



Unspeakable Secrets and the Psychoanalysis of Culture (SUNY series in Psychoanalysis and Culture)

Esther Rashkin

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Explores the radical political potential of close reading to make the case for a new and invigorated psychoanalytic cultural studies.

Esther Rashkin argues that psychoanalysis galvanizes, as no other discipline can, an understanding of texts in their social, historical, and political contexts. Demonstrating that close reading can be a radical political practice, she exposes heretofore unseen ideologies concealed in works of film and literature, from *Last Tango in Paris* to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, from Barthes's *Mythologies* and Balzac's *Sarrasine* to *Babette's Feast*. Psychoanalytic concepts such as identification with the aggressor, the crypt, cryptonymy, illness of mourning, and the phantom allow Rashkin to reveal how shameful and unspeakable secrets propel the narratives she examines. In the process, she convincingly makes the case for a new practice of psychoanalytic cultural studies, a practice that fully engages with the politicized discourses—anti-Semitism, racism, colonialism, censorship—that mark a text's location in history.

Esther Rashkin is Professor of French and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Utah and a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice. She is the author of *Family Secrets* and the *Psychoanalysis of Narrative*.

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