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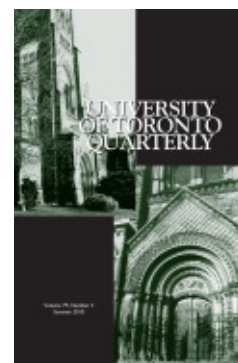
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Navigating the Genealogies of Trauma, Guilt, and Affect: An Interview with Ruth Leys

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ABSTRACT

In this interview, Ruth Leys discusses her career as a historian of science and her research on contemporary developments in the human sciences, including *Trauma: A Genealogy*, *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After*, and her current work on the genealogy of experimental and theoretical approaches to the affects from the 1960s to the present. Among the topics she covers are her investigation of the role of imitation or mimesis in trauma theory; why shame has replaced guilt as a dominant emotional reference in the West; the ways in which the shift from notions of guilt to notions of shame has involved a shift from concern about actions, or what *you do*, to a concern about identity, or *who you are*; why the shift from agency to identity has produced as one of its consequences the replacement of the idea of the meaning of a person's intentions and actions by the idea of the primacy of a person's affective experience; the significance of the recent "turn to affect" in cultural theory; and why the new affect theorists are committed to the view that the affect system is fundamentally independent of intention and meaning because they view it as a material system of the body.

Keywords: trauma theory, turn to affect, guilt, shame, intentionalism and materialism

MG. Both your book *Trauma: A Genealogy* and your more recent book *From Guilt to Shame* explicitly invoke the form of genealogy. Can you tell us why this form attracts you in relation to the study of affect? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the genealogical approach? How would you describe its socio-political valence?

RL. I consider myself an intellectual historian who writes in the mode of what I call the 'genealogy of the present,' by which I mean that I tend to write about contemporary developments or paradigms in the human sciences that have a relatively recent (also a relatively dense) history or lineage. My aim is simultaneously to write the history of those developments or paradigms (or concepts or issues) that interest me and to

make an intervention in the present by situating current debates genealogically and critically commenting on them.

My book on trauma takes this approach. In it I describe the genealogy of the concept of psychic trauma from the late nineteenth century to the present and end my discussion with two chapters on contemporary figures whose theories or views can be shown to have much in common with earlier ones and with whom I disagree (Bessel van de Kolk and Cathy Caruth). I adopt a similar approach in my 2007 book on the vicissitudes of the concepts of 'survivor guilt' and shame. I trace the origin of the concept of 'survivor guilt' back to the work of Freud and his followers, track its development in the postwar work of psychoanalysts and psychiatrists who tried to help the survivors of the Nazi camps by deploying the notion of survivor guilt, and devote the two final chapters to a critical assessment of recent theorists such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Giorgio Agamben who displace notions of guilt in favour of shame, deploying approaches that share certain key features and that I attempt to describe and critique.

I trained in the history of science at Harvard University at a time when Michel Foucault and Thomas Kuhn were beginning to make an impact. But I got little support from the faculty when I expressed an interest in the work of those authors. My situation changed when I came to Hopkins in 1975, since at Hopkins and at the Humanities Center especially there was a strong interest in 'theory,' especially French theory (Foucault, but also Derrida, Girard, Starobinski, Lacan, and others). I quickly realized that if I wanted to participate in the intellectual life of Hopkins I had some catching up to do. For a few years, I taught some of Foucault's texts quite regularly, to undergraduates and graduates, especially his *Madness and Civilization*; *History of Sexuality, vol 1*; *Discipline and Punish*; and *Mental Illness and Psychology*. It was during these years that I read his essay, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.'

What I find valuable in Foucault's notion of 'genealogy' is his rejection of a linear, teleological approach to history in favour of an emphasis on what might be called its more structural aspects. When I set out to write a history of the trauma concept, it seemed to me that such a genealogical approach was needed. The linear approaches that had been attempted in the past did not and could not do justice to what I saw as the structural repetitions that have characterized the successive theorizations of psychic trauma, the tendency for certain theoretical and indeed empirical difficulties and tensions to surface again and again at different historical moments or cruxes. The challenge as I saw it was to be attentive to the singularity of each of those moments or cruxes while remaining alert to the structural repetitions that haunted them. As Foucault observes, genealogy 'operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments that have been scratched over and recopied many times.'

He also remarks that genealogy must record 'the singularity of events outside any monotonous finality' and that it must be 'sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles' (139–40). In my work I have tried to respond to Foucault's injunction.

In my book on trauma, the structure that interested me concerned the role attributed to 'imitation' in the trauma victim's experience of shock, and especially the continuous tension or oscillation in theories of trauma between the tendency to conceive of trauma in 'mimetic' terms and the opposing tendency to theorize trauma in 'anti-mimetic' terms.

By this I mean that on the one hand, the experience of trauma victims has been conceptualized as involving a kind of imitation or 'mimetic' immersion in the other so profound as to negate any distinction between the traumatized victim and the aggressor. On this mimetic model, trauma victims are imagined as behaving rather like hypnotized people who are so swept up in, or identified with, the hypnotist's commands that they are unable to distance themselves from them but instead blindly repeat or imitate them in the form of a compulsive repetition or acting out. The mimetic model therefore views the amnesia held to be characteristic of traumatic shock as a version of post-hypnotic forgetting. Moreover, as I explain in my trauma book, in the mimetic model the unconscious imitation of the aggressor or other leads to doubt about the validity of the victim's testimony: because victims are understood as traumatized into a state of imitative-identificatory suggestibility, the mimetic model can't help worrying about the question of hypnotic suggestion and the fabrication of more or less false memories. Finally, because in this mimetic model victims of trauma are held to be identified with the aggressor, they are judged to be possessed by, and hence complicitous with, the violence directed against them.

