

## 12. Freud, the Enlightenment and the Public Sphere\*

*D'Maris Coffman*

Over 230 years after the question ‘*Was ist Aufklärung?*’ was posed by Johann Friedrich Zöllner in a sly fashion in a footnote to his piece in the *Berlinische Montasschrift* on the merits of civil marriage ceremonies, historians, cultural critics, and sociologists are still arguing about the meaning of the Enlightenment (Schmidt, 1996, p. 2). In early 2018, cognitive psychologist’s Steven Pinker’s polemical treatise, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*, crowned the non-fiction bestseller lists with its impassioned defence of progress, its rehabilitation of what the author understands as ‘Enlightenment values’ and its denouncement of both Donald Trump’s demagoguery and the Left’s ‘identity politics’ as illiberal and a threat to the public sphere (Pinker, 2018, pp. 31, 342). Given the praise heaped upon Pinker’s intervention as encapsulating the mood of moderate, educated Americans at the present juncture, there is an urgent need to return to the landmark conversation between Immanuel Kant and Moses Mendelssohn about the meaning of the Enlightenment in order to understand how the eighteenth-century Enlightenment came to represent the ideas often ascribed to it. Only then can there be a meaningful discussion of what role, if any, those ideas should play in the logics governing the public sphere as articulated by Jürgen Habermas. Not surprisingly, Freud has more to contribute to this debate than practitioners of twenty-first century cognitive psychology, who tend to see themselves in what they perceive as the Enlightenment’s celebration of rationalism, science and civilisation over ignorance,

superstition and violence, but who at the same time fundamentally misunderstand the Enlightenment's contribution to hermeneutics.

In a sense, Pinker's contribution has impoverished our appreciation of the legacy of the Enlightenment where he might have instead enriched it. To illustrate why, I return to contemporary debates in the eighteenth century about how to best to characterise the Enlightenment. After careful exploration of different manifestations of the Enlightenment across Europe and the Americas, Freud's own troubled relationship to the Enlightenment's legacy becomes clear, and in turn brings into focus what is at stake in as yet ongoing debates about the role that the Enlightenment played in the genesis of the public sphere. At the same time, and in some sense paradoxically, the psychoanalytic stance, achieved most immediately through psychoanalytic training practices, offers a lens through which to review and possibly resolve some of the difficulties that our society faces in grappling with the modern public sphere.

The question 'What is Enlightenment?' belongs in one sense to a very specific historical moment within the Berlin Enlightenment, one that played out in the pages of the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*. Not long after Zöllner's provocation, the editors published Mendelssohn's response, which might be read as a summary of discussions within the *Mittwochsgesellschaft* (a secret society of 'Friends of the Enlightenment' closely linked to the periodical) to which both Zöllner and Mendelssohn belonged (Schmidt, 1996, p. 3). Kant's '*Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*' was the second, and by far the most famous, reply. Afterwards, dozens of authors entered the fray and the debate eventually coalesced around questions of censorship, the relationship between faith and reason, and the role of the Enlightenment in spawning the French Revolution.

Beyond its immediate context, Kant's brief contribution raised questions that have engaged (among others) the likes of Edmund Burke, G. W. F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas, and Michel Foucault. Given such a tradition, the danger of Pinker's naïve answer to this question should be obvious. Yet it is equally plain that the 'Enlightenment' cannot be inscribed simply within that debate. The Berlin Enlightenment was one of several national Enlightenments and belonged to a phenomenon that had swept through Western Europe and the Atlantic world. If the *Mittwochsgesellschaft* was paradigmatic of a new form of elite sociability (in which individuals could mingle irrespective of patrons, occupations, class, etc), then that sociability took different forms with different consequences in different places and under different political regimes (Schmidt, 1996, p. 3). Exploring this wider context is critical to understanding why post-war American Freudians could see themselves as bearers of the Enlightenment project and why Pinker and his colleagues can unfurl the Enlightenment banner to celebrate the claims they make for cognitive psychology, even as they denounce Freudian psychoanalysis as a modern unscientific, anti-Enlightenment pseudo-science to be discarded in favour of their own more putatively scientific approaches (Samuels, 2017). Unfortunately, one of the most celebrated historians of eighteenth-century France to use Freudian categories to speculate on the origins of the French Revolution did so in such a reductionist and literal-minded manner as to obscure the very fraught relationship between Freudian hermeneutics and Enlightenment thought (Hunt, 1992).

