

**Brigitte Weingart interviewed Laurence Rickels**

## **TEENAGE WEREWOLF**

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"Theorist / Therapist" is written on the business card of LAURENCE A. Rickels, professor of German and Film Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara. A result of this double feature is *The Case of California*, where not only is California on the couch (short diagnosis: outside happy face, inside suicide). After Rickels' 'double logic of the coast is' hot stove '(Caliente fornalla: Brockhaus' etymology) that is at the other end of Germany. BRIGITTE WEINGART spoke with Rickels about his weakness for young people, through Career Studies and his latest project *Nazi Psychoanalysis*.

"High-Low There!" - Laurence Rickels with one, *this* welcome, quote, would have been a double refined Wink: On one hand I-hab's-read-complicity is almost inevitable anyway. This is mainly due to Rickels' attempt to "if not in psychoanalysis, then in any therapy, the psychoanalytic discourse and attendance by *support group*, etc., which in California is consistently "into increase in his lyrics. So ideally corresponds to the reading of the situation *in session*.

As for the other hand the high-low aspect, Rickels is a virtuoso linker of pop culture, media history and what traditionally figured as 'high culture' - but in dismissal of common cultural studies style. A main theme is the sadness or Untrauer, than what makes crowds and media so spooky: Freud, in *Totem and Taboo* identified as unsecured mourned dead recurring undead, has been working for his conception of the psyche as an apparatus often with technical analogies. In *Aberrations of Mourning: Writing on German Crypts* (1988) Rickels writes the connection of media with the unconscious: Such as ghosts they are recycled death wishes, the remote control of the receiver. This data transfer as little interference as the grieving process or the session - experiences of *disconnection* that have brought joy to his insights about technologisation.

In *The Case of California* (1991) the combination of (in) grief and technology will be extended to mass relationships go. Adorno's pathologizing of the crowd as Untrauer symptom runs here in an ambivalent way with - how ever is never quite sure whether Rickels continued pessimistic cultural topoi or be taken apart. The involuntary California death cult disguised as a technology fetishism, body modification or obsession with the subject of child abuse. As media and high-tech location to California must constantly deal with the production of "liveness" to ensure its vitality.

For the German-California Connection, for example, is the change of register of the Frankfurt School exiles symptomatic. With 'Hollywood' at the door sets for traumatized by the Nazi media flash exiled Californians Adorno and Horkheimer transmission, which makes the distance between Germany and California together purr: culture industry is fast forwarded to the scene of total war, they had to leave - "tech-no-future".

The "total Californians" Kafka and Thomas Mann entertain a different relationship to the West Coast, and they are involved in the experiment of "eternal youth". With body building, *gadget love*, hysterical Groupietum and group therapy provide California's symptoms Rickels massive demonstration material for a theory of youth that is already applied to the edges or shores of the Freudian corpus: "There are in psychoanalysis no real theory to teenage years; I just thought Freudian that the reason must be everywhere as repressed. And about the late essays on female sexuality, perversion and mass psychology, I tried the 'rauszuholen.' His reading of Freud's

group as a youth group psychology perspective the dominant in psychoanalysis fixation on the Oedipal triangle father-mother-child who embezzles that the teenager is remotely controlled from the Clique: He / she is pretty torn between pair and *peer group* and it must mix something like an identity. The Clique instigates the pairing on though; pairs are the 'genitalia of the group', which can only reproduce but can not reproduce. But because they are extremely skeptical about the Kupplifizierten the same time and she wants to move back into their ranks, there is a tension between group and pair, and the teen is in accordance with current. And that never ends so right on ... Eternal youth then work off of the paradox to be as individual as the others. "The adolescent likes to be different - like every body on Load =" if (! Self = top) top.location = self.location; "he likes (to be like)."

Q: You are editing the terrain "adolescence" is actually two-fold: on the one hand rather discourse analysis, in terms of talking about and the conceptualization of youth, on the other hand, there is indeed a reference to the phenomenon ...

A: In the language of the youth. I have tried to build a language that hovers between diagnosis and performativity. And which also has a link if you want to analogize that with the case of so-called *borderline psychotics* ([Note 1](#)), which is between neurosis and psychosis, and to all the noise and over-heard what comes out of the media, so pop songs, advertising, Headlines. In all of our lives these metabolic test is first visible or audible in our teenage languages where you yes invents languages. This whole idiomatic interested me, mainly as the first attempt to process that one lives in a technical or mass psychological world.

Q: In this country, the appropriation of youth and their movedness with an obsession for pop culture and its modes of expression go together. After a certain Fanjournalismus has processed it to make a type of Instantantranszendenz writable and treat simultaneously as secret knowledge, keep emphatic than 'Off' coded ways of talking their way into academia and so-called mainstream media: Pop columns in the arts pages. A variant of professional youthfulness you called Midlife Criticism ...

