Trump and Sanders on the Couch: Neoliberal Populism on the Left and the Right

Abstract This chapter argues that if we want to fully understand the political popularity of people like Donald Trump, we should return to Freud's theory of the group formation and his notion of emotional identification. As a form of group hypnosis, Right-wing populism relies on followers suspending their critical faculties as they access parts of their unconscious id, and psychoanalysis helps us to understand how these unconscious processes function in political movements.

Keywords Donald Trump · Hypnosis · Bernie Sanders · Populism · Fascism · Reality TV · Surplus value · Primal horde · Freud · Lacan

On one level, we can understand Donald Trump's successful effort to become the Republican presidential nominee as a result of the failure of liberals to align with the working class. In his constant criticism of trade policies and unfair practices by China, Trump tells displaced workers that he will "Make America Great Again" by bringing back jobs and making great deals. Of course, his discourse appears to be pure rhetoric with few actual policy prescriptions, but what has amazed so many pundits, party insiders, and political scientists is that it does not seem to matter to his supporters if his promises cannot be kept; in fact, it is unclear whether they care if his rhetoric has any connection to actual reality. To understand this political discourse,

I argue that we should return to Freud's theory of the group formation and his notion of emotional identification. In other words, we need a rational theory of the irrational in order to understand how populists on the Right, like Trump, gain and maintain supporters. Moreover, Freud's theory of free association helps us to see how Trump's campaign might actually be good for America because it serves to expose the underlying fantasies that support the conservative coalition. Finally, it is important to place Trump's brand of fascism in the context of contemporary media and neoliberal capitalism as we also examine Bernie Sanders' populism of the Left.

SUSPENDING THE CRITICAL

In *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, Freud uses his experience of hypnotizing people to argue that at the foundation of blind love and group psychology, we find the same overestimation of the object and suspension of the subject's critical faculties.[1] Freud claims that in these social situations, one replaces one's moral conscience and critical faculties with the object of identification (the ego ideal). He also posits that this relationship returns the hypnotized follower to a time when the helpless child is dominated by the archaic father and the all-powerful id before the development of the reality-testing ego.

The first way, then, that psychoanalysis helps us to understand the neoliberal populism of the Right and Trump's relation to his followers is through this notion that the identification with the leader functions to suspend the reality-testing function of the followers. As Trump said on several occasions, he could shoot someone in the middle of a crowded street, and his followers would still support him. This mode of blind love and adoration perplexes his critics who cannot understand how he is not held accountable for saying outrageous things. From the perspective of the rational, reality-testing ego, it is absurd to suggest that he could get away with murder, but on the level of political identification, reality can be constructed purely through speech acts that go beyond reason and perception.

For Lacan, the structure of hypnosis represents the key to understanding fascism and the politics of self-sacrifice. At the end of his *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, he opposes psychoanalysis to fascism by arguing that analysis works by maintaining a distance between the idealizing "I" of transference and the object that causes one to desire, while in hypnosis, blind love, and collective fascination, the object and the ideal are super-imposed.[2] For instance, in hypnosis, the gaze of the hypnotizer is the

object that also plays the role of the ego ideal in the form of suggestion.[3] Lacan posits that Freud developed this theory of hypnotic fascination at the time of his growing awareness of fascism, and so Freud in his text on group psychology uses hypnosis to explain the rise of social formations that will eventually result in Nazism.[4] Moreover, since psychoanalytic practice grew out of the abandonment of hypnosis, Lacan is able to argue that the discourse of the analyst offers a critique of hypnosis and fascism.[5] Thus, while the structure of fascination is based on the identification of the ego ideal with the object, analysis is centered on the separation of the two. In the practice of psychoanalysis, by not responding to the demands of the patient's desire for identification and idealization, the transference based on fascination is suspended. In other words, the analyst has to desire not to be idealized by the subject, and in this way, Lacan adds, it is the analyst who occupies the position of the hypnotized in an upside-down hypnosis.[6]