The second, or 'anti-mimetic,' model also tends to make imitation basic to the traumatic experience, but it understands imitation differently. Instead of imagining that in the traumatic moment victims are blindly or hypnotically immersed in the scene of violence, the anti-mimetic model imagines them as capable of yielding imitatively to the enemy but in a mode that allows them to remain spectators, who can see and represent to themselves what is happening. The result is to deny the idea that victims of trauma are immersed in and hence complicitous with the traumatic violence, and to establish instead a strict dichotomy between the victim and the external event or aggressor. As I argue, the anti-mimetic model is compatible with and often gives way to the idea that

trauma is a purely external event that befalls the passive subject. Whatever damage there may be to the victim's psychological integrity, there is in principle no problem about his eventually recovering from the trauma, though the

process of bringing this about may be long and arduous. And in contrast to the mimetic theory's assumption of an unconscious identification with the aggressor, the antimimetic theory depicts violence as simply an assault from without. This has the advantage of portraying the victim as in no way mimetically collusive with the violence directed against him, even as the absence of hypnotic complication as regards the reliability of his testimony shores up the notion of the unproblematic actuality of the traumatic event. (Ley, *Guilt* 9)

What has interested me about these competing models of trauma is the way in which from the late nineteenth century onwards theorists have oscillated between the mimetic and the anti-mimetic models. My argument has been that the concept of trauma has been structured historically in such a way as simultaneously to invite resolution in favour of one pole or other of the mimetic–anti-mimetic oscillation and to resist and ultimately defeat all such attempts at resolution. My claim is that this mimetic–anti-mimetic oscillation has structured debates over the nature of trauma from then to now, and it is this structure that I have attempted to identify and analyze. Rather than trying to present crucial episodes in the history of trauma in a linear manner or as part of a continuously unfolding historical development, I wanted to show that those episodes had both an eruptive character, as if the problems involved were occurring for the first time, and a recurrent character, because each episode repeated the same difficulties and contradictions that had troubled conceptualizations of trauma from the start.

In my more recent work on the vicissitudes of concepts of survivor guilt in the post–Second World War period and the recent displacement of guilt by concepts of shame, I've again found it useful to proceed genealogically. I try to show that the notion of survivor guilt is inseparable from the victim's mimetic (hypnotic-immersive) relation to or identification with the other or perpetrator, whereas today's shame theory displaces attention from the guilty subject's unconscious-mimetic yielding to the enemy to the shamed subject's anti-mimetic consciousness of being seen. But I've been less concerned in this book with trying to demonstrate, as I did in my trauma book, the inevitable tensions between mimesis and anti-mimesis that arise in each of the texts on guilt and shame that I discuss, than in tracking the general shift in recent years *from* guilt *to* shame.

In other words, from my perspective a conspicuous strength of a genealogical approach is precisely that it helps make evident such recurring structural features of the historical past. Its weakness is that of any 'method' – if the work isn't carried out with adequate research and with critical tact, the appeal to 'genealogy' is bound to seem an empty gesture.

Since I don't believe that any methodology or approach in history as such – simply in itself – has any specific socio-political implications, I don't think the kind of genealogical approach I deploy has any particular socio-political valence.¹ It's true, however, that in light of the history I trace I do see a common or connecting thread linking my two books. The connecting thread concerns what I regard as the mistaken consequences of what I am calling the anti-mimetic tendencies of contemporary trauma and shame theory, consequences that are in part ethical and political. But in both of these books my aims have been primarily analytical and only secondarily socio-political.

MG. What drew you to an investigation of trauma or what you term 'a particular form of forgetting'? More precisely, were there specific features associated with conventional as well as more theoretical understandings of the concept – including the entries in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* – that prompted you to interrogate the development of trauma?

RL. I began working on the topic of trauma in the 1990s almost by accident. One of the things I did on coming to Hopkins was to spend several years organizing the vast archive of the personal and institutional papers of Adolf Meyer, the Swiss-German neurologist who came to the United States in 1892 and who, in various crucial positions and centrally as the first professor of psychiatry at Hopkins, decisively influenced the entire development of American psychiatry in the first half of the twentieth century. As a good Swiss, Meyer kept every conceivable letter or document or paper that he received or produced, with the result that – since he knew everyone of importance and had a hand in everything – his papers

1 My point is not that there are no political implications to be drawn from whatever methodology someone adopts, but rather that no specific political implications follow; in other words, any political implication can be drawn from any method or approach (or foundation). In the late nineteenth century it was politically progressive to assume that homosexuality was biological in origin; it soon became part of a politically conservative cause to claim that homosexuality was biological. I am sure genealogy can serve politically conservative ends, just as easily as progressive ones. I remember when a young colleague of mine read my first essay on the whole problem of identification in Freud and related texts (my essay, 'The Real Miss Beauchamp'), she got excited at the idea that 'mimesis' was 'good' politically, because it proposed that under the influence of mimesis or imitation the subject was malleable and open to change of all kinds. I had to stop her in her tracks to warn her against postulating such a simple relation between concepts or foundations and the supposedly 'correct' political position. As I note at the end of my trauma book, in the first legal test of the effort to make rape an indictable war crime, lawyers for the accused were able to exploit the fact that the Muslim victim of repeated rape had been diagnosed as suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder by demanding a halt to the trial on the grounds that the traumatized woman's 'suggestibility' made her testimony and memories suspect. Here the 'mimetic' aspect of the traumatic experience served as the foundation for a distinctly odious and retrograde or perverted politics.

constitute an enormous and fascinating collection. As a consequence of my work on the Meyer papers I came to have a good grasp of the development of twentieth-century psychiatry and psychoanalysis (Meyer's greatest intellectual rival was Freud, and the question of psychoanalysis haunts Meyer's rival theoretical approach, which he called 'psychobiology'). Although Meyer's name may not be known to many people interested in psychoanalysis or in the general field of the human sciences, it is worth noting that some of his ideas get more than a passing mention by Lacan in his early writings on paranoia and personality.²

I started out my career as a historian of nineteenth-century British neuroscience, focusing especially on the controversies surrounding the initial formulation of the concept of the spinal reflex, on which I wrote my dissertation. The claim by Marshall Hall and Johannes Muller in 1832–3 that the nervous system below the level of the medulla oblongata operated 'mechanically' on a strictly sensori-motor or input-out reflex basis seemed to propose a materialist account of human behaviour and thus threatened cherished religious ideas about the immateriality of the mind or soul. The debate over the validity and meaning of the concept of the spinal reflex thus anticipated and to some extent laid the groundwork for the controversies over Darwinian evolution that followed. But I now began to switch my attention to twentieth-century developments in the human sciences, especially to the history of twentieth-century psychiatry and psychoanalysis. I published several articles on aspects of Meyer's relations with Freud, Ernest Jones, Carl Jung, John Broadus Watson, and other important figures.³

In addition, during those years I regularly attended the Grand Rounds in the Department of Psychiatry at Hopkins, at the invitation of the head of the department, Paul McHugh, who had himself studied with the British psychiatrist Aubrey Lewis, a former student of Meyer. That was an enormously useful and enlightening experience, which provoked a storm of questions in me. I was both fascinated and disturbed by the interactions between the psychiatrists and their patients. I felt that the psychiatrists in charge knew an enormous amount about the 'positive' science of psychiatry but were for the most part insensitive to the 'transferential' dimensions of the patient–psychiatrist interaction. They were brilliant at seeing the patient as a specimen, example, or representative of the various diagnostic categories and at discussing the life history in terms of 'objective' factors and trends, but much less capable of handling the subtle, unconscious forces that might be in play, interactions that they

2 The question of the nature of Meyer's psychiatric approach is a complex one. I draw attention here to two of my contributions in particular: 'Introduction' and 'Types of One.'

