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The University in Deconstruction, an Interview with Peggy Kamuf and Samuel Weber

Interviewed by Jonathan Basile

Jonathan Basile: I'm excited to speak with you both today—I hoped to return to a debate or set of debates you were both part of roughly a generation ago, in particular, Sam, to your *Institution and Interpretation*

(1987/2001) and Peggy, to your *The Division of Literature, Or the University in Deconstruction* (1997).^[1] These works were deconstructive interventions in that era's conflicts of the faculties, so to speak, in a host of questions surrounding the relationship of the university to 'the public' and to its economic and political conditioning factors, the place and role of the humanities within it, the institutionalization of literature and criticism, and the ineluctable literary fabulation that comprises every act of instituting (among other things). Derrida was in dialogue with your books whenever he most directly broached such themes, for instance in 'The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of its Pupils', 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', and 'The University without Condition'.^[2]

In revisiting this work, I was struck by how similar the debates taking place then, both within and beyond the university (though we will need to question such limits), are to those that continue to occupy us today. Then as now, a fight was taking place over what should be taught in the university, who should be teaching it, and how best to reach the student populations historically marginalized from higher education. Perhaps more broadly, how those within the university who hoped to challenge existing hierarchies could wrest power from those who reinforced those same hierarchies. Meanwhile, neoliberal governments seeking to eliminate public funding for research and education (a politics of austerity that has been pursued as relentlessly by right-wing as by liberal governments) manufactured consent for their project by impugning universities as sites of leftist indoctrination, where diversity and ideological conformism won out over intellectual and aesthetic merit or 'free speech'. One only needs to substitute certain phrases—where we once spoke of the 'canon wars', there is now talk of decolonizing curricula, and 'wokeism' and 'critical race theory' have been added to the lexicon of

those whose original bugbears were ‘political correctness’ and ‘affirmative action’—to see a profound continuity between the previous century’s debates and the present, with even some of the main characters continuing to make an appearance. (To give one example, Peggy, it struck me that your critique or deconstruction of John Guillory’s 1993 *Cultural Capital* could be applied in every particular to his 2022 *Professing Criticism*.)^[3]

And again, then as now, the place of deconstruction or ‘deconstruction’ in these debates is markedly similar. Already, in the nineties, deconstruction was said to be a thing of the past, and yet many of those on all sides or fronts of these debates felt the need to trot it out (or metonymic proper names such as Derrida’s) to denounce it, just as they do today. On the one hand, it is cast as elitist and canon-centric, focused on ‘texts’ (in a narrow sense) to the exclusion of politics and history, and on the other hand, it is cast as a foreign invasion undermining traditional values and texts, destabilizing a supposedly pre-existing unity of the literary, critical, and educational profession and the cultural values it instilled, ultimately opening the door for ‘cultural Marxism’, ‘gender ideology’, and ‘critical race theory’. As you wrote, Peggy, ‘The fact that deconstruction can be positioned as at once too political and not political at all, as both PC and not PC, signals that the terms in which the political is posed in this debate are inadequate to account for all the effects being produced’ (DL 146).

What most struck me, revisiting your texts, was how pertinent your interventions remain to what is taking place today. In short, a certain *misrecognition of novelty* or a kind of amnesia allows the participants to go through all this ‘twice’ (so to speak—the division of the trait would make rigorous enumeration impossible), without the benefit of lessons that could have been gleaned the first time around. It is almost as if we repeat

in order to avoid remembering.

My hope for this interview is to work our way up to a question about how deconstruction intervenes in what is taking place today. I want to emphasize two registers within this notion of deconstruction—one would be how we can formalize or abstract from the deconstructive interventions you both made in an earlier context or contexts, to recognize something like a lesson that responds or corresponds to our present. At the same time, by taking this step back or getting this running start, we can see our ‘today’ *in deconstruction*, as the title of Peggy’s book had it, which would mean that it overtakes and reorients the divisions or instituted limits by which we customarily recognize continuity and rupture, of the past or the present.

Before we get to that question, I thought I might begin by asking you both to reconstruct the contexts in which you wrote these two books: what do you remember yourselves or see yourselves today to have been responding to, and how were you intervening?

Samuel Weber: First, many thanks, Jonathan, for organizing this dia- or triologue. It is the first time in a while that I am participating in such an event, and I have to begin by saying that I find it daunting in different ways. First and perhaps foremost, your reference to my book, *Institution and Interpretation*, takes me back some 40 years, since most of the chapters of the book were composed in the 1980’s. Since then, so much has changed that I hardly know where to begin: above all, perhaps, with the vast transformation of all aspects of life through the introduction and spread of computational technologies. All of that was just getting started in the 80’s, and although most if not all the texts collected in that book were composed on “personal computers,” as they were called at the time, there is little or no mention of the dawning impact of

such technology on the questions discussed. I still remember my initial reaction to “smart phones”: I couldn’t imagine how incorporating photography much less videography in them could be anything but a marketing ploy! Was I ever wrong! Today, I may be erring in the opposite direction when I say that AI is in the process of bringing about a transformation of all aspects of daily life that will rival if not surpass that effected by computers. Those changes will build on the ones brought about by the spread of computing, but will also be quite different, as seen from my very limited perspective at least. For me, the first and enormously important change brought about by the introduction of computers related to ‘word-processing’: all of a sudden, the computer freed me to experiment with different options in writing, which I might have excluded had I had to continue typing my texts on traditional typewriters: the work of having to efface, correct etc., as I proceeded with writing imposed a kind of self-censorship that suddenly was no longer necessary when working with word-processors. The introduction of the internet was yet another enormous step forward, way beyond the non-negligible freedom of writing that the computer made possible. And this progress is raised to an entirely new level with the use of AI ‘Chatbots’, which place the archive of knowledge at one’s disposal in ways that could hardly be dreamt of previously. Of course, the expectation that because of its tremendous cognitive potential AI might somehow be either perfect or usable uncritically must be added to the recognition of its enormous potential.

But I am straying from your initial question, although in part it is in order to gauge the distance that separates us today, and me in particular, from the context in which *Institution and Interpretation* was published (initially in 1987, and then in a second, expanded edition in 2001). The decade of the 80s marked both the continued expansion of ‘poststructuralist’ and ‘deconstructive’ work and its rising contestation, crystallizing around the so-called ‘de Man affair’, which came to light in 1987 and served as a powerful pretext to mobilize the

diverse forces in the Academy and in the media who were all too ready to disqualify any approach to knowledge, literature and life that emphasized the constitutive and ambivalent role of language—in particular, reading and writing—in determining one's relation to and evaluation of 'reality'. Previously, the rejection of 'theory' had focused on the significance of Heidegger for Derrida, but the discovery of de Man's articles in *Le Soir* allowed allegations to be made that more directly concerned literary studies rather than 'theory' in general. Of course, as de Man himself had brilliantly if briefly analyzed in 'The Resistance to Theory', such resistance had been underway long before the 80's, but that was the decade in which it gained in virulence and in influence—a tendency that continues today with the so-called anti-Woke movements.

Looking back from an overly long perspective, one of the focal points of the anti-deconstructive polemic prior to its direct politicization had to do—and probably still does—with the imagined gap between “theory” and “practice,” a gap that 'The Resistance to Theory' for instance already deconstructs. I always understood the writing of Derrida to involve a practice of deconstructing and not the promulgation of an immutable theory or method. This is why his articles so often consisted of the reading of specific texts rather than of pure conceptualizations. And in this respect, his work was close to that of de Man, however much they differed in other aspects. For both, the practice of writing, reading and thinking depended on a medium—which I would call that of 'signifying'—in which the closure of meaning was inevitable but also never definitive. It was against this background that I tried to reflect on the problem of 'institutions', their relation to 'interpretation', which was and is one way of establishing a closure that is not definitive, but to cite Tristram Shandy, more of a 'curious conclusion'. At the same time, I was also convinced, before it became increasingly obvious perhaps, that such provisional closures were never simply arbitrary but reflected relations of forces, forces that draw their power from

desires and fears that were often pre- or unconscious. So it was in this perspective that I sought to mediate between the apparently irreconcilable opposition between ‘conditions of possibility’ and ‘conditions of impossibility’ with the idea of ‘conditions of imposability’, (II, 19, 75)—perhaps vaguely echoing de Man’s notion of ‘the positing power of language’.^[4] From my point of view, however, this echo was vague insofar as de Man characterized this power as ultimately ‘senseless’, as in the case of mortality, whereas I have always sought to distinguish the alterity of death from the heterogeneity through which otherness is ‘imposed’ as the self-same, what Derrida came to call ‘ipseity’, borrowing the term from Levinas. In this respect, I have always felt that Derrida’s deconstructive perspective, if not practice, tends to converge with the critique of the self developed by Adorno and Horkheimer in their *Dialectics of Enlightenment*—although to be sure in a non-dialectical manner. In *Institution and Interpretation*, I tried in a non-systematic manner to indicate how certain practices of reading and writing might work to constitute closures that were at the same time openings—and how this might be related to the institutional conditions of that make such operations possible, but also restrict them.

The relation between the enabling and the restricting aspects of institutions can perhaps be evaluated in terms of the degree of ‘hospitality’ extended to ‘others’ by a movement that inevitably (or so it seems to me) will seek to emphasize the ‘same’. To be sure, that ‘degree’ is anything but simply measurable in quantitative terms...

