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The European Journal of Psychoanalysis

Oct 3, 2023

<https://www.journal-psychoanalysis.eu/articles/psychoanalysis-and-the-politics-of-the-family-the-crisis-of-initiation-an-interview-with-daniel-tutt/>

Anthony Ballas

## Psychoanalysis and the Politics of the Family: The Crisis of Initiation, an Interview with Daniel Tutt

**Daniel Tutt, Ph.D.**, is a philosopher and socialist. His writing and research concerns psychoanalysis, politics and new directions in Marxist and Nietzschean thought. He has taught philosophy at George Washington University, the Washington, DC jail and Marymount University. Tutt is host of Emancipations Podcast and he founded Study Groups on Psychoanalysis and Politics, an extra-academic community that offers affordable seminars and study groups for students and the wider public. He is currently writing a book on the legacy of left-Nietzschean thought and socialism called *How to Read Like a Parasite: What the Left Needs to Know About Nietzsche* which will be published in February 2024 by Repeater Books. His first book is *Psychoanalysis and the Politics of the Family* and is published with the Palgrave Lacan Series and came out in 2022. (@DanielTutt)

**Anthony Ballas:** In your recent work you've examined the politics of the family through the dual lenses of psychoanalysis and Marxism. Can you give us a sketch of this work of yours? What kind of political and theoretical intervention are you making into the literature on family politics?

**Daniel Tutt:** With this book *Psychoanalysis and the Politics of the Family* my aim is to raise the politics of the family from a broader psychoanalytic perspective that draws attention to some common problems that face the contemporary family. A core thesis of the book is that psychoanalytic thought, specifically the Oedipus complex and the theory of the superego must be re-thought in today's conjuncture. These are concepts from psychoanalysis which have direct bearing on the family, and so my objective is to examine the shifting functions of the Oedipus complex and of the superego in our time. To do this I aim to define these functions as social and cultural functions, not merely as clinical functions.

In general, my claim is that the family today experiences a socialised form of the superego in ways that displace the authority of the family and its internal capacity to transmit its ideals. The theory of Oedipus has long been a subject of debate on both the socialist feminist and the Marxist left for several decades. Anti-Oedipal politics reached their peak in the 1970s with Deleuze and Guattari and socialist feminist critiques of psychoanalysis, and these polemics are important debates that I think we need to return to. Today it is often very unclear what the consequences are of what Lacan called the "decline of the paternal function." It is very evident that this decline has given way to a re-configuration of the Oedipal subjective process, i.e., we relate to authority differently in this "post-prohibition" society. And indeed, we can identify a range of new symptoms that appear both in the psychoanalytic clinic (new borderline symptoms, new hysterical symptoms, for example) and in the culture more generally, and these shifts can be attributed to this decline.

I prefer to call it a "shift" rather than a decline because I think we have witnessed a displacement of the Oedipal logic towards what the late Foucauldian sociologist Jacques Donzelot calls the "familialisation of

society,” or the tendency to extend the family logic of dependency to institutions. In this sense our society is not post-Oedipal and nor is it entirely pre-Oedipal – I prefer to say that it is ultra-Oedipal. I believe the Oedipal dynamic is more ubiquitous today than it was in prior periods of capitalist social life and by this I also mean that it is harder to overcome. Oedipus has become ultra-horizontalised and we live with unresolved familial dynamics which appear and reappear in our institutional and political life. We should remember that Oedipus is a theory for how to successfully work-through paternal dependencies and rationally overcome a series of ambivalent paternal identifications. My wager here is that perhaps Oedipus can be thought of in the opposite way than Deleuze and Guattari intended, namely, I want to argue that Oedipus is a theory for a more liberated subjective experience.

But has there ever been a time in which a more thorough process of Oedipal overcoming was in fact present in the family structure? To address this question, I turn to the Frankfurt School and specifically Max Horkheimer, who argued that the bourgeois family in its more original form did offer a family form in which a greater rational process of overcoming Oedipal dependencies was possible and indeed a part of the society. Horkheimer thus brings an insight which I see also in the thought of several other thinkers that work in a psychoanalytic register, from Christopher Lasch, Kojin Karatani, Byung-Chul Han to Lacan himself. In general, these authors argue that the Freudian superego mechanism of the family, at least as Freud theorised it, has in fact shifted. The name I give to this shift is the “social superego”, which refers to a general weakening of the family’s superego enforcement mechanism and the concurrent rise of a more pernicious superego that is more collective, censorial, and cruel. In general, this shift also signals the rise of a crisis that is over shame and the absence of a clear signal from the field of the other, which means that the old Freudian superego, which functioned on guilt, becomes less and less the standard way that familial affects tend to function.

