

WRITING AND RESISTANCE

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This issue of *New Formations* presents a range of exciting new work which spans and connects the fields of cultural studies, literary theory and radical political philosophy.

Two essays in the issue are concerned with the specificities of contemporary sexual politics. David Alderson's 'Acting Straight' examines the deployment of the term 'straight acting' to describe men who have sex with other men but are not considered effeminate: a widespread and under-analysed categorisation. His paper looks at the significance of this term in relation to an intensified social self-consciousness of gender, especially in relation to sexuality, by focusing on the reality TV series, *Playing It Straight*; and he discusses the cultural political dynamics of masculinity and effeminacy in relation to increasing inequality, precarity and austerity. Naomi Booth's essay, 'Bathetic Masochism', examines the privileged position given to masochism in some recent critical-theoretical work and argues that the recent *Fifty Shades* novels romanticise masochism as a shrinking of the female subject accompanied by an increase in her orgasmic and consumer power.

Three articles are concerned with relationships between writing, disclosure and interpretation. Clare Birchall's 'The Aesthetics of the Secret' departs from the recent revelations of former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, positing secrets as subject to and the subject of radical politics rather than merely as appropriate objects of regulation. Birchall turns from a *hermeneutics* of the secret towards an *aesthetics* of the secret, arguing that, considered as a Rancièrian 'distribution of the sensible', this aesthetics can help us to imagine a politics of the secret not bound to policy and legalities. Also concerned with the politics of openness and enclosure, Sarah Kember's 'Why Write? Feminism, publishing and the politics of communication' deals with the enclosure and delimitation of a politics of communication within and across the knowledge and creative sectors, showing how this enclosure is enacted by reform agendas, and specifically by the alignment of copyright and access reform in the UK. The question of writing brings philosophy to bear on policies of openness but, Kember argues, in an environment of increasingly proprietorial knowledge and of creativity as market competition, the key question to ask of writing is not the metaphysical one (what is writing?) but rather the more provisional question: why write? Elizabeth Coles's 'Psychoanalysis and the Poem' continues the theme of writing and interpretation, examining how returning to the issue of interpretation in twentieth-century psychoanalysis can help us reopen the question of the discipline's bearing on literary studies, in particular the study of poetry. Reading the work of Sándor Ferenczi and D.W. Winnicott,

the article sets out their responses to well-documented controversies surrounding psychoanalytic interpretation, and examines how their theories of interpretation rely on notions not only of language but of poetry.

Costas Douzinas makes a major intervention with his 'Notes towards an Analytics of Resistance', which offers a fascinating and inspiring antidote to the pessimism of thinkers such as Alain Badiou. Responding to emergent radical currents in Greece, Spain, and elsewhere, Douzinas offers a unique and timely account of the nature of political resistance as such, which draws out the common lessons from the experiences of Syriza, the *indignados* and the protests in Gezi Park. The latter is the subject of Serhat Karakayali and Özge Yaka's article 'The Spirit of Gezi: an Uprising Between Event and Recomposition', which locates Gezi in a sequence of protests and uprisings including the student's movement in Chile, the Egyptian revolution, the Spanish *indignados* and Occupy Wall Street. This paper explores what the authors call the 'process of *recomposition* of a people', the practices of 'commoning', which created what many participants in the protests lived as a transgressive experience, and the affective dimension of the Gezi protests.

While no single theme links all of the contributions to this issue, what they share in multiple ways is a concern to bring the most sophisticated theoretical tools available to bear upon the analysis of a range of urgent and emergent political questions. This continues to be the overriding purpose of *New Formations*: to explore the intersections between culture, theory and politics in order to understand the changing nature of each in the twenty-first century.