Today, the forces that are opposing heterogeneity in the university, and in society more generally, have attained a degree of aggressivity that I have not seen since I was a child during the rise of McCarthyism. Only today the enemy is not simply identified with an ideology linked to an international movement—the ‘Communist Conspiracy’—but rather to the affirmation of ‘diversity’ as

such—ethnically, sexually and of course intellectually. But once again I am straying from your first question so I will stop here.

Peggy Kamuf: Thanks, Jonathan, for getting us virtually together and initiating our conversation. I must confess that, with the shock wave of the last several months, which has felt so unprecedented, I've not been led until now to look back at previous attacks on the university and, in particular, on the humanities that we experienced in the 1980's and 1990's in the US. But of course at the time, they provoked a lot of dismay among those of us whose intellectual alignments drew primarily on recent French thought, especially the work of Derrida. At the outset, there was doubtless a fair measure of naïveté in my own reaction to what often seemed to me to be willful and tendentious distortion of ideas that, in truth, I was still struggling to fully grasp. I then had only a minimal background in philosophy. Like so many others in the US, I came to deconstruction through literature, specifically through Rousseau. When I read the *Grammatologie*, everything became reoriented by its powerfully effective practice of reading that could dislodge and displace so many hardened ideas and values. One of the first directions it pointed me to was what was then being called 'feminist literary criticism' or simply 'feminist criticism'. For indeed the reaction that was going to set in against all this upheaval was not aimed only at 'deconstruction'; there was also some strong resistance coming from more, let's say, traditional feminist scholars who seemed endlessly suspicious of what had become styled as 'French feminist theory' with the writings of Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and others. That was a front I engaged with in my first publications. And let's not forget that there was also here and there fierce resistance to Foucault's archaeological history. And then there was Lacan and Althusser and Barthes, etc. In retrospect, one could begin to feel a little sorry for defenders of the traditional humanities at the time who saw so many threats on their horizon, mostly coming from France in the last two decades.

As for *The Division of Literature*, it came as something of a culmination of engaging with these debates. I'd been led to think more and more about the institution of the university and specifically of the place there of the study of literature. Sam Weber's work in this domain, especially *Institution and Interpretation* and *Demarcating the Disciplines*, was key for my own thinking, not to mention the continued and growing importance for me of Derrida's writings. But there were many counter-currents as well: for example and as Jonathan has already mentioned, Gerald Graff, in *Professing Literature* and John Guillory, in *Cultural Capital*, two prominent commentators on the institutional entanglements of literary study. Guillory portrayed 'deconstruction', which he attributed solely to de Man in its American instantiation and institutionalisation, as over and done with after having failed to realize its promised transformation (or whatever). Both of these aimed to be serious academic studies, but there was also a more or less constant, totally ignorant complaint sounded by public figures such as William Bennett, Secretary of Education under Reagan, that something called 'deconstructionism' had sent humanities education off the rails. It's remarkable that forty years later, some Trump lackeys are sounding the same false alarm.

Since I wrote the above response, Sam has posted his first reply. It reminded me, although I had certainly not forgotten it, of the 'de Man affair', which both of us experienced from up close. In case anyone reading this does not recall the circumstances, a Belgian researcher had unearthed review articles that the very young Paul de Man wrote during the war for a collaborationist newspaper, *Le Soir*, a few of which fell in line with the prevailing anti-semitism. They were brought to Derrida's attention right away and he insisted that they be made public and discussed openly, a fact that is often forgotten in the rush that followed to taint everything de Man and Derrida would later, much later, be associated with. The logical and chronological contortions of this latest 'anti-

deconstruction' offensive were almost comical but that didn't stem the tide of vitriol that was poured into public discussion. For myself, I never doubted that the newly invigorated claims that deconstruction was dead and buried were as wishful and empty as all the previous announcements of its demise, but for that brief moment it was necessary to confront them vigorously.

JB: There's so much here that I hope we'll be able to go into in more detail—hopefully we can return to the question of transforming technological conditions and AI. First, I wanted to ask more about the deconstruction of institution, division, and discipline or disciplinarity put forward in your books.

Sam, you mention that institution is at once an enabling and constraining condition. Deconstruction, as it is put in play or put to work in your text, is never simply opposed to institutions (academic or otherwise) such as they exist or in general, but receives its only chance and risk there. Derrida often noted that deconstruction made its home in the academy, and above all in departments of literature, even as it challenged their existing disciplinary borders and specialties or modes of professionalization. (Moreover, this deconstruction is at once a prescriptive call to open these institutions toward a certain alterity, and a descriptive attempt toward recognizing that this alterity is always already underway, making possible and impossible both our conservative attempts toward maintaining traditions and our progressive attempts to transform them.) Throughout *Institution and Interpretation*, there resounds a call to open academic disciplines to these transformations, to a hospitality toward the unthought or the other, to reflection on their own history and conditions of possibility (technological, economic, political, etc.), and to a Kierkegaardian mode of *experimenting* tied to theatricality rather than the scientific laboratory. Far from a destructive nihilism or an anything goes,

it is only by maintaining or re-iterating the borders or limits of certain institutions that such hospitality becomes and remains possible, a hospitality that above all must stay vigilant in guarding against the aggressive forces of appropriation you mention, for whom the denunciation of ‘deconstruction’ or ‘deconstructionism’ serves as a pretext for eliminating these institutions altogether.

As you write, ‘Is it possible to envisage institutions, academic or otherwise, that would *assume*—in all the senses of this loaded and equivocal term—the effects of the ambivalence described here without thereby resorting to the kind of archaeological-teleological self-determination that Freud suggests is a factor in provoking neurotic illness? Are institutions of inquiry conceivable in which the relation to the exclusions that enable all inquiry to pose its questions and pursue its problems—in which this process of enabling exclusion is assumed as a structuring factor and as a “regulative idea”?’ (II 148).

I thought I would ask both of you, then, how this question or this call, this *assumption* that troubles the borders of institutions, looked to you then and looks to you now? How does it seem to you that the institutions (the university, academic writing or publishing, the academic disciplines in which your work has found a home) have heeded or refused this call? With everything else that has changed, would you still see this regulative idea as one that could orient us in the present, or would you want to change its formulation today?

Peggy, I hoped to couple this question with one on how your work thinks through division and literature, but so as not to overburden or overdetermine this question, I’ll save that for next. Before we get there, I want to ask if you could expand on your experience of the reception of and

resistance to Derrida and deconstruction within feminist criticism and what I imagine were then relatively new departments (or centers, institutes, programs—depending on the institution) of women’s studies. Did this reception or rejection reveal effects of an institution in deconstruction? What did deconstructive writing open for you that seemed foreclosed by the existing disciplinary approaches? What does it tell us about deconstruction—and about institution and the various forms of investment in it—that these newfound openings met with hostility, both from self-styled progressives and conservatives, feminists and masculinists?

SW: Thanks again, Jonathan for your follow-up questions. I want to begin by acknowledging the obvious: namely, the apparently widening gap between the more ‘theoretical’ questions you pose and the reality of the institution in which most of us have to work, namely the university. I don’t think it is a problem exclusive to those of us who work in what could be called a ‘deconstructive mode’, but it is also our problem to the extent that we rightly feel obliged to try to surmount that gap. When many years ago I resorted to a Kantian vocabulary to ask if it might be ‘possible to envisage institutions, academic and otherwise, that would assume ... the effects of ... ambivalence described here...’ and also whether ‘institutions of inquiry’ could be ‘conceivable’ that would be hospitable to putting their own limits into question without imposing a new horizon—such questions can sound somewhat antiquated today, in view of the real and immediate pressures being put on the academy and the way the institutions are reacting to those pressures (see the recent ‘deals’ struck by Columbia and Brown with the Government). Nevertheless, Heidegger’s response to a postwar Marxist criticism about the necessity to change the world (and more specifically its social relations) strikes me as no less valid today: to change anything one must first interpret it. The problem of course is that the relation between theory and practice has to be reciprocal—I am trying

to avoid the word ‘dialectical’, since neither its Hegelian nor its Kantian sense strikes me as useful today. But probably a combination of the two might be. Kant, you recall, rejected the attitude that equated ‘practical’—in the sense of practical ‘reason’—with simply doing or making things—this he called interestingly ‘technical-practical’^[5] because as in the case of ‘art’ it was informed by a goal or purpose (*Zweck*) and thus should be considered a subset of ‘theory’. Practical for Kant was reserved for those “ideas” such as “freedom” and “totality” that could not be reduced to objects—and especially images or views (*Anschaungen*—badly translated as ‘intuitions’). It seems to me, and this relates to the question of the institution, that from a deconstructive perspective the non-empirical, unimaginable dimension that Kant associates with ‘ideas of reason’ is understood essentially as heterogeneity: this means that its ‘otherness’ is neither entirely detached from the non-other, from ‘ipseity’, nor is it reducible to any determinable form of the ipse, and in particular, in our ‘liberal’ societies, to the ‘selfsame’. In other words, what is heterogeneous only can be thought in relation to what claims to be homogeneous, but this relation is not necessarily one of dialectical contradiction, because its alterity cannot be reduced to negation.

