**PSYCHOANALYTIC SPECULATIONS ON…**

**THE CASE OF *KING LEAR***

Catherine Belsey

* If, in psychoanalysis, art is a compensating pleasure, why do we like tragedy, a mimesis of pain?
* Like psychoanalysis, which cuts across science and fiction, pain “deconstructs that…opposition between psyche and physiology” (341),
* Even after we enter the Symbolic, “the materiality of the real” cannot be denied, reveals the inadequacy of the signifier (predicated upon the –φ, castrating lack)
* As the signifier does not give a complete/fixed/perfectly accurate depiction of reality, it is allied to fiction
* Fiction as inventiveness leads to pleasure, redeems our Symbolic loss
* What fiction imitates is not reality, but seduction (what is hidden behind the veil= the lack)🡪 fiction as *objet petit* *a*, both satisfies and suggests lack
* Freud dismissed fiction as mere anodyne, but what if tragedy points to drives beyond the pleasure principle: ex. *King Lear*
  + Lies, forgeries= failure of signifier to relate to the real
  + even though life/privileges depend on titles (“naming”), they have no force without material backup
  + faced with the naked madman, “the thing itself,” the signifier is revealed as irrelevant to stark reality
  + vacillation between sane and suggestive-mad speech 🡪vacillation of signifier as in/adequate to reflect reality
  + the father-daughter love as both generative and cultural, cannot be contained/named by the signifier
  + Lear’s final wordless lament marks the limits of utterance to signify all human conditions