



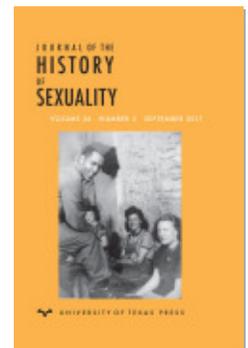
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Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in an Age of Catastrophes by
Dagmar Herzog (review)

Edward Ross Dickinson

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On a related note, the book would have benefited from an explicit discussion of the degree to which Australian psychiatry was affected by trends in European and American sexual psychiatry. We do not learn whether concepts such as sadism, masochism, transvestism, and sexual perversion were current in Australia during this period, and the authors only briefly allude to two editorials in medical journals to frame this entire field.

Despite these weaknesses, this book remains a significant achievement. Without much in the way of local historiography to draw upon, the authors have done an important job in uncovering these trials and situating them in the context of conservative Australian sexual values, which were on the cusp of being challenged both in court and on the streets. While their accounts of the sexual abuse of women and girls and the intense policing of homosexuals make for harrowing reading, the book usefully helps us to both challenge the attitudes that underlie these crimes and resist the control of sexual expressions that should never have been criminalized. This book is an opportunity for Australians to think about the evolution of their attitudes to sexuality and the way it is regulated.

IVAN CROZIER
University of Sydney



Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in an Age of Catastrophes. By DAGMAR HERZOG. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. viii + 311. \$34.99 (cloth); \$28.00 (e-book).

At the heart of Dagmar Herzog's new book is a question central to the history of sexuality as a scholarly field: What is the relationship between sexuality and other spheres of life such as politics and the economy? *Cold War Freud* traces how a wide range of those who have engaged with psychoanalytic ideas since 1945—as advocates or as critics—have thought about that question. The book consists essentially of six case studies (in rough chronological order but often overlapping in time), each of which places psychoanalytic thought in the broader context of the political and intellectual development of a particular place and time. Taken together, these chapters offer a coherent, gripping, and often surprising narrative of the development of psychoanalytic thinking across three continents and over sixty years.

Chapters 1 and 2 examine Freudian thinking in the Cold War period. Chapter 1 investigates the conflict between more traditional Freudians and the neo-Freudians who were more interested in social and cultural influences, as well as the conflicts of psychoanalysis as a whole with the views of religious leaders hostile to the sexually radical potentials of Freudianism. Chapter 2 discusses the conflicts between Freudianism and other strands of American sexual culture in the 1950s and 1960s: with Alfred Kinsey's

radically empiricist sexology (with its radical implications regarding the prevalence of sexual diversity); with behaviorist sex therapy (e.g., Masters and Johnson); with self-help and pop psychology; and with feminism and the homosexual rights movement. These conflicts, Herzog argues, led to the emergence of a conservative variant of Freudianism that focused on sexual dysfunctions as a consequence, not a cause, of neurosis and offered itself as a tool for the normalization of sexuality through the resolution of neuroses. It also invested heavily in the new “Love Doctrine” (65)—the idea that any sexual activity outside the context of a stable committed reproductive and familial relationship was dangerous, destructive, and unhealthy. A predominantly homophobic and sexually and socially prescriptive discipline suffered an “abrupt . . . decline in status” and “increasing marginalization . . . from the 1970s on” (70, 217).

In chapters 3 and 4 the focus widens to take in central Europe and Latin America. Chapter 3 examines the emergence of the concept of posttraumatic stress disorder in the course of psychoanalysts’ engagement with Jewish survivors’ claims for compensation for the psychological incapacitation resulting from wartime trauma, and then with the psychological problems facing Vietnam veterans and survivors of torture under various Latin American regimes. Ironically, Herzog asserts, the acceptance of the idea of PTSD “could be understood as a side-effect of . . . the Cold War and of struggles over decolonization” (121) because it shifted attention from the (political) causes of trauma to its treatment and blurred the line between perpetrators and victims. In chapter 4 the even more unsettling implications of debates regarding the status of aggression as a fundamental human drive are analyzed. The arguments of those, like Konrad Lorenz, who favored the proposition that aggression is a universal human trait were countered with arguments from the New Left that this belief tended toward the exculpation and trivialization of the crimes of the Nazi regime. Meanwhile, the New Left’s thesis that aggression was merely a product of repressed and frustrated sexual energies seemed to others grossly naive and dangerously utopian.