An example could be given relating to the question of ‘hospitality’—and the questions you are asking relate to the degree to which institutions in general, and the university in particular (but don’t we need to differentiate between different universities, different geopolitical spheres, etc?). In his so-called ‘seminars’ on hospitality—and of course Peggy knows this better than I do, having collaborated on the French and English editions—(I say so-called because the ‘seminars’ were largely lecture courses, with discussion sessions interspersed at regular intervals)—Derrida shows how what I am resuming as ‘heterogeneity’ is at work in constantly destabilizing the positions of host and guest (same word in French, *hôte*), such that the host easily becomes the guest and indeed the hostage of the host, and vice-versa. Although if one compares

such instability with the American university today, unfortunately the roles seem to be displaced: the employees, if one can call them that, including the teaching ‘faculty’, seem to be increasingly subject to the power of the administration, which in turn reveals itself to be hostage of the donors, whether public (the Federal government in particular) or private—although hostage here may not do justice to the longstanding complicity between the so-called Board of Trustees, the upper Administration (President, Provost etc.) with public and private donors. Derrida invents a term that can cover such displacements: ‘pervertibility’. He develops it in an all too brief discussion of a scene from Pierre Klossowski’s novel, *Roberte ce soir*.^[6] The heterogeneity of the component parts of hospitality, host and guest, is driven in Klossowski’s fiction, by the ambivalent power of desire—and it is this I believe would make it appropriate to an analysis of the dynamic power relations that determine the university even today. Here Derrida’s constant concern with ‘ipseity’—which as I mentioned before, for me echoes in many ways the earlier critique of Adorno and Horkheimer—could enable us not to envisage directly anything like the unconditional ‘freedom’ of the university—which if it is a persistent *idea* has rarely been a reality, and for ‘reasons’ that are anything but contingent or accidental—but rather the forces that tend to exclude it—or rather, to define it by exclusion.

It would be tempting to try to apply the Derridean deconstruction of ipseity, of Selfsameness, to the values that inform American (that is U.S.) individualism, whether of the neoliberal, neoconservative or MAGA variety. But despite the importance of envisaging alternatives, I have always felt that the strength both of the Frankfurt School critiques (the First Frankfurt School, not so much its Habermasian revisions), and of Derridean deconstruction, and perhaps French poststructuralism more generally, resided in its ability to identify the forces establishing constraints; to be sure the deconstruction of such forces points to the heterogeneous options not realized in the existing balance of power. In the

case of the university, these include aspects such as the freedom to pursue what is considered the perverse. But the attack on ‘diversity’ today certainly includes ‘pervertibility’, which would doubtless be considered an extreme form of ‘woke’ culture.

At the same time, to what extent can something like ‘pervertibility’ be considered akin to a Kantian ‘regulative idea’ or in this case a ‘deregulative idea’, that could provide one criterium for institutional reform? It seems as if the ‘aporetic’ logic pursued by Derridean deconstruction, for instance of hospitality, makes such an application very difficult, indeed problematic. But it perhaps indicates a problem that cannot and should not be avoided: the problem of compromise. Does this compromise the notion of a hospitality that would be ‘unconditional’? Compromise means the imposition of conditionality. It is not without a certain reason that Kant, in the text to which Derrida in his *Hospitality* lectures returns incessantly, but in my eyes a bit like a moth to the light—that Kant in his essay on ‘Perpetual Peace’ (which should read ‘Eternal Peace...’ but *passons!*)—that Kant writes explicitly not of hospitality, *Gastrecht*, but only of *Besuchsrecht*, the right to visit, not to stay: what today in German is known as an *Aufenthaltserlaubnis*, the permission to stay but only for a while. In a text that Derrida—who of course knows all this very well—cites, Kant gives as an instance of the abuse of hospitality the invasion of lands by exploitative colonizers, which he condemns. The European visitors of the 18th century were anything but innocent or pacific guests...and this is one reason why Kant insists on imposing conditions on the right to hospitality. Today the situation is somewhat different, but the problems remain. Pervertibility might be one way of unraveling their complexity—however, is it better suited to serve as the criterion of an applicable program than is the notion of unconditional hospitality? But actually, whoever thought that such unconditionality was either necessary or possible, even as a theoretical ‘idea’? It would be interesting to compare this usage to that of ‘gift’,

where there is a strong tendency to distinguish it from forms of exchange. Does the same hold for the uses of 'hospitality' such that it is only 'pure' when radically distinguished from any possible 'exchange' it might involve?

I will stop here for now. I hope that the questions I am raising are a decent substitute for answers...

PK: Oof! That's a lot to think about, Sam. I find that the conjunction you've set out among unconditionality, pervertibility, the university, and hospitality recall for me a reading I attempted a few years ago and that likewise brought all those '-ity' nouns into conjunction. As you know, hospitality is one of several problematics that in these years (from 1995 on) Derrida is rethinking through the distinction of conditionality and unconditionality. In fact, if I'm not mistaken, it is in the course of the first year of the hospitality seminar that these terms 'unconditional', 'unconditionality' begin to recur in his discourse and to provide a common analytical frame for this series of reflections. Another is, of course, the university. 'The University Without Condition', a lecture given in 1998, puts this thinking of the unconditional up front, in the title, and repeatedly invokes the idea of an unconditional university as touchstone of its affirmations. Two other important problematics that come under the unconditionality clause, so to speak: the gift, as you've pointed out, but I would also add justice, thought in its indissoluble relation to law. This is true, I would argue, even though the vocabulary of unconditional/conditional does not occur in those analyses, at least not with any emphasis. What makes for the affinity of these various problematics is not just the distinction or opposition unconditional/conditional (gift, justice, hospitality, forgiveness, university), but also the necessary relation between the two sides or the two poles of the distinction. For example, without laws that attempt to effect it, justice would be an impotent idea. But if it did not hold up the idea of justice before itself, the law would be unjust, unlawful. Hence their necessary relation: no justice

without laws, no law without justice.

But it is as concerns the gift that Derrida spells out in the most general terms, it seems to me, the necessity of this relation. Unconditional gift is impossible, and yet, he adds, ‘we name it, we desire it. We intend it’. Such naming, desiring, intending, thinking, Derrida suggests, perhaps finds its ‘proper element’ in what he calls ‘the relation without relation to the impossible’.^[7] There is thus a gap between thought, language, and desire, on the one hand, and knowledge, science, and philosophy, on the other, when we can name, think, desire, intend what can never be experienced, verified, or known through some present manifestation. This gap, Derrida affirms, ‘is also a gap between gift and economy’, or we might add between justice and law, unconditional and conditional hospitality, forgiveness, or university, and so forth. But this gap does not entail, as he puts it, an ‘ineffable exteriority that would be transcendent and without relation’. Rather, gift is that which ‘while not simply belonging to the circle [of economy], engages in it and sets off its motion’.^[8] And with that necessary engagement or relation is engaged as well all the possibilities of perversion, of the gift into debt, or of hospitality into hostility, or, we might add perhaps, of democracy into autocracy, oligarchy, or fascizing nationalism.

Both conditional and unconditional hospitality are pervertible. As defined for instance by Kant in *Perpetual Peace*, conditional hospitality risks opening the door to hostility because it inscribes hospitality only within norms and laws that confirm and protect the property and the power of the host, his *chez soi*, his ipseity, his mastery, and his sovereignty. ‘Such a hospitality is finite’, Derrida comments, ‘and thus very close to being converted into its contrary; thus to treating as an enemy, a virtual enemy but also, unconsciously, a real enemy, the one whom it welcomes.’^[9] The risk is of ‘a hospitality so controlled and so economic, economic, that is to say, subject to the law of the home, to the *nomos*

of the *oikos*, that hospitality is confirmed there in its effectivity only by negating itself, by installing denial in the heart of the invitation'.^[10] As for so-called 'unconditional hospitality' (or absolute hospitality, as he calls it here), it 'risks turning into its opposite, creating a situation in which no one receives anyone or gives anything, especially not a determinable place, to an identifiable person. This absolute hospitality, then, can open a savage space of pure violence that would cause it to lose right down to its meaning, its appearance, its phenomenality of hospitality'.^[11] These two contrary perversions, then, are averted, if indeed they are, only to the extent that the laws of economic hospitality take into account the law of aneconomic, unconditional hospitality, or as Derrida puts it in an interview with *Le Monde* published in *Paper Machine*, only to the extent that 'they appeal or call to each other [*s'appellent l'une l'autre*]'.^[12]

It is perhaps, indeed, to the names and in the name of the name—hospitality, justice, gift—that one must appeal. It is the name that persists or remains despite 'the impossible presentation of the thing' itself, which is not a thing. Like the gift that one can name, desire, intend without ever encountering it in the present, hospitality—and I would add democracy—are names in the name of which one acts and decides. This phrase 'in the name of . . .' regularly recurs when Derrida takes up these problematics. For example, 'it is always *in the name of* pure and hyperbolic hospitality that one must, in order to make it as effective as possible, invent the best arrangements, the least bad conditions, the most just legislation. [. . .] One often forgets that it is *in the name of* unconditional hospitality (the one that gives its meaning to any welcome of the stranger) that one must attempt to determine the best conditions, namely particular legislative limits, and especially a particular putting into operation of the laws.'^[13]

The first and perhaps the only question is how to respond to what calls and is

called to as and in the name of unconditional hospitality. I'm going to suggest that it is a matter of recognizing that call by doing what in French is called *faire droit à*, literally to make right to, more colloquially to recognize the right of something, or as Ellen Burt translates it in the passage below, 'to do right by'. This is Derrida's tentative expression in a passage that once again invokes the name of unconditional hospitality:

How to give rise to a determinate law while doing right [*en faisant droit*], so to speak, by unconditional hospitality, how to give rise to a determinable, concrete politics and ethics, which entail an actual history, evolutions, revolutions, and respond to new injunctions coming from novel historical situations, which respond to them effectively, by changing the laws, thinking in different terms about citizenship, democracy, international law, etc., hence by intervening effectively, concretely, in the condition, the conditionality of hospitality, while doing so *in the name of* the unconditional, even if this pure unconditionality seems inaccessible, and inaccessible not only as a regulative idea, an Idea in the Kantian and infinitely distant sense, an idea always inadequately approached, but also for the structural reasons and the internal contradictions that we have analyzed?^[14]

Derrida is asking in effect about a law-making, a *faire-droit*, that recognizes the other law and the law of the other. The law and the laws, the unconditional law and the conditioned laws are held in relation and articulated together here. They are articulated in particular at the point of the question, where it asks 'how to give rise [...]', *comment donner lieu à*. It is a question of bringing about new laws, new conditions on the law of hospitality that respond to 'unprecedented historical situations, that respond to them effectively'. The situations of the asylum seeker, the refugee, the migrant, minority communities chased into exile, these are to some extent unprecedented as

regards current law, and this discrepancy opens up the gap between law and justice, no less than between the unconditional law and the conditional laws of hospitality. This gap is not a negative space, but I would say rather it is what gives place or gives rise, *donne lieu*, to the rearticulation, recalibration, resituation of the conditional laws in relation to the demand of the unconditional, a demand that always arrives in an unprecedented way. The other's arrival is always unprecedented.

Today 'hospitality' is often the name of an industry, the hotel and restaurant industry. There the idea of hospitality is entirely economized, fully conditioned by monetary exchange, which governs and measures out its hospitality according to what its 'guests' can afford to pay. Such guests are often those one would call tourists, who travel on tourist visas wherever they like without many restrictions. They are like those to whom Kant recognizes, and as Sam recalls, a right to visit, a *Besuchsrecht*, but not what is called a *Gastrecht*, a right of residence.^[15] To the fully economized hospitality that welcomes the tourist industry around the world, whose customers can afford to pay for their welcome, contrast the hospitality sought by other travelers, migrants, refugees, by all those who must resort to moving around the world without visas and without the means to buy the kind of hospitality on offer across the divide that separates these travelers from the tourists on the other side. Manifestly, on that divide, another hospitality is called upon and appealed to, beyond or before economy. If indivisible sovereignty cannot hear that appeal without 'some unconditional renunciation' of itself, well, perhaps that is simply because such sovereignty, indivisible and absolute, is a phantasm, as Derrida repeatedly asserts.^[16] Alas, today, anyone can see that this is true.

SW: Thank you, Peggy, for this very helpful review and discussion of unconditionality in Derrida. You raise so many important questions, and I want to try to respond to a few of them—not with answers but with further

questions. I think my main question is ultimately a Kantian one, but radicalized, just as Derrida radicalizes Kant: How can an “unconditional” be understood as a ‘law’—or to repeat the Derrida passage you quote, how can the ‘unconditional’—whether hospitality or justice—‘give rise to (the) determinable’—whether ‘concrete politics, ethics’ etc.? Especially when this ‘unconditional’ seems unthinkable in its ‘purity’ or absoluteness? A gift that is given as a gift is not a gift; hospitality that is extended with conditions is not hospitality, etc. It is truly something like a ‘negative dialectic’ although not in the sense of Adorno: the purity of unconditionality, qua absolute, dissolves the possibility of any determination, which would imply conditioning. I think I understand the motivation in insisting on something like unconditionality, which is to relativize every possible conditioning and thus to preserve a sphere or possibility of alterity, transformation, alteration, change. However, how effective—or as Derrida puts it in the passage you quote at the end—how ‘concrete’ or ‘actual’ can the alternatives be, if they are based on an idea that not only deconstructs itself—which would mean leaving traces—but annihilates itself insofar as it excludes any possible determination. ‘The relation without relation to the impossible’, which of course is a formulation that Derrida quotes from Heidegger’s being-toward-death in *Being and Time*, obtains—as far as I understand it—to the relation of living beings to their finitude, their mortality. My question however is can that relation without relation serve as a model for the relation of the living to alterity, or is it not rather the extreme negation of that relation? Negation in the sense of negating the minimum conditions of singular life? It seems to me that those conditions involve a minimum of continuity—a continuity that I take to be implied in ‘ipseity’ as a minimum continuum of the ‘self’—the self as same—or in other words, a minimum of economy in all the sense of that term.

As I understand it, Derrida’s deconstructions always presupposed something like this minimum, which could be associated with a finite existence; that

minimum could be identified with the prevailing interpretation of texts (subjective and objective genitive), or if not, of a certain shared linguistic pre-comprehension. This was often the starting point of his deconstructions, since it embodied a certain relation of forces that he sought to disrupt and change. But can ‘the name of pure and hyperbolic hospitality’ serve as a basis or starting point for inventing or determining ‘the best arrangements, the least bad conditions, the most just legislation’, if one is mindful of the fact that this name names something that not only does not exist but cannot be consistently thought—assuming a minimum of self-identity necessary for such thinking?^[17] I am not sure that the notion of aporia resolves this problem.

I will add that ‘hyperbolic’ strikes me as quite different from ‘pure’ or ‘absolute’ since it suggests an excess and hence a relation that can be determined, up to a point, rather than the negation of all relationality. I tried to take what I consider to be the irreducible dimension of relationality into account when I formulated the notion of ‘conditions of impossibility’ in *Institution and Interpretation* as an alternative to conditions of possibility and impossibility: what bridges the gap, for better or worse—and it is almost always for worse—is a certain violence, which in turn implies a relation of forces. It is this that has to be taken into account, and I am not sure how helpful the notions of unconditionality or the determination of the possible as impossible are in this respect.

In the end I think it is a question of nothing more or less than the evaluation of finitude and its relation to the infinite. I think what I am trying to say is that from the point of view of finite living beings—and do we have any other?—the infinite should perhaps be understood as a synonym of the un-finished, incomplete, interrupted. But if this seems to be implied by our discussion, it also takes us far afield...

PK: Thanks, Sam, for these probing thoughts. I think we may indeed have gone far afield as you put it from the initial impetus Jonathan gave to our conversation, so I want to get back to that before too long. I'm not even going to try to answer the several questions you've asked. They seem to be framing objections to the way Derrida relies on the conditional/unconditional distinction, which rests finally, as you point out, on an unthinkability. In what sense, though, is it unthinkable, since we are here naming it and appealing to it as if it named 'something'? To my way of thinking (which, apologies, may not be very Kantian), this 'as if' is an opening through which thought can touch upon impossibility, and upon the limits of its enclosure in selfsameness. What you say in conclusion switching out the conditional/unconditional distinction for the finite/infinite one sounds altogether right to me and led me to wonder if we shouldn't be invoking that other early touchstone of Derrida's thought, the quasi-transcendental. It brought to mind the end of *La Voix et le phénomène*, where Derrida writes: '*l'infini est fini*,' which I've always understood as something like the motto of the quasi-transcendental.

I'll leave that there, because I want instead to address the questions Jonathan asked above, specifically to me, picking up on what I had ventured about the American feminist reaction to 'French Feminist Theory' (hereafter FFT) and more broadly to deconstruction. Of the several questions he poses, the last one gave me the most to think about: 'What does it tell us about deconstruction—and about institution and the various forms of investment in it—that these newfound openings met with hostility, both from self-styled progressives and conservatives, feminists and masculinists?' Well, in part at least, it tends to confirm our own acknowledgement that deconstructive reading and thinking practices get at something fundamental in our assumptions about pretty much everything. It can thus seem to threaten basic stabilized ways of being in the world and of understanding our beingness. The institution of the university is

in principle the place where that understanding is cultivated, extended, and passed on to succeeding generations. So it is not surprising that the university was an 'early adapter' of (and early reactor to) the sense of the ground shifting under one's feet. One of the institutional signs of this is that there were waves of reaction and resistance that hit the shores of so many varied university disciplines: all across the humanities, philosophy of course, religious studies, but also the 'softer' social sciences, above all history, international relations, and on into law schools, where a whole subdiscipline, 'Critical Legal Studies', was invented in view of deconstructive arguments. And of course what came to be called Cultural Studies and 'New Historicism' were both widely understood at the time to be alternatives to deconstruction's 'excesses'. As for women's studies, as they were initially called, deconstructive thought was not exactly welcomed there, which is perhaps why it happened that I was never affiliated with a women's studies program. This even though I devoted my initial publications to questions of the feminine and sexual difference. (My first book was titled *Fictions of Feminine Desire*.) As for the resistance to FFT, there were many signs of this some of which I recorded in an essay on the writings of Hélène Cixous, 'Writing for Her Life'.^[18] One standard explanation for the distance maintained between the two continental strains, American FT and FFT, was the importance of psychoanalysis for all the principal FFTs, Cixous, Kristeva, Kofman, and Irigaray, whereas perhaps nowhere else in the US institution was the refutation and rejection of Freudian analysis more pronounced than among women's studies scholars. It was as if they really couldn't get over the insult that was the theory of 'penis envy'. And it must have been difficult to countenance that these famous and accomplished FFT women seem to have gotten over it just fine.

