

Holt's own account of 1,000- and 15,000-page mathematical proofs and of centuries-long efforts involving successive generations of geniuses sufficiently demonstrates how far from "trivial" mathematics is.

John Dolan, *Associate Professor of Mathematics, University of Minnesota*

SAUSSURE OF HERSELF

I would like to correct some errors that appeared in Larissa MacFarquhar's otherwise thoughtful and even-handed article about my company, Semiotic Solutions ["This Semiotician Went to Market," September/October 1994].

In her description of our whisky myth quadrant, MacFarquhar states that we found that whisky conjures up images of old men sitting by the fire-side *eating shortbread* (my italics). The "old men" bit is right, but the "shortbread" actually refers to the clapped-out, stereotypical images of Scotland prevalent in whisky codes, which, in turn, are diluting the strength and power of the drink itself and weakening the values of its provenance. If MacFarquhar gave Marshall Blonsky her misinterpretation instead of our interpretation, no wonder he winced. If we'd told our clients that, they would have thought we were potty.

More serious errors appear in the analysis of British Telecom advertising, used by MacFarquhar to raise questions about just how "semiotic" our recommendations are. In the first place, our analysis did not end, as she suggests, with the obvious statement that "chatting on the phone was regarded as a girly activity, too effeminate for a guy's guy to indulge in." British Telecom knew that already. What we suggested to BT was that they were *colluding* throughout their communications in reinforcing this cultural stereotyping—and thereby keeping "small (female) talk" in the shadow of "big (male) talk." Semiotically, they were denigrating their most faithful and high-spending nonbusiness consumers and forcing them to resort to

artifice and cheating. Our recommendation was that they actively *empower* the female use of the phone in their advertising—and, at the same time, open a crack in the carapace that was keeping male phone usage down.

Secondly, the "series of commercials showing male phone interactions" that MacFarquhar says were developed as the result of our work actually appeared before we became involved, although we concluded BT was moving in the right direction. (We agree with the comment, "Savvy, yes, but semiotic?") Our recommendations resulted, in fact, in the current high-profile campaign, using Bob Hoskins as a "social engineer" (to quote one reviewer) whose remit is to make everyone—men and women—look again at the real value to society, family, and community of what is so easily dismissed as "girly" gossip or chat. As the campaign says, "It's good to talk."

One final point. Monty Alexander didn't "memorize whole chunks of the [Semiotics Solutions] brochure." He wrote it.

Virginia Valentine, *Managing Director, Semiotic Solutions*

CREWS MISSILE

Any discussion of the role of psychoanalysis in contemporary intellectual life should begin with the proposition that Frederick Crews is essentially correct ["Terminating Analysis," July/August 1994]. Psychoanalysis is simply invalid as a theory of mind and behavior. Conventional wisdom sometimes suggests that Freud's speculations were right for his time (suppressed Victorian sexuality, etc.), even though they may be less relevant now. But, along with critics from inside psychology, such as Adolf Grünbaum and Malcom Macmillan, Crews clinches the case that the theory was always bankrupt.

Scholars in the arts, humanities, and social sciences are no different than their colleagues in the natural sciences. When we make use of "theory" in our work, whether Marxist, feminist, psy-

LITERARY ENGLAND

Join us as we trace the lives & legends of Britain's poets, novelists & playwrights, in style!

Two leisurely weeks in August, with three nights at each country inn or manor house, gourmet food and 7-17 like-minded companions.

Recommended by the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, Birnbaum's and Fodor's, our One-of-a-Kind Tours™ also include the finest English, European and California gardens, art and architecture.

Quality Tours . . . Since 1984

Free Brochure:

COOPERSMITH'S ENGLAND
Box 900-LF, Inverness, Calif. 94937
(415) 669-1914 Fax: (415) 669-1942



Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Act of August 12, 1970; Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code) 1. Title of publication: LINGUA FRANCA . A. Publication number: 10518810 2. Date of filing: November 21, 1994 3. Frequency of issue: Bi-monthly A. Number of issues published annually: 6 B. Annual Subscription price: \$40.00 institution; \$24.95 individual 4. Location of known office of publication: 22 West 88th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10018 5. Location of general business offices of the publishers: 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018 6. Names and address of publisher, editor and managing editor: Publisher, Jeffrey Kitay, 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018. Editor, Judith Shulevits, 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018. Managing Editor, Inigo Thomas, 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018. 7. Owner (if owned by a corporation its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address as well as that of each individual must be given.) Name: Lingua Franca, Inc. 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018. Jeffrey Kitay, 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY, 10018. Frieda Goldsmith, 22 West 88th Street, New York, NY 10018. 8. Known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities (if there are none, so state): None 9. Not applicable 10. Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: A. Total no. copies printed (Net press run): 22,402 B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,479 2. Mail subscriptions: 14,493 C. Total paid circulation: 15,972 D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 2,586 E. Total distribution: 18,557 F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 2,162 2. Returns from agents: 1,688 G. Total: 22,493. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: A. Total no. copies printed (Net press run): 19,000 B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 2,205 2. Mail subscriptions: 11,752 C. Total paid circulation: 13,957 D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 1,817 E. Total distribution: 15,869 F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 931 2. Returns from agents: 2,475 G. Total: 19,000 11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Julia J. Kern, Business Manager.