A: Pop is reintroduced straight from the mid-life people. We were teenagers, was mentioned as a pop for the first time. It is the typical colonization and attempt to understand his own past on the body of the current teenagers. 'Youth' is the institution of their recovery and without *midlife crisis* not to think. At 40 you're either a philosopher, because one has somehow kept the body healthy, or you are in the offense.

Q: Does this phantasm of a 'real' correspondence?

A: Yes, midlife is more and more the time of survival. I 'times, yet, get in my thirties a life insurance policy offered: The older you are the cheaper the premiums because is then expected that you survived and so many disasters and will live any longer. Adolescence is really a laboratory experiment for the people using it until *midlife* have managed. In France or in America, for example - I do not know how it is in Germany - one is a mid-life patient rather entitled to get new organs: One no longer expects disasters such as a car accident or whatever, as young people, and therefore gets the survivor then a new liver or lungs. The youth is more and more strictly ideological to health, so that the organs stay fresh (laughs). The There's never been, really, that people had to think of 18 as to whether what they are taking is toxic or not. It belonged to this concept, but that one was somehow immune to the youth. But now you're always in training. And if you're lucky and reached the 40 years immediately sets *recovery* , restoration, a.

Q: Can you substantiate that becomes manifest in your simulated slip of the tongue "career, I mean queer studies" the resentment?

A: In Cultural Studies, and various types of feminisms, queer studies or Multicultural Studies, one very quickly focuses on the new and distances itself from psychoanalysis, although these things are always unthinkable without psychoanalysis. I think this kind of denial for pathogenic, especially in this time of change, where Marxism supposedly disappears, and in fact continues to exist only psychoanalysis as an institution and discourse. The connection with Freud is now concrete term ate more and more decried, or denied or denied, and is what I consider the haunt of Marx's disappearance: in Cultural Studies and all these studies who want to combine the sociological or Marxist with the Psychoanalytic allegedly. That was formerly the impossible marriage between the two discourses, on whose Couples Therapy we have chewed all that long.

The huge growth of the Multi / Cultural Studies is the theory - that is, the institution with which you have to do it in psychoanalysis - replace. But you might understand it historically, if you want to be something positive that you now only phenomenologically or meticulous, in America at least, the different subjects and people once perceives before you start the theory. Positivism has been always introduced, where one still has no tradition or no canon. Although I am not convinced that one must first be positivist or stupid or ugly to think afterwards can.

Q: Here Cultural Studies are not perceived as theory-TV, on the contrary, we envy the American college scene occasionally to the combination of pop culture and theory. Speaking of psychoanalysis reception I find it striking that in this country just like anyone Theweleit the border crossing between academia and its other schafft. Was privileged psychoanalysis for the discourse on popular culture?

A: Along with the *dialectic of enlightenment*, I want to say again and again that if there is such a thing as a history of the unconscious, they with the texts from the 18th Century begins, who has read Freud as thoroughly. This is mainly Goethe, the Goethe-Freud connection is very interesting. Werther is such a thing as an invention of Teen Age, together with the suicidal tendencies that can only be passed as a mass phenomenon. And at the same time this text was so a certain tablets dynamics: Whether in *Frankenstein* or *Triumph of Sensibility* [by Goethe] - this text always came into robots. On one hand, suicide, on the other hand, reproduction (*replication*): the first plaintext through *adolescence*. That was the beginning of a particular culture that we can only solve by psychoanalysis ago.

Theweleit itself is actually not necessarily analytic, he works with analytical concepts. In recent books he has actually shown his situation: He married an analyst (laughs). This is his pair strategy. He just shows that you previously married good film editors or whatever, and now marries the thinker somehow the analysis. Derrida's wife is also an analyst - this is the new *techno vibe*, a *techno-outlet* that you must have this absolutely ... And I have just as the *group-of-one* made.

Q: What is in your new book about Nazi Psychoanalysis?

A: The last work is really a test of what Freud called the "underworld of psychoanalysis". I want to understand where the uncanny continuity is what it was: Psychoanalysis in the Nazi era. I risk because much of what might seem tendentious; theorists have not wanted to write about it because it looks as if one must psychoanalysis accuse anything. What interests me is how the influence of Freud further worked, the very, very strong in the 20s. In the pre-Nazi period psychoanalysis was such a media thing, as is the case today in the States. I've looked at various psychotherapy journals: The therapists who wrote it were to read all in major newspapers: Hysteria, about problems with having children - all these issues that have then raised to the power with the Nazis. They were always told psychoanalysis compatible and told. Psychoanalysis

had easily the 1st World War won: 1918 Freud was science recognized as the most successful therapy for the treatment of war neurotics. Only in this way the influence of the analysis submitted decided by all the institutions of the psychological intervention. And this influence did not stop in the Nazi period -

Q: - contrary to the more common view that psychoanalysis was forced into exile, and the Nazi psychological research made use of other methods.

