The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Bearable and Unbearable Guilt: A Kleinian Perspective

Desy Safán-Gerard

To cite this article: Desy Safán-Gerard (1998) Bearable and Unbearable Guilt: A Kleinian Perspective, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 351-378, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006047

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006047

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

BEARABLE AND UNBEARABLE GUILT: A KLEINIAN PERSPECTIVE

BY DESY SAFÁN-GERARD, PH.D.

Material is presented from four analytic sessions with a patient who seems unable to bear guilt. The first two illustrate defenses against guilt; the last two show the incipient experience of guilt and, finally, the ability to suffer conscious guilt. The author questions interpretations that address defenses against guilt but fail to help the patient bear the guilt. Such interpretations can make the analyst prey to a sadomasochistic enactment in the transference whereby the patient expiates the guilt and reverts to not recognizing what he or she does to objects. The ability to bear guilt is increased by a diminution of the patient's destructiveness and by the mobilization of love.

The experience of conscious guilt represents a key moment in an analysis. Love and hate have finally come together, and love begins to surmount hatred. If patients can bear the guilt, they take responsibility for their neglect of and/or sadistic attacks on their objects and move toward reparation. If, however, patients cannot bear the guilt, they will resort to attempts other than reparation that tend to arrest development and produce a regressive movement in the analysis. The purpose of this paper is to present four analytic sessions with a patient who was unable, until the last session, to bear his guilt. The material of the first two sessions illustrates in its detail the vicissitudes of guilt, how the patient comes

I am grateful for critical comments on an earlier draft of this paper to Drs. James Grotstein, Donald Marcus, Albert Mason, Henri Rey, John Steiner, and Joel West.

into contact with it and then avoids it, employing various defenses. The last two sessions of the week reveal the consequences of the work of the two earlier sessions.

In discussing superego formation, Freud (1930) identified two sources of guilt: the fear of authority and later the fear of the superego. Both authority and the superego demand that the individual renounce instinctual satisfaction in order not to lose the parents' love or in order not to be punished. Throughout his writings on guilt Freud seems concerned with unconscious guilt that seeks relief in the form of punishment of the self or expiation. Both Freud and Klein (1935, 1940, 1948) conceive of guilt as due to aggressive impulses toward the object. Klein follows Freud's notion of unconscious guilt as a search for punishment. However, in her description of the depressive position she adds a new dimension to guilt which becomes the driving force of depressive anxiety (resulting from prior hostile attacks on the loved object) and is manifested in the consulting room as conscious guilt. Within the Kleinian framework guilt is a "marker" of development signaling a capacity for concern for the object. It typically initiates reparative efforts toward the external as well as the internal object. The person may attempt to restore the object or manically defend against an acknowledgment of his or her attacks on it. When guilt is short-circuited in this defensive way, it remains unconscious and has various consequences. If, for example, in the analytic situation the hostility and guilt toward the object are projected onto the analyst, the patient becomes a victim of the sadism attributed to the analyst. This can lead to a sadomasochistic enactment in the transference, in which the analyst's countertransference plays an important part.

How we understand guilt's unbearability will determine the stance we take with our patients, and each stance has its own pitfalls. If we believe that guilt results from an unrealistically harsh superego, our aim will be to help the patient free himself or herself from this excessively demanding superego. An analyst who, in an attempt to help free the patient from excessive guilt, interprets the patient's expressions of guilt as being *merely* the result of

the patient's harsh superego, is bypassing an opportunity to help the patient experience guilt, restore his or her objects, and thus replace the internal damaged object with a reconstituted one. An interpretation based on this notion can exacerbate the patient's manic defenses against depressive anxiety and lead to a "flight into health." On the other hand, if we believe that guilt is a necessary response to an awareness of the individual's own destructiveness, our goal will be to help the patient bear the guilt so that reparation for the fantasized or real attacks on his or her objects can take place. However, the analyst who is helping the patient to become aware of his or her guilt runs the risk of appearing to collude with the patient's harsh superego by becoming an external superego figure. This situation can trap the patient into a masochistic submission to his or her harsh superego and into a sadomasochistic enactment in the transference.

Freud's (1930) understanding that a harsh superego results from the individual's own aggressive impulses toward his or her objects is underscored by Klein (1946), who added to his understanding the mechanism by which the individual's own aggressive impulses result in a harsh internal object, namely, projective identification. It is this understanding that enables the analyst to trace the patient's harsh superego to the latter's own aggressiveness. Moreover, the presence of a harsh superego will direct the analyst to look for evidence in the transference of the patient's *particular* attacks on the object that can explain the *particular* harshness of his or her superego. The Kleinian analyst is not only concerned with the hostile feelings that are being projected into the object but understands that what is being projected is a part of the personality containing such feelings. Once introjected and identified with, a jealous child-part of the personality, for example, will impart a jealous quality to the superego, just as a mocking part of the personality will impart a mocking quality to it.

Confusion between guilt feelings and persecutory anxiety results when guilt appears too early. Klein had noted this in 1930 in the analysis of a psychotic child, Dick. The child's weak ego could not bear guilt. His solution was to project his hostility, which

resulted in feelings of persecution. Later in development, if guilt is not tolerated, it can also become persecutory, representing a regression to the paranoid-schizoid position. For Grinberg (1963) unconscious guilt, which Freud (1923) had linked to moral masochism, *is* persecutory guilt. It is necessary, however, to note that the persecution in persecutory guilt results from the projection of guilt in which the "other" is perceived as blaming, accusatory, and punishing. This is different from the persecution and "unbearability" of conscious guilt, as pointed out by Jaques (1968). The experience of guilt may lead one to feel "besieged" and have a wish to get rid of the guilt. But this experience of guilt does not result in persecution by an "other," a search for punishment or expiation, but is associated with loving feelings for the object and reparative impulses. It is interesting to note that in her later writings Klein (1960) extended the notion of guilt as an expression of a concern for the object to include a concern for the self, that is, guilt feelings that can arise out of the awareness of having neglected and abandoned parts of one's own personality.

When we attempt to understand the immature coping responses to guilt, we enter into the complicated area of sadomasochistic relationships, how these come into play in the transference, and the kind of impasses that result from them. Also related are the complex constellations of anxieties and defenses that have come to be called narcissistic object relationships (Rosenfeld, 1964, 1971), defensive organizations (O'Shaughnessey, 1981), or pathological organizations (Steiner, 1987). Sadomasochistic enactments in the transference can be understood as projections of sadistic impulses into the analyst while the patient becomes the analyst's victim, which, in turn, expiates the patient's guilt. In projecting sadistic impulses, the patient is also projecting the guilt connected with these impulses. By counterprojective identification the analyst may find himself or herself offering punishing or condemning interpretations *and* feeling guilty about them.

Impasses created by the patient's unbearable guilt are also induced when the analyst acts out his or her *own* hatred toward the patient as a frustrating object and is then beset with his or her *own*

unconscious guilt which can lead to a masochistic surrender to the patient's attacks. The patient's sadism projected into the analyst then finds an appropriate target, and the analyst cannot interpret effectively in response to the patient's accusations. The analyst is then confused as to whose sadism and whose guilt are at play. Transference and countertransference feelings become entangled, underscoring the view of the analytic enterprise as a two-way street, especially at times when the analyst has lost his or her position of technical neutrality. In this regard, Joseph (1983) describes patients who are difficult to help because they depend on their rigidly held omipotent balance. She warns us about a technical problem: "These patients often appear so narcissistic, so arrogant and disturbing that they ask to be badly treated or humiliated, and if they can get it, by a clumsy or unkind interpretation, they can slip into a, to them, very welcome sado-masochistic transference and insight will be further lost" (p. 149).

Steiner (1990) and Riesenberg-Malcolm (1981) poignantly illustrate this technical problem by describing their difficulties in dealing with sadomasochistic enactments in the transference of their narcissistic patients. In both cases they trace these enactments to the patient's guilt which must have been unbearable. In their accounts they reveal their own doubts and misgivings about their interventions. Of his patient Steiner notes, "Because he [the patient] also tended to project that part of him capable of proper judgement, it was difficult for me to know whether I was interpreting *responsibly or sadistically* so that doubt and guilt threatened to undermine my judgement" (p. 90, italics added). Both Steiner and Riesenberg-Malcolm acknowledge the role of the analyst's own guilt toward the patient which is stimulated and increased by the patient's projective identifications. The guilt which is not merely a response to the patient's projections is probably due to damaged, unrepaired objects in the analyst's internal world and the wish to repair them in the patient or in the patient's objects (Racker, 1968). The patient's accusations arouse the analyst's guilt for his or her own neglect, abuse, or attacks on his or her objects. The analyst's guilt may also account for the difficulties he

or she may experience in helping patients bear their guilt. Riesenberg-Malcolm eventually terminated the analysis of her patient because she, like Steiner with his patient, felt unable to help him bear his guilt.

At this point we must consider the question of why guilt feelings are so unbearable. Guilt implies a recognition of having attacked or damaged the loved object and an acknowledgment that the attack is due to the person's own hatred. This may have been the result of envy, jealousy, or a retaliatory attack. Perhaps such recognition leads to an unconscious linking between this attack and similar attacks—conscious and unconscious—on other objects in the past. Instances of real attacks may thus link up with omnipotent unconscious attacks on the primary object and their fantasized devastating effects. Guilt then becomes unbearable because it cannot be easily assuaged through reparation, since one would have to repair *all* the damage, real and fantasized. Often the pressure to get past guilt quickly leads to omnipotent, manic reparation (Rey, 1986; Segal, 1981). Because of the force of these attacks which add to the guilt's unbearability, we need to help the patient keep in mind the basic underlying love for these objects. In helping patients bear the guilt, the analyst may need to point out to them that guilt is the *evidence* of this love, without losing sight of the attacks on the objects. We should remember that a denial of guilt may be caused by unconscious envy or jealousy and the patient's reluctance to make that conscious as the cause of his or her unconscious attacks. In the case presented here one can see the connection between envious or jealous attacks and guilt. For it is the acknowledged envious or jealous attack that allows guilt to be experienced. Thus, we may be dealing here with a difficulty in experiencing love or with a deeply rooted destructiveness, both of which preclude the possibility of experiencing guilt.

Another way of looking at guilt's unbearability is that perhaps the patient cannot acknowledge guilt precisely because of the intrinsic connection between guilt and love for the object. The awareness of such love makes the patient acutely aware of his or her separateness and infantile dependence on the object that he

or she is manically trying to deny. Such dependency may not only arouse hatred; it may also put the patient in touch with his or her absent mother who threatens her child's sense of autonomy. The patient then assumes a pseudopsychopathic stance in which he or she defends against a wish not to care at all about his or her objects. The patient does that by evading, denying, and projecting guilt. This would imply that attempts by the analyst to help the patient become aware of guilt are doomed to failure because they threaten the patient's narcissistic organization. Taking this position argues that the primary task at hand is to bring to the patient's attention his or her reluctance to admit to loving, with the resulting anxiety of depending on an object and the fear of losing hard-won autonomy. In light of this, it is the analyst who might have to bear the patient's psychopathic stance by not addressing the patient's defenses against guilt—denial, evasions, projection—but linking guilt with love for the object and addressing the patient's anxieties about loving and depending on an object. Some critical aspects of guilt's bearability will be illustrated in the material below, in which the patient is projecting guilt onto me and experiencing persecution rather than guilt.

A CLINICAL ILLUSTRATION

I will now turn to a week of sessions with David, who came to me complaining about his indecisiveness in getting a divorce from his wife of twenty years from whom he had been separated for two years. He expressed considerable guilt about having left his wife, a successful professional in her own right, and their three teenage children, without warning, to pursue one of his numerous affairs. He had had affairs throughout the marriage, which he considered to be with his wife's implicit approval. When he came for treatment, his independent professional practice had practically collapsed together with the breakup of his family.

David was raised in a foreign country and came here escaping a fascist government. He was the oldest and only male child in his

family. His father is a successful businessman and his mother is a professional. He claims to have been ill-treated by his father during his childhood. His mother is depicted as being mostly unaware of the patient's emotional abuse by his father. A maid he remembers fondly played the role of mother and protected him from his father. At present he seldom talks about his mother and still experiences intense envy of his father's success and, except for money, David either rejects or devalues the help his father offers him.

The sessions I am going to report occurred in the third year of analysis. During the time I have been seeing him, his promiscuity has been center stage. At the beginning of the treatment he was involved with two or three women simultaneously, and we spent time analyzing his anxiety about depending on a single object. The most striking aspect of the treatment has been his tendency to intellectualize and his constantly showing off his analytic sophistication as another "conquest." At the beginning he seemed to want me only as a witness to his expertise and accepted my interpretations only if they supported his own. He seemed hardly aware of my presence as a partner in an exchange. My main task early on was to try to help him stay connected with his experience rather than with his theories about his experience. The patient is still extremely skilled at evading his emotions with intellectualizations and, as he puts it, "diluting" whatever is difficult to bear. David's glib responses at times create an uncomfortable feeling of an "as if" analysis where nothing alive is happening. He often complains at the beginning of a session that he is on "automatic pilot" and disconnected from his real feelings. On the other hand, he can be extremely charming and has a very active social life.

David vividly describes his conflict about women. He sees women at the center and men around them as boys. In a series of relationships since his separation he has been partially supported by his lovers, most of them older than himself. Talking about having flirted with the wife of a good client, he says he gets excited at the idea of the "other" desiring him but then is in turmoil

because he fears his life is on the verge of disaster. It would seem that when he is desired, it excites his impulse to triumph over the woman and over the man, spoiling both the man's generosity and the woman's good feelings toward him. This seems to constitute an attack on the parental couple, a response to a primitive oedipal constellation where mommy and daddy are felt to be enjoying each other and abandoning him. With destroyed internal parents he feels on the verge of disaster.

In spite of a reduced fee, David has been accumulating a debt to me for several months due to the collapse of his professional practice. I often wondered, especially during times such as the first two sessions reported below, whether by keeping him in analysis I was colluding with his abuse of his objects and contributing to a sadomasochistic situation. I took up his neglect, abuse, and attacks on me by not paying my fees in various ways and at every opportunity (as evidenced in the transcript) even though several work options had been offered to him that he did not pursue. My conviction that he would eventually get his professional practice going again and that I would get paid was supported by material like that presented in the subsequent two sessions that are also presented below. Two years later, he had paid off his debt to me in monthly installments and had reconstituted his practice. At the time of these sessions and still today he lives with a girlfriend, also a successful professional, toward whom he is quite ambivalent. He had been monogamous for the previous year, but the wish to go after other women was still present.

Monday Session

He starts the session claiming that he is tired of talking about himself. He has had several dreams but cannot remember any of them. Then he says Alma, his girlfriend, has been complaining that he is not interested in buying anything for the house. She is jealous of his previous life when he bought things. They had gone to help Alma's friend buy furniture for her computer. Alma was

complaining that they do things to help a friend but not for themselves.

Here David shows once again how he is not interested in becoming a couple with his girlfriend. He also seems to be telling me he is not interested in becoming an analytic couple with me. He projects his own neediness into Alma's friend and becomes the helper.

David continues, "My internal agenda was the hope that she would conclude that we are incompatible." This reminded him of a story he had read a couple of nights ago. "This adolescent was picked up by an older woman, a bit like what used to happen to me when I was young. . . . In the story the woman found a job for the guy. The guy gets involved in politics and finds opportunities with other women. . . . The woman then throws a party and invites her fiancé. The guy manages to get her into bed so that her fiancé finds them in bed. Then the guy escapes through the window." After a short silence David says, "I just connected the story to the situation with Alma. I was thinking of telling her, 'Do you realize that I need to build my life alone, to generate an interest for my own house, for me?'. . . This is a 'story' I have used many times in order to leave a relationship. It's a manipulation that implies that I'm too defective to be with a woman."

David's internal agenda is that she will leave him so that he doesn't have to feel guilty for abandoning her. He often talks about how generous she is with him. That troubles him because his being envious of the girlfriend's achievement makes it hard for him to experience gratitude toward her. The woman in the story helps the guy, the way that I help David. The guy in the story not only uses the woman but betrays her with other women and breaks the relationship to her fiancé. He is triumphing over the envied mother in the woman because she has what he needs and she has helped him, which he resents out of envy. By this time I am increasingly annoyed at his "story," at how he uses Alma, at how he uses me in the transference. The defective "story" reflects his unwillingness to give anything to Alma, to his

mother, to me. His manipulation and his avoidance of responsibility about how he treats his objects is clear: if he is defective, he is not accountable.

I interpret how the adolescent in the story, himself, gets rid of the woman once he has used her. I wonder if it is not what he is doing with me, tired of talking about himself, unable to remember his dreams. Just as he feels with Alma, he certainly does not want to contribute anything to *our* partnership. I add that perhaps he has the fantasy that if I believe he is too defective, I will liberate him from his analysis and he won't have to assume responsibility for having interrupted.

David avoids an awareness of how he is using me, an awareness that would make his unconscious guilt, which I believe is considerable, conscious. He has talked about interrupting his analysis for a while until his financial situation improves. On the other hand, he tells me he doesn't open the envelope with his bill because he doesn't want to know how much he owes me. I believe if I agreed to interrupt his analysis, David would use my action as punishment which would lead him to expiate his guilt. In addition, I have been reluctant to agree to interrupt his analysis because I have held on to a conviction that if we continue the work, he would be able to get back on his feet and recover his professional practice. In my discussion (see pp. 371, ff.) I also speculate about my unconscious reasons for keeping him in treatment in spite of his debt.

I continue to interpret that the "story" he told Alma about the need to use his own motivation applies to his analysis as well. He believes he has all the answers, doesn't need anything from me; therefore there is no need to acknowledge what he is getting from women and he is not grateful for what he is given. "If I interrupt your analysis, you could then say, 'She doesn't care,' and then justify your not caring about being fair to me. Then you don't have to feel bad for using me."

David seems taken aback. He sighs and says: "Actually with Alma I feel less guilt because I have given her more than I have

given you. . . . I was asking myself if this was not directed at Vicky [his ex-wife]. She is older than me. It's incredible because *the guilt I feel toward her I can't feel with anybody else.* Invariably when I think about pain I think of the pain I caused her." At this moment he seems to be experiencing guilt. But this doesn't last when he adds, "Although it's different. I don't feel I have used her in the context of our relationship."

We see here an incipient guilt and its denial.

David continues, "It connects me to what Alma was saying and of her jealousy of that relationship: the kids, the house. . . I was going to say that that was another stage in my life, but I didn't say that. What Alma told me made me feel pain. . . pain that I am not willing to give myself things, to fight to get a better income. We were driving in the car and I felt very hurt.

I believe the pain and hurt are not related to guilt and a concern with Alma or with me but guilt connected with his own well-being. There seems to be some guilt and concern about not hurting Alma in his refraining from saying that that was another stage in his life. However, by feeling very hurt because he doesn't give himself things, he seems to be expiating this guilt. I also wonder if his not fighting to get a better income is an expression of his unconscious guilt that manifests itself in a search for punishment. At the time David expressed his guilt about his ex-wife he was in contact with this guilt. I was taken aback by the derailment produced by his immediate denial. My own disappointment interfered with my capacity to interpret. In hindsight I believe I could have brought him back to his statement about Vicky and have taken up how painful it seems to be for him to stay with that experience. Moreover, I could have reminded him of the love he must feel for Vicky, which explains why he feels so guilty. This might have helped him with bearing the guilt.

David now adds, "Even though there is one part of me that uses, who used Alma, who uses you, I don't want to be a witness to all this. . . . Also, I was hurt that that job I was going to get, the guy canceled it. Another potential job that went to hell."

Incipient guilt again, but here he reveals his resistance as he spells out his unwillingness to be a witness to what he is doing to his objects. I no longer feel irritated at his evasions and denials as matters seem to be on the table. However, he immediately expiates the guilt by bringing up and experiencing the hurt over the disappointment about the job that didn't pan out. Still caught up with his earlier statement that he is not willing to fight to get a better income, I thought that his not being willing to give himself things may be as much the result of his expiating guilt for his abuse of his object as the result of projective identification.

I then interpreted that whenever he might succeed at something, he puts the little David who steals, who uses others, into me, and then he gets anxious that I am going to take advantage of him and use him, raise his fee, insist that he pay me at once. Perhaps this anxiety over my robbing him makes him lose his motivation to make more money.

While concentrating on the way he expiates guilt or projects the "user" David into me, I missed stressing how very painful it is to be a witness to all this, especially because he also cares a great deal about Alma and about me. The notion that his painful guilt is connected to love might have helped him bear his guilt.

I continue to elaborate on his fear of being robbed, providing him with some evidence. I remind him that sometimes when he tells me that something at work went well, he immediately adds that it was just a *little* job. I add, "Today you let me see the manipulative David in relation to Alma. But then you fear that I will be manipulating *you* and taking advantage of you."

David now says that it's an illusion that he is going to fare better. He gives examples from his profession as to why things are so difficult. "Even the big companies are having problems," and so on. "That's the reality of my profession," he adds.

He continues to project the manipulative David into me and is trying to convince me that it is an illusion for me to expect that he will have anything for me in the future. He may also be using the *reality* of his profession to punish himself in order to assuage

his unconscious guilt. I begin to interpret that he seems to be using reality to prove. . .

He interrupts. "Yes, it is possible. There *are* alternatives." He has mentioned viable alternatives to his profession, and he does it again. He adds, "There is a part of me who doesn't want to move, though. . ."

I believe he doesn't want to move because of the unconscious fantasy outlined above, namely, a fear of being robbed if he does well.

David continues, "The other day a friend of mine called that he has a lot of work for me. But you have to present proposals, and most of the time nothing comes of that. I told him, 'Yes, I would think about it. But *no way* I'm going to waste my time with proposals that don't pan out.' " After a short silence he adds, "That's the aristocratic part of me, I know. . ."

He doesn't want to be in a situation where he might recognize his dependency on others and be subjected to rejection and psychic pain. In the transference this may mean that, acting out of his envy of me and out of his jealousy of my relationship with my husband or with other patients, he doesn't want to give me anything: "*No way* I'm going to do something for you!" He is back to his object usage, and I become irritated, wishing to shake him out of his aristocratic stance: he is now the "superior" one who is entitled to be waited on by everyone without gratitude or concern and is doing his own analysis.

Remembering how he is using Alma, and probably fueled by my annoyance, I confront him with an important "detail" he mentioned a couple of weeks ago: "You said you are making $500 a month and that means you *are* living off Alma." Annoyed, David argues, "No, it's about $1,500, which allows me to pay the rent and live." I don't let him off the hook, "But you tell me $500 so that I get to pity you by thinking that you are in such terrible shape. Then you can continue to use me." Seeming quite uncomfortable now, David adds softly, "Last year I made a total of

$13,000." I continue to confront him by telling him that if that is the case, he *is* living off Alma and he is living off my help for several months. He doesn't want to work on projects that don't pan out, which is part of being an independent professional. "What you explain as the aristocratic syndrome is the David who insists on using and manipulating the mother in Alma, in Vicky, in me." I tell him that he seems caught up in the dilemma of using or being used, or, "Who is going to use whom?" The problem is that in his wish not to be used by me he could stay poor all his life.

> I am asking myself here, Has he, with his "aristocratic" arrogance, provoked me into "punishing" interpretations? Is his submitting to my confrontation his way of expiating the guilt over the pain he caused Vicky and the children? for what he is doing to Alma and me?

Nearing the end of the session David ponders, "I don't know what changed after my separation. Because I used to make good money before. Did *I* change or did *reality* change?"

> He moves back in time as an evasion of the current situation, my interpretation, and the guilt it is meant to stir up. If reality changed, he is not accountable for what he is doing. I am left with the hopeless feeling that we lost whatever ground we had gained. I regret not having stayed with his statement, "I don't want to be a witness to all this." This statement contained the love and concern for his objects which was being split off.

Tuesday Session

David starts off by telling me that yesterday he was left in *bad shape* by the session on two accounts: on the one hand because he realized that somehow he was using me. He would like now to find a way to pay me before his divorce becomes final. "I have to find a way," he adds. This afternoon he wants to accelerate and finish some pending work so that he can get some money to pay me. After a silence he says, "On the other hand, I felt bad because

having this kind of therapy is also my aristocratic thing. It's unrealistic in my situation to come four times a week."

Yesterday's session was not all wasted, I think. He is experiencing some guilt and the wish to make reparation. However, when he talks about his "aristocratic thing," he is backing off. It may be unrealistic to have an analysis, but I believe he is now saying this to deny the guilt, which undoes the reparation. If the situation is unrealistic, all he needs to do is stop—no need to look into what he is doing to me.

David continues: "Besides, I felt *very bad* realizing how I use women. . .that thing of living off Alma. Yesterday I was calculating. . .mmm. . .it's not like that, I'm not living off Alma."

He is experiencing guilt again, followed by an immediate denial of it. Once again I could have zeroed in on how bad he felt when he realized how he uses women and have explored with him what that feeling bad felt like. In this way I could have helped him bear the guilt by interpreting that the pain of the guilt due to his love of these women was evidenced in his immediate denial, not wanting to be a witness to what he did to them.

He now says, "Then I was thinking that you don't give much importance to what I said before I left yesterday, about what changed after I left home. All my friends were tight financially, and I always had money in reserve. The external situation changed and I was asking myself yesterday to what extent this has to do with a feeling that my life has ended, that I don't have to support anyone, that I don't go out and fight. My life cycle ended with Vicky, and besides, my kids are no longer asking me for money."

He is now blaming the external situation for his actions and projecting his guilt into me: I ought to be feeling guilty for not giving it importance. The rest seems to be rationalizations to evade his guilt about living off Alma and me.

Annoyed once again at his tactics, I interpret that clearly something changed after he left home. But he may be using the separation and the current recession in order not to feel guilty and as

a way to expiate the guilt. I add, "The recession becomes your punishment for what you did to Vicky during the marriage and when you left her.

I thus interpreted his expiating guilt through punishment. However, it would have been better had I brought him back again to his statement about how *bad* he felt using women and his difficulties in bearing this guilt. It was important that he understood that he felt so bad—guilty—because he also cares and wishes to make things better for us.

David replies, "Yes, I have noticed that. We Jews have a very strong guilt structure. Somehow there is a part of me that says I committed a big crime and I have to pay for it." After a short silence he adds, "In spite of the fact that I feel much better I don't feel the push to look for other avenues. . ."

I now get irritated once again as I feel that we are back to square one.

I interpret that the Jews' "guilty structure" means that his guilt is not personal, and he is thus not accountable for what he does to Vicky, Alma, or me. He doesn't get away with this explanation, however. I interpret that he alludes to a personal guilt when he talks about having committed a *big crime.* That he has to pay for it, however, implies expiation of the guilt rather than reparation. Expiation bypasses the experience of guilt and makes reparation impossible.

Maybe he is now expiating the guilt by paying for the crime as he listens to me and puts up with my "scolding" him. He feels better with the help I have given him but cannot experience gratitude because, out of envy, he begrudges my capacity to help him. Since he cannot experience gratitude, he sees no need to look for other avenues to pay me. Fueled by my irritation, I focus on the defenses against guilt, his rationalizations and expiation, rather than zeroing in on his having committed a *big crime.* This might have enabled him to come into closer contact with his guilt feelings.

He continues, "I think that what happens is that I have not been able to differentiate between the neurotic guilt and the healthy part. You put the emphasis on the guilt but you don't distinguish what type of guilt it is."

Even though he raises a valid point here, I sense that he is doing it to project the guilt for his using me onto me. It's all my fault: he is not getting the right help from me, and I should be the one to feel guilty. This may be both an envious attack on my competence and a projection of guilt.

Wednesday Session

David brought in two dreams with oedipal material. In one of them *he is at a Kodak stand asking them to develop some Polaroid film. Two women were rubbing their bodies against him while his friend Charlie was looking at him disapprovingly. He was afraid Charlie would tell Alma about this. In the second dream he was with Peter, Alma's brother. Peter was recklessly driving David's car while David, sitting next to him, was trying to control him with no success. Peter forced an oncoming car to go off the side of the road.*

In his associations to the dreams it became evident that Polaroid represented instant gratification whereas Kodak stood for his capacity to wait. In the process of seeking instant gratification with the mother, who, in the dream of the two women, is depicted as the breasts wanting *him,* he destroys the father represented by the oncoming driver. David associates that after making love with Alma he had visited a delicatessen, giving a beautiful woman there his name and telephone number while the delicatessen's owner was looking on. He had experienced a sense of danger doing this.

I interpret that Peter, driving the car in a reckless way, represents the greedy and dependent part of himself who is now, after taking possession of the mother, out of control. David claims to see in Peter infantile and dependent aspects of himself he dislikes. The oncoming car represents his father who is forced off the side of the road. Charlie also stands for this displaced father, and in the dream he looks at David with a sad expression on his face. Alma and David had recently invited Peter for dinner and, as Peter

left, he also seemed to David to express infinite sadness. I interpreted that the sad Peter stands for the sad little David that underlies the manic oedipal machinations in the dreams. The sad Charlie represents his awareness of having damaged his father, whom he also loves, and conveys David's guilt.

David's response to these interpretations is to wonder why he should go after a woman *precisely* after having made love to Alma, which had been so lovely. I interpret that he is now questioning why he would betray Alma when there is no reason to retaliate. This means that he has no reason for attacking Alma other than his own hatred of her for his inability to control her and make her loving toward him whenever he wants. This takes us back to the Polaroid dream and his search for manic solutions when he realizes he cannot control his objects. The manic solution ends up becoming an attack on the woman and on the parental couple, which puts the relationship with Alma in jeopardy.

