self-control. "To be indifferent is to be unmoved by the game: like Buridan's donkey. . . . Indifference is an ethical state of nonpreference as well as a state of knowledge in which I am not capable of differentiating the stakes proposed. . . . *Illusio* is the very opposite of ataraxy: it is to be invested, taken in and by the game."¹²⁰ The therapeutic ethic of self-control presents itself as a vast cultural attempt to instill in actors a way of playing the game without seeming to be moved by it. Its aim is to instill an indifferent attitude, an attitude of not being taken in by the game, with the goal of securing one's best interests. While the therapeutic person dwells excessively on his or her emotions, he or she is simultaneously required not to be moved by them.

Thus the therapeutic ethos offers the following sociological puzzle: it fosters a form of sociability based on communication; it encourages a strong individualism based on enlightened self-interest, but always with the aim of maintaining the self within a network of social relations. The therapeutic ethos fosters a procedural approach to one's emotional life as opposed to a thick or substantive one. Shame, anger, guilt, offended honor, admiration are all emotions defined by moral content and by a substantive view of relationships, and these emotions have been progressively made into signs of emotional immaturity or dysfunction.

What is commanded instead is the capacity to control emotions and to master the rules of *communicating* with a wide variety of others: to be "emotional," as this therapeutic adjective suggests, is to disturb the expected smoothness of social interactions. In sociological terms, however, being "emotional" simply means foregrounding one's relationship

with another: anger, contempt, admiration, and affection are the names we give to feelings about social relationships when these relations are threatened or at stake. This means that the precondition for “communication” or “cooperation” is, paradoxically, the *suspension of one’s emotional entanglements in a social relationship*. To the extent that emotions point to the entanglement of the self in a social relation, they also point to one’s dependence on others. Emotional control thus points to a model of sociability in which one must display the ability to remove oneself from the reach of others in order to better cooperate with them. The emotional control of the type propounded by the therapeutic persuasion is at once the mark of a *disengaged self* (busy with self-mastery and control) and of a *sociable self*—bracketing emotions for the sake of entering into relations with others.

FOUR The Tyranny of Intimacy

He had long since discovered that May's only use of the liberty she supposed herself to possess would be to lay it on the altar of her wifely adoration. . . . With a conception of marriage so uncomplicated and incurious as hers such a crisis could be brought about only by something visibly outrageous in his own conduct; and the fineness of her feeling for him made that unthinkable. Whatever happened, he knew, she would always be loyal, gallant and un-resentful; and that pledged him to the practice of the same virtues.

—Edith Wharton

The therapeutic language is the privileged language for talking about the family: not only has it emerged from the social transformations of the family, but it has been from its inception a family narrative, that is, a narrative of self and identity that anchors the self in childhood and in one's primary family relationships. This narrative is to modern people what the family genealogy might have been to our ancestors—a way of mapping the self both diachronically and synchronically in kinship relations—but with one crucial difference: the therapeutic persuasion not only defines and explains the self in terms of its family history but also claims to free it from its repressive yoke.

Interestingly enough, the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of another narrative that, like the therapeutic narrative, claimed to simultaneously understand the self within the family and to liberate it from its

oppressive structure: second-wave feminism. Indeed, in both therapeutic and feminist discourses, the family provides the root metaphor for understanding the pathologies of the self and is also the primary site for the self-transformations called for by these two persuasions. However, where the therapeutic persuasion understood the predicament of the self in individualistic terms, the feminist persuasion provided a political narrative that explained women's pathologies as the result of an asymmetrical distribution of power inside (and, of course, outside) the family.

In this vein, many have suggested that psychological discourse is an ideology substituting for or hiding the "real" political condition of women and the family. It has even become somewhat of a cliché of feminist critiques to view the therapeutic mode of self-understanding as a form of false consciousness that translates political collective problems into psychological individual predicaments, thus inhibiting the possibility of genuine structural change. As I show in this chapter, the analysis of cultural material in reference to its ability to deliver (or not deliver) a pre-defined political message obfuscates the many complicated ways in which politics gets diluted in culture and, conversely, the ways in which cultural schemas and models inform political ideas and action. But the feminist critique of therapy has missed an even more important fact: the vocation of psychology was to criticize, with various degrees of explicitness, the family, and it was this critical vocation that in practice met and merged with feminism.

Indeed, the therapeutic and feminist outlooks offer an outstanding example of the alliance of two powerful cultural formations seemingly competing with each other in their attempt to address and criticize the same objects, namely the relationship of the self to the family, the role of sexuality, the relationship between the sexes, and the meaning of parenthood and motherhood. Despite their ideological "rivalry," the models of emotional transactions offered by therapeutic culture interlocked with the categories of speech and thought of the feminist "cultural revolution" and thus transformed the emotional culture of the family by providing a new lexicon for the perceived rights and duties of men and women.

This chapter addresses two sets of broad theoretical questions. The first has to do with the ways in which two seemingly and overtly com-

peting discourses (of feminism and of therapy) interact with and shape one another. This question is particularly relevant because at the very same time that theoretical disputes between feminism and psychology were raging, in practice both discourses were actually borrowing from one another cultural categories of thought and speech, thus providing a powerful illustration of the ways culture often (although by no means always) works beneath and beyond the overt (political) positions of actors. But just how it does that remains to be elucidated.

The second question is more complex and has to do with the plurality of social spheres much discussed by Max Weber and later developed in Pierre Bourdieu's theory of fields.¹ Basically, the theory postulates that in modernity social spheres (e.g., the market, the family, or religion) become increasingly differentiated and that each sphere is autonomous in terms of its rules of conduct and meanings. A comparison of the rules of emotional conduct inside the workplace and the family suggests far more commonalities than the postulate of the differentiation of social spheres would suggest. As I show in this chapter, the languages of economic and domestic transactions have increasingly aligned themselves along criss-crossing and even merging tracks, thus suggesting that different spheres of social life may contain, if not similar, at least overlapping cultural models and normative repertoires.

INTIMACY: AN INCREASINGLY COLD HAVEN

Despite their many contrasts, the modern family entertains more affinities with its predecessor, the Victorian family, than meets the eye. Like its predecessor, the modern middle-class family restricted birth, withdrew from the public realm of sociability, viewed the vocation of the family in primarily emotional terms, and increasingly focused on the couple.² Yet one major difference between nineteenth- and twentieth-century families remains: Victorian marriage was explicitly devoted to the transmission of moral values and the maintenance of the social order, and in that respect the domestic sphere was closely and explicitly intertwined with the accomplishment of moral goals and values. These moral prescriptions were in turn enacted through gendered identities: to fulfill the definitions

of “masculinity” or “femininity” meant to display the moral competence attached to these roles inside the family (e.g., modesty, ability to sacrifice and commit oneself, loyalty and trustworthiness).³ If Victorian marriages were happy, they were happy not because a man and a woman had realized their “inner authentic selves” in daily shared intimacy but rather because men and women, who had different roles, gender identities, and spheres of action, imbued their private thoughts and feelings with the values and actions approved by their community.⁴ As long as men and women were able to subscribe to these general guidelines of morality and character, happiness would be in their reach, regardless of the peculiarities and particularities of their psychological makeup.⁵ As the social historian Stephanie Coontz put it: “There was general agreement on what constituted the proper support a man owed his wife and what sort of behavior he could expect in return. Men were judged by their work ethic, women by the quality of their domesticity. Love was said to be increasingly important but it was still considered to be something that could be objectively ascertained and measured.”⁶ It is because these models started falling apart that the massive intervention of psychologists inside the family became not only possible but necessary.

The Intervention of Psychologists in Marriage

What many have dubbed the “crisis” of the modern family has been the object of much speculation.⁷ But it is more useful to think of this crisis as consisting in a redefinition of the vocation of the family. This redefinition entailed the separation of reproduction and sexuality, accentuated by the invention of the contraceptive pill and the reduction of the number of children.⁸ Moreover, the extension of the period during which couples spent time together increasingly transformed the family from an institution designed to raise children and to ensure the economic survival of men and women to an institution designed to satisfy the emotional needs of its members.⁹ Differently put, the family became individualized: its legitimacy derived not from its contribution to the social order but from its contribution to the personal welfare of individuals. In this process, the norms presumed to govern family life became less clear, uncertain, and more open to argument and negotiation. Because the family occupied a

central place in channeling sexuality, reproduction, economic survival, and child rearing, the increasing normative uncertainty pertaining to the family generated social anxieties. As Clifford Geertz put it, it is "a persistent, constantly re-experienced difficulty in grasping certain aspects of nature, self, and society, in bringing certain elusive phenomena within the sphere of culturally formulatable fact, which renders man chronically uneasy and toward which a more equable flow of diagnostic symbols is consequently directed."¹⁰ In the twentieth century, marriage and intimacy became such areas of social life, since they simultaneously involved the deepest aspects of self and identity and challenged those core aspects by repeatedly straining the expectations, values, and models regulating that sphere. In this context, it becomes obvious why a new class of experts, claiming both to explain and to heal the various forms of distress generated in and by family relationships, became central to American culture.

Psychologists emerged in a context where men and women were experiencing new strains due to rising expectations regarding intimacy.¹¹ With the demise of networks of social support brought about by an expanding market, middle-class women came to transpose the intense emotional bonds that had characterized women's culture into their married life. What had hitherto found an outlet in middle-class female culture—intense emotional bonds, mutual care, and emotional sharing—was now reallocated to men as women started to demand that men be emotionally expressive and caring.¹² In the twentieth century, women were more likely than in the past to hold men accountable for failing to provide not only financial but also emotional support, sympathetic listening and affection. This new expectation regarding men was accentuated by the nascent consumer culture's redefinition of a good marriage as the sharing of common tastes, whether material, attitudinal, or sexual. Perhaps ironically, nothing complicated marriage as much as the idea and ideal of emotional and sexual compatibility.

Before Freud appeared on the American cultural scene, the norm of sexual pleasure, practices of birth control, and a separation between sexual pleasure and reproduction had pervaded the relations between the sexes, though within the strict limits of marriage.¹³ These silent transfor-

mations were accompanied by a search for new standards of sexual behavior, especially with regard to women's sexuality. By increasing the visibility of sexuality in the realm of public discourse and by placing sexuality squarely at the center of a healthy psyche, psychologists created a demand for guidance that was all the more necessary as it concerned a realm of behavior considered taboo.

Psychology and the Politics of Womanhood

Initially, Freud was enthusiastically endorsed by American women reformers who viewed sexuality as the battleground for the politics of emancipation. What feminists "found so appealing in Freud's theories([was] the recognition of passion in women."¹⁴ This in turn helped launch or reinforce campaigns for birth control, smaller families, and the right to sexual pleasure for its own sake. This legitimation of women's sexuality in turn generated a more distanced and even critical attitude toward traditional marriage and the family, now increasingly viewed as exacting unjustified sacrifices on the part of women. Despite misogynist elements in Freud's thought, psychoanalysis initially provided women with the tools to wage a revolution within women's own sphere of action, namely intimate relationships and sexuality.¹⁵ However, because psychologists quickly learned to use the cultural market to expand the scope of their influence and to address a wide audience of consumer-patients, their position significantly shifted. In the process of popularizing their science, psychologists radically altered the mix of conservatism and radicalism that had characterized incipient psychoanalysis.

The middle-class and rather conservative *Ladies' Home Journal* provides a good illustration of the ways in which popular psychology initially embraced patriarchy. The magazine featured a regular column on marriage, dating, and marital problems. Clifford Adams, a regular contributor to the *Ladies' Home Journal* who was an associate professor of psychology at Pennsylvania State College and the director of the Marriage Counseling Service at the same institution, could write in 1950 that "today, as a hundred years ago, a good wife must be a competent homemaker, even though many skills once required are now outmoded. . . . Just as it remains basically the husband's responsibility to earn the living, it remains basically the wife's responsibility to run the home."¹⁶

Similarly, another famous column authored by Dr. Popenoe, who in 1930 had opened and directed the American Institute of Family Relations, recounted numerous stories of estranged wives and husbands. The column took for granted that the proper role of a wife was to be an adequate homemaker. The column was based on real-life cases and was compiled by Dorothy Cameron Disney. In conformity with the multiperspectivalism advocated by the psychological ethos, the case was presented as a superimposition of various points of view, those of the husband, the wife, and the psychologist. Their message put the techniques and knowledge of psychology in the service of patriarchal definitions of marriage as they legitimized the power relations between men and women inside the family by systematically holding women responsible for men's violence and neglect and by instructing women to understand the man's point of view and more generally making them accountable for the welfare of marriage. For example, in 1960 a woman who complained that her husband had hit her more than once, and who had consequently fled to her mother, underwent several counseling sessions, at the end of which, "in reevaluating her relationship with Lance, she was able to perceive her mistakes. She saw her actions and attitudes had increased his feelings of insecurity, alienated him, encouraged him to sulk and behave like a juvenile bully. She saw she had deprived Lance of the pride of fatherhood and had turned Susie [their baby child] into his rival."¹⁷ Clearly, the new psychological jargon and outlook were mobilized to hold women responsible for the successes or failures of marriage and even for their husbands' violence. Thus, initially at least, much of popular psychology echoed and reinforced the patriarchal structure of power inside the family, even while it claimed to reform it. As one author put it, during that period, "psychoanalytic misogyny reigned proudly"¹⁸ as psychological vocabulary was widely used to justify gender inequality and even to disparage women.

The popular culture of the 1930s and 1940s seemed to be particularly receptive to misogynist elements at work in psychoanalysis.¹⁹ Psychoanalysts advised women to "return home and to occupy their important but subordinate position in the patriarchal family."²⁰ Not only did popular psychology use the jargon of psychology to promote misogynist and patriarchal views, it also dismissed the views of feminism. For example, in the 1947 influential book *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, Ferdinand

Lundberg and Marynia Farnham (a journalist and a psychiatrist, respectively) claimed that feminism “was a “deep illness” infecting the “highly disturbed psychobiological organism: the mother.”²¹

In short, during and some time after the Cold War, popular versions of psychoanalysis were particularly averse to feminism and used the analytical jargon of psychology to reinforce traditional views of women. Given the prominence of psychology in popular culture, it is unsurprising that the auspicious start of the 1920s, during which bohemians and feminist activists had welcomed the sexual openness promised by psychoanalysis, was followed by an increasing suspicion and even rejection of psychoanalysis among feminists.

In 1946 the National Mental Health Act was passed.²² While the work of psychologists until then had been limited to the army, the corporation, and the care of mental disease, with the 1946 act psychologists could enlarge the scope of their action to include ordinary citizens. In the same way that Elton Mayo had wanted to promote happiness in the corporation, the new self-appointed healers of the psyche claimed to promote greater harmony inside the family. Ordinary middle-class people struggling with the ordinary problem of having a good life were increasingly drawn inside the purview of psychologists’ expertise. And indeed, as Ellen Herman has documented, community mental health succeeded in providing new services, psychotherapeutic in emphasis, to a new clientele that was larger, better educated, and more middle class.²³ Federal legislation in turn provided the infrastructure necessary to support a community-oriented psychology and psychiatry during the 1950s and 1960s, with the result that psychology expanded the scope of its influence to “normal” people, that is, members of the middle and upper middle classes living in large metropolitan areas.²⁴ In the 1960s, the reorientation of psychologists’ professional interests and clientele to “normal people” not only expanded the market of therapeutic services but also marked a dramatic shift in the social identity of the groups that consumed its services. By the 1960s, psychology had become fully institutionalized and had become an intrinsic aspect of American popular culture.

The full institutionalization of psychology in American culture had a mirror image in the equally full institutionalization of feminism in the

1970s. Indeed, by the mid-1970s a wide network of feminist organizations was in place, including "women's clinics, credit unions, rape crisis centers, bookstores, newspapers, book publishers, and athletic leagues."²⁵ Feminism had become an institutionalized practice, whose strength only grew with the establishment of departments of women's studies in universities, which in turn commanded a large array of other institutional practices inside and outside the university.²⁶

With their institutionalization, feminism and psychology became increasingly hostile to one another. In the 1960s, the critique of psychoanalysis was being voiced from the rank and file of lay women committed to the cause of feminism who now questioned the very premises and *raison d'être* of the discipline. Consensus grew among feminists to the effect that psychology reinforced traditional gender roles and inequality.²⁷ Nowhere was this voice more strident than in Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*.²⁸ Echoing numerous other feminist critiques that had accused the psychotherapeutic establishment of denying women their freedom, Friedan attacked "Freudianism" for having essentialized femininity.²⁹ The 1960s generation of second-wave feminists made Freud into their archenemy, mostly because of what many perceived to be Freud's biological determinism, in turn viewed as a justification for sexual differences and inequality. Feminists also accused psychoanalysis of reinforcing and even worsening women's dependence upon men. Taking as evidence the role of psychologists in American popular culture, many feminists indicted psychology for reconciling women to the patriarchal definition of the family and for using the authority of science to justify the existence of a feminine essence. Kate Millett famously called Freud "the strongest individual counterrevolutionary force in the ideology of sexual politics."³⁰ Other feminist critiques argued that psychotherapy was used as a way to classify women as mad when they either did not conform to their roles or expressed, through atypical behavior, what was essentially social distress.³¹ "As women have been controlled through witch-hunting, suttee, Chinese foot binding or sexual slavery, they are now controlled through labels of madness and the subsequent therapy, therapy which some feminists see as 'mind rape.'"³² For feminists, these manifestations of "madness" or "pathology" were either a social con-

struction aimed at controlling women's behavior within a patriarchal structure or a valid response to the real forms of distress produced by oppression.

Yet despite their often overt hostility and concomitant to it, the (cultural) alliance of psychology and feminism proved to be one of the strongest of the twentieth century. How we are to explain this?

Discursive Alliances

Ellen Herman has argued that despite their differences, the therapeutic and the feminist persuasions could meet through the work of diligent feminists who showed that diagnoses such as "hysteria" and "depression" had been categories forged by men to delegitimize, exclude, and render powerless women who were in fact protesting their social condition.³³ Herman attributes this development to the fact that psychotherapists were alternatively "capable of soothing and exacerbating social and political ruptures."³⁴ As she puts it, psychology was able to "construct the female" and that it simultaneously helped construct the "feminist."³⁵ Yet it remains unclear how the same discourse could do both.

One possible view would be to claim that texts are unstable and can be appropriated by actors according to their needs and strategies. Such a view presumes that meaning has no intrinsic importance. While most cultural sociologists agree with William Sewell that "what are taken as the certainties or truths of texts or discourses are in fact disputable and unstable,"³⁶ there is still a limit to the plasticity of texts. The social uses of texts must somehow resonate with some of their meanings, and such resonance occurs not despite but *because* of the fact that these meanings are often ambivalent or contradictory.³⁷ Indeed, despite the patriarchal and misogynist views of psychologists, I would like to argue now that from the start the categories of psychological discourse entertained affinities with feminist thought. This is because, in distilling their advice, psychologists posed as scientists, and the scientific gaze in turn tended to corrode the traditional structure of marriage by calling into question its norms. Further, using the intrinsically individualist categories of psychology, psychologists questioned the normative traditional marriage, and in doing so drew on values and concepts derived from not the hard core of

feminist politics but from an inchoate feminist sensibility that had pervaded the cultural climate of the twentieth century (though with different degrees of intensity throughout the century). Psychology and feminism, both popularized, would ultimately merge to form a single powerful cultural and cognitive matrix.

BEYOND THEIR WILL? PSYCHOLOGISTS AND MARRIAGE

By the late 1930s clinics specializing in the treatment of marital discord had started to appear, and by the early 1950s the field of marital counseling was well established, as it had a national professional organization (the American Association of Marriage Counselors) and a standardized curriculum to train counselors. The association issued guidelines to the effect that the accredited training to be provided to counselors included "psychology of personality development and interpersonal relations; elements of psychiatry; human biology . . . ; sociology of marriage and the family; and counseling techniques."³⁸ As this quote suggests, to bestow legitimacy on the profession a new attitude toward marriage was required, mostly provided by the ideology of science as an impersonal and truth-seeking endeavor. Thus what was required from counselors was a "scientific attitude . . . especially in the field of human sex behavior and the ability to discuss sexual problems objectively."³⁹ The new science suggested that a relationship could be examined from a neutral point of view. This in turn implied that it could be criticized as well. If marital unhappiness could be remedied scientifically, then the frantic search for a better way of living meant that men and especially women would anxiously scrutinize their relationships. Consequently, from the start the psychological profession assumed that a good marriage did not simply consist in the capacity to stick to norms of proper behavior; rather, it had to satisfy (unavoidably different) individuals. To do so, it needed to rethink the rules of marital relationships. With the aim of making themselves indispensable, psychologists engaged in what Michel Callon calls "problematization," or posing problems in such a way that scientists become necessary to solve them. Scientists define problems and identities "in such a way as to establish themselves as an obligatory passage point

in the network of relationships" they are building.⁴⁰ By claiming that the traditional rules of traditional marriage were now useless, that marriages were inherently complicated, and that good marriages ought to satisfy the emotional needs of women and men, psychologists could now redefine marriage in terms that suited their expertise. In other words, psychologists used a wide variety of strategies to construct and objectify marriage as an uncertain enterprise.

As in the case of the corporation, psychologists, in trying to make their contribution to the problems of marriage distinctive, advanced the notion that a certain type of personality was more conducive to a good marriage than other personality types. Female attributes that would have been viewed as virtuous in the nineteenth century were now perceived as preventing true intimacy. Lynn, a woman who sought the counsel of Dr. Popenoe (the same counselor who had explained and exonerated wife beating), is described in one of his columns as the ideal wife who raised four children, always did her best to encourage her husband's career, and responded to his bad moods or failures with utter cheerfulness. There was, however, a major problem with this personality: she was inhibited (a word that psychologists were fond of using and that quickly found its way into popular culture). As she herself acknowledged: "I don't talk freely and easily to strangers, I've been shy and self-conscious as long as I can remember."⁴¹ The counselor concurred: "On the surface he and Lynn appeared to possess almost every ingredient for a good marriage—healthy children, a beautiful home, stable finances, satisfying work. Yet, they had not brought to their relationship qualities which people with less academic training often bring to marriage—intimacy and true companionship. As husband and wife, they shared no strong common goals: they had no objectives which called upon them to join forces."⁴² Clifford Adams, mentioned earlier for his conservative views, concurred with Popenoe. Despite his conservative views of marriage and of women's role in it, in a quiz in March 1950 he asked, "Are you too inhibited?" by which he meant that being "very modest and dignified" or that having "correct or nearly perfect manners" could prevent true intimacy.⁴³ What had previously been viewed as a praiseworthy combination of devotion, grooming, and self-control was now viewed as an inability to develop

one's own opinions and an outgoing personality—an inability that in turn, psychologists claimed, was an obstacle to reaching true intimacy. Indeed, because the vocation of psychology was to define which personality was “healthy” and which was not, and because discussions of health undercut discussions of moral norms, the success of marriage now depended on personal rather than on moral attributes. Even more specifically, these prescribed attributes took women quite far from the roles and virtues that had been assigned to them during the Victorian era. Again, following Michel Callon's terminology, we may call this aspect of scientific work “*intersement*,” or the building of “*devices which can be placed between them [the actors examined by scientists] and all other entities who want to define their identities otherwise. A interests B by cutting or weakening all the links between B and the invisible (or at times quite visible) group of other entities C, D, E, etc. who may want to link themselves to B.*”⁴⁴ To stabilize the new identities of women (married or aspiring to be married), psychologists disentangled themselves from the traditional normative order that had presided over marriage.

Once marriage was no longer defined by the moral discourse on virtue, its definition became more open and therefore more uncertain. What made a marriage good was the ability of men and women to understand one another and to take mutual pleasure in each other's presence. Psychologists thus suggested that it was up to individuals to make their marriage good and that they bore responsibility for its success or failure. This definition entailed greater uncertainty about rules that ought to govern the conduct of men and women in marriage. In making the success or failure of marriage depend on an adequate emotional makeup, psychologists not only questioned traditional gender roles but also called on people to focus on themselves as individuals and to refine the art of emotional individuality. By calling on women to become full-fledged individuals, the psychologist-as-scientist could engage in the third important aspect of the scientific-therapeutic appropriation of marriage, namely “*enrolment*,” which “*designates the device by which a set of interrelated roles is defined and attributed to actors who accept them.*”⁴⁵ Women would be enrolled by psychology when they were summoned to become full individuals.

Because the therapeutic discourse was by definition centered on individuals, it was also individualistic, commanding men and women to put themselves at the center of their life plan, with the result that, without explicitly intending it, they undermined the traditional commitment to the family based on self-sacrifice. For example, the same aforementioned Clifford Adams, who held a conservative and patriarchal view of marriage and gender, could write in the same breath, in a book published in 1946 (addressing women), that “three things, not one, ought to be considered [when choosing a mate]: 1. What you want. 2. What you need. 3. What you can get.”⁴⁶ In another article giving three pieces of advice on how to restore marriage, Dr. Joyce Brothers gave the following advice:

Put yourself first—at least some of the time. Society has brainwashed women into believing that their husband’s and children’s needs should always be given priority over their own. Society has never impressed on women as it has on men the human necessity of putting yourself first.

I am not advocating selfishness. I am talking about the basics of life. You have to decide how many children you want, what kind of friends you want, what kind of relationships you want with your family.⁴⁷

What was after all an uncompromisingly staunch form of individualism was presented as the “basics of life,” precisely because such individualism was the fundamental working assumption of the psychologist’s body of expertise. Long before feminism had made deep forays into the general culture, this rather conservative psychologist encouraged women to develop their individuality and in doing so drove a wedge between women’s sense of self and their domestic role. As one of the myriad articles on improving marriage suggested succinctly, the key to a good marriage is to “know what you want, say what you want and get what you want.”⁴⁸ This emphasis on wants and needs—which was inherent in the therapeutic discourse—explains why its language proved to be more compatible with the aims of feminism than many of its detractors have claimed. Psychology, quite simply, encouraged actors to examine critically their social roles.

At the same time that it delegitimized the traditional model of the devoted housewife, the therapeutic discourse slowly legitimated what

had previously been banned from marriage, namely conflicts between marital partners. The traditional conception of marriage held that discord was the result of immaturity or selfishness, usually on the part of women, and was to be banned from marital domesticity.⁴⁹ A good marriage was a serene marriage.⁵⁰ In contrast, the new therapeutic conception marked a significant departure from such a view: because psychologists dealt chiefly with human conflict, psychologists now, if they did not justify the presence of conflict, at least made it seem natural by claiming it to be an inevitable component of married life. "Differences between husband and wife are an inevitable part of marriage, just as differences between any two individuals are an inevitable part of life."⁵¹ Such a naturalization of conflict in human interaction can be easily explained by the fact that to assert their expertise psychologists presented conflict as inevitable yet surmountable and suggested that, appropriately handled, marital conflicts could be contained or even resolved. For example, "It isn't fights between husbands and wives that break up marriages; it's not knowing how to fight, or being afraid to, or having nothing to fight about."⁵² While in the past marital harmony was made to depend on moral virtue and good character, increasingly a good marriage was made to depend on adequate technical skills to manage conflicts. Marriage was to be examined "objectively," and a relationship was to be examined dispassionately, by analyzing its components. An offshoot of this view was that conflict was not the result of faulty moral behavior but rather the result of mistaken or inappropriate interactions amenable to technical expertise. For example, a *Redbook* article quotes a Dr. Popenoe as saying, "The way I see couples get trapped in their positions is through blame. . . . If someone is blaming, you have to defend. So no matter what else you do, you must first reduce or eliminate the blame. . . . Once you see that the problem is interactional, *you have to take responsibility for contributing to it*. It doesn't matter who started it" (emphasis added).⁵³ This new etiological framework helped disentangle moral judgment from marital conflicts, depersonalize problems, and make men bear a greater share in the responsibility for marital dysfunction. The proposition that the problems that plague couples were the result of an interaction, rather than the result of one person's "bad" character, simultaneously reallocated respon-

sibility and defused moral judgment. In claiming that both men and women shared the responsibility for bad marriages, psychologists could increase the scope of their clientele and locate the cause of the problem in the intangible, yet objective, notion of "interaction."

What was new in Popenoe's or Adams's views (two psychologists chosen here precisely because of their conservative views) was the attempt to understand men's and women's reactions to each other as the result of their early childhood experiences. Using the vocabulary of psychology, which attributed dysfunctions and maladjustment to childhood faulty experiences, these psychologists, as well as many others, conceived of family disharmony as a result of "infantile personality" or "immaturity," characteristics of childish women unable to understand and cater to their husbands' needs and of immature men who needed to grow up and accept their new duties and responsibilities. This may not have had a direct and immediate impact on men's self-perceptions, but it did transform the ways women conceived of their relationship to men and marriage. As had been the case inside the corporation, the very fact that marriage was now said to be amenable to rules and techniques of management helped undermine the moral and normative certainties that had formed the bulwark of traditional marriage. By disentangling morality from social practices, psychology *de facto* opened such practices to evaluation, questioning, and criticism. This in turn helped open marital practices to a new process of scrutiny of what constituted the proper personality for a good marriage.

To be particularly effective, then, a new discourse need not directly change the content of one's beliefs; it must first create uncertainty about one's established beliefs and ways of doing things and instill a *critical attitude*. That is precisely what psychologists did very skillfully with regard to marriage. Thus in this context feminism and psychology could meet and merge in a common cultural matrix.

WHAT FEMINISM AND PSYCHOLOGY HAVE IN COMMON

From the start, and more decisively from the 1960s on, feminists drew on therapeutic discourse to make sense of women's predicaments and to

devise strategies to overcome them. Second-wave feminism drew heavily on some of the basic cultural schemes of psychology to help devise strategies for women's struggles, while simultaneously disavowing psychoanalysis and psychology. But feminism and psychology proved to be ultimate cultural allies because they shared common schemas or basic cognitive categories ultimately derived from the social experience of women. Both feminist and psychological discourses were chiefly preoccupied with the "woman question" and, on the whole, faced and raised similar questions concerning the viability of the family and of women's role in it. Moreover, because psychology and psychologists used popular culture as a venue to expand their influence and because so many of the early mass-circulation magazines were geared to women, psychology became a *de facto* female cultural persuasion. Perhaps because the professions of psychologists and their clientele were becoming feminized, the critiques that feminists launched against behaviorism, against the Freudian essentialization of men and women, and against the gender blindness of the analytical relationship could find a sympathetic ear among psychologists.⁵⁴ Inasmuch as schemas can be transferable and transposable from one domain of experience to another, or from one institutional sphere to another, feminism and psychology could borrow from one another.⁵⁵ Categories of thought and speech freely circulated from one persuasion to the other.

For example, Ellen Herman observed that the practice of "consciousness raising"—which was central to the feminist movement—borrowed generously from the therapeutic worldview.⁵⁶ Inasmuch as consciousness-raising groups demanded the public revelation of one's darkest (familial) secrets and put the family under a magnifying glass, the project of women's liberation was highly compatible with the language and lexicon of therapy. Most notably, feminism and therapy shared the idea that self-examination could be freeing, that the private sphere could and should be the object of an objective evaluation and transformation, and that emotions belonging to the private sphere needed to be made into public performances. Further, if feminists located the source of women's struggles inside the family, this was because psychoanalysis and psychology had already made the family central to the process of identity formation or

deformation. Before feminists had made the family into a category good to think with and to think about, psychoanalysis had already made it into such a category by claiming that family dynamics were inscribed into the psyche, that they centrally defined who we were, and that they were responsible for our general well-being. In short, feminism could make the family into an object of emotional and political emancipation because psychoanalysis had already made the family into an object of knowledge and into the prime site of self-emancipation.

Another common schema of psychology and feminism was that both required and instilled intense forms of reflexivity. Analyzing the ways in which women have been depicted in Western art, historian John Berger suggests that “a woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself. Whilst she is walking across a room or whilst she is weeping at the death of her father, she can scarcely avoid envisaging herself walking or weeping. . . . And so she comes to consider the *surveyor* and the *surveyed* within her as the two constituent, yet always distinct, elements of her identity as a woman.”⁵⁷ The therapeutic discourse grafted itself onto this particular form of female subjectivity, a subjectivity in which a woman can never become fully a subject because she is to herself an object and therefore takes herself and her inner life as objects of study. The feminist discourse similarly invited women to contemplate the basis of their consciousness and to transform it. In that way, it solicited the very kind of reflexivity that had been an attribute of women’s consciousness.

Still another common feature of therapeutic and feminist discourses was their focus on women’s contradictory position, throughout the twentieth century, at the juncture of two powerful sets of values: one of care and nurturance and the other of autonomy and self-reliance. “Women are viewed as having obligations to and responsibility for others that often override, or at least supplement, those to themselves. Female identity is situated in the ‘in between.’ The ideal for women is different from that for people in general, and both cannot be achieved at the same time by any one woman. Each woman must fail even as she succeeds.”⁵⁸ Psychological discourse catered to such fundamentally conflicting characteristics of the social existence of women, simultaneously promoting care and inde-

pendence. Here also, the parallels with feminism are striking, for independence and nurturance were the two central themes of feminism and constituted the poles of the tension with which it had to struggle in order to conceive of the new woman. Even when it endorsed traditional marriage and gender roles, psychology eroded the cultural edifice on which marriage had been built. Both feminism and therapy viewed the family as an institution from which one ought to free oneself, yet also as an institution to be reconstructed according to the individual's wishes and desires.

Another important aspect of the hidden affinity and compatibility between the two discourses is to be found in the importance each cultural persuasion gave to sex and sexuality. When psychologists emerged after the Second World War as the chief purveyors of advice to distressed families, it was against the background of an already firmly established ideal of sexual pleasure. As has been noted on numerous occasions, the cultural impact of psychologists or sexologists had been to undermine the ethic of abstinence, self-control, and moral purity that had hitherto prevailed and to offer new guidelines for sexuality with the authority of science.⁵⁹ For example, the enormous popularity of Kinsey's report, a book that was on the whole a dry, specialized treatise on human sexuality, suggests that in the 1950s the public had a great thirst for scientific guidance on a subject that was rarely discussed in public and about which there was a great deal of uncertainty.⁶⁰ During the 1940s and 1950s "the woman problem" had become "a subject of nationwide controversy."⁶¹ The public discourse was filled, if not obsessed, with analysis of women's desires, problems, and failures. Before feminism, or at least in parallel, psychology constructed the "woman question" as a sexual question.

This was one of the important junctures at which psychology coalesced with feminism, precisely because of the latter's emphasis on sexual liberation. It has often been remarked, with various degrees of unease or approval, that sexual liberation was one of the main themes of second-wave feminism. Erica Jong's widely successful *Fear of Flying*, published in 1973, was a potent example of the ways in which many women in search of their freedom found it in the affirmation of sexual pleasure outside the confines of marriage. Indeed, feminism "greatly influenced the new, freer

forms of sexuality."⁶² Here again, the differences separating psychology from feminism are as profound as the hidden continuities between them.⁶³ Without the Freudian revolution, it is difficult to imagine that the family and sexuality would have occupied such a central place in feminist theory and political tactics. For psychoanalysis, sexuality was not only a new object of knowledge but also a positive locus through which and in which men and women might look for themselves, shape their true selves, and liberate themselves. No cultural formation seized and implemented this proposition more actively and avidly than feminism because it also viewed sexuality as the prime site for (women's) liberation.

Finally, women's social being is more mediated by language and more characterized by a sustained attention to emotions than that of men's being. For example, as has been shown in several studies, women's friendships are oriented toward the verbal sharing of feelings.⁶⁴ Psychology—with its emphasis on talking and feelings—naturally privileged skills that were socially defined as women's, such as emotional introspection, verbalization, and the centrality of language in intimate relationships. In fact, we may even say that because psychology called on women *and* men to adopt a quintessentially woman's attitude toward the self (to reflect on one's feelings, express them, and understand them) it contributed to a feminization of emotional culture in general, calling on men to become verbal, reflexive, and emotional (see chapter 3). Thus psychology contributed to the legitimization of a typically female attitude toward the self as the repository of feelings and toward the perception of intimate relationships as a product of the verbal sharing of emotions. In that sense, psychology seemed to help erode the cultural and emotional boundaries separating men and women.

The greater openness of psychologists to the causes of women was facilitated by a variety of changes that included a backlash against McCarthyism, the invention of the contraceptive pill, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and consumer culture's development of sophisticated and powerful strategies to cater to adolescents' challenge to their parents' prohibitions. These changes coalesced in what became known as the sexual revolution of the 1960s, in which several books exerted a significant influence in legitimizing new social and cul-

tural trends regarding sexuality. Kinsey's reports on sexuality, *Peyton Place*, Helen Gurley Brown's *Sex and the Single Girl*, and Robert Rimmer's *The Harrad Experiment* played an important role in creating a new sexual imagination.⁶⁵

INTIMACY: A NEW EMOTIONAL IMAGINATION

Together psychology and feminism addressed women's experience and formulated new models of social bonds inside the family. Indeed, a healthy marriage would be increasingly equated with the notion of intimacy. Intimacy became a new norm, a new social form, and an object of the romantic imagination. David Shumway has argued that around the 1970s, alongside the discourse on romance, a discourse of intimacy progressively emerged. This discourse differs from romance not only in "content" but also in the "modes and forms" in which relationships are portrayed.⁶⁶ Its primary, but not exclusive, locus is advice literature, located at the uncertain seam line of science and morality, and not, as was the case with romance, in fiction. The form taken by "intimacy" is that of the case history presenting a problematic couple who require the help of a doctor or therapist. Intimacy is not about presenting love as a promise of happiness; rather, it consists in showing the pitfalls and problems involved in relationships. This discourse of intimacy is apparent in the emergence of new genres such as Woody Allen's movies or John Updike's novels about married life.

The cultural model of intimacy is best understood as being at the intersection of psychology and feminism, each of which, for different reasons, is fascinated by the critique of marriage and by the exposition of its disintegration and each of which offers its own version of how to reconstruct marriage under the aegis of the new cultural model of intimacy. To understand the content of this new cultural model, let me take a famous example of William Howell Masters, a gynecologist, and Virginia Johnson, a psychology researcher, who teamed up in 1957 to study human sexuality.⁶⁷

Masters and Johnson continued a tradition of writing on sexuality started by Havelock Ellis, who presented sexual activity as a natural and healthy human trait.⁶⁸ One of Master and Johnson's books, *The Pleasure*

Bond published in 1974, was an explicit guide to sexual intimacy, geared more to the wider public than to the scientific community.⁶⁹ Because the book was written after the sexual revolution had been, so to speak, consummated, it is worth dwelling on it, for it reveals how the cultural encounter of feminism and psychology produced a new model of intimacy. Precisely because Masters and Johnson explicitly rejected both Freud's theories and feminism,⁷⁰ their book *The Pleasure Bond* offers a good opportunity to illustrate how feminism and psychology had become the conceptual horizon shaping metaphors to think about the self, sexual relationships, and couplehood. The mutual (and often unconscious) borrowing and mirroring of cultural metaphors from psychology and feminism was most visible in the creation of a cultural model and ideal of intimacy.

In her intellectual history of the psychoanalytical discourse, Suzanne Kirschner defined intimacy as one of the two major goals of the narrative of self-development.⁷¹ It is the "utopia, or at least the fleeting paradise of ordinary life."⁷² This form of utopia was already prevalent during the nineteenth century, but I would argue that in the 1950s it took on a new life with changes in psychological theory that shifted from "drive" theory to interpersonal relations.⁷³ This shift put far more emphasis on the ways the self was formed within a web of interpersonal relationships. The various representatives of object-relations theory—Melanie Klein, Heinz Kohut, D. W. Winnicott—viewed the self as developing from within the web of relations. In Stephen Mitchell's summary, the defining feature of this view is that "the central dynamic struggle throughout life is between the powerful need to establish, maintain, and protect intimate bonds with others and various efforts to escape the pains and dangers of those bonds, the sense of vulnerability, and the threat of disappointment, engulfment, exploitation, and loss."⁷⁴ Thus the nineteenth-century opposition between a true and a false self found a resounding echo in Winnicott's distinction between the true and the false self,⁷⁵ which in turn played an important role in defining intimacy (somewhat tautologically) as a relationship where one could express and in fact find one's authentic self.