With regard to Trump, once his followers place him in the position of the Ideal ego, and they identify with this ideal, they give up their critical faculties as they become fascinated with the power of his voice. Like the lover who has overestimated the love-object, one becomes humble and blind as one follows the commands of the beloved.[7] For Freud, in terms of the formation of a fascist group, what occurs is that the followers all identify on an emotional level with being in the same situation.[8] In this case, the people being imitated, the other followers, no longer represent a love interest, but rather, the group unifies by sharing the same emotional response through a process Freud calls "mental infection."[9] The example Freud gives for this contagious identification concerns a group of girls in a boarding school who all have the same emotional response of jealousy when another girl receives a letter from someone with whom she is secretly in love.[10] Unlike the identification through incorporation or the symptomatic identification with a single trait from another, this third form of identification involves copying an emotional reaction in response to identifying with the desire of others. Since the other girls want to be in the same place as the girl who has received the letter, they all respond in the same emotional way, and under a sense of guilt, they all accept the need to suffer. We find here the essence of the victim identification on a group level: people unite over a shared suffering, which is able to spread in a viral way as a mental infection. It is clear that Trump feeds this type of victim identification by stressing how the working class has been screwed over by bad trade deals, immigrants, and an ineffective government. To understand the populism of the Right, it is therefore necessary to understand both the shared viral emotional identification between the followers and the

hypnotic relation between each member and the leader. As Lacan adds, what has plagued the Marxist-Hegelian interpretation of fascism is that it cannot explain these unconscious processes of identification and idealization.[11]

Psychoanalysis helps us to comprehend both Trump and his followers by showing how fascism is structured in the same way as hypnosis, and hypnosis itself replicates blind love.[12] Freud affirms that in all of these social ties, we always witness "the weakness of intellectual ability, the lack of emotional restraint, the incapacity for moderation and delay, the inclination to exceed every limit in the expression of emotion . . . "[13] Here, we find a great description of a Trump rally where the uneducated gather to express their emotions in front of a leader who cannot stop using excessive language. As Freud insists, in this state of group regression, the lack of courage and originality of the members is compensated by the repetition of group attitudes based on "racial characteristics, class prejudices, public opinions."[14] The populism of the Right thus needs prejudice in order to solidify group solidarity and to overcome the followers' lack of courage and originality.

On a fundamental level, Freud argues that at the root of all social solidarity, we find the replacement of envy and jealousy with an identification based on equality.[15] For instance, when a new child is born, and the older child feels that he will lose the love of his parents, his first desire is to eliminate his rival, but he soon realizes that since his parents love the children the same, his only solution is to identify himself with the other child.[16] Here, group identity is formed as a reaction to envy and hostility, and as Freud posits, the desire for social justice and equality stem from the idea of the child that if he cannot be the sole favorite of the parents, then no one should be favored.[17] Freud adds that we find the same dynamic at play when a bunch of girls all crowd around an adored singer: while it would be easy for them to all be jealous of each other; instead they act as a united group and share their sentimental emotions: "Originally rivals, they have succeeded in identifying themselves with one another by means of a similar love for the same object."[18] By moving from Imaginary rivalry to Symbolic identification, the possibility of social solidarity is established. In other words, the dual relationship between the ego and the other is transcended by the Symbolic relationship of language and social mediation.[19]

Freud's theory of social justice can be traced to the same dynamics of overcoming Imaginary envy, rivalry, and jealousy. According to the "group spirit," no one in the social order should put himself forward, and all "must be the same and have the same."[20] Furthermore, in Freud's rewriting of the theory of the social contract, "Social justice means that we deny ourselves

many things so that others may to do without them as well . . . The demand for equality is the root of social conscience and the sense of duty."[21] Unlike other thinkers, Freud bases the motives for social justice, solidarity, and the demand for equality on a reaction to envy, jealousy, and rivalry.[22] However, Freud's theory of the social bond may entail that all forms of populism cannot help but rely on irrational group processes.