When it comes to accounting for the equal distribution of resistance among scholars on the left and the right, progressives (e.g. Terry Eagleton or Jürgen Habermas) and conservatives (e.g. Allan Bloom or Dinesh D'Souza), I think I

addressed just that question in *The Division of Literature*, so if you don't mind, I'm just going to quote a passage. After discussing a minor polemic between two critics who are basically disagreeing about the extension and referentiality of the term 'deconstruction', I commented as follows: the debate, I said, such as it is,

allows a crack to appear that traverses the whole field of academic political discourse, from left to right and from the interior to the exterior of the university institution. [...] This rejection thus forms a kind of secret and unavowable liaison between them, even as it destabilizes the terms of their opposition. It is, in other words, a deconstructive effect that will have occurred and that will have indicated the limit, by exceeding it, of the most recognizable political and analytical discourses. (*DL*, 145)

The rest of the chapter goes on to trace other such effects of a shifting, destabilizing, restabilizing ground. But that's enough self-citation. I hope I have at least gestured toward the richness of your questions, Jonathan.

JB: Thank you both for the depth and thoughtfulness of these responses. I'm glad to see the conversation taking on a life of its own.

I want to return to the *The Division of Literature*—perhaps there is a relationship between what you, Peggy, call by that name and the conditional/unconditional as we've been discussing them. You open the book by broaching a movement that affects any act of institution or division, but for which literature is not simply one example among others. The question of the institution or division of literature is not so simple as asking when and how an existing referent, what we call literature, was gathered into the university and within it departments of literature, or corralled by any of the legal, technological, commercial, and other

innovations that give it a place and recognizability. It isn't so simple, because before we can recognize any of these divisions as befalling what we call literature, it was necessary to institute this name. The term 'literature', we all know, is contingent, it has a history—despite its most pertinent sense arising in the 19th century, it typically attempts to include things that long predated it—and it is only one of several instituted ways of organizing the phenomena so named (earlier eras may have spoken of belles lettres, of tragedy and comedy, and so on). Nonetheless, even if we can recognize the artificiality of this classification, it preconditions our ability to say what it has been imposed on. We have imposed the name 'literature'—on what? We can only turn to that supposedly originary object or referent by means of its inscription in this category, or by instituting another, similarly artificial division. You describe this as the passage from 'literature' to literature; we arrive at an instituted division only on the basis of the unnamable possibility of the name (*DL* 34). (I'm trying to summarize here a very difficult series of reflections that you deal with quite deftly and artfully in the opening pages of your book—please correct me if I've gone astray.)

Any question we could raise about 'literature', whether we are dividing it into periods and genres, or questioning its political and ideological uses, can therefore be displaced by questions that redouble upon this artificial and fragile institution, the division of literature. Moreover, literature has a special place in this thinking of institution or division. As the discipline that deals with 're-marking the specific mode of inscription in a language' (*DL* 11), a department or division of literature is a privileged site for placing division in question, for making borders tremble. Here, it is undoubtedly significant that the first casualty of the many attacks on the university in recent decades has often been language departments, those divisions within the university that remind us there is no universal

intelligibility or communicability, no *universe* of the university, but only the translation and untranslatability of divisions.

Thus, you see a totalitarian aspect in a university that would attempt to contain literature within its division. And, at the same time, a necessarily failing and phantasmatic sovereignty, one that the division of literature is best situated to place in question. This totalizing idea of the university is one that you find shaping the conception of certain scholars of literature, such as Gerald Graff, who seems to think of the university as ‘a neutral frame that is not part of what it frames’ (DL 18).

I think that the most pertinent consequences for debates that are taking place today of this divisibility within division are those you draw for our relationship to ‘the public’ (particularly in chapter 5: ‘The University in Deconstruction’). Questions that will sound very familiar were being posed at that time about ‘elite’ or ‘cloistered’ academics who were guilty of pursuing recondite research that violated their obligations to ‘the broader public’ and would violate that public’s values, if they could understand it (or violated those principles precisely by betraying a supposedly collective common sense). You note the irony that rather than using their platform to try to make academic research intelligible, mass media used what was then their monopoly on certain forms of communicability to put forward this narrative about academic unintelligibility. This might raise certain questions about how this sense of ‘common sense’ gets instituted and enforced, and who maintains it toward what ends, but instead academics such as Bruce Robbins and Michael Bérubé *internalized* this message. They declared the task and the virtue of literary academics ought to be to *reach out* to that ‘public’.

Unfortunately, I am racing past the brilliant and really quite astonishing

readings you perform in this chapter, which re-mark the symptomatic aporias authors from Kant to our contemporaries fall into when they attempt to divide the university from ‘the public’, or to exclude ‘deconstruction’ from both (a goal that everyone from conservative pundits to progressive academics seemed to agree on—though it led them into curious contortions of self-disagreement). What I want to highlight is the task you recognize for deconstructive reading, which is just as urgently necessary now as it was then—a reading that places in question and displaces the assumed borders and divisions said to divide, for example, the university and the public. Rather than arguing over whether we should be reaching out toward ‘the public’, and even beyond the necessary question of complicating this apparently unified *concept* of the public, there is the *intervention* in the apparatus and existing power relations that allow a certain representation of ‘the public’ to appear as common sense. Our task is not simply to accept and work within those limits, but to challenge them and the conditions they place on what can be said and to whom. As you write, ‘If we judge such questions and the analyses they call for to be “too difficult” or, worse, politically disabling because they complicate too much the model of effective public discourse, can we be so sure that that judgment and the decisions it entails have not themselves installed the very limits on public access that everyone in a democracy must decry?’ (DL 160–61).

I wanted to take the time to revisit this argument, because it so aptly summarizes a playbook that has repeated for decades, and which allows the most conservative forces of our political and media ecosystem (which are often part of the *liberal* media) to work in symbiosis with the well-meaning efforts of progressive academics. With respect to the media discourse about climate change, we can see that the playbook that was tested against the humanities and particularly departments of literature

was then wielded against the sciences. Even where—in this political-media ecosystem—the immense threats posed by anthropogenic climate change were acknowledged, the barrier to corrective action was often understood to be ‘climate denialism’, a character that was cast as a kind of belief system or credo. It was understood to result from misinformation, and while conservative media was certainly blamed, climate scientists and other academics were also accused of failing to publicly communicate their knowledge—accused, that is, of precisely the kind of elite or cloistered failure to reach out from their ivory tower to ‘the public’ (a similar rationale of self-reproach can be found, for example, among certain ‘ecocritics’ in literature departments). Much could be said about this accusation, and the role of university administration in using a similar logic of public appeal to cut funding for many disciplines, often in the humanities, but for now I just want to note the parallel; too many academics have *internalized* this demand, blaming themselves for failing to reach ‘the public’, rather than questioning the narrative.^[19] As you put it, ‘What is determining here the limits of comprehensibility and for whom? [...] these questions need to be not just posed but allowed to open onto and into the whole diversity of public practices (that is, of any meaningful symbolic act)’ (DL 160).

I’ve gone on too long, but I wanted to give a sense of the continued necessity I see in your and Sam’s analyses, and why I wanted to revisit them at this moment. I would ask (in addition to anything you might want to correct or add to the account I’ve sketched out here) how both of you see these themes continuing into the present, at the level of the university, the humanities or departments of language and literature, and with respect to deconstruction? Everywhere that urgent calls are felt to make scholarship attentive to present questions of ecological and social justice, the risks that *The Division of Literature* was recognizing are re-doubled

and re-marked. Where do you see the continuities and/or ruptures today with what you were describing then? What might a deconstructive intervention in present academic discourses look like?

I also wanted to ask—both of you have suggested an interesting dialogue between your work and Marxism. Peggy, I see this in the reading of Walter Benjamin in *The Division of Literature*. Sam, you’ve mentioned that you see your deconstructive project as quite close to Adorno, while you also include in *Institution and Interpretation* a critique of Frederic Jameson’s *The Political Unconscious*. I wonder if either of you would like to say more about your points of agreement and disagreement with Marxist discourses?

SW: I will limit myself in this segment to two questions Jonathan raises: 1. The question of the ‘public’ and 2. that of Marxism, both in relation to Deconstruction—or rather as I would prefer to call it, to deconstructively oriented practices of reading and writing. First, ‘the public’. I put the word in quotes because it is obviously necessary to question just what that word might signify. In English the word derives from ‘publicus’, related to ‘populus’, people. It is therefore a word that claims a certain inclusivity, but depends also on an implicit exclusivity: what are the defining limits of a ‘public’? (Interestingly, the word also seems related to ‘pubes’, suggesting that one of the criteria of ‘public’ may well be gendered.) The German equivalent word brings a different aspect to the fore: *Öffentlichkeit*, based on the root word for *open*, *offen*: this suggests that *public* entails bringing things that may have been concealed out into the open. This may be implied in the English as well, but it is not as obvious.

In the United States, ‘public’ can be understood as an alternative to ‘private’. Public Radio, now under attack by the Trump Administration, is one example. Growing up in NYC in the 40s, for instance, the word ‘public’ tended to be

associated not with the people as a whole, but with its poorer members: public hospitals, for instance, were considered far inferior to private ones. Public welfare designated assistance to the poor. I fear that this connotation may not have changed very much in the interim. This association is to some extent a distinctive feature of the United States, although it is also taking hold in neoliberal Europe as well.