> This session is full of David's manic defenses against his dependency on the mother in Alma, in Vicky, in me. The dreams reveal his internal struggle between omnipotent and more mature solutions to dependency. His guilt about the attacks on his father is experienced in projected form in Charlie and Peter. I believe that an oedipal dream in this session represents a development because of the love for the mother implicit in it. Along with his guilt about the sad Charlie standing for his damaged father, and the implicit love for the mother in the dream, there is an incipient experience of guilt toward the mother when he ponders why he should go after women *precisely* after having made love to Alma.

Friday Session

David starts off by telling me he woke up at 2:30 a.m. with an earthquake and had an anxiety attack that lasted for a while. "I was so angry!," he says. He then tells me he had had a difficult day yesterday and had been tempted to call me. He didn't know where to turn. The situation with his pending divorce had come to a head as he had had to hire a lawyer in response to Vicky's having

hired one. He had not told her of his action, which he sees as a retaliation and as knifing Vicky in the back. David had hung up the phone on Vicky even though she was no longer angry and sounded sad. He said he felt very guilty about this and associated again to the circumstances under which he left the marriage. David recounted this story with more details this time around, bemoaning the ugliness of the way he left, without any warning and through the back door. This led him to review the circumstances under which he left his country while his children were being held by the police, something he had not told me before. In acute pain he exclaimed, "I can't believe I *did* that!"

David described his feelings toward Vicky as they were raising their children and his being upset at her lenient ways with them and at her wanting to take them along everywhere while he wanted to leave them at home. It became clear how displaced David felt by his children. He had never said anything to her about his jealousy but had surrounded himself with friends so that they were seldom alone as a couple. She had not complained about this to him either. At some point he poignantly said, "We never gave ourselves a chance!"

David remembers Vicky saying she didn't understand why he was so resentful of her. David tells me of his early resentment that she was a professional with two jobs and owned a car, while he still needed a year and a half to graduate. He adds that he tried to "play up his dependent thing" by fantasizing being supported by her. But suddenly his rage at her becomes clear when he exclaims in anger, "I marry this gal and she gives me her tit but later this gal *doesn't* give me her tit!" More calmly, he later adds that that is probably where the resentment lies. I remind him of his jokes about the patient who follows his hour and how he feels displaced by her. David acknowledges that he jokes about that but now states that his resentment is real, and he compares his feelings with those of the patient before him and the one who follows him. This brings him back to his resentment of Vicky and to the ugly way he abandoned her through the back door. His voice lowers, and he utters slowly, "This is very sad. . . .This is very painful."

In this last session of the week. David consciously experiences the guilt resulting from his attacks on his mother. He starts off with his anger and anxiety at the undependable Mother Earth. He is then more in contact with his dependency on me, and with nowhere to turn, he is tempted to call me. The frustrating object in Vicky, in me, gives rise to hatred and paves the way to his understanding of his attacks on the mother as a response to his own dependency on her. In this last session of the week he is able to revise his account of abandoning Vicky and of his leaving his country and abandoning his children, adding further painful details to a story he had told me at the beginning of the treatment. This suggests that in spite of the various defenses against guilt he had resorted to earlier in the week, there appears to be a gradual increase in his capacity to tolerate it.

DISCUSSION

In the first two sessions of the week David has used several defenses against an awareness of guilt, even though he has claimed, from the beginning of his analysis, that he was paralyzed by guilt. He *is* right, but only with regard to his enormous unconscious guilt and what happens when he interferes with its becoming conscious. In these sessions David talks about his guilt but is not yet *suffering* his guilt and therefore cannot properly repair his damaged internal objects and his external ones. By the third session, in which his defenses against guilt appear in dream form, David shows an incipient awareness of guilt toward both parents. It is only in the last session of the week that David appears to *suffer* the guilt for his attacks on the mother.

Early in the material one can see how David projects dependency and becomes a "helper" to Alma's friend, a role he assumes in all his relationships. He took pride in helping his wife with her papers years ago and now is helping Alma with her professional writing; he also advises his male friends concerning their relationship problems. In the projection of dependency he loses his infantile self in the other by becoming the mother. When free from

this projection, he wakes up to realize he is not doing anything for himself.

In the Monday story the adolescent uses the older woman, gets into bed with her so that her fiancé finds them in bed. He escapes through a window, flaunting his psychopathic-like behavior that invites punishment from me. He seems to hold on to this view of himself as independent and uncaring because it helps him split off his infantile, dependent self. Later on he says he tells women he needs his own life, he needs to generate an interest in his own house. This is again a way for him to get away from the baby part of his personality which may have no other interest than his mommy and which is desperate or enraged in her absence. Early on in the analysis he dreamed about a cat and associated to a girlfriend's dog that had defecated all over the place when it had been left alone.

It is clear that when he talks about the guilt he feels toward Vicky, his ex-wife, or later when he says he doesn't want to be a witness to all this, I failed to help David stay with this experience. Had he resisted it, that would have given me a chance to interpret his enormous anxiety about loving and being dependent on someone like Vicky or on me in the transference. I might have reminded him of the abandoned dog part of him and his fear of his infantile rage. One of the reasons why he manages to abandon his objects or make them wait unnecessarily is to put into them this needy, desperate, and enraged infant him. When David displays and talks about his aristocratic syndrome, I take the bait and confront him with a detail, the $500 a month, which reveals that he is living off of Alma, his girlfriend. He seemed again to be flaunting his psychopathic-like attitude as a defense against dependency out of the fear of losing his present autonomy. I also suspect he *wanted* to be nailed in order to expiate his unconscious guilt about using his objects. In hindsight it might have been better to have pointed out to him his insistence on showing me how callous and uncaring he is about doing better for his objects. This might have led me to interpret his fear of becoming a dependent and enraged baby with no control over his objects. I

could have interpreted how he gets rid of this baby-part in the people close to him so that he can continue to play his aristocratic self—a self that deludes him into believing that he is entitled to be waited on by everyone without having to be concerned about them and without gratitude for what he receives.

As soon as David begins to experience some guilt over not wanting to look for other avenues to improve his income, he projects his guilt into me, suggesting I have not helped him distinguish the type of guilt he experiences. I imagine that he would like to believe that his guilt is neurotic, thus excessive and unrealistic, and that there is no need for gratitude or a wish to repair his objects.

To recapitulate, the first two sessions show how the analyst's interpretations of the patient's evasions and other defenses against guilt can make the analyst fall prey to a sadomasochistic enactment in which the patient successfully projects his sadism and guilt into the analyst who may *then* find herself scolding the patient. By doing this, the patient expiates the guilt and goes back to "square one" with respect to an understanding of what he does to his objects. A patient's masochistic responses are easier to understand when they follow the incipient emergence of guilt and as a retreat from it and harder to detect when a patient like David uses the masochistic response prospectively to defend against the emergence of guilt.

The last two sessions of the week show the results of the work done on Monday and Tuesday. He brings a dream to the Wednesday session, the interpretation of which gives rise to his first look at his attacks on his objects with reflective curiosity. Even though the dream only points out the attacks on the father, the oedipal nature of the dream implicitly reveals the love for the mother, a love that has to surface for guilt to be experienced. The love for the mother is revealed in his curiosity about attacking Alma after having made love to her, that is, at a time when he is not frustrated by her. The final session of the week shows David *suffering* the guilt for his attacks on the mother. The apparent intractability of David's defenses against the experience of guilt in the first two ses-

sions may reflect the workings of omnipotence. His desperately holding on to his defenses must have felt for him to be a matter of life and death where he had to be right or else. Even though at times I was not able to help him bear his guilt, the repeated interpretations of his attacks on his objects, especially on me in the transference, may have served to mitigate his omnipotence and allow for his experience of love for his objects and the suffering of guilt toward them. The material of these four sessions seems to evidence a gradual increase in David's capacity to tolerate guilt.

Some remarks about my countertransference are in order here. As I stated earlier, the analyst may fall prey to a sadomasochistic enactment because of the analyst's *own* guilt toward the patient as a frustrating object. In *Transference and Counter-Transference,* Racker (1968) points out how the oedipal situation of the analyst will express itself in every countertransference. And for him, "although the neurotic reactions to countertransference may be sporadic, the predisposition to them is continuous" (p. 111). This argues that there is a basic depressive situation the analyst needs to work through in each analysis. In addition to his oedipal frustration David's pseudopsychopathic attitude of not caring for his objects and his evasive responses with regard to his guilt toward these objects and toward me account for my conscious and unconscious hatred toward him that may have fueled my attempts at cornering and "nailing" him with evidence of his using or abusing them.

For Racker, the resistance of the patient, in and of itself, provokes annoyance and even intense hatred. It is experienced by the analyst as a hatred the patient feels toward him or her. According to Racker, that feeling reflects an *objective truth,* since the main resistances are an expression of conflicts with introjected objects which are feared, rejected, and hated. He expresses the ensuing dynamics in the following way: "Hence, resistance, in one of its aspects, is hatred, to which the analyst sometimes reacts with hatred on his part, and so falls into a trap laid for him by his own neurosis. For the analyst *believes* the patient when the latter un-

consciously attributes badness to him: that is to say, he believes himself to be as bad as the patient's introjected objects, which have been projected upon him and which account for the patient's main resistances. And he believes him because the patient has a powerful ally within the analyst's own personality—the latter's own bad introjected objects which hate him and which he hates" (p. 121).

My unconscious hatred of David as a rejecting father is further increased by my identification with the women in his life who are used and devalued just as he does with me in the transference. The women in his life must also represent, in my unconscious, my rejected and damaged mother. In his evading guilt and reparation I am therefore threatened with a catastrophe: my own encounter with my destroyed mother. Thus, there is something at stake for me in trying to help David experience his guilt and repair his objects. By being fair and loving to Vicky, Alma, or me in the transference, he is restoring *my* internal damaged objects. His unwillingness to do this increases my hatred even more, all of which tends to increase my unconscious guilt toward him. This formulation can explain my masochistic surrender to his neglect and the development of a sadomasochistic situation. My unconscious guilt and search for punishment can partially explain why I allowed his debt to me to increase so that, in not getting paid, I could expiate my guilt toward him.

Returning to the technical considerations concerning guilt, one could say that rather than focusing on the defenses against the emergence of conscious guilt, the analyst may need to focus on the patient's incipient experience of guilt, whenever and however fleetingly it appears in the material. This certainly follows Klein's dictum of going for the point of maximum anxiety. The analyst may need to bring the patient's attention to that moment in the session when guilt was experienced, acknowledging how painful it must be to recognize neglect or damage toward loved ones or toward the self. Just as the analyst attempts to get the patient to describe his or her anxiety in *detail* (Gooch, 1992) in order to help the patient make contact with his or her experience, the analyst

may need to ask for the *details* of the experience of guilt and, by listening to him or her, help the patient to bear it. However, no matter how helpful this "containing" of the patient's pain is as an initial step, it does not alter the unconscious dynamics. This step might elicit new associations which then may allow the analyst to interpret the underlying dynamics. The internal situation will only be altered by interpreting the ways in which the patient attempts to "cure" himself or herself of guilt, which tend to perpetuate or increase it. Such interpretations of the patient's defenses against the experience of guilt provide an *anchor* that prevents or delays a shift back to the paranoid-schizoid position where guilt seems to turn into persecution.

The importance of bearing the guilt is that it will enable the patient to repair his or her internal objects and thus to make changes in relationships to external ones. This will have the effect of reducing the patient's depression, which has to do with his or her having damaged internal objects. As Rey (1986, 1988) maintains, patients ultimately come to analysis to get help in repairing their damaged internal objects. This requires that the patient increase his or her capacity to stay in the depressive position. Klein's (1948) statement regarding the *simultaneous* appearance of anxiety, guilt, and reparation supports this notion of technically giving guilt, as one gives anxiety, a primary focus of an interpretation.

When attacks on the object due to envy or jealousy are acknowledged, unconscious guilt becomes conscious and this conscious guilt becomes more bearable. On the other hand, the patient's idealization of destructiveness and ruthlessness will increase unconscious guilt, which decreases its bearability. In general, one could say that anything that devalues love as sentimental or weak will increase unconscious guilt, whereas interpretations that succeed in mobilizing love will decrease unconscious guilt and increase its bearability. Guilt is thus so critical because it embodies all the issues of love and hate. It must be worked through over and over again since a new constellation of defenses may appear after an earlier one is interpreted (Mason, 1995). Eskelinen de Folch

(1988) presents two vivid examples of this process in her work with children. As revealed in the material here, my interventions were focused primarily on the destructive aspects of guilt and not sufficiently on the incipient guilt and the underlying love reflected in it. Mobilizing the love by pointing out the relationship between love and this incipient guilt might have prevented a sadomasochistic enactment in the transference.

What has become apparent in David's analysis is that he cannot move fully into a depressive concern for his objects because of his unconscious envy and jealousy which makes him spoil and devalue them. His envy and jealousy are not apparent in the material presented but had been the focus of many earlier sessions. The hatred toward his objects arises from what he experiences as a narcissistic injury, the recognition of their goodness and how much he needs them. At present his envy and jealousy, rather than his defenses against them, are being expressed more directly in the transference. One can hope that by making his envy and jealousy conscious and by his *experiencing* them rather than merely talking *about* them, as he often does, he will be able to prevent them from becoming destructive. This will not only spare his external objects his attacks on them but will diminish his attacks on his internal objects. The devalued, spoiled internal object perpetuates his fear that, as he puts it, "I don't have what it takes," thus, as a countermeasure, maintaining the ruthless solution of exploiting his objects. Once his envious attacks and his attacks due to jealousy diminish in scope and intensity, he may be able to experience more fully the guilt for such attacks, a loving concern for his object, and a move toward reparation.

REFERENCES

ESKELINEN DE FOLCH, T. (1988). Guilt bearable or unbearable: a problem for the child in analysis. *Int. Rev. Psychoanal.*, 15:13–24.

FREUD, S. (1923). The ego and the id. *S.E.*, 19.

——— (1930). Civilization and its discontents. *S.E.*, 21.

GOOCH, J. A. (1992). Personal communication.

GRINBERG, L. (1963). *Guilt and Depression: Psychoanalytic Study.* London: Karnac, 1992.

JAQUES, E. (1968). Guilt, conscience and social behavior. In *Work, Creativity and Social Justice.* London: Heinemann, 1970, pp. 167–180.

JONES, E. (1929). Fear, guilt, and hate. In *Papers on Psycho-Analysis.* London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, pp. 304–319.

JOSEPH, B. (1983). On understanding and not understanding: some technical issues. In *Psychic Equilibrium and Psychic Change.* London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 139–150.

KLEIN, M. (1930). The importance of symbol-formation in the development of the superego. In *Love, Guilt and Reparation.* London: Hogarth, 1975, pp. 219–232.

——— (1935). A contribution to the psychogenesis of manic-depressive states. In *Op. cit.,* pp. 262–289.

——— (1940). Mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states. In *Op. cit.,* pp. 344–369.

——— (1946). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. In *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works.* London: Hogarth, 1975, pp. 1–24.

——— (1948). On the theory of anxiety and guilt. In *Op. cit.,* pp. 25–42.

——— (1960). A note on depression in the schizophrenic. In *Op. cit.,* pp. 264–267.

MASON, A. A. (1995). Personal communication.

O'SHAUGHNESSEY, E. (1981). A clinical study of a defensive organization. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 62:359–369.

RACKER, H. (1968). *Transference and Counter-Transference.* London: Hogarth.

REY, J. H. (1986). Reparation. *J. Melanie Klein Society,* 4:5–35.

——— (1988). That which patients bring to analysis. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 69:457–473.

RIESENBERG-MALCOLM, R. (1981). Expiation as a defense. *Int. J. Psychoanal. Psychother.,* 8:549–570.

ROSENFELD, H. A. (1964). On the psychopathology of narcissism: a clinical approach. In *Psychotic States: A Psycho-Analytical Approach.* New York: Int. Univ. Press, 1965, pp. 169–179.

——— (1971). A clinical approach to the psychoanalytic theory of the life and death instincts: an investigation into the aggressive aspects of narcissism. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 52:169–178.

SEGAL, H. (1981). Manic reparation. In *The Work of Hanna Segal: A Kleinian Approach to Clinical Practice.* New York/London: Aronson, pp. 147–158.

STEINER, J. (1987). The interplay between pathological organizations and the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 68:69–80.

——— (1990). Pathological organizations as obstacles to mourning: the role of unbearable guilt. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 71:87–94.

502 Rialto Ave.
Venice, CA 90291

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Analyst Subjectivity, Analyst Disclosure, and the Aims of Psychoanalysis

Steven H. Cooper

To cite this article: Steven H. Cooper (1998) Analyst Subjectivity, Analyst Disclosure, and the Aims of Psychoanalysis, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 379-406, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006048

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006048

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

ANALYST SUBJECTIVITY, ANALYST DISCLOSURE, AND THE AIMS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

BY STEVEN H. COOPER, PH.D.

It is preferable to think of what we directly disclose to our patients as "analyst disclosure" rather than as the commonly used "self-disclosure." The author suggests this change because, to some extent, we have equated the analyst's subjectivity with the self-concept in ways that fail to distinguish how disclosure both overlaps and is distinct from other forms of interpretation. What distinguishes the analyst's subjectivity in disclosure is her or his deliberate attempt to reveal a construction of the self to the patient so that something new can be explored. This paper elaborates these issues by examining some of the therapeutic aims of analyst disclosure.

In recent years, self-disclosure has been one of the most actively discussed aspects of psychoanalytic technique (Aron, 1991; Bollas, 1987; Burke, 1992; Ehrenberg, 1992, 1995; Greenberg, 1995; Jacobs, 1995; Renik, 1995). While it was spawned and developed largely within the relational framework, incorporating aspects of interpersonal and conflict-relational traditions, it has also received attention from classical approaches and the independent school.

In the growing body of literature on disclosure, the term now includes a variety of levels and types of revealing one's thoughts and feelings. In this paper I refer more narrowly to the attempt to make explicit the analyst's set of thoughts about an experience within the immediacy of the analytic engagement which may differ from the patient's perception of the same moment. This form of disclosure involves what I consider as more routine moments in

clinical work than the instances involving the analyst's deeper private thoughts and fantasies related to the patient or to the clinical encounter (e.g., Davies, 1994).

Despite the fact that the subjectivity and personal engagement of the analyst are at the heart of the technical use of disclosure, I believe that there is value in thinking of our disclosures as analyst based ("analyst's direct disclosure") rather than as "self-disclosure," the commonly used term. I suggest this because the subjectivity of the analyst is central to all kinds of interpretive processes in analytic work. Although, superficially, disclosure appears to be more "self"-revealing, I believe that it is no more revealing of the analyst's "self" than any other kind of analytic intervention; it is just expressed differently. Disclosure is more directly expressive of the analyst's construction of experience (often "unformulated experience" [Stern, 1983]) at a particular moment in treatment and is no more or less impelled by unconscious factors than other interventions. To be sure, the analyst's direct disclosures may catch more of the patient's and therapist's attention within the climate of particular analyses and because of the historical bias in our theory which views intentional disclosures as something to be used sparingly.

I will argue that the term "self-disclosure" developed as a by-product of the need to find a way for the subjectivity of the analyst to break through the constraints which centered on the concepts of the blank screen and anonymity. Relational theorists observed the centrality of the analyst's subjectivity and sought a way to get this subjectivity into the theoretical equation. More particularly, relational theorists have emphasized the importance of understanding the patient's perceptions and experience of the analyst's subjectivity (Aron, 1991; Gill and Hoffman, 1982; Hoffman, 1983, 1991) and the analyst's sense of his or her own experience in coming to terms with mutual influence in the analytic situation. Yet any analyst who takes seriously the value, power, and limitations of analyst disclosure is operating well within the analytic purview of other interventions.

Analyst disclosure is "deliberately selective" (Renik, 1995), in

contrast to the patient's effort to free associate. The analyst's direct disclosures overlap the variety of ways in which the patient comes to know the analyst's subjectivity. For example, Aron (1991) has emphasized that we are disclosing whether we are aware of it or not—or whether we like it or not. *What does distinguish our subjectivity in disclosure is our conscious or deliberate attempt to reveal to the patient a construction of the self—either an aspect of our subjectivity or a "fact" about ourselves—so that something new can be explored or understood.* This means that at times, disclosure can appear to have fewer secondary process properties than interpretation. When disclosure is used judiciously, however, we are aware that it is at the margin of what we do and do not know about ourselves and the patient. More often than has been appreciated, other kinds of interpretation also integrate our unformulated experience and constructions.

I will compare only a few of the varieties and aims of the analyst's direct disclosure, all of which may function simultaneously or in an overlapping manner within the analytic situation. Some of these basic functions of analyst disclosure include attempts to: 1) make something that is unconscious, conscious (including transference and resistance interpretations that take the form of disclosure); 2) create a new mode of inquiry and discovery within the analytic process by applying our evolving understanding of the epistemology of the analytic situation to technique (Cooper, 1998; Hoffman, 1991; Renik, 1995) (e.g., the analyst using disclosure is prepared to view some forms of resistance as mutually held and constructed); and 3) convey how the analyst can be a new object working in a dialectical tension with the transferentially held view of the analyst as an old object (Cooper, 1996a, 1997; Greenberg, 1986; Loewald, 1960).

For any of the forms of disclosure to satisfy the claim that they are a part of the analyst's interpretive tools, the analyst must actively assess the effects of his or her direct disclosure. Part of this assessment involves considering the applicability of Gill's (1983) admonition that the analyst's subjectivity may be as defensive and thus unconsciously held as any other piece of data revealed by

patient or analyst. I will suggest that the concept of potential space is a part of this assessment, however difficult this concept is to define. I agree with Hoffman (1994, 1996) and with Greenberg's (1995) observation that what is often more important than whether or not we use disclosure is understanding our process of decision-making. Sometimes focusing concretely on particular moments of choice about whether or not to disclose can obscure the understanding of the general process of tension between restraint and expressiveness (Hoffman, 1994) that is a part of every analysis.

In attempting to elucidate the dynamic elements and aims of analyst disclosure, I may be understood as advocating its liberal use. This is neither my intention nor is it reflective of my relatively rare use of disclosure. I value the judicious use of disclosure, embedded within the overall aims of therapeutic action, which includes understanding the relationship between disclosure and other technical approaches to interpretation of transference and defense. Implicit in this paper is the sense that disclosure often aims to learn about unconscious processes and that concealed meaning is itself intersubjectively determined and, at times, co-constituted. It is difficult to reconcile this view with one that posits that these interpersonal phenomena distract from learning about underlying determinants of perception (e.g., Inderbitzin and Levy, 1994). I believe that a focus on interpersonal components can distract from important internal processes of the patient, just as a focus on intrapsychic phenomena can impede learning about important relational processes. My hope is that this paper will help us in further understanding the observations generated by these different perspectives and technical approaches.

Analyst Disclosure versus Self-Disclosure

I suggest referring to self-disclosure as analyst disclosure because the "self" in self-disclosure ideally lies firmly within the realm of the participant-observer tradition of psychoanalytic tech-

nique. Put another way, I believe that the self who is disclosing overlaps with, but is significantly different from that self that we would refer to in most other settings. While at first glance this change in nomenclature may seem like a prudish attempt to purify analytic technique, I think that just the opposite is true. My aim is not to leave the analyst's subjectivity or personal participation out of the mix, or to preserve the concept of the analyst as blank screen or objective observer. I see what follows in this paper as something quite separate from what Hoffman (1983) viewed as a "conservative critique" of the blank screen concept. Instead, I suggest that in thinking of disclosure as "self-disclosure," we underemphasize the analyst's expression of subjectivity in all forms of interpretation. In other words, the term "self-disclosure" is one that tames and obscures the notion that the analyst's subjectivity is central to *all* interpretive processes.

In thinking of analyst disclosure as such, I can anticipate objections from two radically different perspectives. Those who are dubious about even the narrowly defined use of disclosure that I explore in this paper might say: "At least call a spade a spade—it's self-disclosure. Thinking of this technique as analyst disclosure rationalizes an impingement on the patient's potential space." For those who, like me, find value in the judicious use of disclosure, I run the risk of constructing one more attempt to unconsciously build in a level of countertransference self-protectiveness in the relationship with our patients. Again, my aim is just the opposite. I am strongly in agreement with Loewald (1960), Greenberg (1991), and Hoffman (1991) that transference is penetrated by reality and that the real relationship in analysis cannot ever be separated from the transference relationship. To some extent the analyst's personal participation and subjectivity in general are involved in every interpretive effort. By thinking of disclosure as self-disclosure, however, we sometimes unconsciously operate with the idea that what we are putting forward is more "true," less a construction than other interventions. Consistent with the analyst's subjective participation in other interventions, disclosure involves the analyst's best guess as to what might be going on. What

distinguishes disclosures from other aspects of interpretation is that it involves an *explicit* piece of information (a fact about the analyst or a conflict or a feeling) that is being used in making an intervention. It is a moment when the disclosure often involves an aspect of the mutual participation that may help the analyst to make an interpretation or to establish a working climate in which interpretation can occur.

So how can my suggestion that self-disclosure be considered analyst disclosure be further reconciled with a belief that the analyst's personal participation is vital to analytic process? In referring to the analyst's personal involvement and the social-constructivist paradigm that he put forward, Hoffman (1991) stated:

> The paradign changes, in my view, only when the idea of the analyst's personal involvement is wedded to a constructivist or perspectivist epistemological position. Only in effecting that integration is the idea of the analyst's participation in the process taken fully into account. By this I mean very specifically that the personal participation of the analyst in the process is considered to have a continuous effect on what he or she understands about himself or herself and about the patient in the interaction. The general assumption in this model is that the analyst's understanding is always a function of his or her perspective at the moment. Moreover, because the participation of the analyst implicates all levels of the analyst's personality, it must include unconscious as well as conscious factors. Therefore, what the analyst seems to understand about his or her own experience and behavior as well as the patient's is always suspect, always susceptible to the vicissitudes of the analyst's own resistance, and always prone to being superseded by another point of view that may emerge (p. 77).

I am strongly in agreement with Hoffman, in that it is the analyst's job to join with the patient in understanding this mutual influence and constructed meaning. It is precisely for this reason that I view the the analyst's personal participation, including interventions of all kinds, as functions of the analyst, not primarily of the self. *The*

notion of "self"-disclosure seems to me to concretize rather than emphasize the constructivist nature of the analyst's subjectivity.

The use of the term "self" in self-disclosure has been influenced by the intense battle that has been fought to include the subjectivity of the analyst within the theory of technique (Aron, 1991, 1996; Greenberg, 1991; Hoffman, 1983, 1991; Renik, 1995). The monolith of the analyst as blank screen has been significantly challenged by the relational school in this country, including currents from Hoffman's (1991) social-constructivist approach, interpersonal theory and conflict-relational theory (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983), and the independent school (Bollas, 1987). The concept of the analyst's subjectivity has also challenged ancillary aspects of the blank screen ideal, such as the analyst as objective observer and thinking of countertransference in the "minimalist" form (Tansey and Burke, 1989) as simply the analyst's responses to the patient's conflicts. Relational theorists have been trying to include the subjectivity of the analyst in considering therapeutic action along technical and epistemological lines. The self of the analyst became synonymous with the subjectivity of the analyst in some ways that, in my view, detract from seeing it as an analytic function that is largely continuous with other analytic functions. Perhaps it is now time to consider whether the subjectivity of the analyst (Renik, 1993), which I take as a given and which is a part of what is disclosed in the analyst's disclosure, can be understood in relation to the self concept or multiple selves of the analyst.

We can perhaps better differentiate the analyst's subjectivity from the self concept through a further appreciation of subjective factors in all interpretations (see, Cooper, 1993; Renik, 1993). For example, every interpretation includes a formulation about how the analyst sees things that, in turn, is embedded in the analyst's view of the patient's psychic future (Cooper, 1996c, 1997). Every interpretation involves theoretical and technical predilections—what the analyst is comfortable with and able to see, to feel, to think about and discuss.

Instances when the analyst's self is used without selectivity and

reflection are more likely to constitute a misuse of disclosure—a kind of impingement on the potential space of the analytic situation. In these instances we may notice that disclosure reflects our own needs which may have little to do with the intended aim of analytic process. For example, when I have disclosed something in order to display myself or to defensively mitigate the asymmetry of the analytic solution (not all needs of the analyst to mitigate the asymmetry are necessarily defensive) in ways that are not easily justified in terms of furthering the goals of analysis, it feels more like "self"-disclosure. Even some of these instances may prove to be indirectly productive when we are able to understand what motivates these needs. But as we have come to refer to self-disclosure, in its ideal form, we use disclosure in order to help understand what our patients feel or remain in conflict about. There is little question that these categories are rarely as neatly differentiated as this schematic presentation might suggest. Disclosure sometimes simultaneously gratifies the analyst's particular needs and serves analytic aims. However, in my own work I generally have what I believe to be a best guess about which is more centrally important. Thus, the binary distinction between self- and analyst disclosure only begins to get at the complex ways in which different aspects of the analyst's subjectivity are involved in disclosure.