The notion of intimacy combined attributes both of the psychological discourse and of feminism, for the cultural model of intimacy was sup-

posed to entail the revealing of the true self as well as a healthy sexuality. Sexuality came to stand for a master metaphor of healthy and intimate bonds and perhaps most of all for a liberated self. And liberation took the form of a delicate work of emotional sharing. As one *Redbook* article stated, "Sex is a very intimate encounter, one that involves sharing feelings."⁷⁶ Thus emotional awareness and expression were directly connected to an open and healthy sexuality. According to another *Redbook* article, "One road to understanding one's mate lies in being frank and open about feelings."⁷⁷ Or, as Masters and Johnson put it in *The Pleasure Bond*,

Instead of making your goal to perform with grace and good taste, make it to be yourself: "I'm me, I feel a little scared and foolish, but I would like to know what other experiences are like." That's the first line of communication—if you're not in touch with yourself, you can't be in touch with anyone else.

But once you're aware of your thoughts and feelings, let your partner know them. If you're afraid, say so. Perhaps together you can discover what you are afraid of and why, and perhaps your partner can help you find ways of overcoming your fears gradually. Then as you move along the way, you will be acting in accordance with your feelings, not in spite of them.⁷⁸

There were a few important differences between the nineteenth century and the modern conception of the "true self": for Victorians, intimacy was an opportunity to express the true self, and the expression of the true self did not pose a special problem—it merely had to be entrusted to a person worthy of one's self-revelations. But now the revelation of the true self seemed to pose special problems and to require special care: "The hardest part of being close to someone is taking that step of uncovering yourself."⁷⁹ Intimacy was posited as a precious but difficult good to obtain, as a goal that the self could only painstakingly attain. To quote the author of a 1980s marriage manual that would have been readily endorsed by Masters and Johnson: "Of all the components of marriage, intimacy is probably the quality most longed for, and often the most elusive."⁸⁰

More than in the nineteenth century, the opening up of feelings and of the self was deemed to be a fragile and even dangerous endeavor that

demanded a self-conscious use of reflexive language. In the same way that psychologists had promoted the idea that “conflict” was inherent in human relationships, they eagerly seized on the idea of a true self that required tremendous skill and caution to reveal. This was a crucial working hypothesis for psychologists because, if revealing the true self was a difficult task, it needed assistance and expert techniques. One of the reasons why such expertise was needed was that, as Masters and Johnson suggested, sexuality needed to be freed but could be properly freed only if it achieved the equality that had been the hallmark of the feminist movement: “If sex-as-service is even more self-defeating a principle for the female, how, then, can a sexually emancipated woman succeed in securing the fulfillment that is her birthright? In the same way—the only way—the male can secure his own birthright: together with a partner who is committed to the principle of mutual pleasure.”⁸¹ Or, later in the book: “What a great many men and women must learn is that they cannot achieve the pleasure they both want until they realize that the most effective sex is not something a man does to or for a woman but something a man and woman do together *as equals*.”⁸² Sexuality slowly became an enlarged and double metaphor for the (female) self and its politics. To obtain sexual pleasure, women were commanded to view themselves as equal to men. And, according to the authors, sexual pleasure and intimacy could be obtained only if true equality underpinned the relationship. This goal, however, was to be reached not through a hedonistic search for pleasure but rather through a sustained and monitored attention to one’s needs. To go back to Masters and Johnson, “Women are brought up to be passive. They are expected to serve the man. You know: ‘I want nothing for myself—just to please you.’ Any vestige of that philosophy has to be resisted, because it keeps a woman from experiencing her own potential for pleasure and from discovering her own wants and needs.”⁸³ And Masters added: “Not only physically but emotionally—and we’re talking specifically about sexual functioning. Men and women are incredibly and constantly similar.”⁸⁴ Ultimately, such an ideal of sexual pleasure blurred gender differences, as Johnson noted: “It’s popular, I know, to point out the differences between men and women, but I have to tell you that from the beginning of our work,

what has impressed us most have been the similarities, not the differences, between the sexes."⁸⁵

The cultural category of "needs" was a crucial conceptual category linking and merging feminism and psychological definitions of the psyche. Through the cultivation of their needs, women would simultaneously know and assert their selves, reach sexual satisfaction, and have an equal relationship with their partner.

"It's when we fail to achieve pleasure that it becomes important to understand our fundamental needs and desires. . . . Each of us has a unique sexual value system that helps us distinguish what matters a great deal from what doesn't matter much at all. And what *really* matters are all the ideas and perceptions that make sex work effectively for us as individuals."⁸⁶ One of the reasons why intimacy was becoming a highly complex social relationship was that it mixed two repertoires: one of private and spontaneous emotionality and one of public and political equality. Good sex was sex in which partners had to relate to each other in an egalitarian fashion—that is, follow abstract norms of equality and fairness—and yet give free rein and expression to their most subjective feelings and needs.

A healthy sexuality demanded an individualization of each partner: reaching true intimacy meant having equal status, and being equal meant being aware of one's needs and making a relationship conform to those needs. Because such a conception was inherently individualizing, there was a greater potential for divisiveness. Once therapeutic culture posited one's needs as the legitimate and almost exclusive basis for intimacy, it was faced with the problem of knowing how to coordinate and reconcile conflicting needs. To overcome the potential divisiveness inherent in an individualizing sexuality, the key metaphor of "negotiation" was offered. For example, discussing sexual relationships, Masters and Johnson claimed that "the way in which a couple talk about how often they make love, it seems, is the important issue. We speak of this as negotiation."⁸⁷

From the late 1960s onward, the therapeutic discourse started shifting its main rhetorical mode of address to women, stressing more explicitly their needs and rights. Increasingly, men and women were deemed to have basic emotional "needs" akin to other needs-related categories. If

that was the case, it was easy to shift to the idea, quickly promoted by feminists, that emotional and sexual fulfillment was a right. Thus, from the 1970s onward, the therapeutic discourse gradually became associated with a liberal feminist lexicon of "rights" that dramatically departed from nineteenth-century "sentimental" female culture in that it mixed the language of emotions with the language of rights, thereby making intimacy a domain of contention and bargaining. The legal scholar Mary Ann Glendon captures the ways in which the therapeutic language has indeed become saturated with the notion of "rights": "Converging with the language of psychotherapy, rights talk encourages our all-too human tendency to place the self at the center of our moral universe. . . . Saturated with rights, political language can no longer perform the important function of facilitating public discussion of the right ordering of our lives together."⁸⁸

Cultural models thus get shaped by combining and forging new semantic and logical connections between repertoires. The notion of "intimacy" combined two different repertoires and key models of the self. On the one hand, it invoked the true self, authenticity, pleasure, and self-revelation; on the other, it used a vocabulary derived from a utilitarian understanding of human psychology and spoke about "rights," "needs," and "wants." This new model of intimacy smuggled the middle-class liberal and utilitarian language of rights and bargaining into the bedroom and the kitchen and introduced public forms and norms of discourse where reciprocity, sacrifice, and gift giving had hitherto prevailed. In the same way that the therapeutic ethos had introduced a vocabulary of emotions and a norm of communication inside the corporation, it ushered a rational and quasi-economic approach to emotions in the domestic sphere.

Thus in considering the claim that the personal is political, it should not be forgotten that this could appear to be so because the personal had already emerged as a constituted cultural category, mostly through the active presence of psychology in American culture. Similarly, because the language of psychology was intrinsically individualizing, it could recycle and naturalize the ambient feminist language of rights; because psychologists acted as arbitrators in conflict and claimed to teach negotiation skills, the language of psychology readily incorporated the feminist claim

to equality. Because of its emancipatory structure, the therapeutic discourse offered a powerful narrative of growth and liberation that resonated with the feminist political claim for liberation. Thus the conjunction of feminism and psychology actually contributed to convert the private self into a public construct and even, as explored in the next chapter, into a public performance. The therapeutic ethos transformed the home into a micro-public sphere in which emotions and private needs could be argued over according to norms of fairness and equality.

This convergence between feminism and therapy has now become common currency. Consider, for example, the claim by Angela McRobbie, a prominent feminist scholar, that "feminism is about being who you want to be—and finding out who you are in the first place."⁸⁹ In this definition, political and psychological categories are completely enmeshed. Another example of the convergence of therapeutic and feminist metaphors can be found in the writings of the veteran feminist activist and editor of *Ms.* magazine Gloria Steinem, who, in her 1992 book *Revolution from Within*, argued that psychological barriers equally affect upper-class and lower-class women and that low self-esteem is the main problem that plagues women.⁹⁰ This is not an example of how feminists have been "co-opted" by the therapeutic discourse. Rather, it is an illustration of how some categories ("true self" or "self-esteem") function as bridges between two discursive formations—the individual and the political, the psychological and the feminist—and a reflection of how these two cultural formations have become tightly intertwined.

COMMUNICATIVE RATIONALITY IN THE BEDROOM

As in the corporation, psychologists, having naturalized categories such as "needs" or "interests" and having viewed conflict as inevitable, could offer techniques to overcome the problems entailed by the individualization of intimate relations to which they themselves had amply contributed. These techniques were to be found in the model of communication. What made the cultural model of communication so powerful was that it merged description and prescription, diagnosis and healing. As a *Redbook* article put it, "Communication is the lifeblood of any relation-

ship, and any love relationship particularly requires communication if it is going to flourish."⁹¹ Communication should be understood here as a "model of" and "model for," at once describing relations and prescribing them. As a popular guidebook on marriage put it: "The way you reach ultimate union is through the skill of communicating."⁹² Sexual incompatibility, anger, money disputes, an unequal distribution of domestic chores, personality incompatibility, secret emotions, and childhood events: all of these could be subsumed and understood under a single overarching model. For example, in an article on marriages that are wrecked by money problems, the advice given by two different marriage therapists is as follows: "The best way to solve some of these problems, as trite as it may sound, is to sit down and talk things over."⁹³ In this way, intimacy becomes equated with talking and with verbal communication. Let me take the example of a novel that was quite popular when it came out in 1978, *Rough Strife*, by Lynne Sharon Schwartz. The subject of the novel is married life. The climactic moment of the story is, I think, unprecedented in the history of the novel. The couple is experiencing difficulties the nature of which the reader does not understand. Then, in a central episode of the novel, the husband asks, "Why are you talking like this?" and the wife responds, "Because I don't know how to talk to you any more. . . . I don't know where you are and what you're becoming. You don't tell me anything. The only time we make any contact is in bed. What the hell is this all about?"⁹⁴ In the 1970s, a new ghost came to haunt popular culture, namely the ghost of the absence of intimacy, viewed as equivalent to a lack of linguistic communication.

In 1976, an article written by two feminists, Carol Tavris (a psychologist) and Toby Epstein Jayaratne, defined the essence of happy marriage as follows: "The most happily married wives are those who say that both they and their husbands tell each other when they are displeased and thus try to work out their displeasure together by communicating in a calm and rational way."⁹⁵ This model of communication stipulated that a good marriage was one in which men and women could verbalize and talk about their respective needs and disagreements. This model of communication has become the implicit model regulating the behavior of partners in intimate relationships.

As in the corporation, the first injunction of communication is systematic self-scrutiny. For example, one *Redbook* article reports that “to break through the impasse, Dr. Walsh used an effective technique: She asked each partner to argue the other’s point of view. . . . Marriage counselors try to transform power struggles into healthier patterns of mutual negotiation and accommodation.”⁹⁶

At the same time that the therapeutic persuasion contributed to individualize the self, to legitimize and entrench personality differences and differences in biographies and thus make them more intractable, it suggested that a neutral ground of objective meaning could be reached to overcome differences. This neutral ground was both emotional and linguistic. For example, one manual for couples describes what it calls the “Vesuvius technique”:

This technique helps you identify when your anger is approaching volcanic proportions, and to ritualize it so that the focus is on getting your anger out of your system. Your partner’s role is simply to witness respectfully the expression of your anger as if it were an overwhelming natural phenomenon in which he or she is not a participant. . . . If you want to let off the steam, say something like, “I’m really about to explode. Can you listen to me for two minutes?” Any length of time your partner will agree to is okay, but two minutes can feel like a surprisingly long time to both the giver and receiver. If your partner says yes, all he or she does is listen with awe, as if watching a volcano explode—and let you know when your time is up.⁹⁷

The technique instructs people to transform their emotions into objects, to be watched from the outside, so to speak, by the subject and object of the emotion. This injunction to keep feelings at bay is at the heart of the communication and therapeutic ethos. In the words of Melody Beattie, author of the best-seller *Co-dependent No More*, “Detach in love, or detach in anger, but strive for detachment. I know it’s difficult, but it will become easier with practice. If you can’t let go completely, try to ‘hang loose.’ Relax. Sit back. Now, take a deep breath.”⁹⁸

Like its corporate counterpart, the domestic ethos of communication prohibits the raw and unrestrained expression of any emotion and attempts to instill neutral patterns of speech. This is why the exercises to

reach communication are purely linguistic: "The Shared Meaning technique [to improve intimate relationships] enables you to share the meaning of what you heard and check out if what you heard is what your partner meant. Often it is not."⁹⁹ If we have been told since poststructuralism that meanings are unintended, undecidable, and polysemic, the therapeutic literature, in contrast, claims that ambiguity is the archenemy of intimacy and that we ought to purge unclear and ambivalent statements from everyday language. Self-help literature offers numerous "exercises" that aim at making explicit the hidden assumptions and expectations of married people, at becoming aware of their speech patterns to understand how those in turn cause misunderstandings and alienation. In short, these techniques aim at formalizing and neutralizing the language exchanged. This attempt to banish ambiguity must serve another and higher purpose, that of understanding the other's point of view and eventually accepting it. "Alienation in marriage," the same advice book says, "is often caused by misunderstandings and mistaken assumptions."¹⁰⁰ And the author continues: "Fair Fight . . . is designed to replace pleading, ignoring, blaming and threatening. [It] is a structure for isolating and resolving problems. . . . The value of the Fair Fight is that it forces both partners in a relationship to talk through the specifics of any given issue, decide clearly what they want and enunciate it just as clearly to the other partner. Then they search for a mutually agreeable solution."¹⁰¹ Perhaps the single most striking cultural feature of the ethos of communication is its basic moral (or sociological) proposition that one's interests and others' interests can be simultaneously served through the use of adequate speech patterns. If there is one message that the therapeutic communicative worldview incessantly conveys, it is that all bonds can be formed and maintained through partners' ability to express verbally their needs, emotions, and goals and to negotiate those needs through language. For example, the incessantly repeated injunction to use "I" language—such as "I need you to share domestic work with me" rather than "You should be sharing domestic work with me"—implies that in the therapeutic worldview conflicts can be resolved, not by appealing to shared norms or shared values, but by using adequate linguistic techniques.

One example among my interviewees illustrates this notion of neu-

trality. Susan, a forty-two-year-old married therapist, recounts how much she dislikes it when "he [her husband] gets emotional. He always makes things personal, whereas I try very hard not to tell him, 'You always do this . . . or you always do that.'"

INTERVIEWER: So what do you tell him?

SUSAN: I would try to make my points without getting personal or emotional. Just talking about how his behavior annoys me or others. Not him; his behavior.

This therapist uses techniques of speech designed to alleviate conflict and in the process tries not to become, as she puts it, "personal" or "emotional."

"Working things out," as numerous guidebooks on marital success put it, means having a methodology to talk, explain, verbalize emotions, and negotiate or compromise over one's needs. That methodology is based on an ideology of emotions that disentangles emotions from their immediate contexts. This in turn suggests a paradoxical observation: emotions become objects to be exchanged in an interaction, but they are exchanged in a language that is both neutral and highly subjectivist. The language is neutral because one is supposed to attend to the objective and denotative content of a sentence and try to neutralize the subjective misinterpretations and emotions that can lurk in the process; it is subjectivist because the justification for making a request or experiencing a need is ultimately based on one's own subjective needs and feelings, which never require any higher justification than the fact that they are felt by the subject.

TOWARD THE IDEOLOGY OF PURE EMOTION

Many have argued that the countercultural movement of the 1960s marked a new era for the self in that it promoted and celebrated "openness," "authenticity," and informality. Indeed, psychotherapy and feminism seemed equally committed to creating a new "utopian vision of a life space in which people could meet face-to-face in some absolute and unmediated sense, beyond all status or conventions."¹⁰² The alliance of psychology and feminism was unintended, but its effects surprisingly conflicted with the cult of authenticity and spontaneity that had domi-

nated the 1960s and 1970s: the meeting of psychotherapy and feminism ultimately produced a new discipline of intimate bonds, which took the form of an increased use of the language of rights inside the bedroom, the practice of self-observation and self-knowledge, and the injunction to work on and change relationships. The feminist and therapeutic persuasions produced new emotional practices, entailing new ways of attending to emotions and new ways of using cultural categories and discourses to classify emotions, label them, explain them, and transform them. To put this differently: feminism and therapy conjoined have been part and parcel of a vast process of disciplining the emotions inside the private sphere.

Discipline is embodied in individual practices, which are constituted by disciplinary ethics and techniques. Disciplinary ethics prescribe the control of drives and affects and the systematic channeling of psychic energies toward the realization of ideal interests. Disciplinary techniques consist of the psychological strategies and physical operations through which discipline is maintained. These practices are instilled and reproduced within definite institutional fields, constituted by disciplinary codes and strategies. The codes specify, usually in written form, a general set of behavioral norms and standards, and the strategies are ways of organizing physical space and social positions so as to facilitate monitoring and surveillance.¹⁰³

To the extent that both feminism and psychotherapy produced innumerable texts, were deployed in definite institutional fields (academia, mass media, and corporations), and taught a wide array of psychological, bodily, and emotional strategies to transform and liberate the self, they offered a vast recoding and disciplining of the psyche. What were these strategies? To answer this question, I turn to Weber rather than to Foucault because the former better conceived of discipline as a set of cognitive practices through which social relationships are recoded and thus is better suited to the cognitive approach to culture.

Max Weber suggested that discipline—which he also called the rationalization of life-conduct—pertains to a way of thinking, to a specific form of mental process. More exactly, it involves a conscious rule-bound comparison and choice among alternative means to a given end.¹⁰⁴ That

is, rational action is consciously regulated, not random, habitual, or impulsive. What makes a line of conduct rational is that it is "methodical," has a general character, is systematic, and, in Weber's words, is "controlled by the intellect." Being rational involves the capacity to survey mentally our range of possible actions, choose one course of action, and apply ourselves to it methodically.

With these definitions of rational conduct in mind, we can now examine how the conjunction of feminism and therapy has rationalized emotional life. This rationalization takes place on several levels.

Value Rationalization

"To be rational the act must be regulated by values, clearly conceived purposes, oriented to knowledge."¹⁰⁵ *Value rationalization* is the process of clarifying one's values and beliefs, dubbed by Weber value-rationality (*Wertrationalitat*), a rationality in which ends have to conform to preestablished values. For example, as one self-help book puts it, "Fighting per se is not the issue. What matters is the degree to which we are able to take a clear position in a relationship and behave in ways that are congruent with our stated beliefs."¹⁰⁶

Indeed, the written quizzes that are endlessly provided in advice literature constitute a form of value rationalization applied to the domain of interpersonal relationships. What do you want? What is your personality? Are you jealous? Are you faithful? The quiz is culturally significant not because it provides the answers to these questions but because it codifies and encourages the application of value rationalization to the domain of emotions. For example, one *Redbook* article offers a questionnaire "to evaluate how compatible people are, how romantic their marriage is. The Romantic Attraction Questionnaire (RAQ) was designed to predict how well a couple is suited. The RAQ is composed of 60 statements. . . . The ideal RAQ score is between 220 and 300 points, indicating the sufficient level of romantic attraction required to sustain a relationship."¹⁰⁷

Women have been enjoined both by feminism and by therapy to clarify their values and preferences and to build relationships that conform to and suit those values, all with the goal of asserting an autonomous and self-reliant self. This process can take place only when women carefully

take themselves as objects of scrutiny, control their emotions, assess choices, and choose their preferred course of action.

Cognitive Rationalization

Closely associated with value rationalization is *cognitive rationalization*. According to Weber, cognitive rationalization is characterized by an attempt to comprehend reality through “increasingly precise and abstract concepts.”¹⁰⁸ Let me provide an example: “In situations such as these [when a fight is starting], you are aware of the half-formed thoughts that flit through your mind. But most of us have not trained ourselves to deliberately bring them to our awareness in a manner that permits us to weigh everything and rationally control the outcome.” What is promoted here is what Weber called cognitive rationalization, applied here to emotions. Women are asked to observe their emotions, identify patterns of behavior, uncover the hidden causes of their behavior (usually located in early childhood relationships), and with that knowledge control their relationships.

Quantification of Emotion

The objectification of emotion leads to the view that emotions are fixed entities and that as such they can be quantified, averaged out, and balanced. One of the most common clichés of popular culture is that relationships should be balanced. For example, by plotting intimacy levels on a scale of zero to ten, Dr. Popenoe outlines the process by which a couple polarizes. “At one end of the scale, say ten, there’s mutuality, connection, proximity. At the other there’s separateness, individuality, differentiation. A good balance is somewhere around five. Let’s say, that when a couple marry, she is a Six, leaning a little more toward closeness, and he is a Four, edging toward distance. That’s a manageable difference. . . . [But she may move toward] a Nine by becoming more clingy and demanding If this continues over a long period of time, she reaches Ten and he reaches Zero.”¹⁰⁹

Once numerical metaphors are used to characterize personalities and relationships, “balancing” emotions becomes akin to establishing a “mean” or average on a numerical scale. Numbers are metaphors for the

idea that emotions and personality traits can be averaged out. "Reason without feeling is as unattractive and unhealthful as feeling without reason. Somehow there has to be a balance."¹¹⁰ The idea of "balance" is intimately related to the epistemology and professional interests of psychologists, for it enables them to conceptualize a wide variety of forms of intimacy and personalities as problematic. By postulating balance as the ideal, warmth and coldness, passivity and activity, assertiveness and timidity, exuberance and self-effacement can all become equally problematic, thus enlarging the scope of the potential clients of therapy and introducing a great uncertainty about the nature of a "healthy" emotional makeup. For example:

In over 25 years as a psychiatrist working with couples and young families, I have found that an imbalance of this kind in one or both partners can lead to two kinds of trouble in a marriage: either there is too much sharing and empathy between the partners (yes, there is actually such a thing as too much!) or there is too little sharing and not enough empathy. I call the first style of marriage "hot" the other "cool." Both are troublesome. Fortunately, if your marriage tends to be a "hot" or a "cool" one and you can identify it, you can begin to make a conscious effort to move your relationship toward that stable balance of closeness we call the "warm" marriage.¹¹¹

The call on striving for a "balance" clearly serves the professional interests of psychologists and makes intimate relationships into cognitive objects that can be numerically evaluated and averaged. This is related to the deployment of techniques of calculation inside the intimate bond.

Techniques of Calculation

Weber viewed rationalization as characterized by a deeper refinement of techniques of calculation. Indeed, as the examples above suggest, intimate life and emotions are made into measurable and calculable objects, to be captured in quantitative statements. To know that I score a ten in the statement "I become anxious when you seem interested by other women" will presumably lead to a different self-understanding and corrective strategy than if I had scored a "two." Psychological tests of this kind use a specifically modern cultural cognition called by sociologists Wendy Espeland

and Mitchell Stevens “commensuration.”¹¹² As Espeland defines it, “Commensuration involves using numbers to create relations between things. Commensuration transforms qualitative distinctions into quantitative distinctions, where difference is precisely expressed as magnitude according to some shared metric.”¹¹³ Under the aegis of psychology and feminism, intimate relationships have increasingly become things to be evaluated and quantified according to some metric (which, by the way, varies with the wide gamut of psychologists and psychological schools).

Objectification through Literacy

Historically, literacy has played a momentous role in setting a course toward a rationalization of conduct. Here too, intimacy is rationalized through the use of reading and writing.

“Any time you feel a sense of separation or distance from your partner,” instructs a psychologist writing for *Redbook*, “go into another room and write down your feelings, beginning with your anger. Blame your partner for every sin you think he or she has committed—don’t edit yourself. Soon you will notice signs of hurt and sadness coming through. Continue writing, this time about things you’re afraid of or sorry for. Finally, express your love for your partner, your understanding and forgiveness. You’ll be surprised at how much positive emotion comes out—because you’ve already released the negative part. Then show the entire letter to your partner.”¹¹⁴

The medium of literacy, which is abundantly advocated by popular therapeutic discourse, puts into motion a process of objectifying emotions. In this process, emotions are externalized in the sense that they become separate from the subjectivity of the speaker, with the aim of taking control of and transforming them. Literacy thus allows an emotion to become an object for the purpose of facilitating interpersonal transactions. For example, a questionnaire published by *Redbook* that asked women to evaluate their sexual and emotional lives was later adopted by two established therapists in their practices. “We are now using the *Redbook* questionnaire in our therapy sessions to help couples begin to communicate better with each other. After answering separately, they compare responses and discuss their feelings. One couple told us that

they were able to begin to deal with some emotional and even painful subjects because the questionnaire helped them get beyond their embarrassment; once they were relaxed, filling out the answers—even those that touched on difficult problems—began to seem like fun” (emphasis added).¹¹⁵ The intertwining of textuality with emotional experience is a main characteristic of psychological advice in popular culture. Drawing on the medieval scholar Brian Stock, we may say that textuality has become an important adjunct of emotional experience.¹¹⁶ “Exercises” like the one above organize and transform emotional life by “locking” emotions into the medium of writing, in the sense of creating a distance between the experience of the emotions and the person’s awareness of that emotion. If literacy is the inscription of spoken language in a medium that enables one to “see” language (rather than hear it) and to decontextualize it from the act of speaking, these exercises similarly invite a decontextualization of emotions in the sense that they invite men and women to reflect on and discuss emotions even after they are disconnected from their original context. The reflexive act of giving names to emotions in order to manage them gives them an ontology that fixes their volatile, transient, and context-based nature.

An example of the uses of literacy in intimate relationships is provided by Elaine, a thirty-five-year-old woman who conducts workshops in anger management and “conflict resolution.” She explains how she communicates with her husband about their unpleasant areas of disagreement: “I write him notes telling him not to do certain things, for example, when he leaves the sink dirty after he has done the dishes.”

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell me what you write exactly?

ELAINE: You know, I would write something like “Bob, I have asked you many times to clean the sink and you don’t seem to be able to respond to this simple request. If you don’t do it, I’ll start getting mad.”

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that there is a difference between writing and talking?

ELAINE: Oh yeah, I think that when you write you’re better able to get your message across. When you talk, somehow things become complicated; you get all wrapped up in these emotions and sometimes you don’t even say things that you intend to say.

According to Jack Goody and Ian Watt, literacy decontextualizes speech and thought and detaches rules that produce speech from the very act of speaking.¹¹⁷ I would argue something similar is happening here. When locked into literacy, emotions become objects to be observed and manipulated. Emotional literacy makes one extract oneself from the flow and unreflexive character of experience and transform emotional experience into words. One is enjoined to transform emotions into cold cognitions, detached from the concrete circumstances of their appearance. Discussing the effect of print on Western thought, Walter Ong writes: "Print encourages a sense of closure, a sense that what is found in a text has been finalized, has reached a state of completion. . . . By isolating thought on a written surface, detached from any interlocutor, making utterance in this sense autonomous and indifferent to attack, writing presents utterance and thought as uninvolved with all else, somehow self-contained, complete."¹¹⁸ Ong further argues that the ideology of literacy has given rise to the idea of the "pure text," the idea that texts have an ontology, that their meanings can be detached from those of their authors and contexts. Similarly, the locking of emotions into language gives rise to the idea of "pure emotion," the idea that emotions are definite discrete entities, somehow locked and trapped inside the self, that can be manipulated and changed by a work of appropriation.

The new emotional discipline instilled by the therapeutic ethos makes emotions into cognitively apprehensible objects to be manipulated in order to reach one overarching form of rationality that I call communicative rationality. The control of emotions, the clarification of one's values and goals, and the objectification of emotions all indicate a broader process of rationalization of intimate relations.

THE COOLING OF PASSION

Anthony Giddens has interpreted the modern transformation of intimacy as expressing a movement toward equality and emancipation.¹¹⁹ But Giddens's analysis unfortunately too often only replicates the psychological credo (that intimacy derives from equality) and has failed to interrogate the social consequences of the transformations it purports to

describe. How has the therapeutic language transformed the language of intimacy? I interviewed therapists and people who had undergone therapy for many years, on the assumption that these people were the most likely to illustrate how, if at all, the language of therapy may shape conceptions and practices of intimacy.

Matthew is a fifty-four-year-old academic who, after his divorce, underwent five years of therapy. He remarried a woman therapist seven years ago.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned earlier that your [second] wife has this ideal of communication. What did you mean?

MATTHEW: By the way, I don't think that she holds that ideal, she understands that communication could be negative, I think in the abstract she accepts it, but in practice I think she has some problems dealing with negative communication. Other than that, yes, overall . . .

INTERVIEWER: If you had to explain to someone what it is to communicate, what people do when they communicate, what goes on inside them, what kind of things do they talk about, what it does to them afterwards, how would you explain that?

MATTHEW: The theory is that . . . if I am clear in my own mind about what I want and don't want, what I need and don't need, and I can communicate that to you, then we have a better chance of reaching a situation in which we can both get more of our needs met, through some conflict and negotiations, following that conflict. A conflict is "I don't want to do this, I want to do that" or "I don't need this, I need that," and each partner being equally empowered in the process, there is a kind of expectation that two things will happen: one is that it will be a kind of optimality, that everyone will be better off, and that unresolved issues will be more tolerable because they will operate on the basis of some partial achievement and a recognition that that's as far as one can go. Again, a kind of optimality. It may not be perfect, but it may be that 20 percent are not resolved, as opposed to various "dis-utopic" [dystopic] models where we are screaming at each other and we have 90 percent unresolved conflicts with each other.

INTERVIEWER: Can you give me an example?

MATTHEW: What expresses more of one's response to the other that's spelled positive and negative, I like your doing that, I appreciate your doing that, this makes me uncomfortable, I'm unhappy about doing this, could we find a way where you meet more of my conditions and I try to meet

more of your conditions, I think the fantasy is that this is going to resolve 100 percent of the conflict or that this won't itself generate other kinds of problems. Let me give you a conflict illustration: We have some tensions at home when my wife says: "You don't clean up the sink!" when I think I do 80 percent or 90 percent of the time. I realize that more and more, that when I hear this, I hear my mother talking. My wife gets frustrated because she says, "You won't give me a voice," and I say, "I'm giving you a voice but I am going to be upset by this." She says, "Is there any way that I can tell you this without making you upset?" and I thought about it, maybe a year or two ago, and I said, "Probably not, so your choices are to either not say it or say it and know that I'm going to be upset, but that's the price that you have to pay. I will then, after being upset, try to modify my behavior." Of late we have been through another round of that, which left her depressed, and this time I was able to see the relationship, it was very solid but there was a lot of conflict around it, and I tried to think. Taking this model one step further, could I find a way of dealing with any instant if reaction to communication didn't seem productive any more. I finally suggested that we keep a clipboard. That instead of verbalizing, we'll write each other messages. It may be real or it may be a caricature, but then, like e-mail, we can open up a file when we are ready to deal with it and not at the moment, think about it and reflect it. I thought about this in a class, . . . I thought we were having a conflict right there where I won't take shit from you and you won't take shit from me . . . That's literally how I took an old idea from a sociological example and thought about using that as a kind of buffer. We have done that for a while, I don't think it resolves all the issues but I think it has at least expanded our repertoire.

INTERVIEWER: What do the notes on the clipboard do?

MATTHEW: They allow me to process a communication without the other being in my face at the same time. So they give me the freedom to hear without it being spoken in my face, it has a kind of symbolic value of being written since we both write and this is an adult behavior and not a childlike behavior, this is an "educative" behavior. There is a way in which it captures some of the group culture and sort of dampens some of the childlike impulsive reactive qualities. I know that we'll use it for a while, but I think it's an interesting experience because when either one of us feels voiceless, there's this other channel.

INTERVIEWER: Why does hearing the voice of the other represent a hindrance?

MATTHEW: Because I think it reminds us of older childlike models, which are very disapproving, impotent, etc., etc. I can't speak for her, but that

is certainly a part of mine. I think I was extraordinarily controlled by my mother, and I think when I hear a mother-like tone I hear my wife saying things to me that I never heard her say to her son, never, in all the years that we have lived together. Often I said that to her as quietly as I could and she would deny it, or she would say: "But they haven't done things to me that you do," and I would say, "Maybe," and then I would calm and if I were angry I would say, "It's not true" and try to get her. . . . I see ways in which the boys are much more passive in their communication, and we've recently begun to talk about how my daughter needs to verbalize a lot of her ambivalence about that, and my wife says, "I'm tired of that, if you want to do that, you can do that, but I'm just going to say." I thought about that, and she said, "Well, that's your family culture, and my family culture is different." I said, "OK, that's, at least on the surface, somewhat neutral, though we are each saying that our culture is better . . ." but I started thinking about what that represented, and I think, my sense from that is that there is a model of intimacy that we have that's different. Her model of intimacy is: "I'll tell you something that is bothering me and then I'll go away and deal with it," and my model is: "I want to talk to you about it, I want to share it with you, both to get some affirmation and also to get some implement to find a new way of dealing with this."

A part of her impulse says: "We've talked about this before, so why should we have to talk about it again?"

Her form [of talking] is: "You're supposed to talk about whatever you feel, talk about why you are angry and what you can do with it." One of our standard patterns of conflict is she will say that I'm not hearing her and I'm trying to make her say everything is all right when she is angry. There's enough congruence with my old patterns that I can see some part of that going on. I can't tolerate her anger, so when she goes off I wind up attacking her and trying to get her to say that she is wrong and I am right. There is some of that and that is certainly one part of my struggle to find a more constructive way. I think that she has her own issues that she doesn't deal with, that we may in fact have quite different models of intimacy and for me that intimacy may include different kinds of expression of anger. She gets very upset if I raise my voice, but I noticed in recent years that when I try to verbalize a complaint she often says something like: "I heard that, you said that before." And I keep saying, "But that's not . . . playing old movies is not fair fighting, every time you say that I am doing that again and again. That's a violation and you are making me angry." And then she says: "You are making me angry because you want to carry this on." I think there's a

part of her that has a real problem accepting her own flaws unless she defines them. Her boundary issue is the kind of criticism that I will make, it's very hard for her to accept that at some level. In the same way that she says that I am trying to make her say that she is wrong, she is also trying to get me to say that I am wrong and she is right, only the mechanism is different, part of her unfair fighting is that she uses her mantle of therapist as if she could be a therapist in her own home, so she brings in that discourse in the middle of our conflict.

Many things are worth noticing here. First, this man, like all other interviewees, holds a clear model of communication that involves using specific and adequate speech patterns, self-awareness, capacity to identify with another's point of view, and the capacity to compromise with another. Second, the therapeutic jargon and narrative are rampant (e.g., he views his conflicts with his wife as the reenactment of childhood conflicts—"she has her own issues"). In his account, emotions and the management of emotions are at the forefront of his relationship with his wife. This illustrates that therapy gives rise to new models of masculinity, in which introspection and emotional expression and emotional self-monitoring play a significant role. These new forms of masculinity, however, are likely to be found among members of professions in which high verbal proficiency and the management of self are crucial (see chapter 6). Third, this man's reflexivity is obvious, as he displays a constant monitoring of his emotions and of the ways he communicates them. Moreover, the interview shows how language—or rather a metalinguistic model of communication (a model about communication)—is at the center of relationships and is at stake in them. For example, one of Matthew's motives for disputing with his wife concerns the way each of them fights and expresses anger. What is at stake in their disputes is each other's consciously held and debated respective emotional style, thus suggesting that the model of communication is a very distinct and well-established cultural cognition, at least among members of the middle classes. Fourth, this interviewee and his wife are both highly conversant with therapeutic jargon and techniques. Yet such familiarity, far from helping them circumvent conflict, seems only to increase its likelihood. For reflexivity creates endless loops of needs to be satisfied, models of *how communication should be conducted*, and sharpens the evaluative standards with which

relationships are appraised, gauged, and thereby criticized. The couple's view that their conflicts emanate from their childhood experiences helps both to explain and to reify their conflicts. In addition, the very fact that Matthew's wife has a well-articulated model of conflict resolution to which he does not subscribe creates yet another area of disagreement. Finally, notice how this man's intimate life is replete both with emotions and with self-control. Indeed, as he himself suggests, he makes great attempts to control his thoughts, emotions, and behavior. To improve his abilities to control his emotional style, he has recourse to writing (on a clipboard), a technique that clearly aims to reduce the reactivity and spontaneity present in face-to-face interactions and to create a distance between his immediate emotional reactions and his goals. What this interview thus reveals and exposes is the conflicting cultural structure of contemporary intimacy, torn between a dense emotionality and processes of rationalization of sentiments. As becomes clearer in chapter 6, such a structure is more likely to characterize the middle than the working classes.

My interview with Margaret, a forty-two-year-old communication consultant, provides another example of some of these dynamics.

MARGARET: Yes, we have a standard, we usually have an argument. . . .

Actually, we have only one argument, that is kind of interesting, and I noticed that, it's about me saying or doing something that embarrasses my husband or makes him feel bad, usually in front of other people, and then he ends up getting very childish and aggressive wherever we are, not speaking to our host or our guest until the end of the evening, then me getting in the car with him and asking him what the problem is, because he doesn't express it, and then he will finally rant against me and how I am this horrible person. . . . Usually then I will say something like "I just said X three days ago and it didn't offend you, why are you doing this tonight?" basically to try to get it more rational, and it ends up with me just clamming up on him because he is attacking me personally but won't talk about what it is, the only thing he wants is for me to apologize and be equally childish. I didn't do anything that I didn't mean to do at the time, and I certainly didn't mean to hurt him, I had no idea . . . I'll apologize for the results—"I'm sorry that you feel so badly, I had no idea that this would be the effect"—but he wants me to say, "I'm sorry I said X," and I will not apologize for something that I

did. I can often be very sorry for the outcome, but I can't be sorry for what I did. These are silly little arguments, but they get huge and we don't speak for two or three days as a result. They don't happen very often. Maybe every six months to a year now, partly because he has changed a lot. I don't perceive that I'm much different, but he has become much more vocal at the time of the injustice. I don't think he had a very good self-esteem and I think it's growing, he'll say at the time, "Why did you say that?" which I think is great and we can discuss these things. This is our argument, and we just had one, and I remember them because they're big and I just can't deal talking with him when he's so irrational with me and he wants this apology and I just can't give it to him. I'm sure there's something there behind that but that's our fight, that's the only one that we have, everything else we can talk about, even the stuff with cleaning, eventually I'll sit down with him and I'll talk about "Your leaving all that in there makes me feel X." So we actually get to that, but this one is never resolved.

Here again, the therapeutic cultural frames structure this woman's understanding of her conflicts. This woman understands her husband's problem as being one of "self-esteem." As in the previous interview, fighting must be contained and regulated by fair procedures of speech. Here also, the fight is about the correct procedure of fighting. Finally, this interview similarly highlights the ways in which the use of rational models of conduct is deeply inscribed within intimate social bonds.

