

CUT LOOSE

(MOSTLY)
OLDER WOMEN
TALK ABOUT
THE END OF
(MOSTLY)
LONG-TERM
RELATIONSHIPS

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Leaking Affections

A Socio-psychoanalytic View

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After twenty years of marriage and two grown children, Elsie finds herself alone and suicidal in a large apartment, her husband Irving having left her and everything they had shared for a younger woman. Using the case of Elsie, a patient of mine, as a starting point, I am proposing a reflection on being dismissed, pushed out, let go abruptly or, in a word, dumped. Dumping is conceptualized as a speech-act that is the expression of feelings through action. It reflects a communication gap, a void that overwhelms a relationship, bringing about a sense of inner terror that is expressed through embodied actions and performed in unconscious ways inside and outside of the relationship. Dumping is the hidden psychic work of two people who have been in love, raised children, taken care of each other, and finally are confronted with a feeling of "overproximity," a psychic condition in which silence and fear of closeness take over.¹ I am not talking here about a mutual agreement to separate or get a divorce. I am talking about one spouse or partner leaving the family abruptly after many years together. Being dumped is a psychic trauma that can happen either to a woman or to a man and is usually the source of great anxiety, suffering, questioning of self, even suicidal thoughts. Being dumped connotes being sacrificed to an unconscious drama, the last stage of a long and often unrecognized process of small withdrawals, emotional leakages, cuts into the fabric of a relationship bleeding to psychic death. I want to discuss the mechanisms that bring about this unexpected disavowal and rejection of the (M)Other in intimate and long-term relationships. I use the formulation

(M)Other to reflect the fact that the mother is also an Other, and that mother and the Other are psychically and unconsciously linked throughout life.

The Process of Cutting Loose

Life is organized around oscillations of attachments and separations, fear of engulfment and fear of loss creating a movement with its own psychic dynamic. Being dumped is among the most traumatic of separations/losses in adulthood because it is a unilateral action, forced by one of the partners on the other. The verb *to dump* has been used to describe the disposal of dangerous materials or dead bodies, often illegally. The elements of danger and deadness are combined in dumping of both material objects and human beings. Monique, the main character in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Woman Destroyed*, expressed her feelings after being abandoned in the following terms: "Now, I am a dead woman. A dead woman who still has years to drag-out. How many?"² While the final act may appear abrupt, the dumping process is one of leaking affections over many years until the last, abrupt, physical, and brutal withdrawal. The leaking of affections is a slow process that takes the aliveness out of a relationship through growing fragmentation of the self and increased generalized anxiety.³ These psychic losses happen so gradually that they often are not experienced as losses but as small inconveniences to be endured. Men and women continue to go through their normal routines, rationalizing the feelings of estrangement and deadness that are taking over. One is too busy with children, career, and family to pay much attention. As part of being cut loose one of the partners comes to experience the (M)Other as disappointing, dangerous, to be disposed of, while the other partner feels distant or oblivious to the situation.⁴ In the end the inside of the couple's relationship has been drained of emotional connectedness and libidinal energy, hollowed out like a tree ready to break.

The process underlying this drifting apart has a subtle and dense quality for both parties. A slow but increasing emotional distance infiltrates the relationship like a poison that cannot be smelled or tasted, creating what Michael Eigen called "damaged bonds."⁵ The process of detachment and inner panic, which precedes the final act of dumping, encompasses unfulfilled needs and unexpressed fears about not being loved, taken care of, or simply recognized enough. In the end these feelings turn into accusations, transforming the perception of the partner into a castrating and dangerous (M)Other.

Ironically, the person who comes to be dumped often lives within her/his bubble without much awareness of what is going on, busy with life preoccupations. When the final abandonment occurs, when the silence is shattered by

torment and tears, the unspeakable has been performed. The will/negativity of one person breaks up the embodied psychic life of the relationship. The person who is dumped often reacts with surprise and bewilderment, bringing a sense of unreality to a much-too-real situation. Quoting Monique in Simone de Beauvoir's essay: "My head was filled with confusion. I thought I knew what kind of person I was. What kind of person he was. And all at once, I no longer recognize us, neither him nor me" (193). After the initial shock of being cut loose, the traumatic experience of loss needs to be digested and a sense of self-worth gradually recovered. The difficult work of reflexivity starts with questions about shame and betrayal, questions that reawaken deep psychic traumas. Monique describes the feeling of disillusionment in the following way: "Ah, I was so proud of us as a pair—a model pair. We proved that love would last without growing weary. How often had I stood-up for total faithfulness! Shattered, the ideal pair! All that is left is a husband who deceives his wife and an abandoned wife who is lied to" (166).