Hoffman (1994) has suggested that the analyst's "self" is in most instances relatively unknown to the patient. He states that one of the aspects of ritualized asymmetry in the analytic situation is "fostered partly by the fact that the patient knows so much less about him or her than the analyst knows about the patient" (p. 199). Hoffman further argues that the analyst is in a relatively protected position, one that is likely to promote some of the most tolerant and generous aspects of his or her personality. The radical nature of the social context in analysis is one in which personal participation is an inevitability, but it is inherently defined by the work task and is both unique and overlapping with other social contexts. The analytic context for the use of self-disclosure is also embedded within a larger social context (Altman, 1995). Thus,

the interactive matrix (Greenberg, 1995) borrows from and is partly separate from the larger social context. This view is compatible with Hoffman's (1994) elaboration of the asymmetrical arrangement that partially protects the analyst's anonymity and how the analyst will be known by the patient. Once again, then, the use of the term "self" in self-disclosure is misleading, despite the analyst's authentic participation and the sense that he or she has particular feelings or experiences with the patient.

Renik (1995) has cogently argued that some of the elements of the analyst's "pretense of anonymity" and his or her ambiguity in the analytic situation may engender problematic aspects of idealization. In defining our disclosures as the analyst's direct disclosures I believe that we further the goal of getting out from under the *pretense* of analytic anonymity. In my view, this does not imply that the analyst's anonymity is generally problematic, nor should it minimize the analyst's anonymity as a central aspect of therapeutic action. Analyst disclosure in the form of the analyst's thinking, speculating, or, at times, revealing affective/cognitive reactions to the patient's associations can sometimes help to analyze unconscious elements of the patient's idealizations of the analyst; these elements are more a routine aspect of interpretation than we might think. Renik emphasized, however, that the analyst's disclosures are selectively chosen, once again fitting into what I would term disclosures that are part of an analytic function. They are never identical to the patient's efforts to be as unselective as possible in what he or she says.

I believe that it is not necessarily desirable or always possible to deconstruct all of the patient's idealizations of the analyst, due to the different work tasks of patient and analyst and their relatively different positions in the analytic situation (Hoffman, 1991). Renik (1995) addresses as problematic the instances when the analyst could make his or her position more clear and thus less ambiguous with the aim of analyzing aspects of transference and resistance.

I suggest that the analyst's disclosures, used in the context of some of the aims of analytic work, do less than we might imagine

to change the fundamental condition of the analyst's anonymity and the patient's experience of tensions between asymmetry and symmetry in relation to the analyst. Disclosure partly stands out for patients because the analyst attempts to make explicit the construction of his or her subjective reactions more than in most other kinds of interventions. Jacobs (1995) cited a clinical example in which the analyst's sharing part of his countertransference dilemma allowed the patient to experience his impact on his analyst as more "real" than he had ever been able to through interpretations of similar content. The analyst shared a similar perception of the patient. My point is not that the patient is wrong about Jacob's reaction being "real," but that Jacobs's ability to use his experience in the analytic encounter has much more to do with his functions as an analyst, or in Jacobs's terms, "the *use* of the self." The use of disclosure is not to create a more egalitarian atmosphere, particularly a false sense of equality. For some patients the experience of the analyst as a subjective object may allow them to observe unconscious phenomena in the transference and resistance that they are otherwise not able to see or experience as clearly.

I disagree with the notion put forward by Burke (1992) that the analyst's use of disclosure is necessarily to be equated with mutual elements of the analytic relationship and that more anonymity is necessarily associated with elements of asymmetry. Aron (1996) has tried to separate the use of disclosure from elements of mutuality. I think of mutuality as related to the notion that both patient and analyst are subjective participants in the analytic situation and influence each other. However, asymmetry (from the analyst's perspective) is retained in the use of disclosure if the analyst maintains a fundamental awareness of the work task. In other words, mutual influence does not mean equal influence.

Thus, I have come to believe that we have taken a rather concrete perspective about how the type of disclosures I focus on here relate to interpretive processes. If we take Hoffman's (1991) paradigm seriously—that is, that every interpretation involves a construction of the analyst's and the patient's participation—then

disclosure is best regarded as an attempt to place a construction of the analyst's subjective participation more plainly in view than is the case for other kinds of interventions. The use of the term "self" in self-disclosure minimizes the selectivity of the analyst in employing disclosure and approaches the subjectivity of the analyst as a concrete entity rather than as something the patient will have all kinds of fantasies about and experiences with during the analytic process. Selectivity refers to the analyst's attempt to use her or his experience, not to the analyst's necessarily having everything figured out. At times, the analyst's presentation of confusion about something that the patient has said, or what Stern (1983) has referred to as "unformulated experience," can be helpful.

Finally, Greenberg's (1995) admonitions about how disclosure both reveals and conceals point to the emphasis I make here—namely, that the concept of "self" in self-disclosure, while emphasizing the vital and essential element of our personal participation, can concretize or reify something as "real" or true when we do not yet know what is happening between patient and analyst. Most of the time I think it important for the analyst to work with ambiguities by listening to what the patient has to say and inquiring along particular lines that seem conspicuously or latently important. However, the way to futher this goal is not always to avoid disclosure, but instead to understand how, at times, it may be used in the process of inquiry, learning, and interpretation. Obviously, there are times when a disclosure can constitute an enactment between patient and analyst, just as is true for many other kinds of interventions. Interpretations that focus on underlying motives too quickly may do so. Interpretations that focus microanalytically on the emergence of drive derivatives or their cessation may do so. There are many instances of disclosure in our literature (e.g., Bollas, 1987; Jacobs, 1995), in which disclosure has a "first draft" kind of quality. However, the aim of these interventions is to lead to a more firmly formulated interpretation of unconscious process between patient and analyst. When disclosure is used, the goal is or should be to employ the analyst's subjectivity for the purpose of interpretation rather than revela-

tion. In keeping this goal in mind, there may be more basis to consider how the essential elements of asymmetry are not as challenged as it might appear. It is for this reason that I believe it to be worth trying to make the therapeutic aims of disclosure and the basis for the analyst's selection process even more explicit.

Analyst Disclosure and the Analyst's Authenticity

The selective use of analyst disclosure involves a dynamic tension between the technical application of relative anonymity and analytic authenticity. It is perhaps paradoxical to argue that the concept of "self" in disclosure does an injustice to the analytic nature of disclosure on the one hand and, on the other, to argue that the analyst's authenticity is vital to the use of disclosure. Yet authenticity and the self concept are not synonymous, just as the analyst's self and subjectivity are not synonymous. Consider instances when the analyst shares a piece of countertransference experience in the form of what Racker referred to as a concordant identification. Part of why these situations can be so potent for the patient may be that the patient feels our authentic involvement. However, these examples involve our ability to use ourselves in the context of analytic work.

I believe that analytic authenticity, like analyst disclosure, is embedded in the realm of all interpretive activities. Analytic authenticity is the precondition of interpretation. My definition of authenticity overlaps with much of what Renik (1995) has described as our effort to communicate everything that we feel will help the patient to understand what we think about what the patient is saying and where we are trying to go with the patient. However, I would underscore the caveat that our attempt to communicate our view of what will help the patient is always a construction. A part of our constructive process is the possibility that we may be surprised by what we find out about ourselves in the process of disclosing (Hoffman, 1991). This surprise is also a part of exploratory efforts to learn about the patient's experience of

our subjectivity (Aron, 1991). I view this element of surprise as central to any definition of analyst authenticity. At the same time, we are always consciously and unconsciously directing where the patient might go (Cooper, 1996b, 1997) whether we like it or not. Analyst disclosure can be compatible with the goal of making our way of thinking and working an important subject of joint inquiry, one that is tied to the task of learning about the patient's way of feeling and thinking.

A capacity for surprise and spontaneity is also related to what Hoffman (1994) has usefully described as the dialectical tension between the analyst's discipline and personal expressiveness. He suggests that there is no "book" on this equation that can be prescribed. Rather, he suggests that the analyst's struggle to learn about both the patient's and the analyst's participation makes for an overarchingly authentic engagement with the patient.

Mitchell's (1995) recent attempt to compare and reconcile the technical contributions of interpersonalists and Kleinians has important implications for understanding the analyst's authenticity and the use of disclosure. He suggests that the interpersonalist is more likely to feel free to use aspects of personal expressiveness, such as immediate affective reactions and, at times, disclosure. While Mitchell is positively disposed toward both the spontaneity and freedom that the interpersonal model affords the analyst, he is also positive about the Kleinian analyst's attempt to contain countertransference for understanding or processing of affect. He warns that the Kleinian analyst is often sensitive to the pitfalls of immediately interpreting a disavowed affect through projective identification which can have the effect of overwhelming the patient and causing further disavowal. Mitchell suggests that "authenticity in the analyst has less to do with saying everything than in the genuineness of what actually is said" (p. 86).

I find Mitchell's emphasis on the tension between expressiveness and spontaneity and the need to hold on to particular affects for processing important because it moves toward a more supple, practical, and useful definition of analytic authenticity. I also agree with Aron (1996) that genuineness is as difficult to deter-

mine as authenticity. In my view, one of the problems is that genuineness and authenticity can be only partially elucidated by describing the analyst's position; the patient's experience of the analyst's stance is also a part of what defines these terms. Furthermore, the attempt to be genuine can obviously be as infiltrated with defensiveness as can more overt attempts to foreclose exploration of the patient's experience. Along these lines, Mitchell (1993) stated: "Honesty, truth, openness, and genuineness are always highly ambiguous. Subjectivity is not a simple or singular essence like 'true self' " (p. 146).

Authenticity can be made banal by elevating it to a singular experience, stance, or outcome. Instead, it can be regarded as the analyst's aggregate capacity for maintaining tensions between observation, interpretation, participation, engagement, and restraint. Authenticity is defined by the analyst, the patient, and the analytic dialogue between the two. It is, in part, an intersubjective process, not an outcome or endpoint in the analytic situation. Analyst disclosure involves the analyst's attempt to engage the patient in examining the patient's and the analyst's different or similar ways of feeling and thinking about the patient's life. Authenticity is no more or less involved in disclosure than any other aspect of enhancing the process of inquiry.

Analyst Disclosure: Some Therapeutic Aims

In discussing the intended aims of disclosure I emphasize the word, "intended," since how disclosures are experienced may be different from how we intend to use them. We may learn later that our motivation in using disclosure is quite different from what we had thought. We are always in danger of reifying disclosure as the truth of the matter, less tinged with unconscious determinants than the patient's original perception of the analyst.

A first and perhaps most important use of direct disclosure relates to a form of interpretation of transference and resistance which aims to make something conscious that is currently uncon-

scious. Let us take an example that can allow us to look at choices about whether or not to use aspects of disclosure. In talking about an experience with his woman friend, a patient on the couch moves from a tone of vividness and excitement to one drained of vitality. Next, he says that the analyst looked and sounded bored or tired when the hour began; he asks if the analyst is feeling so. The analyst had begun to feel bored when the patient had shifted into this drained-of-excitement mode.

My first preference in such instances would be to ask the patient what he has noticed in my behavior, demeanor, or speech that might have led him to this conclusion. However, I have a number of choices about how to proceed. For example, I might feel that inquiring about what the patient noticed in my behavior could distract him from an internal experience (possible defensive loss of excitement) that seemed important. Inderbitzin and Levy (1994) noted how the focus on interaction can distract patient and analyst from focusing on this kind of internal pressure. However, what Inderbitzin and Levy did not discuss is that the same holds true for the way in which a focus on internal processes can at times distract the analytic dyad from important interactional or relational processes.

Many analysts might simply avoid the patient's question and ask him what he noticed about how his feelings and associations changed from passion to something stripped of feeling. The analyst could wonder with the patient why his attention turned toward what the analyst was thinking at that moment. Was it a projection on to the analyst of something that the patient was experiencing about the direction of his associations?

There are a few other choices that do not necessarily involve the analyst's *direct* disclosure but may involve "virtual disclosure" (Cooper, 1996a, 1996c). Virtual disclosure is how I refer to those instances in which we convey something to the patient about our experience without directly acknowledging our volitional contribution in revealing this experience. An example of virtual disclosure within the context of my example might involve the analyst's saying: "It seemed to me that you were talking about something

with passion and somehow you've enervated it, taken away its vitality, and I wonder why." The analyst has virtually told the patient how he experienced the patient's shifts in associations, but has not directly answered the patient's question; hence a patient can view this as answering or as not answering. One can assume that from the patient's perspective, the interpretation about the way the patient enervated the content is associated with the possibility that the analyst *was* feeling responsively tired or bored. I agree with Renik (1995) that at times there is value in changing these ambiguous statements into a form that makes our thoughts and reactions more readily known to the patient. Obviously, there are also many instances in which we need to help patients to elaborate and untangle their experiences and perceptions of us without using analyst disclosure.

At its worst, virtual disclosure may involve a compromise between making our position slightly more available while holding on to the ideal of anonymity. The patient's perceptions are relationally and defensively configured events involving important defensive projections which the analyst wishes to interpret. On the other hand, the patient's perceptions may express complementary or concordant identifications which the analyst, through the use of disclosure, can interpret. The analyst's use of virtual disclosure may impede interpretation in either of these directions.

There are a number of possibilities for interventions in which we might choose to directly disclose something about our reactions at the moment, once again confirming the patient's perceptions of us but without offering a hypothesis about why the patient asked us about our reactions. This type of intervention would aim at seeing what the pair might learn about the analyst's affective reactions and/or the patient's motivations and experiences that led to the shift in affect or to their voicing their perceptions at this moment. For example, the analyst in my example might choose to say, "Yes, I think that my attention and feelings did change as I listened. What should we make of that?" Alternatively, the analyst might wish to answer the question but shift the patient's attention

back to why the patient asked this question or what he noticed about his own feelings at that moment.

Continuing with this example, I will consider another kind of disclosure, one in which the analyst aims to reveal something about how he feels in order to help the patient learn something that may have happened in the process of associating about which he had previously been unaware. Interventions of this sort involve common interpretations of projection. This type of intervention can occur without the analyst minimizing the patient's perceptions of the analyst's "real" behavior. The analyst might say, "I did notice that my attention was different when you began speaking so vividly about this experience with your woman friend as compared to when you asked me if I was bored. At times it seems to me that you are particularly observant about my reactions when you have changed a way of experiencing yourself without being aware of it." This might be part of an even larger transference or defense interpretation: "Perhaps you notice a change in me so that I can see something that you feel reluctant to see yourself, or to speak about, or maybe you are even beginning to see by seeing me see something in you."

The analyst who confirms or disconfirms the patient's observations aims to help the patient become aware of feelings or conflicts that were previously unavailable, to make known something unknown about the transference or resistance. The pretense of anonymity (Renik, 1995) has shifted into a mode of the analyst's making something of his subjectivity known to the patient. However, the analyst has selectively utilized this presentation of his subjectivity, which is consistent with the operating principles of all interpretations.

Disclosure which aims to make the unconscious conscious often does so with the assumption that concealed meaning is itself intersubjectively determined and constituted. Interpretations involving countertransference disclosure related to projective identification fit into this category as well. The analyst views the patient as having unconsciously externalized feelings that are anathema for

the patient to experience directly. By articulating what these affects are and why they might be externalized in this fashion, the analyst helps the patient to examine and integrate previously unconscious experience. As mentioned before, the view that some meaning is intersubjectively determined and co-constituted stands in contrast to the view of analysts (e.g., Gray, 1990; Inderbitzin and Levy, 1994) who regard self-observation of unconscious id and superego pressures as exclusively intrapsychic. This attitude partly becomes the rationale for the rare use of disclosure.

This distinction goes to the heart of a second aim of analyst disclosure, namely, to create a new mode of inquiry and discovery within the analytic process, which, in turn, attempts to apply our understanding of the epistemology of the analytic situation to technique. These disclosures might refer to the analyst sharing a dilemma or conflict about how to approach a particular issue (e.g., Aron, 1996; Hoffman, 1991; Renik, 1995). For example, I observed that a patient seemed to be unconsciously contemptuous of his peers in ways that he had not noticed, but was repeatedly told about by his peers. At the same time, the patient felt put down if I tried to explore the possible dimensions of his contempt. There are many technical choices available to the analyst at this moment. After a period of trust had developed in the analysis, I said to the patient, "I find myself in a dilemma. I want to help you understand what happens with your peers, and I think that we have some reason to understand how you might feel critical at times that you are unaware of, or be experienced by others that way. I also know that when I bring it up, you are likely to feel self-critical or criticized by me in ways that feel like a show-stopper."

This type of disclosure aims to develop new modes of inquiry. It might lead to a further understanding of the transference, such as the analyst being able to say to the patient: "In order for you to be able to explore the anger and criticism that you feel toward others and that we know you come by honestly, you feel a need for me to be 100% on your side. You need to feel that you are in no danger of being on the receiving end of my criticisms the way you felt

yourself to be with your father. Maybe in these moments with your peers, you feel that if the choice is to be your father dishing it out or you receiving it, you'd rather be in the role of your father." This type of disclosure attempts to provide a mode of inquiry that can lead to an interpretation of the patient's experience or his constructed choice: his identifying with his critical father or analyst or receiving this critical response.

Naturally, this type of intervention could be viewed by the patient as the analyst's manipulatively trying to deposit his therapeutic conflict into the patient. In other words, the analyst may be unwittingly asking the patient to "play nice" and not feel narcissistic impingements from the analyst. Part of the analyst's efforts to selectively use disclosure involve considering this as a possible motive. But another way to view the aim of this intervention is to put the dilemma out on the table in order to explore aspects of resistance and transference from both participants that were previously unavailable. The patient may wish the analyst to hold on more exclusively to the sense of danger and the potential for sadistic destruction of another that the patient has experienced as both a victim or as one who dishes it out.

A third aim of analyst disclosure consists of conveying to the patient how the analyst is, or could be, a new object, experienced in tension with the transferentially held view of the analyst as an old object (Greenberg, 1986; Loewald, 1960). For example, a patient long held toward me a working and productive negative paternal transference in which I, like her father, failed to recognize her beauty, intelligence, and charm and instead was always too "objective" and evaluative in my interpretive stance. I would characterize this negative transference as founded on a feeling of safety and trust with me. Over a long period of analyzing this transference, I found that interpretations intended to convey something about how far she had moved and where she might be going were incorporated into the negative transference as my being insufficiently appreciative. After many instances of trying to understand with her what she had noticed in my remarks that led her to this impression, I began to wonder with her more actively

about why it was difficult for her to entertain how my comments were derived from positive feelings about who she was and what she had been able to accomplish. I did not claim authority for my experience, but I did see my view as something quite important to consider in terms of how unavailable it continued to be for her experience of me. I wondered aloud if she was reluctant to take this in from me for reasons that we might further explore. In my view, my anticipation of the patient's psychic future—that is, where the patient could go that was different from her familiar experience of me as her father—had been more exclusively within the historical transference (A. Cooper, 1987) or the old object experience (Greenberg, 1986). My patient agreed with my interpretation, and this began a new line of inquiry about the various dangers of considering these psychic possibilities.

This kind of disclosure also occurs frequently through indirect or "virtual disclosure." In these instances we are not necessarily explicit about how we stand in contrast to the past object within the transference. However, our effort to understand the patient's experience of the past object often implicitly suggests that we occupy a different position from the past object in much the way that Loewald (1960), and earlier Strachey (1934), discussed. For example, we might suggest that the patient has needs to selectively perceive us, needs that would include an attachment to an old object (Cooper and Levitan, 1998; Fairbairn, 1952; Valenstein, 1973) or the avoidance of various kinds of dangers (sexual or hostile feelings or feelings of unsafety). By making explicit our view of the patient that runs next to the patient's embedded view of us within the transference or old-object view, we have the opportunity to make our view of the patient less ambiguous.

A Surreal Concept in Psychoanalytic Technique: Potential Space

Mathematicians employ the term, "surreal number," to that category of numbers which have no "real" computational value. For example, the number, "infinity squared," lies within the

realm of the conceptual rather than being a number that we can ever specify in terms of computational value. It has struck me that the concept of potential space within the analytic situation bears some similarity to the concept of a surreal number. This in no way mitigates against the necessity of this concept in understanding elements of the analytic situation and, more particularly, analytic disclosure. It does, however, require that we think even further about how this concept can be made as functional as possible.

The attempt to maintain the potential space of the analytic situation is a commonly held value or ideal of many analysts in pursuing analytic work. In the rich dialogue that ensued between Davies (1994), Benjamin (1994), and Gabbard (1994) regarding the analyst's disclosure, a central point of discussion involved the concept of potential space. When do the analyst's disclosures open up the observational field? When do they seem to foreclose pathways for exploration of affect and ideation? When do disclosures interfere with the development of transference or help to understand what has already developed?

Most examples of analyst disclosure point to how various "sound bites" from an analysis make it difficult to evaluate when potential space has been expanded or constricted. It is often only in assessing an analysis over a period of time that we can lay claim to how the analyst's disclosure has expanded or foreclosed the potential space of the analytic situation. It is also difficult to isolate the effect of the analyst's disclosure from the amalgam of technical procedures utilized by the analyst. Potential space is a process that the analyst and patient seek to learn more about. Except in frank enactments of boundary violations, it is not usually a discrete phenomenon or clinical moment that can be easily isolated.

Renik's (1995) numerous illustrations of varieties of disclosure sometimes revealed instances when he decided to share with a patient some of his perceptions of himself that were different from those attributed to him by the patient. While it could be argued that this form of disclosure might constrict or foreclose aspects of the potential space by minimizing the patient's perceptual and psychic reality, it could also be argued that these inter-

ventions could open up pathways of association previously unavailable to the patient. Again, it is part of the analyst's job to assess the impact of his or her disclosure on the patient and the overall progress of the analysis. Has the analyst opened up new modes of inquiry and negotiation between patient and analyst, or wittingly or unwittingly imposed a unilaterally defined truth?

There are obviously kinds of impingements upon potential space that we can and should agree on as impingements; these, of course, include frank ethical violations, such as sexual abuse. However, as Renik (1996) has pointed out, we are on thin ethical ice if our main considerations related to frank ethical violations involve only the risk of impinging on the potential psychic space of the analytic situation. I wish to emphasize that the ideal of analytic anonymity (Renik, 1995) is often the subtext for a readiness to view the analyst's disclosures as impinging on potential space within the analytic situation. The aim of the analyst's disclosure, when considered as a part of the purpose of therapeutic action that I have suggested, may provide a modicum of help in differentiating when disclosure might impinge upon the potential space or not; the analyst's attempt to assess the impact of the intervention is crucial here.

With regard to impingements upon potential space, I believe that my suggestion to think of the analyst's disclosures as not synonymous with "self"-disclosure, and as similar to a variety of other analytic interventions, perhaps provides a fairer basis upon which to evaluate this issue. I take it as a given that almost every transference or resistance interpretation can impinge on potential space. Balint's (1968) admonitions about the hazards of consistent interpretation emphasized how interpretive style and theoretical predilections almost inevitably lead to forms of indoctrination, even though he singled out the Kleinian school in particular. If the analyst has a willingness to consider his or her impact on the patient, then the criteria for assessing the degree to which disclosure may impinge upon potential space may be more easily evaluated.

Thus, the surrealness of the concept of potential space does not

preclude its utility in evaluating the efficacy of the analyst's disclosure. However, I have tried to suggest that we are often on rather speculative ground in taking a clinical moment revealing disclosure and evaluating it without extensive information about what both preceded and followed from the intervention. Certainly, the clinical examples in this paper are hardly evidentiary. Instead, they may serve as illustrations, but no more or less than most clinical vignettes in our literature.

The most complicated factor in assessing potential space is that many of our aims and the effects of our interventions do not fit neatly into one category or another. For example, sometimes our disclosure aims to make something apparent to the patient that is hidden or unconscious, while gratifying our particular need to reveal ourselves or the patient's need for us to reveal ourselves. Sometimes patients feel that the potential space has been negatively influenced, and yet later they come to appreciate what has been learned. Naturally, this could involve the possibility that the patient has complied with the style of the analyst, but this is no more likely an outcome than with any other kind of intervention. Sometimes a patient may feel that the analyst's disclosure is helpful in expanding the potential space, or, over time, one or both of the participants may come to feel that they have become derailed from the aims of analytic work.

Conclusion

While I have tried to make explicit some of the aims of analyst disclosure and dimensions of the analyst's subjectivity within disclosure, I do not wish to suggest that there is only one way to go in these matters. Many analysts would argue that each of the aims I have described are accomplished through other modes of analytic interpretation and inquiry. Historically, these considerations have been so unbalanced in the direction of viewing the dangers of analyst disclosure that I suppose a part of my direction in this paper has been to try to even the playing field. By thinking of the

ways in which analyst disclosure holds a great deal in common with other interpretive activities, we may be in a better position to evaluate the efficacy of judicious use of these interventions.

Analysts are enormously variable in the ways in which they reveal, perceive, and analyze how they are showing themselves and being seen by their patients (Aron, 1991, 1996; Cooper, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Ehrenberg, 1995; Greenberg, 1991, 1995; Jacobs, 1995; Mitchell, 1988; Renik, 1995). My attempt to point to the therapeutic aims of analyst disclosure is not to prescribe technique to analysts who find that a far greater degree of analytic anonymity facilitates their work; nor do I minimize the theoretical framework which utilizes the analyst's efforts to help a patient to become more self-observing from a less relationally influenced framework (Gray, 1990; Inderbitzin and Levy, 1994), even though I find limitations in using this framework as the sole basis of understanding my own clinical work.

I believe that it is highly unproductive to discuss these matters of technique from the position of who is right and who is wrong. Such a position minimizes the essential importance of the analyst's subjectivity both in theoretical predilections (Cooper, 1996a, 1996b) and in choices of technique (Aron, 1996; Greenberg, 1995; Renik, 1993, 1995). At a more subtle level, these differences also have implications for understanding the patient's allusions to the patient's experience of the relationship (Gill, 1983), the patient as interpreter of the analyst (Hoffman, 1983), and the analyst's awareness of interpretation as an expression of the analyst's subjectivity (Aron, 1991). Yet we cannot simply reduce matters of technical difference to personal proclivity (Gerson, 1996). In my view, the discussion of personal proclivities has substance only in the context of various schools of psychoanalytic thought that seem theoretically and technically sound and get some results. However, given that we have many therapeutically viable schools of technique, we should increasingly consider that personal proclivity *is* important in discussions of our differences. A strict classical analyst may be no more likely to change during

supervision with an interpersonalist than a psychoanalyst of any persuasion with a cognitive-behaviorist.

I have tried to suggest that the self of the analyst who judiciously uses disclosure reflects his or her subjectivity, but that this subjectivity is well embedded in the analyst's other functions. I hope that the discussion of some aspects of therapeutic action and aims involving analyst disclosure can help us to evaluate when disclosure is being used toward accomplishing these aims. I believe that what makes this topic understandably anathema to many analysts is that the potential dangers in pathologically based use of disclosure are perhaps more damaging than the more subtle problems of defensively held positions of analytic anonymity and ambiguity (excluding, of course, positions of anonymity that are utilized and thought through within a well-developed theory of technique). I would add, however, that the dangers of defensively and rigidly held anonymity have proven to be considerably limiting in the conduct of many analyses.

Each of the forms of disclosure that I have elaborated has the potential to harm the analytic situation. Disclosure can harm through minimizing the exploration of the patient's psychic reality. The analyst may inadvertently harm an open process of inquiry if the disclosures are treated as a kind of authoritative truth about the nature of the interaction even as the analyst is trying to open up an inquiry into the interaction. Finally, disclosure can obviously involve gratification for the analyst that cannot be rationalized by the therapeutic aim of analysis.

The analyst who uses disclosure is in an extremely powerful position both to help and to hurt a patient. I hope I have made clear that there is a great deal to be gained by considering how disclosure can be integrated within the body of our analytic tools. I return again to Gill's (1983) admonitions about disclosure because I find them to be particularly compelling. They give the analyst pause in considering every type of interpretation, every stance, every technical choice, since I believe that the analyst's subjectivity is expressed in each of these activities. Regarding dis-

closure, Gill stated, "Furthermore, the analyst must recognize that his subjective experience may be as defensive on his own part as he believes the patient's conscious attitudes are. He cannot therefore assume that if he reports his own experience that is the end of the story" (p. 228). Indeed, when the analyst using disclosure or interpretation of any kind believes that what he or she has revealed of his or her thoughts, formulation, or experience is the end of the story, the therapeutic aims of analytic work have been compromised. At its best, the careful and occasional use of disclosure, like any other form of inquiry and interpretation, aims not to end the story, but to help in its unfolding.

REFERENCES

ALTMAN, N. (1995). *The Analyst in the Inner City: Race, Class, and Culture through a Psychoanalytic Lens.* Hillsdale, NJ/London: Analytic Press.

ARON, L. (1991). The patient's experience of the analyst's subjectivity. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 1:29–51.

——— (1992). Interpretation as expression of the analyst's subjectivity. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 2:475–507.

——— (1996). *A Meeting of Minds: Mutuality in Psychoanalysis.* Hillsdale, NJ/London: Analytic Press.

BALINT, M. (1968). The Basic Fault: Therapeutic Aspects of Regression. London: Tavistock.

BENJAMIN, J. (1994). Commentary on papers by Tansey, Davies and Hirsch. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 4:193–201.

BOLLAS, C. (1987). *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known.* New York: Columbia Univ. Press.