We can now see how the family has been displaced, and a more socialised mode of authority intervenes in the formerly private bourgeois family form. The guarantee of the bourgeois family form and what the proletariat or working classes have managed to salvage from it has dissolved today. The general experience of the family today is no longer shaped around the social promise of the family as a haven of leisure and exemption from wage labour that the bourgeois family was founded upon. Today we have a more hyper-socialised family, which is why the theory of Oedipus that I work with is cast at a slightly broader register. I claim that we can retain a theory of Oedipus that does not necessarily reinforce patriarchal or gender normative tendencies in subjects. Rather, Oedipal processes should be thought of as a patient working-through of dependencies. Oedipus, if it is worth anything for politics, must be thought of as how we navigate beyond the psychological web of the “mommy-daddy-me” triangle, not only in our families but also in our institutional and community relations. In a hyper-socialised Oedipal formation such as we experience today, the political question is this: How can we more thoroughly overcome negative dependencies and more thoroughly overcome authority figures without possessing a quiet reliance on them, even in our revolt?

This question leads me to the heart of the politics of liberation that much of the book is concerned with. My commitments here revolve around a Marxist praxis which centers the importance of the working class as the agency of overcoming familial dependencies that now exist far beyond the reaches of the nuclear family. It is crucial in my view that we consider the subjective afflictions of the working class as a broad category because they bear the weight of a highly disciplined and penal experience of the family. The experience of the black family in the United States, which was one of the very first to experience the enforced discipline of the neoliberal era in the 1980s, is in many ways at the vanguard of wider working-class struggle in this regard. I cast a big tent when I speak of the working-class family, and I find it important to remember how Marxists during the Second International period in the late nineteenth century through to WWI framed the politics of the proletarian family. The family was discussed by Engels and later Kautsky and other socialists as a form of oppression which was qualitatively distinct from the bourgeois family (Kautsky, 1892/2000, ch. 7). That lived experience of the proletarian family must be put back on the table today.

Another interest of mine in this book is to situate the family as an ideological function, that is, the family is both a mode of social reproduction and it develops a distinct “family spirit” which conceals the family’s role

in social reproduction. The idea of the family spirit is important for me, and I get the idea from Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist. He argues that families form distinct types of exchange that make taboos on making explicit the family's role in capitalist social reproduction. In fact, one way to think of the family is a unit that develops rites and rituals that conceal its own complicity with what Bourdieu calls the "social field" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 65). The proletarian family is slightly different from this model because it forges a family spirit that possesses a far diminished capacity for these rites to function. But in the proletarian family's diminished capacity to be a well-functioning private bourgeois family it develops a series of affective and emotional attachments to the family which make the very proposal of "family abolition" an often highly foreign idea to working class and black families. This is a paradox that interests me a great deal, and I discovered that the Black Radical Tradition, in its dialogue with Marxist family abolitionists, has historically tended to question the viability of family abolition. However, I find the family abolition tradition to be of utmost importance, and in the concluding chapters of the book my aim is to bring my wider insights around a new theory of Oedipus into dialogue with more experimental and more radical alternatives to the family. I specifically think that the commune is an experiment that the utopian socialists and the New Left both experimented with and which our generation must seriously consider. We cannot formulate a politics that relies only on empty hopes for the policies of neoliberal austerity and punishment of the working-class family to simply disappear by socialists or progressive liberals seizing parliamentary forms of power. Extra-parliamentary tactics and experiments in alternative family structures, such as the commune, are important because they push our political imagination of the family in more revolutionary directions beyond the reinforcement of the private bourgeois family.

**AB:** I know your work on the family is primarily addressed to the left, including the liberal left. I'm curious, however, what the implications might be for diagnosing what we might consider latter-day right-wing trends in family politics. I'm thinking of course of the uptick in right-wing violence spurred on since the ascent of the Trump movement in the United States; abortion bans, the erosion of reproductive rights, anti-trans legislation, and numerous other examples. And certainly this trend is to be contextualised to the rise of right and even neofascist politics globally, from Hungary to Brazil for example. I'm interested in how the right-wing reactionary politics we are seeing might be connected with the familialism you explore in your work. Especially with regard to the strengthening of border politics here and abroad, to the return to the ideology of traditionalism, nostalgia for the Reagan and Thatcher era, and so on. Are these dynamics part of the social superego that you discuss? How might we diagnose the rise of the right wing in terms of the politics of the family?