How are we to interpret the consequences of such rationalization? I will discuss this question by referring to Simmel's theory of work as summarized by Jorge Ardití and Ann Swidler.¹²⁰ As Ardití explains, Simmel formulated a theory of alienation according to which the impoverishment of personal life is a consequence of the growing separation between our direct unmediated experience of the world and the increasingly dense world of objects and ideas that are produced to make sense of that world, so to speak outside our experience. For Simmel, when we create a vast and complex objective culture, as ours undoubtedly is, we lose the unity needed for such objects to remain meaningful. Ardití argues that according to Simmel, for our experience to remain existentially meaningful, there must be a high congruence between the object and subject of our experience. Thus for Simmel to love means to apprehend the other

directly and entirely. It means that no social or cultural object lies between the lover and the beloved and that no element of the intellect or external cultural object plays a part in the experience of loving. The non-rational is precisely what makes possible the direct attribution of meaning to an object, unmediated by intellectual constructions. When we love someone, we attach to that person a meaning that derives from experiencing him or her as a whole. Then and only then can we capture the existential particularity of that other and merge with him or her. As Arditì aptly puts it, intellectual experience—what Weber viewed as the essence of rationality—thus necessarily introduces a distance between me and the object. For Simmel, the increasing rationalization of modern societies entails a significant increase in the distance between subjects and objects. And here Arditì, interpreting Simmel, offers a very interesting idea, that social distance derives, not from the absence of common traits, but from the abstract nature of these traits. To put this slightly differently, remoteness derives from the fact that people share a standardized language, an abstract way of capturing and making sense of relationships. In other words, the fact that we increasingly have cultural techniques to standardize intimate relationships, to talk about them and manage them in a generalized way, weakens the capacity for closeness, the congruence between subjects and object, the possibility of fusion. When the relationship becomes increasingly generalized and intellectualized, love loses its unmediated character, and both the emotion and the object of love come to be interpreted in terms that are alien to the inner experience of the self. What this analysis in turn suggests is that the private is not only political but also deeply transformed by the contemporary politics of emotion.

CONCLUSION

On the face of it, therapeutic culture is a reaction against a stultifying technical and bureaucratic disenchantment. Because of its stress on individual uniqueness, pleasure, and introspection, therapeutic culture is, at face value, a vast cultural effort to recapture meaning and feeling in an otherwise barren and technical world of meanings. But the process I have

revealed here is quite different: at the same time that it has made available a rich and elaborate lexicon of inwardness and emotions, therapy has also heralded a standardization and rationalization of emotional life. The cultural originality of the therapeutic discourse is that it has rationalized emotions through an intense emotionalization of the romantic bond. As was the case in the corporation, making relationships more “emotional” went hand in hand with making them more rational. The study of the sphere of intimacy thus reveals the other side of the process of “emotional capitalism” that I started unraveling in the previous chapter, that is, the intertwining and intensification of emotional and economic cultural models to address social relations.¹²¹

In taking a reflexive posture toward emotions essential to selfhood, and in positing a model of disengaged mastery over one’s emotions, therapeutic culture has paradoxically contributed to a splitting of emotions and action. By insisting that the rules governing the expression of emotions are to be learned reflexively, the therapeutic discourse has made emotional life a matter of procedural and reflexive monitoring of the self, especially for members of the middle class and perhaps even more especially for women. I suggest that here lies what may be a major area of differences between different categories of emotional culture, separating middle-class from working-class men and women (see chapter 6). Indeed, as becomes clear in chapter 6, the emotional fault lines in our society may have less and less to do with differences between men’s and women’s emotionality than with differences between members of the working and middle classes. Emotional differences may have less to do with emotional content—which emotions are felt—than with emotional rules and styles, *how* members of different social groups engage in or disengage from the emotional realm. Middle-class emotional culture has been characterized by an intense introspectiveness and reflexivity, and even if such reflexivity is more pronounced among women, men are joining in the rationalization of intimacy described in this chapter. This in turn invites us to revise the ways in which we think of the division of gender around the question of reason. Genevieve Lloyd (and other feminist scholars) have argued that reason has long been identified with the male point of view.¹²² Such male exercise of reason is characterized by the

splitting of reason and emotion and by the domination of instrumental reason. But, as I have suggested in this chapter, the intense rationalization of the private sphere indicates not only that middle-class women's emotional culture is highly rationalized but also that middle-class men's rationality is deeply enmeshed with emotions. As I show in the next two chapters, the cultural models offered by therapy translate themselves into an increasingly gender-blind narrative (chapter 5) and transform the very nature of the resources used by actors in their social struggles (chapter 6).

FIVE Triumphant Suffering

He [the support group leader] always looked forward to the second session. Time to get down to business, to start revealing the secrets that made it all worthwhile. Sure, the process itself was rewarding, seeing these damaged people begin to heal and make the first steps towards their new lives, but what he really loved were the stories: life's rich pattern, like a tapestry unraveling in front of him. . . . Maybe the class was the knitting needles to help people pull themselves back together again, a little more disheveled but more interesting this time around.

—Kate Harrison

Only what goes on hurting will stick.

—Nietzsche

It seems to me that it is possible to make fiction work inside of truth.

—Michel Foucault

In 1859, in a widely popular book called *Self-Help*, Samuel Smiles offered a series of biographies of men who had risen from obscurity to fame and wealth (self-help was masculine, and women had little or no room in narratives of success and self-reliance). Immensely popular, the book made a powerful case for Victorian notions of individual responsibility. With the characteristic optimism and moral voluntarism of the nineteenth-

century faith in progress, Smiles evoked the "spirit of self-help in the energetic action of individuals who, rising above the heads of the mass, knew to distinguish themselves from others." Their lives, he wrote, inspire high thinking and are examples of resolute working, integrity, and "truly noble and manly character." The power of self-help, Smiles went on, is the power of each to accomplish for himself; self-help had thus resolutely democratic overtones, as it enabled even the "humblest of men to work out for themselves an honorable competency and a solid reputation."¹

Some sixty years later, addressing his fellow psychoanalysts in the aftermath of the trauma of the First World War, Freud offered a grandiose yet pessimistic vision of the task to come for psychoanalysis: "Compared with the vast amount of neurotic misery which there is in the world, and perhaps need not be, the quantity we can do away with is almost negligible. Besides this, the necessities of our existence limit our work to the well-to-do-classes." "At present," Freud added, "we can do nothing for the wider social strata, who suffer extremely seriously from neuroses." Despite his call to democratize psychoanalysis, Freud was skeptical about poor people's willingness to part with their neuroses "because the hard life that awaits them if they recover offers them no attraction, and illness gives them one more claim to social help." Where Smiles believed that the simple or the poor man could rise above the ordinary trials of everyday life through sobriety, endurance, and energy, Freud offered the disquieting possibility that neither psychoanalysts nor the poor might remedy "that vast amount of neurotic misery" because, as Freud explained so well, laborers will prefer their moral and mental agony over recovery.² Contrary to Smiles's self-help ethos, which stipulated that moral strength could determine one's social position and social destiny, Freud held the pessimistic view of the psyche and society that the very capacity to help oneself was conditioned by one's social class and that, like other aspects of psychic development, such capacity could be damaged. If psychic development was damaged, it could not be restored through sheer willpower. Only the scientific, painstaking (and costly) work of the analyst could contribute to the improvement of the self. By making psychoanalysis the only road to psychic salvation, Freud sug-

gested that self-help did not depend on one's moral endurance, virtue, and volition because the unconscious could take many cunning routes to defeat the decisions of consciousness. If the unconscious could defeat one's determination to help oneself, then this in turn meant that the Freudian outlook, at least initially, was incompatible with what would become the industry of self-help. Further, "moral spine" and "strong will" were the symptoms of the very problem (neurosis) that Freudianism was set to resolve.

Thus, at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, Smiles and Freud stood at opposite positions of the moral discourse of selfhood: Smiles's ethos of self-help made the access to mobility and to the market dependent on the exercise of virtue obtained by the combined effect of volition and moral spine. By contrast, self-help and virtue had no place in Freud's overall theoretical framework. This is because the family narrative that was at the heart of the Freudian outlook was not linear but figurative, to use Erich Auerbach's word. The figurative form of narrative is opposed to the linear or horizontal narrative in that it "combines two events causally and chronologically remote from each other, by attributing to them a meaning common to both."³ Whereas self-help postulated that life was a series of accumulated achievements and could be understood as incrementally unfolding along a horizontal time line, the Freudian view of the self postulated that one had to draw many invisible vertical lines between key events in one's childhood and subsequent psychic development and conceived of a person's life as unfolding not in a linear but in a cyclical way. Moreover, for Freud, health, rather than success, was the new goal of the psyche, and this health did not depend on one's sheer will because healing occurred, so to speak, behind the back of the patient's cogito and will. Only transference, resistance, dream work, and free association—and not "volition" or "self-control"—could lead to psychic and ultimately social transformation. Finally, psychic recovery could not be democratic and evenly distributed throughout society. In fact, Freud suggested that therapy entertained a hidden affinity with social privilege.

Yet if we take a snapshot of contemporary American culture, it is easy to observe everywhere a powerful cultural alliance between Smiles's

ethos of self-improvement and such notions of Freudian inspiration as childhood trauma, patterns of self-defeating behavior, and unconscious conflicts. Where Freud was dubious about the possibility of a self-made recovery, a vast industry of self-help—addressing issues such as intimacy, child rearing, leadership, divorce, assertiveness, anger management, dieting, and well-being—now relentlessly drives home Smiles's message that self-help is in everyone's reach. By an ironic twist of history, this self-help ethos has become Freudian with a vengeance, for it contains some basic Freudian tenets, such as the claim that much of our identity is unconscious, that its emotional makeup is riddled with conflicts, that most of our conflicts have an internal rather than an external origin, and that conflicts can be overcome through the proper verbal management of one's self and psyche.

The juxtaposition of psychology and self-help—which had initially stood at opposite poles of culture—is one illustration among many of the ways in which seemingly incompatible cultural frameworks can blend to produce a hybrid cultural system different from either of the original systems. Such an alliance occurred because the language of psychotherapy left the realm of experts and moved to the realm of popular culture, where it interlocked and combined with various other key categories of American culture, such as the pursuit of happiness, self-reliance, and the belief in the perfectibility of the self. In fact, Freudian premises about the self could move to the core of American culture when the Freudian outlook was modified enough by subsequent theorists to admit the idea of the perfectibility of the self.

The purpose of this chapter is to reflect on the ways in which the alliance between the therapeutic discourse and the self-help ethos has produced a narrative of self that has deeply transformed autobiographical discourse, that is, how life stories are conceived, told, and negotiated in interpersonal interaction, thereby also transforming identity. Because it has been able to adapt to and absorb different cultural persuasions, psychological discourse has increased the scope of its influence throughout the twentieth century and has come to organize contemporary narratives of selfhood and identity. The durability of a cultural structure is not opposed to change but is on the contrary often explained by it. What

we must explain, then, is how, as Orlando Patterson put it, "identity persists through many sources of change."⁴

The therapeutic narrative has been performed in an array of social sites, such as support groups and television confessional talk shows, and has absorbed a variety of cultural meanings, most conspicuously feminism and the New Age movement. In becoming diffused on a wide scale, the therapeutic ethos moved from being a knowledge system to becoming what Raymond Williams has dubbed a "structure of feeling."⁵ The notion of "structure of feeling" designates two opposite phenomena: "feeling" points to a kind of experience that is inchoate, that defines who we are without our being able to articulate this "who we are." Yet the notion of "structure" also suggests that this level of experience has an underlying pattern, that it is systematic rather than haphazard. Indeed, self-help therapeutic culture is an informal and almost inchoate aspect of our social experience, yet it is also a deeply internalized cultural schema organizing perception of self and others, autobiography, and interpersonal interaction.⁶ If we want to understand how psychology has become a deep cultural structure, that is, a pervasive and unconscious one,⁷ we must understand how and why psychology spilled over several cultural arenas and how it became part of the mental and emotional apparatus of actors. Thus the question of the durability of a cultural structure inevitably brings us back to the question of its depth, which in turn can be reformulated as one of the central theoretical questions of cultural sociology: How does (the therapeutic) cultural structure translate into the "micropractices" of giving accounts, telling one's life story, and explaining others' behavior? This chapter tries to capture the depth of (therapeutic) cultural structure by examining this dual aspect.

WHY THERAPY TRIUMPHED

The therapeutic outlook became a cultural structure enacted in the micropractices of actors thanks to a number of factors: internal changes in psychological theory; the institutionalization of the therapeutic discourse in the state; the growing social authority of psychologists; the role of insurance companies and pharmaceutical industries in regulating pathology and therapy; and the use of psychology by various actors in civil society.

All of these factors explain how therapy took hold of the self in the form of a powerful narrative, the primary vocation of which is to manage various disruptions of biography (e.g., divorce, bereavement, unemployment), the uncertainties that have become inherent in postmodern lives (due to the increasing complexity of the economy and of the cultural sphere), and problems of what I call—following Luc Boltanski's terminology—the “size” of the self, how big or how small one defines oneself (as expressed in such “pathologies” as low self-esteem, low self-confidence, and lack of assertiveness).

Internal Changes in Psychological Theory

As noted in chapter 2, Freudian psychology resonated with the highly popular nineteenth-century movement known as the “mind cure movement,” which included both Christian Science and various non-Christian Science forms of “health mysticism.”⁸ As William James has suggested, this movement was “a deliberately optimistic scheme of life, with both a speculative and a practical side,” whose basic purpose was “the systematic cultivation of healthy-mindedness.”⁹ Protestantism strongly emphasized voluntary action, and in the American context self-help strategies for living have been notoriously combined with popular religions, making spirituality and self-help a central aspect of American culture. This fundamental element of American culture was not easily compatible with the profoundly pessimistic and deterministic framework of the Freudian outlook.

In fact, psychoanalysis could diffuse widely in American popular culture because much of the Freudian bleak determinism was erased from it. It was thus easy for alternative psychological theories—which provided a more optimistic and open-ended view of self-development—to spread. Heinz Hartmann (along with Ernst Kris and Rudolph Loewenstein) played a very important role in making psychoanalysis far more compatible with the core values of American culture. For ego psychologists, the ego rather than the id is the basis of human behavior and functioning and is understood in terms of its adaptive functions. Psychologists like Alfred Adler, Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, and Albert Ellis, although differing in outlook, all rejected the Freudian determinism of the psyche and preferred a more flexible and open-ended view of the self, thus opening

up new possibilities for a greater compatibility between psychology and American moral views of the person. For Alfred Adler, for example, the conscious and unconscious are both in the service of the individual, who uses them to further personal goals. In his view, behavior could change throughout a person's life span in accordance with both the immediate demands of the situation and the long-range goals inherent in one's lifestyle. People move toward self-selected goals that they feel will give them a place in the world, provide them with security, and preserve their self-esteem. Ellis, like Adler, insisted upon action and viewed life as a dynamic striving. Erik Erikson's *Childhood and Society* published in 1950, was another watershed in the history of the integration of psychoanalysis in mainstream American culture.¹⁰ Erikson departed from earlier psychodynamic thought in that he depicted persons as more rational and therefore more conscious in their decision making and problem solving. Whereas Freud believed that the ego struggles to resolve conflicts between instinctual urges and moral constraints, Erikson argued that the ego is an autonomous system that deals with reality through perception, thinking, attention, and memory. As a result of his emphasis on the adaptive functions of the ego, Erikson viewed the person as competent in dealing with various environments over the course of development.¹¹ Whereas Freud concerned himself with the influence of parents on the child's emerging personality, Erikson stressed the historical setting in which the child's ego was molded. If the ego's development was inextricably bound up with the changing nature of social institutions and value systems, this meant it had far more plasticity than the Freudian ego. Moreover, Erikson suggested that the ego developed throughout the life span and was not limited to the early childhood experiences, which in turn suggested the possibility of continuous change. Whereas Freud's objective was to explore how early trauma might bring about psychopathology in adulthood, Erikson's goal was to draw attention to the human capacity to triumph over the psychological hazards of living. In short, Freud's fatalistic determinism was countered by Erikson's optimistic and voluntarist premise that every crisis provided the opportunity for the self to grow and to develop mastery over the world. These developments made psychology increasingly compatible with the values of

the self-help ethos, for they suggested that growth and maturity were inherent components of the life course and that they were obtainable by conscious acts of will and volition.

Thus ego psychology constituted a cultural bridge between the science of psychology and the conceptions of selfhood dominant in American culture. The movement that would help seal this alliance and help psychology make the deepest inroads in popular culture was undoubtedly the humanist movement. Its two most conspicuous and influential representatives were Abraham Maslow and his mentor, Carl Rogers.

Simplifying a great deal of Freudian theory, Carl Rogers viewed people as basically good or healthy and mental health as the normal progression of life, with mental illness, criminality, and other human problems as distortions of that natural, innate tendency toward health. In fact, Rogers extended and stretched a great deal the category of "health" by making it an intrinsic attribute of human beings. Rogers's entire theory was built on the very simple idea of a tendency toward self-actualization, defined as the built-in motivation present in every life form to develop its potentials to the fullest extent possible. In a lecture given at Oberlin College in 1954, Rogers suggested that "whether one calls it a growth tendency, a drive toward self-actualization, or a forward-moving directional tendency, it is the mainspring of life, and is, in the last analysis, the tendency upon which all psychotherapy depends. It is the urge which is evident in all organic and human life—to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature—the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the self . . . [This tendency] awaits only the proper conditions to be released and expressed."¹² Using metaphors borrowed from the realm of plants and animals, Rogers suggests that growth is a universal tendency that is never really absent, only buried. By positing growth as an inherent component of the human condition, Rogers could then offer a simple explanation for lives that were less than fulfilling: they were simply lacking in "self-realization." The goal of therapy thus increasingly became to help one realize one's own authentic self, whether that self needed to be unearthed or fashioned from scratch. The basis for maintaining such drive for growth was, according to Rogers, "to have a basic unconditional positive regard for oneself. Any 'conditions of

worth'—I am worthy if I please my father, or I am worthy if I get a good grade—pose a limit to self-actualization,"¹³ thus suggesting that the self was now enjoined to strive for the elusive goal of self-realization.

But it was Abraham Maslow who would use and fuse these ideas in the most successful synthesis between self-help ethos and psychology. Like the psychologists just discussed, proponents of humanistic psychology maintain that people are largely conscious and rational beings who are not dominated by unconscious needs and conflicts and that they experience, decide, and freely choose their actions. Also inspired by ego psychologists was the idea "of becoming," according to which a person is never static: an adolescent is different from what he or she was in childhood and from what he or she will be in adulthood. Accordingly, it is the person's responsibility as a free agent to realize as many of his or her potentialities as possible; only by actualizing these can the person live a truly authentic life. It is wrong for people to refuse to make the most of every moment of their existence and to fulfill that existence to the best of their ability. Maslow's idea called for a need for self-actualization and led him to offer a hypothesis that would have a resounding success in U.S. culture, namely that fear of success was what prevented a person from aspiring to greatness and self-fulfillment:

It is reasonably [*sic*] to assume in practically every human being, and certainly in almost every newborn baby, that there is an active will toward health, an impulse toward growth, or toward the actualization of human potentialities. But at once we are confronted by the saddening realization that so few people make it. Only a small proportion of the human population gets to the point of identity, or selfhood, full humanness, self-actualization, etc. Even in a society like ours which is relatively one of the most fortunate on the face of the earth. . . . This is our new way of approaching the problem of humanness, i.e. with an appreciation of its high possibilities and simultaneously, a deep disappointment that these possibilities are so infrequently actualized.¹⁴

The result was to define a new category of people: those who did not conform to these psychological ideals of self-fulfillment were now sick. "The people we call 'sick' are the people who are not themselves, the people who have built up all sorts of neurotic defenses against being human."¹⁵ Or, to put things slightly differently, "The concept of creativeness and the

concept of the healthy, self-actualizing, fully human person seem to be coming closer and closer together, and may perhaps turn out to be the same thing."¹⁶

This represented an extraordinarily enlarged realm of action for psychologists. Not only did psychologists move from psychological disturbance to the much wider realm of neurotic misery, but they now moved from neurotic misery to the idea that health and self-realization were *synonymous*. The effect of putting self-realization at the very center of models of selfhood was to make most lives become "un-self-realized." This basic idea formed the core of psychology's uncanny popular success.

But for ideas to guide action, they need an institutional basis. If, as this work assumes, the self is a deeply institutionalized form, we should look for the institutional basis of languages of subjectivity. As John Meyer put it, "The subjective qualities of actors [conform] to and [adapt] the larger cultural resources and prescriptions."¹⁷ I suggest that therapeutic prescriptions could saturate the American polity because they were enacted within three main arenas—the state, the market, and civil society—against the backdrop of the growing social authority of the experts.

Professional Authority

The authority of the psychologist became pervasive in the late 1960s because it found little resistance in the cultural and political arena. In the 1960s, the political ideologies that would have been likely to oppose the individualist and psychological conceptions of the self were on the wane. As Steven Brint put it, "Professional powers are most extensive . . . when professional experts are operating in a depoliticized environment of unchallenged premises. . . . Professional influence can be extensive when professionals are able to assert a central cultural value in the absence of a strong counter-ideology."¹⁸ The 1960s represented an important step toward the depoliticization of the cultural arena because sexuality, self-development, and private life now occupied the center stage of public discourse. More exactly, because these categories had been politicized in the students' protests and discourse, they pushed aside the "older" collectivist understanding and practice of politics and helped focus collective attention on personal well-being and sexuality. The maturation and expansion of the consumer market, allied with the sexual revolution,

helped increase the visibility and authority of psychologists because these two cultural and ideological persuasions—consumerism and sexual liberation—both made the self, sexuality, and private life into crucial sites of identity. In the context of the demise of grand political ideologies and of the increasing legitimacy and cultural visibility of such topics as sexuality and intimate relationships, psychologists were the natural candidates to provide much-needed guidance on topics such as sexuality or intimacy, about which parents or friends had little to contribute. Indeed, areas of conduct are all the more likely to be riddled with uncertainties and to be shaped by the authority of experts when social networks do not (or cannot) serve as guides.¹⁹ Because sexuality had become the supreme site of identity, psychologists could play a role as arbitrators of private life. Using this psychological narrative, psychologists increasingly addressed the public both as consumers and as patients. In particular, because the “paperback revolution,” initiated by Pocket Books in 1939, put easily affordable books in the reach of consumers, popular psychology could now address and reach an ever-widening number of middle- and lower-middle-class people. This paperback revolution enabled psychologists to directly address a wide and heterogeneous public that could now afford accessible expert advice. Such books could be found everywhere, in convenience stores, railway stations, and drugstores, thus consolidating the already flourishing self-help industry.

The self-help publishing industry grew dramatically in the last decades of the twentieth century. “The trade publication *American Bookseller* reports that self-help book sales rose by 96 percent in the five years between 1991 and 1996. By 1998, self-help book sales were said to total some \$581 million, where they constituted a powerful force within the publishing industry. . . . Indeed the self-improvement industry, inclusive of books, seminars, audio and video products, and personal coaching, is said to constitute a 2.48-billion-a-year industry.”²⁰

The State

The therapeutic discourse of self-help became pervasive when it was adopted and diffused by the state, that is, when the state defined itself and became culturally active as what James Nolan calls a “therapeutic

state."²¹ Ellen Herman has argued that the massive adoption of the therapeutic discourse by the state may be attributed to the great concern over social adjustment and well-being in the postwar era. As she puts it, "It was understood that mental health was necessary to the efficacy of the Armed Forces in the short run and national security, domestic tranquility, and economic competitiveness in the long run."²² Reflecting this mood, the National Institute of Mental Health was created in 1946, and its funding then grew at a spectacular rate. If in 1950 the agency's budget was \$8.7 million, in 1967 it was \$315 million, thus suggesting that psychological health and services were deemed to be of universal value and application.²³ Another example of the increasing dominance of mental health-related and psychological language was the fact that in the 1960s the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) was spending more money on psychological studies of behavior than on conventional medical research on the biology of mental disease.²⁴ The institutionalization of the therapeutic outlook in the state apparatus was further manifested in the increasing legitimacy of psychological modes of knowing and ascertaining the truth. As Nolan reports, from 1968 to 1983, the number of clinical psychologists grew threefold. "The monumental increase in the psychologization of modern life is also evident in the fact that there are more therapists than librarians, firefighters, or mail carriers in the United States, and twice as many therapists as dentists or pharmacists." By 1986, there were "253,000 psychologists employed in the United States, more than one-fifth of whom held doctoral degrees." During the same period, it was estimated that an average of ten million Americans sought therapeutic advice in a single year.²⁵ This spectacular increase was tightly connected with the legitimacy that psychology enjoyed in the American state apparatus.

Nolan argues that the (American) state has increasingly relied on the codes, symbolism, and moral discourse of the therapeutic ethos to deploy various rehabilitation programs for such groups as the poor, prison inmates, delinquents, and victims claiming emotional injuries. For example, while throughout the twentieth century the number of emotional injury cases remained constant and unchanged, after the 1960s the "number of cases dealing with claims for emotional damages rose at an extra-

ordinary rate."²⁶ Indeed, courts increasingly recognized the independent nature of emotions and emotional injuries, as evidenced by the increasing number of psychological experts called to testify on behalf of emotionally injured victims and by the fact that criminals were increasingly treated by therapists. Nolan attributes the increasing dominance of psychologists in the state apparatus to the state's need for legitimation. He does not explain, however, why the therapeutic discourse could provide that legitimation. I would argue that at least one of the reasons why the state has increasingly relied upon psychology is that, as George Thomas and colleagues have persuasively documented, modern "collective actors command greater legitimacy and authority if they are founded on a theory of individual membership and activity."²⁷ In this view, individualism is not opposed to state power. In fact, as Michel Foucault and John Meyer have argued, in different yet congruent styles the modern state organizes its power around cultural conceptions and moral views of the individual. The state, in conjunction with the public discourse of media culture, has provided publicly available repertoires to frame languages of selfhood and individualism. It is thus seriously mistaken to view the psychological self as "asocial" or anti-institutional.²⁸ The therapeutic discourse provided added legitimacy to the state at the same time that it was naturalized by its adoption in the state apparatus. The psychological discourse is one of the main sources of models of individualism, adopted and propagated by the state.²⁹ These models, as Meyer and his associates argue, are present in the agenda and the mode of intervention of the state in such various domains as education, business, science, and politics.

*The Market: The Pharmaceutical Industry
and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* was one of the main instruments enabling the extraordinary expansion of psychological modes of explanation. The third edition of the *DSM* (a.k.a. *DSM III*) became the psychologists' definitive "bible," providing a comprehensive list of mental problems, some of which were already known and others of which had been only recently mapped out and diagnosed by a board of psychiatrists and clinical psychologists.³⁰ The *DSM* is the out-

come of research experiments and of numerous deliberations conducted in committees. The ultimate reference book for mental disorders, it lists alphabetically and defines a wide variety of disorders.³¹ The *DSM* is published by the American Psychological Association, and at least since *DSM III* (published in 1980) it has become a widely popular and profitable commercial enterprise. For example, only ten months after its publication, the sale of *DSM IV* grossed \$18 million.³²

Although *DSM III* considerably expanded the range of behaviors defined as markers of mental disorder, the manual never actually defined what exactly qualified these behaviors as mental disorders. The creation of a classification system in which symptoms signified and thus qualified as markers of a mental or emotional disorder now pathologized a wide range of behaviors. For example, "oppositional disorder" (coded 313.81) is defined "as a pattern of disobedient, negativistic, and provocative opposition to authority figures," "histrionic personality disorder" (coded 301.50) occurs when individuals are "lively and dramatic and always drawing attention to themselves," and "avoidant and personality disorder" (coded 301.82) is characterized by "hypersensitivity to potential rejection, humiliation, or shame and unwillingness to enter into relationships unless given unusually strong guarantees of uncritical acceptance."³³ With the attempt to carefully codify and classify pathologies, the category of mental disorder became very loose and very wide, including behaviors or personality traits that merely fell outside the range of what psychologists postulated was "average." Behaviors or personality features that might have been previously categorized as "having a bad temper" were now in need of care and management and were henceforth pathologized.

Herb Kutchins and Stuart Kirk suggest that the codification of pathologies is related to the close connection between mental health treatment and insurance coverage. *DSM III* grew out of the need to make the relationship between diagnosis and treatment tighter so that insurance companies (or other payers) could process claims more efficiently. As Kutchins and Kirk put it, "DSM is the psychotherapist's password for insurance reimbursement."³⁴ *DSM*—which provides the code numbers to be listed on the claims for insurance reimbursement—is the bridge

connecting mental health professionals and such large money-giving institutions as Medicaid, Social Security Disability Income, benefit programs for veterans, and Medicare.³⁵ Not only is it used by the majority of mental health clinicians, but it is increasingly used by third parties such as “state legislatures, regulatory agencies, courts, licensing boards, insurance companies, child welfare authorities, police, etc.”³⁶ In addition, pharmaceutical industries have an interest in the expansion of mental pathologies that can then be treated with psychiatric medications.³⁷ As Kutchin and Kirk eloquently put it, “For drug companies, . . . unlabeled masses are a vast untapped market, the virgin Alaskan oil fields of mental disorder.”³⁸ Thus the *DSM*, willfully or not, helps label and chart new mental health consumer territories, which in turn help expand pharmaceutical companies. Hence the expansion of the category of mental illness, dysfunction, or emotional pathology is related to the professional and financial interests of mental health professionals and drug companies. It is also related to the increasing use of psychological categories to claim benefits, compensations, or extenuating circumstances in courts. In this process, the *DSM* has clearly considerably enlarged the scope of psychologists’ authority, who now legislate over such questions as how much anger may be appropriately expressed, how much sexual desire one should have, how much anxiety one should feel, and which emotional behaviors should be given the label of “mental disease.” Because the classificatory and bureaucratic logic that lies behind the making of *DSM* aims at controlling, predicting, and managing rationally mental disorders, it has increasingly lowered the thresholds defining dysfunctions. This process has most successfully enabled the market’s appropriation of therapy by providing the classifications and cultural frames that have enabled the radical commodification of therapy.

Yet if John Meyer’s theory of culture enables us to understand the “supply side” of culture (which agencies produce it), it does not ask why some institutionalized rules are more likely to be followed than others. The institutionalization of the therapeutic discourse in the state and in the market alone does not explain the uncanny ease with which it took hold of models of selfhood. Therapeutic models of selfhood had an extraordinary cultural resonance because political actors operating in civil society made new demands on the state and on legislatures and ad-

vanced their claims by using and relying on the basic cultural schemes of the therapeutic language to further their struggles.

Civil Society

As outlined in the previous chapter, feminism was one of the major political and cultural formations to adopt the therapeutic discourse, as early as the 1920s and most forcefully in the 1970s. Feminism found in psychology a useful cultural ally because it both promoted sexuality as the site of emancipation and offered the historically unprecedented view that the private sphere should be governed by the (political and psychological) ideal of self-determination. But in the 1980s this alliance took a new turn when feminism denounced the oppressive effects of the patriarchal family in the abuse of children. Ian Hacking argues that the movement against child abuse was started around 1961–62 by a group of pediatricians in Denver who, using x-rays, drew the attention of the public to children who seemed to suffer from repeated injuries.³⁹ If pediatricians could shake public opinion so swiftly, it was because this category of crime suited very well already constituted views of the child's psyche and of the long-lasting effects of injuries experienced during childhood. In 1971, in her address to the New York Radical Feminist Conference, Florence Rush brought the topic of child abuse to the attention of her audience,⁴⁰ a move that had important consequences for feminism. The cause of child abuse was later adopted by feminist activists because it helped transform psychic injury into a political critique of the family.

Alice Miller was one of the most forceful feminists writing against child abuse. In her widely influential *The Drama of the Gifted Child*, Miller utilized therapeutic logic, asserting that to survive and avoid unbearable pain the mind of the abused child is provided with a remarkable mechanism, the "gift" of "repression," allowing for the storage of abusive experiences outside consciousness.⁴¹ Miller placed trauma at the center of one's life narrative and advanced repression as the explanation for why some abused or neglected children do not feel and are not aware of the ravages of trauma as adults. Following the therapeutic logic according to which adults will reproduce the suffering inflicted on them as children, she also saw psychic problems transmitted from one generation to the next:

Any person who abuses his children has himself been severely traumatized in his childhood in some form or another. This statement applies without exception since it is absolutely impossible for someone who has grown up in an environment of honesty, respect, and affection ever to feel driven to torment a weaker person in such a way as to inflict lifelong damage. He has learned very early on that it is right and proper to provide the small, helpless creature with protection and guidance; this knowledge, stored at that early age in his mind and body, will remain effective for the rest of his life.⁴²

Miller also held the view that self-esteem is the most central attribute of successful socialization and that it must be based on the authenticity of one's feelings.

Large cohorts of feminists have followed in Miller's footsteps. Using the defense of abused children, feminism found a new tactic to criticize the family and patriarchy. This was because the social problem labeled "child abuse" enabled feminism to mobilize cultural categories, such as that of the child, that had a broader and more universal appeal.

The cultural categories of "child abuse" and "trauma" were crucial in feminists' tactics because they tapped into universal and uncontested moral views about the sacredness of children and of the family, shared equally by the Right and by the Left. Feminists used the category of trauma to criticize the family, to protect the child, to pass new legislation, and to fight male violence against both women and children, thus illustrating the ways psychological knowledge was used in civil society to convert private ills into political problems and to further universalize feminist struggles. The result of these tactics was that the state and the courts slowly started to indict a new category of perpetrators and to regulate men's behavior inside the family.

Another group that was instrumental in promoting the therapeutic narrative consisted of Vietnam veterans who used the category of trauma to receive social and cultural benefits. In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association officially recognized the category of trauma. "The establishment of PTSD resulted, in part, from intense lobbying by mental health workers and lay activists on behalf of Vietnam War veterans. The PTSD diagnosis acknowledged and dignified the psychological suffering of American veterans amid their ambivalent reception by a divided and

war-weary populace. It grounded their puzzling symptoms and behaviors in tangible external events, promising to free individual veterans of the stigma of mental illness and guaranteeing them (in theory, at least) sympathy, medical attention, and compensation."⁴³ Here again we see at work the blurring of political and private categories and the attempt to ground claims (to compensation or judiciary pursuits) in the universal categories of "psychological damage." Following the institutional and epistemological logic of the therapeutic discourse, PTSD became progressively applied to a wide variety of occurrences, such as rape, terror attacks, crime, and even accidents, thus contributing to the expansion of the category as an illness construct applied to an ever-widening pool of victims.

As Ron Eyerman has argued, it is not the experience that produces traumatic effect but rather *how* we remember it. Experience, as cultural sociologists know, is mediated by culture.⁴⁴ Both feminists and Vietnam veterans could construct certain experiences as traumatic because they held in common a few cultural assumptions that in turn could coalesce into a memory of trauma: that people could be damaged psychically, not just physically; that there could be a considerable time lag between the time at which such damage was perpetrated and its actual consequences; that there could be symptoms of PTSD without necessarily a self-aware recollection of the events that led to it; that compensation could be claimed (or indictment pursued) decades after the trauma; that trauma severely threatened the possibilities of self-development; and that all citizens had an equal right to a healthy psyche. These actors—feminists and Vietnam veterans—were only paving the way for a variety of other political actors who were increasingly entering civil society by making claims to victimhood and psychic damage in the name of ideals of personhood that intertwined the psychic and the political.

From the multitude of examples illustrating the inflation of the number of psychological diseases in general and the expansion of the definition of PTSD, we can cite that of Carol Wilson and Mary Ellen Fromouth, two psychologists who argue that much of what is called sibling rivalry should be properly relabeled as relationships of abuse. As Frank Furedi reports, "Moral entrepreneurs attempting to raise public 'awareness' of

this issue argue that emotional abuse is present in all forms of sibling abuse. They suggest that survivors of sibling abuse often display signs of PTSD, complex post-traumatic disorder and dissociative identity disorder.⁴⁵ Once they are redefined as suffering from any given disorder resulting from PTSD, victims of siblings abuse can be processed by the vast pharmaceutical-health-media-legal industries, which in turn provide the adequate vocabularies and cultural frames to construct a story, make claims on institutions and agencies, and demand reparations.

While I agree with Eva Moskowitz and Frank Furedi that from the 1970s onward political problems were increasingly framed as personal and psychic deficiencies,⁴⁶ I do not believe, as they do, that this means political problems were privatized or disconnected from politics. On the contrary, once psychologized, social problems were refunneled into the public sphere to make new and expanding claims on the polity (which did not, however, take the form of organized ideological propositions). This constitutes, undoubtedly, one of the most obvious transformations of the public sphere in the 1990s, a transformation resulting from the fact that so many different social actors had an interest in promoting a narrative of disease and victimhood.

This analysis offers an outstanding example of what Latour calls a “process of translation”—the process in which individual or collective actors constantly work to translate their own language, problems, identities, or interests into those of others.⁴⁷ Feminists, psychologists, the state and its armies of social workers, academics working in the field of mental health, insurance companies, and pharmaceutical companies have “translated” the therapeutic narrative because all these actors, for different reasons, have had a strong interest in promoting and expanding a narrative of the self defined by pathology, thereby de facto promoting a narrative of disease. The therapeutic persuasion thus functions as an enlarged cultural “trading zone,” a twist on the expression of the historian of science Peter Galison, which designates that various groups with different interests and ways of thinking are engaged in the exchange of knowledge and symbols even when they differ on the meaning of what they are exchanging.⁴⁸

These various actors have all converged in creating a realm of action in

which mental and emotional health is the primary commodity circulated, a realm in turn marking the boundaries of an “emotional field,” namely a sphere of social life in which the state, academia, different segments of cultural industries, groups of professionals accredited by the state and universities, and the large market of medications and popular culture have intersected and created a domain of action with its own language, rules, objects, and boundaries. The rivalry between various schools of psychology, or even the rivalry between psychiatry and psychology, should not overshadow their ultimate agreement on defining emotional life as something in need of management and control and on regulating it under the incessantly expanding ideal of health channeled by the state and the market. A great variety of social and institutional actors compete with one another to define self-realization, health, or pathology, thus making emotional health a new commodity produced, circulated, and recycled in social and economic sites that take the form of a field. The constitution of this “emotional field” explains the emergence of new forms of capital (see next chapter) and new schemas to understand the self in terms of disease, health, suffering, and self-realization. In the same way that artistic fields define “true” art, emotional fields define “real” (mental, emotional) health. In the same way that artistic fields define the set of competencies necessary to evaluate art, emotional fields define the emotional and personal dispositions according to which health, maturity, or self-realization is established. How such fields produce new forms of habitus is what I examine in the remainder of this chapter and in the next chapter.

THE THERAPEUTIC NARRATIVE OF SELFHOOD

The Therapeutic Narrative

As noted earlier, the therapeutic persuasion has transformed what was once classified as a moral problem into a disease and may thus be understood as part and parcel of the broader phenomenon of the medicalization of social life. The therapeutic discourse has indeed performed a massive cultural recoding of what was previously defined as immoral behavior into what Mariana Valverde has called a “disease of the will,” a

disease in which the self's capacity to monitor its actions and to change them is at stake.⁴⁹ With the injunction that we become our most "complete" or "self-realized" selves, no guideline was provided to help determine what differentiated a complete from an incomplete self. If "the real self" is continually evolving and if, as Maslow states, "one's needs, wishes, feelings, values, goals, and behavior all change with age and experience,"⁵⁰ then it is impossible to establish what the self-realized self actually is. Conversely and symmetrically, any behavior could be classified (conceived of) as "self-defeating," "neurotic," or "unhealthy." In fact, when one examines the assumption that underlies most texts using therapeutic language, a clear pattern structuring the therapeutic form of thought emerges: the ideal of health or self-realization defines, *a contrario*, dysfunctions that are produced by the very category of the "fully self-realized life." That is, the claim that an un-self-realized life needs therapy is analogous to the claim that someone who does not use the full potential of his muscles is sick,⁵¹ with the difference that in the psychological discourse it is not even clear what qualifies as a "strong muscle." This fundamental logic shapes the therapeutic narrative (see chapter 2).