BURKE, W. F. (1992). Countertransference disclosure and the asymmetry/mutuality dilemma. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 2:241–271.

COOPER, A. M. (1987). Changes in psychoanalytic ideas: transference interpretation. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 35:77–98.

COOPER, S. H. (1993). Interpretive fallibility and the psychoanalytic dialogue. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 41:95–126.

——— (1996a). The thin blue line of the intrapsychic/interpersonal dialectic: discussion of papers by Gerson and Spezzano. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 6:647–670.

——— (1996b). Facts all come with a point of view: some reflections on fact and formulation in the 75th anniversary edition of the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis. Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 77:255–273.

——— (1996c). Reply to Gerson and Spezzano. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 6:895–902.

——— (1997). Interpretation and the psychic future. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 78:667–681.

——— (1998). Countertransference disclosure and the conceptualization of psychoanalytic technique. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 67:128–154.

——— & LEVITAN, D.(1998). The old and new object in Fairbairnian and American relational theory. *Psychoanal. Dialogues.* In press.

DAVIES, J. (1994). Love in the afternoon: a relational reconsideration of desire and dread in the countertransference. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 4:153–170.

EHRENBERG, D. B. (1992). *The Intimate Edge: Extending the Reach of Psychoanalytic Interaction.* New York/London: Norton.

——— (1995). Self-disclosure: therapeutic tool or indulgence? Countertransference disclosure. *Contemp. Psychoanal.,* 31:213–228.

FAIRBAIRN, W. R. D. (1952). *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality.* London: Tavistock.

GABBARD, G. O. (1994). Commentary on papers by Tansey, Hirsch, and Davies. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 4:203–213.

GERSON, S. (1996). Neutrality, resistance, and self-disclosure in an intersubjective psychoanalysis. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 6:623–646.

GILL, M. M. (1983). The interpersonal paradigm and the degree of the therapist's involvement. *Contemp. Psychoanal.,* 19:200–237.

——— (1994). *Psychoanalysis in Transition: A Personal View.* Hillsdale, NJ/London: Analytic Press.

——— & HOFFMAN, I. Z. (1982). A method for studying the analysis of aspects of the patient's experience of the relationship in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 30:137–167.

GRAY, P. (1990). The nature of therapeutic action in psychoanalysis. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 38:1083–1097.

GREENBERG, J. (1986). Theoretical models and the analyst's neutrality. *Contemp. Psychoanal.,* 6:87–106.

——— (1991). *Oedipus and Beyond: A Clinical Theory.* Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard Univ. Press.

——— (1995). Psychoanalytic technique and the interactive matrix. *Psychoanal. Q.,* 64:1–22.

——— & MITCHELL, S. A. (1983). *Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press.

HOFFMAN, I. Z. (1983). The patient as interpreter of the analyst's experience. *Contemp. Psychoanal.,* 19:389–422.

——— (1991). Discussion: toward a social-constructivist view of the psychoanalytic situation. (Discussion of papers by L. Aron, A. Modell, and J. Greenberg.) *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 1:74–105.

——— (1994). Dialectical thinking and therapeutic action in the psychoanalytic process. *Psychoanal. Q.,* 63:187–218.

——— (1996). The intimate and ironic authority of the psychoanalyst's presence. *Psychoanal. Q.,* 65:102–136.

INDERBITZIN, L. B. & LEVY, S. T. (1994). On grist for the mill: external reality as defense. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 42:763–788.

JACOBS, T. J. (1995). Discussion of Jay Greenberg's paper. (Self-disclosure: is it psychoanalytic?) *Contemp. Psychoanal.*, 31:237–245.

LOEWALD, H. W. (1960). On the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 41:16–33.

MITCHELL, S. A. (1988). *Relational Concepts in Psychoanalysis: An Integration.* Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard Univ. Press.

——— (1993). *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis.* New York: Basic Books.

——— (1995). Interaction in the Kleinian and interpersonal traditions. *Contemp. Psychoanal.*, 31:65–91.

RENIK, O. (1993). Analytic interaction: conceptualizing technique in light of the analyst's irreducible subjectivity. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 62:553–571.

——— (1995). The ideal of the anonymous analyst and the problem of self-disclosure. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 64:466–495.

——— (1996). The perils of neutrality. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 65:495–517.

STERN, D. B. (1983). Unformulated experience. *Contemp. Psychoanal.*, 19:71–99.

STRACHEY, J. (1934). The nature of the therapeutic action of psycho-analysis. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 15:127–159.

TANSEY, M. J. & BURKE, W. F. (1989). *Understanding Countertransference: From Projective Identification to Empathy.* Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

VALENSTEIN, A. F. (1973). On attachment to painful feelings and the negative therapeutic reaction. *Psychoanal. Study Child*, 28:365–392.

---

875 Massachusetts Ave., Suite 54
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Problems in Falling in Love

Lewis A. Kirshner

To cite this article: Lewis A. Kirshner (1998) Problems in Falling in Love, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 407-425, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006049

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006049

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

PROBLEMS IN FALLING IN LOVE

BY LEWIS A. KIRSHNER, M.D.

Certain patients enter psychoanalysis because of their inability to love another person. Often they report a repetitive erotic pursuit of desired partners, without being able to experience or maintain loving feelings. Kernberg has understood such difficulties as representing effects of early narcissistic disappointments and/or of difficulties in resolving oedipal conflicts. In this paper, Lacanian concepts of the mirror phase and symbolic love are employed to develop these issues. Sexualization of problems in mirroring may be fused with oedipal conflicts in some cases. An extended vignette is presented to illustrate the technical and theoretical issues.

Many patients seek analysis because of problems in entering and sustaining love relationships. After all, as Freud (1915) stated, the love between the sexes is one of the chief things in life, and here he explicitly emphasized the "subtler and aim-inhibited wishes" (p. 170) as those exercising the greatest attraction. Yet in mature love, he noted, tender and sexual feelings must be combined, a process which readily falls prey to unconscious conflicts (Freud, 1912). In Kernberg's important contributions (1974a, 1974b, 1977), major barriers to falling in love derive from two sources: pathological narcissism and, developing Freud's view, the inability to resolve oedipal conflicts by identification with a same-sex parent.

In this paper, I elaborate upon these formulations by introducing Lacanian perspectives on the infant's need for a mirroring object and the function of the oedipal phase as establishing the child's place within a differentiated family system. I offer clinical vignettes to illustrate a type of difficulty in falling in love in which the excited pursuit of mirroring from an unavailable object is the

principal expression of sexual desire. This pattern may represent an attempt to master, through erotization, an unsuccessful early mirroring experience, taking the place of a more differentiated (oedipal) form of love.

Although, as Bergmann (1988) notes, Freud never attempted an overview or synthesis of his views on love, it is clear that his approach was to focus upon the element of "aim-inhibited" libido as the vehicle by which the sexual drives of childhood, having succumbed to repression, could gain a roundabout satisfaction. Problems in love would then follow in the wake of disturbances in the development of the libido, as fixations and regression points established during early psychosexual phases came to interfere with the full expression of genital love. Of course, in this epigenetic hierarchy the final battleground for the fate of the libido is the oedipal period. Here the incestuous object love of the child for the mother is threatened by the rivalry and castration threat of the other parent, who has always occupied the position of a privileged sexual relationship with the mother. As Laplanche and Pontalis (1967) observe, with this step of conceptualizing the child's participation in a system of relationships, Freud advanced beyond a simple biological and reductionistic theory of development based upon innate drives and reoriented psychoanalysis around the problem of internalization of a relational structure. The drive then came to acquire its status as a motivational structure within a context of elaborated relationships with others (Laplanche, 1970).

Beyond his electrostatic analogy of a libidinal energy driving man by its near-constant pressure for discharge and making demands for work upon the mental apparatus, Freud (1920) proposed his broader concept of Eros—a fundamental force of nature seeking unity, binding, and wholeness. He drew upon Plato's *Symposium,* citing Aristophanes' imaginative depiction of a bifurcated being who seeks through sexual love to regain his lost completeness. In the *Symposium,* Socrates extended this image by elaboration of his theory that love is a quest for what man is lacking in himself, ultimately, the eternal reality of pure forms.

Lacan (and this was certainly not unique to him) made much of this Socratic aspect of Freud's thought in emphasizing man's fundamental *manque* or innate state of lack as essential to psychic reality (for example, in his seminar on transference, 1960-1961). *Manque* has effects both in terms of generating desire or love for that which is felt to be lacking and in creating psychic structure. Thus, Lacan followed other analysts in regarding the construction of the internal world of symbolization as a response to what is absent, missing, or lacking in reality.

The "poverty of the subject," as Sartre described it, or the *manque à être* (lack of being) elaborated by Lacan, conveys an existential truth about human reality and provides a modern gloss on Socrates' treatment of love. Human beings lack an inborn program for life and, beyond whatever arbitrary answers that culture provides, must pursue self-definition, consciously and unconsciously, from beginning to end. Lacan's stress on this point is clearest in his depiction of the mirror phase, in which the psychobiologically unintegrated infant of eight to eighteen months seeks to identify with the apparent wholeness of a mirror image, a paradigmatic vision which differs in important respects from the use of the mirror concept in Winnicott and Kohut. The infant subject, according to Lacan's (1966) formulation, seeks a state of psychophysical unity through identification with its visual image in the mirror, which forms the nucleus of the developing ego in an essentially imaginary construction. The ego, as Lacan reads Freud, is like a suit of clothing acquired by the subject to cover its ("his or her") inherent nakedness and disorganization, something added on which provides an image of coherence. Henceforth, the ego demands "mirroring" from its objects, that is, confirmation by others as the unity or the "self," one might say, it wishes to be. Narcissistic relations are thus at the base of all object relations for Lacan, and love or the desire for love retains the qualities of this original grandiose and aggrandizing project of the mirror phase. In this sense, the mirror phase could be regarded, in Kleinian terminology, as a "position," rather than a discrete chronological event.

For Kohut and Winnicott, the mirroring concept seems much more bound up with considerations of the response of the object or, more accurately, the affective recognition by another subject. From this theoretical perspective, the uniquely human relationship of *mutual* recognition and attunement between two subjects, beginning in infancy, supplements and finally displaces the instinctual or biological attachment of the infant to the mother. This is an important issue because it raises questions about the nature of the preverbal subject, or the coming to be of this subject in a passionate encounter with its primary objects. (One could argue that this intersubjective, more metaphoric conception of mirroring is also implicit in Lacan—for example, see Borch-Jacobsen, 1990). What I wish to emphasize in Lacan's description is the affective component of the child's response, the element of delight and excitement in the presence of the mirror, which reappears in the phenomenology of adult love. Even considered in its relation to objects, this response is not a symmetric one, and its apparent universality suggests inborn mechanisms which the "good-enough" mother evokes. This limitation of "mirroring" as an intersubjective concept touches on the problem of mutuality in love, which is largely ignored in Freud and, one might infer, highly questionable for Lacan.

In this regard, Lacan (1953-1954) proposed a distinction between imaginary love, whose basis is the narcissistic illusion of the mirror stage, and a different kind of love associated with what he called the symbolic order, which we may roughly translate as the culturally given structure of differentiated relationships (of which the oedipus complex is the paradigm). Imaginary or mirror love seeks self-completion and an ideal selfhood, while symbolic love offers the possibility of a non-narcissistic relationship in which the other is recognized as a fully separate being (another subject). Symbolic love implies acceptance of human limitation, in which the desire of each subject is filtered through the structures of social organization, language, and logic that shape and enable it. Desire, in this familiar paradigm, originates in the human's fundamental existential *manque,* his/her lack of innate essence or

being. It is prior to any verbal representation, while love must be expressed within the constraints of language and signification—within the symbolic realm. For Lacan, speech is always a chain of symbolic displacements along which desire moves or "insists," and the quintessential form of symbolic speech is the verbal commitment of love to another speaking subject.

These dual principles of love as *manque*—an expression of a hunger for wholeness—and of love as the product of an intersubjective pact bear comparison with Kernberg's (1974a, 1974b, 1977) conclusion that the capacity to fall and remain in love involves a two-step process. First, the child requires positive experiences of early erotic bodily contact with the mother; then, subsequently, successful resolution of oedipal conflicts. While acknowledging that the capacity to fall in love and to enjoy sexual relations does not require mature object relations or "genitality," Kernberg does propose that maintenance of love relationships implies achievement of these developmental steps.

Kernberg's first stage of erotic contact may be the internal counterpart to the visible excitement expressed in the presence of the mother, which deserves the adjective "jubilatory" that Lacan applies to the child's response before the mirror. This response, clearly, is not simply instinctual but is the outcome of "good-enough mothering." As Loewald (1971) proposed, there is a necessary environmental provision of preverbal interactions between mother and infant for inborn biological reactions to be structured as psychological drives and, ultimately, experienced by the child as desires. Within the dyadic unit, the biologically immature infant gradually becomes aware of the mother's presence and absence not simply as she satisfies appetitive needs, but as a unique other, whose affective responsiveness sustains the child's incipient psychic organization. Using Loewald's analogy, early bodily contact and emotional interactions with the mother act as a template for the psychic structuring of desire and provide a framework for subjective cohesion as an ego. While Lacan stressed the infant's need for integration at the mirror phase, driven by the infantile *manque*, a feature of our species' biological immaturity at birth,

representation of this *manque* would seem to require fairly consistent physical and emotional contact with an actual, good-enough mother who can be missed and longed for. Absent such contact, as in cases of severe character disorders, narcissistic personalities, and perversions, the capacity for object love is regularly lacking.

Many patients with difficulties falling in love are able to describe quite movingly this deep longing for an object. For example, Spencer, a twenty-nine-year-old attorney, who complained of a painful inability to feel and express love for a woman, said that he dreamed of a type of ideal female he could pursue without the letdown and anxiety of a real relationship. "I like to be the dog chasing the car but never catching it," he admitted. Adele, a twenty-seven-year-old teacher, reported that she was excited by certain kinds of men but had no conception of what love might actually feel like. Her affairs, in fact, were brief and sexual, while Spencer's infatuations had culminated in detached and superficial relationships in which he tried to please but intensely resented his partners. Although his pattern is perhaps more commonly found among women and Adele's among men, their stories are otherwise quite familiar to most analysts. Both histories were combined in Nathan, a thirty-year-old professor, who altered between brief sexual affairs and lengthy relationships in which he was never certain whether he was actually in love, until he finally became bored and dissatisfied by the partner's demands for commitment. He suffered from a sense of being incapable of love, for which he bitterly reproached himself.

These and similar patients experience the excitement of the sexually desirable unknown other—in Kernberg's (1974a) phrase, "the body that withholds itself." At the same time, they are often painfully aware of their inability to enjoy reciprocity with an object. Brazelton, et al. (1974) and Tronick and Cohn (1989) describe similar behavior in infants who seek to repair disrupted interactions with the mother but at a certain point break off or abandon contact because of a problematic maternal response. Thus, their initial excitement in being "mirrored" comes to grief over the inevitable otherness of the object. Repeated erotic con-

tacts may then become a substitute goal for a type of Don Juan for whom "womankind" (or, perhaps, *pari passu,* "mankind") itself has become the mirror object. In this way, compulsive erotic pursuit may disguise a primary wish for affirmation of a fragile self or "ego identity." By attracting a partner who can function as an admiring mirror (in the Kohutian sense), the mirror illusion of wholeness (in the Lacanian sense) is briefly sustained and the subject expresses his/her "jubilatory" excitement, while a relationship in which the object is clearly "other" (not a selfobject) threatens the subject with a basic disaffirmation.

Adele, for example, could become excited by an idealized man because of her ability to arouse his sexual interest. Yet she anticipated being ignored or rejected after the physical encounter, feeling she had little else to offer. In anticipation, she often chose inappropriate men toward whose predictable lack of caring she could feign indifference and thus minimize the otherwise devastating narcissistic injury.

Nathan was also intensely excited at the start of his affairs, idealizing partners whose response made him feel potent and desirable. For a time, he accepted their affection as genuine, permitting himself the magical fantasy of "two beings made for each other." Unfortunately, his gradual attempt to move beyond the sexual pursuit stage to form a bond with the partner aroused mounting disappointment and frustration as she began to express her own individual desires. He then re-experienced a version of his childhood relationship with a seductive and rejecting mother, which supports Bergmann's (1982) pessimistic observation that love in real life is likely to succumb to the repetition compulsion. Analysis of Nathan's defenses against the ensuing rage and guilt were prominent features of his treatment. His basic questions were: how could he love a woman who inspired such rage, and how could she love him? His guiding rule seemed to be that it was better not to need the woman and be bored than to suffer rejection and humiliation. In this regard, Kernberg (1977) has commented that intimacy threatens the release of aggression, a point developed in numerous places by Lacan when he stresses the close

relationship between the mirroring dyad, narcissism, and aggressive reactions toward the object.

In fact, the three vignettes illustrate Lacan's (1953-1954) depiction of the narcissistic lover, who pursues what he calls, "the inexhaustible captation of the desire of the other" (p. 221). He means that the subjects stuck in a dyadic position seek the illusory confirmation of the ideal self through attempting to become the desire of their objects. "It is himself whom he pursues," says Lacan, referring to the fundamental split between the ego of the narcissistic subject and the ideal ego. Within the mirror phase (which is to say, in the realm of images and fantasy), the subject remains in the narcissistic trap (described by Freud [1923]) of the ego attempting to set itself up as a love object for the id, a nonreciprocal and grandiose attempt to be the ideal object of love. At this level, the other person is being recruited essentially to fill an intrapsychic role, rather than being loved for his or her otherness. There is "Verliebtheit—imaginary fascination," says Lacan (1953-1954, p. 276), "but there is no love."

On the other hand, in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,* Freud (1921) seemed to regard the gap between ego and ideal as a prerequisite for the state of being in love. In narcissistic states, the ego (or "self") may be identified or merged with the ideal. There is then no Socratic lack, no longing for what is missing, and no love. *Manque* fuels passion and desire and must therefore be an ingredient of all love relationships. In many instances, however, writes Freud, the love object/ideal seems to capture all the subject's libido (his/her self-love or esteem), leaving the ego weakened, in a state of self-sacrifice. To the extent that the ideal ego is heir to the idealization of the mother as well as to the child's own infantile narcissism, falling in love is thus highly dangerous for the ego. This is a situation clinically familiar in adolescents, whose infatuations can be so powerful and depleting that they may even lead to psychosis in vulnerable cases. Self-protective aggression against the power of this primitive object in the form of narcissistic rage is also clinically familiar. In some ways, the capacity to fall in love could be said to represent a sustainable oscillation between

these tendencies and involves, as Kernberg notes, a bearable revival of primitive object relations. What enables some individuals to tolerate these relations and remain in love is less clear. Does love require sufficient developmental experiences with good objects to modify introjects composing the ideal ego, thereby lessening the rage and passion associated with splitting? Or is it a question of finding the "right" object as the essential element?

As one might expect, the three patients mentioned previously were quite angry with their mothers, whom they depicted as unavailable, cold, or controlling in varying degrees. They consciously longed for a thinly disguised maternal/parental figure to make them feel loved and lovable but were highly sensitive to any hint of rejection. Excitation through being chosen seemed to be their immediate goal, but probably there is a significant difference between those whose quest for the mirror is sexualized and those pursuing some other form of affirmation. Perhaps this difference explains why Freud (1914) persisted in his effort to separate object from narcissistic love.

Kohut (1977) has drawn our attention to the need of many patients for an empathic dyadic relationship through which they might eventually analyze and begin to repair early narcissistic injuries. Indeed, he felt that by addressing their disappointments in the transference, some internalization of a good mirroring object could be accomplished (although whether this would then open the way toward oedipal phase conflicts and their resolution is unclear). Likewise, we do not know whether the establishment or strengthening of selfobject ties can lead to lasting love relationships.

Kernberg approaches a Lacanian formulation in his conclusion that the capacity to love a separate other person, who is appreciated for his or her individual value, is acquired through internalization of a triadic structure. In Kernberg's work, overcoming preoedipal disappointments, jealousy, and resentment is a prelude to intimacy with the forbidden sexual object of the oedipal phase. Citing the French analyst David, Kernberg notes the necessary "acceptance of unfulfillable longings" and the "constant

awareness of indissoluble separateness" (Kernberg, 1977, pp. 94, 95) as aspects of triangular structure. These are also aspects of what Lacan calls symbolic love, which puts the oedipal phase into the wider context of the symbolic order, grounding the human being as individuated subject in pre-existing (symbolic) structures. Restated in developmental terms, the oedipal phase represents a gradual socialization process, in the course of which the narcissistically desiring child, functioning at a preoperational cognitive level (with its magical qualities), is introduced to the human reality of irrevocable differences of genders and generations, rules of relationships and logical categories, which will be internalized as psychic structure.

Clinical situations, of course, frequently fail to conform to the normative, rather idealized version of the oedipus complex in psychoanalytic theory. Often the analyst encounters histories of parental schisms expressed through divorce, abandonment, or emotional distance amounting to mutual disdain and rejection. One or both parents may not provide mirroring or attunement but behave in a disruptive, intrusive, or controlling manner, impinging on the child's imaginary space. As a result, the child is obliged to pursue whatever opportunities for emotional contact are left open by the parent who is most available, but whose own object needs may impede triangulation. Even with relatively loving parents, the isolation of the nuclear or one-parent family and the unavailability of other relatives to introduce the child into a network of reciprocal relationships and differentiated partners may interfere with oedipal structuring. The oedipus complex may then lack a sharp delineation from what have traditionally been considered dyadic issues such as the threat of abandonment, exploitation by a needy parent, or elaboration of a "child-centered" milieu of specialness, inevitably commingling narcissistic, psychosexual, and object relational issues.

Of course, the child's fantasies about the parental relationship do not draw solely upon the libidinal conflicts of the oedipal period, but reflect the entire history of the family structure within

which the child has emerged as subject. This history frequently involves a skewed oedipal setup or products of defenses against it (Kirshner, 1992), in which narcissistic object relations (Faimberg and Corel, 1990) negate the "otherness" and separateness of the object.

Such was the case with the attorney, Spencer, whose difficulties in loving I will now describe in greater detail. A polite and shy Southern man, Spencer was unable to imagine a loving relationship between two people, as he believed one partner was always dominant, controlling a needy "puppy" of a mate. He described women as either self-sufficient and remote or degraded and promiscuously in search of love. In the presence of a woman he admired, his spontaneity was crippled by his fear of displaying open affection, which she might scorn as weak and pathetic. At such times, he imagined the mockery of the woman and pictured his own servile appearance with revulsion. Because the possibility of a humiliating rejection was paramount, he carried out a hypercritical assessment of potential partners, which inevitably suggested that he would be extremely foolish to become attached to such a person who could certainly tarnish his own identity. Such frozen imaginary patterns may be considered characteristic of mirror relationships in Lacanian terms.

Spencer explained his mistrust of women as a result of his poor relationship with his mother. While he portrayed her as extremely unaffectionate and insensitive, he nevertheless had dreaded losing her. Prior to the oedipal period, his few memories were of emotional distance (watching mother occupied with his older sisters, for example) or rejection (mother laughing at him after an accident). Subsequently, he began to avoid her during the day in favor of his more exciting scientist father (who showed pride in and mirrored his scholastic accomplishments), only to awaken suddenly at night with dreams of "total aloneness" from which he fled to her bed. Although he was pleased with his father's recognition of his growing skills, Spencer was troubled by his mother's lack of respect for her husband, noting the total absence of affec-

tion between them. He took her sarcasm about their shared interests as expressing a contempt for men, which seemed more than matched by father's disdain for "feminine" pursuits.

Spencer presented for analysis with a complaint of severe eating difficulties and anxiety, symptoms which followed the unilateral decision of the woman he had been pursuing to move into his apartment. These symptoms had previously occurred whenever he felt he was about to be taken over by a woman who would usurp all his time and demand "perfect oneness," the goal of close relationships in his view. In essence, he feared he would end up being pulled into the mirror, as in the familiar reversal of master and slave (in Hegel)—that is, becoming a narcissistic object for the partner. For these reasons, the early years of his lengthy treatment focused on problems in the dyadic relationship and were highly influenced by Kohutian formulations of his lack of early mirroring as a separate object who could delight his mother. In all his relationships, Spencer expected to be used by a controlling mother for her own narcissistic needs. He felt emasculated by women and sought the support of an idealized male analyst from whom he hoped to borrow strength, emphasizing his disappointment in his own father, whom he had come to view as inadequate. Interpretations concerned his devastated reaction to feeling disaffirmed as a male by his mother, to feeling that she did not differentiate him from his sisters or other children, and to absorbing her sarcastic remarks, which he recounted numerous times. These interpretations helped allay his anxiety and enabled him to feel less helpless in his new relationship. However, it soon became apparent that he experienced no emotional intimacy with this woman. Among the many similar examples, he was unable to tell her about his therapy, for which he feared she would scorn him as a weakling, just as his mother had looked down on his activities with father.

As he felt better, Spencer reported pride in leading a separate life at work and in chess tournaments, which took him away for periods of time. A fantasy of self-sufficient independence took shape as he expressed superiority toward friends who were depen-

dent on their therapists or spouses. In Kohut's terms, he seemed to use the analyst as someone who mirrored his grandiose self as the "selfobject" he required to maintain a sense of cohesion and psychophysical integrity. For Lacan, an analyst's willingness to perform the functions of a "selfobject" would probably be regarded as joining the patient's narcissistic transference, an "imaginary transference," which could stalemate the analysis. Here, parenthetically, the theoretical difference could be linked with technical issues. A Kohutian view of the patient as demonstrating a form of developmental deficit might promote the analyst's empathic participation in the mirror transference. Lacanians, however, would tend to see the predictable development of a mirror transference as an obstacle to be countered by the "symbolic" position of the analyst, who resists collusion with the patient's demand to act as a mirror. The analyst would instead attend closely to the flow of associations (to the patient's speech) which might offer opportunities for interpretation, rather than play a kind of interpersonal role as the selfobject. In Spencer's case, the period of treatment during which empathic responses prevailed seemed to strengthen the patient's confidence and sense of initiative, as might be predicted by self psychology, but the process gradually felt "stuck" and unproductive.

During this phase of treatment, Spencer advanced in his career, fulfilled some personal objectives in chess ranking, rewarded himself for the first time with high-quality computer chess equipment, and accepted setbacks with less self-criticism. He seemed to understand the extent of his disappointment with both parents and was able to spend time with them without developing symptoms, which had not been the case since he left for college. After a brief recrudescence of symptoms following a demand for marriage from his partner, Spencer reluctantly agreed to start a family with her. Although he could not say that he loved this woman, not being able to identify the emotion of love, he was proud of her as an attractive and successful companion who supported his masculine identity, and he dreaded being left by her. For her part, his new wife was apparently uninterested in an intimate emotional

relationship and, according to him, appreciated the space he gave her for her own pursuits. The situation seemed to represent some sort of stable compromise opposing any further change.

After the sixth year of treatment, when the sessions had seemed static for many months, I chose a suitable moment to broach the possibility of termination. This aroused immediate anxiety in Spencer, who felt a catastrophic threat of abandonment. There was no question of his giving me up. I was somewhat taken aback to realize to what extent I had been participating all along in an enactment involving our collusion in ignoring my role in his psychic integrity as his "selfobject." This mirror illusion was shattered by my raising the reality conditions of the treatment, a symbolic act which removed me to a third position. Who had I been for him after all? How had I been caught up in this repetition of the parental schism, becoming his exciting day-parent (father), fostering his illusion of self-sufficiency, while he returned each night in his fear to the bed of his unavailable and longed-for wife-mother?

Around this time, the couple began having overt conflict over his wife's wish for a baby, which raised the issue of a "third" in more concrete terms. He felt the child would be her baby and not a mutual project, and he was frightened by the possibility of becoming a father. His wife now expressed considerable disappointment in the marriage, which she confessed had been undertaken "on the rebound" from a broken affair. In his sessions, Spencer insisted that this confirmed his fears of being unloved and used by his spouse for her private purposes. When she subsequently announced that she had begun another affair and asked him to leave, Spencer reiterated his sense of victimization, convinced that this episode validated all his doubts about her (which he felt I would share). Concurrently, however, he developed nightmares, whose images of isolation and abandonment recalled the episodes from childhood when he had awakened in terror and run to his mother's bed. These nighttime activities had contrasted with his daytime avoidance of his mother, which he associated to his fear of her physical touch and appearance. For example, he had been

upset to notice the outline of her breasts and the shadow of pubic hair through the nightgowns she wore about the house. He recounted an incident from age five or six when he pushed her away from embracing him, and confessed that he had not hugged his mother since that time, fearing that such contact would make him ill. I interpreted the parallel split in the relationship with his wife, sleeping with her at night while disclaiming love during the day in his sessions with me. He associated to his father's disgust with displays of physical affection that became apparent when he would grimace and make sounds of repugnance at incidents of "mush" on television.

Spencer's father's evident contempt for women had confirmed his fantasies that the parents had an asexual relationship and that father would reject him if he showed interest in a female. He supposed that I would share this reaction. This permitted some productive work on the transference repetition of his imaginary identification with his father in flight from longings for mother's bed and affection, a disavowal of parental sexuality which was part of the family mythology. Spencer's mother had been raised in an orphanage until adoption at age six and allegedly knew nothing of her parents (he later learned that this was not true). For his part, father had been told (falsely) that his parents died when he was an infant and that he was the youngest brother of his (unmarried) actual biological mother. Thus, all signifiers of parental sexuality had been erased from their childhood histories.