Chapter 5 turns to a happier topic: the theorists who sought to transcend this whole calculus of the drives and their repression or liberation and who by the 1980s had arrived at a radicalized variant of the neo-Freudian position examined in chapter 1. While psychoanalysis was “shedding whatever social subversive potential it once had” (157), New Left intellectual icons Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari proposed a new “paradigm” of the “unremitting mutual imbrication of selves and society” (156, 158). They argued that capitalism, war, bureaucracy, fascism, the state, the economy, and everything else must be understood as the consequence of libidinal “flows of all kinds that run through the social body” (159); but they insisted, on the other hand, that social orders also create the very subjectivities that host that universal libidinal energy. In short, the “distinctions between private life

and the various levels of social life are no longer valid” (169). Mental and social health could therefore only be achieved by living in completely new ways—“counter to all forms of fascism,” as Michel Foucault put it (173). In the context of radical critiques of consumer capitalism and neocolonialism, the ongoing sexual revolution, and postcolonial insurgencies, this was a powerful message.

Finally, chapter 6 examines the work of Swiss psychoanalysts, particularly Paul Parin and Fritz Morgenthaler, who studied their African patients in order to determine whether the intrapsychic dynamics central to Freudian theory were universal or culturally bound—and to discover those other ways of living that might liberate Western societies from their pathologies. They found that “societies do indeed shape selves at the most elemental levels” and that more latitudinarian sexual views produced less neurotic people—in particular, people who were not convinced that they “never had enough money” (192, 196). Their work, Herzog argues, therefore “seemed to offer a model for how human community could be organized with less competitiveness and more solidarity” (209).

Herzog concludes that we do psychoanalysis a grave injustice and deprive ourselves of important tools for thought about the connections between sex and society if we identify psychoanalytic thought only with its dominant depoliticizing and sexually conservative variant, particularly in the United States. This “psychoanalysis that everyone loves to hate,” it turns out, was “only *one* kind of psychoanalysis” among “an astonishing array of—often mutually incompatible—psychoanalytic concepts of human selfhood” with radically different political implications (219), some of which were characterized by a “defiant liberationist impulse” (211). Psychoanalytic ideas have been “used both for malicious and for generous purposes” (86); and, in fact, the history she reconstructs here shows that “there is no intrinsically necessary relationship between a particular psychoanalytic concept and the uses to which it can be put” (176).

This is a brilliant, ambitious, passionate book. It is also eminently readable—not least because Herzog has transferred many asides and ancillary discussions to the very extensive footnotes (80 of the 304 pages of text, and some of them up to two full pages in length). Throughout, Herzog strikes a successful balance between narrative coherence and an appreciation of the complexity and ambivalence of psychoanalytic thought. The geographic scope of the book allows her to explore a vast range of varieties and implications of psychoanalytic thinking and to show how their complex and multivalent potentials were activated and debated in different circumstances. The aim of this book is not to achieve encyclopedic coverage, however, but to offer a model that allows for the full complexity and variety of psychoanalytic thinking. It succeeds admirably at that, always portraying psychoanalytic thought as a field of contention and of complex, cross-cutting, cross-fertilizing conflicts and alliances. Finally, this is a book

in which there are clear heroes (people who favored and furthered freedom, tolerance, respect, and solidarity) and villains (people committed to constraint, pathologization, and exclusion and who caused or refused to see suffering). But the fact that Herzog makes no secret of her own political preferences does not make this a biased book; it is an engaged one. Herzog's reading of the interactions between psychoanalysis as a profession, the personal concerns and possible psychological motivations of theorists themselves, and broader political and cultural contexts is consistently nuanced, complex, and plausible.

In short, this is a scintillating and thought-provoking work of intellectual history, a rich, sophisticated, and exciting analysis of ideas in historical context. It is an important book and will be productive for Herzog's readers both for its empirical and for its theoretical contribution.

EDWARD ROSS DICKINSON
University of California Davis



Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex and Rebellion before the Sixties. By AMANDA H. LITTAUER. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. Pp. 280. \$27.95 (paper); \$26.99 (ebook).

Who would not buy a book about girls in search of hot sex? Illustrated with colorful evidence about the American girls who decided to “do it,” girls who found sex too exciting not to pursue in the decades before the 1960s counterculture, *Bad Girls* does not disappoint. As Amanda Littauer writes in this lively, well-researched book, the “victory girls,” “B-girls,” lesbians, and ordinary teenagers of the 1940s and 1950s set the stage for the sexual revolution. *Bad Girls* is also an account of female sexual courage: if girls couldn't get what they wanted at home, they often hit the road, leaving school, parents, community, and sometimes a young husband behind.

The sexual revolution is often said to have begun with the marketing of oral contraceptives in 1960 and the widespread availability of all birth control by 1965. But Littauer asks us to rethink these assumptions, arguing that a “long sexual revolution” (3) was already under way before World War II. It accelerated during the war years, when “victory girls” put their bodies to work on behalf of the war effort—and sometimes got a few dollars and a dose of venereal disease in return. In the postwar years, “B-girls,” or “drink solicitors,” seduced men into buying watered-down and fake drinks, earning a percentage of each sale. B-girls sometimes came through with a little sex too, but they did not consider themselves prostitutes. By using their sexuality to make a sale, they “expanded the possibilities for women's sexual license” (53).