To arrive at a characterisation of the Enlightenment's fundamental nature, we must, in turn, consider the 'The Enlightenment' as milieu, movement (or project), process, and stance. In the first sense, it was a pan-European cultural and intellectual milieu of the late eighteenth-century. Although many of its adherents might loosely subscribe to Kant's notion of the Enlightenment

as ‘man’s exit from self-incurred immaturity’ (Schmidt, 1996, p. 58), the majority had much more concrete and external targets in minds. Their enemies were the vestiges of feudalism, the corruption of venal office-holders, the exemptions and privileges enjoyed by various groups (especially the nobility, the church and the guilds) in the *Ancien Régime*, censorship, religious intolerance and dogma; in short, injustice, inequality and inefficiency. Yet the Enlightenment was not, in its essentials, revolutionary or even always innovatory. In Scotland and England, its adherents were most immediately the intellectual heirs of the seventeenth-century New Science, both in their patterns of sociability and their synthesis of rationalism, skepticism and empiricism (Shapin and Schaffer, 1985; Schofield, 1964), though their politics could range from the secular absolutism of Thomas Hobbes to the Jacobinism of Joseph Priestley and the Lunar Society. In Scotland, the moral philosophies of David Hume and Adam Smith, as well as their writings on political economy, belong to this milieu. In England, the world of Samuel Johnson and his dictionary, Samuel Richardson and the epistolary novel, and even the notorious John Cleland, author of the pornographic *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1749), were dominated by these new forms of sociability, what historians now call the ‘republic of letters.’ While the Atlantic Revolutions took on a political character, extending far beyond norms of polite society and polite learning, they cannot be reduced to the internal logic of Enlightenment principles (Muldoon, 1999; Pocock, 1975). As James Muldoon has argued, in the American context, John Adams and his contemporaries might also be seen as ‘defenders of traditional rights as any medieval estate or region,’ and that ‘the American Revolution may even have been the last medieval political conflict’ (Muldoon, 1999, p. 149), whereas John Pocock has famously argued for the importance of Renaissance civic humanism (Pocock, 1975) in understanding their motivations. This ambiguity is so much the case that modern historiography now distinguishes a Radical Enlightenment, in order to refer to those strains

which focus on radical equality and the universality of the rights of man (Jacob, 1981; Israel, 2001).

In France, the Philosophes may have been emblematic of the Enlightenment's new forms of sociability, but they were no more interested in political revolution than Kant himself. Betty Behrens neatly summarised the problem in her extended essay on the *Ancien Régime*: 'though their denunciations of arbitrary power were in fact an indictment of it, to have condemned it openly would have been to preach revolution, which [the Philosophes] never contemplated' (Behrens, 1967, p. 131). Rousseau, in his *Contrat Social*, may have been an exception, but he was Swiss and never gained a following before the Revolution. As Behrens very shrewdly and somewhat cynically observed,

but the famous Philosophes, nearly all of whom were by [the late 1780s] already dead, by continually denouncing the abuses of the régime, yet providing no programs of reform which could provoke dissension, were able to cater to every kind of discontent, from that of the landless and starving to that of the principal beneficiaries of the régime, whose material advantages increasingly failed to compensate them for the arbitrariness and inefficiencies of absolutism (Behrens, 1967, p. 131).

In an important sense, Behrens anticipated the current post-revisionist consensus, such that it is, on the relationship between Enlightenment and Revolution in France. Although this is not the place to review that literature at length, what emerged is the sense that the 'high Enlightenment' had run out of steam. The successors to Voltaire and Diderot had 'inherited their social acclaim, [but] had little new to say' (Doyle, 1999, pp. 36-40) Instead they excluded

the ‘literary rabble’ of Paris from their new forms of sociability, provoking resentment amongst the Grub Street press (Darnton, 1982). Two hundred years from now, historians might well have cause to ponder the parallels with the role of new media (particularly social media) and traditional print today during the Brexit campaign and the Trump election. At any rate, Jürgen Habermas furnished the theoretical framework for this interpretation in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Doyle, 1999). Habermas wanted to draw attention to the re-feudalisation of the Kantian public space in post-war Europe; to do so, he had to first investigate the origins of the public sphere, which he found in those new forms of sociability associated with the late eighteenth century. This model has done some important work. It gave us a new interpretation of the French Revolution; Roger Chartier’s pithy epigram about the cultural origins that ‘made it possible because it was conceivable’ nicely encapsulated the accomplishment (Chartier, 1991, p. 2).