Spencer's splitting repetition was sustained for a long period, as he could not bring himself to discuss divorce with his wife, whom he was supporting in their former home. Instead, he maintained a posture of injury and hostile dependency, similar to his childhood relation to mother. For example, he was afraid of feeling sexual attraction for his wife, avoiding even the touch of her hand, just as he had always recoiled from physical contact with his mother in identification with his misogynistic father. He insisted, in fact, that his parents had totally avoided touching, recalling an episode of anxiety from his teens, when he had seen his father brush mother's arm. In the ensuing period, we saw in more detail

how this narcissistic identification with father not only provided a masculine identity for Spencer but protected him from the severe anxiety associated with closeness to mother which could lead to "oneness" and loss of self.

One might speculate why a perversion did not develop in this psychological context. In fact, there had been a period of sexually exhibitionistic behavior in adolescence, which faded when Spencer began to have his first heterosexual relationships. In these relationships, there had been similar idealizations of the women and use of them to prop up his masculine self-esteem. From an anthropological perspective, the use of a macho-warrior father separating his son from the mother to create a "real man" through secret shared activities of a sublimated or symbolic homosexual nature recalls Stoller and Herdt's (1982) study of the Sambia. In Sambian culture, the dramatic gender role polarization, with a sanction against tenderness and intimacy in men, does not preclude a heterosexual object choice. The mother remains the object of desire, however dangerous closeness to her may be for the boy-man. Cases like the male patients described in this paper suggest that intrusive, narcissistically aggrandizing fathers support a different type of masculinity from absent fathers whose uninvolvement is also associated with a fantasied self-sufficiency and grandiosity in the child (Kirshner, 1992). In the present case, the father in a sense rescued the child from an emotionally absent mother by an invitation to a shared fantasy. In essence, Spencer assumed that loving a partner would mean surrendering to the narcissistic needs of the other, not entry into a reciprocal and affirming relationship of two subjects.

CONCLUSIONS

These abbreviated examples illustrate a type of difficulty in falling in love in which the excited pursuit of contact and mirroring from an unavailable object appears to be the principal expression of sexual desire. I suggest that such a relational pattern may repre-

sent an attempt to master, through erotization, an unsuccessful early mirroring or primary attachment experience, either by repetition of an infantile prototype (seeking an exciting, but unavailable mother) or by pursuit of an idealized mirror love which was lacking. Beneath this pattern, there may be a mirror identification with the object, so that at some level the subject's "ego" is reciprocally structured around being an unreachable object of desire for another. This self-structure emerged, for example, in Spencer's marriage.

We have become much more aware since Kohut of important "nonlibidinal" developmental needs that have been discussed under the heading of "mirroring." Perhaps more attention should be devoted to how families convey a sense of how the child came to be born and where he or she fits into the network of familial and social affiliations that to a great degree will define him/her as a person in the "Symbolic" realm. Spencer's parents concealed the history of the circumstances of their own births, failing to provide an accurate picture of their families with their multiple and complex relationships. This interfered with Spencer's development of a symbolic identity which could act as a solution or counterweight to the impasse of the mirror stage. Instead of the parents' offering an opportunity for progressive differentiation within a family structure providing his symbolic place, dyadic relations prevailed, no doubt reflecting the parents' own strong mirroring desires, perhaps to maintain their own "imaginary families."

In analogous situations of isolation and parental schism, children are extremely vulnerable to being psychologically appropriated to meet the mother's or father's narcissistic needs. They then fall into the dilemma of either being captured by the object (by the narcissistic object relation—if the dog catches the car) or of abandonment (if the narcissistic object relation is given up). As adults, they are prey to the power of a desired object who is equally needed and hated. Around this powerful other they revolve like helpless satellites, any moment at risk of dissolution by falling into the mother planet or by the total isolation of flying into empty

space. Perhaps it is their solution to replace falling in love by a sexualized quest for mirroring as in the cases described.

To venture a clinical hypothesis, it may be that treatment of these individuals begins of necessity with acceptance of the "mirror position" and some participation in a complex repetition of object relationships in the imaginary mode which gradually unfolds. Significant enactment with severely damaged characters is probably inevitable in any event. In this regard, Lacan's technique apparently had serious limitations (in not accepting the necessity of participation and enactment as part of the transference relationship). Eventually, however, analysts must in some manner submit to the constraints of the analytic position as a "third," highlighted by Lacan, and to accept the limits to their desires and capacity to heal or restore the narcissistic deficit. Finally, analysts must deal with their own grandiose needs for participation in the mirror-dyad, while attempting to affirm, within the context of an ongoing treatment relationship, their position as a separate other. In this way, the patient's oscillation between a mirroring position and one of anger at the disappointments in the analyst/object as "other" can be sustained and interpreted, so that the patient can begin to attempt engagement in triangular, less exclusive, and less all-encompassing relationships—or, to put it another way, can risk falling in love.

REFERENCES

BERGMANN, M. S. (1982). Platonic love, transference love, and love in real life. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 30:87–111.

——— (1988). Freud's three theories of love in the light of later developments. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 36:653–672.

BORCH-JACOBSEN, M. (1990). *Lacan le maître absolu.* Paris: Flammarion.

BRAZELTON, T. B., KOSLOWSKI, B. & MAIN, M. (1974). The origin of reciprocity: the early mother-infant interaction. In *The Effect of the Infant on Its Caregiver. The Origins of Behavior Series, Volume I,* ed. M. Lewis & L.A. Rosenblum. New York: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 49–76.

FAIMBERG, H. & COREL, A. (1990). Repetition and surprise: a clinical approach to the necessity of construction and its validation. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 71:411–420.

FREUD, S. (1912). On the universal tendency to debasement in the sphere of love. (Contributions to the psychology of love II.) *S.E.*, 11.

——— (1914). On narcissism: an introduction. *S.E.*, 14.

——— (1915). Observations on transference-love. (Further recommendations on the technique of psycho-analysis III.) *S.E.*, 12.

——— (1920). Beyond the pleasure principle. *S.E.*, 18.

——— (1921). Group psychology and the analysis of the ego. *S.E.*, 18.

——— (1923). The ego and the id. *S.E.*, 19.

KERNBERG, O. F. (1974a). Barriers to falling and remaining in love. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 22:486–511.

——— (1974b). Mature love: prerequisites and characteristics. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 22:743–768.

——— (1977). Boundaries and structure in love relations. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 25:81–114.

KIRSHNER, L. A. (1992). The absence of the father. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 40:1117–1138.

KOHUT, H. (1977). *The Restoration of the Self.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

LACAN, J. (1953–1954). *The Seminars of Jacques Lacan. Book I.* Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988.

——— (1966). *Écrits.* Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

LAPLANCHE, J. (1970). *Vie et mort en psychanalyse.* Paris: Flammarion.

——— & PONTALIS, J.-B. (1967). *The Language of Psycho-Analysis.* Translated by D. Nicholson-Smith. New York: Norton, 1973.

LOEWALD, H. W. (1971). On motivation and instinct theory. *Psychoanal. Study Child*, 26:91–128.

STOLLER, R. J. & HERDT, G. H. (1982). The development of masculinity: a cross-cultural contribution. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 30:29–59.

TRONICK, E. Z. & COHN, J. F. (1989). Emotions and emotional communication in infants. *Amer. Psychologist*, 44:112–119.

306 Harvard St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

A Question of Voice in Poetry and Psychoanalysis

Thomas H. Ogden

To cite this article: Thomas H. Ogden (1998) A Question of Voice in Poetry and Psychoanalysis, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 426-448, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006050

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006050

Published online: 27 Jun 2018.

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

A QUESTION OF VOICE IN POETRY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

BY THOMAS H. OGDEN, M.D.

The author discusses the notion of voice as a contribution to the development of a set of ideas and an attendant vocabulary adequate for describing the richness and complexity of language usage in the analytic setting. In a discussion of the sounds, movement, and texture of voice in poems by Robert Frost and Wallace Stevens, the author illustrates ways in which a listener attempts to experience how a speaker creates a voice and brings himself to life through his use of language. The layering of sounds and feelings in voice is discussed in terms of the creation of "oversounds" derived from the experience of analyst and analysand in the jointly constructed unconscious "analytic third."

Psychoanalysts over the past two decades have been moving in the direction of attending as closely to the way the analysand is speaking as to what the analysand is saying. This movement seems to be in part an outgrowth of the work of Joseph (1985) and others who have been elaborating on Klein's (1952) concept of transference as "total situation" (p. 55). With the growing awareness of the centrality of the way language is used by both analyst and analysand, there is a concomitant demand on analytic thought to develop a set of ideas and an attendant vocabulary that is adequate to the task of listening to and describing the richness and complexity of language usage in the analytic situation.

In this paper, I address the question of voice in an effort to explore an aspect of listening and speaking that I believe to be central to the analytic experience. Creating a voice with which to

speak or to write might be thought of as a way, perhaps the principal way, in which individuals bring themselves into being, come to life, through their use of language. This conception of voice applies to every form of language usage, whether it be poetry, fiction, prose, drama, the analytic dialogue, or everyday conversation.

There is a vast difference between thinking, on the one hand, and writing or speaking, on the other. In speech or in writing, one listens to oneself in a way that is potentially different from the way one experiences one's own thinking. Wallace Stevens (recounted by Vendler, 1984) has said that one thinks in one's own language; one writes in a foreign language. I believe that Stevens is in part referring to the way in which writing (and I would add speech) involves a quality of otherness that affords an opportunity to listen to the way we come into being in the way we use language.[1]

Voice is a quality of experience that is very difficult to define, and I shall not attempt to do so except in the way I use the notion of voice in the course of this paper. "We don't know what the voice on the page is, or how it got there, or how to improve it, but we just know when we hear it. The voice on the page [is] a mysterious process. . . . It [is] there, but it [is] a mystery" (Looker, quoted by Varnum, 1996, pp. 192-193).

The idea of voice is neither synonymous with the idea of a "true self" (voice as one's authentic self finding expression in language) or a "false self" (voice as a series of masks and poses). In an odd way, voice has qualities of both at the same time and, in addition, might be viewed as a medium for conscious and unconscious "experimentation" with the experience of self:

> Language . . . enables us, somehow, to seem to get outside ourselves and to assume positions we may or may not really believe in. Thus, we are able to speak almost in someone else's voice, to be insincere, to be ironical, to be sarcastic, to be, even, objective (whatever that means) (Baird, 1968, p. 200).

[1] Of course, the use of language is only one of many avenues through which the individual achieves a sense of aliveness in her/his experience of her/himself.

From the perspective of Baird's comments, it is entirely possible to imagine speaking with or hearing a voice that sounds sincerely insincere (a voice that succeeds in being insincere) and another voice that sounds insincerely sincere (a voice that seems to attempt sincerity but has a hollowness to it). In the end, I believe that it is the aliveness of the voice created in one's use of language that is its own measure of what feels most real. Attending to the aliveness and deadness in the language as experienced by writer/speaker and reader/listener seems to me to be a more fruitful way of approaching the question of voice than through the more static notions of sincerity and insincerity, truth and deception (Ogden, 1995).

By focusing on voice in this paper, I have no illusion that I am introducing something new to the analytic discourse. Analysts have been listening to the way people sound from the time that Breuer invited Freud to listen to the strange, bewildering, disturbing sounds of the female patients whom he had been attempting to treat (see Appelbaum, 1966; Balkányi, 1964; Brody, 1943; Edelson, 1975; Meares, 1993; Silverman, 1982). Nevertheless, we, as psychoanalysts, are relative newcomers to the work of attending to voice, in that our discipline is hardly a century old. Consequently, I believe we are well advised to turn for instruction in listening to and in speaking about voice to the people who have for millennia been listening closely to "the *living* sounds of speech" (Frost, 1915, p. 687) and who have developed a capacity for capturing/creating voices with which to bring themselves to life in their writing through their use of language. Of course, the people I am speaking of are the poets, playwrights, novelists, essayists, and writers and storytellers of other genres. Perhaps if we listen to the ways they go about creating life in language and bringing language to life, we might further develop our own ways of listening to and finding words to describe how a person in the analytic setting goes about bringing him/herself into being through language in the process of participating in the analytic dialogue.

In this paper, I shall attempt to listen closely to two twentieth century American poems in an effort to provide a sense of what I

mean by voice and how I make use of the concept. A poem, though an inanimate "thing," provides a living voice spoken to the reader and by the reader—a voice that can engage the reader in a first-hand, unmediated way. In reading the poems discussed in this paper, readers need not take my word or that of literary critics or even the word of the poet regarding what the voices in the poems feel and sound like. Readers will hear for themselves with their own ears (and with their own emotional responsiveness) the voices with which the poems speak and with which they, the readers, speak the poems.

I have selected a poem by Robert Frost and one by Wallace Stevens as ports of entry into the subject of voice. I have chosen these poems not because they speak with particularly well-defined voices, but because I am very fond of these poems and welcome the opportunity to spend considerable time with them in the process of writing about them. Both of these poets are masters of voice, and in each of the poems the poet creates interesting, subtly layered, often elusive, sometimes unnamable voices that comprise a very large part of what the poems are "up to." In discussing these poems, I will not be engaged in an effort to get behind the language to what the poem really "means"; instead, I will attempt to get deeply into the language and to allow it to get deeply into me (Ogden, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1997d). In particular, I will be attempting to experience and to find ways of talking about what the language is doing, what sort of life is being created in the voices of the poem, in the sound and movement of the words and sentences being spoken, in "the music of what happens" (Heaney, 1979, p. 141).

A good deal of the experience of the voice in the Frost and Stevens poems is accessible only by reading them aloud. The poems are made of the sounds of words "strung together" (Frost, 1922, p. 675) into sentences, which in turn have their own sounds, "sentence-sounds" (p. 675). These sounds are best heard with the ear (not a metaphorical ear, but the actual ear) and best felt as shapes in one's mouth and sensations in one's body as one says them aloud. One must spend a good deal of time with these

poems in order to get a feel for them: "A poem would be no good that hadn't doors. I wouldn't leave them open though" (Frost, quoted by Pritchard, 1984, p. 20).

AN ELOQUENCE SO SOFT

"Never Again Would Birds' Song Be the Same" (1942a), a poem first published when Frost was nearing seventy, is for me one of Frost's most beautifully crafted and subtly evocative lyrics. This sonnet creates a voice that encompasses a very wide range of human experience, a voice that is unique to itself, while at the same time being unmistakably Frost.

NEVER AGAIN WOULD BIRDS' SONG BE THE SAME[2]

He would declare and could himself believe
That the birds there in all the garden round
From having heard the daylong voice of Eve
Had added to their own an oversound,
Her tone of meaning but without the words.
Admittedly an eloquence so soft
Could only have had an influence on birds
When call or laughter carried it aloft.
Be that as may be, she was in their song.
Moreover her voice upon their voices crossed
Had now persisted in the woods so long
That probably it never would be lost.
Never again would birds' song be the same.
And to do that to birds was why she came.

The poem opens with the sound of good-natured chiding as the speaker, with mock skepticism, talks of a man who professed a far-fetched notion about birds that he actually seemed to believe. There is a slightly disowned intimacy in the speaker's voice as he fondly, skeptically marvels at the capacity of the man to believe the

[2] From THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST, edited by Edward Connery Lathem, Copyright 1942, © 1970 by Lesley Frost Ballantine, © 1969 by Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

unbelievable and speak these beliefs from a place in himself where there seemed to be no doubt. There is a feeling that what he believes he "believes . . . into existence" (Frost, quoted in Lathem, 1966, p. 271). One can hear in the voice the pleasure taken in knowing someone so well over the years that even his old stories and quirky beliefs have become signatures of his being.

As the poem proceeds, the metaphor of narrator describing a man of strange, but deeply held convictions, is "turned" in a way that serves to gently invite a reader to take his place *in* the metaphor as he becomes the person to whom the "argument" is addressed, while the speaker becomes the man holding these odd beliefs.

There is delightful playfulness and wit in the speaker's voice as he invokes flawed cause-and-effect reasoning to "explain" events occurring in a metaphor: the birds in the garden (of Eden), having listened to Eve's voice all day long, had incorporated the sound of her voice into their song (as if time played a role in the mythic Garden). The strange "belief" in the creation of an "oversound" (a wonderful neologism) becomes an experience that is occurring in the poem, that is, in the changes taking place in the sound of the voice of the poem. The "oversound" developing in the voice is a softer sound that is being "crossed" upon the more witty, ironic voice in the first five lines of the poem. In the lines that follow, we hear and feel the interplay of sound and oversound:

> Admittedly an eloquence so soft
> Could only have had an influence on birds
> When call or laughter carried it aloft.

The phrase "an eloquence so soft," with its delicate, repeated "s" sounds, speaks with such tenderness and respectfulness and grace that it seems to "float above" the hard "c" sounds of the words "could" and "call" and "carried" in the lines spatially below it on the page. The experience created in the language of the poem of softer sounds being suspended above harder ones anticipates the image of sounds of "call or laughter" being carried "aloft."

The poem is in constant motion, continually creating unexpected oversounds. The words "Could only have had an influence on birds" brings the poem back to earth (back from the mythic metaphor) with a humorous thud. The extra unstressed syllable in this line creates a rather awkward cadence that causes the voice to stumble a bit and finally fall into the final stressed syllable, "birds." The effect is to playfully, mischievously transform these airy, mythical birds into poultry (for the moment). At the same time, the play on the words birds/bards in this line conveys quite a different "tone of meaning." There is a suggestion in this wordplay that the eloquence of the music of spoken language (both present day and ancestral) could only have had an influence on bards, people who incorporate the sounds they hear with their "deep ear" (Heaney, 1988, p. 109) into their own songs/poems as oversounds—more in their "tone of meaning" than in their words/messages.

The poem takes a surprising turn in the final six lines (the sestet) of the sonnet which opens on a subtly dissonant note:

> Be that as may be, she was in their song.

In this starkly assertive single-line sentence, the "open-ended" conditionality of "would declare" (when? to whom? under what circumstances?) and "could himself believe" (how? why? if what?) are replaced by the conclusive tones of "Be that as may be." This phrase, in conjunction with the forced, flat certainty of the words "she was in their song," represents a marked shift in voice and introduces an unsettling awareness of a yet-to-be-defined source of emotional pain or danger that had been almost entirely absent from the playfulness of the voice up to this point. This anxious insistence is woven into more complex sounds in the succeeding lines:

> Moreover her voice upon their voices crossed
> Had now persisted in the wood so long
> That probably it never would be lost.
> Never again would birds' song be the same.

The voice here is a more personal voice filled with the effort to hold on to what is most valued (reminiscent of the tone of the words "For what I would not part with I have kept" in Frost's [1942b] "I Could Give All to Time"). In "Birds' Song," what is most valued is a belief—a belief which in these lines is no longer a certainty—that poetry/this poem, is able to speak with an "eloquence" that reaches so deeply into human feeling and experience that it alters language itself and has persisted in the woods/words so long that "probably it never would be lost." The "eloquence," the ability of poetry to change the sound of language is only as potent as the ability of this poem to create the sounds of a unique voice that will never be lost to the reader.

The phrase "probably it never would be lost" quietly and unobtrusively conveys a remarkable depth of sadness. The word "probably" softly suggests a never openly acknowledged feeling of doubt about the permanence and immutability over time of the "oversounds" that are created in the course of a poem or of a life. As is characteristic of Frost, the line-ending words "never would be lost," give the word "lost" the "final word" and in so doing undercut the claim for permanence in the very act of making the claim.

The voice in the line "Never again would birds' song be the same" moves well beyond the wit and charm of the first part of the poem and beyond the bald assertion "she was in their song." The line has the sound and feel of a memorial prayer. In these most delicate and unpresuming of words (that contain not a single hard consonant sound), a sense of the sacred is evoked. It is a deeply personal sacredness that is filled with both love and sadness. The strength of the voice in this line keeps the declaration free of sentimentality or nostalgia. The line conveys a sense of the poet's attempts, in his making of poems, to create and preserve in the sound of his words something of the sounds of the past voices that have been most important to him: the voices of the people he has loved, the voices of the poems that have mattered most to him, the changing sounds of his own voice in the course of his life (both in speech and in the poems that he has written), as well as the sounds

of ancestral voices that are not attributable to any particular person, but are part of the language with which he speaks and from which he creates his own voice and his own poems.

There is something else happening in the sounds of the words in this line that is as disturbing as the feeling of doubt regarding the permanence of "oversounds." The sentence begins with the phrase "Never again," which serves to underscore that past voices will never again be heard, will never again be directly experienced. Those people and the sounds of their voices are gone. What we have as consolation for that loss is a form of remembrance of the sound of their voices "crossed" on our own and on the voice of the poet. The oversounds are reminders of what has been lost, but they are not the past voices themselves. Those voices will "never again" be heard.

The sound of the voice in this line, as it repeats the title of the poem, seems to make a place for the poem to end. But no, there is one more line that has the feeling of a hastily added postscript that captures what William James (1890) might describe as "a feeling of *and*". (p. 245):

> And to do that to birds was why she came.

The voice in this final line is wonderfully unexpected. The line, seemingly tossed off as an afterthought, insists on being read quickly and more loudly than the previous line. It is a line filled with hard "t" and "c" sounds that seem to make an awful racket after the quiet elegiac sounds that precede. But the effect of the final line is anything but incidental to the process of creating the delicately textured sound of the voice in this part of the poem. The simultaneity of irony and wit and compassion and grief in the voice here carries enormous emotional force. The power of the line is in part attributable to masterful timing. It is positioned as the second half of a final couplet in which sadness and muted consolation and a sense of the sacredness to the poet of past voices have been tenderly and respectfully brought to life in the voice of the first line of the couplet. The last line of the poem creates a voice that somehow encompasses the full distance that the poem

has come. There is a feeling of pleasure in playing with the sounds and meanings of words that does not diminish the "oversound" of grief and loss that has accrued in the course of the poem. In these final ten monosyllabic words, the poem is pulled forcefully, but in a generously humorous way, back into the immediacy and informality of the sounds of everyday spoken words. The phrase "And to do that to birds" feels better suited to a description of a group of ten-year-old boys startling pigeons in a park than to a depiction of the effects of poetry on the sound of language and of the sound of language on poetry. The final words "was why she came" compound the effect by invoking a tenderly comic tautology in which Eve arrives on the scene in order to do a job (as a plumber might arrive at a house to clean out a drain).

The voice in "Birds' Song" succeeds in making the poem itself an experience and not a description of an experience. We can hear and feel in the action of the voice the delight taken by the poet in inventively using language. There is continual movement in the voice as humor invades sadness and sadness invades humor. In its insistence on being "always on the wing . . . and not to be viewed except in flight" (James, 1890, p. 253), the voice manages to be a great many things. It seems to find solace and even joy in hearing and in making oversounds at the same time as it is filled with the sadness of the recognition that the voices of the people who have mattered most to the poet (as well as his own earlier voices and eventually his voice in this poem) will persist *only* as oversounds. "But isn't that quite a lot?" the sound of the voice of the poem asks equivocally.

THE SOUND OF A FEW LEAVES

Wallace Stevens (b. 1879) and Frost (b. 1874) were contemporaries in the sense that the period of their maturity as poets roughly overlapped, but as you will see in "The Snow Man" (1923), Stevens created a twentieth century American voice in poetry that is unlike anything encountered in Frost (or in the work of any other American or British poet to that point). Stevens,

unlike Frost, is a "difficult" poet in Eliot's (1924) sense of the word: his narratives are fragmented, the tone of the voice is often difficult to determine, and he frequently "dislocate[s] language into his meaning" (p. 248).

A poem (and I think this is particularly true of Stevens's poetry) must initially and finally be taken as a whole. It must be allowed to be "intelligent/Beyond intelligence," (Stevens, 1947, p. 311), a series of words and sounds and cadences that suggest (and do no more than suggest) meaning, and, as often as not, obscure and contradict that meaning as soon as it is suggested. The task of the reader as critic is that of marveling at how a poem works, what the language is doing as opposed to what it is saying (what it "means"). After listening to and looking into what the language of the poem is doing, one must "throw it back in the water" and allow the poem once again to move and breathe and live in its own terms as a "creation of sound" (Stevens, 1947, p. 311). "The Snow Man" was included in Stevens's first volume of poetry, *Harmonium*, published in 1923.

THE SNOW MAN

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

"The Snow Man," although a single sentence, seems to me to speak in a sequence of three quite different voices, each building upon, complicating, and enriching the others. The series of voices has the effect of dividing the poem into three intermeshed parts, the first of which extends into the middle of line seven:

> One must have a mind of winter
> To regard the frost and the boughs
> Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;
>
> And have been cold a long time
> To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
> The spruces rough in the distant glitter
>
> Of the January sun;

"One must have a mind of winter" is a remarkable opening line. In the space of seven words, the poem establishes a voice of extraordinary poise and balance, of beauty and restraint. It is an intelligent, meditative voice that seems to be speaking to itself and seems hardly, if at all, cognizant of the reader's presence. The voice of the poem makes no effort to explain itself. There is a feeling as each line moves gracefully into the next that the reader is to refrain from questioning, clarifying, and paraphrasing and instead must simply "regard" (watch) and "behold" what is going on in the words, phrases, and sounds as they create their effects. The quiet, serene voice moves slowly, but not laboriously through each of the three carefully balanced eight-beat phrases of the first stanza and the even longer flowing measures of the second.

The syntactical form of the line "One must have a mind of winter" is reminiscent of Frost's (1923) line "One had to be versed in country things" (from "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things" which was published in the same year as "The Snow Man"). But the similarity of form serves to underscore the vastly different sound of the voice in each. In contrast to the solitary inwardness of Stevens's line, Frost's line seems to be patiently and kindly (albeit mischievously) mindful of the reader. Frost's voice in "Country Things" (as in "Birds' Song") seems to invite the reader to share in the pleasure of playing with words, for

example, in the play on the word "versed"/verse and in the experience of the welcoming ordinariness of the word "things." The reader will receive no such invitation from Stevens.

In the opening part of "The Snow Man," the reader is at least as much taken by the beauty and subtlety of what is happening in the language as by the beauty of the images of the winter landscape. For instance, the word "shagged" in the phrase "the junipers shagged with ice" seems to sag in the middle under the weight of the guttural "g" sounds. It seems that no other word would have sufficed. We can hear in the voice a poetic sensibility that is quietly contemplative while at the same time closely attentive to the way language is being used. Part of the speaker's masterful use of language is felt in the soft (mostly internal) rhyming going on in this part of the poem. This unobtrusive rhyming serves to tightly knit these lines together and give them a quality of powerful inevitability (which is not to say predictability). Examples of this type of internal rhyming include mind/pine/time/ice; cold/behold/snow; winter/glitter/junipers; and one/sun (which ties together the first and last word of this part of the poem).

The phrase "the spruces rough in the distant glitter/Of the January sun" creates a haunting, otherworldly effect, a sense of vast silence and stillness disturbed only by a faint movement of light, of white glittering against white. The word "rough" is unexpected and seems not to carry the usual denotation of coarseness—there is nothing coarse about the voice in these lines. The word "rough" here is newly created in the poem and seems to have more to do with being a part of a rough sketch, an artistic form meant to capture an essence in a few strokes of a brush or a pen (which is what the language of the poem is *doing* here).

The winter encountered in the first part of "The Snow Man" is a winter created in language, in the poet's "mind of winter" (a mind thinking, feeling, sensing, imagining), as opposed to a winter "out there." Of course, every poem is made of words and not of snow and ice and trees. But in this part of the poem, the voice is that of a poet who, having experienced winter in an emotional

and physical way ("having been cold a long time"), has created in language a winter that is uniquely his own. The opening portion of the poem is more an experience of language being used in extraordinary ways than it is an experience of bumping up against a sense of something that simply is there, something that has been found and not made. This relation to winter is similar to the experience depicted in Stevens's (1936) "The Idea of Order at Key West" as the speaker listens to a woman singing about the sea:

> It may have been in all her phrases stirred
> The grinding water and the gasping wind;
> But it was she and not the sea we heard (p. 128).

"The Snow Man" seems to transform itself into something quite different in the middle of the seventh line where the second part of the poem (as I hear it) begins and where a new voice is created:

> and not to think
> Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
> In the sound of a few leaves,
>
> Which is the sound of the land
> Full of the same wind
> That is blowing in the same bare place

In line seven, one is struck by the way the words "and not to think" are tucked into the same line as the final phrase of the first part of the poem: "Of the January sun." By isolating and juxtaposing these two phrases, the words begin to "talk to each other" (Frost, 1936, p. 427). A "January sun" is a man-made thing: the month of January is a human invention. Nature has its cycles and rhythms, but it does not count them or name them as people do with their clocks and calendars. Having been positioned next to the "January sun," the words "and not to think" seem to become something of an announcement of the cessation of thinking, of inventing, of imagining, of making things in one's mind with words. If the opening portion of the poem had been an experience of a "mind of winter" thinking, feeling, regarding, behold-

ing, creating, it seems that what is now happening in the poem is an experience of "not to think." In other words, what occurs in this line and in the remainder of the third and fourth stanzas is what happens if one does not think (does not create in feeling and imagination) and instead listens to something that one has not made.