Narrative has become a key category to understand how selfhood is constituted through culture, how the self communicates with others, and how one makes sense of one's place in a particular social environment. Life stories focus attention on certain objects through the ways in which they connect events in the life course together. Narratives contain an abstract (summary of the gist of the narrative); an orientation in space, time, situation, and participants; a complicating action (sequence of events); an evaluation (significance and meaning of the action, attitude of the narrator); and a resolution.⁵² A biographical narrative is a narrative that selects and connects the "significant events" in one's life, thus giving a person's life meaning, direction, and purpose. Students of autobiographical discourse have argued that narratives shape our self-understandings and the ways we interact with others. Indeed, how we grasp our lives and communicate them to others depends on the narrative form we choose "to tell our lives."⁵³ Life stories have a form. To use Paul Ricoeur's expression, they "emplot the self" in specific ways, integrating the various events of one's life within an overall narrative frame-

work or story that carries a general theme.⁵⁴ Narratives of self draw upon broader, collective narratives, values, and scripts that imbue these personal stories with socially significant meanings. Personal narratives may also embed a collective dimension, as they can be linked to master or grand “cultural key scenarios,”⁵⁵ to use Sherry Ortner’s felicitous expression.

The main characteristic of therapeutic narratives is that the goal of the story dictates the events that are selected to tell the story as well as the ways in which these events, as components of the narrative, are connected.⁵⁶ Narrative goals such as “sexual liberation,” “self-realization,” “professional success,” or “intimacy” dictate the complication that will prevent me from attaining my goal, which will in turn dictate which past events of one’s life I will pay attention to and the emotional logic that will bind these events together (e.g., “I should have a life with intimacy; yet I do not experience intimacy; that is because all the men I am with are distant; the men I am with are distant because I *choose them this way*; I choose distant men because my mother never attended to my needs. How do I know my needs were unfulfilled then? Because they are unfulfilled now”). In that sense, the therapeutic narrative is retrospectively emplotted or “written backwards”: the “end” of the story (my present predicament and my prospective improvement) initiates the story.

But we arrive here at an extraordinary paradox: therapeutic culture—the primary vocation of which is to heal—must generate a narrative structure in which suffering and victimhood actually define the self. Indeed, the therapeutic narrative functions only by conceiving of life events as the markers of failed or thwarted opportunities for self-development. Thus the narrative of self-help is fundamentally sustained by a narrative of suffering. This is because suffering is the central “knot” of the narrative, what initiates and motivates it, helps it unfold, and makes it “work.” Therapeutic storytelling is thus inherently circular: to tell a story is to tell a story about a “diseased self.” As Michel Foucault laconically remarked in his *History of Sexuality*, the care of the self, cast in medical metaphors of health, paradoxically encouraged a view of a “sick” self in need of correction and transformation.⁵⁷

Let me offer an example of such narrative. As suggested in the previ-

ous chapter, intimacy was posited by psychologists as an ideal to be reached in sexual and marital relations. In the context of close relationships, intimacy, like self-realization and other categories invented by psychologists, became a code word for "health." Healthy relationships were intimate, and intimacy was healthy. Once the notion of intimacy was posited as the norm and standard for healthy relationships, the absence of intimacy could become the organizing overall narrative frame of a variety of problems. In the therapeutic narrative, an absence of intimacy can only point to one's emotional makeup: for example, to what psychologists call a *fear* of intimacy. Quoting a therapist, a *Redbook* article aptly makes the point as follows: "In our society, people are more afraid of intimacy than sex. . . . Typically, people with intimacy problems have trouble feeling sexual in close relationships, although they may function very well in more casual affairs."⁵⁸ Therapeutic narratives are supremely tautological, for once an emotional state is defined as healthy and desirable, then all behaviors or states that fall short of this ideal point to problematic emotions or unconscious barriers, which in turn must be understood and managed in the framework of the therapeutic narrative. "Some couples feel mismatched: They think that the distance in their marriages exists because they are married to the wrong person. They both may have chosen their incompatible mates because they need distance: If they were married to someone they really liked, they would have to be intimate and then they would be in even greater trouble."⁵⁹ Instead of taking "incompatibility" as a cause for discord, incompatibility is taken to be the symptom of deep unconscious fears, the unearthing of which will initiate the narrative reworking of the self. "Fear of intimacy" becomes a narrative peg for intimate relationships, a way of framing, explaining, and transforming them. If distant men (or women) are really only afraid of something they actually deeply long for, then this narrative provides both the dominant theme of their deficient identity and the goal toward which such an identity can be re-formed.

The symbolic structure of therapeutic narratives is highly compatible with the cultural industry because narrative pegs can be easily changed, thus making the psychological profession susceptible to renewable consumption of "narratives" and "narrative fashions." To illustrate, in the

1980s, a new narrative frame was offered in a book that, one year after its publication, had sold more than three million copies: *Women Who Love Too Much*.⁶⁰ That book replaced "fear" with a new narrative peg, namely "addiction," to play the narrative role of explaining why some relations fell short of the ideal of intimacy psychologists had constructed. Any behavior that falls short of the therapeutic ideal requires an explanation.⁶¹ In this process, opposites can become equivalent: in Norwood's book, for example, it turns out that addiction actually hides fear. "If you have found yourself obsessed with a man, you may have suspected that the root of that obsession was not love but fear. We who love obsessively are full of fear."⁶² And how does one know that one has the disease of "loving too much"? Simply by looking at one's own childhood. Childhood spent in a dysfunctional family is likely to produce addiction. What is a dysfunctional family? A family where one's needs are not met. And how does one know that one's needs were not met in childhood? Simply by looking at one's present situation. The nature of the tautology is obvious: any present predicament points to a past injury (which can range from severe physical abuse to lack of love or benign negligence). A past lack of love can manifest in two equally opposite ways: either one is "afraid of intimacy" or one "compensates for lack of love by being a care-giver."⁶³ Loving too much and not loving enough are thus converted into symptoms of the same pathology. The crux of the reasoning that lies behind these claims again follows the psychologist's reasoning: by definition, healthy love does not hurt and is not painful; if anything hurts or goes awry, it necessarily points to a psychological deficiency of the person who loves, a deficiency that can mean either of two opposite facts, loving too much or not enough. "When being in love means being in pain we are loving too much. . . . When our relationship jeopardizes our emotional well-being . . . we are definitely loving too much."⁶⁴ Intimacy and health thus become equated and equivalent. "But we are not attracted to healthy men, men with whom there was some hope of getting our own needs met. . . . They seem boring to us. We are attracted to men who replicate for us the struggle we endured with our parents, when we tried to be good enough, loving enough, worthy enough, helpful enough, and smart enough to win the love, attention, and approval from those who

could not give us what we needed, because of their own problems and preoccupations. Now we operate as though love, attention, and approval don't count unless we are able to extract them from a man who is also unable to readily give them to us, because of his own problems and preoccupations."⁶⁵ The therapeutic narrative structure can produce contradictory plot lines—fear of intimacy or addiction to intimacy—that organize the self in a consistent way by finding the causes of a deficient relationship in a repressed or forgotten past. How is this narrative structured? Or more exactly, how does its structure reflect some important ideological mechanisms of the therapeutic discourse?

A Demonic Narrative

William Sewell Jr. and many others have suggested that institutions build cultural coherence not so much by trying to establish uniformity as by trying to organize difference. Institutions are "constantly engaged in efforts not only to normalize or homogenize but also to hierarchize, encapsulate, exclude, criminalize, hegemonize, or marginalize practices and populations that diverge from the sanctioned ideal."⁶⁶ What is interesting and perhaps unprecedented in the therapeutic persuasion is that it has institutionalized the self through "difference" that is actually generated by the moral and scientific ideal of health and normality.

Through the positing of an undefined and endlessly expanding ideal of health, any and all behaviors could be labeled, *a contrario*, "pathological," "sick," "neurotic," or, more simply, "dysfunctional" or "un-self-realized." The therapeutic narrative posits normality as the goal of the narrative of self, but because that goal is never given a clear positive content it in fact produces a wide variety of un-self-realized and therefore sick people. The narrative of self-help is thus not the remedy to failure or misery; rather, *the very injunction to strive for higher levels of health and self-realization produces narratives of suffering*. The contemporary twist on Freud's famous claim is that we are the masters of our own house, even when, or perhaps especially when, that house is on fire.

In other words, the narrative of therapeutic self-help is not, as structuralists would have it, the binary opposite of a narrative of "disease." Rather, the very same narrative that promotes self-help *is* a narrative of

disease and psychic suffering. Because cultural schemas can be extended or transposed to new situations, feminists, veterans, courts, state services, and professionals of mental care appropriated and translated the same schema of disease and self-realization to organize the self, making the narrative of self-realization a truly Derridean entity, containing and enacting simultaneously that which it wants to exclude, namely disease, suffering, and pain.

This narrative does not constitute a distortion of psychoanalysis but was embedded within it from the start. For example, Margaret Mahler, one of the foremost early proponents of psychoanalysis in America, claimed: "It seems inherent in the human condition that not even the most normally endowed child, with the most optimally accessible mother, is able to weather the separation-individuation process without crises, come out unscathed by the rapprochement struggle, and enter the oedipal phase without developmental difficulty."⁶⁷ If the "most normally endowed child" and the "most optimally accessible mother" still produce "difficulties" and "crises," then both normal and pathological children—*all* children—do not and cannot achieve mental health and consequently need the help of psychology to surmount the crises inherent in the very experience of living. This basic vision of health—intrinsic in the therapeutic narrative of self-liberation and self-realization—leans on a narrative of disease.

This narrative may be characterized as a "demonic narrative."⁶⁸ As explained by Alon Nahi and Haim Omer, a demonic narrative situates the source of suffering in an evil principle that is outside the subject, whether Satan or a traumatic event. This form of evil is characterized by its ability to insidiously get inside the person. Evil is inside a person and is basically hidden from observers and even from the subject's own view. In the same way that the devil can take control of a person without his or her knowledge, trauma can leave its destructive marks without the person's awareness. Moreover, in the demonic narrative, the identity of the person is taken over and transformed by the evil principle, which has insidiously entered his or her soul and body. Similarly, in the therapeutic narrative a trauma forges a new identity. Another characteristic of the demonic narrative is that only an outside person can correctly decipher the signs of psychic contamination. This is why confession is central to

the purification process, which must follow the identification of the demonic possession. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, in the demonic narrative one thing and its opposite are both interpreted as proof of the presence of the demon. Acknowledgment that one has met with Satan is as strong a proof of one's encounter with the devil as vehement denial. Similarly, to become aware of one's psychological problems is as indicative of their power as one's denial of them.

To summarize: in order to explain how therapy became a basic schema for the self, we must account for the fact that it has become part of the routine operations of large institutions that command many cultural and social resources, or what William Sewell calls an "institutional node,"⁶⁹ such as the state or the market. Moreover, the therapeutic narrative is located at the tenuous, conflict-ridden, and unstable junction between the market and the language of rights that has increasingly saturated civil society. Institutionalization and diffuse dispersal of the therapeutic narrative code throughout society go hand in hand and are key to understanding how the therapeutic self was made into a narrative schema organizing the self.

PERFORMING THE SELF THROUGH THERAPY

Cultural schemas are deep forms of cultural encoding in that they organize perception of the world within basic structures that in turn constrain the ways we communicate and interact with our environment. Because of its wide institutional resonance, the therapeutic narrative has become a basic self-schema, organizing stories about the self and, more specifically, autobiographical discourse. It is the form as much as the content of how we make sense of ourselves in the world. Cultural schemas can be extended or transposed to new situations when the opportunity arises. In that sense a schematic structure is virtual, that is, it can be actualized in a potentially broad and undetermined range of situations. "Cultural action puts texts into practice."⁷⁰ But just how does it do that? Therapeutic texts have become translated into practice because from the start they were texts that were *performed*. These performances started in the consulting room of the psychoanalyst but later became considerably extended when new sites were added, most conspicuously the support group and the

television talk show. "Cultural performance is the social process by which actors, individually or in concert, display for others the meaning of their social situation. . . . It is the meaning that they, as social actors, consciously or unconsciously wish to have others believe. In order for their display to be effective, actors must offer a plausible performance, one that leads those to whom their actions and gestures are directed to accept their motives and explanations as a reasonable account."⁷¹

The therapeutic narrative structures the mode of speech in a performative genre that has emerged in the last fifteen years and has transformed the entire medium of TV, namely the television talk show. The most successful and well-known example of this television genre is the Oprah Winfrey talk show, viewed by more than thirty-three million people daily. Oprah Winfrey has notoriously used a therapeutic style of interviewing and has intensely promoted a therapeutic style of self-improvement. As I have argued elsewhere, her vast cultural and economic enterprise has depended on her capacity to perform her inner self, that is, on her capacity to convince her audience of the authenticity of her suffering and self-overcoming. Moreover, her show has been a platform for the performance of the problems and struggles of ordinary guests who, in the act of their self, use the therapeutic narrative. Here is an example of how the Oprah Winfrey show provides its guests with a therapeutic narrative with which to frame *and perform* their self-understanding.

Sue wants to file for divorce. Her husband, Gary, feels distressed by the prospect and very much wants to go back to his wife. His desire to go back to his estranged wife is framed as a psychological problem, presented under the broad heading of "why people want to get back to their ex." A psychotherapist, Carolyn Bushong, has the primary function of framing Gary's story as a problem and of providing the general narrative accounting for his behavior:

OPRAH: We've been joined by Carolyn Bushong. She's a psychotherapist, and her book is called *Loving Him without Losing You*. And she says that love is not usually the reason that people can't get over their exes. It is?
 BUSHONG: Well, there are a lot of reasons, but a lot of it is rejection. And I think that's what's hooking him [Gary] in here—is that he needs—you need to win her back to feel like you're OK with yourself. . . . [Later in the show] Gary is addicted to that. And "that" is that feeling that "I'm a

bad person. That—my ex says I’m a bad person. And maybe I am a bad person. So if I can convince her that I’m not a bad person, then they’ll be OK again . . . in righting the wrong, it is the part, again, where maybe I feel guilty about what I did and I want to—I want to make it up to that person so that my guilt can go away.

OPRAH: Do you feel some guilt, too, Gary?

GARY: Sure, I do.

BUSHONG: Yeah, about [your trying to control Sue].

OPRAH: And you want to say, if you would just take me back, I can show you I want to, and not do that anymore.

GARY: That’s the way I felt in the past, yes.

OPRAH: Yeah, OK, that you can’t live or with—live with or without the ex.

BUSHONG: And that gets into addicted—addictive relationships. There are so many relationships where people feel like, you know, “I want this person, I love them, but I hate them.”⁷²

A few observations are called for. First, a group of people who “love too much” or people “who can’t live without their ex” are simultaneously constituted as sick people and as consumers by the profession of therapy, the publishing industry, and the television talk show, thus illustrating that the cultural power and pervasiveness of therapy is related to the fact that consumer culture has been one of the main venues for therapy. Second, we can observe how the therapeutic narrative constitutes emotions, here guilt, as public objects to be exposed, discussed, argued over, and, most of all, performed, that is, communicated for an audience and evaluated for their authenticity. Thus, in becoming therapeutic, the self becomes both more private (centered on its inner interiority) and more public (in possession of a language to make private life accountable and subject to the objective evaluation of others). Third, the therapeutic biography is an ideal commodity in that it demands no or little economic investment—it demands only that the person allow us to peek into the dark corners of his or her psyche and that he or she be willing to tell a story. Narrating and being transformed by one’s narration are the very commodities produced, processed, and circulated by a wide array of media outlets (women’s and men’s magazines, talk shows, radio call-in programs, etc.) because they can generate an almost unprecedented surplus value. In fact, what grants the therapeutic narrative its performative character is its location in the market. If Oprah Winfrey has become one of the richest

women in the United States, it is because talk shows demand very little economic investment and because the conversion of private woes into public concerns appeals to popular taste by transgressing the cultural boundary between private and public. Fourth, in this account, the therapeutic narrative exerts an obvious and “substantial interpretive sway” over processes of self-interpretation.⁷³ What helps a person rewrite the story of his or her life is the therapeutic goal of the story.⁷⁴ Finally, this narrative foregrounds negative emotions such as shame, guilt, fear, and inadequacy, yet it does not activate moral schemes of blame or guilt.

The therapeutic narrative has significantly transformed autobiographical discourse in that it makes the public exposure of psychic suffering central to the account of oneself. If nineteenth-century autobiographical narratives were characterized by their “rag to riches” storyline, a new contemporary autobiographical genre takes an opposite character: these stories are about psychic agony, even in the midst of fame and wealth, and they are about the very act of telling them. Three examples will clarify my point. The first concerns Oprah Winfrey, who, at the apex of her glory, could construct her life as follows:

Before the Book [an autobiographical book she was supposed to write], she was emotionally adrift in the murky and suffocating waters of self-doubt. . . . What matters is how she felt inside, in the deepest corridors of her soul. And there, she never felt good enough. Everything flows from that: her perpetual struggle with obesity (“The Pounds represented the weight of my life”), her sexually active adolescence (“It wasn’t because I liked running around having sex. It was because once I started I didn’t want the other boys to be mad at me”), her willingness to make a fool of herself for a man in the name of love (“I was in relationship after relationship where I was mistreated because I felt that was what I deserved”). “I know it appears I have everything,” Oprah says, glancing around her \$20 million, 88,000 square foot film and TV complex just west of downtown Chicago. “And people think because you’re on TV you have the world by a string. But I have struggled with MY own self-value for many, many years. And I am just now coming to terms with it.”⁷⁵

The narrative of psychic suffering recasts success biographies as biographies in which the self itself is never quite “made” and in which one’s psychic suffering becomes an ongoing constitutive aspect of one’s

identity. In the new therapeutic autobiography, success is not what drives the story; rather, it is precisely the possibility that the self is or can be undone in the midst of worldly success. To take another example, an actress as young and successful as Brooke Shields can write an autobiography whose interest lies almost exclusively in its account of her postpartum depression.⁷⁶ The value of such accounts lies in the fact that in the therapeutic worldview even successful lives are still in the making, with the very act of telling the story being one aspect of such process of self-making. In a similar way, Jane Fonda's autobiography⁷⁷ is told as the unfolding of an emotional and psychological drama that starts with an unhappy childhood spent with a cold and distant father, who, in her story, becomes the hidden but real cause for her three equally failed marriages. Fonda's book is sarcastically reviewed by the *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd in a way that highlights the overuse of the therapeutic formula: "Fonda offers six decades' worth of exhaustive excavations into her lost and found selves. 'My life so far' is not a lyrical title, but it captures Jungian Jane's Sisyphean, Oprah-phan struggle to process her pain and banish her demons. Her book is a psychobabble loop of . . . forfeiting her authenticity and feeling disembodied, then trying to reinhabit her body and 'own' her womanhood and her space and her vagina, and her leadership and her wrinkles and her mother, so that her 'authentic self' can emerge."⁷⁸ All three autobiographies of powerful, successful, and glamorous women are thus told as tales of past wounds, in which the protagonist is still at work in her successful and glamorous life and is perpetually overcoming her emotional problems.

The narrative of self-help and self-realization is a narrative of memory and of the memory of suffering, but it is simultaneously a narrative in which the exercise of memory brings redemption from it. Central to this narrative is the assumption that one exercises one's memory of suffering to free oneself from it.

Around the 1990s, such confessional autobiographies became a well-established genre. As Furedi suggests, the "illness memoir became one of the most distinct literary genres of the 1990s."⁷⁹ In fact, the illness memoir has given rise to "what Bookseller magazine refers to as 'mis lit,' or 'misery memoirs,' in which the author tells of his or her triumph over

personal trauma.⁸⁰ Strangely enough, this genre seems to have particularly flourished among the privileged, who, I suggest, can use the narrative to further bestow on themselves symbolic capital, to show that their life is still a struggle against (and a success over) an adversity that has now a psychic character. To illustrate the cultural distinctiveness of this narrative genre, we may quote here Abraham Lincoln's remark about his own life: "It is a great piece of folly to attempt to make anything out of my early life. It can all be condensed into a single sentence . . . the short and simple annals of the poor."⁸¹ The therapeutic narrative is radically opposed to this way of telling one's life story, as it consists precisely in making everything out of early life. In conformity with the stoicism and restraint that pervaded much of Protestant culture, Lincoln refused to adorn poverty and suffering with meaning. In contrast, the therapeutic narrative consists precisely in adorning with maximum meaning any and all forms of suffering, both real and invented.

It is tempting to lament the pervasiveness of such narrative. But we should resist this temptation. Instead, we should explain how its symbolic structure has resonated with the structure of wants and desires of contemporary men and women. I posit that the therapeutic narrative has had a wide cultural resonance for a number of reasons.

1. It addresses and explains contradictory emotions—loving too much or not loving enough; being aggressive or not being assertive enough. In marketing terms, it is like a cigarette that could satisfy both smokers and nonsmokers as well as smokers of different brands of cigarettes. In other words, the therapeutic structure is a generic structure that lacks specific content and is therefore highly mobile and flexible, adaptable to a wide variety of ills, able to account for individual particularity, yet able to be shared by many others. This generic flexibility in turn enables the constitution of what David Held calls "communities of fate,"⁸² or communities organized around common suffering, best exemplified by the phenomenon of the support group.
2. The therapeutic narrative taps into the subject simultaneously as a patient and as a consumer, as someone in need of management

and care and as someone who can, if helped, be in control of his or her actions. In that respect, it merges two contradictory constructions of self at work in contemporary culture: the self as a (potential or actual) victim of social circumstances and the self as the sole author and actor of one's life.

3. The narrative uses the basic cultural template of the Judeo-Christian narrative. That template that is both regressive and progressive: regressive because it is about past events that are, so to speak, still present and at work in people's lives, and progressive because the goal of the narrative is to establish prospective redemption, here, emotional health. In that way, the narrative is a very efficient tool to establish coherence and continuity for the self.
4. The narrative makes one responsible for one's psychic well-being, yet does so by removing any notion of moral culpability. It enables one to mobilize the cultural schemes and values of moral individualism and of self-improvement. Yet by transposing these to childhood and to deficient families, it exonerates the person from the moral weight of being at fault for living an unsatisfactory life.
5. The narrative is performative, and in that sense it is more than a story because it reorganizes experience as it tells it. In the same way that performative verbs do the very action they proffer, a wide variety of social sites such as support groups or talk shows provide a platform on which healing is performed. This is an important feature, as it is in the experience of self-change and in the construction of that experience that modern subjects experience themselves as morally and socially most competent. Self-change is perhaps the chief source of contemporary moral worth.
6. The therapeutic discourse is a contagious cultural structure because it can be duplicated and spread to collaterals, grandchildren, and spouses. For example, second- and third-generation trauma victims now have their own support groups by virtue of their grandparents' having been actual victims of the Holocaust.⁸³

This is possible because they draw on a symbolic structure that enables them to constitute their identity as sick subjects to be healed. In this way, the therapeutic narrative can activate family lineage and create continuity, both vertically and horizontally.

7. This narrative has been very compelling for men and women alike because it taps into the (traditionally male) ideal of self-reliance through the foregrounding of emotional life and because it enables self-management in both the private and the public sphere. To that extent, this narrative can be said to be gender blind.
8. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, the therapeutic narrative emerges from the fact that the individual has become embedded in a culture saturated with the notion of rights. The psychological persuasion provides the lexicon and grammar to articulate claims to “recognition,” claims that one’s private suffering ought to be publicly acknowledged and remedied. Like no other cultural language, the language of psychology mixes together private emotionality and public norms. The language of psychology has codified the private self and made this private self ready for public scrutiny and exposure. This mechanism can transform suffering into victimhood and victimhood into an identity. The therapeutic narrative calls on us to improve our lives, but it can do so only by making us attend to our deficiencies, suffering, and dysfunctions. In making this suffering a public form of speech, in which one must expose to others the injuries inflicted on the self by others, one becomes ipso facto a public victim, somebody whose psychic damage points to the past injuries perpetrated by others and whose status as victim is acquired in the very act of telling others one’s injuries in public. In becoming public, this speech not only allows the subject to obtain symbolic reparation (in the form of recognition) but also compels him or her to change and to improve his or her condition. It thereby inaugurates a new model of selfhood and responsibility: it makes one responsible for one’s future but not for one’s past. It promotes a self that is passive—in that it is

defined by wounds inflicted by others—but is commanded to become highly active, in that it is summoned to change. It is highly responsible for self-transformation, yet it is not held morally accountable for its deficiencies. This split model of responsibility marks, I believe, a new cultural form of selfhood.

My last suggestion is greatly at odds with the claim of many commentators that the American creed of success and self-reliance is being eroded by therapeutic self-absorption. Christina Hoff Sommers and Sally Satel in particular have forcefully claimed that “therapism” corrodes a stoic attitude and a sense of self-responsibility.⁸⁴ As I have suggested, this claim is mistaken and fails to recognize that therapeutic culture has marked a major advance in the ethos of self-reliance; although it takes a stance of victimhood and moral disculpation for the past, it enjoins a voluntarist responsibility for the future.

A NARRATIVE IN ACTION

Cognitive typifications, or schemas, should be viewed as institutions “deposited” in mental frames. Similarly and conversely, mental structures point back to the institutions from which they emanate.⁸⁵ As Terry Eagleton suggests, “A successful ideology must work both practically and theoretically, and discover some way of linking these levels. It must extend from an elaborated system of thought to the minutiae of everyday life, from a scholarly treatise to a shout in the street.”⁸⁶ Indeed, ideological systems are particularly prone to be “action oriented,” that is, to make their propositions and beliefs binding through an array of practices and behaviors. Only within the context of a practical framework does a theoretical discourse become integrated into ordinary conceptions of the self. In other words, to circulate, culture must be embodied in social practices. To be operative, cultural ideas need to crystallize around objects, interaction rituals, and social performances. Support groups have served as one of the main cultural vehicles for the translation of the textual and institutional structure of therapy into a cultural performance. In this respect, the emergence of support groups should be understood as the

other side of the cultural coin of institutionalized therapeutic language. The therapeutic structure exists in the dense interplay of a textual culture and of social performances, chiefly through support groups.

Support groups are very diverse in orientation and method. Their themes and methods range from meditation groups to primal scream groups, assertiveness training groups, Alcoholics Anonymous, groups for survivors of sexual abuse, rape, trauma, or genocide, and groups for single persons, overeaters, and people with anorexia. In fact, there is such a wide variety of support groups that if we were to define them by their content the very notion of the support group would dissolve. That there can be such a wide variety of themes around which support groups get organized suggests that they have a deeper cultural structure in common. While much has been written about support groups, few have noted the simple fact that support groups activate and perform the structure of therapeutic narratives. The therapeutic narrative schema makes it possible to emplot the self in ways that turn the narration of the self into a public performance.

Support groups are characterized by making private stories into public communicative acts.⁸⁷ The mechanism that enables the translation of the private into the public is therapeutic: it is the therapeutic narrative code that dictates how private stories can be shared, the motivation in telling them in public, and how the audience should interpret them. If we view the support group as a cultural framework in which one enacts and acquires an identity narrative, it becomes obvious that the support group is a cultural form in the sense given by Simmel, that is, a way to organize social experience, negotiate distance between self and others, and draw boundaries between private and public self.

What makes self-esteem, eating, alcohol, or being a third-generation Holocaust survivor into problems to be exposed, told, and shared in the context of a support group is the close interplay between three categories of narratives: a *generic therapeutic narrative*, which conceives of the self as in need of development and/or reparation and that summons the self to reshape the present through the exercise of memory; a *theme narrative*, shared by all members of the support group (obesity, alcohol, divorce, social anxiety, etc.), that constitutes the focus and the experience presum-

ably shared by all members of the support group; and finally *a personal, customized narrative* for each member. Support groups structure encounters and storytelling through these three categories of narrative. I would even venture to say that the therapeutic narrative could spread through society as a set of techniques to present and perform the self because it combined a standardized therapeutic narrative—applicable to men and women, youth and adults, “normally neurotic” and pathologically dysfunctional persons—with one that was highly individualized and customized, adapted to the life circumstances of the person who used it.

While many support groups have remained outside the purview of the market and have developed in the interstices of civil society, the form of the support group has increasingly become commodified. I would like to focus here on a practice that bears affinities to the support group without being equivalent to it, namely the for-profit workshop that lasts anywhere from a few hours to a few days. These workshops are usually led by people who, like the leaders of support groups, claim to have themselves benefited from the techniques they offer. These workshops have a more clearly defined commercial character and illustrate well the insertion of therapy in the market and its commodification. While support groups emanate from civil society, these workshops attempt to commercialize the therapeutic narrative and to package it in a standardized, short, and recyclable formula.

In 1998, I participated in one of the three-day Forum workshops provided by the Landmark Education Corporation (LEC). I chose this particular workshop because it is the most successful global therapeutic cultural form—it not only “exports” global psychological cultural frames in specific locales but presupposes them—and because it had the reputation for having a significant impact on its participants.

The Forum is an offshoot and development of est, which was founded by Werner Erhard, a former car retailer who had a “revelation” that he transformed into “empowerment” workshops. With no small amount of bravado, the Web page presenting Werner Erhard claims that

Werner Erhard, a force for change, became a cultural icon and shaped human consciousness in the last half of the 20th century. In 1971, Erhard introduced the breakthrough notion of “transformation” to the American

public—a notion that redefined how people saw their lives and continues to be seen as a powerful, practical and relevant resource in contemporary society. Transformation, according to Erhard, creates a clear distinction between changing an existing model (no matter how significantly) and creating an entirely new model. This thinking gave rise to the idea that human beings could transform their lives in a very short period of time yielding powerful, long-lasting results.

Erhard developed a dynamic, evolutionary “think tank” for leading-edge programs designed to maximize personal and organizational effectiveness, communication, and the ability to relate to others. The results were extraordinary. To this day, people report remarkable, sustainable benefits in their personal and professional lives—in their families, careers, organizations, and communities.

Millions of people have been influenced by Erhard’s work through direct participation or the cultural change that occurred as thought leaders built upon and applied Erhard’s thinking. The multi-billion-dollar personal growth industry continues to draw and expand on Erhard’s original concepts.⁸⁸

A few elements are interesting here. Like its successor the Forum, est was a hodge-podge of doctrines and ideas, religious (Zen and scientology), philosophical (most notably Heidegger’s existentialism), and psychological (most conspicuously echoing Maslow and Rogers). The workshop is not, strictly speaking, psychological, but it has used many of the themes and techniques characteristic of the therapeutic persuasion and more specifically of humanist psychology. For example, an advanced course called the Wisdom Course is described as an “eight-month-long inquiry that transforms our ordinary conversations and ways of relating to others, from a fundamentally childish way of being that we inherited from our past to a fundamentally adult way of being that fully utilizes our best capabilities.” It is noteworthy that Erhard was not a psychologist but an ordinary, nonprofessional, white-collar worker. What would later become an international workshop for self-change could spring from an ordinary member of the American middle class because the therapeutic language and narrative had become so deeply entrenched in American culture that a nonprofessional psychologist could use its basic categories and mix them with elements taken from the New Age movement to offer a framework for self-change. The second noteworthy element in the cre-

ation of the Forum is that it represented an unprecedented attempt to commodify the therapeutic narrative, in that it could now become a fifty- or sixty-hour object of consumption. Indeed, the Erhard Web site estimates that close to one million people worldwide underwent the est training before the seminars were halted in 1991, to be replaced by LEC. LEC grosses some \$50 million a year in business and has attracted several hundreds of thousands participants worldwide. It is headquartered in San Francisco and has forty-two offices in eleven countries, thus suggesting that it is a global enterprise.

The workshop functions as a global company, both in the sense that its structure is designed to spread worldwide and in the sense that it offers a homogeneous cultural form that it circulates worldwide. At the top of the corporation is a body of fifty leaders from different countries who are trained in the United States. These leaders are the only ones authorized to deliver the workshop at the senior level. They carry programs in more than one hundred locations in the United States, Canada, the Middle East, Australia, Europe, Asia, and India. What enables the corporation to function as a global cultural form is its simultaneous use of Far Eastern spirituality and therapeutic schemas,⁸⁹ both of which have become permanent cultural features of Western cultures in the form of the New Age movement. Reflecting an important aspect of the New Age movement, the workshop seamlessly blends New Age spirituality with psychological techniques of self-knowledge and discussion. But the most interesting feature is LEC's dual economic structure: a commercial structure embodied in various workshops delivered only by authorized leaders and a voluntary structure, that is, a series of meetings held after the main workshop in which the attendees rehearse the lessons learned during the workshops with the help of a group of volunteers whose main function is to keep the participants within the cultural orbit of the Forum and to motivate them to attend the more advanced workshops. Those after-workshop sessions are all led by former attendees of the Forum, who, after undergoing formal training, conduct voluntary sessions with Forum attendants. The voluntary workshops are an important addition to the for-profit workshops because they make self-transformation an ongoing and incremental process, thus translating each "higher" step toward self-transformation into a new economic outlay. LEC mixes a

highly commodified version of the therapeutic narrative with the informal, voluntary work of people who can influence others through their disinterestedness, past suffering, and capacity to restructure their selves.

In accordance with the self-realization narrative and the widespread therapeutic ideal of communication, the LEC Web site defines the purpose of its *workshop* as that of providing its participants with “a remarkable enhancement in their ability to communicate and relate to others and to accomplish what’s important to them in their own lives.” The leader of the Forum workshop I attended defined the main goal of the workshop as one of empowerment and self-transformation, thus firmly placing the workshop in the genre of self-help. Moreover, the workshop makes forceful claims to self-realization. Toward that end, it uses at least two terminologies: one derived from the realm of spirituality and New Age thought (referring, for example, to Zen Buddhism) and the other derived from the “scientific” terminology of psychology. However, the core of their program is committed to the cultural model of communication analyzed in the previous chapters. Their programs are described as “committed to generating extraordinary communication—powerful listening and committed speaking that results in self-expression and fulfillment.”⁹⁰

Support groups arise from disruptions and crises in the life course. It is easy to see how divorce, rape, or sexual abuse can provide both the motivations for participating in a support group and its thematic raw material, for experiences that most reveal a breach between self and society and between the ideal and the real are those most in need of being narrativized.⁹¹ In this perspective, the main object of support groups is to renarrate the self and to make sense of life-disrupting events. A study of large group awareness training confirms that the participants (or prospective participants) in these programs are more likely to be faced with life crises.

A study was conducted to assess the psychosocial characteristics of individuals who become involved in large group awareness training (LGAT) programs. Prospective participants in The Forum, which has been classified as an LGAT, were compared with nonparticipating peers and with available normative samples on measures of well-being, negative life events, social support, and philosophical orientation. Results revealed that prospective participants were significantly more distressed than peer and normative

samples of community residents and had a higher level of impact of recent negative life events compared with peer (but not normative) samples.⁹²

Yet although this workshop contains people whose lives have been disrupted, the narrative structure it puts into service is essentially activated by the Rogerian ideal of self-realization. The Forum leader thus opens the workshop by claiming that “to be extraordinary is what we are committed to. . . . The Forum encompasses all areas of your life. It will be taken care of. Just try it.”

To reach this extraordinariness, the leader calls upon participants to identify a dysfunction, a source of complaint. Indeed, the first way of emplotting the self offered by the workshop is to focus on what the Forum calls “a racket,” or a recurring complaint. The first step toward a narrative reconstruction of the self consists in “looking back in the past to identify the source of complaint.” Following the therapeutic logic, the Forum narrative is put into motion by focusing on a dysfunctional aspect of one’s life that unfolds through the creation of a system of analogies between different recurring aspects of one’s life. To mobilize the self—and thereby to make it a source of emplotment and self-change—this complaint is claimed to hold a hidden benefit for the complainer. As a leaflet describing the Forum program suggests, “In the Rackets segment, we discuss the idea of a racket as an unproductive way of being or acting that includes a complaint that something shouldn’t be the way it is. Often, we don’t notice that while our complaints may seem justified, even legitimate, there is a certain payoff—some advantage or benefit we are receiving that reinforces the cycle of behavior. At the same time, this way of being has steep costs, whether in our vitality, affinity, self-expression, or sense of fulfillment.” This step offers an explanation for one’s discontent but almost simultaneously is accompanied by the claim that such complaining serves hidden purposes and has hidden benefits; the assumption of hidden and secondary benefit from suffering in turn makes it possible to call on the individual to change.

The leader asks participants to think intensely about people they have difficult relationships with, such as colleagues, bosses, or close relatives. Here again the emplotment of the self is activated by focus on a dysfunc-

tion. Moreover, the very ideal of self-realization or “extraordinariness” is likely to generate a sense of perpetual crisis.

During the workshop in which I participated, various people stood up in front of an audience of a few hundred people and told them the complaints thus solicited. One woman claimed she had not talked to her father for many years. A man claimed that he had always wanted to become a musician but had never fulfilled his dream. He declared he was now ready to make the move. Another man declared that he now understood that he was always running away from home and avoiding his responsibilities and that he was now ready to cope with them. Another woman, whose parents had divorced when she was a child, claimed that after twenty years she now understood that she was consumed by an unexpressed anger toward her father, who had left home. To give a final example, a forty-two-year-old woman whose brother had died when she was twelve suggested that she now understood that her lifelong problem had been a failure to grieve properly for her dead brother. As a result, she had become passive and anxious and unable to get a hold of her life.

The workshop taps into two main categories of problems. The first category concerns the self’s relative positioning vis-à-vis others, its competence, and its capacity to compare well to others: problems such as self-esteem, assertiveness, an inferiority or superiority complex, or insecurity. The second category concerns the viability and durability of close relationships and/or the difficulty of the self in entering such relationships.

For example, Daniel, who participated in the workshop, tells the following story on the Web:

One of my automatic ways of being came out of an incident when I was eleven, and [when] I was forced to admit publicly to my friends that I was too shy to kiss a girl who lived across the street. I felt humiliated, and I concluded that I could never make it socially or really be brave with girls. So instead I re-designed myself to be studious, serious, hard-working and responsible as a way of compensating for this. Part of this was that I had to do things on my own, by myself. It became my winning formula. It still is, but since I can now distinguish it and see it, it doesn’t have to run me anymore. I have the freedom to be ways and create things which the previous automatic way of being would have forbidden as off-limits or too threaten-

ing. I see myself as less rigid, and more able to enjoy integrating an increasing variety of people and activities in my social circle, my community, and my work.

The insignificance of this incident—admitting publicly he was too shy to kiss a girl—illustrates how the dysfunctions that form the basis of self-narratives have to do with how the self is sized up and evaluated. Indeed, many of the diseases of the self are about how big or small one feels vis-à-vis others.⁹³ We see in this story the therapeutic narrative at work. The person identifies a behavior—hard work, seriousness, or studiousness—as “pathological” by identifying an incident responsible for causing it and by focusing on the behaviors or feelings that the incident presumably precluded. In conformity with the new narrative structure provided by the Forum, this man also tries to identify the benefits accrued by his behavior. Once a racket is identified and one’s life story is accordingly and appropriately framed, the next step is to execute an act that will signal a dramatic break from previous patterns and that can be interpreted as signifying that one’s life story is in the process of changing. This corresponds to dramaturgy as Victor Turner defined it: “The dramaturgical phase begins when crises arise in the daily flow of social interaction.”⁹⁴ These public stories are forms of metalanguage dealing with everyday crises that are neither amorphous nor open-ended but have a diachronic structure, identifiable and isolatable phases, and an end, all deemed by Turner to be characteristic of performances. In these groups, men and women become reflexive and “reveal” themselves to themselves as well as to others. These narrations retell one’s life by viewing the present as problematic, by locating in the past an event explaining one’s predicament and directly connected to it, and by making emotional self-understanding the motor of self-change. In conformity with the therapeutic ethos, these stories of self-change stress self-understanding and the capacity to exercise choices in a flexible way.