**DT:** The familialisation of society signals a displacement of the traditional private bourgeois family, and the collapse of the "breadwinner" family form is one example of this that we are all quite familiar with. This collapse brings about a weakening of the family's authority. The weakening of the family breeds reactionary politics in the sense that it stokes ambivalent and passionate attachments to a family form which is unrealisable. A politics of melancholic nostalgia tends to breed reaction. For the post-2008 situation, it is obvious that younger generations simply cannot form families as they are expected to by their parents. The politics of austerity and dwindling salaried job prospects create the sense in our culture that the family has no one looking out for it, that families are thrown to the whims of the market, and these dynamics bring about reactionary and conservative politics. In some sense the family has become proletarianised both in our imagination of what the family is and in the material reality of what is possible for families today.

We live in the shadow of the Thatcherite dictum that there is no society, only individuals and families. This slogan, although it is clichéd, must be taken literally. It means that we live with a form of the family which is not thought of in our political imaginary as a socialised family even though that is precisely what the family is today; a socialised unit in which the immediate family has lost a great degree of power over steering its own development. Melinda Cooper's (2017) argument in *Family Values* that both the right and the left erode the family's stability in capitalism is an essential argument in this context because it further shows how the family is still formally treated as a private bourgeois family. But hardly any family today can live up to the

mandate of the bourgeois family because families are simply not given the adequate social protections that would allow them to flourish. Today's socialised family was not the vision of the liberatory proposals of the New Left of the 1960s and 70s, which put an onus on revolutionising the family and overcoming the bourgeois family. These experiments in revolutionising the family did not maintain the patience necessary in experimenting with alternative family forms, such as the commune, that could provide a viable alternative to the bourgeois family. Instead, they produced what I call a paradox of liberation, in the sense that the liberatory proposals for the overcoming of the private bourgeois family were taken up by the market, and the radical demands of the New Left were largely coopted by neoliberal entrepreneurial culture. This is an argument that I work with from *The New Spirit of Capitalism* by Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), who argue that leftist demands for greater horizontal relations and freer expression were seized and re-routed by corporate business cultures. A similar fate faced the family abolitionists of the 1960s and 70s; and the family has been thoroughly marketised and socialised. But this marketisation has brought a great deal of anguish for families because it has just intensified family precarity – it has not strengthened the subjective resolve of the subjects of contemporary families.

**AB:** I'm also curious about the racial implications of your diagnoses. Keeping in mind the Reagan era rhetoric of super-predators and welfare queens, which were repackaged later in the Clinton era with the lead-up to the war on drugs, mass incarceration, and which seem to be echoed in the contemporary political and legal attacks on Critical Race Theory, and so on. In my mind these racialised structures have very acute consequences in the politics of the family: in the production of labour forces that fall outside of the market (prison labour), or in the doubly negated labour of nonwhite domestic servants in the United States, and things of that nature. Can you help us navigate through these racial dynamics of family politics?

**DT:** I particularly like Fred Moten's (2013) argument that the Black Radical Tradition offers insights into liberatory politics that are out ahead of other struggles. The black family faced disciplinary policies of austerity and intensive discipline at the dawn of the neoliberal era in the early 1980s, and these policies are now imposed on the working-class family more generally. In this way, I believe that the left needs to think of the experience of the black family and the working-class family from the position of their lived experience of struggle, and of course these two family forms are not necessarily that distinct from one another. We should remember that it was a goal of Engels's work on the family, as well as many socialists of the Second International, to reveal the suffering of the working-class family. And I think that sort of sociological and ethnographic study is of utmost importance today.