3 'Meyer, Jung, and the Limits of Association,' 'Meyer, Watson, and the Dangers of Behaviorism,' and 'Meyer's Dealings with Jones.'

were in fact, as non-Freudians, ideologically committed to ignoring. But I learned a huge amount at that time about how a scientific psychiatry operated and proceeded, especially since the Grand Rounds presentation of the patients still largely conformed to the clinical model Emil Kraepelin had introduced at the end of the nineteenth century. The experience was invaluable to me and I remain enormously grateful for the opportunity I was given to witness psychiatry in action in this way. During those years, while I was still working on the Meyer archive, with co-author Rand Evans I published an edition of Meyer's correspondence with the important British psychologist Edward Bradford Titchener, a correspondence on the foundations of the human sciences that took place in 1909 and 1918 and was twice broken off because the two men simply could not find a common ground. The letters are fascinating and I enjoyed the task of co-editing the material.

The consequence of all this was that I immersed myself in American psychiatric, psychoanalytic, psychological, and philosophical thought between 1890 and 1920. By then I knew quite a lot about Freud but, at a time when most people in the humanities I hung out with were reading Lacan (and some Freud), I was also reading obscure American turn-of-the-century texts on clinical and institutional psychiatry, as well as texts by William James, John Dewey, Josiah Royce, and others, all of whom Meyer knew and read. I taught graduate and undergraduate courses on these materials, including a course on James's ideas about the self and consciousness.

A work that I was especially drawn to was a once-famous book by the New England psychotherapist Morton Prince, a book that appeared the same year as Freud's Dora case but was largely forgotten by the time I came across it. It was devoted to the analysis of a single patient, a young woman whom he called Miss Beauchamp and who suffered from multiple personality. Prince's enormously detailed account of his patient's history was framed in terms that suggested not only the centrality of the themes of imitation and hypnosis to understanding the notions of trauma and dissociation, but also his difficulty in mastering the case. The text became something of an obsession of mine. I wanted to understand the meaning and significance of the extraordinary scenes – scenes or tableaux of hypnotic imitation and identification – that occurred between the patient and Prince. It was at that moment that I had the luck to come across a book by Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Le Sujet freudien* (subsequently translated into English), a brilliant philosophical analysis, carried out in the spirit of deconstruction, of the relationship between the concepts of identification and desire in Freud.

Laplanche and Pontalis define identification as the psychological process whereby the subject 'assimilates an aspect, or property or attribute of the other and is transformed, wholly or partially, after the

model the other provides,' and they add, 'It is by means of a series of identifications that the personality is constituted and specified' (205). Typically, Freud regarded the hysteric's identification as the result or consequence of the subject's unconscious desire for a loved object, thus placing identification as secondary to, or an expression of, the subject's libidinal trends. But in a close reading of Freud's aporetic texts, Borch-Jacobsen suggested that Freud equally reversed the terms of his analysis by treating identification as primordial, that is, as prior to desire, because it involved the imitation by one 'self' of an 'other' that to all intents and purposes is indistinguishable from the first and as a result of which desire is induced.

Crucial to Borch-Jacobsen's discussion was the question of the role of hypnosis and suggestion in psychoanalysis. Thus Borch-Jacobsen showed that for Freud the hypnotic rapport, or relation between self and other, exemplified the workings of this primordial, unconscious identification, and that his well-known fascination and struggles with the phenomenon of suggestion hypnosis are centred on the question of the nature of that hypnotic-mimetic identification. The problem or nature of hypnosis was also important to François Roustang, a remarkable French psychoanalyst and former analysand of Lacan, who regularly visited Hopkins in the 1980s and with whom I became friendly.

I wrote a paper on the Beauchamp case for a book entitled *Feminists Theorize the Political*, edited by Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, and I think I was among the very first in feminist circles to stress the significance of the notion of identification for theorizing about identity and gender. After that, it did not take me long to see the possibility of a book focused on the concept of trauma, since the notion of hysteria or dissociation as a disorder of trauma had become commonplace by the time Prince published his case. My book could have been organized around other themes – around the theme of multiple personality or that of dissociation, for example. Indeed, Ian Hacking invited me to the University of Toronto to give a presentation on my work at a time when he was himself working on the topic of multiple personality, and his work and mine overlapped in fruitful ways. But I found that the most productive way for me to present the material that interested me was as a contribution to the genealogy of the concept of trauma, bearing in mind as well that the theme of trauma was on the agenda in contemporary American psychiatry because of the centrality of the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Before plotting my book I published another essay, an analysis of the question of shell shock and hypnosis that included a discussion of the work of Pierre Janet, on whom I did a great deal of research at the time, and of the work of leading contemporary experts on PTSD, such as Judith Herman. The essay was prompted by my interest in the question

of the role of suggestion or hypnosis in the cure of the war neuroses. I had been fascinated to discover the brilliant discussion by the Swiss psychologist Edouard Claparède of the notion of 'emotional memory' and the use Claparède made of Freud's discussion of affect in order to critique the notion of affective representation endorsed by many of Claparède's contemporaries. The question at stake in Claparède's discussion concerned whether the affects belonged to a system of representation comparable to that of the instincts or drives. The majority of the psychiatrists involved in using hypnosis to cure victims of 'shell shock' believed that the fright and other affects that the war neurotics had experienced persisted in the patients' minds with the same continuity and verisimilitude as the images on a movie reel. That is why, according to them, the patient's affects might be 'dissociated' or 'repressed' but they did not disappear; instead, they were lodged in the subconscious in the form of forgotten recollections. For those physicians, it was because the affects participated in the same representational system as other experiences that they could be summoned or reproduced during the cathartic-hypnotic treatment. In other words, the physicians held that the subject was incapable of forgetting anything: even if conscious access to such emotional memories was blocked, their patients unconsciously retained a complete record of every single event that had ever happened to them, however insignificant, with the result that those memories could in principle be brought into consciousness and representation and mastered during the cathartic-hypnotic treatment.