But having done that work, it is crucial not to reify the ‘public sphere’ as an autonomous vehicle for public opinion (Darnton, 2000). The danger can be seen in Lynn Hunt’s work on the *Family Romance of the French Revolution* (1999) where the public sphere is deployed as a kind of (psycho)-analytic space in which a new sense of self develops and Oedipal conflicts are mapped onto civil society, thereby collapsing the conceptual distinction between social and the cultural. The problem with her argument, which is, in essence, that revolutionary politics were experienced by their adherents as a kind of family romance, in which participants were freed of their social roles and able to live-out their fantasies of joining the royal family, as evidenced by the emergence of pornographic images of the queen, is that it is by no means obvious that the sexualised images of the monarchy undermined the regime. Although the medium had changed, pornographic treatments of kings and their consorts were nothing new; baroque kingship had a place for it. As it has with Trump’s affair with Stormy Daniels, the ‘dead cat’

of pornography may even have helped trivialise the abuses of rule. Under Charles II in England (in 1674), the earl of Rochester produced raunchy court verse satirising the king: ‘Him no ambition moves to get reknown [...] / His scepter and his prick are of a length; And she may sway the one who plays with th' other, And make him little wiser than his brother.’<sup>1</sup> Arguably, the flourishing of this kind of complicit critique rendered the Merry Monarch’s regime more (not less) secure; his brother James II may not have been the target of such satires, but his relative sexual probity did not guarantee his crown. The problem in France was not the pornography itself. In part, the growth of print culture (and the shift from scribal to print publication of such material) guaranteed a wider audience; but more significantly, the new forms of elite sociability excluded the authors of these libels. Had the denizens of the *haute-culture* Parisian salons been prepared to laugh with those they deemed scribblers, modern historians might have cause to view the matter very differently. To this question of the Enlightenment as complicit critique we will return presently.

Meanwhile, in Prussia, the Enlightenment took a different course. As Behrens noticed, ‘the Enlightenment as [Frederick II understood it], and to the best of his ability translated into practice, produced, by the standards of the times, a high degree of consensus. In Prussia, it was a unifying force while in France a disruptive one’ (Behrens, 1985, p. 185). In other words, in Prussia it served the neo-Stoic social disciplining function so characteristic of early modern absolutism (Oestreich, 1982). Nowhere is this more evident than in Kant’s own definition of Enlightenment. The apparent reversal of commonplace distinctions between public and private, Kant’s right of public debate coupled with the duty of private obedience, embraces those Neo-Stoic ideals of *constantia*, *patientia*, *firmitas* (steadfastness, patience, firmness): steadfastness in the courage to use that reason, patience with the process of liberation from self-incurred immaturity, and firmness in upholding the distinction between public and private. In a sense,

the Kantian stance is the one adopted by post-war American Freudians, who interpreted Freud in this fashion to support their clinical aim of exploring all manner of psycho-sexual urges and fantasies on the couch, with the aim of helping their patients adapt themselves better to their middle class lives (Coffman, 2017). In their account, Freud might have been radical in his ideas about sex, but he was a quite conventional, if frequently penurious, member of the Vienna *bourgeoisie* (Shapiro, 1991).

Just as Kant and Freud are compatible, Kant was not as far from Burke as some historians imagine (Schmidt, 1996, pp. 17-21). The danger comes from reading Burke through the lens of Gadamer's hermeneutics and his rehabilitation of the value of prejudice. But on a critical point they converge. Burke was 'afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect the stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of all ages' (Ibid., p. 17). He advised that man should look for the 'latent wisdom' which prevails in prejudice, uncovering its reason. This 'because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and affection that will give it permanence' (Ibid.). Kant too believed the average stock of reason in each individual was small (though more from lack of exercise than lack of potential), 'hence only a few who have managed to free themselves from immaturity through the exercise of their minds, and yet proceed confidently. But that a public should enlighten itself is more likely; indeed, it is nearly inevitable, if only it is granted freedom' (Ibid., p. 59). For Kant, the 'private use of reason may be very narrowly restricted without the progress of enlightenment being particularly hindered' (Ibid., pp. 59-60). In Burke's view, the Englishman lived under a political regime where prejudice was the only means to disciplining the subversive element within private reason (the state was not going to do it), but where historical forces had evolved an enlightened political constitution. For Kant, the Prussian state served the

disciplining function. As long as man patiently and unflinchingly obeyed, he could (and should) get on with improving the ‘general bank and capital’ on which individuals might draw in their own liberation (Ibid., p. 15). Too much attention to the apparent distinction between man’s inherent capacity or incapacity to reason well obscures the fact that neither Kant nor Burke had the slightest interest in the use of reason to dissolve the bonds of public order. This ‘confusion of tongues’ illustrates some of the difficulties of discussing the Enlightenment in a pan-European (much less trans-historical) context. Kant was, especially in his answer, an apologist for an enlightened despot—a revelation which would no doubt come as a surprise to Pinker and his allies, who see in the Enlightenment the genesis of liberal democracy.