The family conceals a profound suffering, and many members of families experience abandonment by parents and primary caretakers. In these situations of abandonment, either of the mother or the father, or even of both, what occurs is a sort of heroism and wisdom into the Oedipal dynamic. We often neglect to see those people who have found a way to forge their own father function and to take care of their siblings as a father, or even as a mother, (the distinction is often not clear at the end of the day!) as incredibly resilient and brave people. If anyone has had to be a father to their siblings and has had to deal with an absent father, the story here is not one of a total loneliness or psychotic aloofness, although those dynamics can happen. But what gets overlooked in these situations is a profound subjective strength that these conditions bring about. People who have weathered these family dynamics are people that we rely on; they tend to be the ones that we trust because they have had to bear the weight of indeterminate and unstable familial environments. No one knows what a father really is, like the person who has had to live without a father themselves. Lacan had the idea in his later teaching that the decline of the father function means that the father becomes pluralised, that the father is a pragmatic function that permits you to invent a new desire, to let go of a bad repetition in your life (Lacan, 1971). In that way those without fathers have a true knowledge of how to invent and reinvent themselves which should be acknowledged and celebrated. I believe that the black family often possesses a knowledge of this dynamic that is quite profound, and we should start to see our friends and comrades from this perspective. We are not necessarily wounded by experiencing an absent father; sometimes the father is so monstrous to begin with that we are better off that he is absent.

With that said, I believe that the left needs to find a new language to talk about broken families, about divorce and about dysfunctional families. The psychical, and often physical, wounds from broken families run deep. But often we experience a culture on the left which does not know how to properly process these dynamics. Part of the reason that we cannot speak about the wounds of the broken family is because of inequality. A family is expected to shelter the costs of the child, and when they cannot this breeds a quiet resentment which cannot be spoken of. Even worse, imagine a family that not only cannot cover the costs of education for the child but cannot even provide the stability of its members or even basic care. I think that psychoanalysis can offer us quite a lot of resources to discuss these dynamics without feeling shameful about them. I am interested in thinking about subjects who have not been granted a guarantee by the family, who have been ejected by the family bonds; these are subjects who are forced to find alternative means to initiate themselves into the family. In that way we can say that working class families more generally are the vanguard for any re-thinking of the family-form, given that the subjects from these families are most adept at facing the contingency and precarity of the family. They are the ones who know the truth of the contemporary family better than anyone else.

**AB:** I am fascinated by what you've termed the "crisis of initiation," and the ways in which marketisation has essentially facilitated a mass infantilisation of society through the erosion of social rituals of adulthood. Correct me if I am wrong, but do I detect a bit of Badiou in this formulation? (Specifically his appraisal of the waning military conscription and the crisis of adulthood faced by men in the West.) I'm particularly interested in how the "revolution of everyday life" from the 1960s and 70s stagnated, yielding to this "hyper-marketisation." Have all of our rituals of adulthood simply sublimated into the logics and forms of the market? Can you talk a bit about the history of this crisis?

**DT:** In Lacan's later seminars he invoked this idea of a crisis of initiation in our society, and I was immediately drawn to it. At first the term was distracting and uninteresting because of its mystical and quasi-religious baggage, but the more I thought about it, the more I realised that it describes something accurate. I work with Lacan's idea of initiation, but I define it more broadly as a subjective process that can involve rituals, rites, and unconscious forms of working-through identifications, attachments, and affects. Initiation generally refers to any event, subjective process, rite, or ritual that enhances the subject's capacities to flourish or gain a degree of subjective freedom and responsibility. Families today are no longer the vectors of initiation procedures, and this offers up a profound freedom of experimentation, but it also causes a great deal of psychical instability.

Today, the subject must bring initiation upon themselves, they must decide it for themselves. Perhaps in some ways, the crisis of initiation is quite freeing, and we can think of the profound contingency that being freed from familial or traditional initiatory rites opens for subjects. But often when we think of contingency and luck today, we are stuck thinking this as conditioned by the forces of the capitalist discourse; i.e., we are thinking along marketising logics. And it is important to note that a decline in subjective initiation was something that Lacan saw as accelerating concurrent to the rise of what he called the capitalist discourse. One of the ways the capitalist discourse accelerates this crisis is that it does not necessitate the subject face their fundamentally split subjectivity, and instead it is the S1 of the commodity that is brought in to resolve this more fundamental subjective situation. Without getting into the technicalities involved with castration and lack, we can say generally that the concept of a diminished or inefficacious initiation means that it is the logic of the market which intervenes to mediate initiation. But as Alain Badiou (2017) suggests the market produces an "initiation without initiation," or a passive or immobile initiation process. This is not to say that the old modes of initiation, which the social bond in its traditional Oedipal arrangement gave rise to, were somehow better. It is rather to say that the old bonds of initiation did tend to produce a more thorough sense of subjective movement out of relations of dependence (Badiou, 2017 p. 77). Thus, the question for me is how do we think of more localised forms of radical initiation on the left which might more thoroughly resolve the deadlock that comes with the capitalist discourse?