But Claparède challenged that assumption. He suggested that the success of the hypnotic-cathartic treatments of the war neuroses depended not on the revival of emotional events that had been previously experienced and were now 're-presented' to the subject as events that had happened in the past, but on the repetition of the original emotional experience in the present, with all the intensity of the original. He therefore suggested that the passionate 'reproductions' or 'relivings' (or what we now call 'flashbacks') characteristic of the cathartic-hypnotic cure could not be used to retrieve emotional memories, for the good reason that the memories in question did not exist. In effect, Claparède proposed that the emotions defied a certain representational economy because, as Freud had also proposed, the affects, or the emotional ties or identifications, are always experienced in the present, and not as past. This claim raised a series of fascinating questions about how catharsis, or hypnosis, or indeed the transference cured – *if* it cured. Did it cure by enabling the shell-shock victim or the hysteric to remember traumatic events by converting dissociated or repressed events into representations that could then be narrated and placed in the past, where they belonged? Or did the cure work otherwise, by discharging the affect in the present as if it was happening all over again? If the latter was the case, then the idea

that trauma could be cured by hypnosis by making the patient capable of remembering and telling the story of the shock was challenged. These issues have continued to haunt the trauma field to the present day, which is why, interpreted rightly, Claparède's discussion is so important. That is why I paid attention to his work, as I did also to Janet's related discussions of dissociation and hypnosis, and to the entire debate over the war neuroses in the First World War.

The question of the nature of the cathartic cure, or cure by suggestion, was also central to Ferenczi's late work on the topic, so naturally I had to include a discussion of his ideas as well. This was all the more necessary because it seemed to me that Ferenczi's late work on trauma and hysteria or dissociation was being made captive to the most simple-minded ideas about the role of trauma and 'child abuse' in hysteria. So I had a wonderful time figuring out the meaning, as I saw it, of Ferenczi's extraordinary *Clinical Diary*, which had recently been published for the first time and contained a complex and tangled record of his theoretical and therapeutic ideas. The other chapters in my book – on Freud himself, on the British psychiatrist William Sargant, who treated neurotic or hysterical soldiers after the Dunkirk disaster, and on the contributions of the psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk and literary critic Cathy Caruth to the theory of trauma – fell into place quite easily. I can't remember how I was alerted to Allan Young's work on the invention of PTSD, but I read it during the process of writing my book on trauma and it impressed me very much; I incorporated Allan's insights and he has remained a helpful interlocutor for me ever since. Another valued interlocutor, going back a long way, has been the literary scholar and theorist Walter Benn Michaels.

MG. In your study of trauma, you outline the problems associated with anti-cognitive models that, as you observe, shift the focus of research 'from the mind back to the body by explaining traumatic memory in neurobiological terms' (*Trauma* 6). Why do these models, which include that of Cathy Caruth, remain so popular? Put somewhat differently, why are the intersubjective, object-relations, cognitive approaches to trauma less compelling?

RL. The reasons so many people today are attracted to non-cognitive approaches to trauma and the affects are 'overdetermined,' to use a Freudian notion. They include the reaction against psychoanalysis, a reaction embodied in the third edition of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders* (1980), which jettisoned psychoanalysis as a template for organizing mental diseases in favour of an earlier, ostensibly atheoretical, classificatory model that understands mental disorders on the model of organic illnesses; the fascination among today's cultural theorists and critics of all kinds with 'embodiment' and the widespread feeling that the body has been

neglected in approaches to subjectivity; a concomitant fascination in the humanities and social sciences with the neurosciences resulting in an often naïve and uncritical borrowing from the work of scientists such as Antonio Damasio; the associated 'turn to affect' in cultural studies, a turn that often involves the belief that the affects must form a system independent of cognition; and the growth of concern with the question of the non-human animal, a concern that raises doubts about the idea that animal emotions have a cognitive dimension if cognitivism is defined, as it often is by philosophers, as involving processes of appraisal with a 'propositional content' that is lacking in non-humans. The result of these and other developments is a tendency to reject the idea that trauma and the affects involve any kind of cognition and to treat them instead as physiological processes of the body.

There is yet another reason for the success of anti-cognitivism, especially among postmodernist or post-historicist theorists. At first sight it is tempting to assume that the ideas of psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk about the physiology of trauma, or the views of psychologist Paul Ekman about the existence of six, or seven, or eight basic emotions hardwired in the brain and functioning automatically without regard to the meaning such feelings have for the organism, are too reductive for the purposes of post-modernist cultural theorists as sophisticated, say, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. But it is my claim that a major reason for the popularity among postmodern theorists of non-cognitive theories of trauma and affects is that there is a deep coherence between the views of cultural critics and those of the scientists to whose work they are attracted.

Thus in my book on trauma I suggested that the deconstructive critic Cathy Caruth is drawn to van der Kolk's neuroscientific approach to trauma because the two of them share the same epistemological-ontological commitments. They both think that traumatic flashbacks and nightmares are veridical memories of past traumatic events, and they both believe that those symptoms are literal replicas or reproductions of the trauma that as such stand outside all representation. Van der Kolk believes that the literal nature of the traumatic flashback or memory means that it belongs to a system of traumatic memory different from that of ordinary memory and as such is cut off or dissociated from ordinary recollection, symbolization, and meaning. In the case of Caruth the same argument takes the deconstructive form of claiming that the aporia or gap in consciousness and representation that van der Kolk and others believe characterizes the victim's traumatic experience stands for the materiality of the signifier in de Man's sense, that 'moment' of materiality that simultaneously belongs to language but is aporetically cut off from the speech act of signification or meaning.

Again, in my recent book on guilt and shame, I try to show that when the postmodernist critic Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick advocates a certain

account of shame, she does so in the name of the same non-cognitivism to which the affect theorist and scientist Silvan Tomkins is also committed. By this I mean that Sedgwick turns her back on psychoanalytic accounts of the affects in order to give consideration to the evolutionary approach associated with the work of Silvan Tomkins and his followers according to which the affects are discrete, genetically hard-wired programs in the brain that are triggered by what we call the 'object,' but the object is nothing more than a tripwire for an inbuilt physiological-behavioural response. What interests Sedgwick about Tomkins's views is precisely the idea that the affects constitute a system that is radically separate from that of cognition; the affects are therefore conceived as a system that can be discharged in a self-rewarding or self-punishing manner independent of any object whatsoever.

I am now writing a book on the genealogy of experimental and theoretical approaches to the affects from the 1960s to the present. I will be devoting several chapters to episodes in the post-Second World War history of research on the affects, including chapters on the work of Tomkins, Lazarus, Zajonc, Ekman, and others. One of my purposes will be to examine and highlight the research that challenges the dominant Tomkins-Ekman paradigm in order to show that the claims made on behalf of that paradigm are on much shakier empirical grounds than its proponents are prepared to admit. I will also be writing about very recent developments, including the widespread turn to affect among cultural critics.