POPULISM ON THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT

It is important to return to Freud's text to see how the populism of the Right can be related to the populism on the Left. In other terms, how do we explain Trump's appeal to the working class and how does it differ from someone like Bernie Sanders on the Left? I will argue that part of the answer to this question entails distinguishing between the class antagonisms of the Left and the racial divisions of the Right. In the case of the Left, the group solidarity of the people is defined in opposition to the upper classes who control the economy and the political system. On the other hand, the populists on the Right need to define themselves against liberals, immigrants, foreign nations, and different races and ethnicities; instead of focusing on class conflict or class solidarity, they interpret class through the lens of identity politics. In this structure, someone like Trump can argue that if only we built a wall and kept all of the Mexicans out, we would have good jobs. The problem then is not that the billionaire class is hording all of the wealth and profits; the problem is that Mexicans and Chinese are stealing our jobs. In this conservative version of identity politics, white males blame people who do not share the same demographic identity for all of their problems, and we see this dynamic throughout the world where immigrants and Muslims are blamed for the failures of economic globalization.

Unlike populists on the Right who are locked into an Imaginary rivalry with their debased other, Freud's theory implies that populists on the Left overcome interpersonal rivalry by affirming a Symbolic notion of universal justice, but it is unclear if the Left can escape from the idealization of the charismatic leader and the division of society between the idealized people and the demonized powerful others. In other terms, it may be that both the populisms of the Left and the Right rely on a regressive hypnotic structure where blind love negates critical thinking and universal justice.

Freud posits that in social groups like the military and the church, all the members have to be loved by the leader in the same way, but this demand for equality is only for the members and not the leader: "All the members must

be equal to one other, but they all want to be ruled by one person."[23] It is, then, this need for an all-powerful leader/master that has to be explained in order to determine how populism functions today. For Freud, the roots of fascism can be understood through his theory of the primal horde that he borrowed from Darwin and first presented in *Totem and Taboo*. In his retelling of his original theory, Freud claims that in this primal social structure, we find the origins of the powerful leaders in relation to a community of equal brothers.[24] He then hypothesizes that what happens in blind love, fascism, and hypnosis is a regression to the state of the primal horde and that there is a homology between the development of the group and the development of the individual.[25] Freud stresses that this primal leader and father was totally free and "his intellectual acts were strong and independent even in isolation and his will needed no reinforcement from others . . . he loved no one but himself, but other people only as far as they served his needs."[26] This analysis by Freud can be read as a perfect description of Trump, who is seen as a powerful leader by his followers because he is strong willed, and he appears to need no one else, not even the Republican Party.

In this reactivation of the primal horde, Trump's wealth allowed him to run without relying on other people or groups, and by self-funding his campaign, he was able to feed the image of the self-made man who is the master of his own destiny. Furthermore, his wealth gives him the power to treat other people as objects of his will: his team is only there to service his needs as he presents himself as the isolated leader, uninfluenced by the usual political donors or party leaders. In referring to Nietzsche, and with the rising power of fascism in mind, Freud calls this type of leader a "superman," who is someone who loves no one but is loved by all: "He may be of a masterful nature, absolutely narcissistic, self-confident, and independent."[27] Once again, this description fits Trump well and shows how the populism of the Right is always dependent on the overestimation of the leader who is a purely independent and self-satisfying master.

Freud argues that love often functions to put a check on narcissism, but with the fascist crowd, there is no limit to the narcissism of the leader.[28] Central to Freud's theory is the idea that the narcissism of the master is coupled with the inhibition of sexual impulses in the followers. Since object love threatens to undermine narcissism, Freud has to find a way to explain both the narcissism of the leader and the sexless devotion of the followers. Moreover, he posits that in order to show how group psychology turns into individual psychology, it is necessary to posit that the primal father has horded all of the women and has prevented his sons from accessing direct

sexual pleasure: the result is that the sons have to be abstinent as they watch the father enjoy.[29] Meanwhile, Freud adds that the unused sexual drives of the brothers are transformed into the emotional ties with the father/leader. What is so interesting in this description is that it matches the way that Trump always surrounds himself with beautiful women and family members during his press conferences. He literally represents himself as the primal father of enjoyment as his followers are motivated to identify with the primal enjoyment of the father.[30]

In returning to the question of hypnosis, Freud argues that the hypnotist tells the subject that the hypnotizer possesses a mysterious power that robs people of their free will.[31] Freud posits that this power must be the same that is used by kings and chieftains and makes them difficult to approach. Freud then adds that it is the look of the Other that is the source of power.[32] The look or gaze allows the hypnotist to say to the subject that all attention should be focused on the hypnotist as the rest of the world becomes uninteresting, but the hypnotists does not say this because the relationship has to remain unconscious.[33] For Freud, this situation of focused attention on the Other and disinterest in the rest of the world defines the essence of transference and the functioning of unconscious formations like jokes and dreams.[34] In other words, the sleeper who loses the critical capacity to test reality regresses to a fascist state of hypnosis where the helpless subject is forced to watch the representations that appear to come from the Other.