The words "not to think/Of any misery" are again reminiscent of the final stanza of Frost's (1923) "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things" in which phoebes (small birds) have made a nesting place of the remains of a barn that has been abandoned for years (after the farmhouse was destroyed by a fire):

> For them there was really nothing sad.
> But though they rejoiced in the nest they kept,
> One had to be versed in country things
> Not to believe the phoebes wept.

The type of structuring of negation in the last line of Frost's poem allows the poet not only to "have it both ways" (that is, to create a simultaneity of statement and negation), but also to give the semantically "incorrect" understanding "the final word" by allowing the poem to end with the sadness of the sound of the words "the phoebes wept." Stevens does something similar in "The Snow Man" by beginning the second part of the poem with the words "and not to think." By leaving these words disconnected both spatially and emotionally from what follows, what one is "not to think" (and feel) is "released" from its moorings in the negation.

In this "headless" ("not to think") part of the poem, the experience of winter comes to life in the accelerating force of the sounds and rhythm of these phrases and in the repetition and alliteration of the words "sound" and "same."[3] Something has

[3] In "The Snow Man," sight seems to be tied up with thinking, watching, and creating in one's mind, while hearing (not surprisingly for an art form so rooted in sound) seems to involve a more direct, unmediated form of connection with the perceived (unimagined, inarticulate) otherness of the world and of oneself.

broken loose here in a way that feels as if the poem is leading the poet. There is a sense of a powerful forward movement in the sound of the words: "in the sound of the wind/In the sound of a few leaves,/Which is the sound of the land/Full of the same wind/ That is blowing in the same bare place." These words have vitality not primarily for the ways they reflect the workings of a mind, "a mind of winter"; they are alive and vibrant because they capture a sense of something outside of themselves, outside of words, outside of thinking and feeling and imagining. The word "leaves" carries a highly compact set of meanings beyond the surface meaning of leaves from a tree. The word alludes to the sounds and feelings of rapidly "leafing" through pages of a book (no longer reading the words), of "leaving"/abandoning/departing from the world of the mind, of giving or being given "leave"/ permission to release oneself from one's confinement, of discovering what one "leaves" oneself after giving up one's own inventions. This multiplicity of meaning is only subliminally perceived by the reader because here the poem is up to something quite different from experiencing pleasure in the play of the meanings of words.

The second part of the poem is not describing or "regarding" winter; it is creating a sense of the hard, opaque alterity of winter as the words seem to hurl themselves from the page in clumps with increasing force, reaching a crescendo in the three consecutively stressed line-ending words "same bare place." The poet seems here not to have prearranged where the poem is headed; instead, there is a feeling of wildness: "It [a good poem] finds its own name and it goes and finds the best waiting for it in some final phrase" (Frost, 1939, p. 777). The "same bare place," the final phrase into which the poem in its second section hurls itself, is "more felt than seen ahead like prophecy" (*ibid.*). There is nothing inevitable occurring in these lines.

The language in the middle portion of "The Snow Man" achieves the seemingly impossible: it manages to create a voice in the sounds and rhythms and movement of the words that is a voice not of the speaker of the poem, but of something outside of the

speaker, outside of the speaker's mind of winter, that seems to be speaking *through* the speaker. The speaking voice of the poem becomes other to itself, almost as if the poem is happening to the poet. The sounds of words and the sounds of winter seem to be more heard than created by the "speaker" who is now more listener than speaker.

"The Snow Man" makes still another turn and speaks with still another voice in the final stanza, the third "part" of the poem. The poet and the reader, having heard/experienced/felt the sound of the wind, have each become a "listener, who listens in the snow." One can feel the sense of honor that is being bestowed upon a genuine "listener":

> For the listener, who listens in the snow,
> And, nothing himself, beholds
> Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

The final stanza is pure abstraction. It is almost completely imageless: there are no pine-trees crusted with snow, no junipers shagged with ice, no spruces rough in the distant glitter of the January sun. The voice is virtually toneless, lacking even the meditative sound of the voice of the first section of the poem. It is as if the sounds of words themselves have all but disappeared: there are only three consonants in the final stanza that have even a modicum of hardness. And along with the "disappearance" of the sound of the words is a sense of the disappearance of the speaker: "There are words/Better without an author, without a poet" (Stevens, 1947, p. 311).

We hear in this part of the poem, the sound of words that seem to speak themselves. The "listener, who listens in the snow" having become only a listener, a sensibility of pure receptivity, "beholds/Nothing that is not there," i.e., only what is there, outside of the imagination, outside of constructions in words. What remains for this listener is silence, inarticulate silence, "the nothing that is." Paradoxically, this silence, the sound (the voice) of "the nothing that is" is a sound created in words, words used artfully and imaginatively. The language, while creating a "voice of noth-

ing," is neither silent nor still. The poet cannot escape his dependence on the sounds made with words (and the spaces between the words) in his efforts to create the sound of "the nothing that is."

Perhaps there is a quiet irony in the words "the nothing that is" in that the phrase seems to suggest that "the nothing that is" is everything, i.e., everything we have not concocted with our words and imaginations. But "to do that" to the ending of this poem, to find subtleties of irony and wit, to "pluck out the last secret of the poem, unearthing, if necessary its seventh [type of] ambiguity" (Heaney, 1988, p. 132), is to do violence to a poem and to an experience that asks not to be figured out, not to be reduced, not to be understood.[4]

The poem is a sentence grammatically, but it does not stop, it does not even seem to end with the period at the close of the final line; instead, it seems to open itself up still further by using as its final word "is"—the most inclusive and inconclusive of words. The poem does not have an end in part because it does not have a beginning or a middle. The poem does not "progress" from one part, or from one voice, to the next. None of the three voices of the poem creates a resolution or a transcendence of the other two. Each voice is a different sound created in the process of the poet's effort to do something with all that lies outside of words and imagination. There is a voice that makes exquisitely beautiful sounds and works in interesting and subtle ways as it turns trees and snow into "junipers shagged with ice" and "spruces rough in the distant glitter/Of the January sun." There is a voice of a speaker swept up by the force of rhythms and sounds that are discovered and discover him and seem more to speak through him than to be spoken by him. There is a voice of a listener in the snow who hears the silence and speaks the silence and is the silence that remains before and after all is said and done.

[4] I am reminded here of Bion's admonition to his analysand, James Grotstein, when Grotstein responded to one of Bion's interpretations by saying, "I understand." Bion calmly replied, "Please try not to understand. If you must, superstand, circumstand, parastand, but please try not to understand" (Grotstein, 1990, personal communication).

A discussion of voices heard in "The Snow Man" would be incomplete if it did not make mention of a fourth voice that runs through and encompasses each of the other voices. The fourth voice is almost impossible to capture in words, and yet it is there. One can hear it. It is the unique sound and "touch and texture" (Heaney, 1980, p. 47) of the way language is being used, the "watermarking" (*ibid.*) that makes this poem and the voices and the music it creates distinctively the work of Wallace Stevens.

VOICE IN THE ANALYTIC SETTING

In the preceding discussion of "Never Again Would Birds' Song Be the Same" and "The Snow Man," I have attempted to illustrate some of the ways in which a listener engages in an effort to experience and to talk with himself about how a speaker (whether himself or another person) comes to life through his use of language. In reading a poem, there are two voices acting upon one another, the voice of the speaker in the poem and the voice of the reader experiencing and saying the poem. Consequently, it is not easy to say whose voice it is that one hears as one reads or listens to a poem. The voice heard/made is a voice that is neither exclusively that of the poet nor that of the reader; it is a new and unique voice, a third voice that is generated in the creative conjunction of reader and writer. No two readers of a poem will create the same voice.

Similarly, in an analytic setting, analyst and analysand together generate conditions in which each speaks with a voice arising from the unconscious conjunction of the two individuals. The voice of the analyst and the voice of the analysand under these circumstances are not the same voice, but the two voices are spoken, to a significant degree, *from* a common area of jointly (but asymmetrically) constructed unconscious experience. I have spoken of this intersubjective experience generated by the unconscious interplay of analyst and analysand as the "analytic third" (Ogden, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1997c, 1997d,

1997e). In a sense, the "oversound" in the voices of analyst and analysand is the sound of the voice of the analytic third "upon their voices crossed" (Frost, 1942a, p. 308). The analytic third is experienced by analyst and analysand in the context of the personality system, personal history, sensory awareness, and so on of each individual. As a result, analyst and analysand each speaks with a unique voice; at the same time, each of the two voices is informed by (has an "oversound" derived from) the unconscious experience in and of the analytic third.

Individuality of voice is not a given; it is an achievement. Uniqueness of voice might be thought of as an individual shape created in the medium of the use of language. This "shape" is one that is made not simply in the medium of language, but in the medium of the *use* of language: voice is an action, not a potential, more verb than noun. The individual voice is not resting dormant waiting for its moment to be heard. It exists only as an event in motion, being created in the moment. We do not know what our voice will sound like in any situation until we hear it, whether that be in what we say, in what we write, or in what we read aloud. A very large part of what is involved in listening to voice is attempting to experience and find words to describe what the voice in the writing or in speech sounds like, to whom it seems to be addressed, what it is "doing," what effects it is creating, how it is transforming and being transformed by the experience of speaking, listening, and being heard.

It is misleading to say that voice is "an expression" of the self since this suggests that there is a self "inside" that is speaking through the individual (almost as a ventriloquist speaks through a dummy), giving audible form to itself. To my mind, it is more accurate to say that voice is an experience of self coming into being in the act of speaking or writing. Speaking or writing becomes a self-reflective experience to the degree that one listens to one's voice and asks oneself, "What do I sound like?" "Who do I sound like?" "How have I come to sound like that?" "Do I want to continue to sound like that?" and so on.

The analysand may never have heard the sound of his/her own

voice before the initial analytic meeting (Ogden, 1989), and the experience of creating a voice of his/her own in that meeting (or feeling that he or she has been unable to do so) is an experience of enormous importance in an analysis. The analytic setup, with its relative absence of visual cues, its unusual rhythm of dialogic give and take, its strong emphasis on the use of language in the service of the exploration of the conscious and unconscious experience of the analysand, powerfully contributes to a greatly heightened sensitivity to the sound of the analysand's voice.

The analyst, too, is creating a voice for the first time at the beginning of each analysis, and in a sense, in each analytic meeting. He or she cannot know before beginning to speak what his/her voice will sound like and how it will change while speaking to *this* analysand, in *this* analysis, in *this* analytic hour. As many times as I have entered into an analytic experience with a new patient over the past twenty-five years, I am each time surprised by the fact that I speak with a different voice (more accurately, a different set of voices in continual transition) with each new patient. I do not and could not preconceive the voices with which I will hear myself speaking. For me, this is one of the wonders of spending one's life in the practice of psychoanalysis. Not only is my voice different with each patient, when an analysis is going well my voice and that of the patient are developing new "oversounds" in the course of each analytic hour and during the course of the weeks, months, and years of an analysis.

The surprise that I experience in hearing my voice is often a disconcerting one. There have been times when I have found my voice disappointingly wooden or cloyingly sweet or hollowly authoritative or embarrassingly thin. Voice (my own and the patient's) is always an object of analytic scrutiny, and so even (or perhaps, particularly) these disturbing surprises are not unwelcome events, nor are they a source of worry. I am far more concerned by long periods of absence of surprise in my experience of my own voice or in my experience of the patient's voice. Hearing/feeling stagnation of voice is, for me, one of the experiences on

which I rely most heavily to alert me to the fact that an analytic hour or a phase of an analysis has become lifeless. The experience of lifelessness itself, as it is heard and named, is transformed into an event of analytic interest.

REFERENCES

APPELBAUM, S. A. (1966). Speaking with the second voice: evocativeness. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 14:462-477.

BAIRD, T. (1968). Writing assignment. In *Fencing with Words: A History of Writing Instruction at Amherst College during the Era of Theodore Baird, 1938-1966*, by R. Varnum. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1996, p. 200.

BALKÁNYI, C. (1964). On verbalization. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 45:64-74.

BRODY, M. W. (1943). Neurotic manifestations of the voice. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 12:371-380.

EDELSON, M. (1975). *Language and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.

ELIOT, T. S. (1924). The metaphysical poets. In *Selected Essays*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1932, pp. 241-250.

FROST, R. (1915). The imagining ear. In *Robert Frost: Collected Poems, Prose and Plays*, ed. R. Poirier & M. Richardson. New York: Library of America, 1995, pp. 687-689.

——— (1922). Letter to John T. Bartlett, February 13. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 673-679.

——— (1923). The need of being versed in country things. In *Op. cit.*, p. 223.

——— (1936). Letter to L. W. Payne, Jr., March 12. In *Selected Letters of Robert Frost*, ed. L. Thompson. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964, pp. 426-427.

——— (1939). The figure a poem makes. In *Robert Frost: Collected Poems, Prose and Plays*, ed. R. Poirier & M. Richardson. New York: Library of America, 1995, pp. 776-778.

——— (1942a). Never again would birds' song be the same. In *Op. cit.*, p. 308.

——— (1942b). I could give all to time. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 304-305.

HEANEY, S. (1979). Song. In *Seamus Heaney: Selected Poems, 1966-1987*. New York: Noonday, 1990, p. 141.

——— (1980). *Preoccupations: Selected Prose, 1968-1978*. New York: Noonday.

——— (1988). *The Government of the Tongue*. New York: Noonday.

JAMES, W. (1890). *Principles of Psychology, Vol. 1*, ed. P. Smith. New York: Dover, 1950.

JOSEPH B. (1985). Transference: the total situation. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 66:447-454.

KLEIN, M. (1952). The origins of transference. In *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works, 1946-1963*. New York: Delacorte, 1975, pp. 48-56.

LATHEM, E., Editor (1966). *Interviews with Robert Frost*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

MEARES, R. (1993). *The Metaphor of Play: Disruption and Restoration in the Borderline Experience.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson.

OGDEN, T. H. (1989). The initial analytic meeting. In *The Primitive Edge of Experience.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson, pp. 169-194.

——— (1994a). The analytic third: working with intersubjective clinical facts. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 75:3-20.

——— (1994b). The concept of interpretive action. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 63:219-245.

——— (1994c). Projective identification and the subjugating third. In *Subjects of Analysis.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson, pp. 97-106.

——— (1994d). *Subjects of Analysis.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson.

——— (1995). Analysing forms of aliveness and deadness of the transference-countertransference. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 76:695-710.

——— (1996a). The perverse subject of analysis. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 44:1121-1146.

——— (1996b). Reconsidering three aspects of psychoanalytic technique, *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 77:883-899.

——— (1997a). Some thoughts on the use of language in pyschoanalysis. *Psychoanal. Dialogues*, 7:1-22.

——— (1997b). Listening: three Frost poems. *Psychoanal. Dialogues*, 7:619-639.

——— (1997c). Reverie and metaphor: some thoughts on how I work as a psychoanalyst. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 78:719-732.

——— (1997d). *Reverie and Interpretation: Sensing Something Human.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson.

——— (1997e). Réverie and interpretation. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 66:567-595.

PRITCHARD, W. (1984). *Frost: A Literary Life Reconsidered.* Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press.

SILVERMAN, M. A. (1982). The voice of conscience and the sounds of the analytic hour. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 51:196-217.

STEVENS, W. (1923). The snow man. In *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens.* New York: Knopf, 1954, pp. 9-10.

——— (1936). The idea of order at Key West. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 128-130.

——— (1947). The creations of sound. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 310-311.

VARNUM, R. (1996). *Fencing with Words: A History of Writing Instruction at Amherst College during the Era of Theodore Baird, 1938-1966.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

VENDLER, H. (1984). *Wallace Stevens: Words Chosen out of Desire.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press.

306 Laurel St.
San Francisco, CA 94118

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Partial Failure: The Attempt to Deal with Uncertainty in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy and in Anthropology

Tanya M. Luhrmann

To cite this article: Tanya M. Luhrmann (1998) Partial Failure: The Attempt to Deal with Uncertainty in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy and in Anthropology, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 449-473, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006051

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006051

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

PARTIAL FAILURE: THE ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH UNCERTAINTY IN PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY AND IN ANTHROPOLOGY

BY TANYA M. LUHRMANN

The paper identifies and tries to explain a style of argument that can be found in recent psychoanalytic writing and anthropological writing. In particular, it seeks to explain why similar styles of argument (which emphasize narration, interpretation, uncertainty, and the professional's incomplete knowledge of the patient or fieldsubject) are presented in these different fields with such different affect. The paper suggests that these differences might arise from the different moral goals of the disciplines and, specifically, from the differences between a clinical and a nonclinical enterprise.

Anthropology and psychoanalysis are not unalike. The task of each is to understand other human lives. Their practitioners have trained for years. They have read extensively about the process of understanding. They have invested so much time—hundreds of analytic sessions, years of fieldwork—in the people they want to understand that they baffle most outsiders. They become engrossed in the lives they study, and they become a part of those

This paper has benefited from the intelligence and generosity of R. D'Andrade, M. Fischer, D. Greenwood, L. Havens, A. Margulies, M. Meeker, E. Schwaber, M. Spiro, R. Tyson, and the participants in the scientific program at the San Diego Institute of Psychoanalysis. The research grew out of a larger project on residency training, funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, and the National Institute of Mental Health. It gives me great pleasure to thank them here.

lives, intimately absorbed into other people's dreams and daily rhythms. And yet at the end of their attempts they sometimes struggle with a sense of ignorance, and with what could perhaps be called the paradox of human knowing: that the more we understand a person, the more acutely we become aware of the ways in which we do not know him or her. The struggle that anthropologists and psychoanalysts have in common, then, is the struggle to come to terms with a sense of partial failure.

The sense of knowing or understanding here is more than the command of rules and facts that characterize, say, the game of chess. Knowing the rules is one thing; being able to use them unreflectively is another. Having the skill to use them well is something else again: one can say, the computer often wins, but by God it plays bad chess. Anthropologists and analysts are usually interested in the experience of the chess-playing, and yet it is not clear that an analyst/anthropologist of mediocre chess ability can ever understand the experience of a profoundly skilled player.

The complexity of this question perhaps encourages the use of metaphor to evoke an ideal sense of intimate knowing: anthropologists/analysts might say that they want to know what it is like to live inside the chessplayer's skin. Analysts and anthropologists want to know what it is like to think like the other person, to assume that person's analogies, play in her/his idioms, anticipate her/his startlement. They want to know what it would be like to live that other life, with those parents, those expectations, that disordered personal history. The analysts, of course, have also a therapeutic aim, which the anthropologists, at least explicitly, do not. But they both want to know what it would be to live as another person lives. Without defining this kind of more-than-ordinary understanding precisely, it is clear that it entails an as-if quality: to know another person, one should be able, in one's imagination, to understand in detail how that person responds to the world.

Taken to its limits, this project is inevitably doomed. The life that confronts you is not the one you would lead if you suddenly found yourself in those circumstances—suddenly set down, in Malinowski's phrase, with all your books and trunks. This other life is

one in which the very style of thinking, feeling, and experiencing may be (often is) profoundly unlike your own. At some point, the most expert observer falls short of a complete understanding of another person. This, of course, has always been true for all people, among them analysts and anthropologists.

This essay springs from the recognition that there is in contemporary anthropology and contemporary psychoanalysis a body of work which emerged in the 1980's and which addresses the problem of the incomplete knowledge of other people as a real problem with relevance for the professional activities of their respective disciplines. The anthropological arguments are called "postmodern," while the psychoanalytic ones usually are not, but they each have the feel of normal science with respect to each other. Both the analysts and the anthropologists who write in this style reject the stance of the scientist in search of universal laws. Both analysts and anthropologists place the authority for knowledge of the patient or fieldsubject in the hands of the patient or fieldsubject more than they did before. They share, to some extent, a similar vocabulary, a similar intellectual stance, and similar concerns. In both of them one finds frequent references to Ricoeur, Foucault, Habermas, Jameson, and Nietzsche, and above all to hermeneutics and interpretation. There is the same relentless emphasis on partial knowledge.

I am an anthropologist who has recently been reading widely in psychoanalysis, and as I read, I was struck by the similarities in the arguments, but also by what I took to be their different tone. It seemed to me that these roughly similar arguments had, in their respective disciplines, been presented and received quite differently. The psychoanalytic writing seemed to have a less provocative quality, and there seemed to be less overt controversy around the ideas than there was in the anthropological writing. The psychoanalysts who write in this vein wrote as if it were straightforward that an interpretive sensibility and the acceptance of uncertainty made them better analysts. The anthropological writing was attended by a turbulent ocean of outrage.

My goal in this essay is to explore the question of why that

difference may exist. There are, of course, great distinctions between the disciplines in style, culture, history, and so forth. I will argue that the most illuminating difference here is the ultimate purpose of the discipline and the different kind of moral distress that this entails.

First, though, let me explain what I take to be the similarities in argumentative styles, and, as far as I can gather, the concerns to which they responded.

ANTHROPOLOGY

In 1973 Clifford Geertz published a collection of essays which became the dominant key of anthropological thinking for a generation. *The Interpretation of Cultures* was a subtle, mellifluous volume. Geertz used his Balinese to meditate on power, death, status, and the eternal. He compared a scruffy cockfight to *Macbeth* and *King Lear* and made the comparison so compelling that the essay became a humanistic classic. Culture became the public symbols through which people gave meaning to the brute facts of human life: that we envy, love, lust, and hate, that experience is often unfair and usually painful. Geertzian anthropologists capture these symbols with thick description to grasp the idiosyncracy, the moving particularity, with which others invest significance in the mundane, and for Geertz the anthropologist's relationship to "his" culture was like a literary critic's relationship to "her" text. Anthropology could best be understood as an interpretive enterprise, not as a science. Geertz had been trained by people who collected "data," but he saw himself as being for the cultures he studied an interpreter in every sense of the word: he translated, he explained, and he imposed his own artistry upon the explanation.

As an argument, this was intellectually quite powerful. It drew on new arguments, mostly French (Ricoeur was one of Geertz's primary influences), which argued that social life could be understood as a text. One of Geertz's best known remarks, for example, was that "the culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, them-

selves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong" (1973, p. 452). It must also be mentioned, in this context, that he was an extraordinarily gifted writer, whose ethnographies had delicate, deft characterizations which bristled with intellectual allusion and sophistication, and he set a standard for literary achievement so high that very few people could even dream of emulating it. They did, however, begin to notice the power of good prose.

In 1986 the University of California Press published a collection of essays which became the most notorious instance of what was called anthropological postmodernism. (It is these essays, and not Geertz's work, that I am trying to compare to the analytic writing.) The authors of *Writing Culture* (see Clifford and Marcus, 1986) were mostly men in their forties, some of whom, in one way or another, had worked with Geertz. All of the essays took Geertz's literary sympathies to their logical extreme, and some of them used his own arguments to attack him. The mood of this volume was perceived by many anthropologists as angry, iconoclastic, and daring. At least some senior anthropologists regarded it as parricidal. Certainly, its publication and the publication of a companion volume became an event. I myself have heard graduate students gossip about carrying the volume around their department corridors, and heard senior anthropologists worry that the volume signaled the end of the field as they knew it. The emotional intensity of the debate in the journals and in the classrooms suggested that the future of the field was at stake. Through *Writing Culture* and a cluster of other books—*Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Marcus and Fischer, 1986), *Tuhami* (Crapanzano, 1980), *The Predicament of Culture* (Clifford, 1988)—postmodernism became *the* emotionally charged discussion in anthropology. I know of no anthropologist who does not have views and feelings about it. It is these claims, so controversial in anthropology, that seem to be echoed in psychoanalytic writings.

On the page, the intellectual claims do not seem unduly dramatic. The authors of *Writing Culture* ask how the fact that anthropologists write ethnographies is relevant to the anthropological

production of ethnographic knowledge, particularly in a cultural climate in which the right of marginalized people to speak for themselves has become a charged political issue. If I had to summarize the claims of this collection, they would be these: 1) that ethnographers are situated in the ethnographic context, that they cannot see all that context, that their presence alters it, that they have a certain political and psychological relationship with it and to it; 2) that the way in which you write about something reflects an implicit truth claim or assertion about what you know and how you know it; and 3) that culture is not some coherent set of propositions or symbols shared and acted upon by all members of a society, but that different members of a culture have varied interpretations and experiences of whatever culture is.

None of these claims is a denial that there is a meat-and-potatoes reality (although one essay in the collection did make such assertions), and none is a claim of epistemological relativism. Rather, they are assertions of the partial nature of ethnographers' experience and their use of literary form to assert persuasively their knowledge of that world. The introduction to the volume specifically denies a relativist stance, and explicitly argues that one cultural account is not always as good as any other and that there are standards for evaluating ethnographic texts. For the most part, the writing circles around writing: ethnography as literature, writing as an interpretive and rhetorical act.

But the writing always returns to an attack on the external vantage point, or rather on the idea that an anthropologist can have one. The introduction to the volume is entitled "Partial Truths." That title captures the polemical essence of the volume well: no ethnographer can see the whole of any social world, and all ethnographers present these partial truths through the vehicle of literary expression, with the potential strengths and weaknesses of that medium. Clifford (in Clifford and Marcus, 1986, p. 2) remarks: "The essays collected here . . . see culture as composed of seriously contested codes and representations; they assume that the poetic and the politic are inseparable, that science is in, not above, historical and linguistic process." He also says, "Ethnogra-

phers are more and more like the Cree hunter who (the story goes) came to Montreal to testify in court concerning the fate of his hunting lands in the new James Bay hydroelectric scheme. He would describe his way of life. But when administered the oath he hesitated: 'I'm not sure I can tell the truth. . . . I can only tell what I know' " (p. 8). And the introduction says also: "A major consequence of the historical and theoretical movements traced in this Introduction has been to dislodge the grounds from which persons and groups securely represent others. . . . We ground this, now, on a moving earth. There is no longer any place of overview (mountaintop) from which to map human ways of life, no Archimedian point from which to represent the world" (p. 22).

These arguments generated fury, not because of their explicit concerns but because of what seemed to be—*seemed* to be—their authors' underlying motivations. The fact that anthropologists were embedded in their ethnographic context and that this embeddedness partially obscured their vantage point was probably as obvious to the "dinosaurs" of anthropology (the classic anthropologists who published in the interwar period) as it is to those whom Edwin Ardener called (in a charming comparison) the "furry little mammals" of the modern discipline. After all, the limited (but useful) vantage point is what the phrase "participant observation" implies: that the observers see more because they participate, but that their participation will affect what they see.

The reason for the outrage against the essays (and other writing that followed in this style) was that some anthropologists understood them to imply that ignoring the anthropologist's embeddedness was tantamount to asserting the anthropologist's authority over her/his fieldsubjects. From that perspective, anthropology was not only morally difficult but morally corrupt. When Evans-Pritchard makes generalizing assertions along the lines of "The Azande believe that x," he asserts his superiority and dominance; he speaks for the Azande, as if he knew them better than they know themselves; he colludes—so goes the implication—with colonialism and with racism. (There has been a remarkable amount of critique along this line, both from outside the field and from

within. Edward Said [1993], for instance, remarked that anthropology carries "as a major constitutive element, an unequal relationship of force between the outside Western ethnographer-observer and the primitive, or at least different, but certainly weaker and less developed non-European, non-Western person" [p. 56]).

Others understood the essays to imply, by merely raising the importance of style and rhetoric, that anthropology was neither empirical nor fact bound. If we see that one anthropologist is better known than another and suspect that it is because the one better known is a better writer, perhaps the facts don't matter at all. Essay after essay in the volume asked how Benedict, or Evans-Pritchard, or Geertz himself, had persuaded their readers to take them seriously and to believe their claims about places that the reader had never seen and their generalizations about complexly individual people whom the reader had never met. Sometimes this questioning became a not-so-implicit challenge to the so-called facts; more often, it was perceived as such. The interesting, important aspects of this work raise questions about the nature of the knowledge gained through anthropological fieldwork and the problems associated with the representation of that knowledge. What came to be seen as one of the underlying motivations of anthropological postmodernism in this and other works was far more subversive: to challenge the very possibility of anthropological fieldwork and anthropological knowledge by labeling that attempt as hegemonic, authoritative, and morally bankrupt.

There is considerable disagreement about whether these interpretations of *Writing Culture* are appropriate or accurate, but there is no disagreement that they were made and that what came to be called postmodernism was perceived by some members of the profession as a moralizing, radical, self-destructive, parricidal attack on the discipline from within.

For the present essay, I am not interested in whether these evaluations of *Writing Culture* are correct, or whether the arguments are in general good ones. I simply want to observe that

these arguments generated a great deal of emotional anxiety, distress, and hostility in the field.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

We come now to psychoanalysis, and I must immediately admit my lesser grasp on the dynamics in this field, because I am an observer. (I have spent five years studying psychiatric residents as an anthropologist: I have been interested in what residents must learn to diagnose and prescribe well, and what they must learn in order to do good psychotherapy.) However, my observer's impression is that the arguments I see echoed in mainstream psychoanalytic writing have not produced the kind of distress that the arguments have done in anthropology. This is not to say that the arguments of these authors are not controversial: they are indeed controversial. But they are not controversial in the same way. They have not been perceived as a direct threat to the field, at least in the way that other psychoanalytic arguments (for example, those about self psychology) have been. And again, to the extent that this is true, the interesting question is why.