The Enlightenment was given its ‘project’ and stature as a ‘movement’ after the Revolution, when it became a litmus test for Jacobinism and was tarnished with the totalitarian implications of popular sovereignty embodied in the *Terror*. The point here is not to dispute the linkage of the Revolution with the Enlightenment, but rather to acknowledge that linkage as part of the latter’s legacy. The resulting bifurcation of the Enlightenment and its consequent politicisation creates the trap into which Pinker and his followers fell. On the one hand, the Jacobin legacy became the ‘Enlightenment project’ of classical civic virtue and rational self-improvement of man through the vehicle of the state (Chartier, 1991, p. 17; Koselleck, 1999). In a certain sense, the entire period from 1789-1989 can be taken as a working out of that ‘Age of Ideology.’ Critics and advocates of the Enlightenment have appropriated and re-deployed the idea of Enlightenment for their own instrumental aims (Schmidt, 2000). Advocates call on it for legitimacy; critics, notably Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, in their neo-Hegelian *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, blamed the Enlightenment veneration of rationality for destroying itself and laying waste to Europe in two world wars: ‘Enlightenment has always aimed at

liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant' (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1979; Schmidt, 1996, p. 21).

But another, equally important legacy of the Enlightenment, can be found in both German philosophical idealism of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries and its most serious critic. That is the notion of Enlightenment as process in the sense identified by Kant as one of long liberation. It might also be framed as a Freudian erotic drive, one that shifts the emphasis from Enlightenment as belief in reason to Enlightenment as liberating self-awareness. This strain of the Berlin Enlightenment was evident from the beginning, when the young Goethe and his circle embraced a cultural revolution that 'liberated' them from the grips of a 'civilizing process' that entailed aping French manners, fashion and courtly society. *Sturm und Drang*, with its emphasis on personal subjectivity, was at least a stepchild of the Enlightenment (and as far as Kant's formulation went might even have a greater claim to legitimacy). This is also the sense of Enlightenment picked up by Friedrich Nietzsche, 'who wants to continue the work of Enlightenment in himself, and to strangle the Revolution at birth' (Schmidt, 1996, p. 25). In a sense, Nietzsche made explicit a tension within the Enlightenment. At the risk of overschematising these two Enlightenments, I will classify them as the external and internal. A more cynical observer might simply say that the Enlightenment has a way of absorbing its critics. Among those who call themselves intellectuals, almost none want to be associated with promoting ignorance or encouraging man to infantilise himself—even the staunchest critics of unbridled reason speak of it as a new form of enslavement.

In this sense, Freudianism may be the most problematic child of the Enlightenment, or, alternatively, as Berthold Rothschild would have it, partner (Rothschild, 2018). Freud's champions see him as developing a method for systematically exploring his patients'

unconscious (mostly sexual) conflicts in order to liberate them; his critics point out that his real aim is to accommodate the individual to the strictures and expectations of bourgeois society and to promote arguably repressive sexual and gender norms. Although declaring the ‘death of the Enlightenment’ as process would be premature, in the second decade of the twenty-first century committed Jacobins and neo-Freudians are scarce on the ground. At least in the English-speaking world, we have mostly lost our faith in the state as a means to improving man or perfecting human society and in the psychological project (Freudian or otherwise), which is probably why Pinker’s attempt to rehabilitate the Enlightenment has found greatest favour among Silicon Valley’s tech billionaires, including Bill Gates.