The question that interests me is why so many cultural theorists – geographers, political theorists, new media theorists, and others – are so fascinated by the idea of affect and are so drawn to the work on the affects by certain neuroscientists, such as LeDoux and Damasio. Since I think it can be shown (and I have already tried to indicate this in my book on guilt and shame, and will be dealing with this issue at length in my next book) that the empirical evidence in favour of the non-cognitive approach to the affects is weak, the question why so many people are nevertheless attracted to this approach intrigues me all the more. The answer I propose is that, however complex the negotiations between cultural critics and the neurosciences may be, what fundamentally binds the two groups together is their shared anti-cognitivism, or what I prefer to call their shared anti-intentionalism. My claim is that whatever differences of philosophical orientation may exist between cultural theorists and the neuroscientists whose findings they wish to appropriate, the important point to recognize is that they all share the same belief – the belief that the affects are fundamentally independent of intention and meaning because they are material processes of the body. In short, what they share is a commitment to the idea that there is a radical separation between the affect system on the one hand, and intention or meaning or cognition on the other. For both

the cultural theorists and the neuroscientists from whom they variously borrow – and transcending differences of philosophical background, approach, and orientation – affect is a matter of automatic responses that are held to occur below the threshold of consciousness and cognition and to be rooted entirely in the body. Put slightly differently, they share a commitment to the idea that there is a gap between the subject's affects and his or her appraisal of the affective situation, such that cognition or thinking come 'too late' for intention, belief, or meaning to play the role in action and behaviour that is usually accorded to them. The result is that action and behaviour are held to be determined by material-corporeal affective programs or dispositions or systems that are independent of the mind.

Still another way of putting this point is to say that the cultural theorists whose work I shall be examining are not interested in the cognitive content or the meaning that various events or people or texts – that is, political events, articles, debates, films, or other representations – may have for the subject, but in their emotional effect on the body of the viewer, regardless of their signification. The whole point of the general turn to affect among recent cultural critics is to shift attention from the level of political debate or ideology to the level of the person's subliminal or sub-personal material-affective responses, where, it is held, political influences do their real work. I shall be arguing that the disconnect between *ideology* and the body, between meaning and affect, hypothesized by theorists such as Brian Massumi and other like-minded writers, produces as one of its consequences a relative indifference to the role of ideas and beliefs in politics in favour of an 'ontological' concern with people's corporeal-affective experiences of the political images and representations that surround them.

The whole point of the separation between affect and cognition posited by so many affect theorists today is to make the relationship between affect and ideas or meaning seem arbitrary or contingent, in a way that is different from Freud's ideas about the emotions and repression. As I point out in my book on guilt and shame, for Freud 'free-floating' anxiety appears to be free and unhinged from an object only by virtue of the role of repression, but the anxious person is not really anxious about nothing, as it were. But for Tomkins and his followers, the anxiety of the newborn who cries without knowing why it does so is the very paradigm of 'objectless' emotions, with the result that the attribution of an object to the affects is likely to be a mistake. The difference between the cognitivists and the non-cognitivists may go back to debates over William James's approach to the emotions, but it is the post-Second World War debates that interest me the most.

I should mention that another reason cognitivist approaches are felt to be less compelling than non-cognitivist ones is that the former are often

held to be captive to a particular picture of cognition according to which it is associated with making propositions or holding 'propositional attitudes.' In other words, cognitivism is held to be tied to the human capacity for producing linguistic propositions, a position that appears to create a sharp divide between humans and non-human animals, which do not have the capacity for human language. This is how the philosopher of science Paul Griffiths defines the cognitivist position, in order to reject it. But I think this is a mistake. In my view there is nothing about the cognitivist position that limits intentions to humans in this way. There is no reason to deny some sort of capacity for cognition and intentionality to non-human animals. Indeed, one of the challenges I shall be trying to meet in my new book on the genealogy of approaches to the affects since the Second World War is to defend an account of animal cognition or intentionality. I use the term *intentionality* in the spirit of Brentano to refer to states of mind that are directed towards an object and that include beliefs, judgments, wishes, and cognitions. Obviously this is a large and difficult topic, but it is one that I think is inescapable. I note in this regard that the scientist Alan Fridlund, who has written brilliant critiques of the Ekman approach to emotions and facial expression, treats the emotions as intentional states, so the topic is very much on the agenda. I shall use what resources I can find to help me think the issues through. I have found discussions of this and related concerns regarding non-human animal intentionality by the philosophers John McDowell, David Finkelstein, Jason Bridges, and several others very stimulating in this regard. I might add that the term *cognitive* can suggest a concern with cognitive psychology and information-processing systems, which is very far from the meaning attached to the term by the appraisal theorists who interest me, which is one reason I prefer to frame the debate over the nature of the affects in terms of intentionalism versus anti-intentionalism, rather than in terms of cognitivism versus anti-cognitivism.

Finally, another reason why cognitive approaches are felt to be less compelling is the accusation that they are less in touch with developments in the life sciences, especially the neurosciences. Philosophers tend to favour the cognitivist position, and since on the whole they are not very interested in bringing their arguments to bear on the findings of the empirical sciences, their views can seem out of touch and unconvincing. But today some philosophers are willing to meet scientists on their own ground. I am thinking, for example, of the philosopher Shaun Gallagher's discussion of the body image and body schema in the de-afferented patient and the role of contextualization in the rehabilitation of function after brain damage. De-afferented patients are patients who have lost the normal feedback sensations that govern ordinary habitual movements. Gallagher discusses the experience of one such de-afferented

patient who has lost the sense of touch and proprioception from the neck down and who therefore lacks the normal feedback necessary for motor control. As a consequence, the patient is obliged to make a conscious mental decision for every simple movement he tries to make, with the result that he can hardly move naturally at all. Gallagher offers a persuasive analysis of the motor limitations of this patient from the perspective of an embodied phenomenology and in general is very plugged in to recent developments in the neurosciences.

In any case, the fact that some philosophers can be characterized as armchair theorists because they fail to acknowledge the contributions of the contemporary sciences is no excuse for taking on board as true certain empirical findings of doubtful validity, as Griffiths does when he endorses Ekman's work on the basic emotions.

MG. Interestingly, in your book *From Guilt to Shame* you trace the opposite tendency – the desire to take an anti-mimetic, cognitive approach to the affective response of victims of concentration camps. What does this shift (from guilt to shame) tell us about our cultural concepts of self and identity?