Let me illustrate further the psychic responses to being cut loose. Ariela, a patient from my therapy practice, had been dumped by her boyfriend after a decade together. She had been the driving force in the relationship, the one who could be relied upon, financially responsible and willing to sacrifice herself for the sake of the couple. Her boyfriend left her suddenly and without warning, refusing to have any contact with her whatsoever. After the initial shock, it took her over a year to regain enough psychic balance to start dealing with her feelings of betrayal and anger. But having gained a growing sense of self-worth, new feelings of disorientation and psychic dizziness emerged. "How could this have happened without me being aware of it?" "How could he have lied so much without my noticing it?" "Am I such a fool?" "Did I let it happen?" "Did I collude with him?"

Ariela needed to explain to herself her own blindness and failure to decipher the terrible drama as it had been prepared and enacted, and her naïvety and blind trust in her boyfriend. The realizations of having been duped, misled, and lied to, touched feelings of self-punishment that took the form of self-accusatory attacks. With more therapeutic work, Ariela was able to go beyond these feelings of shame and anger and confront her unconscious desires, wishes, and fantasies that had led her to repeat/relive past traumas. Her childhood trauma of having been abandoned and manipulated to satisfy her mother's emotional needs—that is, denied a separate identity—had created deep psychic wounds around which her sense of self became organized. In her adult years she experienced an unconscious conflict between her search for the unconditional love that she never received as a child and the feeling of not

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deserving the love that she so much needed. This conflict led to situations where she ended up being abandoned or dumped, thus repeating the original trauma of her childhood. These vignettes point to the role of early emotional injuries in the cutting loose process.

Narcissistic Injury and Fear of Abandonment

The shortage of emotional sustenance and the lack of emotional breathing space in children can endanger individuals' sense of aliveness in their adult lives. Injuries to the self, stemming from the lack of recognition and affective connectedness, can lead to a search for attachments outside the immediate family, through greater involvement with peers, school, work, grandchildren, and friends as well as immersion in worlds of fantasy. Being cut loose reawakens emotional injuries that the infant experienced in the separation process from the (M)Other. The need to be admired, to feel special, to be cared for, is an important part of the development of the self through what Freud called primary narcissism, which helps in the separation process.⁶ Adults who did not receive enough early emotional sustenance as children are likely to carry within them narcissistic wounds. They become detached from (M)Other and invest their libidinal and emotional energy back into the ego as a form of auto-affection. This process of turning inward makes it increasingly difficult to identify with and link up with significant others.

The conflagration of the mother's love and the fear of abandonment in children are repeated in adult life in an unconscious search for lost loved objects. This dynamic, it has been argued, is different for female and male. Both genders have to separate from an early state of plenitude and oneness with the mother's body and accede to a world of representation, symbolization, and relatedness. Without delving into psychoanalytic theories of gender development, whether from a pre-Oedipal or Oedipal point of view, "mothering" affects boys and girls differently because the links to the mother and the separation process create different narcissistic wounds.⁷ (M)Others push the male infant to separate physically and emotionally with greater force than the female infant.⁸ The infant girl remains ambivalently attached to the (M)Other throughout her life. For Julia Kristeva, women do not split mother's image into sublime and terrifying objects the way men do and consequently stay to a greater extent emotionally involved with her ideal/fantasized image all through life.⁹ Women also retain, to a greater extent, access to sources of caring since they are more likely to experience childbearing, childrearing and other forms of caring and relatedness. Indeed, women are more likely to take care of elderly parents or sick relatives and more likely to be found in the "helping" professions.