What remains is the question of the Enlightenment hermeneutics or the Enlightenment as a critical and interpretative stance. For the present, perhaps the best entry into this problem can be found in the Gadamer-Habermas debate and the contribution of Gadamerian hermeneutics to the so-called ‘linguistic turn.’ The problem is one of the ontological status of language and of whether or not there is a reality outside language that is, in any sense, accessible to it. For Gadamer there is no reality outside language, his project is to understand how ‘hermeneutics, freed from the ontological obstructions of the scientific concept of objectivity, can do justice to the historicity of understanding’ (Gadamer, 2004, p. 265). Gadamer held that ‘we can never achieve a “personal or temporal” identity with the author,’ but rather must content ourselves with being aware of our own biases, fore-meanings, and prejudices, so that ‘the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings’ (Ibid., p. 266 fn. 187, p. 269). Only then can we obtain his ‘fusion of horizons.’ In Gadamer’s view, prejudices are not only inescapable, but also play a vital role in understanding; Kant’s call to outgrow them is thus, as Gadamer would see it, not only impossible but also self-defeating.

While I cannot pretend to offer a solution to the Gadamer-Habermas debate, I am sympathetic to Habermas' position, his insistence on the possibility of rational validity testing of truth claims, his sensitivity to hierarchical relationships, and his demands for an 'institutionally secure' public sphere (Jay, 1982, p. 101). This is a very different version of the Enlightenment from what Pinker (2018, p. 8) presents when he argues that 'reason' and 'reality' are external to discourse, and when he insists that truth claims can be evaluated against 'objective reality' and should be considered without regard for the discursive conventions that generate them, and that doing otherwise fuels the 'contempt for experts' that he laments (Ibid., p. 29). In defence of my own position, I would like to run the risk of provisionally rehabilitating the analogy between psychoanalysis and social critique (Allen, 2016) drawn from psychoanalytic practice, which Habermas abandoned after *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Habermas, 1986) with one essential modification. This is a problem that cannot, and need not, be resolved from within the 'I-Thou' dyadic relationship (i.e. the patient and the analyst), as many educational theorists have attempted (Gordon, 2002; Josselson, 2004), nor can it be reduced to a question of hermeneutic stances (Blight, 1981), or rather to the endless debate about the correspondence between the patient's fantasies and any realities outside the consulting room.

Another proponent of radical inter-textuality, Dominick LaCapra, inadvertently explained why in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* when he insisted: 'when you study something, at some level you always have a tendency to repeat the problems you are studying' (LaCapra, 2001, p. 142).<sup>ii</sup> LaCapra understood this phenomenon as analogous to Freudian transference/counter-transference (here the danger is in the fusion of horizon not in the inability to obtain it), where the researcher is implicated in the material and compelled to repeat its dynamics (Ibid.). Having framed it in those terms, he then goes to lengths to 'take his distance from therapeutic conceptions of psychoanalysis,' preferring to take it "in more ethical and political dimensions"

(Ibid., p. 143).<sup>iii</sup> LaCapra's concern is with the putative contagiousness of trauma, or 'the way in which it can spread even to the interviewer or commentator' (LaCapra 2004, p. 81). In his disdain for psychoanalytic practice, he misses a key innovation, one unavailable to Habermas when he first attempted and then abandoned the analogy.

Practitioners of contemporary Freudian psychoanalysis are familiar with the phenomenon LaCapra has described, but the more accurate analogy is not to 'transference' but to 'parallel processing' (Runia, 2004). This is the problem that arises in training when psychoanalytic candidates inadvertently reproduce their problematic interactions with patients in their interactions with their supervisors. In most cases, psychoanalytic practitioners have discovered that the parallelisms 'do not refer to content of the therapeutic process, but to "treatment alliances"—to the tacit rules that form the basis of the therapist-patient relationship' (Ibid., p. 295; Sachs and Shapiro, 1976; Sachs and Shapiro 1974; Sachs and Shapiro 1972). As the Dutch psychoanalyst and historian Eelco Runia (2004) observed, this can also occur in historical work. He cites an example of this phenomenon at work in the Dutch report of the massacres at Srebrenica, where the official Dutch report on the massacre paralleled the events and 'unwittingly replicated key aspects of the events they studied' (Runia, 2004, p. 296).

The solution of practitioners is to establish a form of group supervision where this triadic relationship can be interrogated in a milieu group. This is particularly effective because those tacit rules are common to the group. In historical work, those rules are almost always discursive. The solution for historians and social and cultural critics is to see the scholarly community as that milieu group, an institutionally secure public space, for validity testing, in a manner that also considers the hierarchical positions and power relations between and among interlocutors. Martin Jay objected to Habermas' attempt to find an "extra-hermeneutic vantage

point in Freudian theory” on the grounds that the patient and the analyst have a vested interest in discussing (and if possible ‘curing’) the patient’s neuroses. Jay also highlighted the artificiality of the interaction, with the obvious limitation that the therapist would never tolerate the patient’s transference if he were not being paid to do so (Jay, 1982, p. 103). This whole problem can be re-formulated as a triadic relationship of the source, the historian’s interrogation of the source, and the historian’s historical writing; this re-frames the scholarly community as a kind of group supervision that helps resolve the vagaries of ‘parallel processing.’ The scholarly community is, after all, not actually concerned with the relationship between the historian and his source except insofar as it manifests itself in problematic ways in the historical writing. What is true of the historian in this instance is true of the critic more broadly.

