

## Editorial

### Volume 3: The Gaze: Fantasy and the Desire of the Other

The Lacanian gaze is not merely a way of rethinking vision but is a new mapping of perception itself. This special two-volume issue of (Re)-turn presents a collection of articles which focus on the theory that the gaze involves a rethinking of the acts of judgment and idealization representable by such topological figures as the Moebius strip.

The contributors to these volumes offer a review as well as a clarification of the function of the Lacanian gaze in the clinic as well as in the field of literary studies, film studies and topology. Jacques Alain Miller's discussion of fantasy in terms of "the instant of seeing" inaugurates *Volume 3: The Lacanian gaze: Fantasy and the Desire of the Other*. In this important seminar, Miller focuses on the elicitation of desire and the nature of fantasy. Miller illustrates his analyses with examples from the myth of Diana and Acheteon. By tracing the slope of deception which characterizes desire within the "instant" of fantasy, Miller puts into question the axiom that "desire causes desire." In so doing, he points to the fundamental way in which fantasy functions for both the obsessional and the hysteric: By "persuading himself or herself that the other is complete," the hysteric and obsessional participate in the function of the gaze.

The articles of both Evelyn Moore and Jane Cowles explore the narcissistic fantasy of completeness at the heart of desire. Moore begins with the fatal nature of the concept of romantic love in "The deadly gaze: Penthesilea and Achilles in Love." Penthesilea, a mythic stand-in for Diana, and her doomed lover Achilles do battle in this war of the sexes. Moore analyzes the function of the gaze in the act of falling in love through the myth of completeness, the fundamental fantasy which triggers the fatal attachment of the lovers Moore argues that the gaze, in its relation to desire, exists radically outside the subject and is inaccessible to conscious control. Cowles, in "The Gaze and the Fold in Balzac's *Le Lys dans la vallée*," reveals the constitution of desire in the maternal gaze. Cowles demonstrates the operation of the gaze by examining the establishment of narcissistic fantasy at the heart of "fatal attraction."

Cliff Manlove's essay offers both a history and a review of the literature on the gaze in his piece "On the 'Split' between the Eye and the Gaze in Literature". Manlove begins with Lacan's elucidation of this important model of visual perception and psychic structure. The article also includes a review of various interpretor's of Lacan's views on the gaze, including Laura Mulvey's influential mis-apprehension of the subject. Manlove examines the "split between the eye and the gaze" with examples from biblical studies, Sophocles, Antigone, and Poe's "Purloined Letter."

### Volume 4: The Topology of the Gaze

Ellie Ragland's article "The Topological Dimension of Lacanian Optics" introduces Volume 4: The Topology of the Gaze. Ragland's article on "Lacanian Optics" locates the gaze not only within the drives and part-objects of Lacan's model of psychic structuration, but as an integral part of the topological mapping of this process. Ragland demonstrates that the Lacanian gaze must be seen not as a simple binary relation between subject and object but as an embodiment of

a complex multi-dimensional process. According to Ragland, this new conception of the gaze "first led Lacan to topology."

G rard Wajcman, in his article "Painting" develops the link between the visual moment and topological structure and thus reveals the importance of this process of visual mapping to psychoanalysis. One of the most important themes of this volume is the problem of representation: Lacan states that the picture is not a representation. If the picture does not represent, then what does it do? In his article, Wajcman discusses Lacan's conception that the picture "shows" the real, lets itself be seen, and also reveals what cannot be said or seen.

Jeanne Lafont's work in the Lacanian clinic demonstrates the elusive aspects of the gaze. How can we conceive of this showing, of a representation which does not represent? What is being shown and how? Lafont's article is particularly illuminating because she moves between a clinical and theoretical understanding of these questions. Her article demonstrates further that the gaze is not a representation but an actual mapping of the real into a visual pattern. In her article "The inherent Twisting of the Gaze", Lafont reveals the gaze to be a literal mapping of the real into a visual form.

The mysterious power of the gaze is always evident in the act of painting itself. Efrat Biberman explores not only the relationship of painter to the object being "represented", but also the connection between the painter, painting and observer. Biberman begins with an example of a contemporary painter (Gil Jacobson) whose paintings on glass demonstrate the impossibility of a binary relationship between object and viewer. By obscuring the locus of the painting, this modern painter nevertheless is manipulating its locus. In his important treatise, "On Painting," Alberti presents a geometrical schema for representing the locus of a painting. He thus creates a perspectival method of painting for Western art. Alberti recognizes nevertheless that there is something "divine", which is beyond the locus of painting. Lacan's theory of the gaze, argues Biberman, addresses this evocative power which cannot be mapped into a geometrical model. Lacan develops a typology of the gaze which captures the moment which had eluded Alberti's schema.

Like Biberman, Jennifer Friedlander, in her article "Affecting Art: Barthes, Kert sz, and Lacan," is interested in the moment of focus. Friedlander analyzes the topic in terms of the photographic image and its relationship to Barthes' *punctum* and to the Lacanian real. In so doing, Friedlander challenges the dismissal of these theories by the "grand theorists." Like Jacobson, the painter who can not see what he has painted on glass, the photographer also cannot control the mechanisms of perception. This issue of representational accuracy has been central to the devaluation of photography in relation to the reproduction of the illusion of reality in painting.

The Editors