The group acts not only as the site for a verbal narration but also as the witness for an immediate change demanded by the leader. After a racket has been identified, each participant is asked to write a letter and/or make a phone call to someone he or she has not spoken to and to ask for forgiveness or otherwise have an important and revealing conversation.

The conversation is a purely performative event, for, in conducting it with someone with whom one has a difficult relationship one is already effecting a change (which can then be attributed to the powerful effects of the Forum workshop). One is then asked to tell the group about how the conversation produced a change in oneself, thus making the event into a dramaturgical performance that acquires even more emotional power when it is ratified by the group.

An example of the ideal Forum story is given below. It was told by a former attendant of the first workshop whose story was supposed to convince and recruit newcomers.

My story is simple. The Forum gave me back my life. I grew up in a family with a father who used to beat me and I went around life carrying a heavy burden on my shoulders. What the Forum made me see was that I was afraid of people and was judgmental of them, how I could not get close to people, and how I chose to be a victim, a person who has been hurt and victimized in his life. The biggest present I got in life was when I attended and completed the Forum. I went to my father and I told him, "Daddy, I love you. It doesn't matter what happened." At that point I had not seen my father for a few years, since my parents had been divorced. But then I spoke to him as if nothing had happened, I sat down with him in his house, we drank coffee, and I got my life back. My father today has cancer and my mother supports him very much, we all support him very much, and without the Forum I can hardly imagine where we would all be. I would probably have come to him with all the weight of my past, with all the weight of the years where he abused me. The fact that I'm able to forgive him makes me a freer person. The past cannot dictate itself to me anymore.

Discussing Victor Turner, James Clifford argues that social performances enact powerful stories "that provide the social process with a rhetoric, a mode of employment, and a meaning."⁹⁵ In the story just quoted, as in the entire therapeutic persuasion, the rhetoric, mode of employment, and meanings are chiefly provided by the therapeutic narrative and performance of self-change.

During the various intermissions of the workshop, I discussed with various (five) participants whether they liked the Forum and what they liked about it. All were very enthusiastic about the workshop. When I asked them informally to state what they liked about it, the four women

and one man concurred that the idea that “you are in charge” and that “you can change your life” was by far the most appealing.

Self-change is thus the keystone of the large therapeutic cultural edifice, and self-change can take place only if ills and suffering are first defined, labeled, and categorized. This dual narrative structure in turn generates the dual moral world of contemporary men and women, a world in which both “victims” and “survivors” are celebrated. The dual narrative structure of victimhood and survival is also a moral structure that endows selfhood with a moral status.

CONCLUSION

In his discussion of narcissism, Fred Alford suggests that the sociologist Christopher Lasch and the philosopher Alasdair McIntyre share the view that the therapeutic-narcissistic self can no longer have a coherent narrative of selfhood. Because the self retreats into the present and into the realm of inner emotional life, it can no longer produce a narrative meaningfully connecting life events and projecting the self into the future.⁹⁶ However, as this chapter suggests, the opposite seems to be true. The therapeutic discourse offers endless possibilities for coherently narrativizing the life story through its “diseases.” This assumption, central to the support group, is what makes the therapeutic persuasion “work”: if failure can always be corrected, then it has to be somehow the result of a “disease of the will,” that is, to be self-made, and if it is self-made, it can also be unmade, which in turn legitimates and perpetuates the very existence of the therapeutic institution. Indeed, what is particularly interesting about therapeutic narratives is that the narrative *about* the self quickly becomes a “narrative in action”—a narrative about the process of understanding, working at, and overcoming (or not overcoming) one’s problems. Far from being unable to bestow coherence on a given life, therapeutic narratives can be faulted for making *too much* sense of one’s life, of binding too tightly the present, the past, and the future in a seamless narrative of psychic wounding and self-change. The social and economic consequences of such gender-blind or androgynous narratives of selfhood are examined in the next chapter.

SIX A New Emotional Stratification?

The less the skill and exertion implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labor of men superseded by that of women.

—Karl Marx

In 1883, before the birth of psychoanalysis, writing a letter to his future wife Martha Bernays, Freud commented on the differences between the pleasures of “the masses” and those of the middle and propertied classes. He wrote:

The mob gives vent to its appetites, and we deprive ourselves. We deprive ourselves in order to maintain our integrity, we economize in our health, our capacity for enjoyment, and our emotions. We save ourselves for something, not knowing for what. And this habit of constant suppression of natural instincts gives us the quality of refinement. . . . Why don't we get drunk? Because the discomfort and disgrace of the after-effects gives us more un-pleasure than the pleasure we derived from getting drunk. Why don't we fall in love with a different person every month? Because at each separation a part of our heart would be torn away. . . . Our whole conduct of life presupposes that we are protected from the direst poverty . . . The poor

people, the masses, could not survive without their thick skins and their easy going ways. . . . Why should they scorn the pleasure of the moment when no other awaits them?¹

In these surprisingly sociological remarks on the emotional and instinctual structure that separates the working classes from the middle classes, Freud anticipates what would become a cliché of the 1960s, namely that the middle and propertied classes achieve economic security at the price of constricting and constricting their emotions, impulses, and desires. Using such metaphors as “economizing,” “saving,” and “deprivation,” Freud suggests that his middle-class contemporaries treat their emotions as an economic asset: they save and conserve energy; they “invest” emotions in objects that do not threaten their stability and security; they make their emotions yield social benefits such as “refinement” and a genteel demeanor. Conversely and symmetrically, Freud suggests that the working classes are less stifled by emotional constraints. The middle-class emotional ethos would be of no use to the working classes, Freud tells us, because it would weaken them (they need their “thick skins” to survive) and because emotional deprivation serves no purpose when one may not expect future rewards such as respectability and social standing. The working classes have no choice but to enjoy ordinary pleasures when they can.

In these succinct lines, Freud formulates a relationship between a psychic economy of emotions and social class, or more exactly between emotions and what Pierre Bourdieu would later call “economic necessity.”² The more pressing one’s economic necessity, the less restrained one’s emotions are likely to be: this is clearly what we can read between Freud’s lines.

In a later text, Freud brings a new twist to these evocative statements. Freud imagines a house divided between a “basement” and a “first floor.” The caretaker’s daughter lives in the basement and the landlord’s daughter on the first floor.³ Freud imagines that early in their lives the two girls engage in sexual play. But, Freud tells us, they will develop quite differently: the caretaker’s daughter, who does not think much of playing with genitals, will remain unharmed and perhaps become a successful actress, marry above her condition, and even eventually become an aristocrat. By contrast, the landlord’s daughter, who at a young age has learned the ideals of feminine purity and abstinence, will view her

childhood sexual activity as incompatible with such ideals. She will be haunted by guilt, will take refuge in neurosis, and will not marry. Given Freud's and his contemporaries' prejudices, we are led to presume that the landlord's daughter will lead the lonely and dull life of a spinster. Thus Freud suggests that the social destiny of these two girls is intertwined with their psychic development and that their neurosis (or lack thereof) will determine their social trajectory. However, the idea proposed here by Freud differs from what he expressed in his letter to Martha. Freud again suggests that members of different classes have access to unequal emotional resources, but here the lower classes are, so to speak, emotionally better equipped, for it is precisely their lack of sexual inhibition that will prevent the birth of neurosis and will in turn help the caretaker's daughter achieve upward social mobility.⁴

In these two texts, Freud makes a complex claim about the relations between social and psychic trajectories. He points to reciprocal connections between emotions and social position, for he argues that if class determines emotions, emotions may play an invisible but powerful role in social mobility. By suggesting that the economic ethos of emotions, engendered within the capitalist sphere of work, is incompatible with successful personal and emotional development, Freud implicitly relies on a model in which psychic development *may disturb and invert* the traditional hierarchical supremacy of money and social prestige.

Freud's observations have important consequences for our understanding of the relationship between culture, emotions, and social class. First, Freud suggests that the middle-class private sphere is not sealed from the economic marketplace. Nor is it a zone of free-flowing, spontaneous, and disinterested emotions. On the contrary, Freud clearly suggests that even in their private lives members of the middle class continue to treat their emotions as *capital*—as something to be properly amassed toward the acquisition of a respectable social identity and “distinction.” Second, Freud suggests that by using the economic ethos to manage one's emotions and libido, members of the middle class deprive themselves of emotional fulfillment and happiness. Economic success and “distinction” come at the price of “true” intimacy and stand in the way of happiness. Third and perhaps most important, emotional development and happiness may ultimately disturb conventional class hierarchies.

In the few sentences quoted here, Freud tentatively suggests that there are some significant points of connection between social stratification and emotions and that emotional life can shape one's social destiny and success. He offers a supremely sociological idea, namely that emotional life is not only stratified but stratifying as well.

But for emotional life to play this role in social structure, there must be a mechanism that makes possible the conversion of emotional action into social resources. In fact, Freud's remarks are strangely premonitory of the ways psychological ideas have contributed to making emotions play an increasingly crucial role in social mobility. In other words, the mechanism mediating between social structure and emotions is the vast cultural apparatus deployed by the psychological persuasion that I have documented in the previous chapters. As Karin Knorr-Cetina puts it: "With the current understanding of the society, we tend to see knowledge as a component of economic, social, and political life. But we can also turn the argument around and consider social, political, and economic life as part and parcel of a particular knowledge culture. . . . *Knowledge cultures have real political, economic, and social effects that are not neutral with respect to social structures and interests and with respect to economic growth*" (emphasis added).⁵

In this chapter, I examine, in a somewhat preliminary and tentative way, some effects of psychological knowledge on social structure. If culture is central to the sociological project, this is not only because it bestows meaning on action but also because it shapes the very structure of economic and symbolic resources. As Roger Friedland and John Mohr put it, "Materiality is a way of producing meaning; meaning is a way of producing materiality."⁶

THE RISE OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

Freud's ideas quoted at the beginning of this chapter have nowhere been more thoroughly applied than in the personality tests that were established during the first decade of the twentieth century.⁷ As Andrew Abbott noted, "Psychological tests, both intelligence tests and personality tests, have been a central part of organizational America since the 1920s."⁸

Personality tests aimed at selecting the most suitable candidates for work in organizations and thus were premised on the assumption that there was a close connection between personality traits, emotional makeup, and work performance. As two leading researchers of personality tests argue, somewhat unsurprisingly, "Psychoanalytic concepts and psychoanalysis itself have had a rather profound impact on the assessment process."⁹ Psychoanalysis played an important role in making emotions and personality an aspect of social mobility by providing the tools with which to recruit people and to evaluate their performance in corporations.

In the 1940s, the field of personality screening went through an important phase of development with the use of Jungian "archetypes." On the basis of their interpretation of Jung's archetypes, Katherine C. Briggs and Isabel Myers developed the famous Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which included such categories as "sensing" and "intuitive," subsequently used widely for personality evaluation and job placement.¹⁰ Another example of the influence of clinical psychology on personality tests was the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), initially designed to diagnose clinical pathologies and later transplanted from its initial clinical context to the workplace. This test was based on the assumption that choosing between true-false statements about a number of propositions such as "I prefer my boss to be good-natured but inconsistent than sharp-tongued but logical" would reveal one's personality.

Through psychologically inspired categorization and classification, emotional behavior imposed itself as a central criterion on which to evaluate and predict economic behavior. Personality tests have become so widespread that they can be said to be to emotions what scholastic tests are to cultural capital: a way to sanction, legitimize, and authorize a specific way of handling feeling. In her *Cult of Personality*, Ann Murphy Paul reports that there are today twenty-five hundred kinds of personality tests and that testing has become a \$400 million industry. Eighty-nine of the *Fortune* 100 largest corporations use personality tests for hiring and training employees.¹¹

Personality tests are predicated on a few core assumptions: that individuals' actions and reactions can be captured under the category of "personality"; that personalities are stable and therefore predictable; that

they can be measured; and finally that certain personalities—the patterned cluster of attitudes and emotions through which we respond to situations—are more suited to certain professions than others. In an extension of this core notion, some personalities came to be viewed as more competent than others.

The practice of measuring personality included two components, attitudinal and emotional. But it was the emotional component that, through time, became most decisively developed. The idea that emotions point to (professional and social) competence has nowhere been more apparent than in the now widespread notion of “emotional intelligence” (EI), which explicitly connects emotional management and social success. According to this notion, one’s emotional makeup, however subjective, can be objectively evaluated, thus enabling comparisons of people’s emotional capacities.

When the notion of EI emerged in the 1990s, it swept American corporations and even American culture at large and quickly became a new instrument for evaluating work performance. With it, psychologists could now “discover” in the world characteristics they had helped shape, namely that emotional demeanor had become a marker of social identity. The notion of EI claimed that how we handle our emotions points to essential aspects of who we are and that emotions can in turn be currencies to be exchanged for a variety of social goods, most noticeably that of leadership.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

The notion of EI seems to have been recently “discovered,” but as is often the case in the history of science and ideas, its basic tenets had already been established and diffused by psychologists throughout the twentieth century. EI marks the culmination of a century in which the presence and hegemony of the therapeutic loomed large.

Even before the concept was coined, psychologists can be said to have promoted the tenets of EI. For example, a 1985 *Redbook* article advises that

at your job you can take advantage of your greater ease with emotion if you start using it strategically. You can begin by thinking about what you’re feel-

ing, trying to understand why you feel the way you do. Consider your emotions an early-warning system, to alert yourself that an office situation needs to be adjusted. "If you are angry or upset," Dr. Potter says, "something's wrong. That's what your emotions can tell you. Then use your intelligence to decide what to do. Analyze the degree of risk you face, and decide whether it's in your best interests to express your emotions. If you think before you speak, revealing your feelings might actually turn out to be savvy office politics."¹²

This article advances the central idea behind the later notion of EI, namely that emotions should be at the service of one's intelligence, always used to understand and further one's self-interest. To be emotionally intelligent is tautologically defined as the ability to manage one's emotions in such a way that they are disciplined by the cognitive and practical understanding of one's interests. A second illustration of the existence of the idea before the concept emerged can be found in a 1997 book claiming that "emotional literacy" is the key to a happy life lived without emotional mistakes. Whereas "emotions like anger, fear, or shame make smart people behave stupidly, rendering them powerless," emotional literacy makes it possible to respond skillfully to situations as varied as a street riot, wife beating, and a magistrate's lying under oath.¹³

If Daniel Goleman, a journalist with training in clinical psychology, was able to turn his book *Emotional Intelligence* into a worldwide best-seller and into a new standard against which to evaluate conduct,¹⁴ it was because American popular culture had already been saturated for almost a century in psychological notions that increasingly made emotions central to the evaluation of self and others. Psychological culture had long been advocating the main tenet behind the notion of EI, namely that emotions ought to be informed and guided by rational judgments.

EI is, among other things, an offshoot of Howard Gardner's pioneering notion of multiple intelligence,¹⁵ and more specifically of his notion of "personal intelligence." Personal intelligence consists of "access to one's own feeling life—one's range of affects or emotions: the capacity instantly to effect discriminations among these feelings, and eventually label them, to enmesh them in symbolic codes, to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior."¹⁶ EI is an extension of this form of intelligence in that it "is a type of social intelligence that involves

the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions."¹⁷

John Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David Caruso, three prominent researchers in EI, define EI as the set of abilities that determine the accuracy of one's emotional reports and in turn affect one's problem-solving skills. According to their definition, EI includes the ability to perceive and express emotion, incorporate emotion into cognitive processes, and regulate one's own emotion as well as that of others.¹⁸ In this definition, EI is the cognitive ability to process one's own feelings mentally and verbally, such rational processing being in turn important for the reflexive management of situations.¹⁹ EI is thus the rational capacity to manage one's emotions in order to create adaptive responses to situations.

Given that sociology has been very preoccupied with mechanisms of social reproduction and exclusion,²⁰ the concept of EI should be a welcome guest: at face value, it should help us build more complex models of social stratification—helping us introduce another variable that may or may not explain and predict social mobility. In addition, the notion of EI could offer an alternative to the much criticized concept of IQ. Indeed, the standard measurements of intelligence have been sharply criticized by sociologists on the ground that they reflect the cognitive competence and social environment of the middle and upper middle classes, thus subtly discriminating against those whose socialization excludes the cognitive skills that are tapped into by the IQ tests. An example of the ways in which the notion of EI has been seized in popular culture as a welcome alternative to standard notions of intelligence can be found in Oprah Winfrey's show on EI in which she enthusiastically endorsed the concept: "And isn't it exciting to know you're smarter than you think? Because success in life, in relationships, with your family and at work really isn't about how well you did in school, test scores or even a high IQ. It's about something completely different, and it's something you have the power in yourself to change. It is called emotional intelligence. . . . The best part: Unlike your IQ score which is pretty much set in stone, you can actually raise your EQ score and become emotionally smarter."²¹

It is also easy to understand why the notion of EI would be enthusiastically endorsed by feminists who hold that women are more attuned

than men to interpersonal relations and that they base their moral decisions on empathic thinking. If it is indeed frequently the case that women (and perhaps minorities in general) develop the skill of tuning into the emotional needs of others, of managing social relations in a nonconfrontational fashion, and of monitoring their verbal and emotional behavior, they should score high on EI tests. Consequently, making our institutions sensitive and responsive to EI would make it possible for emotional competence to increase the status of minorities that have been disadvantaged when competing with others on the basis of formal intellectual skills. In light of this, the concept of EI would seem to be analytically useful, as it complicates our picture of social stratification, and normatively important, as it could help us define positively skills other than those traditionally used to rank children and adults. Hence, at face value, the concept of EI should be welcome, as it reinforces the repeated claims that forms of intelligence are multiple, that intelligence does not necessarily demand formal cognitive skills, and that our institutions (schools or corporations) should be more attuned to identify and reward this new form of competence. But despite the promise of EI as enabling more plural and democratic distribution of resources, I argue that it in fact represents a new axis of social classification that creates new forms of social competence (and incompetence).

Emotional Intelligence and the Therapeutic Ideology

Let me refer to a vignette presented in a seminal article by two of the most prominent academic researchers in the field of EI, Mayer and Geher. They define EI through its opposite, the lack of EI: "A patient (a woman) was having an affair with a married man. One day she asked the married man to promise her that he would not come from his home when he visited his wife and that he would not return home when he left her. She formulated what she expected from him more clearly the next day: "You must not come from her or go to her when you see me." She spoke of it as if it were an indifferent thought that had occurred to her, a convenient arrangement, yes, even a kind of amusing idea. But the analyst could put himself into the place of his patient. . . . He got an inkling . . . of the emotions of his patient: her jealousy, her suffering from the thought that her lover left her to go home to his wife."²² The authors suggest that this

woman's request is formulated in a way that renders her own interest unintelligible: unable to tell to herself and to her lover what her "real" feelings are, she runs the risk of seeming capricious, irrational, and demanding. Thus one must conclude that her coping strategies are inadequate in helping her achieve her goals. According to the authors, she offers an example of a lack of EI.

The authors' analysis of the vignette is interesting precisely because it helps expose the assumptions contained in the notion of EI, assumptions derived mostly from the therapeutic ideology. Their first and perhaps most obvious assumption is that there are "real" feelings trapped inside the self, only waiting to be appropriately named and known by a conscious and knowing subject. As I argued in chapter 4, such an "ontological" view of emotion is central to clinical psychology and stands in opposition to the view that feeling an emotion is a labile process, a result of interpretation and labeling that in turn depend on symbolic cues provided by the environment. As numerous anthropologists and social psychologists have argued, there is no emotional "substance" waiting to be known, named, and revealed.²³ Far from being blocks of experience or consciousness waiting to be discovered and appropriately named, names of emotions and the experience of emotions are fluidly and contextually generated. The view that emotions are blocks of experience, repressed, stored, and only waiting to be named and freed, feeds directly into the interests of psychologists who define their work as that of exposing, adequately naming, and transforming emotions.

Furthermore, the authors assume that grounding one's claims on "what one feels" is socially more competent. This claim, which is never made explicit in the text but is only axiomatically assumed, is, once again, a central tenet of the therapeutic persuasion. I would, on the contrary, argue that a competent emotional response depends on the constraints embedded in situations, not on a context-free rational processing, understanding, and labeling of emotions. In other words, a competent emotional response does not necessarily entail a self-conscious awareness of one's emotional responses. For example, in the vignette evoked above, the woman's request was, in all likelihood, perfectly comprehensible to her lover, who would have had to be singularly ignorant of con-

temporary codes of love not to understand that her request was an attempt to claim the uniqueness of their relationship and to isolate their relations from his married life. As it was formulated, this woman's request *was not only reasonable but highly competent* precisely because she did not verbalize her motivations. She was able to make a clear demand on this man's movements without expressing anxiety, jealousy, or possessiveness, all emotions likely to have weakened her position and status within the relationship. This suggests an important theoretical point: social actors attend to situations and function in them with *stored cultural knowledge, or cultural codes*, that make them finely attuned to the constraints embedded in a situation without going through the elaborate operation of identifying, naming, and explicitly expressing the emotions produced by these constraints. In other words, what guarantees that social interactions "flow" is that so much of these interactions relies on tacit and stored knowledge. Echoing the psychological persuasion at large, Mayer and Geher's suggestion that EI involves the reflexive and explicit naming of emotions for oneself and for others is oblivious to the fact that people attend to the meaning of the emotions felt by others without having recourse to a reflexive foregrounding and manipulation of emotions. EI as defined by these authors would make most social interactions cumbersome, as it would hamper interactional flow and fluency. Reflecting the rational views of actors and action that have engulfed and colonized the social sciences,²⁴ the notion of EI equates intelligence with the harnessing of emotions to problem solving. In contrast, for cultural sociologists, situations are construed and dealt with through the tacit knowledge we bring to them; such tacit knowledge makes us opt for less explicit emotional responses grounded in practical and habitual knowledge. Like pianists playing difficult sonatas, we attend to situations by using rules we have perfectly internalized, not by mentally reflecting on and contemplating different courses of action. Pianists or social actors who become too intensely aware of themselves and of the rules they use, of their bodily and emotional movements, play their social score awkwardly, without the flow and fluency that distinguish virtuosity from rote learning. In short, mental awareness of one's emotions is not always possible, nor is it always desirable. The very idea and

ideal of EI emanate from the ideology of psychologists, which has reified emotional life in constructing and institutionalizing the distinction between competent and incompetent emotional responses.

This connects to another crucial point: in this particular social situation—a situation in which a married man has control over a single woman—making her claim in a roundabout fashion rather than clarifying her emotions forthrightly is the *most* competent emotional response, since it enables this woman to retain control of the situation. Indeed, as this example suggests, we often maintain control of situations by veiling emotions, both to ourselves and to others, rather than by disclosing them. Given that power and control are fundamental dimensions of social interactions, and given that they crucially depend on hiding emotions (from others but also sometimes from oneself), this implies that the reflexivity and verbal disclosure of emotions advocated by psychologists and by the experts in EI may ultimately disturb a subtle and more efficient manipulation of social relations and situations. To be more precise: the aforementioned woman is caught in the double bind within which her lover has placed her. Her indirect request elegantly reconciles two contradictory requirements: to retain control by seeming detached from the predicaments inherent to the situation and to establish her amorous territory. Therefore, this example does not illustrate the woman's incompetence; rather, it shows that actors often operate in situations with contradictory demands unreflexively navigating in them and improvising responses. Emotional ambiguity, ambivalence, and unclarity are highly *competent* because they are ways of coping with contradiction-ridden social situations. Had this woman showed what the authors would call EI by becoming conscious of her feelings and by voicing them to ground her claims, she might have lost her control over the situation or over her lover. Specifying her emotions, needs, and goals to herself or to her lover would have made her unable to cope strategically and practically with her situation. The forms of competence posited and implied by the notion of EI thus overlook the fact that actors make inferences about their emotions from situational cues, use practical and tacit emotional knowledge to function in them, and must therefore often be inattentive to whatever background emotions they may have in order to navigate between conflicting situational demands.

The rationalist assumptions guiding the notion of EI curiously contradict not only sociologists of culture but also a line of research in cognitive psychology about some of the processes involved in decision making. This research paradigm shows that many intelligent decisions are based on intuitive thinking, or what cognitive psychologists call “thin slicing,” the ability to make accurate snap judgments about people, problems, and situations without going through a formal process of labeling and rehearsing cognitively the dimensions of the situation, emotional or otherwise. Such snap judgments derive from unconscious thought processes, the capacity to mobilize past experiences and to zero in and focus on very few elements of the object judged. Further, in pathbreaking experiments, the cognitive psychologists Timothy Wilson and Jonathan Schooler and their colleagues have showed that introspection can be an obstacle to problem solving based on insight. When introspecting about such tasks as tasting a jam or choosing an interesting university course, people do less well at recognizing the good from the bad jam, the interesting from the boring course.²⁵ In the vocabulary of sociologists, introspection interferes with action that is moved by the logic of practices, such as taste and social tact.²⁶

Let me thus make the following suggestion: EI is characterized by the reflexive, cognitive, and verbal foregrounding of emotions. Yet it is highly arguable that the injunction to be self-aware, to introspect about one’s emotional makeup, and to process one’s emotions rationally through thought describes adequately emotional competence in its many forms. What we can say, however, is that the value of EI in the form of this definition is a widespread and even dominant notion because it corresponds to the ideology of social groups that are key to the production process and because it corresponds quite well to the requirements made on the self by new forms of capitalism. We should then ask ourselves whose social and emotional skills the notion of EI naturalizes and legitimizes. This is what I turn to examine now.

Emotional and Social Competence

It is not by chance that in the vignette offered by Mayer and Geher the therapist is presented as the one who is emotionally intelligent. This is so because to define emotional incompetence is to simultaneously define

competence and the social bearers of that competence. This is not surprising given that the notion of EI corresponds quite well to the worldview of a particular class of professionals—the psychologists—who have historically been extraordinarily successful in claiming a monopoly over the definition and the rules of emotional life in the private and public spheres and have redefined professional success in terms of emotional demeanor and management. To be emotionally intelligent has become the prerogative of a professional class responsible for the management of emotions, and being emotionally competent would seem to consist in acquiring the cognitive and emotional skills of which clinical psychologists and mental health workers claim to be the virtuosos. EI, like the notion of IQ, serves as an instrument of classification and stratification by virtue of being implemented in organizations that sanction and legitimize it. In the same way that IQ served to classify people in the army and in the workplace so as to increase their productivity, EI has become a way to classify productive and less productive workers, this time along the lines of emotional rather than cognitive skills. But in claiming to simply describe different forms of emotional competencies, the notion of EI in fact helps organize social groups around a new axis of social classification. Emotions have come to be increasingly defined as a form of competence that in turn can be “played” with in social fields of struggle.

As I argued in the previous chapter, emotional fields work by constructing and expanding the criteria to evaluate health and pathology. These emotional fields construct and regulate access to new forms of social competence that I will dub emotional competence. In the same way that cultural fields are structured by cultural competence—the capacity to relate to cultural artifacts in a way that signals familiarity with high or legitimate culture sanctioned by the upper classes—emotional fields are regulated by emotional competence, or the capacity to display an emotional style defined and legitimized by the main actors in that field, namely psychologists and mental workers. The notion of EI constitutes a formalization and codification of such emotional competence.

Like cultural competence, emotional competence may be translated into a social benefit such as professional advancement or social capital. Indeed, for a particular form of cultural behavior to become a form of

capital, it must be convertible into something that agents can play with in a field, such as an economic and social benefit that will in turn give them a right of entry and help them seize what is at stake in that field.²⁷ In that sense, we may speak of a concept of emotional capital, similar in function to that of cultural capital.

Browsing the Internet on EI yielded several examples of the uses of the construct of EI in modern corporations and of the relations it bears to emotional capital. An article reviewing the various uses of EI in the industry deserves to be quoted at length because it (unwittingly) provides an illustration of the way EI is used as a new form of classification that can be converted into real economic capital.²⁸ The article celebrates the capacity of EI to evaluate and measure economic performance.

- “The US Air Force used the EQ-I to select recruiters (the Air Force’s front-line HR personnel) and found that the most successful recruiters scored significantly higher in the emotional intelligence competencies of Assertiveness, Empathy, Happiness, and Emotional Self Awareness. The Air Force also found that by using emotional intelligence to select recruiters, they increased their ability to predict successful recruiters by nearly three-fold. The immediate gain was a savings of \$3 million annually. These gains resulted in the Government Accounting Office submitting a report to Congress, which led to a request that the Secretary of Defense order all branches of the armed forces to adopt this procedure in recruitment and selection.”²⁹
- “Experienced partners in a multinational consulting firm were assessed on the EI competencies and three other tests. Partners who scored above the median on 9 or more of the 20 competencies delivered \$1.2 million more profit from their accounts than did other partners—a 139 percent incremental gain.”³⁰
- “An analysis of more than 300 top-level executives from fifteen global companies showed that six emotional competencies distinguished stars from the average: Influence, Team Leadership, Organizational Awareness, Self-Confidence, Achievement Drive, and Leadership.”³¹

- “In jobs of medium complexity (sales clerks, mechanics), a top performer is 12 times more productive than those at the bottom and 85 percent more productive than an average performer. In the most complex jobs (insurance salespeople, account managers), a top performer is 127 percent more productive than an average performer. Competency research in over 200 companies and organizations worldwide suggests that about one-third of this difference is due to technical skill and cognitive ability while two-thirds is due to emotional competence. (In top leadership positions, over four-fifths of the difference is due to emotional competence.)”³²
- “At L’Oreal, sales agents selected on the basis of certain emotional competencies significantly outsold salespeople selected using the company’s old selection procedure. On an annual basis, salespeople selected on the basis of emotional competence sold \$91,370 more than other salespeople did, for a net revenue increase of \$2,558,360. Salespeople selected on the basis of emotional competence also had 63% less turnover during the first year than those selected in the typical way.”³³
- “In a national insurance company, insurance sales agents who were weak in emotional competencies such as self-confidence, initiative, and empathy sold policies with an average premium of \$54,000. Those who were very strong in at least 5 of 8 key emotional competencies sold policies worth \$114,000.”³⁴
- “In a large beverage firm, using standard methods to hire division presidents, 50% left within two years, mostly because of poor performance. When they began hiring based on emotional competencies such as initiative, self-confidence, and leadership, only 6% left in two years. Furthermore, the executives selected based on emotional competence were far more likely to perform in the top third based on salary bonuses for performance of the divisions they led: 87% were in the top third. In addition, division leaders with these competencies outperformed their targets by 15 to 20 percent. Those who lacked them under-performed by almost 20%.”³⁵

- “For 515 senior executives analyzed by the search firm Egon Zehnder International, those who were primarily strong in emotional intelligence were more likely to succeed than those who were strongest in either relevant previous experience or IQ. In other words, emotional intelligence was a better predictor of success than either relevant previous experience or high IQ. More specifically, the executive was high in emotional intelligence in 74 percent of the successes and only in 24 percent of the failures. The study included executives in Latin America, Germany, and Japan, and the results were almost identical in all three cultures.”³⁶
- “Financial advisors at American Express whose managers completed the Emotional Competence training program were compared to an equal number whose managers had not. During the year following training, the advisors of trained managers grew their businesses by 18.1% compared to 16.2% for those whose managers were untrained.”³⁷
- “The most successful debt collectors in a large collection agency had an average goal attainment of 163 percent over a three-month period. They were compared with a group of collectors who achieved an average of only 80 percent over the same time period. The most successful collectors scored significantly higher in the emotional intelligence competencies of self-actualization, independence, and optimism. (Self-actualization refers to a well-developed, inner knowledge of one’s own goals and a sense of pride in one’s work.)”³⁸

The numerous examples discussed in this article call for a few remarks: EI is used as a new way to predict and control economic productivity and to classify the people in charge of production. It employs what Wendy Espeland and Mitchell Stevens call “commensuration,” a common metric to standardize and compare different objects in order to build (symbolic and/or material) equivalence between them.³⁹ Here the equivalence one tries to build is between jobs and people. As Joan Acker puts it, “[A job] is an empty slot, a reification that must continually be reconstructed, for positions exist only as scraps of paper until people fill

them. . . . Human beings are to be motivated, managed, and chosen to fit the job. The job exists as a thing apart."⁴⁰ Emotional competence has become a formal criterion for measuring and quantifying competencies, thus creating a system of equivalence between emotions and professional performance, measured almost exclusively in monetary terms. The system of equivalence enabled by the notion of EI suggests an unprecedented process of commodification, for EI makes it possible to ascribe a monetary value to a person's emotional makeup, and even to convert one into the other.⁴¹

Following the logic of capital described by Bourdieu, emotional forms of capital can be converted into monetary ones. The emergence of the corporate field has given rise to what Bourdieu terms new forms of symbolic capital that are used in fields of struggle.⁴² If, as Bourdieu suggests, fields maintain themselves through the mechanism of habitus or "the structuring mechanism that operates from within agents,"⁴³ then we may suggest that a certain emotional habitus is increasingly a prerequisite to enter and play in more and more fields. Surpassing traditional forms of cultural capital, such as wine tasting or familiarity with high culture, emotional capital seems to mobilize the least reflexive aspects of habitus. It exists in the form of "long-lasting dispositions of mind and body" and is the most "embodied" part of cultural capital.⁴⁴ Emotional habitus lies thus at the intersection of three domains of social experience: the interactional, the bodily, and the linguistic. It reflects and signals one's social class position at these three junctures. Emotional habitus shapes the ways in which one's emotions are bodily and verbally expressed and used in turn to negotiate social interactions.

Although Randall Collins's approach substantially differs from that of Bourdieu, some of his insights may perhaps help explain the formation of emotional habitus and the reason why it may play an important role in social interactions. Collins has famously discussed the notion of emotional energy to account for what holds interaction rituals together.⁴⁵ I would argue that while emotional energy is not equivalent to emotional intelligence or competence, it is a precondition for it. Collins argues that emotional energy is the type of energy we accumulate from a series of successful interactions with others.⁴⁶ Emotional energy—undoubtedly

an important component of sociability—is the self-confidence we acquire from having repeatedly gained a sense of belonging in a status group. Collins depicts here a kind of Durkheimian synergism—a capacity to “connect” to others—that we derive from having felt like a member in a group in the past and that we can in turn presently feed back to the group. People with such emotional energy, Collins claims, are likely to assume a position of leadership because they have the energy that derives from the group that can in turn embody the group. If, as Collins argues, emotional energy is accumulated through past membership in a status group and successful interactions, then displaying it becomes a way of signaling one’s previous successful interactions—a *sort of positive emotional capital that can be converted into leadership*. Emotional competence can thus be said to depend on the frequency of one’s social interactions and of one’s status in these interactions. But because Collins’s notion of emotional energy is Durkheimian, it does not pay attention to the status markers with which emotions are associated. Emotions function as a capital not only because they are derived from one’s social bonds and one’s position within those bonds but also because emotional habitus, like one’s taste, has a style that is defined by one’s social position and social identity and that in turn defines it.⁴⁷ In other words, not all forms of emotional energy can function as social currencies and be converted into social capital. A rowdy and exuberant energy will not get you very far in such settings as the army or an economic organization. We may thus say that certain emotional styles are more likely than others to be converted into capital, and it is these forms that interest me here.

By proclaiming that personality and emotions were assets for leadership and that these assets could be acquired by a self-reflexive work of introspection and self-observation, psychologists contributed to the conversion of emotional style into a social currency or capital and articulated a new language of selfhood with which to seize that capital. While in Freud’s descriptions the economic self exacted a high price from private life—that peculiar flavor of morose repressiveness that leads to repression and neurosis—the psychic economy of people working in the contemporary service industry—especially lower- and middle-ranking managers—demands a subtle and complex emotional work that in-

cludes rather than excludes others, is both assertive and other-oriented, and is attuned to the emotional aspects of interaction, yet also in full cognitive control of them. For this reason, EI is fundamentally connected to the organization and class dynamics of contemporary capitalism. Contemporary capitalism demands symbolic and emotional skills that will help one cope with a wide variety of social situations and persons in complex, variable, and uncertain markets. EI reflects the emotional style and models of sociability of the middle classes, whose work in the contemporary capitalist economy demands a careful management of the self, who are tightly dependent on collaborative work, who constantly evaluate others and are evaluated by them, who move in long interactional chains, who meet a wide variety of persons who belong to various groups, who must gain the trust of others, and, perhaps most of all, who work in environments in which criteria for success are contradictory, elusive, and uncertain. EI is a disposition through which one is able to cope emotionally with structural uncertainty and with the problem of trust and consensus building. Such an emotional disposition yields emotional competence, which has become particularly prominent in a form of capitalism that can be characterized, following Luc Boltanski's expression, as "connectionist." As Boltanski puts it, in connectionist capitalism the "class *habitus of the dominant classes can no longer rely on its own intuition. This habitus needs to know how to establish relationships between people, who are geographically and socially distant from oneself.*"⁴⁸ In connectionist capitalism, status is established by one's capacity to know many people and to establish connections between them.

More specifically, EI is central to social capital because emotions are the nuts and bolts of how people acquire networks, both strong and weak. Emotions are essential components of the mechanism of social capital in the two senses identified by Alejandro Portes: one designates the ability to form positive social networks, that is, a positive form of sociability in which solidarity and emotional energy are produced; the other designates the ways in which personal relationships are converted into forms of capital, such as career advancement or increased wealth.⁴⁹ Adding a new layer to our conceptualization of emotional competence, here emotions have become a form of capital because establishing social relationships is central to connectionist capitalism.

THE GLOBAL THERAPEUTIC HABITUS
AND THE NEW MAN

Let me take this analysis one step further. The therapeutic habitus marks the emergence of new forms of masculinity, and such new masculinities are, if not directly caused by, at least closely associated with the diffusion and even globalization of therapeutic cultural models, which are themselves connected to the emergence of a "connectionist" structure of feeling.

In a series of articles, John Meyer and his associates have argued that globalization is the process by which an increasing number of states worldwide adopt the same cultural models (of the economy, the polity, the individual), thus making these models penetrate social life.⁵⁰ In the modern globalized polity, individuals constitute themselves by using standard rules in order to establish the essence of modern actorhood, such as being rational and purposeful. Psychology is one of the main cores of cultural globalization, a source of models around which individuality gets organized worldwide. This model is diffused worldwide through university curriculum and training, through the regulated practice of professional therapy, through the state adoption of therapeutic modes of intervention in society, and through the more informal structure of the market. Israel provides an excellent illustration of this process of globalization of models of actorhood through psychology, as it has deeply institutionalized psychological expertise in a number of key social sites and as it also counts a large number of commercial workshops intended to change and improve the self.

To illustrate, I will analyze the example of a workshop on EI that I attended in Israel in 1998. The purpose of the workshop was to teach and spread the insights of the then newly discovered but already widely popular concept of EI.⁵¹

The workshop was attended by approximately two hundred participants. During the day, I sat at several tables and had informal discussions with several dozens of participants. Their professions were varied: the majority worked in average-sized corporations and were middle managers; some were owners of small businesses; still others were educators and organizational consultants. For most participants, this day qualified

as a “training” day and was therefore paid for by their workplace (school, corporation, etc.). This in turn suggests and confirms that the appeal and social uses of the notion of EI are mostly economic.

The first part of the day consisted of various lectures given by Israeli local organizational consultants and coaches, many of whom held degrees in clinical psychology. The second part of the day consisted of a workshop given in English by a certified American psychologist who had come to Israel from the United States for the workshop.