The fear of castration pushes the infant to solve the Oedipus drama,¹⁰ enter into the symbolic world of language, and internalize social expectations through the eyes of the (M)Other.¹¹ For Kristeva, the dynamics of separation additionally take the form of identification with a pre-Oedipal father, not only the stern Father of the Law, but a loving father that she calls the "Imaginary Father."¹² In our discussion of narcissistic injury an emotionally present and loving father/partner mediates the tension between attachment and fear of abandonment by the (M)Other. Many of the women and men who experienced dumping reported growing up in families where the emotional safety net of having a loving father did not exist. The women that I talked to, unlike the men, wished to be different from (M)Other yet stay attached and identified with her, oscillating between positive and negative identifications. Men reported searching for women who could fulfill a motherly role while being weary of mother's engulfing and castrating powers. Men were looking for women who could take care of their needs for food, order, cleanliness, sex, and even beauty without too many emotional demands.

A mother's projection of her own unfulfilled needs and wishes onto the child as well as the simultaneous push toward separation creates the first conflict between need for love and fear of abandonment. Dumping someone is certainly an act of fear, aggressiveness, and symbolic violence. When an individual dumps a partner she/he expresses narcissistic rage comparable to a child's tantrum. A man I talked to mentioned that his wife lives in a self-contained world that he enters intermittently but does not understand; after being married for a decade he felt that he no longer was cherished, loved, or desired as much as he wanted to be, increasing the emotional distance and desexualization of the relationship. These feelings led the husband to think of his wife/partner as a "sister" or a "close friend." By putting sexual distance the husband coped with his underlying aggressive rage. Most of the men who dumped their wives described them as encroaching, critical, and possessive. In contrast, women's views of their own needs were quite different from the way men perceived them. Women expressed their desire for successful men who could exhibit maternal tendencies and their frustration at the lack of nurturing qualities in men whose vision of masculinity and success pre-empted them.

Analyzing the mutual dependence in marriages, one can argue that each partner needed the (M)Other to provide admiration and approval and simultaneously hated the expression of these unacceptable needs. Dependence on the (M)Other and the resentment, hostility, and aggression that such dependence breeds is often acted out with the partner. Each partner only sees a polarized and persecuting version of what is feared inside themselves. This

mutual and fantasied dependence on the M(Other) and the fears that it provokes are shaped by sociocultural contexts.

The Expression of Narcissistic Needs across Cultural Contexts

Early gender differences in modes of attachment and the expression of narcissistic and sexual desires are shaped by linguistic, normative, familial, and institutional structures which are all culturally and historically grounded. For most adults, familial arrangements provide arenas in which to fulfill emotional, sexual, and erotic needs. But there are additional legal and institutional arrangements to satisfy these needs through access, for example, to multiple wives, mistresses, and concubines.¹³ These arrangements are found across centuries, countries, and religions. Despite their variety, these legal and religious systems have several commonalities: they organize men's lives rather than women's; they tend to favor higher social classes; and they add to the size of the patriarchal household. The possession of several wives and/or concubines traditionally increased men's wealth, status, pleasure, sexuality, and procreative power, while decreasing the fear of aging and death. Today, these patterns are still found in modified forms and create systems of gender inequalities in access to erotic and sexual pleasures.

In countries like France and Japan, there is a wider acceptance for men of intimate, erotic, and sexual relationships outside of marriage. France has a well-known tradition of mistresses, who in the past have received legal and social recognition. Today, the male head of a bourgeois household can maintain a private space (*garçonnière*) where he pursues intimate encounters with the knowledge, if not acceptance, of his wife. Erotic encounters are positioned differently from sexual/reproductive ones.

Among Japanese managerial classes, erotic and emotional connectedness can be enhanced by visits after work to "hostess clubs." These "clubs" provide physical and emotional spaces where men spend a few hours with women whom they pay to boost their ego. They can regress to being childlike, getting motherly indulgence, ego support, and sexual excitement without having the responsibility of a real commitment or a full sexual encounter. In these "clubs" men can feel important and taken care of:

Males become so attached to their mothers in their pre-adult years that they either can't duplicate this closeness with a wife or sexualize the structure of the mother-son attachment, enacting the relationship with a paid-for woman more easily than with a spouse. The emphasis is how men need to be taken care of, treated indulgently, and flattered.¹⁴