RL. What the shift from guilt to shame tells us is that in today's shame theory – and in the general turn to affect that characterizes cultural theory today – a concern with meaning and agency has been displaced in favour of an interest in notions of identity and personal difference. As I argue, after the Holocaust, victims of the Nazi camps reported feeling guilty for having survived when so many others had died, and this notion of survivor guilt was then made a defining feature of the 'survivor syndrome' by postwar psychoanalysts and others committed to the task of defining the long-term effects of the camp experience and in helping survivors obtain reparations from the West German government. The notion of unconscious identification with the other was central to the concept of survivor guilt, which meant that the theorization of survivor guilt remained within an intentionalist or cognitive framework.

Thus, as I argue, by common agreement guilt concerns your actions, namely, what you do – or what you wish or fantasize you have done, since for Freud the unconscious does not distinguish between the intention and the deed, the virtual and the actual. But as I show in my book, shame is held to concern not your actions but *who you are* in all your differentness from others. According to shame theorists, shame means experiencing not guilt for some imagined or real deed that you have performed – say, in the moment of terror unconsciously identifying with those in power because you secretly wish you were in some place other than that of abject powerlessness – but simply some personal experience that is unique to you and that defines you as who you are. And although shame is usually considered a negative experience, it is also understood to be a more positive emotion than guilt because it holds out the possibility

of contingency and change. Whereas the actual or fantasized acts that produce guilty feelings in principle can't be undone, feelings of shame that may be felt as highly negative nevertheless concern aspects of selfhood that are imagined to be amenable to change or correction. I may be ashamed of my identity as 'queer' but I can also learn to take 'pride' in it, or I can decide to change whatever aspect of my identity embarrasses me.

In other words, what has happened in the shift from guilt to shame is the replacement of the idea of the meaning of a person's intentions and actions, which have informed theories of guilt, by the idea of the primacy of a person's affective (shameful) experience, or, as I put it, the idea of personal differences. This shift is understood by Sedgwick and others as a means of avoiding the moralisms associated with the notion of guilt. The rise of shame theory can thus be placed in the context of a general rejection of Freud and the 'repressive hypothesis.'

It's the idea of a gap between the affects and cognition or meaning that interests Tomkins and Sedgwick, and that interests so many others who are caught up in the 'affective turn' today. For Tomkins and these theorists, if I run from a snake I do not do so because I believe there is a dangerous object in front of me and desire not to be bitten by it. Snakes frighten me because they were once terrifying to my ancestors in evolutionary history. The snake on this model does not function as an object of my beliefs or desires or intentions but as a 'trigger' or tripwire for an involuntary, hard-wired response that is rapidly discharged without my affect system's knowledge or cognition of the object that triggered it. For Sedgwick, it is precisely the gap or slippage or 'inefficiency of fit' between my feelings on the one hand and my knowledge of what causes my feelings on the other that interests her because, according to her, that gap is productive of opacity and error and hence of change: the inefficiency of the fit between my affect system and my cognitive system is what makes it possible for me to be wrong about objects and hence myself – and hence also makes it possible for me to change.

It's as if Sedgwick thinks that an intentionalist account of the affects of the kind found in Freud weighs the subject down with the pull of the repressed past, as if the guilty Oedipal scenario inexorably forces the subject into repetition and regularity without let up or the possibility of change. Tomkins's affect program theory appeals to her in this regard precisely because it seems to her to offer far more possibilities for change and transformation, since the relationship between what I feel (shame) and what I feel shame 'about' (my sexual orientation, the size of my nose, the colour of my hair) is now held to be entirely contingent and indeterminate. The radical contingency of the shame experience – the capacity of shame, according to Tomkins's shame theory, to attach to any aspect of the self – means that shame avoids the generational lockstep of the guilty

Oedipal scenario by allowing for the radical indeterminacy and contingency of experience. As I state in my recent discussion of this topic, shame in this scenario 'thus transforms and produces identity without any moralism and indeed without giving identity any specific content. Shame interests Sedgwick politically, because 'it generates and legitimates the place of identity – the question of identity – at the origin of the impulse to the performative, but does so without giving that identity space the standing of an essence.' In short, shame is a technology for creating queer identity as the experience of pure difference: 'Part of the interest of shame is that it is an affect that delineates identity – but delineates it without defining it or giving it content. Shame as opposed to guilt, is a bad feeling that does not attach to what one does, but what one is . . . Shame is a bad feeling attaching to what one is: one therefore is something, in experiencing shame' (*Guilt*, 164, citing Sedgwick).

In the conclusion of my book I offer a few speculations about the appeal of this approach to shame for those who advocate it, by pointing out the new view of the subject that it makes possible. It is a view of the subject that is centred not on the experience of guilt for some real (or imagined or fantasized) deed but shame for some personal experience or feeling that is unique to you and makes you what you are. Such a view of the subject avoids the moralisms associated with the theory of guilt, for it is certainly true that the notion of guilt, however theorized, carries with it a notion of responsibility. Indeed, the idea of 'survivor guilt' has consistently given rise to the objection that, however innocent she may be, the victim stands accused of complicity in the violence directed against her because she has unconsciously identified with the aggressor. But shame theory replaces such concerns about accountability with an emphasis on the question of our personal identity and attributes. Indeed, as I've said, for Sedgwick and her followers the value of shame as opposed to guilt is that it is a technology for ensuring that one person's attributes will be different from everyone else's, indeed that it is a means for producing (queer) identity as the experience of pure difference. Above all, I propose that a theory that draws a distinction between affects on the one hand, and meaning or cognition on the other, renders debate or dissension beside the point. I argue that Sedgwick's work on shame, and by extension Tomkins's entire affect program theory, conforms to a certain post-historicist logic that entails a series of commitments – a commitment to anti-intentionalism, to materialism, and to the primacy of identity or personal differences – in such a way as to make debates about the meaning of our beliefs irrelevant and our personal feelings and experiences the only things that matter. For me what is at stake in this argument is the logic involved, a logic that foregrounds the question of identity at the expense of questions of meaning. Sedgwick thinks it is important to theorize identity as malleable and constituted by a multiplicity of affect

and other assemblies of degrees of independence and dependence. But from my perspective, it makes no difference whether your view is that the subject is fixed and stable, or whether you theorize the subject as plural and mobile. In both cases you are committed to the primacy of identity and hence close off debate about the meaning of our emotions. The result, I suggest, is that when people have different experiences or feelings, they don't disagree, they are just different.

