

## NOTES

### PREFACE

1. *Reinventing the Soul: Posthumanist Theory and Psychic Life* (New York: Other Press, 2006); *A World of Fragile Things: Psychoanalysis and the Art of Living* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009); and *The Singularity of Being: Lacan and the Immortal Within* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

### 1. THE CALL OF CHARACTER

1. I am obviously referring to Nietzsche's famous statement in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1969).
2. In the realm of ethics, Kant was the one to formulate this notion most clearly by insisting that our ethical judgments must be "disinterested" in the sense of being devoid of all personal passions and investments.

- See Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (New York: Hackett, 1987).
3. Bernard Williams, interviewed by Stuart Jeffries, *The Guardian*, November 30, 2002.
  4. For an excellent analysis of this feeling, see Julia Kristeva, *New Maladies of the Soul*, trans. Ross Guberman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). See also my book *Reinventing the Soul: Posthumanist Theory and Psychic Life* (New York: Other Press, 2006).
  5. On existential overagitation, see Jonathan Lear, *Happiness, Death, and the Remainder of Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000). Eric L. Santner also makes a relevant argument in *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
  6. Adam Phillips explores our somewhat problematic attachment to the notion of a balanced life in *On Balance* (New York: Picador, 2011).
  7. For a fascinating discussion of some of these issues, see Anthony Storr, *Solitude: A Return to the Self* (New York: Free Press, 2005).

## 2. THE PROCESS OF BECOMING

1. This perspective is common in popular spiritual writing. One of its most engaging articulations can be found in Thomas Moore's *Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994).
2. The outlines of Nietzsche's thinking presented in this chapter are drawn primarily from *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974). The chapter epigraph is from page 335, emphasis in original. Note also the subtitle of Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin, 1992).
3. On falsely coherent selves, see D. W. Winnicott, "Ego Distortion in Terms of True and False Self," in *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, 140–152 (London: Karnac, 1965).
4. For a related examination of human life as an open-ended process, see Jonathan Lear, *Open-Minded: Working Out the Logic of the Soul* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).
5. This complicated argument exceeds the parameters of the present discussion. I plan to tackle it in a more academic book tentatively entitled *Between Levinas and Lacan: Self, Other, Ethics*.

6. One of my ongoing disagreements with contemporary theory is that it tends to paint the world as precisely such a default adversary. Those interested in how to conceptualize the world as a potentially enabling space of collective ideals might benefit from Lewis Kirshner's *Having a Life: Self-Pathology After Lacan* (Hillsdale, N.J.: The Analytic Press, 2004).
7. Slavoj Žižek talks about this feeling in a number of his books, but perhaps the most relevant in this context is *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London: Verso, 2000).

### 3. THE SPECIFICITY OF DESIRE

1. I take my wording from Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Citadel, 2001).
2. Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011).
3. I am here drawing on Freud's famous essay "Mourning and Melancholia," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 14, edited by James Strachey, 239–258 (New York: Norton, 1957).
4. The Lacanian insights in this chapter are drawn broadly from his work, but of specific interest are two of his seminars: *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Dennis Porter (New York: Norton, 1992), and *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1981).
5. Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, 118.
6. The "disclosure"—or unveiling—of the world is a common theme in Heidegger's philosophy, attaining mystical dimensions in his later theory of poetic dwelling. See the essays collected in Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).
7. See the final chapter of *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*.
8. Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, 112.
9. Alenka Zupančič makes this point beautifully in *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).
10. See Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, chapter 24.

11. Ibid., 319.
12. I explore this problem in chapter 3 of *The Singularity of Being: Lacan and the Immortal Within* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).
13. I am here signaling to the idea that a desire that resuscitates the Thing's echo is a desire that relates to the Lacanian "real"—the part of our being that resists symbolization. See *ibid.*

#### 4. THE BLUEPRINTS OF BEHAVIOR

1. My approach in this chapter is broadly Freudian. Those interested in the basics of his thinking might want to start with the following classics: *The Interpretation of Dreams*; *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis*; *The New Introductory Lecture on Psychoanalysis*; *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*; *The Ego and the Id*; and *Civilization and Its Discontents*. These texts are available as separate volumes in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Norton).
2. Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, ed. James Strachey, in *The Standard Edition*, vol. 18 (New York: Norton, 1961), 23.
3. Freud characterized this state of unorganized desire as one of "polymorphous perversity" without thereby placing a normative judgment on it: it is simply the primordial, presocial manifestation of human wanting. See Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
4. Jonathan Lear analyzes this predicament in *Therapeutic Action: An Earnest Plea for Irony* (New York: Other Press, 2004).
5. On the importance of developing an active relationship to our repetition compulsion, see Hans Loewald, *The Essential Loewald: Collected Papers and Monographs*, ed. Jonathan Lear (Hagerstown, Md.: University Publishing Group, 2000).
6. Lear argues along related lines throughout his work. See, in particular, his introduction to *The Essential Loewald*.
7. This point resides at the core of my argument in *A World of Fragile Things: Psychoanalysis and the Art of Living* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

#### 5. THE ALCHEMY OF RELATIONALITY

1. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1966), 476.