In these in-between zones, neither private nor public, Japanese men can get emotional gratification of intimacy and sexual play. The emphasis is not on sexual consummation but on erotic pleasure. Their wives, however, are expected to get gratification from their devotion, indulgence, and sacrifice in raising children and preparing sons for success in arduous educational exams. Emotional distance and desexualization of the marital relationship occurs within a work-family system based on a family wage that prioritizes the husband's work and legitimizes his absence in the socialization process of the children. The situation of "fatherless"¹⁵ families in Japan provides women emotional control over their children, especially the sons, who become intensely attached and guilty about (M)Other's love and sacrifice for them. Wives compensate for their physical and emotional isolation from their husbands by displacing of affection onto their children, especially the boys.¹⁶ These arrangements greatly penalize women and limit their options outside the home.

While there are no statistics on dumping, there are statistics on divorce rates. Japan has one of the lowest divorce rates in the industrialized world, but equally important it has one of the lowest birth rates and the largest increase over a decade in numbers of single women.¹⁷ The low birth rate, a great concern for policy makers, could be seen as an unconscious "feminist revenge" against a socioeconomic system that gives so little occupational choice and emotional support to married women. The family structure and institutional arrangements in Japan around gender relations and the family-work nexus make it improbable that physical separation can occur. However, emotional dumping and withdrawal occur in daily family life without any disruption, supporting the demands of the work-family system in the name of the greater good of family and community.

In the United States in 2001 41 percent of all marriages ended in divorce.¹⁸ Unlike France and Japan, the United States does not legitimize nor encourage zones of intimacy and sexual/erotic play in addition to married life.¹⁹ While the family as an institution holds a central role in American society by providing a privileged place for the socialization and nurturance of children, the workplace has become an increasingly significant arena where sexual fantasies and emotional needs of adults are expressed and gratified. Men and women express fantasies and project emotional needs onto others and onto the work organization itself. In the workplace, desire for care, attention, and the expression of sexual desires are acted out in organizational contexts where numerous young, bright, and ambitious men and women are available and ready to fill the nurturance gap of middle-aged managerial officers. Gender difference

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reappears in the workplace in the ways narcissistic needs are structured and responded to within a knowledge-power nexus that favors the organizational and symbolic world of male heterosexual power. Women lose socially, economically, and emotionally in all the arrangements discussed above. While the traditional legal structures of sexual inequalities around the family no longer exist in modern Western nations, the unconscious wish for multiple wives/partners and erotic gratification outside marriage constitutes a widespread state of mind and provides a psychic framework within which to analyze dumping.

Fantasies of Multiple Wives/Partners

A professional woman that I interviewed recalled that in the 1970s she was labeled, with other young female professionals, "office wives." They were expected to provide emotional support and admiration to the boss as part of their regular job. Clinical cases show that men's fantasies involve a desire to be taken care of by several (M)Others, illustrating Freud's observation that the psychic world tends toward satisfaction through fantasy against an outside world which gradually imposes the reality principle on the individual.²⁰

On occasion I have heard male patients described their fantasies of living in harems or having multiples wives/partners that would ensure a continuous and plentiful source of physical care and emotional nourishment. Other men that I interviewed had similar fantasies; some of them stayed with their desires while others acted them out. Fantasizing about other women as M(Others) can work in several directions: erotic and sexual desire can be channeled and diffused within socially acceptable frameworks or they can be expressed through acting-out by having affairs or cutting loose from the partner. As Freud's discovered, anxiety regarding the infant's fear and anger at the loss of mother's breast is defended against through hallucinations and fantasies.²¹ Aggressive fantasies of devouring, mutilating, and destroying the breast become projected onto individuals, situations, and/or organizations before being re-introjected into the ego, bringing about a paranoid self.²² The fantasy of multiple partners is a metaphor and compromise formation for an unconscious desire to simultaneously destroy and regain the original love object.

