



THE ECONOMICS OF LIBIDO

Psychic Bisexuality, the Superego, and the Centrality of the Oedipus Complex

BY TREVOR C. PEDERSON

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This book is an attempt to get beyond pluralism by embedding psychoanalysis in philosophy and returning to Freud *qua* psychologist to link the depths of the mind to its surface. Beginning with the proposition that egoism and altruism are a more accurate representation of the binary of activity and passivity, *Economics* revisits Freud's work to contextualize his central concepts and expand upon them. Egoism and altruism are further divided into masculine and feminine drives which can exist in either sex due to *psychic bisexuality*. Pederson's Freud places the Oedipus complex as the height of personal happiness in striving for passionate love or success while maturing through a series of educators and mentors. The subsequent father complex is snatched from obscurity as the recreation of the parental incest taboo amongst siblings. The ideal of commitment in relationships, fairness in one's dealings with peers, and Freud's emphasis on the non-universality of guilt are given their proper weight in his model. However, this reading of Freud's work also demonstrates that earlier forms of the superego exist and are *depersonalized* to create different *ontologies*, or levels of Being. In the tradition of Kant, what seem like relations too complex for a child to understand, the author contends, are references to the necessary subjective senses of Space, Time, the Superlative, and Prestige. Lastly, Pederson offers an explication of Wittgenstein's private language argument to justify this return to drive theory and to appreciate Freud's 'Copernican Revolution' of the mind.

The superego has diminished in importance in psychoanalysis in recent years, and so it is a delight to encounter Trevor Pederson's close reading of Freud's understanding of the concept, especially because he also grapples with its contemporary relevance. Pederson revisits a number of other related ideas, too, such as social ontology. Philosophically inclined psychoanalysts from all orientations will find much to enjoy in this new book.'

—Elliot Jurist, Professor of Psychology and Philosophy, The City College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; editor of *Psychoanalytic Psychology*

A dense, insightful exploration of the human condition filled with ideas that stimulate further thought. A surprising turn to Freud's work on psychosexuality and what Pederson does with it! Rich arrays of philosophical, cultural, and psychoanalytic figures populate this work, each used as a lens on psychosocial realities. Pederson links conscience with post-oedipal development and develops a kind of dialectics between social ontology and psychic bisexuality. An uncommon perspective today that richly adds to the current pool!

—Michael Eigen, PhD, author of *Contact With the Depths and Faith*

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About the Author

Trevor Pederson is a mental health counselor and psychoanalyst in Casper, Wyoming. He is a doctoral candidate at the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis and his dissertation introduces a new model for the psychoanalytic interpretation of film.