

SKEPTICAL ENGAGEMENTS



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Skeptical Engagements

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Skeptical Engagements:

Against Freud Todd Dufresne, 2007 *Against Freud* is a highly accessible informative and entertaining examination of Freud's controversial ideas and legacy by the world's most knowledgeable critics of psychoanalysis *Skeptical Engagements* Frederick C. Crews, 1986 Eleven years ago in *Out of My System* the noted critic Frederick Crews served notice that his Freudian sympathies were being eroded In his new book Crews shows where that reappraisal took him and why he has come to regard himself as an opponent of all self-validating doctrines The essays collected here are linked by a theme Crews came to understand through trial and error The fear of facing the world including its works of literature without an intellectual narcotic at hand Crews himself a former Freudian takes on a host of academic critics and theorists and he does so with vigor and in bitingly effective lucid prose Booklist The author is provocative about writers from Philip Roth to Erik Erikson and in the process gives us a clear picture of intellectual life warts and all Kirkus Reviews **A Cultivated Reason** Christopher Williams, 1998-12-01 As Plato's tripartite division of the soul Descartes's criterion of clear and distinct ideas and Kant's notion of the categorical imperative attest philosophy has traditionally been wedded to rationalism and its intellectualist view of persons In this book Christopher Williams seeks to wean his fellow philosophers away from an overly rationalistic self-understanding by using resources that are available within the philosophical tradition itself including some that anticipate strands of Nietzsche's thought The book begins by developing Hume's critique of rationalism with reference especially to the section of the *Treatise* that deals with the continuing existence of bodies an argument that subverts intellectualist criteria by attempting to satisfy them and to his neglected essay *The Sceptic* where Hume reveals the importance of our embodiment through a comic portrayal of philosophers' efforts to correct our sentiments Then it moves on to ward off charges of irrationalism by showing that although our powers of self-correction are more limited than the rationalist thinks they are a Humean position is able both to sustain a commitment to reflection and to sensitize us to a version of irrationalism manifest in monotheistic theologies that is otherwise difficult to detect The book concludes more speculatively with a comparison of persons to artworks in order to show how our aesthetic dimension is the source of some of the normative work previously assigned to rationalist reason Ranging as it does across subfields from epistemology and history of philosophy to ethics and aesthetics *A Cultivated Reason* should appeal to a wide audience of philosophers and to scholars in other fields as well *Freudians and Schadenfreudians* Jeffrey Berman, 2024-08-22 Sigmund Freud can be a polarizing figure beloved by many and despised by some Focusing on eight key writers and scholars who either passionately loved or gleefully loathed Freud this book represents Freud's wide legacy the reach of his ideas their controversies and their ability still to provoke inspire confound outrage and compel The book begins by focusing on four highly prolific authors whose admiration for Freud is boundless Lionel Trilling Harold Bloom Kurt R Eissler and Peter Gay Berman then explores four more writers whose aim was not simply to debunk Freud and destroy his monstrous creation but to cast both into hell D

H Lawrence Vladimir Nabokov Thomas Szasz and Frederick Crews Each chapter discusses the author's involvement with Freud exploring the continuities and discontinuities of his or her writings as well as offering snapshots of the writers suggesting how their personal and professional lives were inextricably related Berman draws out some surprising commonalities between the Freudolaters and Schadenfreudians going on to discuss the current state of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic credos by which contemporary analysts live **On Hawthorne** Edwin Harrison Cady, Louis J. Budd, 1990 From 1929 to the latest issue American Literature has been the foremost journal expressing the findings of those who study our national literature The journal has published the best work of literary historians critics and bibliographers ranging from the founders of the discipline to the best current critics and researchers The longevity of this excellence lends a special distinction to the articles in American Literature Presented in order of their first appearance the articles in each volume constitute a revealing record of developing insights and important shifts of critical emphasis Each article has opened a fresh line of inquiry established a fresh perspective on a familiar topic or settled a question that engaged the interest of experts