The meaning of the shift from guilt to shame is thus to make conflicts over our beliefs beside the point, because to see or feel something from a different personal perspective is to see the same thing differently but without contradiction. For who am I to contradict you if you say something makes you feel some way that is different from how it makes me feel? The larger meaning of the shift from guilt to shame, from cognitive approaches to the affects to non-cognitive ones, is that it gets rid of interpretation or meaning altogether. I regard this as a mistake, one that is both empirically misguided and theoretically problematic. In this regard my argument is in close dialogue with Walter Benn Michaels in his stunning book *The Shape of the Signifier*.

MG. In your recent lectures at the University of Toronto, I could not help but notice that the F-word came up several times – I mean, Freud, of course! Do you think people have misread Freud, owing, perhaps, to accounts disseminated by critics such as Jeffrey Masson? Is it time to return to Freud's critical insights? And why is 'identification,' a basic premise of Freudian theory, so problematic?

RL. I always find Freud 'good to think with.' I believe a lot of people have misread Freud, not necessarily because of the account proposed by Jeffrey Masson. Equally interesting to me is the fact that some people who have not misread Freud but have been brilliant readers of Freud's texts, such as Borch-Jacobsen and Sedgwick, have turned against Freud. We are indeed living in a post-psychoanalytic age, to the point that when certain theorists are tempted to return to Freud for insights into the nature of the human psyche they offer materialist readings of his work in order to align his thought with the latest neuroscientific findings. It's as if there is a deep, almost somnambulistic cultural trend that favours the body and the biological sciences at the expense of any notion of the psychological unconscious. In my view what goes missing in so much of the cultural-critical work on affect today is precisely the question of the relation to the other, or rapport, which for Freud is always a psychic relation – an identificatory-libidinous relation – that is inherently conflictual and ambivalent, a relation that is at once immersive and identificatory and non-immersive (or specular) and rivalrous. But how does one theorize conflict when the affects are imagined to consist of six or seven or eight discrete 'affect programs,' and the more complex emotions, such as guilt, are imagined to be a blend of the more basic ones?

To put this another way, the affect program theory is essentially 'atomistic' in that it posits the existence of a set of discrete or basic emotions, out of which the more complex ones are said to be elaborated by a process of addition or blends. The Freudian notion of the primordial conflict between love and hate gives way to a notion of the affects as autonomous and discrete. Moreover, since for Tomkins the affects are 'autotelic,' that is, they can be discharged in a self-rewarding or self-punishing way independently of any object, there is an important sense in which the subject does not need a world outside himself or herself at all. His theory of affect therefore gives primacy to the feelings of a subject without a psychology and without an external world, whereas on the Freudian account – or indeed any intentionalist or cognitivist account – the world or other is a crucial factor in the emotional reaction: our emotions are 'about' the other, they entail our identifications with the other (Freud) or our appraisal of the (significance of) the other or object – an appraisal that for Freud is bound to be conflictual, torn between attraction and repulsion, affection and rivalry, or love and hate.

Why is identification so problematic? The reasons are complex. As I've indicated in my book on guilt and shame, almost from the start people were uncomfortable with the idea – inherent in the idea of survivor guilt – that in the moment of trauma the victim unconsciously identifies with the perpetrator or the aggressor. The concept of survivor guilt proffered a troubling image of the victim as psychically complicit with violence. So instead of seeing the Freudian formulation as one that offered a compassionate portrait of the abjected psyche under siege, critics of the notion of survivor guilt felt that the victim was being scapegoated all over again by being accused of colluding with power. So almost from the moment the concept of survivor guilt was proposed as the key to the concentration camp survivor's tormented, depressive state, critics, such as Terrence Des Pres, launched an attack on the whole idea of survivor guilt, emphasizing instead a pre- or non-Freudian account of the role played in the victim's survival by social bonding, mutual care, and outright resistance. If identification did take place in the camps, Des Pres and others argued, the imitation did not take the form of an unconscious collusive identification with those in power, but of a conscious and strategic mimicry undertaken by prisoners and those in the resistance to secure positions of influence in the camps and to assist other prisoners. One might put it that Des Pres, opposed to the Freudian idea of the victim's unconscious yielding to the enemy, offered a pre-Freudian account of the subject who behaves in a conscious and calculated manner to obtain his or her goals.

This theorization went hand in hand, in Des Pres's discussion of the survivor, with a thematization of the corporeal that bears a striking resemblance to current theorizing of embodiment. But the whole idea of a

psychic unconscious is now under attack because there is such a yearning to thematize the body and embodiment as purely material and distinct from cognition – as if you can't think about the body without rejecting the psychic unconscious. In my view, many of today's affect theorists are actually quite dualistic, even if they profess to be anti-dualists or indeed monists. They posit consciousness and the body, with no third term, such as psychic reality or the unconscious, and if they show an interest in Freud they seek to provide a materialist interpretation of his work, with frequently naïve or reductive results. In this context, it is worth remembering that Freud did not neglect the body. Indeed, we owe the idea of the 'psychosomatic' to him, and no one has ever given a more brilliant reading of the way the body carries psychic meaning and conflict in the form of corporeal symptoms. However, today the theorization of embodiment is carried out in a vein that tends to reject his insights or at least to materialize them completely.

To all this, I can also add that from the perspective of the human sciences themselves, the kind of narratives that seem to be called for in Freudian approaches to the affects, or in appraisal theories, are difficult for scientists to accommodate because they don't conform easily to the norms of empiricism. If one favours an intentionalist interpretation of the affects of the kind associated with Freud and the appraisal theorists, one finds oneself forced to provide thick descriptions of life experiences in more or less naturalistic settings – descriptions of the kind that are familiar to anthropologists and Freud and indeed great literature but are widely held to be inimical to science. At the same time one is obliged to engage with an array of tremendously difficult questions about the nature of intentionality, including the intentionality of non-human animals, that have traditionally belonged to the domain of philosophy. The affect program theorists largely dispense with these problems, because they rely on methods of research, such as the use in test situations of still images of posed emotional expressions, that are convenient and easy to use and that are compatible with recent imaging methods, such as PET scanning and fMRI. The methods by which the affects are investigated today in the laboratory do not involve recording in any narrative detail the subjective experiences of experimental subjects as they respond to various photographs of emotional expressions or other affective test stimuli. Rather, the reactions of the subjects' amygdalae and other brain regions are taken as evidence of emotional response, because feeling and brain activation are equated. This operationalizes the affects in ways that obviate the need to worry about collecting detailed reports from the subject as to what she or he is actually feeling. The use of forced-choice methods of labelling emotional responses – which involve asking a subject to identify an image of an emotional expression by selecting one label from a limited list of emotion terms – and related techniques also work to reduce to a minimum the need to record subjective responses.