There is a mainstream, ego-psychological, psychoanalytic literature which seems to respond to the same intellectual climate as does *Writing Culture.* There is the same sophistication about being situated and so limited in one's perceptions, about using rhetoric to persuade, about being trapped within one's own history. The authors share a common focus on the way analysts build an edifice of knowledge about a patient—using metatheories, models, preconceptions—and they all point to the shaky foundations of the edifice, and the way that the neglect of the shakiness of the edifice can impede good analytic work. The authors that I am thinking of include Schafer, Schwaber, Spence, Renik, S. Cooper, Margulies, Hoffman, McLaughlin, Bollas, Jacobs, and others. Their particular concerns are often quite distinctive and each may have writings which are irrelevant to this discussion. Nevertheless, they seem to share some themes in common.

In reading this work (I will give three examples shortly) the following claims emerged which seemed to echo the claims in *Writing Culture*: 1) the analyst is not outside the analytic situation, watching objectively as the sessions unfold; 2) the patient tells a narrative, not necessarily a historically true accounting, in which the analyst's listening is implicated; and 3) the patient's experience has an oblique relationship to metatheories about the grand theories of psyche, self (or self-representation), and development for which psychoanalysis is justly famous; and indeed, the metatheories can impede the analyst's listening. In other words, the analyst, like the anthropologist, is not observing from a truly external vantage point; the analyst, like the anthropologist, gives up the claim to authoritative, final knowledge of what "really" happened; the analyst must not fit the patient to the theory, just as the anthropologist must not fit the person to the anthropologist's understanding of the culture. As in anthropological theory, these patient-centered writings take authority from the professional observer and give it to the observed subject.

To what are these authors reacting? The psychoanalysis of the 1980's and early 1990's was carried out in the shadow of disciplinary debates about self psychology, about Jacques Lacan, and in a *Zeitgeist* of literary theory which privileged uncertainty. To be specific, however, these authors seem to react to doubts about the analyst's empathy—a crucial analytic tool of understanding—or at least to the way that an earlier generation of psychoanalysts seemed to have conceptualized it.

Empathy is a very complicated process, with the same vulnerability to skepticism as the fieldwork process (which, after all, depends in large part on empathy). Empathy is supposed to refer to the listener's capacity to feel at the moment, to some extent, what it is that the analysand is feeling. It is to be able to understand, from the inside, what the analysand's experience is like. When analysts empathize they experience themselves as feeling the analysand's feeling. Greenson, whose 1967 *Technique and Practice of Psychoanalysis* still stands as one of the leading instructional introductions to the field, presented empathy as follows:

> Empathy is a model of understanding another human being by means of a temporary and partial identification. To accomplish it the analyst must renounce for a time part of his own identity, and for this he must have a loose or flexible self image. This is not to be confused with role playing, which is a more conscious phenomenon. It is more like the process of "serious make believe," which is experienced when one is moved by a work of art, a performance or a piece of fiction. It is an intimate, non-verbal form of establishing contact (p. 382).

At one point Greenson described his experience of feeling empathic:

> At this point I change the way I am listening to [the patient]. I shift from listening from the outside to listening from the inside. I have to let a part of me become the patient, and I have to go through her experiences as if I were the patient and to introspect what is going on in me as they occur. What I am trying to describe are the processes that occur when one empathizes with a patient. I let myself experience the different events the patient has described and I also let myself experience the analytic hour, her associations, and her affects as she seems to have gone through them in the hour. I go back over the patient's utterances and transform her words into pictures and feelings in accordance with her personality. I let myself associate to these pictures with *her* life experiences, *her* memories, *her* fantasies. As I have worked with this patient over the years I have built up a working model of the patient consisting of her physical appearance, her behavior, her ways of moving, her desires, feelings, defenses, values, attitudes, etc. It is this working model of the patient that I shift into the foreground as I try to capture what she was experiencing. The rest of me is de-emphasized and isolated for the time being (1967, pp. 367–368).

For this seasoned, teaching analyst, the experience of empathy involved a cognitive representation of patients and their words, and a vicarious emotional identification with them, an imaginative participation in their lives. He described empathy as an "intimate, non-verbal" form of contact. It is, he said, a kind of sharing of the

emotions. In psychoanalysis, this emphasis on shared intimacy is the more striking because during the analytic hour, the analyst and the analysand cannot see each other. The analysand is lying on a couch, staring at the ceiling. The analyst is sitting in a tall-backed leather chair at the head of the couch, from which he or she cannot see the patient's face. The analyst cannot even see whether the patient is crying.

There are some good reasons to suspect that while analysts do experience what they call empathy, this experience is not always a reliable source of information about the patient. First, analysts are inevitably mired in the swamp of their own personalities. The need for the personal analysis in analytic training used to be presented as a means to "eliminate blind spots" in the analyst's personality and "to maintain clinical objectivity." I am quoting, in this case, from a 1974 handbook of psychiatry (Solomon and Patch, 1974, p. 490), but the view that the psychoanalysis somehow allowed young analytic candidates to get rid of the embarrassing conflicts that distorted their perceptions of others, or at least to be sufficiently aware of them to render them impotent, was widespread in the decades in which psychoanalysis held an unquestioned sway over psychiatry.

Second, the patient sees the analyst under peculiar social conditions. The analyst never sees the spouse, the boss, the children, or the co-workers. The analyst never sees the patient interact with other people, never sees the patient work or eat lunch or do any of the thousands of small tasks that form the crucial background to most of the layperson's intimate conversations.

Third, the subtleties of emotional perception depend not only on the face—which the analyst cannot see during the analytic hour—but on a shared culture, and there is no guarantee that the analysts share their patients' local microcosm of a culture. Analysts listen to patients of different ages, different genders, and different professional engagements. The male analyst might not anticipate, for example, that a woman's cultural experience might be quite different from his own.

The analytic writings that concern me take off from these various doubts about the knowledge obtained through the experience called empathy. What I, as an observer, find fascinating is that these authors do not use their doubts to question the validity of psychoanalysis, nor do I believe that their papers are read as a threat to psychoanalysis. On the contrary, in their discipline, these doubts are used as part of an account of how to do and understand psychoanalysis more deeply.

The first of my examples comes from the work of a (in analytic time) young analyst, Steven Cooper, whose first articles signal his membership in an interpretive community different from that of his elders. He has edited a symposium entitled "What Does the Analyst Know?," which featured two articles, one which relied heavily upon Rorty's understanding of philosophy as an inherently inconclusive conversation about an unknowable reality, and another which argued that the transference is always, in a literary sense, a fiction. Cooper's introduction is baldly entitled "Hermeneutics and You." He opens with this remark: "These questions attempt to move the analyst clinically from the high ground of being an expert decipherer to some common ground of being a participant-observer. . . . there is generally more and more agreement that the truth of the matter is contextually, not objectively, defined" (1993a, p. 169).

In an essay from the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*—as public and traditional a forum as one could find—Cooper (1993b) describes this new hermeneutic perspective.

> Much of contemporary analytic theory, varied as it is, has in common an increased emphasis on the fallibility of the analyst as a participant and interpreter within the analytic process. By the term "fallibility" I mean to suggest neither flawed technique nor faulty outcome, but rather the limitations of anyone in determining, absolutely, the nature of "objective" or psychic reality, in judging the accuracy of interpretation, or in remaining impervious to countertransference influence or transference enactment (p. 95).

In other words, the analyst can never be a truly independent, objective observer, because he or she is so embedded in the analytic process.

Later, Cooper summarizes the impact on psychoanalysis of what he calls "revisionist psychoanalytic theory." He describes this impact as the "deidealization" of the therapist and describes it as

> increased emphasis on the analyst as participant-observer attempting to understand psychic and multiple realities rather than as the arbiter and dispenser of views of objective reality within the analytic situation; emphasis on psychoanalysis as a hermeneutic discipline shifting, in Heidegger's terms, away from "canonical" truth to the creation of a "mutual" truth; transference as meaning and expression of psychic realities, not exclusively distortion; the inevitable arousal of the analyst's subjectivities (transference and countertransference); and enactment as a frequent prelude to the capacity to put into words the patient-analyst process (p. 109).

There is no true external vantage point; while analysts have always known this on some level, Cooper implies, they need to take it more seriously, and hermeneutics provides the theory to help them do so.

Roy Schafer is an older, highly distinguished, and widely respected analyst. He has always been slightly on the margins of the psychoanalytic mainstream. Nonetheless, in recent years he has been increasingly granted considerable mainstream prominence. And his views are more radical than Cooper's.

Schafer is sometimes called a constructivist, by which it is meant that he understands analysands' accounts of their experience to be constructed in the interaction between analyst and analysand. Schafer understands the analytic process as an interaction between two people who are different in this dyad from the way they are in nonanalytic contexts. In the analytic dyad, as he conceives it, both analyst and analysand work with "second selves." By virtue of their analytic attitude, analysts do not respond in kind—as a friend would—to attacks or declarations of love; analysands, by

virtue of their pain, do not present the strengths they might in other contexts. These second selves are "fictive," in that they are created in the concrete interactions between two people, and the two second selves of the analytic dyad weave together, as they talk, a narration of the analysand's life. Freudian analysts, Schafer suggests, organize this material in particular ways, often around body parts; others organize it differently.

The point is that the account of the patient's experience is built out of a complex negotiation between what the patient says, how the analyst understands it, and how the patient interprets what the analyst says. One cannot, Schafer says, contrast the different schools of psychoanalytic thought on the basis of the "facts." This does not bother him. Schafer is less interested in the relationship between word and in-the-world reference—in what one thinks of as the "truth" of an analytic theory—than he is in the transformative power of empathizing within the fictive interaction. It is the retelling of the analysand's life, rather than the analyst's understanding of that life, which is the heart of Schafer's conception of the analytic attention. "Psychoanalysts may be described as people who listen to the narrations of analysands and help to transform these narrations into others that are more complete, coherent, convincing and adaptively useful than those they have been accustomed to constructing" (1983, p. 240).

Schafer writes of the analytic process as "worldmaking," borrowing Nelson Goodman's term, and with philosophical and literary sophistication argues that the way we conceive of ourselves in the world is intertwined with the way we feel and behave. Changing our conceptions—our narrative—changes our experience, adding possibility to our worlds. "Character change lies, then, in the analysands' now living in vastly more complex worlds with vastly more complex repertoires of action, including the actions of representation of self and others in relation" (p. 158).

So it is not that analysands come to remember a more complex past or even to understand more deeply; it is that they have experienced that past in a different way, and so have profoundly changed it. Schafer argues that it is wrong to say that in the trans-

ference the analysand repetitively relives the past. "Another... better account," he says, "tells of change of action along certain lines; it emphasizes new experiencing and new remembering of the past that unconsciously has never become the past" (p. 220). Analysands who break into torrential weeping upon remembering their father's actions in the past are not reliving the past; they are altering their understanding and memory of that past and relating it to the present in a different way.

Accompanying the emphasis on narration is a quite specific emphasis on language. Schafer writes of the need for "action language," which is a mode of speaking wherein the speaker remains the active agent of his or her experience. The speaker does not say, "The dreams stayed with me all day," but rather learns to say, "All day I continued to think about what I had dreamed." The speaker does not say, "The sadistic fantasy came between me and my climax"; the speaker says, "I delayed and attenuated my climax by imagining sadistic situations" (1983, pp. 246–247). From Schafer's perspective the traditional metapsychology works against this notion of a learning, changing agent, and should be avoided. Terms like "drive," "ego," "id," suggest a fragmented person who is incapacitated by the fragments, and this, he suggests, is unhelpful. The suggestion is quite subversive. Schafer is recommending that psychoanalysts abandon most of the language they were given by Freud. Analysis, he says, is an interpretive enterprise, not a natural science, and its interpretive nature is what enables it to change the narrative self-account of its participants. Its interpretive nature is what enables it to cure.

Evelyne Schwaber, again a distinguished senior analyst, regards herself in many respects as quite orthodox. She distances herself from constructivists like Schafer and certainly from self psychology. She focuses on the analyst's mislistening, but is uncomfortable with the idea that mislistening might alter the story that the patient tells. Nevertheless, her work belongs in this discussion because it persistently challenges analytic presumptions and analytic authority, with the aim of emphasizing the patient's point of view. Her work takes the authority for knowledge about the pa-

tient away from the analyst and gives it back to the patient. And because she so intently emphasizes the need for the analyst not to assume knowledge, she celebrates the uncertainty of human understanding. She quotes Kundera: "It is precisely in losing the certainty of truth and the unanimous agreement of others that man becomes an individual" (1986, p. 912).

One's analytic job is to listen, Schwaber says again and again, and anything—anything at all—that interferes with that listening must be derogated in the interest of the more important job, which is understanding what the patient's experience is for the patient. "If . . . a patient (with no organic visual abnormality) sees a red dress where the analyst is wearing beige, we may assess the *in*accuracy in the specification of color. But this is a matter different from a judgment about the correctness in the *experienced* reality . . ." (1992, p. 1042). Schwaber is not rejecting external reality or the analyst's surprise at having communicated something different from what she had intended. One learns something if one is wearing a beige dress and the patient perceives it as red. But from Schwaber's perspective what one learns is not that the patient has made a mistake so much as that one does not yet understand the patient.

Much of her work, then, is focused on the ways in which adherence to a model interferes with the capacity to hear. In a commentary on Brenner's description of a case, she says: "only the model tells us that the patient 'wished' [as Brenner had assumed] to maintain the same set of relationships [to her analyst as to her father]" (1987, p. 266). In a recent review of a book of psychoanalytic case studies, she remarks: "Consider [and here she quotes from another analyst's case study]: 'His voyeurism was an attempt to deny castration. He remembered how once he saw his mother bending over after she had finished on the toilet, and that afterwards he told his grandfather that mother had hair around her behind. The pubic hair was . . . a falsification designed to maintain the illusion that in front there was still something'. . . . It is not at all clear," Schwaber remarks, "what was the patient's expressed idea or fantasy, and what the analyst's formulation"

(1993, p. 411). She quotes again from another case in which the analyst remarked, " 'One of the difficulties of conducting any analysis is that the insights of the analyst often outstrip those of the patient'. . . . Surely," she says, "things may also happen the other way around . . ." (p. 412).

Yet Schwaber does not believe that these insights reveal the theoretical models to be inherently wrong or that it might be possible to do analytic work without them. It is simply that she wants analysts to be aware of the ways in which their models can limit them. As she says, "There is a fundamental difference in outlook between an interpretive effort that attempts to help the patient arrive at a truth, the existence of which the analyst has implicitly pre-existing knowledge, and an interpretation that inherently derives from a question to which the analyst does not yet have an answer" (1990, p. 239). To Schwaber, it is extremely difficult to understand someone else, and there is an enormous temptation in psychoanalysis to use analytic theories and to use one's own experience to interpret and to judge the other. The analyst's interest in theory or in her or his own experience of the patient must not override the focus on the patient's physical reality. And it is this focus, and the shared recognition of the patient's experience, which is therapeutic. "It is such profoundly, if subtly expanded and articulated shared recognition, that underlies the mutative power of psychoanalysis" (1992, p. 1055).

DISCUSSION

Before the cultural shift in the late sixties, both anthropology and psychoanalysis had role models who presented themselves as authoritative scientists. Helene Deutsch and Margaret Mead, to take prominent exemplars, conceived of themselves as practicing scientists who collected data, developed theory, and spoke as knowledgeable experts about the patients and cultures they surveyed. Now in the uncertain nineties, both anthropology and psychoanalysis have produced a more uncertain role model (though it is

not adopted by everyone in the field). These uncertain professionals are interpreters, highly conscious of their limitations, highly conscious of their capacity to distort, humble in the face of their ignorance, and hesitant to assert their knowledge of someone else's life. And yet although these anthropologists and psychoanalysts draw from the same intellectual *Zeitgeist*, they develop its themes with a different affect. Schafer, Schwaber, and Cooper do not seem as angry about the older generation as do some authors in *Writing Culture*, nor as bleak about the achievements and possibilities of their profession as, at times, the anthropologists seem to be. And the reactions to these writings in the two disciplines appear different as well. The anthropological reaction to postmodern anthropology has been stormy and doom-ridden—appropriately or not; that the interpretation of these writings is far more jaundiced than the writing itself is one of the most interesting features of the debates—and the emotional tension around it remains. My impression is that the psychoanalytic community has not been torn apart by analysts who tackle these themes, nor have their claims been exaggerated past recognition and treated as a risk to the very discipline itself. Why has the interest in narration and the limitation of knowledge not seemed so dangerous to the analysts?

One route of explanation lies in the different disciplinary institutions. For analysts in private practice (at least in America) to assert that therapy is morally bankrupt is quite a different matter than for tenured professors to claim that the scholarship in their profession is intellectually suspect. The analysts' writings are in some sense a reflection on a professional commitment that they continually renew with each patient they agree to treat; after tenure, the anthropologists' professional commitment need renew itself only in teaching, and in any event to teach and write from a position of deep skepticism is a time-honored style within the academy. Moreover, it is hard to attack anthropologists' status as anthropologists if they have doctorates in anthropology and jobs in anthropology departments, whereas psychoanalysts, no matter what their institutional affiliations, are always vulnerable to the

argument that they are "not doing psychoanalysis." In addition, analysts are not chosen to be training analysts—the senior authorities in the local institutes—until quite late in their careers. These institutional differences must encourage greater caution among psychoanalysts.

The more interesting explanation of these different disciplinary responses to similar arguments lies in what can be called the different moral characters of the fields. By "moral character," I mean the sharp awareness of what counts as a good or bad performance of the craft of the discipline, and even more, the emotional response to a performance which signals whether it is in accord with or violates the field's expectations of right behavior. Ultimately, these standards are tied to the goals of the enterprise. Potters' skills are not the same as those of plumbers, and economists' are not those of historians, and that is because they need to achieve different ends. But we often forget that there is a moral quality to these construals, that it is not simply a matter of knowing how to use the clay, but being "good" with clay, that there is a way to have integrity as a potter which is different from the way one has integrity as a plumber. The good potter uses the clay as it "ought" to be used, with respect for its substance and the demands of its skill. These evaluations are tied in specific ways to the achievement of the potter's goals. The good historian, as Bernard Cohn (1987) informs us, is "solid": he or she is thorough, has exhausted the archives, and has competence in his or her domain. The good historian finds abhorrent the misremembering of details, because the method of the work depends inherently on the accumulation of small details, and the historian is less troubled by the thinness of explanatory theory, because an abstract account of social change is not foremost in his or her aims. The historian who never writes before reading through all the relevant archival sources, whose references are always accurate, has integrity, whereas a minister's integrity depends more on being able to keep confidences and to be honest. And this is true for all fields—that an individual's achievement of the field's goals is bound up with moral expectations around the method that she or he uses.

Anthropology and psychoanalysis have ultimately different goals, and the emphasis on narration and uncertainty offends only the anthropological ones. Anthropologists see their main task as producing the public, published description of the people they have studied. Fieldwork is a means to an end, which is the dissertation or the book, which is then reviewed in print for its accuracy in getting the description right. Any suggestion that the description may be inherently flawed is bound to be met with intense feeling, for that suggestion states that the goals of the field cannot be met by the methods it has chosen and, thus, implicitly argues that the methods of the field are morally corrupt—as the essays in *Writing Culture* were interpreted to imply, although that is not what their authors necessarily intended to state.

For the psychoanalyst, the reverse is true. Book-writing, theory-developing, and fact-finding may all be important, but the psychoanalyst is a clinician first and foremost. By this I do not mean at all to belittle the importance of psychoanalytic theorizing; it is simply that one can be an excellent, well-regarded analyst irrespective of whether one publishes, and Cooper, Schafer, and Schwaber all seem to me to write to an audience focused on clinical goals. A literature which argues that an epistemological stance will improve patient care is less likely to send shock waves through this readership, even if, as is the case with Schafer and others, the suggestion involves a radical approach to traditional metapsychology. Given a forced choice, most American psychoanalysts would probably choose therapeutic efficacy over theoretical orthodoxy or even consistency. That is, the "bottom line" in psychoanalysis is the health of the patient—not the analyst's knowledge of the patient or the analyst's theoretical sophistication. What really matters is whether the analyst can help the analysand to achieve greater self-knowledge and greater ease.

There *was* an intellectual challenge to psychoanalysis which threw the discipline into the same level of outrage and disarray as anthropology has experienced with what is called postmodernism, and that occurred in the years after Kohut introduced self psychology. Self psychology argued that analysts were using the

wrong techniques to help their patients. Orthodox Freudians understood their patients to be emotionally conflicted, and held that cure emerged through insight (broadly speaking); the analyst's role, then, was to interpret the conflict to the patient. Kohut argued that many patients were troubled not by conflict, but by deficit, and that the point of the therapy was (again, broadly speaking) to reparent them, or to restructure their emotional insufficiencies by engaging in a certain kind of relationship with them. That argument (far more elaborate than presented here) could be read as attacking the Freudian analysts for failing to treat their patients effectively; and that perception led psychoanalytic institutes to fragment and even to split apart across the country. (Lacanian psychoanalysis could probably also have produced intense conflict, as it did in France, but my understanding is that Lacan has had relatively little impact upon the practice of American psychoanalysis.) By contrast, the claim that most anthropologists did their fieldwork ineffectively would provoke far less heat than the charge that their ethnographies were based on inherent misperceptions.

Anthropologists and psychoanalysts both rely on empathy to some degree as a central methodological tool. The achievement and denial of empathy is the heart of participant observation—a phrase used by all anthropologists, and by psychoanalysts at least since Sullivan, to describe their enterprise. Greenson (1967) says: "It is necessary for the analyst to feel close enough to the patient to be able to empathize with the most intimate details of his emotional life; yet he must be able to become distant enough for dispassionate understanding. This is one of the most difficult requirements of psychoanalytic work—the alternation between the temporary and partial identification of empathy and the return to the distant position of the observer, the evaluator, etc." (p. 279). Both disciplines demand an oscillation between empathic identification and distance. But because the goals of the disciplines are quite different, the moral cost of empathy's vulnerability to skepticism are weighted very differently.

Psychoanalysts listen at great length to a small number of

people whom they get to know well, very well, within the limits of the professional relationship. By the nature of this relationship and its model of cure the analyst in general does not meet the people about whom the patient talks. The analyst strives to understand the patient's experience of these people from the patient's point of view, and pragmatically speaking, the accuracy of these representations is probably irrelevant to the practice of the therapy. This is not to say that analysts do not recognize that the patient distorts the event—therapists become sophisticated interpreters of the bare words of the patient's presentation—but that recognizing the possible unreliability of the empathic connection should, practically speaking, make little difference to what the analyst does in the therapy except to make the analyst try to listen more carefully, which is what analysts are supposed to be doing in the first place. Self psychology suggested that analysts do their work differently; that methodological innovation created schisms and fights in abundance. The psychoanalytic work discussed here, epistemologically shocking though it may be, can be read as an affirmation to analysts to tell them to do as they have always tried to do: to listen to the patient, to understand the patient's point of view.

Anthropology, by contrast, is founded on the belief that empathic connection—the anthropologist's experience of partially identifying with the group she or he has come to study—produces publically verifiable information about that group. As a result, these arcane epistemological arguments about narration tear directly at the basic fabric of the enterprise. Anthropological selfhood is founded on the notion that good fieldworkers connect with their fieldsubjects, share their experience to some degree (they empathize with the Bedouin woman who recites poetry when she is gloomy), and from this experience produce good ethnography. To notice that the experience of empathic connection may not always provide reliable information is to attack the moral sculpting of the domain, or at least to be easily perceived as doing so. That sense of attack accounts, I believe, for the peculiarity of the debate around anthropological postmodernism: that

the authors often point out obvious surface features of the way that anthropology is done, and their remarks are greeted with the great emotional attention that betokens moral distress. The work of *Writing Culture*, innocuous as its descriptions may be, is perceived as a moral attack when it is understood to suggest that the field's aims cannot be achieved with its methods.

The most interesting feature of this new discourse of uncertainty in both anthropology and psychoanalysis is that it privileges the subjective understanding of human connection. It does portray the professional as greedily eager to tell the story of the interaction in the way that serves him or her best. But in the process it paints a far more delicate, nuanced, psychological account of the interactions between people than we have had before (often, in the case of anthropology, while being supposedly antipsychological). There are, of course, problems with the chic excesses of the new enthusiasms. Nevertheless, these new approaches in psychoanalysis and anthropology present a complex account of empathic engagement in its strengths, distortions, and vulnerabilities. Psychoanalysts do not always see the challenge that these analyses present to their presumptive knowledge base. Anthropologists see the challenges as fire-breathing dragons. Both these responses reveal something about the deep moral fashionings of our disciplinary construals of self.

REFERENCES

CLIFFORD, J. (1988). *The Predicament of Culture.* Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press.

——— & MARCUS, G., Editors. (1986). *Writing Culture.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

COHN, B. (1987). *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays.* Oxford/Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press.

COOPER, S. H. (1993a). Introduction: hermeneutics and you. *Psychoanal. Dialogues,* 2:169-176.

——— (1993b). Interpretive fallibility and the psychoanalytic dialogue. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 41:95-127.

CRAPANZANO, V. (1980). *Tuhami.* Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

GEERTZ, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York: Basic Books.

GREENSON, R. R. (1967). *The Technique and Practice of Psychoanalysis, Vol. 1*. New York: Int. Univ. Press.

MARCUS, G. & FISCHER, M. (1986). *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

SAID, E. (1993). *Orientalism and Culture*. New York: Knopf.

SCHAFER, R. (1983). *The Analytic Attitude*. New York: Basic Books.

SCHWABER, E. A. (1986). Reconstruction and perceptual experience: further thoughts on psychoanalytic listening. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 34:911:932.

——— (1987). Models of the mind and data-gathering in clinical work. *Psychoanal. Inquiry*, 7:261-275.

——— (1990). Interpretation and the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 71:229-240.

——— (1992). Psychoanalytic theory and its relation to clinical work. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 40:1039-1057.

——— (1993). Review of *Psychoanalytic Case Studies*, ed. by G.P. Sholevar & J. Glenn. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 74:409-413.

SOLOMON, P. & PATCH, V. (1974). *Handbook of Psychiatry*. Los Altos, CA: Lange Medical Publs.

Department of Anthropology
University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla, CA 90293-0532

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Visiting the Father's Grave

Salman Akhtar & Andrew Smolar

To cite this article: Salman Akhtar & Andrew Smolar (1998) Visiting the Father's Grave, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 474-483, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006052

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006052

Published online: 27 Jun 2018.

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

VISITING THE FATHER'S GRAVE

BY SALMAN AKHTAR, M.D. AND ANDREW SMOLAR, M.D.

While adolescence is a nodal point for fine-tuning the internalized object relations of childhood (Blos, 1967), emotional revisiting of the primary objects continues throughout adult life. The establishment of romantic intimacy and marriage during young adulthood (Erikson, 1959; Escoll, 1991), the assumption of the parental role with the arrival of children (Colarusso, 1990), the earnest scrutiny of one's identity and the overcoming of emergent sexual competitiveness and unconscious envy of offspring during middle age (Erikson, 1959; Kernberg, 1980), and the final consolidation of a postambivalent world-view during old age (Akhtar, 1994; Cath, 1997) are all contingent upon the working through of our relations with the parents of childhood. Continued dialogue with parents—actual visits, phone calls, correspondence, exchange of gifts—greatly facilitates psychic development.

In situations of parental loss during childhood, even young adulthood, such internal updating becomes difficult. Transferences (both within and outside a treatment setting), creativity, and transitional phenomena then substitute for actual contact. Anniversary reactions (Pollock, 1970), the use of the deceased's physical possessions (Volkan, 1981), and visits to the burial site acquire much greater psychic significance under such circumstances. It is striking that this last-mentioned phenomenon, though ubiquitous, has received scant psychoanalytic attention. Our paper seeks to fill this gap and to highlight some interesting developmental and technical issues in this area. To accomplish this, we report selected aspects of the analyses of two men whose visits to their fathers' graves played an important role in treatment.

CLINICAL VIGNETTES

Case 1

Dr. M, a forty-year-old physician, sought help for his concern that his recent engagement was a mistake. He had always been "half in and half out" of romantic relationships and thought that his reluctance to marry might reflect more generalized constraints. As he talked about his professional inhibitions, his limited capacity for intimacy with his siblings and friends, and his restricted emotions regarding his father's death during his childhood, I recommended psychoanalysis.

Dr. M's parents were also physicians. His father had a sudden myocardial infarction when the patient was three years old. A progressive deterioration in his father's strength followed until his death four years later. Dr. M's mother remained a widow living with numerous mementos of her brief marital life. She worked full time and raised Dr. M and his two older brothers with help from her mother.

Dr. M's analysis was marked by a rapidly emerging longing for his father which he found surprising. Prior to analysis, he had experienced his father's death unemotionally and resolutely. However, as the analytic process unfolded, Dr. M conjured up fresh memories of his father and began to experience associated painful affects. He yearned for more attention from me and gradually recognized his underlying wish that he had received something more substantial from his father.

As his wedding approached, he broached the subject of his father's grave, informing me that he had not visited it since he was an intern. He asked me if this was significant. I said that not only was he asking me to help him understand his inhibition, he was asking me to help him overcome it. Memories of the "piercing look of pain that came over [his] mother's face" when the family visited the cemetery now emerged. Dr. M voiced a fantasy of receiving his father's blessing while visiting the grave before the wedding.