Critique of Impure Reason Anne Munz, 1999-02-28 Thanks to the enormous progress of neuroscience over the past few decades we can now monitor the passage of initial stimulations to certain points in the brain In spite of these findings however subjective consciousness still remains an unsolved mystery This volume exposes neuroscience and cognitive science to philosophical analysis and proposes that we think of our conscious states of mind as a composite phenomenon consisting of three layers neuronal events somatic markers and explicit consciousness While physics and chemistry can and have been successfully employed to describe the causal relation between the first two layers the further step to articulate consciousness is purely interpretative and points to the preponderant importance of language Language is essential for the transformation of inchoate not very informative somatic markers and mere moods into full consciousness and appraised emotion Munz uses literary examples to shift our understanding of the mind away from computational models and to show how eloquence about our states of mind is manufactured rather than caused He firmly rejects the efforts of both Freud and non Freudian psychologists to find a scientific explanation for such manufacture and to make a science out of the eloquence of folk psychology Instead he argues that the many ways eloquence is being manufactured to transform somatic markers into conscious states of mind are best accounted for in terms of Wittgenstein's conception of language games This volume challenges most current thinking about consciousness and mind and will appeal to philosophers psychologists neuroscientists and linguists **Primary Process Thinking** Robert R. Holt, 2008-12-19 Volume one of this comprehensive approach to one of Freud's most important conceptual achievements the theory of thinking examines the emergence and changes in his conceptions of primary and secondary process thought in their theoretical and clinical contexts Unlike most treatments which emphasize their embeddedness in metapsychology the text demonstrates the empirical grounding of these concepts in observation and describes how it led to a method of quantitative measurement A summary of major theoretically relevant

findings with that method plus a critical review of post Freudian reexaminations of primary process leads to a reformulation of the psychoanalytic theory of thinking that is in Rubinstein's term protoneurophysiological as consistent as possible with contemporary knowledge in the brain sciences. In so doing the author attempts to convert a psychoanalytic theory into a set of testable propositions using objectively quantifiable scientific concepts. Moreover, he shows how data obtained with his method can be used to confront the theoretical propositions, verifying some, rejecting some, and significantly modifying others. Volume two is an enclosed compact disc. The first ten chapters constitute a detailed scoring manual designed to be self-teaching for applying the concepts of primary process, its controls and defenses to data from the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception Tests, dreams, and free verbal data. The remaining chapters treat its reliability and validity, including a critical summary of over one hundred researches from around the world demonstrating how it can be used not only to test psychoanalytic propositions but to illuminate issues in clinical psychiatry, clinical and developmental psychology, and personality. A concluding chapter points to many promising directions for further research.

Wallace Stevens James Longenbach, 1991-10-31 Wallace Stevens the poet and Wallace Stevens the insurance executive for more than one critical generation it has seemed as if these two men were unacquainted that Stevens was a poet who existed only in the rarefied world of language. However, the idea that Stevens lived a double life, the author maintains, is misleading. This compelling book uncovers what Stevens liked to think of as his ordinary life, a life in which the demands of politics, economics, poetry, and everyday distractions coexisted, sometimes peacefully and sometimes not. Examining the full scope of Stevens's career from the student poet of the nineteenth century to the award-winning poet of the Cold War years, Longenbach reveals that Stevens was not only aware of events taking place around him but often inspired by those events. The major achievements of Stevens's career are shown to coalesce around the major historical events of his lifetime: the Great Depression and two World Wars. But Longenbach also dwells on Stevens's two extended periods of poetic silence, exploring the crucial aspects of Stevens's life that were not exclusively poetic. Longenbach demonstrates that through Stevens's work in surety law, he was far more intimately acquainted with legal and economic concerns than most poets, and he consequently thought deeply about the strengths and equally important the limitations of poetry as a social product and force.

Literature, Analytically Speaking Peter Swirski, 2010-04-01 In a new approach to interdisciplinary literary theory, *Literature Analytically Speaking* integrates literary studies with analytic aesthetics, girded by neo-Darwinian evolution. Scrutinizing narrative fiction through a lens provided by analytic philosophy, revered literary theorist Peter Swirski puts new life into literary theory while fashioning a set of practical guidelines for critics in the interpretive trenches. Dismissing critical inquirers who deny intention its key role in the study of literary reception, Swirski extends the defense of intentionality to art and to human behavior in general. In the process, Swirski takes stock of the recent work in evolutionary theory, arguing that the analysis of narrative truth may be grounded in the neo-Darwinian paradigm, which forms the empirical backbone behind his analytic approach. *Literature*

Analytically Speaking provides a series of revolutionary precepts designed to capture the ways in which we do interpret and ought to interpret works of literature. Reflecting a resounding shift from the poststructuralist paradigm, Swirski's lively and colorful presentation backed up by a dazzling variety of examples and case studies reconceptualizes the aesthetics of literature and literary studies. The Sense of Art Ralph A. Smith, 2014-10-29 Ralph A. Smith provides a theory of aesthetic education that addresses the need to revitalize the capacity for genuine judgment in society, reaffirm the ideal of excellence in culture, and reorder our thoughts about teaching the arts in schools. The book presents an image of the curriculum as an itinerary preparing the young to traverse the world of art with adroitness and sensitivity.

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