Freud argues that the hypnotist puts the patient into a state that is similar to dreams because the critical faculties are suspended and the unconscious emerges in a distorted form.[35] This regression also entails that the subject returns to the primal relation between the all-powerful archaic father and the helpless child: "[W]hat is thus awakened is the idea of a paramount and dangerous personality towards who only a passive-masochistic attitude is possible, to whom one's will has to be surrendered –while to be alone with him, 'to look him in the face', appears a hazardous enterprise."[36] Freud insists that the regression to the relationship with the gaze of the threatening, dangerous Other is desired by the subject who wishes to be governed by "unrestricted force."[37] Freud thus posits a primary form of masochism that defines fascism, hypnosis, blind love, and the unconscious itself.

It has been my argument that one cannot explain the political power of someone like Trump, if one does not work through these unconscious processes that determine the fundamental relationship between people and authority. While pundits and political scientists are perplexed by the

seductive power of populist leaders, Freud helps us to see how we all contain in our unconscious a masochistic desire to be ruled by a powerful, archaic force. As we saw in Chap. 2, at the roots of many political and religious institutions, we find a fantasy of traumatic victimization, which is then used to give the subject a sense of innocence and purity that allows one to escape from criticism and justifies all acts of revenge. In the fascist crowd, the submission to the leader reactivates the fundamental fantasy of masochistic victimization where pain is confused with pleasure and fiction mixes with reality. However, as Freud and Lacan insist, we are often blind to the force of the unconscious because we are so invested in censoring anything that we perceive to be irrational, shameful, antisocial, or out of our personal control.

History and the Unconscious

Up to this point, I have focused on an ahistorical approach to Trump and the political unconscious, but it is important to place the universal structures Freud developed within a historical structure. As many critics have argued, psychoanalysis often suffers from not taking into full account the effect of different cultures and time periods, and so it is necessary to historicize and relativize psychic structures.[38] In the case of analyzing the rise of Trump, it is vital to look at how contemporary capitalism and media culture produces a new mode of fascism.

On the most fundamental level, we can define our current neoliberal order as one that places the exchange value of the market above all other values, meanings, or traditions. As Marx argued, capitalism spreads beyond all borders and liquefies all traditional stable structures, and what we are witnessing in our current age of globalization is the viral movement of capital into all parts of the world and all aspects of human existence. It is therefore important to ask how we must revise Freud's modern theories when they are used to understand a neoliberal world? Specifically for our current purposes, we have to ask: How does modern fascism and the populism of the Right get restructured in the age of global capital and neoliberal mass media?[39]

The Commodification of the Self

As a former reality TV persona, Trump has been able to cash in on his mass media star power, which circles around the commodification of his own identity. What Trump is always selling is his own name and reputation; in

fact, he broke new ground when during a press conference after a primary election victory, he brought out several of his own products, including Trump Steaks and Trump Vodka. Here the border between politics and business has been broken down as both are repackaged as advertising brand recognition. In turning his name into his central commodity, Trump himself is able to embody pure surplus value: like so many multinational corporations, instead of focusing on producing products for use-value, Trump sells a brand.[40] However, as a shameless self-promoter, Trump's refusal to differentiate between politics, entertainment, and business threatens to expose the repressed truth of our political system, which concerns the way democracy has been taken over by the need of candidates to spend huge sums of money on advertising themselves like a product. In this historical instance, the modern divide between democracy, capitalism, and entertainment has broken down.

To understand this new form of fascism that we find in neoliberal society, we can turn to Freud's theory of jokes.[41] Freud's basic insight is that the joke teller bribes the audience by giving them enjoyment in exchange for the listeners not criticizing the joke teller or holding the joker responsible for his sexual and aggressive attacks. Here the escape from criticism is not due solely to the submission of the subject to unconscious processes controlled by a powerful censoring source; instead, one makes an implicit social contract that allows for the free reign of unconscious fantasies that cannot be subjected to criticism. In the case of Trump, he sanctions the racism, sexism, and violence of his crowd as they promise not to hold him responsible, but in the process, he himself becomes a joker.