Radical sceptics may reply that the group milieu cannot free itself of bias or fore-meanings either. Maybe so, but it can certainly go a great distance towards that aim. The more serious problem, to my mind, is the extent to which our scholarly milieu group is implicated in contemporary social and material realities or in our own mental habits, as has been argued by Stanley Fish (1980) and Pierre Bourdieu (1997). But that is a problem which Pinker and his followers are unwilling even to consider.

I have, in the course of this discussion of Enlightenment as milieu, movement (or project), process, and stance, given my own answer to the question of ‘What is Enlightenment?’ Although I have no especially sanguine view of human nature and few illusions about human rationality, I also have no wish to repudiate the Kantian notion of a public space (or more properly public spaces) for the free exercise of reason. What I am arguing for is a commitment to self-reflection on the extent to which the discursive logics of the public sphere reproduce,

unwittingly or not, the hierarchical relations of the participants. Yes, of course, privately we all have ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, genders, sexualities, and religious beliefs. To varying degrees, most of us experience some oppression because of them and are frequently obligated to act privately in ways we would rather not. But if we cannot agree on the need to preserve the integrity of institutionally protected public spaces in which to debate those competing claims, then we can have very little hope for civil society. We must proceed, but with self-reflection and with caution, as we delineate the boundaries of socio-political institutional legitimacy and authority in a manner not unlike that advocated by both Hannah Arendt and Paul Ricœur (Garduño Comparán, 2014; Ricœur, 1986; Arendt, 1993).<sup>iv</sup> But what both Pinker and those applauding him forget in his attempts to reify the topic of his panegyric is that the Enlightenment is best summarised as our collective investment in those spaces.

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## Notes

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\* The author would like to thank the participants and organisers of the London Consortium's "Psychoanalysis, History and Political Thought Forum" where this paper was presented under the same title on 13 March 2012 at the Senate House, University of London. Special thanks in particular are due to Daniel Pick, Jacqueline Rose, Matt ffytch, Nemonie Craven, and Shahidha Bari for their very useful comments. The very early drafts of this essay date from the autumn of 2005 when the author was in graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania; Roger Chartier set a question about the many meanings of the Enlightenment as a field exam. The author would also like to acknowledge a long and enduring debt to Dr Stanley H. Shapiro, who first introduced her to Freudian hermeneutics through its clinical practice. This essay is dedicated to him with warm thanks and fond reminiscences.

<sup>i</sup> John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. See [<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/charles2.html>]. Although Rochester was banished from court over it, this had more to do with the fact that he sprang it on the king as a prank when he had been asked to produce a different poem.

His 'Signor Dildo' (which implies that the Spanish Ambassador serves that function for the Duchess of York) [<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/dildo.html>] and 'The Imperfect Enjoyment' (which takes up masturbation) passed without censure.

<sup>ii</sup> This was LaCapra's solution to the problem of where to position the historian in the process of observing a past which for him 'arrives in the form of texts and textualised remainders-memories, reports, published writings, archives, monuments, and so forth (LaCapra 1985, 128; Hutcheon, 1989).

<sup>iii</sup> LaCapra, p. 143. This is unfortunately also the position he took in a public debate with David Sachs, a practitioner who has worked with victims of political violence and who has helped to theorise the role of parallel processing in the therapeutic space. Dominick LaCapra, Ph.D. & David Sachs, M.D., "Trauma: Literary, Historical, and Psychoanalytic Approaches" (16 February 2005) in a scientific program at the Philadelphia Psychoanalytic Center.

<sup>iv</sup> The author would like to thank Jacqueline Rose for reminding her, albeit too late in the revision process to provoke more than passing mention, of the extent to which Hannah Arendt's work shares many of these same preoccupations. Thanks also to Josef Nothmann for tracking down the reference to Carlos Alfonso Garduño Comparán's essay on the shared preoccupations of Arendt and Ricœur.