Much of the work I do on the theme of initiation is to show how the Oedipus complex can be thought of as an initiatory process in a general sense. By that I mean that the Oedipus complex is about initiation out of the familial situation. Keep in mind that initiation refers to an exit, it refers to a joining as much as it refers to a movement out of. In that sense I try to provide examples of subjects of what I call ‘counter-initiation’ who experience initiation without the support or aid of a traditional family. I try to link this form of contingent or counter-initiation, in which subjects invent strategies for surviving and resisting a world that has mostly abandoned them, to categories such as the lumpenproletariat and the nomadic proletariat. Even further, I aim to think of these sorts of subjects as essential to political revolution, and I try to show that Freud’s work on group psychology must be read as placing these subjects that have been thrown out from the social bond as the central agents involved in any re-configuring of the social bond.

**AB:** Psychoanalysis, it must be admitted, has functioned as a handmaiden of the state and capitalism historically. I know you do not shy away from this aspect of psychoanalysis, Oedipalisation, and so on. You of course invoke Deleuze and Guattari’s formulation of “lines of flight,” a concept which attempts to move perpendicularly to Oedipalisation. I was particularly struck by your revision of the latter; “lines of patience” is a very compelling concept to help work-through the “paradoxes of liberation,” as you call them. Can you elaborate on this a bit? How must psychoanalysis be revolutionised to combat the rising tides of marketisation, right or left-wing family politics, and/or what we might call the fatigue of revolutionary thinking?

**DT:** I think it’s important to situate the Oedipal problem in a more explicit political context, and particularly through labour market and debt dependencies. We often don’t think of the ways that familial dependencies are transferred to the workplace, but if we examine workplaces in today’s age—a time when the labour movement has experienced great defeats despite the hopeful resurgence of new labour victories—we discover that familial submission to authority and Oedipal dependencies are reproduced day in and day out in the workplace. This ultra-Oedipal dynamic creates conditions wherein authority figures (bosses, people of elevated political stature) are often placed in untranscendable positions, and we transpose family dependency to other institutions. This mode of submission to untranscendable dependencies is the makeup of what Freud called “artificial groups,” namely the church and the army. Today, we experience a similar submission and dependency in the workplace. But of course, that experience is classed, and the working-class subject experiences this dependency in markedly different ways than subjects who have more fluid salaried occupations and entrepreneurial workers. We are thrown to compete with one another, and often what this means is that our politics tend to mirror the pattern of sibling rivalry, i.e., people in the same condition vie with one another for favors from those in power. This is what I mean by the persistence of ultra-Oedipal politics.

Liberal capitalism perpetuates elusive hierarchies, vertical relations that are often lived and experienced as horizontal equality. It is important to remember that liberal political thought has a theory of egalitarianism, but its idea of egalitarianism perpetuates a repressive form of egalitarianism because of its built-on disavowed market dependencies. Liberals do not take market dependencies seriously enough at the subjective level. I believe that the cornerstone of Marxist psychoanalysis is the necessity to take this form of dependency more seriously. Liberal political thought and the practical arrangement of liberal institutions intensify this Oedipal dynamic because they posit untranscendable authorities that are both necessary and constitutive of the social order. I argue for example that John Rawls’s theory of justice relies on a form of paternalism in his conception of the original position, one in which paternal dependencies are transferred into the social order. Even at the theoretical level, liberalism perpetuates the Oedipal problem.

Of course, Freud obviously has a theory of paternal dependencies, but as I mentioned earlier, Oedipus must be taken as a theory for the overcoming of these dependencies. For me, the best means to overcome these dependencies is through liberatory socialist politics that focuses on large-scale solidarity and organising amongst the working class. I believe this form of politics presents a more thorough solution to these

deadlocks and to overcoming these dependencies than does an anarchist politics, although the suspicion anarchism brings to the table apropos hierarchy is something that socialists need to take more seriously. Perhaps this is a good place to address the contribution of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (2009). I find this work broadly anarchist and libertine in orientation and its critique of Oedipus is reliant on a critique of psychoanalysis as a dominant institution in Europe at the time. Psychoanalysis and indeed the social role of the psychoanalyst are presented as the avatars of a new ascetic priest, and psychoanalytic methods as complicit with reinforcing the legitimacy of bourgeois institutions. If we take the work of Donzelot, in *The Policing of Families* he is quite clear in this regard that it was psychoanalysis and social work as an apparatus which sought to stabilise the psychic illnesses of the family, to promote the "happy family" mythology (Donzelot, 2007 p. 189).