Unlike the fascist leader of the past, someone like Trump undermines his own power by turning himself into a pure surplus value. Instead of following the tradition of other fascist leaders and arguing that America must affirm its destiny and dominate the world through the creation of a master race, he tries to sell himself as a self-made brand dedicated to his own self-inflation. For example, one of the more remarkable aspects of his discourse is his constant use of superlatives, which can be considered to be a form of hyperbolic self-inflated language. As he insists that he is going to make America great again and make the best deals because he has the greatest company with the greatest employees, this hyperbole indicates an excess and lack inherent in language itself.

SANDERS AND THE POPULISM OF THE LEFT

Trump's discourse has to be placed within a historical context that combines together the abandonment of the working class by the Democratic Party and the conservative coalition's use of victim identification politics. Since both sides fear and reject a real Left alternative that would help the working class, the vast majority of the populace is forced to support either Trump or Bernie Sanders. Although Sanders does appear to offer a populism of the Left without the Right's reliance on prejudice and a strong leader, what Sanders actually represents is a fake version of revolution and socialism. Of course, Sanders would try to do more for the working class as he challenges a corrupt campaign finance system and demonizes Wall Street and the wealthy, but many of his policy proposals do not go far enough to take on the destructive effects of neoliberal capitalism. For example, he wants to raise taxes on the rich and financial institutions, but he has no way of stopping the flow of money to other parts of the world. Likewise, he wants to protect American jobs, yet in the current system, individual nations cannot prevent multinational corporations from moving their labor or operations to another country. As I will argue in the next chapter, all of our major social and political issues are now global, but we lack any global government or real enforcement mechanism, and so, the current focus on nation-state solutions will always fail.

In terms of his call for revolution, what Sanders is really doing is encouraging millions of people to donate money online, and while this helps people to buy into the system, it is far from a political revolution. In fact, we are still seeing money-controlled politics, as Sanders has to raise huge funds to air commercials, hire staff, and hold rallies. Moreover, there is polling evidence that many of his supporters are not focused on his actual policy initiatives; rather, they are excited by an alternative, and they fear the other choices.[42] Also, as much as Sanders wants to tell his followers that his campaign is really about the people, they cannot help but invest in a cult of personality. Instead of doing the hard, long work of actually building a viable alternative political organization and movement, the Sanders campaign is often fueled by emotion and temporary involvement.

Sanders' use of the term socialism is also highly problematic because he is not talking about the public owning companies and banks; what he is offering is to rebuild the old welfare state system by publically financing universities and healthcare and breaking up the largest financial institutions. Although this would be a major improvement for the United States,

it does not confront the destructive nature of global capitalism or the limitations of global regulation. Also, like so many other liberal politicians, Sanders believes that higher education is the path to a good job, even though it is clear that most jobs are now low-paying service positions that do not require a college degree.

Sanders has been a good counter to Trump's use of racism and xenophobia, but his populism of the Left still relies more on emotion than reason. For instance, his huge rallies are subject to the same contagion of emotion that we find in Trump's crowds, and many of his policy proposals are not matched with any description of how these goals will be achieved; instead he relies on saying that if millions of people get involved, then politicians from both parties will be forced to do the right thing. Unfortunately, a real democratic movement for justice cannot be achieved without a real organization and dedication to radical transformation.

It is also hard to imagine how the current campaign system in America will be changed in the way Sanders and his supporters demand because the Supreme Court has ruled that money is the same thing as speech, and since you cannot regulate free speech, you cannot legislate the use of money in campaigns. What is remarkable about this legal opinion is the way that speech and capitalism are equated. As a prime example of neoliberal culture, what we find in the court's ruling is the idea that speech, freedom, and money are the same thing, and so any form of censorship or governmental control is experienced as a form of Symbolic castration.