I mention this as a precondition for understanding how the situation of university academics and intellectuals particularly in the United States is in part determined by this traditional valorization of public versus private. The situation is rendered more complex through the fact that higher education in the U.S. has become increasingly a privilege rather than a right. This, combined with a traditional mistrust of intellectuals, has rendered the so-called 'public' increasingly antagonistic to the university in general. The MAGA movement is in part a reaction against this valorization, all the more ironic for its being situated on the 'right', which is to say on that side of the political spectrum that has traditionally supported financial policies leading to inequality. This also in part explains certain tensions between the populist side of this movement and its neoliberal and neoconservative elements. How this situation might affect the work of those academics who are inspired by deconstruction is too complex a question to be examined here. I want to limit myself therefore to one small aspect of it, that I believe affects work along these lines. This has to do with language.

The power of Derrida's deconstructive writings derives in part from the way they could mobilize widely shared understanding of terms, such as what is involved in 'giving' and how this was distinguished from anything like a simple exchange. I haven't had the chance to reread the relevant texts, so Peggy can correct me if my memory here is inaccurate. But as I remember them, his writings on the gift derived their power from the way they revealed how a

certain self-consciousness of the gift could destroy it, precisely by inserting it into a logic of equivalence that would undermine what makes the gift different from an economic exchange. In other words, such a deconstructive procedure appealed to what could be called a ‘public’ understanding or widely shared experience of what giving entailed, in order to expose the limits of this understanding in its ostensible self-evidence.

In his writings Derrida constantly appealed to non-technical, ‘idiomatic’ French expressions—not always easy to render in English (example: ‘*Je suis le dernier des juifs*’)—although of course this appeal to a certain public discourse does not make his writings easily accessible to readers who lack the necessary prerequisites for understanding them. But perhaps what can be communicated more broadly—i.e. to a ‘larger public’—could be a sensitivity to the structural complexities of language, and indeed, beyond verbal discourse, of what I would call ‘signification’, no matter in what medium. The result is the potential for discovery of what has hitherto been ignored and/or suppressed, as well as a recognition of the necessity of a constant ‘vigilance’—a word that Derrida often favored—to what is presented as self-evident. This can and should have consequences for the relation of the ‘public’ to what is called the “mainstream media.”

It is also no less necessary to be aware that there is no one ‘public’ and that it is possible and necessary to distinguish between different potential publics. The internet has opened the possibility of reaching out to groups that otherwise would remain inaccessible, even if this possibility is constantly under pressure in the name of a consensus that is more ‘manufactured’ than spontaneous.

2. Concerning the relation of deconstruction to Marxism: one point of intersection could be Derrida’s early problematization of the value of the ‘propre’—a French word meaning both what necessarily belongs to something

(or someone) else, and also suggesting the ‘clean’ and ‘pure’—developed later into his deconstructive focus on ‘ipseity’, which I translate as ‘selfsameness’. As I’ve mentioned this is also the point of convergence with the first Frankfurt School of Adorno and Horkheimer, although they are clearly not simply identical with ‘Marxism’. The fact that Derrida wrote of ‘exappropriation’ and not simply of ‘expropriation’ indicated his recognition of the inevitability of the ambivalent necessity of ‘propriation’. His thematization of and also practical use of the first person singular, the I, point to a similar ambivalent necessity. Of course, a deconstructive sense of the ambivalence of the ‘proper’, and of the Self is a long way from the critique of social relations associated with traditional Marxism. But recognition of the growing importance of the sphere of circulation as distinct from that of production should make it possible for deconstruction and Marxism to communicate more than they have in the past. Neo-Marxist theories of ‘Technofeudalism’ (Varoufakis, Durand)^[20] assign an importance to digital technology in reconfiguring social relations; this complicates the traditional linear view of history of classical Marxism and opens up possibilities of examining the extremely complex and important social impact of digital technologies.

To sum up, the challenge for deconstruction will be to build and extend a practice of reading that has been largely devoted to literary and philosophical texts to other domains. The basis for this extension remains the fact that signifying practices are not limited to any one medium, even if language and literary language in particular have been its traditionally privileged terrain. But insofar as differential signifying remains both the enabling and disabling condition of meaning, such extensions should be possible.

PK: There are so many threads in what the two of you have said, I can pull on only a couple of them. First of all, I want to second Sam’s idea to scrap reference to ‘Deconstruction’ capital D, and speak rather, as he puts it, of

‘deconstructively oriented practices of reading and writing’. That is what matters and counts about deconstruction, that is what is working in the world to the extent it does, and not as the name of some theory-thing in which guise it has earned so many negative associations and been so widely abused.

It’s also tempting to take up Jonathan’s remarks about the shifting sense of ‘literature’ over its history, before it came to mean ‘writing which has claim on the ground of beauty of form or emotional effect,’ as the OED puts it. But there is another essential trait of this modern sense of ‘literature’, one to which Derrida always points whenever he addresses it, as he often has, and it is the relation of literature to the law. By law, what is recognized as literature can say anything and everything whatsoever, it has no responsibility to truth, or accuracy, or fact. For it is essentially *fiction*, and it is this trait of fiction that the law institutes and protects (along with the privilege of copyright). ‘Fiction’ points to the absence of a referent, to the conjuring of an appearance ‘out of thin air’, as it were, and yet that appearance subsists, and repeats as if it existed in reality, in fact. It is often this strange quality of fiction that comes to trip up historicising (including Marxist) readings of literature, when they work to arrest this fictional suspension in some historical context or other. Literature’s fictions, however, do not come with an expiration date, after which they are inactive agents that can no longer affect whoever encounters them. No context can contain them, and no relevant context can be determined exhaustively. As fiction, literature is inexhaustible.

Having said all that, so solemnly, I wonder what purchase it has on the urgent issues you highlight, Jonathan. Any answer, I believe, would have to pass by way of the reflection you initiate on the ‘public’ and ‘public-ness’ and that Sam has extended so helpfully. Literature is unquestionably a public affair; it takes place in publication, a kind of making-public of something never before seen or heard or read. For whom is it meant, for which public? We’re tempted by that

question because it ties meaning to its reception, to how it is received and understood. Walter Benjamin (whose name I invoke in honor of Sam, the author of *Benjamin's –abilities*^[21]) sets aside precisely the pertinence of that question at the outset of 'The Translator's Task'—to cite Steven Rendall's new translation. You remember that he begins:

When seeking knowledge of a work of art or an art form, it never proves useful to take the receiver into account. Not only is every effort to relate art to a specific public or its representatives misleading, but the very concept of an 'ideal' receiver is spurious in any discussion concerning the theory of art, since such discussions are required to presuppose only the existence and essence of human beings. Art itself also presupposes man's corporal and spiritual essence—but no work of art presupposes his attention. No poem is meant for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the audience.^[22]

This is a bracing reminder that what we're still calling literature has no known address, no destination that is not an *arrivance*, an arriving that goes on arriving. It is essentially unsettled in its meaning. If it arrives to some public, to one or another of its representatives, it is because the addressee will have determined its destination, according to that structure of the post card that Derrida tracked in 'Envois'.^[23] What I am trying to get at with these reminders is some figure of the public in which the transformative effect of literature and of deconstructive practices of reading is registered even if it does not register in common measures of public reception and public opinion (polls, or whatever). This is doubtless also in reaction to what I find to be the particularly insidious manner in which today 'public opinion' is so often pointed to as self-evident. A common turn in Trump's discourse is to refer vaguely to what 'people have said', 'people are saying', 'I'm told that...', and so forth. It's the discourse, Heidegger might have said, of the 'man sagt', the 'on dit', 'it's said' that

distracts Dasein from its authenticity.

I like very much what Sam says about language as the lever of deconstructive intervention, in particular in this passage:

But perhaps what can be communicated more broadly—i.e. to a ‘larger public’—could be a sensitivity to the structural complexities of language, and indeed, beyond verbal discourse, of what I would call ‘signification’, no matter in what medium. The result is the potential for discovery of what has hitherto been ignored and/or suppressed, as well as a recognition of the necessity of a constant ‘vigilance’—a word that Derrida often favored—to what is presented as self-evident.

The reserve of meaning, of ‘signification,’ in any text, of whatever sort, that is what deconstruction has insisted on and made apparent since the beginning. That a ‘gift’ can be a debt, that hospitality can become a refined form of withholding, that forgiveness is forever uncertain, these are indeed, as Sam recalls, experiences of the most ordinary, ‘non-academic’ sort and their ‘vigilant’ exposure and exposition can speak to whoever manages to encounter them. Of course, the place where that sort of encounter is at the heart of its *raison d’être* is the university, but just as obviously this by no means limits such practices to an academic context. Our highly differentiated public space, with its seemingly endless digital, technical, mediatic extensions, its capacities for generating, recording and transmitting textual artifacts of every kind, this very immensity of the public ‘thing’ should make us at least to hesitate to affirm what does or does not go on there. Anything remains possible.

Perhaps, however, that is just something I tell myself in order not to despair.

JB: My last question corresponds to just this issue you bring up, Peggy, of

the right literature grants to say anything. It is intimately related to one of Derrida's interventions in these questions of the university, which has come up several times already in our conversation, 'The University without Condition'. Derrida is responding there to similar questions to those we have been contemplating about the transformations underway in the university and especially its humanities and literature departments, and how they might become a site of resistance.

Of course, this lecture was not the first time he broached these themes. Deconstruction always involved recognizing that every attempt at launching a philosophical or other universalizing discourse depended on its inscription in particular contexts, which include everything from its particular language or idiom to the political, economic, technological, and academic contexts that allowed for its publication. Thus, he was always attentive to the working conditions of philosophers in the past and present, both in his written work, notably *Du droit à la philosophie*, and in the organizing and activism he did to defend and expand philosophy education in France.^[24] 'The University without Condition' can be understood within this context.