Fantasies of escape are also likely to erupt when reality becomes too disappointing, painful, or unreal. Love between partners starts as an all-encompassing feeling of symbiosis, sometimes described as an oceanic feeling of togetherness. Partners experience each other as ONE through the eyes of the Other's desire. Over the years love becomes disjointed; it no longer involves the whole person but gets attached to an individual's objectified attributes and/or skills. When these emotional shifts occur the partner has become

instrumentalized and is no longer experienced as able to fulfill sexual excitement, romance, beauty, and intellectual challenges. At this point feelings regarding the partner become highly ambivalent, underscored judgments of inadequacy and disappointment. These views of the Other bring about desperate attempts by the recipient of such projections to regain feelings of safety, union, and sharing through defensive responses: "Tell me that you love me!" "Don't you love me anymore?" "I need to hear you say you love me a thousand times!" and the like. By the time reassurances are verbally expressed the phantasmatic frame of the relationship has shifted. The tangible reality has not yet changed, yet an emotional shift has occurred that discloses feelings of distance and depersonalization making loving more unreal and cutting loose more likely. The social structure of gender inequalities creates the framework by which the loss of access to sources of gratification and pleasure outside the home is likely to impact men and women differently.

Unlike the middle-aged men, the women I talked to did not express clear desire for multiple husbands or lovers. Sexual desire played a role but it was more muted and diffused. They reported fantasizing about meeting other men but also experiencing women as companions, sexual partners, and close friends. Their fantasies expressed wishes of sharing ideas, activities, and time; getting involved in reciprocal relationships rather than simple sexual encounters.²³ These fantasies of men and women for additional partners helped fill in the gap between emotional and erotic needs and supplies, a gap that increases with age.

Aging and the Dumping Process

Aging is a creative process accompanied by a sense of drift, loss, and grief that goes together with fears of the fragmenting body becoming less socially and sexually valued over time, especially for women. Today older women are still at an economic and social disadvantage compared to men, making them more careful about leaving a relationship. For most women aging also means a humiliating process of gradual sexual disqualification based on a double standard; as Susan Sontag expressed it: "Growing older is mainly an ordeal of the imagination—a moral disease, a social pathology—intrinsic to it is the dreary panic of middle-aged men whose 'achievements' seem paltry, who feel stuck on the job ladder, or fear being pushed off by someone else younger."²⁴

The fear of death and bodily fragmentation bring about a variety of responses: from projection of negative feelings onto others, to fantasies of multiple partners, creative searches, and cutting loose the (M)Other. The need for emotional supplies, like connectedness and emotional sustenance, increases with age while the sense of selfhood is redefined. Growing older takes

individuals by surprise unless they have the ability to imagine old age, something that younger people and most adults cannot easily do.²⁵

When being cut loose occurs among older individuals, it opens more widely earlier psychic wounds. The trauma of loss and betrayal is intensified for older women who are left behind with limited social and financial options. The following dream of a middle-aged female patient expresses the fear of being abandoned for younger women:

"I was inside a tall building with an elevator. I was looking for my husband when the door of the elevator opened. The elevator was very crowded and I saw him standing at the very back. It was so crowded that I could not get in. As the doors started to close, a young woman pushed her way in. Her knapsack got caught in the door and fell to the floor. She picked it up, kept the doors open and pushed her way back. The doors closed. I was left out, feeling abandoned and powerless, following with my eyes the ascent of the elevator that was taking my husband away."

Her associations to the dream revealed her sexual anxiety at losing her husband to younger women, something that she was not fully aware of. In her associations she blamed herself for not being young, aggressive, strong, and sexy enough to keep her husband interested in her and yet expressed her wish to be daring and exciting. The issues of power relations emerged with the feeling that older women are powerless and childlike. They have to compete unfairly to be included and noticed.

With age, sexuality and libidinal needs change, bringing the tactile body, not just sex, to the center of embodied selves. The space where two bodies touch is a space where it is possible to be a part of and yet distinct from the (M)Other, a space that brings together and separates at the same time. Among older people this transitional space creates new forms of intimacy that redefine a sense of self within a relationship: "Our sense of being real in our bodies, especially aging bodies comes from being touched."²⁶ Dumping means losing the intimate and physical contact that affects our psychic body; it puts in question our social reality. The need for a tactile body and physical touch are experienced differently by older men and women. The middle-aged women I talked to crave this type of connectedness as part of a relationship that reinforces feelings of safety and intimacy.²⁷ Among the middle-aged men I talked to, fear of bodily fragmentation was more likely to bring out the expression of narcissistic rage. As some psychoanalysts have shown, the fear of fragmentation can be greater than the fear of death. Freud described in "A Disturbance of

Memory on the Acropolis"²⁸ how he experienced old age and suffering as punishment and a second castration. The fear of castration and loss among older men could explain their greater need for nurturance and reassurance as well as their desire for younger women. As the double standard applies to love relationships, older males are allowed, if not encouraged, to be with and marry much younger women. Freud did surround himself with younger women in addition to his wife, Martha Bernays: Minna Bernays, Marie Bonaparte, and Lou Andreas-Salome (his muse), and of course his daughter Anna Freud.