The Myth of the Liberal Superego

Returning to Trump, we see that the false equation of money with speech and freedom is enhanced by the notion that the internal censor in the form of the superego is in actuality the liberal media, professors, and political establishment. Due to a false association between liberals and the social super-ego, what many of his followers like about Trump is that he appears to say what is on his mind without censorship. As he himself indicates, he is tired of all of the political correctness in American society, so he is not going to shy away from calling people terrorists or rapists. Supporters see this type of discourse as indicating that he says the truth without censorship, and he will no longer be a victim of the liberal super-ego that makes us feel guilty for all of our negative thoughts about Mexicans, Muslims, foreigners, and women. From this perspective, the liberal elites who control our media, universities, and

political discourse prevent us from saying the truth, and so we are unable to confront our real problems.[43]

This identification of liberal elites with the super-ego is coupled with the idea that in our media-saturated world, we desire a media that is immediate, natural, and real. Thus, reality TV, and many modes of social media, represent attempts of overcoming Symbolic alienation by making the Symbolic mediation itself appear to be natural and immediate. By getting rid of scripts and actors, new media productions pretend that they are presenting the real without mediation. Therefore, as a former reality TV star, Trump tries to cash in on this idea that he is real, authentic, and true because he does not talk from a script, and he refuses to be handled by PR people. In this mode of discourse, he is trying to make the media immediate and overcome alienation and the censorship of the liberal super-ego. It appears that even though he has no political experience and very little knowledge of politics, what people like about him is that he is an anti-politician politician feeding into the anti-government rhetoric of the conservative coalition. After all, since the time of Reagan, one of the main tenants of the Republican Party has been to get rid of government, and so it should not surprise us if Trump can win with no experience. Since conservatives have been demonizing the government for two generations in order to reduce regulations and cut taxes, they are now being subjected to their own medicine. Trump is thus the logical extension of the conservative movement, which was always really about gaining political power and enhancing personal wealth.

Trump then is performing a form of wild analysis where he free associates without much shame or censorship. Since he does not feel that he has to rely on wealthy donors to back his campaign, he is able to say the truth about his party, and this often means exposing its hatred for others. Thus, instead of using indirect racism and sexism, he openly says what he thinks about Mexicans, Muslims, and women. As a verbal bully, he uses words as his main weapon, and these words often end up attacking everyone and anyone, including his own party. For example, in one speech, he commented on how much he loves the uneducated. What he was probably trying to say was that many of his supporters do not have a college education and that is why they are suffering so badly in the current economy, but what he actually revealed was that Republicans often appeal to people who do not believe in reason, expertise, or science.

In this strange political culture, the liberals have abandoned the working class for meritocratic professionals, while the wealthy donors of the Right cash in on their false support for the working class. Not only does a sense

of shared victimhood unite the wealthy and the poor on the Right, but as we see with Trump, the poor often identify with the wealth and power of the rich. As a figure of excess, Trump represents the consumer object that is supposed to make up for everything we lack. From this perspective, consumerism gives us direct satisfaction of our drives without having to worry about the law, censorship, and desire of the Other.[44]

The Boob Tube

Much of Trump's success has been driven by the news media, which no longer is focused on reporting the news but instead is centered on attracting the highest number of viewers so it can sell advertisements for the highest price or increase cable subscriptions. To understand this type of cultural environment where surplus value trumps all other values, we have to think of the new media news system as lacking any moral compass, and in the age of 24-hour multichannel news coverage, every station is so afraid of missing out on the big story that they tend to all present the same news as every other channel.[45] Here instead of the multiplicity of channels bringing a more diverse selection of information, everyone conforms to everyone else out of fear of missing out. Therefore, the obsessional narcissism of the liberal media results in an amoral viral circulation of sensationalist representations that caters to our unconscious desires and fears. In this system, someone like Trump gets much more coverage and exposure because he is always making news by saying unpredictable and outrageous things. Furthermore, since he combines conservative rhetoric with a manipulation of the liberal media, Trump reveals how liberals and conservatives actually function together.