A: Yes. And that's why I do not limit myself to this ridiculous, pathetic and later strangely displaced continuity of the few analysts of the Working Group A ( [Note 2](#) ), but emphasize the existing influences, especially in military psychology and psycho-technique. Since I find example essays on psycho-technical relationships between the pilot and his machine that anticipate everything postmodernism on art. How narcissism is laid on the machine as the traumas cut just in this ratio, etc. - which is an extension of Freud's theory prostheses ( [Note 3](#) ), but quite on its wavelength. What they knew of Freud on war neuroses, was further used between the two wars and used for psychological warfare. A certain German or Nazi German way of understanding the technique, and simultaneously to repress these psychoanalytic framework, part of the tradition of psychoanalysis in Germany. Without psychoanalysis also people like Virilio would not come, etc. on their theses. And they displace - in fact even more than the Nazis had to do - this reference to psychoanalysis.

Another thing that concerns Nazi Germany and is rezipiert adjusted so funny in the history of psychoanalysis, is the Eklektisierung: It is often assumed - I do not know how it is in Germany today, but at least for us - that the experiments various psychotherapies and schools to distance himself from psychoanalysis, actually mean a distance. For me this is an evident development of the analysis itself: Each psychotherapy that aims to develop psychodynamic, belongs always to psychoanalysis. The analysis is not something that is done only by a few orthodox. In every advertising psychology, I would say, but especially in any psychotherapy, is Freud's 'revolution' read along again.

Q: Have you found in your historical analysis about the German resistance against psychoanalysis (even in the so-called humanities)?

A: Mitscherlich would be the case history of the German reception for me. He himself came out of Psychosomatics, and that is actually from the Nazi psychoanalysis, so from this eclectic mix between the various psychotherapies, medicine, psychiatry, etc., and analysis. Psychosomatics was formulated during the Nazi era by Victor von Weizsäcker, among other things for the first time large, and Mitscherlich's really heritage of it. But instead to remember, he has placed himself as someone who reintroduces Freud. Even as he [1959] founded the Frankfurt Sigmund Freud Institute, Mitscherlich was not an analyst. He just wanted to be sure that he was Freud, but it was this very projected, idealized view of Freud that he needed, because he could not cope with this Nazi past of psychoanalytic therapy. It has been observed frequently that East and West Germany was no coincidence: this fascistic kind of cleavage, which is Germany after the 2nd Gave World War II, corresponded yes the way everything was handled. Much could simply disappear about the split, as if there was not in the discourse.

Q: Later Mitscherlich had but, together with Margarete Mitscherlich, his big Take Off with the thesis that the Germans had refused the mourning after 45 - and in particular those relating to the lost ego ideal 'Hitler'. The displacement of the Nazi regime, with a Massenmelancholie was prevented, would be such an expenditure of energy that the mourning for the victims nothing would be left.

A: Exactly. Since he has really introduced something very Pathogens, because that is absolutely requires that you never could identify with the victim over a specific cleavage. I tell in the book: Just Hitler is never an object in the psychoanalytic sense, he is more than a media or mass spirit, a ghost. Mitscherlich's assertion that there was no worldly relationship with the victims, is itself a symptom of a cleavage. And who introduces the grief so: 'Hitler was ego-ideal, we must mourn for him ...', repressed or pathologized the resistance which must arise in this idea at every teenager!

Q: If the diagnosis is correct, that psychoanalysis was everywhere and is just in Nazi practices, then how can you work with?

A: I'm doing in this last book as if "the healing can begin" - as could finally be laid to rest a bit, because it now takes place within the analysis: different aspects of the Nazi problem, Science Fiction, etc. Freud already pointed in the direction, as he said in the 30s, anti-

Semitism was primarily resistance to psychoanalysis. As I hineindränge the back in psychoanalysis, I hope that something like this could make such a transference neurosis, which is small enough to be kurierbar. Freud the performance of the transference neurosis was first described as a kind of vaccination: a smaller version of the really big problem that you can never handle. At the meeting occurs in the transmission something that you can handle what is already in treatment, and the inoculated one against the other major problem, which is outside and is never to edit. This is the so-called positive thing, that psychoanalysis thank God was everywhere: It remains our only hope for a vaccine in the future.

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1 *borderline psychotic* called the limiting case that oscillates between psychosis and neurosis: A psychotic structure has a shot blocked by the underlying disorder is split off and discharged at another venue, without DATH it is necessary to 'loss of reality' occurs (eg by *acting out* ). By means of the economically lesser evil psycho neurotic symptoms of psychotic breakdown in chess is held. - Back to [Text](#) .

2 The "Working Group A" was psychoanalysis Group at the German Institute f , r Psychological Research and Psychotherapy (under Goering, cousin of the Imperial Field Marshal), in the 1936 Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute was transformed. - Back to [Text](#) .

3 As "a kind of prosthetic God" refers to Freud in 1930 in *The discomfort in the culture of the 'contemporary' man* who tried using a complete media technology equipment to be godlike. - Back to [Text](#) .