The middle-aged women that I talked to and who survived being dumped experienced aging as a challenge, a space for change and creativity despite fears of loneliness and changing body image. Their remarks illustrate that psychoanalysts who have talked about fragmentation in old age and the disintegrating of the body have been predominantly male. Female psychoanalysts have a different view of the aging process that stresses change and creativity.²⁹

The combination of fear of castration, bodily fragmentation, and death among older individuals, especially men, can further account for the symbolic violence of the dumping process. At this point in life differentials in power and social status between men and women are overshadowed by fear of illness, pain, and social isolation. The self emerges in the mirror stage of infant development through the illusion of bodily unity, the acquisition of language, the entry into the symbolic order and creating a sense of identity through Other's desires.³⁰ Older individuals experience the reverse process, going from a sense of wholeness to a fear of disintegration and death. Misrecognition of the self in the mirror of old age is likely to occur when the gaze of the (M)Other fails to sustain the illusion of wholeness, when one's selfhood is questioned anew. Renewed aggressive wishes and paranoid fears are likely to be expressed and translated into the search for younger gazes.

Compared to men, women develop greater independence and assertiveness as they age; they become more dominant and forceful in what is called "postmenopausal zest." Among older people a crossover occurs, with women becoming more assertive and independent and men more mellow and dependent.³¹ This asymmetrical situation, however, increases rather than decreases men's insecurities and fears; they often perceive this change as a loss of increasingly needed attention and sustenance. Despite the original devastating impact of being cut loose, the women that I interviewed were likely to invent new lives for themselves.

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needs and narcissistic supplies among older people increases. Fears and anxieties stimulate phantasms and breaks from reality creating the conditions for potential abandonment unless shared experiences of connectedness and caring work within relationships are explored and encouraged.

Countering the Leaking of Affections

The dumping process has a certain feel of unreality so well captured by Woody Allen's movie *Interiors*. In the movie an older man announces casually at dinner, surrounded by his wife and grown children, that he is leaving the family and starting a new life with a younger woman. From that point on we witness the unfolding of a Greek drama that shows the breaking-up of psychic structures, the struggle to make sense of an unreal situation, the pull of madness that ends in suicide and the destruction of all potential new beginnings. As expressed in *Interiors*, depersonalization, deadening silences, and a sense of meaninglessness are part and parcel of the dumping process. While the movie dramatizes to an extreme the process of depersonalization, in real life the leaking of affections and the silencing of discourse also destroy the emotional space between individuals. In a feeling void becoming real to oneself and others becomes increasingly difficult. The depersonalization that is part of cutting loose entails a lack of libidinal investment in one's body and body image as well as a deadly inner silence that gets filled with phantasms and ghosts. In such a void words become deadening silences rather than a source of connectedness. To use Michael Eigen's formulation: "When words are used to evacuate rather than to build meaning, meaning is murdered."³²