In this neoliberal media culture, people from both political tendencies try to escape from any responsibility for what they say, and one way they do this is by feeding into the cultural opposition of criticism versus ignorant bliss. Within our entertainment culture, one seeks to enjoy without thinking, and the media delivers on this desire by presenting information so fast and so compacted that there is no time to break down and decode the messages being internalized. Instead of consciously examining social information in a critical way, fast media and fast talkers like Trump cater to unconscious processing. We can therefore think of the media as now playing the role of the gazing hypnotic fascist leader who is listened to by followers who have given up their critical faculties. Just as one stares into the gaze of the hypnotist who tells the hypnotized to ignore the world

around her, the media watcher regresses to the primal masochistic relationship between the archaic father and the helpless child. The populism of the Left and the Right thus offer an infantilization of culture and politics.

Beyond Unconscious Populism

In the next chapter, I articulate a way out of the new populism on the Left and the Right, but first, I want to end by articulating how Trump's and Sanders' campaigns may be good for American politics and the rest of the world. As I have argued above, Trumps' free associations help to expose the underlying unconscious fantasies supporting the conservative coalition, and one effect of this discourse is that we are seeing the possible break-up of the Republican Party. Many of the elites in the conservative coalition reject Trump because he not only alienates many voters through his distasteful bullying, but he has also turned some of his aggression toward his own party. As a billionaire who can self-fund his run for the nomination, he reveals that the conservative push to allow for unlimited spending by individuals in campaigns can result in cutting out the party from the relationship between a candidate and a voter. Since he does not have to rely on the Republican Party for resources, he shows how money can lead to freedom, but in this case, it is freedom from the establishment.

In a similar way, Sanders has turned to individual small donors to bypass the Democratic Party, and in result of his efforts, the establishment has tried to counter his nomination through the use of super delegates and other party power plays. One possible result of this battle between Sanders and the Democratic establishment is that the party itself will be divided between a Left and a moderate wing. This division, in turn, could end up also destroying the Democrat Party at the same time the Republicans meet a similar fate. The question then becomes what happens when each party dissolves: will the people retreat into a state of total apathy or will they seek a new alternative. My argument in the next chapter will be that a real Left alternative has to emerge because the current form of politics is based on an investment in the nation state, which no longer can work in a globalized world. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the service provided by Trump and Sanders is that they have used a mode of free association to expose the repressed psychopathologies that have held together the Democratic and Republican coalitions.

Notes

1. Freud, S. (1975). *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego*. New York: WW Norton & Company, p. 44.
2. Lacan, J. (1998). *The four fundamental concepts of psycho-analysis* (Vol. 11). New York: WW Norton & Company, p. 272.
3. Ibid., p. 273.
4. Ibid., p. 272.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Freud, *Group psychology*, p. 45.
8. Ibid., p. 39.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Lacan, *Four fundamental*, p. 275.
12. Freud, *Group psychology*, p. 47.
13. Ibid., p. 49.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., pp. 52–53.
16. Ibid., p. 52.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. In Lacan's later works, he realizes that his original theory of Symbolic mediation represents an endorsement of linguistic and social alienation. He then argues that we need to find a way to separate from the Symbolic Other, who has no real actual existence but is defined by a set of social beliefs.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 53.
22. For instance, Hobbes bases the need for the social contract on the fear of living in a state of natural war and anarchy.
23. Freud, *Group psychology*, p. 53.
24. Ibid., p. 54.
25. Ibid., pp. 54–55.
26. Ibid., p. 55.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 56.
29. Ibid.
30. Freud posits that the sons are only able to overcome the primal father when they move from nonsexual identification with each other to homosexual object love, which has the result of freeing their libido so they have the ability to kill off the father (*Group psychology*, p. 56., note 1). From this perspective fascist groups have to repress homosexuality so that the homosocial bonding of the

followers can emerge. As Freud insists, the military and the church represent this same need to replace homosexuality with a nonsexual bond between the followers and with the leader.

31. Ibid., p. 57.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 58.
34. Ibid., p. 57, notes, 1–2.
35. Ibid., p. 58.
36. Ibid., p. 59.
37. Eric Fromm's work often focuses on why people try to escape their own freedom by submitting themselves to the will of powerful others. Fromm, E. (1994). *Escape from freedom*. New York: Macmillan.
38. Felman, S., & Laub, D. (1992). *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
39. Žižek, *In defense of lost cause*s, pp. 264–233.
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