2. Lacan makes this point in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1981). But it is Laplanche who has developed it most extensively in *New Foundations of Psychoanalysis*, trans. David Macey (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989). For more recent discussions of the enigmatic desire of the other, see Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); Eric L. Santner, "Miracles Happen: Benjamin, Rosenzweig, Freud, and the Matter of the Neighbor," in *The Neighbor: Three Inquiries in Political Theology*, by Slavoj Žižek, Eric L. Santner, and Kenneth Reinhard, 76–133 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and Mari Ruti, *The Singularity of Being: Lacan and the Immortal Within* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).
3. I take up this issue in detail in my mainstream book *The Case for Falling in Love: Why We Can't Master the Madness of Love—and Why That's the Best Part* (Chicago: Sourcebooks Casablanca, 2011).
4. I discuss this summons in greater detail in *The Summons of Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).
5. On our culture's ambivalence about singleness, see Kate Bolick's delightful article "All the Single Ladies," *The Atlantic* (November 2011). See also Bella M. DePaulo, *Singled Out: How Singles Are Stereotyped, Stigmatized, and Ignored, and Still Live Happily Ever After* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007). For a more academic analysis, see Michael Cobb, *Single: Arguments for the Uncoupled* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
6. See Arendt's *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) as well as *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.
7. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1991).
8. Stephen Mitchell argues along related lines in *Can Love Last? The Fate of Romance Over Time* (New York: Norton, 2003). I develop this line of reasoning about idealization in both *The Summons of Love* and *The Singularity of Being*.
9. My ideas about the sublime aspects of love have been influenced by Alenka Zupančič's *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

## 6. THE ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. Kelly Oliver, *The Colonization of Psychic Space: A Psychoanalytic Social Theory of Oppression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 199.

2. Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret* (New York: Atria Books/Beyond Words, 2006).
3. For an incisive critique of “positive thinking” and of Byrne’s book in particular, see Barbara Ehrenreich, *Bright-Sided: How Positive Thinking Is Undermining America* (New York: Picador, 2009). For a related critique, see Roy F. Baumeister and John Tierney, *Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength* (New York: Penguin, 2011).
4. This notion is perhaps most closely associated with Eckhart Tolle’s influential *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* (Novato, Calif.: New World Library, 2004), but it has been enthusiastically embraced by the self-help industry, in particular its more spiritual echelons.
5. Nietzsche makes this argument in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1989), and *Unfashionable Observations*, trans. Richard T. Gray (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995). For an excellent reading of Nietzsche’s stance, see Alenka Zupančič, *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche’s Philosophy of the Two* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).
6. For a sophisticated analysis of this impossibility, see Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005).
7. This theme can be found throughout Žižek’s work, but one of its most pointed articulations is his critique of Levinasian ethics in “Neighbors and Other Monsters: A Plea for Ethical Violence,” in *The Neighbor: Three Inquiries in Political Theology*, by Slavoj Žižek, Eric L. Santner, and Kenneth Reinhard, 134–190 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
8. For a related critique of Western notions of tolerance, see Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006).
9. See Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999).
10. Žižek, “Neighbors and Other Monsters,” 185. See also Eric L. Santner’s essay “Miracles Happen: Benjamin, Rosenzweig, Freud, and the Matter of the Neighbor,” in *The Neighbor*, 76–133.
11. See Butler’s *Giving an Account of Oneself* as well as *Precarious Life* (New York: Verso, 2004) and *Frames of War* (New York: Verso, 2009).
12. Butler makes this argument most forcefully in *Precarious Life* and *Frames of War*.

13. Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself*, 42. See also my critique of Butler in the conclusion to *The Summons of Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).
14. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 233, 237–241. For a related argument, see Julia Kristeva's *Intimate Revolt: The Powers and Limits of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Jeanine Herman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), and *Hatred and Forgiveness*, trans. Jeanine Herman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
15. Oliver, *The Colonization of Psychic Space*, 195–200.

## 7. THE SWERVE OF PASSION

1. In what follows, I draw on the notion of the “truth-event” that Badiou develops throughout his work, but most accessibly in *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2001). Badiou is of course not the only contemporary philosopher to deploy the “event” as a way of thinking about radical change. The concept can be found in the work of Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze, among others.
2. Badiou, *Ethics*, 52.
3. This, of course, is one of the central insights of Judith Butler's early work, in particular *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) and *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
4. Alenka Zupančič makes a related argument in *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

## 8. THE UPSIDE OF ANXIETY

1. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), 62–63.
2. *Ibid.*, 154.
3. See, for instance, Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. Martin Milligan (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988).
4. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 57–59.

5. Tim Dean, *Unlimited Intimacy: Reflections on the Subculture of Barebacking* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 60–62, 67–69.
6. This medicalization is obviously a part of what Michel Foucault, among others, has characterized as biopolitics: the social management of biological life. Readers unfamiliar with Foucault's thinking might want to look at *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, 3 vols., ed. Robert Hurley et al. (New York: New Press, 1997).
7. Dean, *Unlimited Intimacy*, 190–191.
8. Expert readers should here recognize the echo of Heidegger's "being-toward-death" from *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962). Yet they should also recall Emmanuel Levinas's vehement critique of this notion. For Levinas, it is not our own death that we should worry about, but rather the death of the other. On this, see Levinas, *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).
9. Adam Phillips addresses this issue eloquently in *Darwin's Worms: On Life Stories and Death Stories* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
10. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 59.
11. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 180–181.

## 9. THE EROTICS OF BEING

1. Christopher Bollas, *Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self-Experience* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 30.
2. *Ibid.*, 31.
3. I make this argument in a more academic vein in *The Singularity of Being: Lacan and the Immortal Within* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012). My analysis has been influenced by Alenka Zupančič's *Ethics of the Real: Kant, Lacan* (London: Verso, 2000).
4. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1992).
5. Bollas, *Being a Character*, 17.

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