In Wilhelm Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1933)—a figure who Deleuze and Guattari are hugely inspired by—he locates the repression of the family as the primary bulwark to revolutionary potential. It is the family which functions as a relay system to the adoption of repressive social codes. Deleuze and Guattari will develop the idea that "desire is productive" from a reading of the unconscious as a construct that is totally unaware of persons as such, but driven primarily by "partial objects." This insight is linked to the important psychoanalytic idea of "polymorphous perversity" or the pre-social period of a child's life in which they experience pleasure that is fulfilling to organs and not caught within social taboos and norms. This more elemental state of the subject drives Deleuze and Guattari to put forward the "body without organs" as a mode of subjective return to this condition in which different erogenous zones and what they call "desiring machines" govern.

In their view, fascism builds a territory of desire and builds up and affirms the metaphysics of Oedipus in a "molar" fashion, as opposed to the more liberatory "molecular" praxis they advocate (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009. p. 132). In one example, they note the literary figure of Jack Kerouac. As he aged and settled his road travel books, he began to develop a distinct American fascism, retiring in an alcoholic stupor with his mother. But in our era that is dominated by the social superego, the very idea of "de-territorialising" desire that produces a "line of flight" from Oedipus no longer makes sense as a clear mark of subjective freedom from the double bind of Oedipal authority. If we take seriously Lacan's argument about the shift or decline in the paternal function, this means that the social superego operates on the logic of a double bind that is not reliant on the law of the father. Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on flows and circuits of desire requiring movement and freedom from the territorialising encroachment of Oedipus is no longer a sensible proposal in my view. My argument is that the ultra-Oedipal binds of familialism are so strong that we should consider an approach that is more grounded on a patient working-through of these dependencies, as opposed to a more urgent line of flight.

The concept "line of flight" presupposes an outside, or what in Lacanian thought is often called an "extimate" space of psychic life. But there is no pure outside. Furthermore, they scrap dialectics entirely and replace it with a different logic of resistance and a theory of groups which is quite critical of centralised organisation. While Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Oedipus, and by extension psychoanalysis, is tied to an important political project, with the passage of time and the conditions of social fragmentation brought on by neoliberalism, the anti-Oedipal critique, like its accelerationist project that find so much influence from their thought, needs to be seen as having reached a fundamental dead-end in terms of a philosophy of liberation. As Lacan and the Slovene School have argued, Oedipus is a de-normative and de-stabilising form of subjectivity that does not necessarily signify a dependence upon the father as an authoritarian figure and nor does Oedipal subjectivity bring the subject to a blind repetition of the Oedipal complex itself. On the contrary, as I have tried to argue, Oedipus is what figures a break from the father's authority in a way that disrupts all traditional roles within the family.

The predominance of what I term the social superego, this more acephalic and censorial superego, is accelerating nihilistic politics, and the task is not to destroy institutions such as the family and to drive an acceleration of capitalist de-territorialisation and fragmentation; the task is to develop a different sort of necessity of the family as a revolutionary agency. This is not to say that Deleuze and Guattari's politics is nihilistic, joyless, or even destructive. On the contrary, I think it is multifaceted and can be read in several

ways, as Andrew Culp's (2016) *Dark Deleuze* shows. What their work opens is the core question of how to overcome the double bind of Oedipus, and I think only through a joyful and careful solidarity-building approach on the left can this be done. Therefore, in the final two chapters of the book, I focus on how the two predominant forms of the superego on the left, what Mark Fisher (2018) calls the "Leninist superego" and the "cultural unconscious," must be thought of in a dialectical relation. I think Fisher saw something important in this internal division on the left, a division between two conceptions of revolution: The Leninist superego places an emphasis on the urgency of revolutionary struggle without acknowledging the more careful work of the revolution of everyday life. The left must forge a two-pronged approach to revolutionary politics that incorporates these two more general and latent tendencies, and I think Fisher was right to note that when these tendencies are in opposition, the left succumbs to internal rivalry, and a politics of resentment tends to proliferate.

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## **Publication Date:**

June 1, 20223