The thinking person's source
for high-quality, hard-to-find
sex toys, books and videos.

Toy catalog \$2
Books & Videos \$2
(applied to first order)

GOOD
VIBRATIONS

1210 Valencia #LF
San Francisco, CA
94110



CHEAP THRILLS

Free Personals
in the next issue of *Lingua Franca!*

First 25 words without charge
in our Valentine's Issue
(each word thereafter \$1.00 per word)

*Include your e-mail address for quick
responses!*

Text due by December 31 to:

Lf Advertising Dept.
22 West 38th Street, New York, NY 10018
or fax it to: (212)302-0847

VISA/Mastercard accepted



LIBIDO

The Journal of Sex and Sensibility

Quarterly/\$26*

It's smart, bold, challenging.
It's all-embracing and unafraid
to bridge the barriers of gender
orientation and age to turn on
the mind and the body.

LIBIDO, Dept. LF
Box 146721, Chicago, IL 60614

VISA/MC Orders

Call 1-800-495-1988

*(Outside USA: Canada & Mexico, \$36;
Europe, \$46; elsewhere, \$56; U.S. Funds)

Letters to the *Editor*

Continued from page 73

choanalytic, or some other kind, it is helpful if that theory has some validity. Alas, so far as psychoanalysis is concerned, what was true wasn't new, and what was new wasn't true. Everyone should understand this clearly by now.

It is still possible, of course, to use psychoanalysis to understand the work of an artist who *believed* in the theory, or who used the theory as the basis for his or her own work. Scholars who adopt this stance should make their position clear at the outset, so that they will not be misunderstood. But scholars who assume that the theory sheds independent light on historical figures and events, artists and their creations, and the like, are on shaky ground indeed.

**John Kihlstrom, Professor of
Psychology, Yale University**

A NEW MICKEY MOUSE CLUB

Jon Weiner's "In the Belly of the Mouse" [July/August 1994] reminded me of my own experiences at the Disney Archive. I went there in 1988 to conduct research on animation in general and Walt Disney in particular. When I called the Archive to arrange my visit, I said that I was interested in Disney's work in South America for the State Department in the 1940s. I was told that I could save the bother of a trip, because "that's already been written about, in Richard Shale's book." Shale's *Donald Duck Joins Up* (UMI Research Press, 1982), while a good chronology of Disney's State Department work, is not a critical history. But as far as Disney was concerned, it dealt with everything that needed to be covered.

When I came anyway, the librarians at the Archive were incredibly nice and professional; they granted me access to any number of movies, television programs, books, and periodicals. What I really wanted to see, however, were documents pertaining to Disney's State Department work. I had already seen all of the available documents at the

National Archives in Washington; I assumed that if the government had no problem with my viewing the materials, then neither would Disney. This was where I hit a brick wall. I was told that I could not see anything regarding Disney's trips to South America because those papers were in the legal department, off-limits to scholars. In effect, Disney was tougher than the government when it came to releasing information about federally-funded programs.

I was greatly heartened by Professor Weiner's article. It sounds like there are enough of us out there to start a support group: "I've done research at Disney, and I survived."

**Eric Smoodin, Associate Professor of
Literature and Cinema Studies,
American University**

HE SAID HE WANTED A REVOLUTION

The debate over editing the work of C.L.R. James reported in the May/June 1994 issue ["If He Can't Do the Twist to It, It's Not His Revolution"] is real, but the comments of Cambridge African Studies scholar Keith Hart are distorting. He says: "The people in [James's] Marxist faction saw his work on cultural theory as a threatening diversion from Marxist theory." That is nonsense. As the leader of the Marxist organization James established and maintained ties with, I can tell you it makes no sense to call it a "faction." James did not write about cultural theory, but about culture. Hart and Grimshaw want to make his writing palatable to academic disciplinarians. We did not see his writing on culture as somehow in conflict with his Marxism. We relished, and I published and kept in print, his work on Melville and other novelists. The problem is not that we rejected his writing on culture, but that Hart and Grimshaw reject his Marxism.

**Martin Glaberman, Professor
Emeritus, Wayne State University**