I have two sets of questions I'd like to pose to you about this lecture and text. The first involves, so to speak, your personal relationships to it. I understand that you both were in attendance when Derrida delivered it as part of the Presidential Lecture Series at Stanford in 1999. What are your recollections of this occasion? Does anything stand out in your memory, either from the lecture itself, or from surrounding conversations you might have had with Derrida, that might enrich our reading of the text? Did it stand out to you at the time as particularly important either in Derrida's trajectory or for your own work? Have your thoughts about it changed with time?

Moreover, Peggy, you had a special relationship with this text because you translated it for publication in *Without Alibi*. This translation is also noteworthy because it brought together five of Derrida's texts that did not exist within the covers of a single book in French. I'm interested, thus, both in any reflections you might have on the process of translating it—I know a lot of time has passed, but do any realizations or difficulties from the translation process stand out in your memory today?—and on the process of curation that you were able to exercise in creating this book. Do you recall anything of the conversations with Derrida that must have accompanied it? (I should also point interested readers to the brilliant introduction you wrote to this book, where you discuss some of this already, and thus limit the question to anything you might want to add that isn't already said there.)^[25]

Second, I'll pose a question that gets more into the text itself. Derrida's notion of a university without condition is of a space animated by the *right to say everything*:

Here, then, is what we could call, in order to call upon it, the unconditional university or the university without condition: the principial right to say everything, even if it be under the heading of fiction and the experimentation of knowledge, and the right to say it publicly, to publish it. This reference to public space will remain the link that affiliates the new Humanities to the age of Enlightenment. It distinguishes the university institution from other institutions founded on the right or the duty to say everything, for example, religious confession and even psychoanalytic "free association." But it is also what fundamentally links the university, and above all the Humanities, to what is called literature, in the European and modern

sense of the term, as the right to say everything publicly, or to keep it secret, if only in the form of fiction. ('UC' 205)

This 'right to say everything', and to say it publicly, does not merely extend to the content of discourses that could be professed by those in our profession, but to those challenges to the existing forms and media of communication that we have been discussing—in a word, to deconstruction. It would consist not merely of positional statements of belief, but of texts that singularly transgress the existing norms of positional debate or even intelligibility. Thus, Derrida sees the humanities (or what he invokes as the 'new Humanities', opening themselves to such singular *oeuvres*), and literature departments above all, as crucial to this unconditional university.

Such a 'right to say everything' creates an intimate bond between the university, democracy, and literature. Derrida uses similar formulas when defining or invoking them; the democracy-to-come is entangled in the logic of conditional and unconditional that we have been discussing, it requires opening itself to the freedom of expression, even at the risk of opening itself to what is undemocratic, which therefore brings about an auto-immune structure, requiring democracy to defend against itself in order to maintain itself. One places limits—necessarily—on what is sometimes called 'freedom of speech', in order to defend that freedom from itself.

This 'right to say everything' holds a special relationship to the *as if*, which accedes to these forms of writing beyond the positive knowledge of science or philosophy, and thus to the only space in which an event that transgresses any pre-established possibilities, the space of the *perhaps* which gives a true event its only chance (an impossible chance). If this 'as

if' has a special bond with literature and fabulation, it is no less related to technological invention, to the space of virtualization that Derrida sees at work profoundly reshaping what counts as the space or place of the university and its public. (I'll note that I read this essay—by chance?—with a reading group near the beginning of the pandemic, when most of university life was still happening on zoom, which made it feel particularly prescient to us.)

This linking of the unconditional university—deconstruction—democracy—the humanities—literature—the *as if*—virtuality also leads to a difficult reflection on the nature of work. Derrida opens his discourse on this theme with a kind of fabulation: *As if the end of work were at the origin of the world...* This fable is meant to interrupt the Christian notion of work and labor that follows from the punishments in Genesis. This expiatory and soteriological notion of work would see labor or work-qua-*travail* as our punishment in this fallen world, by which we work off inherited guilt and become worthy of a paradise regained, an infinite Sabbath or rest. In an intriguing reading of Jeremy Rifkin's *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*,^[26] Derrida recognizes that this Christian apocalypticism seems to still orient the most apparently contemporary meditations on work, such as this book which promises to account for the technological transformations of labor. For Derrida, Rifkin's account remains naïve to the extent that it pictures the transformations we are undergoing as a transition to a 'post-work' society of infinite rest, where all needs would be met automatically or automatedly. Rather, Derrida recognizes the unevenness of this 'end of work', and the extent to which many—more of us than ever before—suffer from a lack of work while others suffer from too much. He even explicitly notes what so many commentators on the university still fail to acknowledge,^[27] the incredibly uneven distribution of labor and its

rewards that constitute our working conditions, including the casualization and precaritization of academic labor: ‘Rifkin does not speak of unemployed teachers or aspiring professors, in particular in the Humanities. He pays no attention to the growing marginalization of so many part-time employees, all underpaid and marginalized in the university, in the name of what is called flexibility or competitiveness’ (‘UC’ 227). Ultimately, it is necessary to think work outside of this soteriological horizon in order to take account of the transformations that were already under way then, and which we are living in the wake of today.

It is a matter then, not of a university that would take account of all this in theory, but which would be the site of the potential or rather virtual energy from which seismic transformations would issue, displacing all of these borders: ‘This limit of the impossible, the “perhaps,” and the “if,” this is the place where the divided university is exposed to reality, to the forces from without (be they cultural, ideological, political, economic, or other). It is there that the university is in the world that it is attempting to think’ (‘UC’ 236).

The question(s) I wanted to pose deal most directly with this notion of a *right to say everything*. It seems to touch on something that has become central, at least in the US, to the politics of the university, of literature, and of our democracy, in which the university, at least rhetorically, plays a central role. First of all, it would be naïve simply to assimilate Derrida’s position to what is sometimes called ‘free speech’, and to those voices on the right that most effectively mobilize this slogan today. It is obvious that the same people who claim that they are *for* ‘free speech’ on college campuses are happy to see militarized police forces attacking students protesting the genocide in Gaza—in other words, they are *for* the free speech of anyone who agrees with them, and use the phrase as an

apparently liberal rejoinder *against* and to silence any form of expression they dislike. I think that in what Derrida called auto-immunity we find a recognition of this cooptability and fragility of the unconditional—on the one hand it can be mobilized in service of the worst, and on the other hand in order to preserve the best it is necessary to turn it against itself, to place it within conditions (to try to oppose and ultimately silence the most violent exclusions or inclusions). Moreover, it is never just a question of content, of what gets said in the space of the university, but who has access to its platform, and here considerations of the conditions faced by workers and students return.

In other words, as I read him, Derrida's position is not simply a naïve call for 'free speech', and certainly not assimilable to the conservative voices that weaponize this call today. On the other hand, how should we put this call to work today? It is undoubtedly the case that the political import of the university-in-deconstruction and literature and other art forms is more in question than ever today. Can Derrida help orient us as we try to think through what is the best and the worst in this domain?

SW: I agree with Jonathan's remark that much of Derrida's writing emerged as responses to singular situations, which is why he so often stressed the importance of singularity and also why he tended to deal with specific texts rather than with general pronouncements. I myself have extrapolated from that a pattern of 'response and appeal'—in other words, response to appeals and appeals for future responses. This is no doubt banal, but I have found it useful in suggesting an irreducible concatenation of continuity and discontinuity: we haven't discussed the notion of 'decision' but I take it to be very important in this respect, since it signals the inextricability of separation and connection. My question is how helpful the notion of the unconditional is in negotiating the linkage of response and appeal. In an interesting way, the

emphasis on the unconditional links the notion of ‘autoimmunity’ to that of ‘auto-affection’, with which Derrida began in his wonderful deconstructive reading of Husserl in *Speech and Phenomenon*: the effort to think a radical alternative to autoaffection as the unconditional, leads to autoimmunity as the defense of the self that destroys itself. Perhaps thinking more closely about the nature of ‘decision’ and the way it supplements (but never supplants) traditional cognitive judgments (for me the lesson of Kant’s third *Critique*, which never mentions decision), might help us to see the unconditional as a way of thinking hyperconditionality. The ‘as-if’ and even more the ‘perhaps’ enters here as does ‘fiction’. I myself have tended in recent work more toward the notion of ‘friction’ as a way of thinking what I described above as the contiguity of discontinuity and continuity (Freud’s discussion of how elements of everyday intrude and become significant in the dream—*Tagesreste*—is one example of ‘friction’, pervertibility would be its more dynamic expression). Derrida’s skepticism about the French ‘*peut-être*’ because of its implicit reference to power and control—the ‘*peut*’—can serve to bring out the positive aspects of the English ‘per-haps’, which focuses on chance, on the ‘hap’—the happening and happenstance—rather than on control. To sum up: hyperconditionality as a supplement to the unconditional, or even as a replacement for it, frictionality as a supplement of fiction, responsiveness to the unsayable (as the significant), as a supplement to responsibility: these are the questionable suggestions with which I would like to respond to Jonathan’s appeal, inconclusively no doubt, but hopefully, ‘curiously’.

PK: One thing I remember about the Stanford lecture is that Chelsea Clinton, the then-president’s daughter, was in the large audience. She was an undergraduate there at the time.