The translator of Goleman’s book into Hebrew opened the event and was followed by a variety of speakers, most of whom were in the field of organizational consulting, claiming expertise in leadership training. In response to one of the organizers’ question as to “who had read” the book, everyone, as far as I could tell, had read it. Yet although the book and its insights were the main topic of the day, there was very little coherence between the different approaches offered by the speakers. One speaker claimed that EI consisted in knowing how to be determined and stubborn, while another claimed that the failure to understand when to stop trying marked a lack of EI. One speaker argued how important it was to plan and think ahead about what we do and what we say, while another claimed that spontaneity was of paramount importance. One advised to “look at what people do, not what they say,” while another argued that “what people do may have so many meanings that we don’t know for sure what it means. We can only know from their intentions, and thus we must always ask them.” None of these contradictions seemed to disturb or to be perceptible to the audience because they were in fact in line with the therapeutic persuasion, which “works” by seizing upon a wide variety of mutually contradicting narrative pegs that can all organize retrospectively the proper management of self. EI is one such narrative peg while also functioning as a classification scheme around which various consultants and psychologists in turn organize their professional practices.

The second part of the day entailed a workshop delivered by David Ryback, PhD and author of *Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work*.⁵² One of an increasingly large number of psychologists, coaches, and organizational consultants who travel globally to distill their standardized tech-

niques locally, Ryback spoke in English to an audience of Israeli participants about his techniques to gain EI.

The content of his workshop—delivered as an interactive lecture—was highly congruent with many of the themes discussed in previous chapters of this book: he claimed that the skills of EI are to be practiced in the private and public spheres and that the skills required for a good marriage are equivalent to the skills required to conduct business or even international diplomatic negotiations. For the most part, these skills are gender neutral, but if they were to be gendered they would undoubtedly be female. Ryback, like all psychologists, distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate emotions and posits that emotional life should be conducted in accordance with objective rules. A competent emotional life contains skills that mix neutrality with spontaneity; sincerity with lack of judgmentality; self-assertion with listening skills; and flexibility with firmness. In short, EI as advocated by this psychologist contained a “mix” of conflicting attributes, precisely the mix that has made the therapeutic persuasion so effective, because it creates a permanent uncertainty and desire to reconcile conflicting attributes.

The attendees were able to refer to insights from Goleman’s book during the workshop. All participants spoke fluent English, which in the Israeli context suggests that they had at least a partial university education. In informal conversations during dinner, all the people I spoke to claimed they had enjoyed the workshop a great deal. One woman, who worked as an administrative assistant in a high-tech firm, claimed that “this stuff influenced [her] a lot” and that she “think[s] a lot about how to improve [her] relationships.” A man who had started his company claimed that people didn’t think enough about the human factor in business and that he was very interested in improving his emotional skills. Finally, another man, who was unemployed and looking for a job, claimed he believed that “the impression one makes is very important. You may be a very good person inside but yet, for some reason, not make a good impression. If you become aware of how you behave and of the impression you make on others, you can better control the whole process.” At the end of the workshop, people were asked to state in public whether they had learned anything from the workshop, and if so,

what. The answers varied and can be listed (in summarized form) as follows: "I feel it has improved my listening skills"; "It teaches me we don't listen to each other"; "I have learned from this workshop that we should live our life to the fullest"; "These are very important ideas that should be introduced to schools"; "It reinforced me in my way of being, to be sincere, open, and honest"; "It has taught me the importance of self-control, how we must watch ourselves carefully"; and "I am happy to be legitimated in my position that our feelings can be empowering and not weakening."

It is very doubtful whether this workshop can single-handedly transform the emotional makeup of its participants. But such workshops should nonetheless interest the sociologist because they point to the formation of what I would like to call a "global emotional habitus." The formation of such a habitus takes place in the usual sites of socialization (family, school, media), but, as the plethora of psychological workshops that have flourished in Israel for the last two decades attests, its acquisition also takes place in the voluntarist cultural framework of educational workshops such as the one analyzed above. These workshops, I argue, have the main purpose of instilling new emotional dispositions, or skills required to navigate the volatile conditions of late modernity, to move along long chains of social networks, and to meet the demands of global connectionist capitalism.

Such habitus is related to economic and cultural globalization (understood as a process that *gets* deployed within local class structures, even if it often ends up disturbing that class structure). In this vein, John Meyer's ambitious and highly persuasive analyses have remained curiously oblivious to the class dynamic through which the process of globalization occurs. Indeed, not only have psychological models of selfhood given rise to a new habitus—which we may characterize as a "global" therapeutic habitus—but, I would argue, this habitus is characteristic of a social group of managers and cultural specialists most involved in the process of globalization. Such habitus works by deconstructing traditional forms of masculinity and by fracturing social groups along lines of new gender (and emotional) identities.

Let me explain with an example. In 1998 I interviewed Eyal, a twenty-

eight-year-old Israeli man who had earned a graduate degree in the social sciences from Tel Aviv University and who worked as a cultural specialist in a cultural/political association with a clear global orientation. During the interview, he distinguished between two types of men, one he called “the hero-type,” who had served in the army, ate national foods (e.g., hummus), and did not express his feelings under any circumstances. The second type, he said, was the “New Man,” as he called him in Hebrew (*Ha Guever Hachadasch*), who was able to “get in touch with his feelings,” with what he called “the feminine side of things.” The interviewee claimed that all his male friends were “like that,” like the New Man, and that he could not have other kinds of friends. The following excerpts of the interview further outline the profile of the “New Man”:

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you are typical in that? Or do you think that your views of men and emotions are strange in Israeli society?

EYAL: No. I am quite typical of a certain social group, a certain social milieu.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean?

EYAL: I mean that to be able to enter a certain social territory, to belong to certain groups, emotional complexity is a must.

QUESTION: Can you point to a character known or unknown that would embody for you that kind of emotional complexity?

EYAL: That would have to be the movie *Annie Hall*. I saw that movie perhaps thirty times. That was a very formative movie for me and for many others.

INTERVIEWER: Let me go back to something you said just before, with regard to belonging to a certain social group, men, or at least the men you know, have to have a certain way of expressing their emotions. Did I understand you correctly?

EYAL: Absolutely. Definitely. It is a part of the “entry exams.” Let me give you an example. My wife, Liora, is a clinical psychologist. She has a sister who lives in Jerusalem. Her husband is some kind of redneck. He comes from a *Moshav* [agricultural settlement.] He is a stereotypical *moshavnik*. He lacks any kind of emotional expressivity. He has no emotions. And we make fun of him, all three of us, me, my wife, and my wife’s sister precisely about that, about the fact that he does not have feelings. He never longs for anything, or misses anything, or feels depressed. He does not know the concept of “being depressed.” Where have you seen anything like that? So that’s the criterion. When I used to date women, if she did not know what “being depressed” meant—

I don't mean a big clinical depression but just regular ordinary depression—then she would not qualify. She would not be a possible candidate. No way.

Cultural globalization is largely at work in the above excerpt: Woody Allen's movies have been a powerful instrument of diffusion of a certain therapeutic style and a new form of masculinity. This style of masculinity is strongly associated with a specific emotional style (anxious, nervous, self-conscious, verbal, reflexive) and has become diffused mostly among the new middle classes. Emotional style functions here as a token of membership in certain social groups—educated, Western, secular, and perhaps, most of all, not defined by the nation, that is, global. That style is associated with everyday markers of taste—how one dresses and what one eats. The "New Man" here thus expresses membership in a status group, for emotional competence marks a form of social distinction. Two men could be technically members of the same socioeconomic group, yet have very different emotional habituses. If globalization creates new forms of inequality, it does so by destructuring gender identities and by driving a wedge between old and new masculinities. We may thus suggest that therapy is a cultural structure mediating between globalization and class structure through the formation of new masculinities. How the formation of new masculinities creates new emotional hierarchies is what I examine now by going back to my American fieldwork, though in a sketchy and tentative fashion.

INTIMACY AS A SOCIAL GOOD

Much of the Marxist or Weberian sociology of capitalism has implicitly held the same view offered by Freud at the beginning of this chapter: the bourgeoisie may exploit others in the realm of production, but they find themselves, after all, the victims of a poetic justice that dispossesses them of the poor man's emotional riches, for in the process of submitting the world to the dispassionate pursuit of gain they sacrifice on the altar of Mammon their well-being and capacity to forge long-lasting meaningful bonds. This cliché—at the heart of which lie the dichotomies of "market"

and “gift” and “interest” and “sentiment”—has prevented sociologists from grasping the ways in which therapeutic habitus may provide better access not only to economic performance but also to such ill-defined and vague concepts as well-being and intimacy. What if the bourgeoisie, or their postindustrial version, have turned out to be the best candidates for love and well-being not despite but because of the emotional habitus that they require and use in the economic sphere?

Because most critiques of therapy oppose the therapeutic ethos to a model of civic virtue or political engagement, they have usually ignored the question of its *social uses*, its pragmatics, thus failing to grasp that the therapeutic discourse orients perceptions, classifications, and modes of social interactions toward the pursuit of social goods, and more especially emotional goods, such as intimacy. Many claim that the most interesting social effect of the cultural domination of therapy has been to create new forms of social goods and new forms of social competence with which to attain intangible goods as intimacy.

This claim is based on what is perhaps the single most important contribution of feminist scholarship, namely that the public sphere (political or economic) cannot be our only way to evaluate the “good society”: intimate relations, friendship, and parenthood are no less—and perhaps even more—the arenas by which to evaluate how good and just a society is.⁵³ Or to say this differently with Andrew Sayer: “Class inequalities involve not merely differences in wealth, income and economic security, but differences in access to valued circumstances, practices, and ways of life—‘goods’ in a broad sense and in the recognition or valuation of those goods and their holders.”⁵⁴ This in turn implies that to critically examine the impact of therapeutic habitus on stratification we cannot rely on a model of society based on economic goods narrowly defined. Intimate relations ought to figure no less in our accounts of the connection between culture and just social arrangements. This also implies that my critique of the social uses of therapy does *not contradict* actors’ own understandings and uses of therapy as a cultural resource to improve their lives. That is, I am able to illuminate new forms of goods and hierarchies not by ignoring the meaning and goals of actors when they use therapy (as traditional concepts of “ideology” or “surveillance” do) but

by taking these very goals and meanings as the departure point of my critique.

In this respect, I suggest that if we view intimacy as a *sphere of meaning in its own right*, the therapeutic ethos appears to be a cultural resource that helps actors reach forms of well-being *as they are socially and historically constructed*. In other words, if we view intimacy as a good of a special kind, we may inquire about the cultural and symbolic forms that grant access to such spheres of well-being.

This proposition runs counter to the dominant paradigm of the sociology of domination, which typically addresses various forms of capital in the context of competitive arenas and finds it disconcerting to approach the family and intimacy as goods in their own right. For example, Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction approaches the family as an institution that is ultimately subordinate to social structure.⁵⁵ In that theory, the family is the institution that instills the early and invisible dispositions that will later be converted into practical choices in competitive fields of social struggle. However, as Michael Walzer has persuasively suggested, a theory of justice ought to account for (and respect) the values of each sphere of life.⁵⁶ Michael Rustin works with the same premise when he suggests that we include "well-being" as a category of social right. According to Rustin, with the increasing complexity and variety of human values, there is a parallel increase in the need for personal development, which becomes "one of the goals which people seek through relationships of kinship or friendship, through education, through work and culture."⁵⁷ Rustin suggests that psychoanalysis should have its place as a "sphere of justice," with its own criteria of value, helping one to achieve one's definition of the good life, and that psychic development and satisfaction can and should matter to public institutions. In this respect, we may inquire about intimacy not only as a sphere subservient to the greater socioeconomic structure but also as a sphere of meaning and well-being in its own right. It would then make sense to ask whether intimacy is "justly" distributed.

If we approach the family and intimacy as autonomous spheres of meaning and action, we may analyze them as institutions meant to provide *moral goods* in which the content of selfhood and well-being are at

stake.⁵⁸ That is, if we reverse Bourdieu's model and inquire about the ways in which one's professional habitus helps one reach particular forms of eudaimonia (happiness and well-being), then we may inquire about the ways in which intimacy is, like other forms of goods, socially distributed and allocated. This is, I think, what Anthony Giddens has in mind when he suggests that "life politics" (which includes such issues as self-realization, intimacy, and the good life in general) restructures older social divisions: "Class divisions and other fundamental lines of inequality, such as those connected with gender or ethnicity, can be partly *defined* in terms of differential access to forms of self-actualization and empowerment. . . . Modernity, one should not forget, produces *difference, exclusion* and *marginalization*."⁵⁹ If Giddens is correct, then we must inquire into the "mechanics" of inclusion and exclusion from such spheres of well-being as intimacy. How is exclusion from such (moral) goods as well-being and intimacy produced? As I argue now, the language of therapy plays an important role in relaying such exclusions by mediating between class structure and new masculinities.

The following example may help us begin to illustrate what I mean here. Natasha is a thirty-two-year-old professional editor who holds a PhD in English literature from a top American university. She has been married for four years to a university teacher in philosophy. She has been in therapy off and on for the past eleven years.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have negative emotions?
(*Silence*)

INTERVIEWER: You don't have to answer if you don't want to.

NATASHA: Well, I am not sure if I should say.

INTERVIEWER: It is completely up to you.

NATASHA: Well . . . I am jealous. I am very jealous. And I know where it comes from. It basically comes from my father leaving my mother for another woman, and growing up with a mother who told me over and over again not to trust men.

INTERVIEWER: Does it have any impact on your relationship with your husband?

NATASHA: Yes, oh yes, I can become very jealous, very possessive, and feel really threatened by other women. Like the other day, we were having dinner with friends of ours, and one of my friends asked Larry [her hus-

band] if he had been to India. And he said he did but he did not want to talk about it, because he had been there with a girlfriend, and he knew it would upset me to talk about it. So he didn't want to talk about it, but she kept asking him questions, until I told her: "Look he does not want to talk about it. He was there with a girlfriend, and that's making me upset." Larry and I, we had some rough times over this issue. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you do something about it?

NATASHA: Yeah . . . Just talking, we talked for a long, long time about it.

Both of us are sort of very aware of ourselves; both of us have a strong interest in psychoanalysis and therapy; so we talked and talked about it, and analyzed it. So it was just talking about it, understanding it, and having him tell me over and over again that he loved me, and that he would not leave me for another woman. And I think that the fact we could talk about our feelings and really understand them is what got us through.

This highly educated couple displays "emotional competence" (what psychologists would call EI), namely self-awareness, ability to identify their feelings, name them, talk about them, empathize with each other's position, and find solutions to a problem. It is not a coincidence that this man and woman display such emotional and linguistic practices: both have earned PhDs in fields where language is crucial to their professional performance and where self-awareness can be converted into symbolic capital. These skills are closely intertwined with their cultural capital. Both hold PhDs in fields in which self-expression is important and in which the cultivation of self and authenticity are rewarded. The therapeutic language and this couple's EI are "real" cultural resources, not because the couple understand the "real" nature of their emotional problems, but because they can deploy a common cultural habitus, in which language is viewed as a tool for solving problems and for expressing the inner self. They can in turn use this tool to make sense of difficult emotions and put them "to work" by eliciting a narrative of verbal intimacy and self-help, which they can in turn both share and capitalize on to further their intimacy. Clearly, they are both using a single habitus transposable from the workplace to the sphere of intimacy and vice versa. Furthermore, and perhaps most conspicuously, as discussed in previous chapters, this habitus destructures gender identities. As is obvious from the quote, this woman and her husband display similar linguistic and emotional competence;

they hold common emotional models; the man is no less able than this woman to show empathy and care, to think reflexively about his own and her emotions, and to process them in a rational overall scheme.

EI may thus have real positive effects (in the same way that IQ does), not because of its inherently positive aspects, but because it is a form of emotional competence that is very well adapted to the conditions of intimate relations in late modernity. (In that respect, unlike Bourdieu's cultural competence, it is not entirely arbitrary.) As women have entered the workforce, and as norms of equality have progressively penetrated marriage, marriage has become increasingly individualized, the meeting point between two distinct biographies. As a result, the need for functional cooperation and communication between partners has increased. Moreover, the therapeutic ideal increases the injunction to share all needs and feelings, with the result that the coordination must take place both at the level of daily tasks and at the level of emotional and verbal disclosure. Men with a therapeutic habitus—New Men—are most likely to navigate successfully within these new conditions. These new conditions and the pervasiveness of psychological culture may explain why a 2001 poll in the United States found that 80 percent of women in their twenties believed that “having a husband who can talk about his feelings” was more important than “having one who makes a good living.”⁶⁰

Let me illustrate this further with another interviewee, Sherwood, a twenty-seven-year-old personnel manager who explains the nature of his work as follows:

SHERWOOD: In my work, communication is critical.

INTERVIEWER: Why is it critical?

SHERWOOD: We operate under assumptions about people and must be able to communicate. We are more clear about other people's beliefs, so, to give an example, uh, if I'm making a decision on behalf of my fiancée, say, I may project onto her what I think her beliefs are based on what I know from the past. You know, a lot of wrong decisions may happen by just not understanding what other people are thinking and not knowing what their attitudes are.

Here Sherwood unproblematically transfers the therapeutic ethos of “communication” from the workplace to his relationship with his girl-

friend and vice versa, thus indicating that the therapeutic language and model of “communication” is a habitus that directs feelings, thoughts, and action in both the private and public spheres and is transferable from one to the other. As a self-help book puts it: “It is only recently that organizations have begun to value employees who can deal effectively with people. The best place to learn that skill is in your intimate relationship.”⁶¹ By the same token, corporate skills may contribute to intimate relationships: “Because conversation control [i.e., communication] is central to everything we do, we will see the benefits not only in our work life but in our home with our family and with our friends in social relations.”⁶² We see clearly here how the person-centered economy of connectionist capitalism, which requires incessant bargaining and consensus building through communication, shapes and informs the forms of emotional competence used in romantic and domestic bonds.

To take a further example, after one interviewee, Christian, a thirty-four-year-old international investment banker, told me that he “talk[s] a lot with [his] wife,” I asked him what they “normally talk about.” His answer is very illuminating:

CHRISTIAN: She’ll bring up, “Somebody said this today at work” or “This happened at work today, what’s your spin on it?” And the usefulness of this conversation is that you’ll have an extra perspective of somebody who isn’t going to—you know, maybe she doesn’t want to go ask a co-worker what or how to interpret that comment because it’s a co-worker and that person is not as confidential. Where she can ask me and vice versa.

INTERVIEWER: And you help each other figure out things?

CHRISTIAN: Yeah. All the time.

Domestic communication here fulfills a few important functions: it helps this man’s wife perform better at work, for, as he suggests, these kinds of conversations are “useful” in that they help one plan one’s moves. Further, they may help one better perform in the workplace because they may help alleviate anxieties and uncertainties relating to one’s performance at work. But what is most interesting perhaps is that this kind of conversation provides a sense of continuity between the home and the workplace. To share with one’s partner hesitations about the

moves one should make to get a promotion, to decipher the cues of a cryptic manager with one's partner, may help one not only be more strategic in the workplace but also be more intimate and trusting within the framework of a domestic relationship. Clearly here the practice of "communication" is both expressive and instrumental, affective and rational.

Thus the therapeutic ethos has contributed to blur the cultural boundaries between the spheres of work and intimacy: it makes the dialogical and emotional skills central to intimacy skills that can be capitalized on in the workplace, and vice versa, it makes the skills in human relations ordinarily used by people working in American corporations skills they can also use with their partner. The middle-class domestic sphere and the workplace, far from being opposed to each other, are closely connected through the cultivation of a common reflexive and communicative selfhood that in turn tends to blur distinctions of gender roles and identities.⁶³

To illustrate this, let me quote Sharon, a single twenty-eight-year-old high school teacher with a graduate degree in literature:

INTERVIEWER: If you knew that a man is going to therapy, would that make him more or less attractive?

SHARON: More! Definitely more attractive!

INTERVIEWER: Can you say why?

SHARON: Because that means he is in touch with his feminine side. It means he is going to be talkative, emotional, understanding.

The reflexive and communicative selfhood codified, made visible, and legitimated by psychologists has articulated male and female identities in a common and convergent androgynous model of selfhood, alternatively used in the home and in the workplace.

The final example is that of a thirty-three-year-old manager, Paul, who works as a marketing director:

INTERVIEWER: Are there things that make you angry?

PAUL: Well, here's another piece of the whole puzzle. I also had some problems with depression, the last serious problem was when I was about twenty and, uh, just sort . . . debilitating bouts of black moods and being unable to do things and then being frustrated by being unable to do things. . . .

INTERVIEWER: [later in the interview] How did you overcome this depression?

PAUL: I just started feeling bad. I just started getting depressed and hum . . . , I started sleeping a lot. I was sleeping all the time. I had constant anxiety. I wasn't able to do any of my schoolwork. I turned myself off to most of my friends. And hum . . . it all came to an end one evening, I was able to, I had a real blowout, uh, real blowout session one evening with my family where I told them everything that had been going on.

INTERVIEWER: They had not known.

PAUL: Well, they had known something was going on, but I had never really talked about it with them. So I talked it through with them, and that was great to be able to acknowledge that something was going on, and I made some subtle changes in my orientation at school.

INTERVIEWER: Talking to your family had this impact.

PAUL: Well, it was an opportunity to articulate what was going on with me, something I hadn't done really up to that point. And by articulating it start to understand it. And also the nature of the depression was that I felt that there was something really wrong with me and that everybody was perceiving me because of this as some kind of pariah. So to be able to talk all of this through with my family and them do nothing but express their love and support for me in return was an important way for me to understand that, okay, that this is something that I have to deal with but it doesn't really have to do with me.

INTERVIEWER: Can you recall where that conversation took place?

PAUL: I remember sitting in the kitchen with my father and my sister, and they, I can't remember exactly, my memory is just that they expressed their love for me and that they were very warm. . . . By speaking with somebody that I trust and I feel understands me, by talking about something that is upsetting me, it allows me to articulate it. (muffled) so much more important than hearing what they have to say in response to it, by sort of trying to talk to somebody and describe what it is I'm feeling, I feel that is critical, because then that understanding leads you in the direction of "Well, what may I do to deal with it next." Because typically the people I trust and love will come back and say: "I understand and that's fine and I love you, and there's nothing wrong with you."

INTERVIEWER: Are you saying that what had an impact on you is the feeling of being loved and understood?

PAUL: Okay, so, um, now I'm thinking in terms of recent examples, so in terms of being with my girlfriend . . . there have been times when things have not been working out that well between us when she was resentful

of me or just when we haven't been communicating, and I would usually talk to—I have a friend up in San Francisco, or I'll talk to my mother or I'll talk to my sister, and you know when I describe what upsets me between us but I sort of do so by talking through, so first that first understanding comes by articulating it to one of them, so I can sort of understand for myself. Whether I am right, you know, I can put some structure around it, and typically the response is: you know, I love you, something like that. My girlfriend Lisa may not say that to me, but that is what she expresses. And just by knowing that there are supportive people out there I feel strengthened by that.

Although he comes from an upper-middle-class family, depression could very well have taken this respondent off the track of school and sent him off on a spiral of downward mobility. His family showed an ability to respond to his difficulties through the display of support and conversation. Whether he really understood the “true” and “real” nature and cause of his pain is beside the point. What is important is that he was able to overcome his difficulties, not because he changed something about his objective surroundings, or because he discovered the true and real cause of his depression, but because he readily had a model of therapeutic selfhood in which the self values the capacity to understand itself and to reveal difficult emotions to others through communication and even more critically because his social environment shared the same habitus. This man and his family could create and fashion social support through a (class-based) emotional and linguistic therapeutic habitus, thus illustrating Freud's point about the caretaker's daughter: emotional strategies can be crucial in (downward or upward) mobility, but here clearly the therapeutic outlook plays a crucial role in shaping those emotional strategies.

Let me make a further important point. As these interviews suggest, in their use of therapeutic cultural frames, middle- and upper-middle-class men may have access to a new form of masculinity more compatible with “feminine” models of selfhood. This new form of masculinity is becoming increasingly dominant, since it is viewed by the reigning therapeutic ethos as the only healthy form of masculinity. As Frank Furedi argues, hegemonic masculinity—silent, strong, self-reliant, unemotional—is now pathologized, and feminine masculinity is clearly preferred (i.e.,

thought to be healthier) by mental health workers: "According to the emotionally correct hierarchy of virtuous behavior, feminine women come on top. Feminine men beat masculine women for second place. And of course, masculine, macho men come last. This hierarchy informs the attitude of many health professionals."⁶⁴ My claim has been that this hierarchy also reflects a social hierarchy of forms of masculinity, for non-macho men are significantly more likely to have college education and to be involved in types of work oriented toward the manipulation of knowledge and cultural symbols. Indeed, as Maureen Dowd, the *New York Times* columnist and astute observer of men's and women's differences, put it: "Now to win, men have to feminize themselves."⁶⁵ This becomes clearer when we compare the interviews discussed earlier with my interview with George, a fifty-six-year-old African American working-class man who is employed as a janitor in the Chicago area:

GEORGE: I was married a few years ago and had a stepson who was knowing that he was an only child, and his mother was a whole entire different breed compared to what my mother—compared to what my first wife was in the way she raised kids. I mean she let him do a lot of different things that I didn't approve of, like—to telephone all night long, and so after eight years of her I wouldn't give a damn about the telephone line, you know, because the phone would ring all night long. I don't believe in that.

INTERVIEWER: Did the phone bother you?

GEORGE: Yeah, oh yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Did you tell him?

GEORGE: Oh yes. Oh yes. I told him and her.

INTERVIEWER: What did you tell her?

GEORGE: Well, I don't know. Well I have a . . . I have a . . . a . . . I can be foul at times. I told her more than once. So in the eight years we were together we've always had problems with the phone ringing all night long and then as he got older, 'cause he was fifteen years old when I met him, we broke up two years ago—he was a full-grown man.

INTERVIEWER: You broke up with your wife?

GEORGE: Well, we broke up. I'm, I'm, I'm the one . . . so—in the process of that—that was one the big reasons why we broke up. And she, of course, was someone who thought he couldn't do any wrong, and, uh, so therefore he got away with a lot of stuff being an only child. I mean it's halfway dangerous about kids when you meet women out there

nowadays who have teenage kids and they run 'em in. You know what I mean? I mean, I have several buddies of mine who have relationships with women who have teenage kids, and it's a misfit.

INTERVIEWER: Did your marriage fall apart because of that?

GEORGE: Well, well, well, well, it wasn't all his fault. It was part of the problem.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have arguments?

GEORGE: Oh yes. Sure, I shouted at him. I shouted at her. There's only so much you can take, but, but also, like I said, I can do my shouting, but in the end I've got it all out of my system and I'm going on with my business. I don't hold grudges to anybody, you know what I mean?

I hate to go to bed—I hate to wake up in the morning—I hate to wake up in the morning mad at your woman. I like to settle all the stuff before going to bed, you know what I mean? We may be fighting all day long, but holding a grudge and being angry at each other is something I try to avoid. It's also nice to make up, you know, after you've had your fight you know to make it up.

INTERVIEWER: How do you make up?

GEORGE: Um, different ways. Well, it's always nice when you have a good sex partner. That's always nice. I most enjoy it after a fight . . .

[later in the interview] And the second [wife], she left me—I didn't leave her. I mentioned that I left her, but I didn't leave her. She left me. I came home one morning from work at two o'clock in the morning and she had took a lot of stuff that she shouldn't have took and didn't tell me anything about it. See, so I would've told her—

INTERVIEWER: And she did not tell you anything beforehand that indicated that she might leave?

GEORGE: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: How do you explain she left?

GEORGE: She left. And she didn't tell me anything about it. That's the only thing I can think. [later in the interview] After she left—after I got the initial shock and it wasn't so much the shock about her going, it—it was the shock over what she done, you know. That's the thing that upset me more than anything else.

INTERVIEWER: What is this that she had done?

GEORGE: Well, uh, uh, you know, uh, I mean the way she didn't sit down and talk to me. She could've told me about, I would've felt much better if she would've told me—if she says, "George, uh, uh, I am not satisfied with the situation and I'm going to move." I would've loved her to come straightforward and told me. 'Cause that's the way I—I told her on several occasions that I wasn't satisfied, and, uh, you know— (silence)

INTERVIEWER: And how did she tell you?

GEORGE: I don't know. I don't know. (silence)

INTERVIEWER: And what is the thing that is difficult in having her move out without telling you?

GEORGE: It makes me feel like I can trust very few women or for that percentage trust anybody, because once you sleep with somebody every night and all of a sudden then you come home one day, that's a horrible feeling. It's like, "I let you break into my house and then you devastate my sixty years on earth." It's like leaving like she did—I come home from work and somebody has broken the house and taken a lot of stuff out of it. It's something that I worked hard for, you know what I mean? That's a devastating feeling. You know. When I picked up the wreaths at the hospital and they told me that my [first] wife was deceased in an automobile accident—those were the biggest shocks in my entire life.

This working-class man exemplifies in a dramatic fashion the fact that working-class marriage contains potential for havoc, not only because of the objective difficulties to which working-class lives are incessantly subject, but also because working-class men and women do not have a clear common language in which to organize their private selves and to articulate a common project for two different biographies. Notice that this man mentions they frequently screamed at each other and that they resolved their conflicts by having sex, two modes of action opposed to the therapeutic gospel of verbal communication. That is, they lacked a common cultural resource that they could use in the framework of daily life to manage their relationship and their conflicts. This working-class man was left with the experience of a suffering all the more intolerable in that it remained meaningless, without an interpretative frame to account for it. He did not have readily available a narrative that could give meaning to this event, nor could he put himself to "work" toward a psychological goal to process, integrate, or overcome it.

Working-class people whom I (or other researchers) interviewed complain, much more than their middle-class counterparts, of silence, of difficulties in communicating and having satisfying relationships. Therapeutic emotional and linguistic skills and habitus are absent from working-class lives because they have less currency in the working-class man's workplace. As the British sociologist Paul Willis has shown in his

ethnographic study of the shop floor, blue-collar work mobilizes an ethos of bravery, strength, and distrust of words.⁶⁶ Skills in human relations, the ability to attend to one's emotions and to negotiate with others, have little relevance in the working-class man's work domain. Unlike middle-class men, whose emotional makeup plays an important role in their work performance, working-class men are more likely to conform to models of hegemonic masculinity. More broadly, these differences reflect differences between working-class individualism and middle-class individualism, in that the former can be described as "rugged" or "tough" and the latter as "soft" and "psychological."⁶⁷ The individualism of the working-class men and women is characterized by narratives of struggle with adversity; it is a rugged individualism that emphasizes distrust, toughness, and physical strength. In contrast, middle- and upper-middle-class individualism can be characterized as "soft psychologized individualism," emphasizing a sense of uniqueness, individuality, and self-confidence as well as the emotions, needs, and desires of the psychological self. These differences should be viewed as inequalities in the chances of obtaining access to ordinary forms of well-being. Quoting the sociologist Frank Furstenberg, the historian Stephanie Coontz suggests that "it's as if marriage has become a luxury consumer item, available only to those with the means to bring it off."⁶⁸ Furstenberg and Coontz may have meant "material means," but clearly also, marriage is a luxury item because it demands *cultural* means to "bring it off."

CONCLUSION

One last example will summarize the preceding discussion. In an article trying to explain why black males and females marry each other in much lower proportions than their white counterparts, the authors—two sociologists specializing in the African American family—locate one of the possible sources of the problem in what they call "the cool pose of the Black male." In their own words: "This term refers to the ability to present oneself as emotionless, fearless, and aloof, and functions both to preserve the Black male's pride, dignity, and respect, and to express bitterness, anger, and distrust toward the broader society. Although this

behavior may be functional in protecting Black males from the pain of living in an oppressive society, . . . it may be dysfunctional in relationships with not only Black women but other Black men and White men."⁶⁹ The cool pose illustrates the point raised earlier, namely that our emotional responses are more often than not indirect responses to situations that present conflicting demands, here the contradiction between maintaining one's dignity and needing to express rage. It also illustrates that what is adaptive in protecting oneself from an unjust society may be maladaptive for finding a mate and that one of the social sites in which inequality may be visible is the realm of intimacy, or the capacity to form long-lasting bonds based on trust. Finally, were we to measure these men according to scales of EI, we would introduce yet another dimension along which they would doubtless fare poorly. Using EI as a classificatory device would categorize black men with the "cool pose" as emotionally unintelligent and inept. Hence the notion of EI may in fact deepen the exclusion of working-class men by offering yet another measurement of their social incompetence. In using and adopting the notion of EI, we are in fact tautologically defining as "competence" what our institutions have already defined as competence and are reaffirming the social privileges of those who are already privileged.

However, the notion of emotional competence or intelligence may also signal that the social identity of the privileged has subtly but importantly changed: in the new emotional economy, women may play a more significant role than the one traditionally assigned to them. In connectionist capitalism women are equipped with skills and forms of capital that enable them to play new and different games in the social field. As Marx himself suggested, in his uncannily prescient way: "The less the skill and exertion implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labor of men superseded by that of women."⁷⁰ The point here is not to deny current male hierarchies and distributions of power but rather to suggest that increasingly the cultural category of emotions is likely to make our traditional models of social hierarchy more complex. The general shift toward emotional androgyny described throughout this book points to the fact that women can compete in social markets with emotional skills and that they

may have access to forms of goods that have been imperfectly accounted for by the traditional (male) sociology of stratification. Indeed, people have been traditionally classified and stratified by their access to goods such as money and prestige. Yet from the standpoint of the sociology of emotion we could also say that people have unequal access to eudaimonic goods, intangible goods that constitute the good life, the capacity to give and receive what Axel Honneth calls "recognition," which, according to him, is the keystone of successful membership in social communities.⁷¹ One of the urgent tasks that lie ahead for the sociology of gender and emotion will be to explore the differential position of men and women vis-à-vis eudaimonic goods in order to unravel new forms of inequality.

SEVEN Conclusion

INSTITUTIONAL PRAGMATISM IN THE STUDY OF CULTURE

As in many other domains, it is not easy to determine which is the cause and which is the consequence. Did the *kapia* [the middle of the bridge] make the inhabitants of the city what they are, or on the contrary, was it conceived according to their mentality and their ideas and constructed in order to respond to their needs and habits?

—Ivo Andric

Intellectual queries frequently have their origins in questions that nag our personal lives. Like others, I have witnessed the frequently palpable successes of therapy. Yet, when encountering “the therapeutic” in books, turns of phrases, and popular advice literature, I have often been struck by the banality of a language that has curiously flattened our emotional imagination and experience. As this book has argued, the success of a cultural idiom as ubiquitous as therapy is in need of an explanation that is not predicated on an a priori normative and political vision of the social bond. Instead, by working through the tangled terrain of the sociology of culture and the sociology of emotions, I hope to have been able to uncover some important cultural and social processes.

Indeed, the therapeutic discourse has been the cultural conduit for a few major social transformations that have run through the twentieth

century, and perhaps more especially through the second half of the twentieth century. The first is the cultural codification of the language and emotional norms of the modern workplace and the family. Psychologists have been historically the great codifiers of the twin spheres of work and the family, stipulating and categorizing the interaction rituals, rules of emotional conduct, and models of verbal interactions in these two spheres. But the language of therapy has also reshuffled the cultural boundaries separating and regulating the public and private spheres, the masculine and the feminine, making private selfhood a narrative to be told and consumed publicly. By infusing into the private self techniques and languages that have turned privacy into a public performance, psychology has blurred the differences between the emotional cultures of the two genders, and this in two main ways: it has made verbal and emotional "communication" a central component of a gender-blind sociability, and it has put psychic suffering at the center of modern performance of the self. The result of this codification has been the increasing convergence of the cultural models and language presiding over the family and the workplace, making selfhood more rational and strategic on the one hand and more focused on emotions on the other. This implies that interests and emotions are neither ontological categories nor dichotomous categories to understand the self; rather, my analysis shows that both have been simultaneously vigorously culturally encoded in the self by psychologists. The management theories that have played an important role in shaping conceptions of leadership have put sentiments, interpersonal relations, *and* self-interest squarely at the center of the economic language of productivity and efficiency; conversely, through the influence and mediation of feminism, psychology has grafted utilitarianism and procedural forms of speech onto intimate relationships. The emotionalization of economic conduct and the rationalization of intimate relations have given rise to a form of selfhood in which strategic self-interest and emotional reflexivity are seamlessly interconnected. The cultural model that has best synthesized the strategic and emotional constituents of psychological selfhood by providing new models of sociability is the model of communication, which has marked the rise of one of the most important epistemes and forms of sociability of the twentieth century. The thera-

peutic ideal of communication aims to instill emotional control, a “neutral” point of view, and the capacity to listen to and identify with others and to carry on relationships according to fair procedures of speech.

This model in turn points to the increasing convergence of male and female gender identities into an androgynous identity, both in the workplace and in intimate relationships. In the therapeutic era, men and women are called upon to reconcile “masculine” attributes of assertiveness with the “feminine” capacity to monitor relationships and emotions. The intensely emotional culture fostered by psychology has destructured and disorganized traditional gender identities, opening up a greater variety of cultural models for the formation of gender and, even more subtly, privileging woman’s selfhood and point of view. This destructuring has had in turn consequences for the classifications and practices at the heart of the mechanism of social reproduction. The therapeutic discourse has greatly contributed to the formation of new forms of inequality in at least two ways: it sanctions new forms of competence inside the workplace, and it structures differential access to what I call “moral goods.” Moral goods concern those noncompetitive spheres of justice (family, friendship, love) in which intangible goods (such as well-being) are at stake. Emotional competence might thus be a new form of capital to access social goods both in the workplace and in the sphere of intimate relations.

The analysis exposed in this book offers an implicit model for the study of culture and cultural change. The metaphor of a map may capture the underlying conceptual model of how culture works. A map, like culture, does not “reflect” or “describe” a landscape; rather, it charts it through codes and symbols that represent social reality in stylized ways (e.g., metaphors, narratives, prescriptive models) and help one orient oneself in it. The stylized signs and symbols of maps help one make broad distinctions, say between different types of landscape (water, mountain, or valley), and provide one with a general sense of direction, where one should move and perhaps even more crucially how—that is, along which path. A cultural map is thus what we use to orient ourselves in both charted and uncharted social terrains. Culture helps us get a sense of the main “lines of force” of a social landscape and allows us to

orient ourselves in it, that is, to get a sense of the different “paths” available to us and to choose—through calculation or sheer familiarity with the terrain—how to proceed from one point to another.¹ Thus culture not only gives a sense of how one’s social world is constituted but also provides the cognitive and practical tools with which to orient oneself, that is, to choose between different possible routes, stay on course, and help solve problems as they arise. My main argument has been that therapy has become the lingua franca of the new service class in most countries with advanced capitalist economies because it provides the cognitive and emotional “tool kit” for disorganized selves to manage the conduct of their lives in contemporary polities.

