The View From The Couch

Jeanne Marecek
Swarthmore College, jmarece1@swarthmore.edu

Let us know how access to these works benefits you

Follow this and additional works at: http://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-psychology

Part of the Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation
http://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-psychology/272

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Psychology at Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Psychology Faculty Works by an authorized administrator of Works. For more information, please contact myworks@swarthmore.edu.
The view from the couch
by Jeanne Marie

In Bonnie Friedman's memoir about seven years of therapy, she follows her Free and the fundamentals of psychoanalysis: communicate everything that comes to mind. Do not exclude any idea because it is too disadvantageous, irrelevant, or non-sensical. The Truth of Happiness includes interchanges with her pseudonymous psychoanalyst Dr. Harriet Sing, a pastiche of childhood recollections, adored musings about love, life, and feverish fantasies. Friedman reports sundry details of meals, shopping trips, phone conversations and household chores. She puts readers in the position of the psychoanalyst who must locate what Freud called "precious metal" buried in the "many tons of ore" that free association produces. Those who prefer stories with discernible plots will throw up their hands. But there is method to Friedman's madness: although she risks sounding self-indulgent, there is no more truthful way to tell a psychoanalysis.

At the heart of psychoanalytic therapy, transference—the emotionally charged relationship between therapist and patient—was the pivot of the therapy. Dr. Sing was remote, austere and sparing in her words. Apart from her wardrobe—blue skirts, starched white blouses and riding boots—Friedman knew little about her. This left ample room for her unconscious to run free, which is precisely the effect Sing intended. Friedman was instantly propelled into an intense infatuation: "Little mattered now besides Harriet Sing. Everyone else was merely metaphoric." Sing encouraged this absorption: "If I say I feel that you respond, 'You felt lonely for me,' and I know she's right. A journalist...writes, 'You felt lonely for me,' and I respond, 'You felt lonely for me,' and I..." Dr. Sing responded, "Don't send it to him," and "It's not right for me..." Shehadeh gathers so many stories, Hebron, provides definitive answers, and others hold analyses of the social construction of significant Islamic women and intellectuals. In the works of Shehadeh, shehadeh, shehadeh...hehadeh— Bruce L. Mouser, editor, The Women's Review of Books / Vol. XX, No. 7 / April 2003

Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Pales-

The Thief of Happiness: The Story of an Extraordinary
Psychotherapy by Bonnie Friedman. Boston: Beacon Press,
2002, pp. 274, $16.00 paper.

Readers may well ask what actually happened in Friedman's therapy. Did she change because of her therapy or in spite of it? Her writer's block—the problem for which she entered therapy—disappeared in two weeks. Why did she stay in therapy for seven additional years? Was analysis a trap that sidetracked her from productive and healthy living? Or did it ultimately enable her to live, write zestfully and relish a humdrum marriage? These questions have no easy answers. This is why scientifically-minded practitioners (and cost-conscious managed-care companies) are wary of psychoanalysis.

The idea of Women in Fundamentalist Islam

Lamia Rashid-Shahdah

Shehadeh gathers so many stories, Hebron, provides definitive answers, and others hold analyses of the social construction of significant Islamic women and intellectuals. In the works of Shehadeh, shehadeh, shehadeh...hehadeh— Bruce L. Mouser, editor, The Women's Review of Books / Vol. XX, No. 7 / April 2003

Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Pales-

The Thief of Happiness: The Story of an Extraordinary
Psychotherapy by Bonnie Friedman. Boston: Beacon Press,
2002, pp. 274, $16.00 paper.
The Country Under My Skin: A Memoir of Love and War

Inside the revolution
by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

L
ike many other North Americans and other "internationalistas" from Latin America, Japan and Western Europe, I spent a lot of time during the Reagan years in either Nicaragua or organizing solidarity against the Contra war. Following the July 1979 Sandinista Revolution that dislodged the Somoza dictatorship and its crucial National Guard from power, activists from the sixties movements along with a new generation of anti-imperialists, particularly American lesbian and gay activists, flooded Nicaragua in response to the Sandinistas’ call for international brigades to assist with a literacy program and help rebuild the war-torn and impoverished nation of 2.5 million people.

I didn’t get to experience that first euphoric moment. With a year to a year and a half of the United States government, led by Jimmy Carter, began its project to banish the Sandinistas and to restore Somocismo without really solving any of its country’s problems. Sooner or later, the US invaded Grenada, and we had to go.

I visited the new Nicaragua in May 1981, three months into the Reagan administration. Most of the new American tourists were pro-working class to overthrow the “communistic terrorists” in Nicaragua was well under way. On my second trip to Nicaragua in December 1981, the (sole) Nicaraguan airliner that I was waiting to board in the Mexico City airport blew up in our faces. It was the first admitted act of terrorism by the US administration. Three guardsmen in Honduras under the aegis of the US embassy, soon to be headed and controlled by John Negroponte (now the US ambassador to Iraq) and controlled by John Negroponte (now the US ambassador to Iraq), were killed. Nicaragua was left to “behave itself.” Nicaragua had to stop building airfields for the United States military. “I will never forgive my life worthwhile. It was an act of generosity. . .” (p. 358)

I know how to be alone. I didn’t know how to be alone. I didn’t get to experience that first euphoric moment. With a year to a year and a half of the United States government, led by Jimmy Carter, began its project to banish the Sandinistas and to restore Somocismo without really solving any of its country’s problems. Sooner or later, the US invaded Grenada, and we had to go.

I visited the new Nicaragua in May 1981, three months into the Reagan administration. Most of the new American tourists were pro-working class to overthrow the “communistic terrorists” in Nicaragua was well under way. On my second trip to Nicaragua in December 1981, the (sole) Nicaraguan airliner that I was waiting to board in the Mexico City airport blew up in our faces. It was the first admitted act of terrorism by the US administration. Three guardsmen in Honduras under the aegis of the US embassy, soon to be headed and controlled by John Negroponte (now the US ambassador to Iraq) and controlled by John Negroponte (now the US ambassador to Iraq), were killed. Nicaragua was left to “behave itself.” Nicaragua had to stop building airfields for the United States military. “I will never