‘The University Without Condition’ became a key reference for me in the years following its publication and I wrote about it several times. The most sustained

engagement was for the online journal *Culture Machine* which asked contributors to address the provocative phrase ‘Deconstruction is/in Cultural Studies’.^[28] ‘Cultural Studies’ seemed then to be everywhere you turned in the university. Indeed, in the lecture Derrida makes a passing and disparaging remark about it. ‘These Humanities to come’, he writes, ‘will cross disciplinary borders without dissolving the specificity of each discipline into what is called, often in a very confused way, “interdisciplinarity” or into what is lumped with another good-for-everything concept “cultural studies”’ (‘UC’ 230). As mentioned earlier, ‘The University Without Condition’ is one of the texts of this period of his work when Derrida is elaborating most intensely the notion of unconditionality and it goes very far in this direction. As Sam has mentioned, it is conjugated with ‘fiction’ and the ‘as if’, which latter expression Derrida places in epigraph to his text: ‘*As if the end of work were the origin of the world*’. When he later points to the phrase, he redoubles the effect of the ‘as if’ by writing: ‘As if I wanted to let an example of the “as if” work all by itself, outside any context, to attract your attention’ (210). These early hints, of course, will be fleshed out later in the essay when the fiction of the ‘as if’ is identified with the unconditional right to say anything and everything, which implicates literature at the core of the university and what he is calling here ‘The New Humanities’. The heart of the Humanities beats *as* a virtual fiction, a notion that Derrida does not limit to its literary sense even as he insists that the reference to literature, in the modern, European sense, must remain irreducible if indeed the university without condition will continue to be able to affirm, that is, profess its faith in the unconditionality of truth. Literature, fiction, names the democratic institution in which the right to say anything or nothing is safeguarded as an unconditional one, and as such, it safeguards as well the university. Or so it did until the all-out assault on that institution which is currently underway in the US.

As for *Without Alibi*, it so happened that I had already translated, for different

contexts, four of the five texts it collects, which had all been published in different journals or collections of essays. I saw many connections among the essays and Derrida agreed to my idea of editing them together, along with a translation of ‘États d’âme de la psychanalyse’. He even accepted to write a preface, which he did very quickly and as always very generously. Which is not to say that it contained unmitigated praise. He focused a lot on my own introduction to the volume, titled ‘Event of Resistance’, and brought out deftly an ambiguity in my identification of a current of resistance—which I cast in a positive light—running through the essays. Subtly but in a way I could not miss, he wondered out loud how wise it was to emphasise resistance as a characteristic of deconstructive writing, at the risk, perhaps, of arousing it in a reader. He titled the preface ‘Provocation’ and it certainly provoked me to rethink things.

JB: I’m so grateful to you both for having this conversation with me, and for the generosity of your responses. Is there anything more you’d like to say before we part?

PK: Thank you, Jonathan, for all your thoughtful questions and your patience. And I appreciated a lot being ‘in touch’ with Sam again, however virtually!

SW: Let me also add a word of thanks to Jonathan, and also to Peggy, whose contributions reminded me of much that I had alas forgotten! We may not have been able to respond to all the questions raised by Jonathan, but at least I hope we provided some signposts...

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1. Samuel Weber, *Institution and Interpretation* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987). References herein are to Samuel Weber, *Institution and Interpretation*, Expanded Edition (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001), hereafter *II*. Peggy Kamuf, *The Division of Literature, Or the*

University in Deconstruction (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997),
hereafter *DL*. ↑

2. Jacques Derrida, 'The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of Its Pupils', translated by Catherine Porter, and Edward P. Morris, *Diacritics* 13, no. 3 (1983): 3–20, 9. JSTOR. <https://doi.org/10.2307/464997>; Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', translated by Mary Quaintance, in *Acts of Religion*, edited by Gil Anidjar (New York, Routledge, 2002), 242; Jacques Derrida, 'The University without Condition', in *Without Alibi*, translated by Peggy Kamuf. (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002), 211, hereafter 'UC'. ↑
3. See *DL*, 20–29. John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1993); John Guillory, *Professing Criticism: Essays on the Organization of Literary Study* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2022). ↑
4. Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1984), 116–17. ↑
5. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), 60–61. ↑
6. P. Klossowski, *Roberte ce soir*, Minuit, 1953; J. Derrida, *Hospitalité*, vol. 1, 1995–96, Ed. Du Seuil, 32–34, I note in passing that Nicolas Cotton has published an excellent book on this very notion, which however he examines only in relation to Derrida's published works, and not to the Seminars: Nicolas Cotton, *Penser la "pervertibilité"—Avec Jacques Derrida*, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal (2023). Also available in digital form on the internet at: <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=http://uplopen.com/>

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7. Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 29. ↑

8. *Ibid.*, 30–31. ↑

9. Jacques Derrida, *Hospitality*, I ed. Pascale-Anne Brault and Peggy Kamuf, trans. E.S. Burt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2023), 58. ↑

10. *Ibid.* ↑

11. *Ibid.*, 57. ↑

12. Jacques Derrida, “The Principle of Hospitality,” in Derrida, *Paper Machine*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 66 (trans. mod.). ↑

13. J. Derrida, *Paper Machine*, 67; emphasis added. ↑

14. Derrida, *Hospitality I*, 124–25; emphasis added. ↑

15. Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, trans. H.B. Nisbet, in *Kant’s Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 106. ↑

16. See for example, ‘UC’, 204, 235, 236. ↑

17. ‘In order to know an object, I must be able to prove its possibility, either from its reality, as attested by experience, or a priori by means of reason. But I can think whatever I please, provided only I do not contradict myself...’ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xxvi. ↑

18. In *Literature and the Development of Feminist Theory*, ed. Robin Truth Goodman, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015. ↑
19. I wanted to add an explanatory note here, though I see that Sam has already mentioned some of what I'll say in his reply: what gets called climate denialism, as well as related phenomena such as opposition to vaccines, which certainly have something to do with a lack of trust in existing institutions (though it may also be a rationalization of violent self-destructive drives), may ultimately be grounded in the fundamentally hostile and exploitative configuration of institutions including those of higher education, technoscience and medicine, etc. If most people's experience with or association with college and medicine is going into debt or being financially excluded, and if most of what they are sold as technological progress is Ponzi schemes, this may build into a resentment and hostility over time, not only toward these specific institutions but toward anyone involved in the political and media establishment involved in justifying the present state of affairs. Then, an academic who self-flagellates about failing to reach out to the public is actually providing ideological cover for a system or structure that we not only cannot control, but that our increasingly precarious working conditions are themselves an effect of.

On these themes, see Peter Michael Gratton, 'The Grift Society', *Liberal Currents*, April 28, 2025, <https://www.liberalcurrents.com/the-grift-society/>; Peter Gratton, 'Review: Fictions of Financialization, by Nick Bernards', *The OLR Supplement*, May 29, 2025, <https://olrsupplement.com/2025/05/29/fictions-of-financialization-by-nick-bernards/>; and Jonathan Basile, *Virality Vitality* (Albany, SUNY Press, 2025) 18–29. ↑

20. **Yannis Varoufakis**, *Technofeudalism: What Killed Capitalism*, Vintage Books, 2024; **Cédric Durand**, *How Silicon Valley Unleashed*

Technofeudalism, Verso Books, 2024 ↑

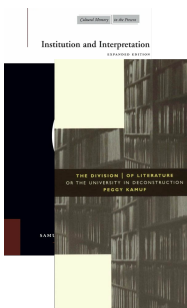
21. Samuel Weber, *Benjamin's –abilities*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2008. ↑
22. Walter Benjamin, "The Translator's Task," trans. Steven Rendall, *TTR*, 10, 2, 1997. ↑
23. Jacques Derrida, 'Envois', in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, translated by Alan Bass, Chicago, University of Chicago of Press, 1987, 1–256. ↑
24. Jacques Derrida, *Du droit à la philosophie* (Paris, Galilée, 1990); Jacques Derrida, *Who's Afraid of Philosophy: Right to Philosophy 1*, translated by Jan Plug (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002); Jacques Derrida, *Eyes of the University: Right to Philosophy 2*, translated by Jan Plug and others (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004). ↑
25. Peggy Kamuf, 'Introduction: Event of Resistance' in *Without Alibi*, Jacques Derrida, translated by Peggy Kamuf (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002) 1–27. ↑
26. Jeremy Rifkin, *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era* (New York, Putnam, 1995). ↑
27. We have already mentioned that John Guillory has a peculiarly unified notion of 'the professoriate' and its public. This is still the case in his 2022 book, and his failure to account for adjunctification and the divisions within the profession was the subject of a critique by Andy Hines; see Andy Hines, 'Working Critics', *Modern Language Quarterly*, February 12, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1215/00267929-11060439>. ↑
28. Peggy Kamuf, 'The University in the World it is Attempting to Think', *Culture Machine* 6 (<https://culturemachine.net/deconstruction-is-in->

cultural-studies/). ↑

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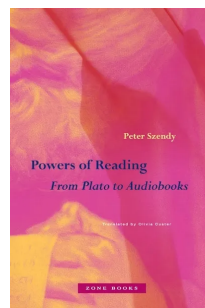
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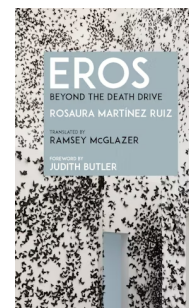
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