MG. What alternative models of the construction of self and identity are elided by an over-emphasis on the anti-mimetic approach? Here I am thinking of your valuable analysis of the work of Ferenczi. Was there any particular reason why you did not discuss Winnicott?

RL. The psychologist Richard Lazarus was among those who, in the recent past, tried to offer an alternative account of the construction of self and identity to that offered by the affect program theorists. In the 1960s, Lazarus conducted important experiments showing that witnessing unpleasant or stressful films could induce powerful emotional and physiological effects. But he was critical of much of the work then being done on stress on the grounds that researchers assumed that a stimulus, such as a stress film, was either stressful or not, without regard to the subject's personal assessment or the meaning the stimulus had for him or her. On the basis of experiments in which he altered the sound track on a stress film and induced different responses in his subjects, Lazarus concluded that the threat was not 'out there,' as an attribute of the stimulus, but that its threat value depended on the appraisal process, which depended on the subject's beliefs and coping styles. Lazarus therefore emphasized the complexity of the subject's reaction to a film-stimulus – a complexity due to the complexity of the film content, which tended to be interpreted in highly simplistic terms by other researchers, and to the complexity of the human response. As a result of these considerations, Lazarus took a prominent role in defending the cognitivist or appraisal position against the non-cognitivists, as in his famous debate in the 1980s with Robert Zajonc. In order to do justice to the personality issues involved in appraisal, he increasingly centred his research on the clinic and gave up the elegant but somewhat artificial experiments he had been pursuing in the laboratory. He went on to produce important and influential books on the affects and cognition and personality. But in my view, in the absence of Freud's conceptual and narrative originality, the descriptions of the formation of the self that Lazarus put forward ended up being wordy and a bit dull to read. I find Lazarus more interesting in his early years, when he was a laboratory scientist who nevertheless saw many of the pitfalls of many laboratory approaches to the emotions, than in his later years, when he retreated to the clinic in order to obtain an account of the affects in more natural settings. When he started to formulate the construction of the self in terms of certain 'core relational themes' his narratives tended to become long and rather boring. Reading a good novel is just as enlightening and a lot more fun.

I did not discuss Winnicott because I have not paid as many dues to the British School of psychoanalysis as I have on Freud and Ferenczi – that is the only reason. I would like to know more about his work.

MG. Turning to your current research, do you see any similarities between Caruth's notion of trauma and the affect-program theorist approach to supposedly universal affective responses?

RL. As I say, the link or connection I see between Caruth and today's affect program theorists is to be found in their shared materialism, or anti-intentionalism. That is what seems to me to be crucial.

When I was studying Caruth's work I was fascinated by the fact that she was so clearly drawn to the work of someone like Bessel van der Kolk, one of the leading theorists of trauma in the medical-psychiatric sciences. I read a lot of van der Kolk's writings and did not find them persuasive. For me, the question then became why she, so evidently at home in the high theory associated with the work of Paul de Man, became sympathetic to Van der Kolk's work. What was the tie that bound together thinkers who might appear to have such different agendas? And the answer then became clear to me: what they shared was a commitment to the idea that trauma lies outside all representation because under conditions of trauma the ordinary mechanisms of consciousness and memory are temporarily destroyed. The result, they claim, is that an undistorted, material, or 'literal' registration of the traumatic event occurs that cannot be known or represented but returns belatedly in the form of 'flashbacks' and other repetition phenomena. Van der Kolk explains this process in neurobiological terms, whereas Caruth turns to de Manian deconstruction to explain the gap or aporia in consciousness and representation that defines the traumatic experience. But the same interpretive impulses are at work in both cases, which is why van der Kolk and Caruth find support for their ideas in each other's work. I argue that today's affect theorists similarly espouse an anti-intentionalist or materialist position, so in this sense trauma theory and affect theory overlap.

MG. How would your emphasis on guilt alter our understanding of the construction of queer identity?

RL. An emphasis on guilt would at least make questions of meaning and agency of central interest, because, as I've already mentioned, guilt is tied to the question of one's (real or imagined) intentions to act in a certain way, whereas shame shifts attention from questions of agency and meaning to questions of personal identity. So if you are interested in questions of personal difference, then shame theory is definitely the way to go. I argue that such an interest in personal identity goes hand in hand with other theoretical commitments – to materialism and anti-intentionalism – amounting to a single logic that I regard as highly problematic. But note that nothing I say critically about shame theory today is meant to reject the view that shame may be an appropriate response to certain situations. The purpose of my book is not to deny the relevance of shame, but to question the terms in which shame, and the affects generally, are being theorized today. Moreover, alternative accounts of shame are possible, ones that don't adhere to the affect program theory but stay closer to a psychoanalytic framework or an appraisal paradigm. For example, Leon Wurmser, in his interesting book *The Mask of Shame*,

writes about shame in a way that doesn't dispense with a psychoanalytic vocabulary or meaning.

MG. Ideally, what impact would you like your work to have on cultural and/or scientific understandings of and research on emotion?

RL. I have rather modest expectations about the impact of my work on the actual course of science. On the other hand, I very much enjoy my contacts with certain scientists in the emotions field. As I began to delve into the literature on guilt and shame I became convinced that some of the crucial evidence about the affect program theory and facial expression on which the emotion field depends today was faulty. I eventually stumbled on the work of one scientist, Alan Fridlund, who has written a superb book on facial expression from the perspective of someone who had started out as an advocate of the reigning paradigm and a student of Paul Ekman, but who had come to doubt its validity. I immediately contacted Alan in order to pose many questions to him and, encouraged by the warmth and helpfulness of his reply, I have enjoyed an immensely productive and stimulating email friendship with him ever since.

Now I don't hesitate to contact scientists whose work interests me, nor do I hesitate to send my work to them for comment. I've been impressed by the fact that the emotions field is not monolithic, and that there is what I might call a minority wing that is asking some very tough questions about prevailing assumptions and norms. The existence of these scientists and their generosity in responding to my inquiries have given me the confidence to pursue my own critiques wherever they lead me, especially as my interlocutors don't agree with each other all the time, so there is ample room for questioning. More recently, James A. Russell, another scientist who has written superb critiques of some of the basic paradigmatic experimental work on the affects, has invited me to contribute to the journal *Emotion Review*, which he edits. I have welcomed the invitation as a chance to participate in an ongoing debate about the affects. I also enjoy contacts with several philosophers, some of whom are my best readers, as are literary critics, such as yourself. If I can persuade them and you and others in a variety of fields that what I say makes sense, I am more than satisfied.

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