But the metaphor of the map goes one step further: once designed and made available for use, maps modify the ways people move in space and ultimately the territory originally charted by the map. Like geographical maps, cultural maps orient the self within the intricate terrain of social relationships, which are in turn transformed by the social practices they themselves have helped orient and organize. As Marshall Sahlins put it in another context, “Events are ordered by culture, . . . [and] in that process, the culture is reordered.”² The story told in this book is not only that of the progressive drawing of a new cultural map provided by the language of psychology but also the story of how this map changed social relations. The contours of this new map started being drawn with the rise of psychoanalysis and of the Freudian enterprise, with Freud’s charisma being the impetus accounting for the initial speed and strength of the social networks that helped spread psychoanalysis. Freud’s most distinctive contribution to American culture has been to formulate a language and to provide frames of meaning that put everyday life, psychic health, and normality squarely in the center of the identity of modern men and women. The incipient discipline of psychoanalysis rapidly took hold of American culture because it offered recipes, plans of action, metaphors, and narrative templates that helped modern men and women cope with the increasing complexity and normative uncertainty of modern lives, most noticeably in the workplace and in the family. Freud’s metaphors and narratives could be used pragmatically, that is, as a way to solve practical problems in everyday life. While meaning shapes

action, not all meanings are equal in their capacity to constrain people's interpretive frames and to help them navigate in their social environment. For meanings to be long-lasting, they must resonate with existing cultural templates, recruit the self in a highly energetic way, and be simultaneously institutionalized and used as practical currencies in everyday life. I dub this approach to culture "institutional pragmatism," as illustrated by the three main objectives I hope to have accomplished in this book. My first objective has been to document the emergence of a new cultural structure. While sociologists of culture traditionally assume the presence of structure as the invisible but powerful organizer of action, I have instead asked *how* this cultural structure came about. As I have documented throughout the book, the body of knowledge of psychology quickly penetrated the core institutions of American society—the army, the corporation, the family, the state, the mass media, and civil society. Such saturation of American society with psychology was not the result of a concerted action; rather, it was the result of different, *asymmetrical*, and *somewhat autonomous* logics at work in each field in which it was incorporated. It was only natural that a body of knowledge that claimed to help control and predict "the human factor" it would be espoused and used by corporations in search of new modes of governing the workforce. Moreover, because the modern state's legitimacy derived primarily from its capacity to secure the well-being of its citizens, it was eager to adopt a body of knowledge whose purpose was to relieve human suffering and contribute to general mental health. Finally, because the family had become an emotional social unit, and because men's and women's roles in that sphere had become increasingly democratized, psychology played an important role in offering models to help overcome the increasingly conflictual character of modern marriage. Between the large-scale institutions that adopted psychology as their main legitimating discourse and the microperformance of the therapeutic self, media industries have played an essential role in codifying, legitimizing, and disseminating the worldview of psychology and in providing a platform for the performance of the therapeutic self. Media were crucial in that they mediated between a group of professional experts on the one hand and the public on the other, a public simultaneously constructed as

patients and consumers. Between institutions and civil society, between institutional meanings and everyday life, the media industries have loomed large and are central to explaining the emergence, codification, and diffusion of the psychological cultural structure. In other words, the four most powerful institutional sites of American society—the corporation, the family, the mass media, and the state—adopted psychology and made it a central feature of modern identity through different institutional and cultural dynamics. Thus the second thing I hope to have accomplished in this book is to show that if the historian must account for different types of temporalities,³ the sociologist of culture must expose asymmetrical institutional dynamics behind what may seem to be homogeneous cultural processes. Even if we can speak with Max Weber of a wide-ranging process of rationalization running through modern institutions, this process takes different forms and courses in different institutional spheres.

But—and this is the third contribution I hope this book has made—the asymmetrical institutional model alone cannot explain the grip and tenacity with which psychology has taken hold of everyday life. Psychology was enthusiastically espoused by lay actors because it “worked,” that is, it offered tools and technologies to manage the problems that plagued modern men and women, such as the uncertainty generated by the incipient democratic norms and rules in the workplace and in the family, the multiplicity of social roles assumed by men and women, and the complexity of a culture riddled with contradictory normative imperatives. The self has become the prime site for the management of the contradictions of modernity, and psychology has offered techniques to manage those contradictions. In other words, psychology is less about “surveillance” or “bio-power” than it is about containing and managing the contradictions of modern selfhood. For, in becoming democratized, both the workplace and the family became more “chaotic,” that is, endowed with a normative structure in which the self had to perform many more, contradictory tasks to monitor social relationships: become self-reliant, yet attuned to others’ needs; conduct relationships in a highly rational way, yet be highly focused on its own and others’ emotions; be a unique individual, yet constantly cooperate with others. Psychology

played a crucial role in providing dialogical models of interaction that could presumably manage these tensions, inside the workplace and the family. These dialogical models became all the more efficient in that they were not only a set of cultural themes and prescriptions but also a narrative with which to perform the self in a variety of social and cultural platforms, such as therapeutic sessions, television talk shows, support groups, and a wide variety of for-profit workshops aimed at making the self better adapted to its environment and more functional in it. Institutional pragmatism thus aims to explain simultaneously how cultural structures come about, how they are enacted in everyday life, and how they in turn transform everyday life.

The approach advocated in this book does not abandon the critical vocation of sociology but enables us to pursue it differently, from a different point of view from the one traditionally assumed by proponents of cultural studies. When seen from the perspective of a pragmatic cultural sociology and the sociology of emotions, the social effects of therapy turn out to be quite different from the ones that have been traditionally decried by critical sociologists of various persuasions.

First, the contemporary ideal of communication, which has penetrated and thoroughly saturated our models of social relationships and which has never been questioned by sociologists, may well be what anthropologist Michael Silverstein calls "a language ideology." A language ideology is a set of "self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning *roles of language in the social experiences of members* as they contribute to the expression of the group" (emphasis added).⁴ The language ideology that has been promoted by therapy resides in a number of beliefs: that self-knowledge is gained by introspection; that introspection can in turn help us understand, control, and come to terms with our social and emotional environment; and that verbal disclosure is key to social relations. There are quite a few reasons to doubt many of the premises of the reigning psychological credo. Quoting the poet Theodore Roethke, the psychologist Timothy Wilson argues that "self-contemplation is a curse / That makes an old confusion worse."⁵ Not only do we seem to be cognitively poorly equipped to understand ourselves, but self-analysis may even interfere with other intuitive (that is, practical) ways of knowing the

world. I would suggest that the language ideology of therapy has been responsible for a vast cognitive and cultural process of “verbal overshadowing.” Research by cognitive psychologist Jonathan W. Schooler and T. Y. Engstler-Schooler shows that when people are asked to remember a face in their minds and then identify this face in a lineup, they do quite well. But if these people are asked first to describe the face in words and then to identify it, they actually do much less well at recognizing the face. Schooler and Engstler-Schooler call this effect “verbal overshadowing,” an interference of verbal processes with visual ones.⁶ In other words, they and many other psychologists suggest that there are things we simply do better without words, without verbalizing what we are doing and why we are doing it. I would argue that culturally the therapeutic persuasion may have been responsible for a vast process of verbal overshadowing that makes linguistic self-introspection a substitute for nonverbal ways of functioning in social interactions. What I call a cultural process of verbal overshadowing is the broad process by which increasingly verbality comes to interfere with decisions that require us to use our “intuition,” “insight,” or snap judgment. Psychologists’ ideology ironically ends up reifying the very concept of personality that has been a crucial assumption of their body of knowledge. This claim is bolstered by the social psychologist and foremost expert on personality Walter Mischel, who has argued that personality varies across situations and does not consist of cross-situationally consistent traits.⁷ For Mischel, people’s actions and reactions are shaped by situational constraints, not by invariant inner properties of the self (that need to be revealed). Mischel’s view is highly consistent with sociologists’ approach in that it claims that personality is influenced more by situational factors than by a set of traits acquired in infancy. The point here is simply to suggest that the psychological persuasion reifies personality in its view that there is an essence—our self—that we can and must grasp.

Second, I would argue that, in contrast to the standard Foucauldian account of psychology, according to which “we have . . . invented a different kind of pleasure: pleasure in the truth of pleasure, the pleasure of knowing the truth, of discovering and exposing it,”⁸ the therapeutic narrative has produced a multiplicity of forms of suffering. Against the

Foucauldian view that psychology produces pleasure, I would argue that one of its most objectionable aspects lies in the ways that it produces suffering. For with anthropologist Richard Schweder I would suggest that “a people’s causal ontology for suffering plays a part in causing the suffering it explains, just as people’s representation of a form of suffering may be part of the suffering it represents.”⁹ There is a poignant irony in the therapeutic discourse. The more the causes for suffering are situated in the self, the more the self is understood in terms of its predicaments, and the more “real” diseases of the self will be produced. Because the therapeutic narrative discusses, labels, and explains predicaments of the self, the self is in turn invited to conceive of itself as ridden with emotional and psychological problems. Far from actually helping manage the contradictions and predicaments of modern identity, the psychological discourse may only deepen them.

While the experience of suffering has traditionally brought a cultural system to the very limits of its legitimation,¹⁰ in the contemporary therapeutic worldview suffering has become a problem to be managed by experts of the psyche. The disturbing question regarding the distribution of suffering (or theodicy)—Why do the innocent suffer and the wicked prosper?—that has haunted world religions and modern social utopias has been reduced to an unprecedented banality by a discourse that views suffering as the effect of mismanaged emotions or a dysfunctional psyche or even as an inevitable stage in one’s emotional development. As Susan Neiman has magisterially argued, the problem of theodicy has been one of the central moral puzzles of Western thought.¹¹ And we could add that the tension between merit and fortune has often produced great cultural systems and movements whose purpose has been precisely to account for the chasm between the two. Clinical psychology is the first cultural system to dispose of the problem altogether by making misfortune the result of a wounded or mismanaged psyche. It brings to perfect completion one of religion’s aims: to explain, rationalize, and ultimately always justify suffering. As Max Weber put it: “In treating suffering as a symptom of odiousness in the eyes of the gods and as a sign of secret guilt, religion has psychologically met a very general need. The fortunate is seldom satisfied with the fact of being fortunate. Beyond this, he needs to

know that he has a *right* to his good fortune. He wants to know that he 'deserves' it, and above all, that he deserves it in comparison with others. He wishes to be allowed the belief that the less fortunate also merely experiences his due. Good fortune thus wants to be 'legitimate' fortune."¹²

What Weber describes here is the most powerful form of preservation of the status quo, namely the retrospective explaining and therefore legitimizing of good or bad fortune by hidden virtue or vice. Psychology resuscitates such forms of theodicy with a vengeance. In the therapeutic ethos there is no such thing as senseless suffering and chaos, and this is why, in the final analysis, its cultural impact should worry us.

Notes

1. INTRODUCTION

Epigraphs are from Jean Amery, *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities* (1970; reprint, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), xi, and Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1966), 20.

1. On bureaucratization, see Peter Berger, "Toward a Sociological Understanding of Psychoanalysis," *Social Research* 32 (1965): 26–41. On narcissism, see Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Warner Books, 1979). On the construction of a false self, see Ian Craib, *The Importance of Disappointment* (London: Routledge, 1994). On the control of modern lives by the state, see Ellen Herman, "Psychologism and the Child," in *The Cambridge History of Science*, vol. 7, *The Modern Social Sciences*, ed. Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 649–62, and *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts, 1940–1970* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). On the collapse of cultural and moral hierarchies, see Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith after Freud* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

1987). On the privatization of life under capitalism, see Eli Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004). On the emptiness of the modern self, see Philip Cushman, "Why the Self Is Empty: Toward a Historically Situated Psychology," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 5 (1990): 599–611. On surveillance, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995); Nikolas Rose, "Assembling the Modern Self," in *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), 224–47, and *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power, and Personhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). On the expansion of state power and on the development of new sources of state legitimation, see James L. Nolan, *Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (New York: New York University Press, 1998). On "risk society," the societal obsession with the management of risk, and its relation to a cultivation of the self's vulnerability, see Frank Furedi, *Therapy Culture: Cultivating Vulnerability in an Uncertain Age* (London: Routledge, 2004).

2. See Robert Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 55–112.

3. Lionel Trilling, *Freud and the Crisis of Our Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955); Rieff, *Triumph of the Therapeutic*; Lasch, *Culture of Narcissism*; Philip Cushman, *Constructing the Self, Constructing America: A Cultural History of Psychotherapy* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley).

4. See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Rose, *Inventing Our Selves*.

5. This is Nikolas Rose's expression, from *Inventing Our Selves*.

6. For a recent attempt, see Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul*.

7. Michel Callon, "Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay," in *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* ed. John Law (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 196–233.

8. Philippe Corcuff, personal communication, June 6, 2000.

9. See Eva S. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); James Capshew, *Psychologists on the March: Science, Practice, and Professional Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Furedi, *Therapy Culture*; Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*.

10. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust*, and Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*, are glaring exceptions.

11. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999).

12. Robert Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-traditional World* (New York: Harper and Row), 67.

13. Furedi, *Therapy Culture*, 103.

14. See S. N. Eisenstadt, "Axial Age Civilizations: The Reconstruction of the World and the Crystallization of Distinct Civilizational Complexes," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, ed. George Ritzer (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).
15. See Doyle McCarthy, *Knowledge as Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1996); this runs counter to Adam Kuper's suggestion, in *Culture: The Anthropologist's Account* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), that we dispose of the idea of culture and use instead such concepts as knowledge or beliefs or norms.
16. Karin Knorr-Cetina, "Sociality with Objects: Social Relations in Postsocial Knowledge Societies," *Theory, Culture, Society* 14, no. 4 (1997): 9–10.
17. McCarthy, *Knowledge as Culture*, 20.
18. Orlando Patterson, "Taking Culture Seriously: A Framework and an Afro-American Illustration," in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, ed. Samuel P. Huntington and Lawrence E. Harrison (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
19. George Steinmetz, *State Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 28.
20. See Jeffrey Alexander and Phil Smith, "The Discourse of American Civil Society: A New Proposal for Cultural Studies," *Theory and Society* 22, no. 2 (1993): 151–207; see also Roger Friedland and John Mohr's excellent introduction to *Matters of Culture*, ed. Roger Friedland and John Mohr (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1–70.
21. Michael Schudson, "How Culture Works: Perspectives from Media Studies on the Efficacy of Symbols," *Theory and Society* 18, no. 2 (1989): 153–80.
22. See John Steadman Rice, *A Disease of One's Own: Psychotherapy, Addiction, and the Emergence of Co-dependency* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998); Bellah, *Beyond Belief*; Rieff, *Triumph of the Therapeutic*; Lasch, *Culture of Narcissism*; Leslie Irvine, *Codependent Forevermore: The Invention of Self in a Twelve Step Group* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
23. In this, of course, I agree with Foucault's analysis in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *The Will to Knowledge* (London: Penguin, 1998).
24. See Friedland and Mohr, introduction to *Matters of Culture*, 15.
25. Indeed, as Randall Collins usefully reminds us, the assumption of the autonomy of culture is either inaccurate or superfluous. It is inaccurate if we intend to isolate meaning from social relations; it is superfluous if by *culture* we mean the outlooks and assumptions that form the background of our actions. See Randall Collins, "Comparative and Historical Patterns of Education," in *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, ed. Maureen T. Hallinan (New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers/Plenum, 2000), 213–39, and "Situational Stratification: A Micro-Macro Theory of Inequality," *Sociological Theory* 18, no. 1 (2000): 17–43.
26. See Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Michele Lamont, *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University

Press, 2000), and “Meaning Making in Cultural Sociology: Broadening Our Agenda,” *Contemporary Sociology* 29 (2000): 602–7.

27. Trilling, *Freud and the Crisis*.

28. Jorge Ardití and Ann Swidler, “The New Sociology of Knowledge,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 20 (1994): 305–29.

29. All emotions are not conducive to action, but what interests sociologists most are those emotions that color and structure action.

30. See Clifford Geertz’s famous discussion of religious symbols in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); see also a point made by Richard Biernacki in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 69–70.

31. Richard Biernacki, “Practice,” in Ritzer, *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. On culture as practice, see Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr-Cetina, and Eike von Savigny, eds., *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

32. Bellah, *Beyond Belief*, 67.

33. Margaret R. Somers, “The Privatization of Citizenship: How to Unthink a Knowledge Culture,” in Bonnell and Hunt, *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, 121–61.

34. When one analyzes Defoe or Austen in terms of “ideology” or “conventions,” one is implicitly positing a continuity between the symbolic world of highbrow literature and low entertainments.

35. Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), vii.

36. Aaron T. Beck, *Love Is Never Enough* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Albert Ellis, *A New Guide to Rational Living* (North Hollywood, CA: Wilshire, 1975).

37. Two notable examples are Robin Norwood, *Women Who Love Too Much* (New York: Pocket, 1990), and Susan Forward and Joan Torres, *Men Who Hate Women and the Women Who Love Them: When Loving Hurts and You Don’t Know Why* (New York: Bantam Trade, 2002).

38. Suzanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 3.

39. This discussion is based on Martin Albrow’s “The Application of the Weberian Concept of Rationalization to Contemporary Conditions,” in *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, ed. Scott Lash and Sam Whimster (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 164–82.

40. Eva Illouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia: Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), and *Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery: An Essay on Popular Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

41. William H. Sewell, “Theory, History, and Social Science,” in *Logics of His-*

tory: Social Theory and Social Transformation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1.

42. See Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L. Mast, "Introduction: Symbolic Action in Theory and Practice: The Cultural Pragmatics of Symbolic Action," in *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L. Mast (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–29.

43. Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982); Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz, eds., *The Export of Meaning: Cross Cultural Readings of "Dallas"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

44. Karen A. Cerulo, *Culture in Mind: Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

45. Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essay on Language, Action, and Interpretation*, ed. and trans. J. B. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 140, quoted in Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 103.

46. Illouz, *Oprah Winfrey*.

47. William James, *Pragmatism* (1907; reprint, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), 26.

48. John P. Murphy, *Pragmatism: From Peirce to Davidson* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 54–55.

2. FREUD: A CULTURAL INNOVATOR

The epigraph is from Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 110.

1. Jerry Adler, "Freud in Our Midst," *Newsweek*, March 27, 2006, www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11904222/site/newsweek/.

2. Hendrik Ruitenbeek, *Freud and America* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 13.

3. For a similar emphasis on culture and emotions, see Joel Pfister, "On Conceptualizing the Cultural History of Emotional and Psychological Life in America," in *Inventing the Psychological*, ed. Nancy Schnog and Joel Pfister (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 17–62.

4. Robert Wuthnow, "Cultural Change and Sociological Theory," in *Social Change and Modernity*, ed. Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 256–76, <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft6000078s/>.

5. See Hans Joas, *The Creativity of Action* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), for an excellent critique of the neglect of creativity in social theory.

6. “Only because invention is hidden within phenomenological conformity can culture be so plastic and individual action proceed in such an extraordinarily fluid way.” Jeffrey Alexander, *Action and Its Environment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 314.

7. “A general theory [of action] should regard creativity as a dimension that is present in all human action and should interpret routine as a result of creativity” (Joas, *Creativity of Action*, 197).

8. Eva Illouz, *Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery: An Essay on Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of Columbia Press, 2003).

9. See Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Paul DiMaggio, “Market Structure, the Creative Process, and Popular Culture: Toward an Organizational Reinterpretation of Mass-Culture Theory,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 11, no. 2 (1977): 436–52.

10. Jurgen Habermas, “Self-Reflection as Science: Freud’s Psychoanalytic Critique of Meaning,” in *Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader*, ed. Steven Seidman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 55. Habermas’s claim is not universally accepted. For example, Henri Ellenberger claims, in *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), that Freud was only one link in a long chain of psychotherapeutic treatments.

11. Max Weber, *On Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

12. Paul Roazen, *Freud and His Followers* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1975), 7.

13. Quoted in *ibid.*, 180.

14. Quoted in Louis Breger, *Freud: Darkness in the Midst of Vision* (New York: John Wiley, 2000), 177.

15. Weber, *On Charisma*, 246.

16. Breger, *Freud*, 178.

17. Max Weber, “The Sociology of Charismatic Authority,” in *Max Weber*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Galaxy, 1946), 249.

18. Edward Shils, quoted in S. N. Eisenstadt, introduction to *Max Weber: On Charisma and Institution Building* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), xxv.

19. Johannes Fabian, “Charisma and Cultural Change: The Case of the Jamaa Movement in Katanga (Congo Republic),” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11, no. 2 (1969): 158.

20. Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action: A Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent European Writers* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), n. 668 F.

21. See Margaret Somers, “The Privatization of Citizenship: How to Unthink

a Knowledge Culture,” in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

22. Much of the following analysis is based on Edith Kurzweil’s *The Freudians: A Comparative Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

23. Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, introduction to *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 29.

24. Some of these followers were Alfred Adler, Rudolf Reitler, Isidor Sadger, Wilhelm Stekel, Rainer Maria Rilke, Otto Rank, and Alfred Meisl.

25. DiMaggio and Powell, introduction to Powell and DiMaggio, *New Institutionalism*.

26. Kurzweil, *Freudians*, 3.

27. See Breger, *Freud*, 179.

28. Kurzweil, *Freudians*, 41.

29. Stephan Fuchs, *Against Essentialism: A Theory of Culture and Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 188; see also Randall Collins, *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

30. See, for example, Walter Powell and Laurel Smith-Doerr, “Networks and Economic Life,” in *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, ed. Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 368–402.

31. See, for example, one of Roazen’s interviewees who, after she underwent psychoanalysis with Freud, went back to the United States to practice the profession of psychoanalysis (*Freud and His Followers*, xxiii).

32. Adler was expelled because he pushed for the application of psychoanalytic theories in the community. Freud viewed such applications as unhelpful for understanding the unconscious.

33. Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (New York: Norton, 1988), 213.

34. Kurzweil, *Freudians*, 23.

35. Eric Caplan, *Mind Games: American Culture and the Birth of Psychotherapy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 151.

36. See Caplan, *Mind Games*; also, for an excellent history of the origins of psychotherapy, see Eva Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America’s Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001).

37. See, for example, opposition by such psychologists as Henry Rutgers Marshall and Hugo Munsterberg, described in Caplan, *Mind Games*, 145–46.

38. *Ibid.*, 147.

39. See William H. Sewell Jr., “The Concept(s) of Culture,” in Bonnell and Hunt, *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, 57.

40. See Nathan G. Hale, *Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psycho-*

analysis in the United States, 1876–1917 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

41. See Robert C. Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Methuen, 1984); Hans R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982); Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

42. Mary Jo Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents: A Century of Struggle with Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 22.

43. Nathan G. Hale, "From Berggasse XIX to Central Park West: The Americanization of Psychoanalysis, 1919–1940," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14 (1978): 303.

44. Gay, *Freud*, 209.

45. Ruitenbeek, *Freud and America*, 61.

46. See Breger, *Freud*, 176.

47. Hale, *Freud and the Americans*.

48. Magali Sarfati Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 70.

49. James Capshew, *Psychologists on the March: Science, Practice, and Professional Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

50. Kurzweil, *Freudians*, 208.

51. Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft696nb3n8/>.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

53. See Sarfatti Larson, *Rise of Professionalism*.

54. *Ibid.*

55. James L. Nolan, *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

56. This is in contradistinction to scientific communities, which, according to Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, are both producers and consumers of the knowledge they produce.

57. Fuchs, *Against Essentialism*, 189.

58. Sigmund Freud, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (New York: Norton, 1990), and *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (1966; reprint, New York: Norton, 1989).

59. Sigmund Freud, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), and *The Interpretation of Dreams*, vol. 4 (1900; reprint, London: Hogarth Press, 1971).

60. Hale, *Freud and the Americans*, 22.

61. See, for example, the outstanding José Brunner, *Freud and the Politics of Psy-*

choanalysis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), or Philip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moral-ist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

62. Freud, "Third [Clark] Lecture," in Saul Rosenzweig, *The Historic Expedition to America (1909): Freud, Jung, and Hall the King-Maker* (St. Louis, MO: Rana House, 1992), 422.

63. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 211.

64. The uneventful is "an interpretation of the everyday." Stanley Cavell, "The Ordinary as the Uneventful," in *The Cavell Reader*, ed. Stephen Mulhall (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 200.

65. As Charles Taylor has argued in *Sources of the Self*, the sources of identity could be drawn from an aristocratic-heroic ethos, from an ascetic contemplation of the other world, or from the ideal of civic republicanism of citizenship. The domain of the *oikos*, of women, was not deemed to be a worthy arena to form a valuable male self. An aristocratic ethic of honor or a Machiavellian republican ethic of citizenship orients the (always male) self to high feats and prowess in the public realm of war or politics.

66. John Demos, "History and the Psychosocial: Reflections on 'Oedipus and America,'" in Pfister and Schnog, *Inventing the Psychological*, 79–83.

67. *Ibid.*

68. See Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Anchor Press, 1978).

69. Demos, "History and the Psychosocial."

70. Suzanne R. Kirschner, *The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis: Individuation and Integration in Post-Freudian Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 34.

71. Kirschner's discussion draws on Karl Lowith's *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949) and even more profusely from M. H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: Norton, 1971).

72. Three main cultural movements were responsible for the secularization of the biblical narratives: Protestantism, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism. From Protestantism, the salvation narrative reoriented the believer to his or her inner self. The doctrine of the inner light emphasized the possibility of a direct connection with God, which eventually became and remained a connection with one's own self. In the cultural tradition of the Enlightenment, the salvation narrative emphasized the idea of freedom and autonomy, which would be a central telos of psychological and psychoanalytical narratives.

73. Kirschner, *Religious and Romantic Origins*, *passim*. The Romantic version of the biblical narrative emphasized the intractable conflict between opposite tendencies and the turning inward of the self to search for truth.

74. *Ibid.*, 195.
75. *Ibid.*, 196.
76. Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 111.
77. *Ibid.*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 419.
78. For example, in the *Introductory Lectures* Freud discussed the pure and innocent child as taking an erotic pleasure in such ordinary activities as defecating, touching his genitals, sucking his thumb, and retaining feces. Freud also suggested that the child—who at that time, we must remember, was the symbol of purity and innocence—engaged naturally in the then severely prohibited activity of masturbation. What were likely to have sounded to his contemporaries like shocking perversions (all the more so since they were displayed by the “pure” and “innocent” child) were nothing else, Freud claimed, than a continuation of normal—and universal—impulses. Freud’s “normality” was, then, singularly new and foreign.
79. Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 348.
80. *Ibid.*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 349.
81. Rieff, *Freud*, 354.
82. Steven Seidman, *Difference Troubles: Queering Social Theory and Sexual Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xi.
83. Gay, *Freud*, 148.
84. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).
85. Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 76.
86. *Ibid.*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 76.
87. *Ibid.*, quoted in Roazen, *Freud and His Followers*, 76.
88. Freud, “Third [Clark] Lecture,” in Rosenzweig, *Historic Expedition*, 423.
89. Freud, “Fifth Lecture,” in *Introductory Lectures* [Norton ed.], 106–7.
90. Freud, “Third [Clark] Lecture,” in Rosenzweig, *Historic Expedition*, 419. Yet Freud compares the psychoanalyst’s work to that of a “physician” and compares his action on the psyche to that of a surgeon, thus suggesting that his method and rhetoric tried to tap into two different audiences (“laypeople,” who had a tendency to ascribe hidden meanings to ordinary events, and scientists, who located this new science under the prestigious professional and scientific rubric of medicine (thereby ensuring that psychoanalysis would fare well in both realms).
91. Freud, “Fifth [Clark] Lecture,” in Rosenzweig, *Historic Expedition*, 434.
92. See Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Penguin Books, 1971).
93. Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
94. William H. Sewell Jr., “Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History: From Synchro to Transformation,” in *The Fate of “Culture”: Geertz and Beyond*, ed. Sheryl Ortner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 47.

95. Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 403.

96. For example, the term *nymphomania* was applied to a form of sexual desire that today would be considered normal and even healthy.

97. See Gay, *Bourgeois Experience*.

98. See Estelle Freedman, "Sexuality in Nineteenth Century America: Behavior, Ideology, Politics," *Reviews in American History* 10 (December 1982): 196–215.

99. John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 225.

100. Caplan, *Mind Games*, 151.

101. D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 223.

102. See E. Fuller Torrey, *Freudian Fraud: The Malignant Effect of Freud's Theory on American Thought and Culture* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 114.

103. "We ought not to exalt ourselves so high as completely to neglect what was originally animal in our nature. Nor should we forget that the satisfaction of the individual's happiness cannot be erased from among the aims of our civilization." Sigmund Freud, quoted in Rosenzweig, *Historic Expedition*.

104. Quoted in Torrey, *Freudian Fraud*, 124.

105. This interpretation seems to be congruent with Freud's own personal views, despite the many contradictions he expressed on the topic in his work. For example, writing to a mother in 1935, Freud suggested that "homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation; it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function, produced by a certain arrest of sexual development." Quoted in Jack Drescher, *Psychoanalytic Therapy and the Gay Man* (Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, 1998), 19.

106. Illouz, *Oprah Winfrey*.

107. See Eli Zaretsky, "Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Post Structuralism," in *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

108. Jeffrey B. Abramson, *Liberation and Its Limits: The Moral and Political Thought of Freud* (New York: Free Press, 1984), 121.

109. Quoting Paul Ricoeur, Abramson further suggests that this was inscribed in an ethical project of the self: "There is . . . opened up a clearing of truthfulness, in which the lies of the ideals and idols are brought to light . . . This truthfulness is undoubtedly not the whole of ethics but at least it is the threshold" (*Liberation and Its Limits*, 121).

110. Steven Marcus, *Freud and the Culture of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1984), 7.

111. See Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*.

112. T. S. Strang, David Strang, and John Meyer, "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion," *Theory and Society* 22 (1993): 492.

113. Quoted in Torrey, *Freudian Fraud*, 124.
114. Eli Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 145.
115. *Ibid.*
116. Karin Gabbard and Glen O. Gabbard, *Psychiatry and the Cinema* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987), 252.
117. For a detailed analysis, see Virginia Richter, “Strangers on a Couch: Hitchcock’s Use of Psychoanalysis in *Spellbound* and *Marnie*,” in *Psychoanalyticism: Uses of Psychoanalysis in Novels, Poems, Plays and Films*, ed. Ingrid Hotz-Davies and Anton Kirchhofer (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2000), 114–31.
118. See such movies as *Spellbound*, *The House of Dr. Edwards*, *Psycho*, and *Marnie*.
119. Daniel Robinson, “Marketing Gum, Making Meanings: Wrigley in North America, 1890–1930,” *Enterprise and Society* 5, no. 1 (2004): 31.
120. Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998), 248.
121. *Ibid.*, 248.
122. *Ibid.*
123. Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire: L’économie des échanges linguistiques* (Paris: Fayard, 1982); Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1972).
124. Or what Bourdieu has dubbed the “skeptron”; see Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).
125. Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 89.
126. *Ibid.*, 82.

3. FROM HOMO ECONOMICUS TO HOMO COMMUNICANS

The epigraph is taken from Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. F. Golffing (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 193–94.

1. Jeffrey Alexander, “The Computer as Sacred and Profane,” in *The New American Cultural Sociology*, ed. Philip Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 29.
2. Viviana Zelizer, *The Purchase of Intimacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), and *The Social Meaning of Money: Pin Money, Paychecks, Poor Relief, and Other Currencies* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).
3. Marshall David Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).
4. Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
5. Eva Illouz, *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

6. C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Doubleday, 1956).

7. Arlie Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

8. Gideon Kunda, *Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment in a High-Tech Corporation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 218.

9. Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

10. See C. Dallett Hemphill, "Class, Gender, and the Regulation of Emotional Expression in Revolutionary Era Conduct Literature," in *An Emotional History of the United States*, ed. Peter N. Stearns and Jan Lewis (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 33–51.

11. Erving Goffman, quoted in Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 115.

12. The injunction to self-control is a motif that has accompanied the development of what is conventionally called Western civilization. Temperance (or emotional control) appears to be one of the cardinal categories that, from Plato onward, has been consistently viewed as the precondition of the exercise of discernment as well as the precondition for cooperation. With a few noticeable exceptions in the history of Western thought, almost no thinker, whether inspired by Augustinian faith or straightforward rationalism, has seriously objected to the need to control one's emotions. "There is hardly any variety of moral theory (whether developed in terms of law and duty or in terms of happiness and virtue, whether appealing to *a priori* principles or to criteria of utility empirically applied (which does not recommend the discipline of desire by reason and which does not condemn sensuality, self-indulgence, unchecked appetites, or passions run wild" (*The Synopticon: An Index to the Great Ideas*, 2nd ed., ed. Mortimer J. Adler [Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990], 684). Indeed, whether what is advocated is religious modesty, rational control, Aristotelian moderation, or Machiavellian strategic thinking, emotional control has been deemed central to social existence, spiritual progress, virtue, and social success.

13. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (1939; reprint, Oxford: Blackwell, 1968).

14. Yehouda Shenhav, *Manufacturing Rationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20.

15. Firm owners increasingly pushed away contractors, who until then had controlled the production process, and gained control of the workers, of the firing and hiring.

16. An opinion of the time makes this clear: "Many a man is entirely incapable of assuming responsibility. He is a success as the led, but not as the leader." N. C.

Fowler, *The Boy, How to Help Him Succeed* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1902), pp. 56–57, quoted in Reinhard Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry: Ideologies of Management in the Course of Industrialization* (New York: John Wiley, 1956), 259.

17. Alfred D. Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977).

18. Quoted in Bendix, *Work and Authority*, 278.

19. Quoted in *ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, 298.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Shenhav, *Manufacturing Rationality*.

23. *Ibid.*, 206.

24. *Ibid.*, 197.

25. Because Shenhav focused almost exclusively on engineers, he was led to overgeneralize from their own rhetoric to the corporation in general. Indeed, engineers tended to think of men as machines to be carefully monitored and of the corporation as an impersonal system to operate.

26. Frederick Taylor himself was not impervious to the emotional atmosphere of the shop floor as he “talked about his shock at the choleric surliness of many factory workers.” The mental revolution propounded by Frederick Taylor targeted the workers’ moods and emotions no less than their work performance. See Peter Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing the 20th Century Emotional Style* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 122.

27. Loren Baritz, *Servants of Power: A History of the Use of Social Science in American Industry* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979).

28. Donald Napoli, “The Motivation of American Psychologists, 1938–1941,” *Military Affairs* 42 (February 1978): 32–26.

29. *Ibid.*, 33.

30. Thomas Camfield, “‘Will to Win’: The US Army Troop Morale Program of WWI,” *Military Affairs* 41, no. 3 (1977): 124–28.

31. Among the first universities to offer such degrees were Ohio State, the Carnegie Institute of Technology, the University of Minnesota, and Stanford University.

32. Alex Carey, “The Hawthorne Studies: A Radical Criticism,” *American Sociological Review* 32 (June 1967): 403–16.

33. Daniel A. Wren, *The Evolution of Management Thought* (New York: John Wiley, 1979), 313.

34. Warren I. Susman, in *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), has documented the passage from a “character”-oriented society to a personality-oriented culture. He confirms that the emphasis on “personality” had corporate origins and that the psychologists’ intervention in the cultural arena made “personality” something to “play” with, “work on,” and manipulate.

35. Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949), 69.
36. *Ibid.*, 71.
37. *Ibid.*, 72.
38. *Ibid.*, 65.
39. Wren, *Evolution of Management Thought*, 318.
40. See in particular Trahair's biography of Elton Mayo: R. C. S. Trahair, *The Humanist Temper: The Life and Work of Elton Mayo* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1984).
41. See Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999).
42. Ross Stagner, "Psychological Aspects of Industrial Conflict: I. Perception," *Personnel Psychology* 1 (1948): 131.
43. M. S. Viteles, "'Human Relations' and the 'Humanities' in the Education of Business Leaders: Evaluation of a Program of Humanistic Studies for Executives," *Personnel Psychology* 12 (1959): 1.
44. Wren, *Evolution of Management Thought*, 475.
45. For works that accomplish this task very well, see, for example, Mauro F. Guillen, *Models of Management: Work, Authority, and Organization in a Comparative Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Yehouda Shenhav, "From Chaos to Systems: The Engineering Foundations of Organization Theory," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 40 (1995): 557–85; Wren, *Evolution of Management Thought*.
46. The following analysis is based on my reading of advice books for success, leadership, management, and communication inside the corporation from the 1930s to the 1990s. The fifty-two books were chosen according to their availability in a network of six suburban libraries in the Midwest. I also read and sampled the management journal *Personnel Psychology* from the 1940s to the 1960s.
47. Roger Chartier, *The Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Ithaca, NY: Polity Press, 1988).
48. Louise M. Rosenblatt, *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1978), 184.
49. Wayne C. Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 13.
50. The following analysis does not pertain to high-ranking executives, who are less likely to be constrained by their positions in the corporation. See Robert Jackall, *Moral Mazes: The World of Corporate Managers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
51. C. Stearns and Stearns, *Anger*.
52. Frank Dobbin, "The Sociological View of the Economy," in *The New Economic Sociology: A Reader*, ed. Frank Dobbin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 11.

53. Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1933).

54. C. Stearns and Stearns, *Anger*.

55. P. Stearns, *American Cool*, 123.

56. Quoted in *ibid.*, 124.

57. C. Stearns and Stearns, *Anger*, 133.

58. Quoted in P. Stearns, *American Cool*, 133.

59. Hochschild, *Managed Heart*; Jackall, *Moral Mazes*; Kunda, *Engineering Culture*.

60. Ann Curran, "Is It OK to Sob on the Job?" *Redbook*, March 1985, 115.

61. Catherine Lutz, "Engendered Emotion: Gender, Power and the Rhetoric of Emotional Control in American Discourse," In *Language and the Politics of Emotion*, ed. Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 69–91.

62. See Hemphill, "Class, Gender," 43.

63. Stephanie Coontz, *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families, 1600–1900* (New York: Verso, 1988), 339.

64. As Michael Kimmel suggests, at the beginning of the twentieth century, as the United States moved away from an agrarian to a service economy and from the mythology of the wilderness to an urban existence, the discourse of American manhood became very concerned with what was perceived as a dangerous absorption into the realm of the feminine. While in the past men had been their own masters, middle-class men faced the problem of how to maintain manhood in the context of white-collar work characterized by submission to hierarchy and mutual dependency. In the new economy, masculinity was redefined as being more impersonal—to adapt to formal organizations—but being friendly enough to be able to collaborate with others. See Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

65. P. Stearns, *American Cool*, 215–16.

66. Allen E. Ivey, *Managing Face to Face Communication: Survival Tactics for People and Products in the 1990s* (Bromley: Chartwell Bratt Press, 1988), 40.

67. Kathy Ferguson, *The Feminist Case against Bureaucracy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

68. Carol Saline, "How Not to Crumble under Criticism," *Redbook*, August 1980, 177.

69. *Ibid.*, 178.

70. William Ury, *Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 15.

71. See Joan Acker's excellent "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations," *Gender and Society* 4 (June 1990): 139–58.

72. Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1937; reprint, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 218.

73. Leonard Jarrard, "Empathy: The Concept and Industrial Applications," *Personnel Psychology* 9, no. 2 (1956): 157.
74. Jackall, *Moral Mazes*, 55.
75. Paul Rosenfeld, Robert Giacalone, and Catherine Riordan, *Impression Management in Organizations* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 28–47.
76. Roos Vonk and Richard D. Ashmore, "The Multifaceted Self: Androgyny Reassessed by Open-Ended Self-Descriptions," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (1993): 278–87.
77. David Fontana, *Social Skills at Work* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 8.
78. Richard Sennett, *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism* (New York: Norton, 1998), 109.
79. Max Weber, "Domination by Economic Power and Authority," in *Power: A Radical View*, ed. Steven Lukes (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 29.
80. Leslie Beach and Elon Clark, *Psychology in Business* (New York: McGraw, 1959), 97.
81. Ury, *Getting Past No*, 15.
82. Roderick M. Kramer and Karen S. Cook, *Trust and Distrust in Organizations: Dilemmas and Approaches* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004).
83. Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 148.
84. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936), 3.
85. Jorge Ardití and Ann Swidler, "The New Sociology of Knowledge," *Annual Review of Sociology* 20 (1994): 306.
86. See Kimmel, *Manhood in America*.
87. Shenhav, *Manufacturing Rationality*, 21.
88. Elton Mayo himself was no democrat (see Ellen S. O'Connor, "The Politics of Management Thought: A Case Study of the Harvard Business School and the Human Relations School," *Academy of Management Review* 24, no. 1 [1999]: 117–31), but his ideas could be easily interpreted as such.
89. Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 280.
90. See Connor, "Politics of Management Thought," esp. 119–20.
91. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).
92. Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, 229–52.
93. Fontana, *Social Skills at Work*, 23.
94. Rebecca B. Mann, *Behavior Mismatch: How to Manage "Problem" Employees Whose Actions Don't Match Your Expectations* (New York: Amacom Books, 1993), 4.
95. *Talking and Listening: Keys to Success with Customers and Co-Workers* (Chicago: Institute of Financial Education, 1990), 34.

