



American Paraliterature and Other Theories to Hijack Communication

By Blake Stricklin

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A critical account of the 1975 Schizo-Culture Columbia conference examining the generative encounters of post-1968 French theory with postwar American avant-garde

“There’s a familiar story about the arrival of poststructuralist theory in U.S. universities with Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Jacques Lacan presenting papers at a conference at Johns Hopkins in 1966. Another event almost a decade later, the Schizo-Culture Conference at Columbia in 1975, attended by Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, John Cage, and William Burroughs, and its aftershocks, felt by the likes of Kathy Acker, Samuel R. Delany, and others, along with the former is the subject of this invaluable book. Stricklin traces the ways Schizo-Culture blew the doors off humanism, transforming contemporary literature and culture through an “American rhizome” far weirder and more punk than the influences of the so-called structuralist controversy.” —Dr. Aaron Jaffe, Frances Cushing Ervin Professor, Florida State University, US

“Blake Stricklin provides a powerful, revisionist account of the crucial war waged by experimental literature against the corporate capture and commodification of language in the last half century. Stricklin situates this practice between Deleuze’s initial articulation of a “control society” and our own moment of the reduction of all communication to data, grist for the algorithmic mill. From the vantage of the reduction of language to data, he returns to the experimental practices of paraliterature, reading them not as merely as ludic or transgressive, but instead as a front of struggle against the emergence of a control society. In doing so, Stricklin gives us a reappraisal of the synthesis that Deleuze and others formed between poststructuralism and Marxism; he also gives us a new way of reading experimental writing practices that are too easily dismissed. A necessary read.” —Christopher Breu, College of Arts and Science, Professor, Illinois State University, US

A critical account of the 1975 Schizo-Culture conference, which Michel Foucault called “the last countercultural event of the 1960s,” and its direct and indirect connection to American experimental literature.

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Introduction – November 1975: A Schizo Report; Chapter I – “I Have Nothing to Say”; Chapter II – “Storming the Reality Studio”; Chapter III – “Culture Stinks”; Conclusion – “1984: A Postscript on the Paracommons”

About the Author

Blake Stricklin is a lecturer at the University of Houston-Victoria, Texas.

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