There are ways to counter the leaking of affections and the psychic deadness that ensues. The gap between narcissistic desire for emotional sustenance, affection, and recognition and narcissistic supplies needs to be narrowed. Social support from family members and friends as well as fantasies can provide important safety valves when confronted with a sense of depersonalization. They can introduce some breathing space. However, it is creative work through the use of touch, language, and imagination that can gradually restore a world of inner meaning and a sense of aliveness between partners that was shattered in the dumping process. After being cut loose, taking the emotional risk of "becoming" creates the excitement and psychic energy of feeling alive.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. Slavoj Žižek, "Love Thy Neighbor? No, Thanks!" in *The Psychoanalysis of Race*, ed. Christopher Lane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 154–175.
2. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Woman Destroyed*, trans. Patrick O'Brian (New York: Putnam, 1967), 253. Subsequent citations to this work appear in the text.
3. The generalized anxiety is responded to by defense mechanisms like splitting, whereby the object of identification is split into a "good" and a "bad" object. Melanie Klein, "Our Adult World and Its Roots in Infancy," in *Envy, Gratitude, and Other Works, 1946–1963*, (London: Hogarth Press, 1984), 247–263.
4. In this paper I use the terms *dumping* and *being cut loose* to describe the traumatic process of forced separation in adult relationships. They are used interchangeably but point to different aspects of the process.
5. Michael Eigen, *Damaged Bonds* (London: Karnac, 2001).
6. Sigmund Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction," in *Standard Edition*, vol. 14 (London: Hogarth Press, 1914), 69–102.
7. I use the term "mothering" to express a pattern of relatedness between mother and child that can be applied to a variety of people whether they are the actual mother or not.
8. Nancy Chodorow, *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
9. Julia Kristeva, *New Maladies of the Soul* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
10. Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," in *Standard Edition*, vol. 7 (1905), 136–149.
11. Jacques Lacan, "The Ego and the Other," in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953–1954*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 38–51.
12. Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 133.
13. Going back to the early stories of the Bible, the patriarchs had several wives and concubines, Sarah and Hagar being the most famous ones. Jesus had two wives in the form of Madonna and Magdalena. Freud with his wife and his wife's sister Minna Bernays, and the American President Thomas Jefferson and his African American slave are additional cases. There have been quite a number of situations where men actually had several full families across continents or in different parts of the country: a recent and prominent example being Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, whose second family was discovered after his death in 2004 (*International Herald Tribune*, Dec. 15, 2004). The French have/had a tradition of

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having a mistress for whom kings built magnificent houses (Hotels) and provided with financial support. Today, French presidents still have their "second wife." In today's world, religious prescriptions for multiple wives are present among Mormons sects, some Islamic societies and in tribal lands across the world.

14. Anne Allison, *Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 136–137.

15. By "fatherless" families I am referring to the fact that the father is absent from the socialization process, not that there is no father in the family. If anything, families are organized around the father as patriarchal institutions.

16. Allan Roland, *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).

17. Harry C. Katz and Owen Darbishire, *Convergence and Divergences: Worldwide Changes in Employment Systems* (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press and Cornell University, 2000).

18. Rose M. Keider, "Fertility and Family Statistics," *New York Times*, April 19, 2005.

19. Following the Japanese lead, erotic clubs are opening up in large American cities. However, unlike the Japanese clubs, the American erotic clubs welcome both men and women, providing each gender with a separate and special space of erotic experiences.

20. Sigmund Freud, "Two Principles of Mental Functioning," in *Standard Edition*, vol. 12 (1911), 215–227.

21. Sigmund Freud, "A Child Is Being Beaten," in *Standard Edition*, vol. 17 (1919), 175–195.

22. Melánie Klein, "On the Development of Mental Functioning," in *Envy, Gratitude, and Other Works, 1946–1963* (London: Hogarth, 1984).

23. Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, "Beyond the Female Homosexual," *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 1(1) (2000), 97–124.

24. Susan Sontag, "The Double Standard of Aging," in *The Other Within Us: Feminist Explorations of Women and Aging*, ed. Marilyn Pearsall (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), 19–20.

25. Haim Hazan, *Old Age Construction and Deconstructions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

26. Kathleen Woodward, *Aging and Its Discontents* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 174.

27. The Japanese have a term for the need to be taken care of in that way; they call it "amae." Takeo Doi, *The Anatomy of Dependence* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1973).

28. Sigmund Freud, "A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis," in *Standard Edition*, vol. 22 (1936), 238–248.

29. Catherine Silver, "Gendered Identities in Old Age: Toward (De)Gendering," *Journal of Aging Studies* 17 (2003), 379–397.

30. Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formation of the Function of the I," in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I*, 1-8.

31. D. L. Gutmann, "Psychoanalysis and Aging: A Developmental View," in *Adulthood and the Aging Process*, ed. I. G. Stanley and G. M. Pollock (Washington, D.C.: NIMH, 1980), 489-517.

32. Michael Eigen, *Psychic Deadness* (London: Jason Aronson, 1996), 47.

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