96. *Ibid.*, 41.

97. Quoted in James Eicher, *Making the Message Clear: Communicating for Business* (Santa Cruz, CA: Grinder, DeLozier, and Associates, 1987), 33. The term *mirroring* is, of course, borrowed from psychoanalytic practice, where it is used as a practical device to structure the analysand-analysee relation. Here, however, it is used, not to enhance self-awareness, but rather to promote cooperation and interpersonal efficiency.

98. Ivey, *Managing Face to Face Communications*, 26.

99. Mind Tools, "Introduction: Why You Need to Get Your Message Across," 1995–2007, www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/CommunicationIntro.htm (accessed March 14, 2007).

100. Redford Williams and Virginia Williams, *Anger Kills: Seventeen Strategies for Controlling the Hostility That Can Harm Your Health* (New York: Random House, 1993), 141–42.

101. Eicher, *Making the Message Clear*, xii.

102. Axel Honneth, "Personal Identity and Disrespect," in *The New Social Theory Reader: Contemporary Debates*, ed. Steven Seidman and Jeffrey Alexander (New York: Routledge, 2001), 39.

103. Conflict Research Consortium, "Communication Improvement," 1998, www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/commimp.htm (accessed March 14, 2007).

104. Nicole Aubert and Vincent de Gaulejac, *Le cout de l'excellence* (Paris: Seuil, 1991), 148.

105. Mind Tools, "Introduction."

106. Sennett, *Corrosion of Character*, 99.

107. See Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

108. Jackall, *Moral Mazes*.

109. As an advice book on corporate success puts it, "[W]hereas the skills needed to make a success at Level 1 are relatively straightforward [relationships with subordinates], those from Level 2 [with equals] onwards become increasingly complex." Fontana, *Social Skills at Work*, 12.

110. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

111. Vern Baxter and A. V. Margavio, "Honor, Status, and Aggression into Economic Exchange," *Sociological Theory* 18, no. 3 (2000): 4.

112. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (London: J. M. Dent, 1910).

113. Krishan Kumar, *From Post-industrial to Post-modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005).

114. William H. Sewell Jr., "The Concept(s) of Culture," in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1999), 47.

115. My two categories of interviewees were important for my purposes because I wanted to compare actual managers actually struggling with the problem of projecting professional competence to students who had, presumably, only images and models to define competence.

116. John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 41–62.

117. This assumption has been very persuasively contested by such scientific studies as Antonio Damasio's *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam, 1994); yet it continues to be at the cornerstone of our public philosophy of the relationship between emotion and rationality.

118. To illustrate that the equation between rationality and self-control is not as self-evident as we may assume, we may quote from a study on the history of tears. In the eighteenth century, men cried abundantly because this showed their great heart. Delisle de la Sales wrote: "A man who has the gift of great sensitivity [that is, crying] is often more master of himself than the man whose temperament is as cold as cold reason." Quoted in Anne Vincent-Buffault, *History of Tears*, trans. Teresa Bridgeman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 46.

119. Quoted in Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 22.

120. Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 116.

4. THE TYRANNY OF INTIMACY

The epigraph is from Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (Ware: Wordsworth, 1994), 198.

1. Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of World Religions," in *From Max Weber: Essay in Sociology*, ed. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 267–301; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

2. Tamar Hareven, "Continuity and Change in American Family Life," in *Family in Transition*, ed. Arlene Skolnick and Jerome Skolnick (New York: Harper-Collins College, 1993), 40–46.

3. For example, as late as 1947 a book by Joseph L. Fox entitled *How to Keep Happily Married* (Philadelphia: Dorrance) captured the quintessential traditional definition of marriage: "Marcus Aurelius summarized in a sentence, the key to man's happiness in the words 'to do the things proper to man'" (2). These "thing proper to man" were the informal moral codes shared by the members of the middle class.

4. Thus, in 1905, a college-educated woman writing in the *Ladies' Home Journal* (more reference not available) defined authoritatively the source of a happy marriage as deriving from "the fact that every night we pray for mutual forbearance and wisdom that we may live up to our best ideals. It seems to me that there is no foundations for a happy marriage so stable as the Christian religion."

5. "The first article of the constitution should be that any person applying for membership should solemnly covenant and agree that throughout married life he or she would carefully observe and practice all courtesy, thoughtfulness, and unselfishness that belong to what is known as the 'engagement' period. . . . The secret of conjugal felicity is contained in this formula: demonstrative affection and self-sacrifice. A man should not only love his wife dearly, but he should tell her that he loves her, and tell her very often, and each should be willing to yield, not once or twice, but constantly, and as a practice to the other. Selfishness crushes out love, and most of the couples who are living without affection for each other, with cold and dead hearts, with ashes where there should be a bright and holy flame, have destroyed themselves by caring too much for themselves and too little for each other." Anonymous "graduate of the university of matrimony," quoted in Edward John Hardy, *How to Be Happy though Married*, 7th ed. (New York: Scribner, 1887), 7.

6. Stephanie Coontz, *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families, 1600–1900* (New York: Verso, 1988), 269.

7. In 1916 in San Francisco one in four marriages ended in divorce. Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 159.

8. Between 1800 and 1849 there were nearly five children per wife; between 1870 and 1900 there were less than three; and by 1915, there were less than two (*ibid.*).

9. Arlene Skolnick and Jerome Skolnick, introduction to Skolnick and Skolnick, *Family in Transition*, 1–18.

10. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 219.

11. For example, in 1908, explaining why she would not marry her husband again, a contributor to the *Ladies' Home Journal* wrote: "I am very sure that my husband was the first to speak the cross, impatient word: to exhibit carelessness of the little niceties and considerations necessary to happiness in housemates. I am sure that he deliberately showed me the other side of his nature with utter tactlessness and unconcern as to how it may affect my love." "Why I Would Not Marry My Husband Again," *Ladies' Home Journal*, August 1908, 38.

12. On Victorian middle-class female culture, see Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1985). The new expectations of men were probably related to the fact that the sphere of leisure, in which men and women had previously been divided, started

giving way to heterosocial leisure mixing men and women. See Lawrence Birken, *Consuming Desire: Sexual Science and the Emergence of a Culture of Abundance, 1871–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

13. John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988).

14. See Mary Jo Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents: A Century of Struggle with Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 25.

15. One can refer to Dora’s case to make the point, although the case has ironically served the cause of the feminist denunciation of psychoanalysis. Dora, one of Freud’s famous “failed cases,” was sent to Freud by her father because she suffered from acute coughing. Freud diagnosed this coughing as a neurotic reaction to the story in which she found herself entangled: she had been pushed by her father into the arms of Herr K. so that he himself could quietly conduct an affair with Herr K.’s wife, Frau K. Feminists have frequently used this story as an indictment against Freud, illustrating the way the psychoanalytical project was contained within and served the patriarchal structure, in which men exchange women between themselves to satisfy their sexual appetite, in turn an expression of their domination. The therapy is viewed in this context as masking and even helping ensure the perpetuation of the symptoms and diseases that are generated by the patriarchal social structure. Beyond a doubt, the story was an example of such patriarchal arrangements and domination. But Freud’s treatment of the story was not. I would argue that Freud’s telling of the story was far more destabilizing for the representation of women than any other cultural formation available at that time.

As the historian of the family Carl Degler points out, “In the whole Western world during the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth it would have been not only scandalous to admit the existence of a strong sex surge in women, but it would have been contrary to all observation” (Carl Degler, “What Ought to Be and What Was: Women’s Sexuality in the Nineteenth Century,” *American Historical Review* 79 [December 1974]: 1467–90). In contrast, in Freud’s renarration of Dora’s story, Dora’s sexuality appears to be as powerful and implacable as that of the two men who were exchanging her. Indeed, in Freud’s understanding and renarration of Dora’s hysterical reaction, her conflict turns out to have been provoked by her own love and desire for her father, by her unconscious desire for her unscrupulous suitor Herr K., and by her sexual desire for Frau K. herself. That such redescription of Dora’s sexuality was written not as a pornographic tale but as a neutral (and therefore legitimate) scientific account made Freud’s account all the more subversive. For, in writing about Dora’s presumed enormous and varied sexual appetite, Freud disentangled morality from an evaluation of this woman’s sexuality. To quote Peter Gay again, “Freud’s generous vision of libido made him into a psychological democrat. Since all humans

share in the erotic life, all men and women are brothers and sisters beneath their cultural uniforms" (Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life of Our Time* [London: J. M. Dent, 1988], 148).

The transformation of the representation of women here could be found, not in an active and explicit discourse denouncing explicitly their condition, but rather in a new cultural style that revealed a voracious female sexuality, thus legitimating the view that women's sexual appetite could be as powerful and as determining in their behavior as that of men. Although Freud was undoubtedly not a feminist and although he himself did not invent the idea of female sexual pleasure, his views that men and women had an equally powerful sexuality profoundly helped to destabilize the cultural definitions of women's sexuality.

16. Clifford Adams, "Making Marriage Work," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1950, 26.

17. Paul Popenoe, "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1960, 22.

18. Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents*, 206.

19. For example, the widely successful instant best-seller *A Generation of Vipers* (1942) suggested that America was a sick society because women had emasculated their husbands and deprived their sons of their masculinity. Using the jargon of psychoanalysis, the author, Philip Wylie, declared that mothers were responsible for the decline of leadership and democratic values. Or to take another example, in 1944 the Hollywood movie *Lady in the Dark* used psychoanalytical themes (such as repressed desire, the unconscious, and the Oedipus complex) to convey the basic message that the working woman was doomed to be unhappy and that her happiness would be recovered when she found a man who could dominate her.

20. Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents*, 173.

21. Marynia F. Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York: Harper, 1974), quoted in Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts, 1940(1970)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 278.

22. Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 171.

26. In 1970 there were fewer than twenty courses on women in American universities; two decades later, more than thirty thousand of such courses were offered at the undergraduate level (*ibid.*, 172).

27. Challenges to the psychological and psychoanalytical understanding of women had been voiced since the 1920s, but mostly from other practicing women

psychoanalysts. Early feminist critiques of psychoanalysis were waged by fellow practitioners who did not seek to undermine the discipline itself.

28. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963).

29. Speaking about the social sciences in general and psychology in particular, Betty Friedan claimed that “instead of destroying the old prejudices that restricted women’s lives, social sciences in America merely gave them new authority” (ibid., 117).

30. Quoted in Buhle, *Feminism and Its Discontents*, 209.

31. See Elizabeth Lunbeck, *The Psychiatric Persuasion: Knowledge, Gender, and Power in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Jane Ussher, *Women’s Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992).

32. Ussher, *Women’s Madness*, 166.

33. Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*.

34. Ibid., 278, 303.

35. Ibid., 280.

36. William H. Sewell Jr., “The Concept(s) of Culture,” in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 50.

37. See Michael Walzer’s *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

38. Janet Fowler Nelson, “Current Trends in Marriage Counseling,” *Journal of Home Economics* 44 (April 1952): 8.

39. Ibid., 254.

40. Michel Callon, “Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of Saint Brieuç Bay,” in *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* ed. John Law (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 204.

41. Popenoe, “Can This Marriage Be Saved?” 144.

42. Ibid., 146.

43. Clifford Adams, “Making Marriage Work,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, March 1950, 26.

44. Callon, “Some Elements,” 208.

45. Ibid., 211.

46. Clifford Adams, *How to Pick a Mate* (New York: Dutton, 1946), 91.

47. Joyce Brothers, “Make Your Marriage a Love Affair,” *Readers’ Digest*, March 1973, 80.

48. Terri Brooks, “A Better Marriage,” *Redbook*, August 1988, 142.

49. An example of this is John J. Anthony, *Marriage and Family Problems* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1939).

50. See Peters Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing the 20th-Century Emotional Style* (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

51. Adams, "Making Marriage Work," 26.
52. Natalie Winslow, "How to Assault a Husband Safely," *Mademoiselle*, July 1958, 71.
53. *Ibid.*, 123.
54. For some of these critiques, see Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1970), and Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974).
55. See Bourdieu, *Distinction*, or Paul J. DiMaggio, "Culture and Cognition," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1997): 263, on the transposability of schemes.
56. Herman, *Romance of American Psychology*, 276–304.
57. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972), 46.
58. Ellen Kaschak, *Engendered Lives: A New Psychology of Women's Experience* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 151.
59. Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog, eds., *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 17–59.
60. Kinsey's report, however, seems to have been based on falsified data and sampling methods. See Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *Sacrificing Truth: Archaeology and the Myth of Masada* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2002).
61. William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 176.
62. Schulman, *The Seventies*, 175.
63. For example, when Alfred Kinsey questioned the psychoanalytic theory of sexuality by establishing the insensitivity of the vagina and by making the clitoris the prime site for sexual satisfaction, feminists used it as evidence that Freud's view of sexuality was biased against women. Yet I would argue that this argument confuses intellectual and cultural incompatibility. For what made women's sexuality such a debated issue and determined it to be the site of women's liberation was the fact it had been deemed worthy of scientific investigation by Freud and his followers in the first place.
64. Robert R. Bell, *Worlds of Friendship* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1981); M. A. Caldwell and L. A. Peplau, "Sex Differences in Same-Sex Friendships," *Sex Roles* 8 (1982): 721–32.
65. A. C. Kinsey, W. B. Pomeroy, and C. E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1948); A. C. Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1953); Helen Gurley Brown, *Sex and the Single Girl* (New York: Avon, 1962); Grace Metalious, *Peyton Place* (New York: Random House, 1956); Robert Rimmer, *The Harrad Experiment* (New York: Bantam Books, 1973).
66. David R. Shumway, *Modern Love: Romance, Intimacy, and the Marriage Crisis* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 149.

67. It is interesting to observe in that respect that this clinic today treats “sexual compulsiveness,” as well as intimacy issues, “trauma,” and eating disorders, thus suggesting that the tools they developed quickly “colonized” other areas of behavior.

68. Instead of asking people about their sexual activities, as Kinsey had done, Masters and Johnson observed sexual activity in a laboratory setting, developing tools and techniques for accurately measuring the physical responses of seven hundred men and women during masturbation and intercourse. In 1966, they published their findings in the book *Human Sexual Response*, which quickly became an international best-seller. Like Kinsey’s report, their book was very popular and well received by the general public. Masters and Johnson’s research was particularly interesting because, like Freud, they treated sexual dysfunctions and simultaneously described and prescribed healthy sexuality and because they both conducted rigorous laboratory experiments and wrote widely popular books. They created one of the first clinics in the United States to treat couples’ problems and sexuality.

69. William H. Masters, Virginia E. Johnson, and Robert J. Levin, *The Pleasure Bond: A New Look at Sexuality and Commitment* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974).

70. See David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution, an Unfettered History* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 169.

71. Suzanne R. Kirschner, *The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis: Individuation and Integration in Post-Freudian Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

72. *Ibid.*, 195.

73. See Stephen Mitchell, *Relational Concepts in Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

74. *Ibid.*, 20.

75. See D. W. Winnicott, *Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development* (New York: International Universities Press, 1965).

76. Philip Sarrel and Lorna Sarrel, “The Redbook Report on Sexual Relationships,” *Redbook*, October 1980, 73.

77. J. Barnard and M. Fain, “Five Challenges That Can Make or Break Your Marriage,” *Redbook*, April 1980, 178.

78. Masters et al., *Pleasure Bond*, 24–25.

79. Francine Klagsbrun, *Married People: Staying Together in the Age of Divorce* (New York: Bantam Books, 1985), 21.

80. *Ibid.*, 18.

81. Masters et al., *Pleasure Bond*, 14.

82. *Ibid.*, 84.

83. *Ibid.*, 27.

84. *Ibid.*, 36.

85. Ibid.
86. Ibid., 28–29.
87. William Masters and Virginia Johnson, "Sex and Marriage," *Redbook*, October 1970, 83.
88. Mary Ann Glendon, *Rights Talk: the Impoverishment of Political Discourse* (Toronto: Free Press, 1991), xi.
89. Angela McRobbie, "Just Like a Jackie Story," in *Feminism for Girls: An Adventure Story*, ed. Angela McRobbie and Trisha McCabe (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 6.
90. "The more I talked to men as well as women, the more it seemed that inner feelings of incompleteness, emptiness, self-doubt, and self-hatred were the same, no matter who experienced them, even if they were expressed in culturally opposite ways." Gloria Steinem, *The Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), 5.
91. Nathaniel Branden, "If You Could Hear What I Cannot Say: The Husband/Wife Communication Workshop," *Redbook*, April 1985, 94.
92. Dale R. Olen, *Resolving Conflict: Learning How You Both Can Win and Keep Your Relationship* (Milwaukee: Joda Communications, 1993), 6.
93. Abigail Gerd, "When Money Comes between Couples," *Redbook*, January 1985, 82.
94. Lynne Sharon Schwartz, *Rough Strife* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 89.
95. Carol Tavris and Toby Epstein Jayaratne, "How Happy Is Your Marriage?" *Redbook*, June 1976, 92.
96. Terri Brooks and Judith Glassman, "Three Ways to a Better (Trouble-Proof) Marriage," *Redbook*, August 1998, 96.
97. Lori H. Gordon and Jon Frandsen, *Passage to Intimacy: Key Concepts and Skills from the Pairs Program Which Has Helped Thousands of Couples Rekindle Their Love* (New York: Fireside Simon and Schuster, 1993), 114.
98. Quoted in John Steadman Rice, *A Disease of One's Own: Psychotherapy, Addiction, and the Emergence of Co-dependency* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 163.
99. Gordon and Frandsen, *Passage to Intimacy*, 91.
100. Ibid., 105–6.
101. Ibid., 120.
102. Frederic Jameson, quoted in Arthur P. Bochner, "On the Efficacy of Openness in Close Relationships," in *Communication Yearbook 5*, ed. Michael Burgoon (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1982), 109.
103. Philip Gorski, "Calvinism and State-Formation in Early Modern Europe," in *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 161.
104. See Martin Albrow, "The Application of the Weberian Concept of Weber-

ian Concept of Rationalization to Contemporary Conditions," in *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, ed. Scott Lash and Sam Whimster (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 164–82. Following Habermas's discussion of the concept, Albrow suggests that rationalization includes five components: the calculated use of means; the use of more effective means; choosing on the rational basis (that is, on the basis of knowledge and education); making general value principles guide one's life; and unifying the previous four components in a rational, methodical lifestyle. But rationalization has an additional important meaning: it is the process of expansion of formal systems of knowledge, which in turn lead to an "intellectualization" of everyday life: that is, to the fact that everyday life is increasingly shaped by knowledge systems and by the systematization of beliefs about the world.

105. *Ibid.*, 170.

106. Harriet Lerner, *The Dance of Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing the Patterns of Intimate Relationships* (New York: HarperCollins, 1985), 29.

107. Sarrel and Sarrel, "Redbook Report," 73.

108. Max Weber, quoted in Seyla Benhabib, *Critique, Norm, and Utopia: A Study of the Foundations of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

109. Popenoe, "Can This Marriage Be Saved?"

110. Ann Curran, "Should You Sob on the Job?" *Redbook*, March 1985, 174.

111. Wells Goodrich, "How to Handle a Hot Marriage and Warm up a Cool One," *Redbook*, November 1980, 25, 181.

112. Wendy Espeland and Mitchell Stevens, "Commensuration as a Social Process," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 313–43.

113. Wendy Nelson Espeland, "Commensuration and Cognition," in *Culture in Mind: Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition*, ed. Karen Cerulo (New York: Routledge, 2002), 64.

114. Mary Beth Crain, "The Marriage Checkup," *Redbook*, [unknown year], 89.

115. Sarrel and Sarrel, "Redbook Report," 73.

116. "Mine is an attempt to illustrate where texts, seen as adjuncts of discourse, interpenetrate human action." Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 104–5.

117. Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy," in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. Jack Goody (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 27–68.

118. Walter J. Ong, "Print, Space, and Closure," in *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*, ed. David Crowley and Paul Heyer (New York: Longman, 1991), 110.

119. Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy, Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

120. Jorge Ardití, "Simmel's Theory of Alienation and the Decline of the Non-rational," *Sociological Theory* 14 (July 1996): 93–108.

121. See Eva Illouz, *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

122. Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

5. TRIUMPHANT SUFFERING

Epigraphs are from Kate Harrison, *The Starter Marriage* (London: Orion, 2005), 75; Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. F. Golffing (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 192; and Michel Foucault, interview with Lucette Finas, "The History of Sexuality," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. and trans. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 193.

1. Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help* (London: John Murray, 1882), 6.

2. Sigmund Freud, "Lines of Advance in Psychoanalytic Therapy" (1919), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey, vol. 17 (London: Hogarth Press, 1963), 168.

3. Erich Auerbach, quoted in Melvin J. Woody, "The Unconscious as a Hermeneutic Myth: Defense of the Imagination," in *Imagination and Its Pathologies*, ed. James Phillips and James Morley (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 191.

4. Orlando Patterson, "Culture and Continuity: Causal Structures in Socio-Cultural Persistence," in *Matters of Culture: Cultural Sociology in Practice*, ed. Roger Friedland and John Mohr (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 82.

5. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

6. Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991).

7. The notion of "depth" is discussed in William H. Sewell Jr., "A Theory of Structure: Quality, Agency, and Transformation," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 1 (1992): 1–29.

8. See Eva Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001).

9. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Mentor, 1960), 87, 85.

10. Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1963).

11. Larry A. Hjelle and Daniel J. Ziegler, *Personality Theories: Basic Assumptions, Research, and Applications*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 188–89.

12. Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 35.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 25–26.

15. *Ibid.*, 52.
16. *Ibid.*, 57.
17. John Meyer, "The Self and Life Course: Institutionalization and Its Effects," in *Human Development and the Life Course: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Aage B. Sørensen, Franz E. Weinert, and Lonnie R. Sherrod (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1986), 206.
18. Steven Brint, "Rethinking the Policy Influence of Experts," *Sociological Forum* 5 (1990): 372–73.
19. Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2 (1986): 273–86.
20. Micki McGee, *Self-Help, Inc.: Makeover Culture in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 11.
21. James Nolan, *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).
22. Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts, 1940–1970* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 241. An example of such concern for mental health was the fact that some federal agencies as the Veterans Administration were eager to adopt new programs in mental health.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Nolan, *Therapeutic State*, 281.
25. All these statistics are from *ibid.*, 8.
26. *Ibid.*, 48.
27. George M. Thomas et al., "Ontology and Rationalization in the Western Cultural Account," in *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications), 27.
28. For an example of the claim that the psychological self is asocial, see John Steadman Rice, *A Disease of One's Own: Psychotherapy, Addiction, and the Emergence of Co-dependency* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1996), 89–99.
29. John Meyer, "World Society and the Nation State," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): 144–81.
30. American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1980) (hereafter referred to as *DSM III*).
31. Atwood D. Gains, "From DSM to III-R: Voices of Self Mastery and the Other. A Cultural Constructivist Reading of U.S. Psychiatric Classification," *Social Science and Medicine* 35, no. 1 (1992): 3–24.
32. Herb Kutchins and Stuart Kirk, *Making Us Crazy: DSM: The Psychiatric Bible and the Creation of Mental Disorders* (New York: Free Press, 1997), 247. Much of the discussion of the *DSM* here is based on this book.
33. *DSM III*, 63, 313, 323.

34. Kutchins and Kirk, *Making Us Crazy*, 12.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*, 261.
37. *Ibid.*, 247. The authors claim that some pharmaceutical companies even directly contributed to the development of the *DSM*.
38. *Ibid.*, 13.
39. Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 136–37.
40. *Ibid.*, 139.
41. Alice Miller, *The Drama of the Gifted Child: The Search for the True Self* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).
42. Alice Miller, *Banished Knowledge: Facing Childhood Injuries* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), 190.
43. Mark S. Micale and Paul Lerner, “Trauma, Psychiatry, and History,” in *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870–1930*, ed. Mark S. Micale and Paul Lerner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.
44. Ron Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African-American Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
45. See Frank Furedi, *Therapy Culture: Cultivating Vulnerability in an Uncertain Age* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 82.
46. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust*, ch. 8; Furedi, *Therapy Culture*, chs. 1 and 7.
47. See Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), which shows, for example, how the hygienists supported Pasteur’s theories of microbes because this could provide a justification in their fight against insalubrious accommodations. See also Michel Callon, “Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St Brieuc Bay,” in *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* ed. John Law (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 196–233.
48. Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
49. Mariana Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
50. Sidney Jourard, “The Fear That Cheats Us of Love,” *Redbook*, October 1971, 157; Maslow, *Farther Reaches*, 57.
51. Lawrie Reznick, *The Philosophical Defense of Psychiatry* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
52. William Labov, *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972); see also Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993).
53. This discussion of narrative is inspired by and draws from the excellent

study by Carol Kidron, “Amcha’s Second Generation Holocaust Survivors: A Recursive Journey into the Past to Construct Wounded Carriers of Memory” (MA thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999).

54. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–88).

55. Sherry Ortner, quoted in Kidron, “Amcha’s Second Generation,” 6.

56. Kenneth J. Gergen and Mary Gergen, “Narrative and the Self as Relationship,” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 21 (1988): 18.

57. Michel Foucault, “The Care of the Self,” in *History of Sexuality*, vol. 3, *The Care of the Self* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

58. Carol Botwin, “The Big Chill,” *Redbook*, February 1985, 102.

59. *Ibid.*, 106.

60. Robin Norwood, *Women Who Love Too Much: When You Keep Wishing and Hoping He’ll Change* (New York: J. P. Tarcher, 1985).

61. Sometimes it is given a whole range of explanations, as in this quote from Stephanie S. Covington’s *Awakening Your Sexuality: A Guide for Recovering Women* (Center City, MN: Hazelden Information and Educational Services, 2000), 126–27: “Addictions and abuse definitely prevent partners from relating honestly and fully with one another, but people can be distant in other ways. They may be married to someone else or be involved in multiple relationships. They may have rigid boundaries that preclude intimacy. They may be depressed and unable to meet your needs. They may be profoundly narcissistic and refer everything back to themselves, denying you the right to your feelings or memories because they are wholly intent on the effect on themselves.”

62. Norwood, *Women Who Love Too Much*.

63. *Ibid.*, xiv.

64. *Ibid.*, xiii.

65. *Ibid.*, 18.

66. William H. Sewell Jr., “The Concept(s) of Culture,” in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 56.

67. Margaret S. Mahler, “On the Current Status of the Infantile Neurosis,” *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 23 (1975): 327–33, quoted in Suzanne Kirschner, *The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis: Individuation and Integration in Post-Freudian Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 41.

68. Alon Nahi and Haim Omer, “Demonic and Tragic Narratives in Psychotherapy,” in *Healing Plots: The Narrative Basis of Psychotherapy*, ed. Amia Lieblich, Dan P. McAdams, and Ruthellen Josselson (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2004), 29–48. But I will change somewhat the terms of their characterization of what constitutes a demonic narrative.

69. Sewell, "Concept(s) of Culture," 56.
70. Jeffrey Alexander and Jason L. Mast, "Introduction: Symbolic Action in Theory and Practice: The Cultural Pragmatics of Symbolic Action," in *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L. Mast (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5.
71. Jeffrey Alexander, "Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy," in Alexander, Giesen, and Mast, *Social Performance*, 32.
72. "Can't Get Over Your Ex," *Oprah Winfrey Show*, March 28, 1995.
73. Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein, "The Self in a World of Going Concerns," *Symbolic Interaction* 23, no. 2 (2000): 109.
74. Gergen and Gergen, "Narrative."
75. L. Randolph, "Oprah Opens up about Her Weight, Her Wedding, and Why She Withheld the Book," *Ebony*, October 1993, 130.
76. Brooke Shields, *Down Came the Rain: My Journey through Postpartum Depression* (New York: Hyperion Press, 2005).
77. Jane Fonda, *My Life So Far* (New York: Random House, 2005).
78. Maureen Dowd, "The Roles of a Lifetime," *New York Times Book Review*, April 24, 2005, 13.
79. Furedi, *Therapy Culture*, 41.
80. Brendan O'Neill, "Misery Lit . . . Read On," April 17, 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6563529.stm (accessed June 13, 2007).
81. Abraham Lincoln's remark to John L. Scripps, 1860, in J. L. Scripps and M. L. Houser, *John Locke Scripps' 1860 Campaign Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Peoria, IL: Edward Jacob, 1931).
82. David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 183–84.
83. Kidron, "Amcha's Second Generation."
84. Christina Hoff Sommers and Sally Satel, *One Nation under Therapy: How the Helping Culture Is Eroding Self-Reliance* (New York: Saint-Martin's Press, 2005).
85. Paul DiMaggio, "Culture and Cognition," *Annual Review of Sociology* 23 (1997): 263–87.
86. Eagleton, *Ideology*, 48.
87. Robert Wuthnow, *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and America's New Quest for Community* (New York: Free Press, 1994).
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89. Although the corporation relies heavily on therapeutic techniques, it calls itself "educational" so as not to be submitted to the control and accreditation system of psychologists.
90. Robert Todd Carroll, "Landmark Forum," 2005, <http://skeptdic.com/landmark.html> (accessed March 16, 2007).

91. Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*.
92. Y. Klar et al., "Characteristics of Participants in a Large Group Awareness Training," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 58, no. 1 (1990): 99–108, quoted in "Landmark Forum."
93. See Alain Ehrenberg, *L'individu incertain* (Paris: Hachette, Coll. Pluriel, 1995).
94. Victor Turner, "The Anthropology of Performance," in *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1986), 76.
95. James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Allegory," in *The New Social Theory Reader*, ed. Jeffrey Alexander and Steven Seidman (New York: Routledge, 2001), 58.
96. Fred Alford, *Narcissism: Socrates, the Frankfurt, and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 11–13.

6. A NEW EMOTIONAL STRATIFICATION?

Epigraph is from Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1969), 5.

1. Sigmund Freud, *Letters of Sigmund Freud*, ed. Ernst L. Freud, trans. Tania and James Stern (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 50–51.
2. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).
3. Sigmund Freud, "Lecture XXII: "Some Thoughts on Development and Regression Aetiology," from *Introductory Lectures*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1963), 16: 352–53.
4. I thank Jose Brunner for having brought these two texts of Freud to my attention.
5. Karin Knorr-Cetina, "Culture in Global Knowledge Societies," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Culture*, ed. Marc Jacobs and Nancy Weiss Hanrahan (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 74.
6. Roger Friedland and John Mohr, "The Cultural Turn in American Sociology," in *Matters of Culture*, ed. Roger Friedland and John Mohr (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9.
7. Hugo Munsterberg was the first in a long series of psychologists to devise personality tests for workers (see his *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency* [Boston: Mifflin, 1913]) and started almost single-handedly the field of vocational guidance counseling.
8. Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 149.
9. Bruce Walsh and Nancy Betz, *Tests and Assessments* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1985), 110.
10. Katherine C. Briggs and Isabel Myers, *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1976).

11. Annie Murphy Paul, *Cult of Personality: How Personality Tests Are Leading Us to Miseducate Our Children, Mismanage Our Companies, and Misunderstand Ourselves* (New York: Free Press, 2004).

12. Ann Curran, "Is It OK to Sob on the Job?" *Redbook*, March 1985, 115.

13. Claude Steiner, *Achieving Emotional Literacy: A Personal Program to Improve your Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Avon Books, 1997), 13.

14. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bentham Books, 1995).

15. Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

16. Quoted in Peter Salovey et al., "Emotional Attention, Clarity, and Repair: Exploring Emotional Intelligence Using the Trait Meta-Mood Scale," in *Emotion, Disclosure, and Health*, ed. J. W. Pennebaker (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1995), 126.

17. John D. Mayer and Peter Salovey, "The Intelligence of Emotional Intelligence," *Intelligence* 17 (1993): 433.

18. John D. Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David Caruso, "Models of Emotional Intelligence," in *Handbook of Human Intelligence*, 2nd ed., ed. R. J. Sternberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 396–420.

19. EI subsumes Gardner's inter- and intrapersonal intelligences and involves abilities that may be categorized into five domains: (1) *self-awareness*: recognizing in oneself a feeling as it happens; (2) *managing emotions*: handling feelings so that they are appropriate; realizing what is behind a feeling; finding ways to handle negative emotions as fear and anxiety, anger, and sadness; (3) *motivating oneself*: channeling emotions in the service of a goal; delaying gratification and stifling impulses; being able to exercise self-control; (4) *empathy*: sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns and taking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things; (5) *handling relationships*: managing emotions in others; social competence and social skills.

20. Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

21. "Emotional Intelligence," *Oprah Winfrey Show*, October 6, 1998.

22. J. D. Mayer and G. Geher, "Emotional Intelligence and the Identification of Emotion," *Intelligence* 22, no. 2 (1996): 90–91.

23. See Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod, eds., *Language and the Politics of Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

24. Neil J. Smelser, "The Rational and the Ambivalent in the Social Sciences," *American Sociological Review* 63, no. 1 (1998): 1–16.

25. Timothy Wilson and Jonathan W. Schooler, "Thinking Too Much: Introspection Can Reduce the Quality of Preferences and Decisions," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 60 (February 1991): 181–92.

26. *Ibid.*; Jonathan Schooler, Stellan Ohlsson, and Kevin Brooks, "Thoughts beyond Words: When Language Overshadows Insight," *Journal of Experimental Psychology* (June 1993): 166–83.

27. Bourdieu, *Distinction*.
28. Cary Cherniss, "The Business Case for Emotional Intelligence," 2004, www.eiconsortium.org/research/business_case_for_ei.htm (accessed March 18, 2007).
29. *Ibid.*, citing U.S. Government Accounting Office, "Military Recruiting: The Department of Defense Could Improve Its Recruiter Selection and Incentive Systems," submitted to Congress on January 30, 1998.
30. *Ibid.*, citing R. E. Boyatzis, "Emotional Intelligence," paper presented at the Linkage Conference on Emotional Intelligence, Chicago, September 27, 1999.
31. *Ibid.*, citing Lyle M. Spencer, David C. McClelland, and S. Kelner, *Competency Assessment Methods: History and State of the Art* (Boston: Hay/McBer, 1997).
32. *Ibid.*, citing J. E. Hunter, F. L. Schmidt, and M. K. Judiesch, "Individual Differences in Output Variability as a Function of Job Complexity," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 75 (1990): 28–42, and Daniel Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 1998).
33. *Ibid.*, citing Lyle M. Spencer and Signe M. Spencer, *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance* (New York: John Wiley, 1993), and Spencer, McClelland, and Kelner, *Competency Assessment Methods*.
34. *Ibid.*, citing Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*.
35. *Ibid.*, citing David C. McClelland, "Identifying Competencies with Behavioral-Event Interviews," *Psychological Science* 9, no. 5 (1999): 331–39.
36. *Ibid.*, no citation given.
37. *Ibid.*, no citation given.
38. *Ibid.*, citing John Bachman et al., "Emotional Intelligence in the Collection of Debt," *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* 8, no. 3 (2000): 176–82.
39. Wendy Espeland and Mitchell Stevens, "Commensuration as a Social Process," 24 (1998): 313–43.
40. Joan Acker, "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations," *Gender and Society* 4, no. 2 (1990): 148.
41. Notice that this argument differs from Arlie Hochschild's important work on the modification of the self, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). In her work it is emotional performance, not emotional makeup, that is commoditized.
42. Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 166.
43. Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 18.
44. Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 243.
45. Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

46. Randall Collins, "Stratification, Emotional Energy and Transient Emotions," in *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), 27–57.

47. To the extent, however, that cultural capital, at least in Bourdieu's sense, means access to an established corpus of artistic creations identified as "high culture," emotional intelligence does not qualify as a subspecies of cultural capital.

48. "Dans un monde en reseau, ou les connexions ont d'autant plus de chances d'être profitables qu'elles sont plus imprevisibles et plus lointaines, l'*habitus* de classe, sur lequel repose la convergence spontanée des goûts dans les ordres sociaux à dominante domestique, n'est plus un support suffisant de l'intuition, du flair. Le grand est au contraire celui qui établit des liens entre des êtres, non seulement éloignés les uns des autres, situés dans des univers différents, mais aussi distants de son milieu d'origine et du cercle de ses relations immédiates. C'est la raison pour laquelle un capitalisme connexionniste, contrairement à l'ancienne société bourgeoise, accepte bien un capital d'expériences et une connaissance de plusieurs mondes leur conférant une adaptabilité importante." Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 176.

49. Alejandro Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 1–24.

50. See, for example, John Meyer et al., "World Society and the Nation-State," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): 144–81.

51. The day was organized by an Israeli company called Anashim ve Machshevim (People and Computers).

52. David Ryback, *Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work* (Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998).

53. See Susan Moller-Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

54. Andrew Sayer, *The Moral Significance of Class* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 95.

55. Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

56. Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1983).

57. Michael Rustin, *The Good Society and the Inner World: Psychoanalysis, Politics and Culture* (New York: Verso, 1991).

58. For a somewhat similar approach, see Sayer, *Moral Significance of Class*.

59. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 6.

60. Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 285.

61. Judith A. Sellner and James G. Sellner, *Loving for Life: Your Self-Help Guide*

to a Successful, Intimate Relationship (Vancouver, BC: International Self-Counsel Press, 1991), 14.

62. Charles J. Margerison, *Conversation Control Skills for Managers* (London: Mercury Books, 1987), 7.

63. This is not to say that there are not many important differences between the corporate and the domestic self, most notably the fact that the corporate self wears many more masks than its domestic counterpart. But the fact that the corporate self is self-consciously masked is the cultural analogue of the ideal of self-disclosure in the private sphere, for “self-revelation” and “disguise” belong to the same binary code of selfhood conceived in terms of “authenticity.” Further, this self, whether masked or disclosed, must cope in the same way with the question of how to live with another.

64. Frank Furedi, *Therapy Culture: Cultivating Vulnerability in an Uncertain Age* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 35.

65. Dowd, *Are Men Necessary?* 76.

66. Paul E. Willis, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977).

67. Adrié Suzanne Kusserow, “De-homogenizing American Individualism: Socializing Hard and Soft Individualism in Manhattan and Queens,” *Ethos* 27 (1999): 210–34, quoted in Richard Harvey Brown, *Culture, Capitalism, and Democracy in the New America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 169.

68. Coontz, *Marriage, a History*, 289.

69. Lynda Dickson, “The Future of Marriage and Family in Black America,” *Journal of Black Studies* 23 (June 1993): 481.

70. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Samuel Moore (New York: Penguin, 2002), 228.

71. Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans. Joel Anderson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

7. CONCLUSION

The epigraph is from Ivo Andrić, *Le pont sur la Drina* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1999), 17. The translation is my own.

1. See Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

2. Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), 8.

3. See William H. Sewell, *The Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 10–12.

4. Michael Silverstein, quoted in Katherin A. Woolard, “Introduction: Lan-

guage Ideology as a Field of Inquiry," in *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, ed. Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4.

5. Timothy Wilson, "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right," *International Herald Tribune*, December 30, 2005, 6.

6. J. W. Schooler and T. Y. Engstler-Schooler, "Verbal Overshadowing of Visual Memories: Some Things Are Better Left Unsaid," *Cognitive Psychology* 22 (1990): 36–71.

7. Walter Mischel, Y. Shoda, and R. Mendoza-Denton, "Situation-Behavior Profiles as a Locus of Consistency in Personality," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 11 (2002): 50–54.

8. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. R. Hurley (1976; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 71.

9. Richard A. Shweder, *Thinking through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 488.

10. See Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958).

11. See Susan Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought: An Alternative History of Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

12. Weber, "Social Psychology," 271.

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