A fantasy about paternal resurrection also seemed to be in the air before Dr. M left to get married. He announced on a Monday that he had miscalculated his departure and would have to miss the rest of the week's sessions. He was also not sure whether he could come at all the week after his return from his honeymoon because of an anticipated new work schedule. When I pointed out this unusual degree of scheduling confusion and wondered about it, he responded by saying: "Maybe I am transforming the end into one where [father] comes back after the break . . . one where I as the son have an open exchange and assessment of our relationship before the end . . . I wish you would say something explicit like 'I want you to be here' or 'It would really be worth coming for this or that reason.' " I noted that he wanted to hear something explicit about my love for him as the break approached, that his confusion over our next visit contained his wish that I could forestall the end—all of special relevance as he prepared to visit his father's grave. I added that he might have had similar wishes of hearing his father's proclamation of love for him as his father lay dying, as well as fantasies of his father's returning for future meetings.

Later that day, he informed me that he would come the next day. In the next session, he said that he would also keep his appointments for the week after his honeymoon. He talked more about his father, reflected on his analysis, and said, "I have much more of a sense of sorrow and grieving than I ever did . . . I'm not sure I'll be in town for more than two years . . . I hope there is time to work this all out. . . ." This fear of running out of time was not an infrequent theme. It underlay his fear, stated in the initial consultation, that he would die at a young age like his father, as well as his feeling at the end of sessions that he "has to pack it all in" before the time was up.

When he returned to his hometown before the wedding, Dr. M borrowed his mother's car to visit the grave, which limited the time he was able to spend there—it reminded him of his annoyance with her intrusiveness when he was seventeen. I pointed out that he, too, seemed to have difficulty freeing himself from their

bond; after all, he had other options for transportation. He agreed, and added that his mother shared with him, somewhat reluctantly, a scrapbook devoted to his father. The book contained pictures, poetry his father had written, notes added by his mother, and the eulogy delivered at his father's funeral. "I became tearful reading the book, but she wouldn't give me space . . . I wanted the tears to myself, and I felt pissed at her, so I closed [the book] in the house and went to the grave with [it] so I could thumb through my father's life . . . she said she preferred I didn't take it, that it needed to be guarded and she'd had control of it, but she relented."

The time at the grave was "sad, cathartic, and the tears were more accessible. . . . It was neat to feel something for my father. I credit psychoanalysis for that." Dr. M wished that his father could be present at his wedding. He had a fantasy of exhuming the body and wondered if it was rotted or intact. He read quotations about his father from the scrapbook that he had heard his whole life: "of infinite grace and devoted benevolence, he lightened the way." He remembered many moments of closeness with his father. When he returned to his mother's home, he continued his quest to reconnect with his father by looking for a treasured picture of father and sons.

When Dr. M returned from his honeymoon, he conspicuously avoided the topic of sex. It was as if he could not dare tell his father that he was now a truly grown-up man. In fact, he felt that the honeymoon was a failure: he should have had an erotic explosion, not the familiar and comfortable experience he did have. He also reported experiencing more frequent palpitations from a chronic but benign arrhythmia, and that this reminded him of his father. At this moment, he handed me the program from his father's memorial service. His father's picture was on the back of it. Dr. M spoke more about what his father must have felt as he approached his death. His deepening empathy with his father seemed to serve as a defense against his anxiety upon finding himself in the potentially competitive role of a married man. However, it also reflected genuine progress in his mourning, with

enrichment of his inner view of his father and his identification with him.

Case 2

Dr. R, a thirty-eight-year-old, twice-divorced research scientist sought help because he was considering marriage again and was worried whether this union would last. Dr. R's previous marriages had been with women of subtle sexual ill-repute, and he was involved with "a good woman" for the first time. Dr. R also wondered whether he was too close to his mother.

Dr. R's father, a factory supervisor, was allegedly uninvolved with his children and died suddenly of a myocardial infarction when Dr. R was twenty-five-years old. He had little recall of the funeral. The only thing he could remember was that upon returning from the cemetery, he had fallen into a deep sleep for a few hours (I sensed elements of denial of the father's death as well as an identification with him in this long nap.) Dr. R's mother was a housewife who was "always dissatisfied" and whom he felt hopelessly unable to please. His only sibling was an older, mildly sociopathic brother. Dr. R. himself had grown up as a conscientious individual who, throughout high school, college, and subsequent academic career, had socialized little and remained devoted to his work.

Dr. R began analysis in a characteristically industrious manner. Even after he relaxed, the associative material remained focused upon his mother, his previous wives, and his current woman friend. He repeatedly expressed anxieties about fusion with and abandonment by mother (and other women). With interpretive resolution of externalizing resistances, Dr. R's own ambivalence toward these figures became available for exploration. Empathic, affirmative interventions coupled with my sustained emotional availability diminished separation and merger anxieties. With buttressed self-constancy and enhanced capacity for optimal distance, Dr. R broached the topic of rescuing women from men who "bothered" them. Father now appeared on the scene.

Over subsequent weeks, Dr. R elaborated the profile of a father who seemed disappointed in him and appeared to be "bothering" the mother all the time. Dr. R said that his father was a "grown-up boy" and began experiencing the issues directly in transference. Did I have a wife? Did I "bother" her? Did I visit prostitutes? Gradually, the "madonna-whore" split of the maternal imago became fleshed out and so did a childhood rescue theme. Subsequent months also revealed the linkage of this theme to his repeated choice of women in need. Competitive impulses toward me (father) and various anxious retreats from them (feeling weak, wanting to be a woman) now began to fill the sessions.

With further analysis, however, a more benevolent image of father emerged. Dr. R recalled his father's teaching him baseball, golf, bowling, etc. He realized with sadness that it was he who had distanced himself from his father. He cried. To his own surprise, he recalled that his father had given him, when he was a teenager, a book on sexual matters and suggested that they talk about it. He never spoke to his father about it. He revealed, with pride, that he still used his father's golf clubs. He sobbed and said he missed his father very much. I spontaneously asked him where his father was buried (as if to put the two in touch for a final goodbye!). He replied that his father's grave was in their hometown, a few hundred miles away. I asked him when was the last time he had visited the grave. He revealed that he had not been there since the day of the funeral some thirteen years ago, though he had thought about going there from time to time.

Over subsequent sessions he talked about the various times he had considered a visit and then put it off. We began to see that it was his hitherto repressed hostility toward his father that had got in his way. Dr. R now began to actively plan a visit to his father's grave. However, as he talked, again he got caught up with who should accompany him. If he went with his mother, would he be mocking his father ("See, I got your woman! I won!")? If he went with his woman friend, the same anxiety would be there ("See, I got a prettier woman than you had!"). If he went alone, would he be deceptive? I pointed out that the common element in all this

was his continued inner competitiveness. He saw it and decided to base his external behavior in this regard on realistic considerations. He visited the grave with both his mother and his woman friend. While there, he felt love and gratitude toward his father, pride about his own accomplishments, and deep sadness over the father's death. He cried. Finally he was at peace with his father. Soon afterward, he decided to marry his woman friend.

It is noteworthy that the memory of his visiting his father's grave appeared on two subsequent occasions in Dr. R's analysis. The first was a few months after his wedding when he bought a house. In describing the house to me, the only thing he left out was its price. Upon my pointing this out, Dr. R said that he was afraid that I would mock him since I certainly owned a more expensive house. Soon, however, he revealed a second worry: that I would be crushed by hearing that the house he had bought was more expensive than mine. At this time, I reminded him of the various competitive scenarios he had envisioned before going to his father's grave.

Then, near termination, Dr. R "discovered" Peter Gay's biography of Freud and began reading it avidly. As we settled on a termination date, Dr. R finished the book and decided to read the reference notes at the end. The footnotes were not the "real thing" but did allow a further lingering on. Dr. R wryly compared the main text to his actual interactions with his father and his reading the footnotes to visiting the grave!

DISCUSSION

While dramatic rituals around visiting graves or a phobic avoidance of them have been reported in connection with severely pathological grief reactions (Volkan, 1981), the possible development-facilitating role of such visits in less impaired individuals undergoing psychoanalysis has received little attention. In the case of both men described here, the desire to visit a parent's grave arose in connection with a major adult developmental mile-

stone, namely, marriage. Neither man had visited his father's grave for years. Both undertook the trip to seek their fathers' blessings on the threshold of their weddings. At a deeper level, this subsumed a desire for help in disengagement from their mothers, a proud display of masculinity, a wish to be "forgiven" for their hostile oedipal competitiveness (more prominent in the second case), and a need to buttress their heterosexual identifications. Interesting questions remain, however. Could these individuals have undertaken such "pilgrimages" without the help of analysis? Would the expectable destabilization of the inner world during middle age have propelled them in any event to visit their fathers' graves? We do not know. We also must acknowledge the gender specificity of our data. Is there a difference, for instance, in the nature, timing, meaning, and effects of a bereaved daughter's visits to her father's grave? Are visits to a mother's grave, either by a son or a daughter, different in any or all of these regards? One might also wonder about the situation of individuals whose parents have either been cremated, have graves that are untraceable, or exist in locales that the bereaved cannot visit for one reason or another.

In the technical realm, too, important issues exist. While in a brief communication like this, it is not possible to do justice to all such issues, enumerating them might not be out of place here. The technical issues our clinical material touches upon include (1) the concept of analytic neutrality, (2) the impact of actual life experience on the analytic process, and (3) the relationship between the mourning process and the analytic process during the course of an analysis. These highly complex matters form the nexus of many controversies in the current psychoanalytic literature. We cannot discuss them here. Instead, we focus upon our clinical observations. We can only say that in working with these two particular patients, we discerned a dialectical relationship between the actual and the transference experiences and between the mourning and the analytic processes. The interpretive softening of affects involving the father facilitated the visit to his grave. This, in turn, advanced both the mourning and the analytic pro-

cesses. However, the situation also presented a dilemma for the analyst. Should the analyst abide by the dictum of "not directing one's notice to anything in particular" (Freud, 1912, p. 111), remain "without memory or desire" (Bion, 1967), and wait patiently for the analysand to talk and act as he or she pleases? Or should the analyst adopt a "strategy" (Levy, 1987), avoid the "perils of neutrality" (Renik, 1996), and help the patient focus upon the potential meanings of the visit to the grave, even to the extent of encouraging the patient to actually undertake the visit?[1] We opted for the latter route. We asked questions, prompted our patients to fantasize about visiting the grave, and, in the process, certainly encouraged the actual visit. Once again, just as in the realm of phenomenology and developmental dynamics, unanswered questions remain here too. Was our manner of conducting analysis better, more useful? We would like to think so, but we are aware that others might take exception to our approach. Would the patients of such neutral analysts ever undertake a visit to their fathers' graves? Would they do it somewhat later in the course of their analyses? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such a "neutral" approach?

It was our goal to describe the phenomenon under consideration and prompt other analysts to think about the developmental and technical questions raised. We hope that we have successfully achieved our aim.

REFERENCES

AKHTAR, S. (1994). Object constancy and adult psychopathology. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 75:441-455.

BION, W. R. (1967). Notes on memory and desire. *Psychoanal. Forum*, 2:272-273.

BLOS, P. (1967). The second individuation process of adolescence. *Psychoanal. Study Child*, 22:162-186.

[1] Over a hundred years ago, an intervention of this sort was made by Freud in the case of Elisabeth von R. "[T]o bring up fresh memories which had not yet reached the surface . . . [he] sent her to visit her sister's grave . . ." (Breuer and Freud, 1893-1895, p. 149).

BREUER, J. & FREUD, S. (1893-1895). Studies on hysteria. *S.E.*, 2.

CATH, S. (1997). Loss and restitution in late life. In *The Seasons of Life: Separation-Individuation Perspectives.* Northvale, NJ: Aronson, pp. 127-156.

COLARUSSO, C. A. (1990). The third individuation: the effect of biological parenthood on separation-individuation processes in adulthood. *Psychoanal. Study Child,* 45:179-194.

ERIKSON, E. H. (1959). *Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

ESCOLL, P. (1991). Treatment implications of separation-individuation theory in the analysis of young adults. In *Beyond the Symbiotic Orbit: Advances in Separation-Individuation Theory. Essays in Honor of Selma Kramer, M.D.*, ed. S. Akhtar & H. Parens. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, pp. 369-388.

FREUD, S. (1912). Recommendations to physicians practising psycho-analysis. *S.E.*, 12.

KERNBERG, O. F. (1980). *Internal World and External Reality: Object Relations Theory Applied.* New York/London: Aronson.

LEVY, S. T. (1987). Therapeutic strategy and psychoanalytic technique. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 35:447-466.

POLLOCK, G. H. (1970). Anniversary reactions, trauma, and mourning. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 39:347-371.

RENIK, O. (1996). The perils of neutrality. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 65:495-517.

VOLKAN, V. D. (1981). *Linking Objects and Linking Phenomena: A Study of the Forms, Symptoms, Metapsychology, and Therapy of Complicated Mourning.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

Salman Akhtar, M.D.
1201 Chestnut St., Suite 1503
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Andrew Smolar, M.D.
Wynewood House, Suite 209
300 E. Lancaster Ave.
Wynewood, PA 19096

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

On Sandor Rado: A Book Review Essay

George J. Makari

To cite this article: George J. Makari (1998) On Sandor Rado: A Book Review Essay, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 484-495, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006053

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006053

Psychoanalytic Quarterly, LXVII, 1998

ON SANDOR RADO: A BOOK REVIEW ESSAY[1]

BY GEORGE J. MAKARI, M.D.

The star of the psychoanalyst Sandor Rado (1890-1972) has long been dark. Such neglect should not be Rado's fate. His achievements and failures are too interesting, too revealing of our intellectual history and of the fabric of the psychoanalytic community in Budapest, Berlin, and New York. Rado's trail, however, is not an easy one to pick up. While decades ago his published writings were collected (Rado, 1956a, 1962) and a book was culled from his later lectures (Rado, 1969), today he is rarely cited, taught, or given a significant role in our histories of psychoanalysis. Furthermore, it seems that his personal papers have been lost. Given that absence, we are fortunate to have Paul Roazen and Bluma Swerdloff's *Heresy: Sandor Rado and the Psychoanalytic Movement* (1995). Their book contains an oral history culled by Roazen from interviews conducted by Swerdloff with Rado in 1964 and 1965, as well as Freud's correspondence with Rado and an elegant introductory essay by Swerdloff. The volume is a crucial and intriguing resource in helping us reassess Rado's legacy.

A Hungarian born in 1890, Rado helped found the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society in 1913. After a decade of weekly informal coffeehouse interchanges with Ferenczi, Rado moved to Berlin in 1922 where he was analyzed by Karl Abraham for two years. Later, he became director of training at the Berlin Institute and was in good part instrumental in creating the Berlin curriculum. This was not an insubstantial feat, for this curriculum was adopted in 1938 by the

Support for this work was received from a fund established in The New York Community Trust by DeWitt-Wallace. This essay is an outgrowth of a discussion the author presented at the Association for Psychoanalytic Medicine on November 15, 1995. The author would like to thank Drs. Craig Tomlinson and Nathan Kravis for their stimulating papers on Rado given that evening.

[1] Sandor Rado (1956): *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. I*; Sandor Rado (1962): *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. II: 1956-1961*. Paul Roazen & Bluma Swerdloff (1995): *Heresy: Sandor Rado and the Psychoanalytic Movement.*

American Psychoanalytic Association as its model for other psychoanalytic institutes. Trusted secretary of psychoanalytic organizations and editor of such influential journals as the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse* and *Imago*, Rado in the 1920's was the psychoanalytic insider par excellence. In 1931, he was tapped by A. A. Brill to develop the curriculum of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute.

During this early period of Rado's career, his writings consisted primarily of detailed and innovative clinical papers that were centrally concerned with orality and narcissism. In a 1927 paper, Rado wrote about repressed aggression as the underbelly of narcissism, and about the crucial import of healthy self-regard in creating and maintaining a coherent ego (1927a, pp. 40-45). In a paper on melancholia written that same year, Rado furthered his inquiries into narcissism, giving a rich and prescient account of the fragile narcissist's loss of self-regard and his or her despairing cry for love. Crucial to this account is Rado's pre-Kleinian notion of splitting (1927b, p. 59). Parents are split into good and bad representations; the child introjects the bad parents as superego, and hence the loss of the good external object is catastrophic. Faced with the loss of the loving external object, the narcissistic ego melancholically withdraws from the external world in the hope of winning the love of the punishing superego via abjection and surrender. Rado posited that this melancholic response referred back to a set of common experiences of the nursing child. The hungry child, left alone by the mother and exhausted from crying, found that while in its abject and defeated state the mother returned to feed him/her. Hence the child learned that oral/narcissistic satisfaction can be accomplished not only via howls of rage but also via resigned despair (1927b, p. 52).

Rado's thoughts on the relationship between oral need and narcissism also informed his 1926 and 1933 papers on drug addiction (which he called pharmacothymia). For Rado, the craving of "elatants" (*Rauschgift*) is based on depression and is what we might call today an attempt to self-medicate. Drug abuse resulted in a regression from the pleasures of genital orgasm to those dominated by an oral-stage "alimentary orgasm" (1926, 1933a). As with melancholia, Rado linked this set of problems to an underlying narcissistic vulnerability. For those for whom self-esteem cannot be internally regulated by a mature ego, depression inevitably results. Drugs are the pharmacologic substitution for such self-esteem maintenance, lifting

mood and eliminating the frustrations of reality. However, as the drug's effects wear off, the depression returns, leading to chronic drug abuse, psychosis, and suicide (1933a).

In these clinical works, Rado's later proclivity to coin his own jargon was already becoming apparent (e.g., "metaerotism," "parasitic superego," "tense depression"), but here his neologisms strike the reader as hard earned and congruent with clinical descriptions and explanations. In toto, these early papers would seem to announce the coming of age of a major clinical theorist, one who would rank among the best of his contemporaries.

How did this consummate insider—one who was working to extend the understandings of Freud and Abraham—end up as a rebel and an outsider? Roazen and Swerdloff give us a context in which to think about this transition in Rado's career. In 1933 Rado published "Fear of Castration in Women" (1933b), a paper in which he took issue with Freud on penis envy in women. For Rado, viewing a girl's penis envy as the corollary of a boy's castration anxiety presented a logical and empirical quandary. For how, then, was one to explain the castration anxieties of a girl? Rado argued that girls at first hallucinate the presence of a penis, then they give up this perception, but they hold onto the unconscious belief of possessing a penis while transferring penis-like status to some other bodily region, such as the eyes or nose. That body site becomes the locus for hysterical conversion symptoms. Hence, a threat to the woman's unconsciously held belief that she has a penis results in castration anxiety, which, according to Rado, is associated with masochism (1933b, pp. 85-94). This paper was criticized by Anna Freud and treated harshly in print by Jeanne Lampl-de Groot. In 1935, Helene Deutsch wrote a letter indicating that Rado responded to this criticism with such a paranoid rage that she feared for his sanity (Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, p. 9).

After that episode, Rado grew more and more dissatisfied with the inner circle at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute and with the traditional psychoanalytic community. Instead, he turned increasingly toward another powerful current in American psychiatry for sustenance. For in those same years, Rado speaks of having developed the warmest personal relations with Adolf Meyer (Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, pp. 131-134). As Tomlinson (1996) has shown in his significant contribution, the extent of this relationship to Adolf Meyer, then dean of American psychiatry, the founder of "psychobi-

ology," and director of the Johns Hopkins Phipps Clinic, has been significantly underappreciated.

Born in Switzerland in 1866, Meyer developed a lasting dislike for the grand, dogmatic theorizing of German science and philosophy and a respect for the piecemeal empiricism of the British. After coming to America in 1892, he discovered the pragmatists, Peirce, Dewey, and James, who confirmed his antinominalist stance. In the first years of this century, Meyer, influenced by Thomas Huxley, was constructing an adaptational framework in which the focus centered on how an action-self employed different characteristic reactions (which Meyer called reaction-types) to respond to environmental challenges. In 1906, as Meyer was putting this framework together, he discovered Freud's work. That year Meyer published generally positive reviews of both the Dora case and the *Three Essays* (see Kiell, 1988, pp. 284-286, 311-312). Meyer's early acceptance of psychoanalysis was warm, and historians have deemed him one of the most influential early American followers of Freud (see Burnham, 1968; Hale, 1971). Later, as one would expect from Meyer's eclecticism and his pragmatic philosophical orientation, he grew disgruntled with what he saw as generalizations based on scant data and with the dogmatic cockiness of libido theorists. By 1915, Meyer had turned from an advocate and early enthusiast of psychoanalysis to, at best, an apostate. Meyer felt that psychoanalysis's use of special terms was essentially mystifying, conflating hypothesis with observation, assumption with fact. And so, in 1935, enter into Meyer's world, Sandor Rado, one of the greatest lovers of jargon that psychoanalysis has ever seen.

It would seem on the surface to have been an impossible match. But Rado, like Meyer, had long been interested in questions of scientific knowledge, as well as in adaptationally oriented attempts to integrate psychology and biology. In his interviews with Swerdloff, Rado discussed his youthful interest in scientific epistemology (Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, p. 34), as well as in the importance of an evolutionary, adaptational perspective to the Hungarian psychoanalytic contingent (on which Rado amusingly reflected, "It makes no sense that we should promise people treatment and then, like Ferenczi, talk about what happened two hundred million years ago in the evolution of the species" [p. 80]). Furthermore, Rado had always strongly argued for psychoanalysis to be closely linked to biology and medicine. In fact, Rado's first unpublished psychoanalytic paper in

1914 pondered the interrelationships between psychoanalysis, biology, and medicine. Given this belief, it is no surprise to find that in the 1920's, Rado staunchly rejected the notion of lay analysis (pp. 71-76).

Perhaps the most compelling document recording Rado's early interest in the philosophy of science and his views on the place of psychoanalysis in the sciences is his first published paper, "The Paths of Natural Science in the Light of Psychoanalysis" (1922). Read before the Seventh International Congress of Psychoanalysis, the paper is an exposition of a conceptual shift in the sciences, one that Rado felt psychoanalysis had to come to terms with. That shift was nothing less than the collapse of mechanistic determinism. Speaking to an audience of psychic determinists, Rado detailed the bankruptcy of determinism in the face of the "modern" understandings of relativity and probability in physics and mathematics. He recognized the radical intent of his paper and clearly stated it: "The significance of the problem of determinism for psychoanalysis is surely not to be underestimated" (1922, p. 6). And: "We cannot foresee when and at what point in our work the statistical view, or one as of yet unknown, will oust determinism from the domain of psychoanalysis" (p. 14). Rado then veered off into a discussion not of how to integrate probability into analysis but of how scientists put up massive resistance when faced with the collapse of their beloved theories. Scientists crave certainty and causality, Rado argued. The "deterministic fiction" was the successor to religious conceptions of the universe, rooted in the tribal relationship to the overwhelming, feared Father. It is the angry son, Rado argues, who becomes a skeptical scientist, one who questions patriarchal tradition and breaks with faith (pp. 3-7).

All of this foreshadowed Rado's embittered disappointment with his father-figure Freud and with the psychoanalytic community; his sense that scientific truth was being deeply compromised by cultish, communal solidarity; and his quick and categorical dismissal of the Vienna group as pathetic, clingy hangers on, desperate to please a primal father rather than interested in furthering a science (Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, pp. 41-42, 46-47). But in 1922, Rado was still at the beginning of his career. In the last paragraph of this daring paper he offered a quick disclaimer, saying that perhaps psychoanalysis did not have to make such a massive foundational shift, because psychoanalysis deals with the anthropomorphic in human life and anthro-

pos in fact was based on a myth of causality and determinism (1922, pp. 14-15).

If in 1922 Rado pulled back from the implications of his own radical thought on the scientific status of psychoanalysis, after his disillusionment in the 1930's and his friendship with the antinominalist, psychobiologist Meyer, Rado returned to this arena with a vengeance. During the fertile decade that followed, he produced an extraordinary series of papers examining and exposing the methodologic and scientific problems of Freudian language, metapsychology, and libido theory. These papers include the short but extraordinary 1938 work, "Scientific Aspects of Training in Psychoanalysis," in which he "invades the magnificent edifice of psychoanalytic theories, and disregarding their beauty as a whole" seeks to "reduce them to their factual and heuristic content" (p. 128). Here, Rado offers an elegant critique of the language of metapsychology, in which assumption and empirical fact, phenomena and theory, are too often collapsed in the same term. As more factual references are over the years packed into the same terms, Rado argued, confusion builds until claims made in this language can "neither be verified nor refuted by empirical analytic methods" (p. 127). In 1939, Rado stated flat out that libido theory had "outlived its usefulness" and that a new psychoanalysis, an "egology" based on the disorders of ego functioning and integration, that is, on ego pathology, must move in to replace it (1939, p. 132). Toward this goal, Rado wrote trenchant historical critiques of Freud's concept of bisexuality (1940) and sexual development (1949), as well as a rather misguided critique of the therapeutic use of transference (1942) (see Kravis, 1995).

Reading Rado's extraordinary work of this period makes one astonished to think that psychoanalysis had in its own ranks in the 1930's and '40's a thinker who anticipated by decades the antimetapsychologic critiques of the 1970's. As might be imagined, during the same time, Rado the rebel was increasingly ostracized at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. In 1941, he was ousted as educational director, and later he was dismissed as a training analyst. In 1945, after intense behind-the-scenes planning, he was named director of the newly born Columbia Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research.

Upon his departure from the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, Rado's intended destination was not the less biologic, more cultural and interpersonalist orientations of Horney, Fromm, Thompson, and

Sullivan; Rado wanted more biology in psychoanalysis, not less. Instead, he left the hub of American psychoanalysis to found an institute that was to be aligned with a wider academic and medical community of psychobiologic integrationists. The integration of psychoanalysis with the work of Sherrington, Pavlov, and Cannon began in America as early as 1910 and continued through the 1920's with Meyer, William Alanson White, Smith Ely Jelliffe, Horace Frink, and Morton Prince. In the early 1930's a second generation carried on in this tradition—people like Lawrence Kubie (1934; also see 1951) as well as Paul Schilder, the Viennese émigré philosopher and psychoanalyst. Schilder, like Rado, left the New York Psychoanalytic Institute and received support for his integrationist work in university psychiatry, at first by forming an alliance with Meyer and co-workers at the Phipps Clinic (Schilder, 1935; also see Shaskin and Roller, 1985). The integrationist spirit was also carried by a number of Rado's cofounders at Columbia, as well as by his ally and compatriot in Chicago, Franz Alexander.

And so, when Rado left the New York Psychoanalytic, it was not at all clear that he was moving into oblivion. Rather, he was now among a group of thinkers who, while having left the center of orthodox psychoanalysis, were nonetheless active participants in the increasingly pressing desire to modify libido theory. The neo-Freudians emerged from this crucible, as did the more biologically oriented psychiatric thinkers. What happened then, I suggest, had less to do with Sandor Rado's personal defeat than with the broader defeat of eclectic and pragmatic Meyerian psychiatry by a new orthodoxy in Freudian psychoanalysis that emerged after World War II (see Hale, 1995). After the war, the ground simply moved out from under Rado's feet; attempts to make a psychobiologic integration were increasingly swept under by the tidal wave of ego psychology, as represented by the work of Heinz Hartmann.

In 1939, the same year in which Rado declared libido theory dead and urged a reintegration of psychoanalysis around the principle of ego pathology, Hartmann published his influential monograph *Ego Psychology and the Problems of Adaptation.* One can see Hartmann as the ghostly figure who by his very absence haunts Rado's later work. Hartmann was Rado's analysand in Berlin, and in a 1926 paper on intoxicants Rado cites Hartmann (1926, p. 39). Rado never cited Hartmann again. In interviews with Swerdloff, Rado claims much

personal fondness for Hartmann (Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, p. 122), but then goes on to dismiss Hartmann's work as nonsensical, "clearly valueless," and unreadable (p. 122). In contemplating the "tragedy" of Hartmann's failure, Rado goes so far as to slander his former analysand by implying that Hartmann's work was the product of mental illness (p. 94).

Rado had reason to be bitter. For as Hartmann's work grew in popularity, it hammered nails into Rado's intellectual coffin. Like a number of thinkers in the decade following Freud's *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926), Rado had seen that a new synthesis was required. A focus on the ego, reality, and adaptation aspects of bio-psychological maturation and cognition, and anxiety—things which Rado had been building toward for some fifteen years—were now integrated into libido theory without the wholesale linguistic and epistemologic revamping which Rado wanted. Hartmann's reformist synthesis answered Rado's critique, and therefore made the latter's much more radical solutions easier to ignore. Freudian psychoanalysis consolidated under the banner of *this* reformist reshaping rather than under Rado's. Increasingly, Rado and his like-minded colleagues were coopted, outflanked, and politically vanquished. With the consolidation of this orthodoxy not only in psychoanalysis but also in good part in American psychiatry, Rado—the Berlin insider par excellence—truly became an outsider. In the two decades following World War II, it was not Sandor Rado but Heinz Hartmann, along with Kris and Loewenstein, who reigned supreme.

In this new emphasis on ego psychology and adaptation, Rado was rarely cited, not even to be refuted. But Rado did not simply disappear. Instead, he did what theoreticians often do when they sense they are losing the battle for hearts and minds: they become bolder, more provocative. During this period, Rado built and attempted to codify his theory of adaptational psychodynamics (1949, 1950, 1956b, 1956c, 1969). A full delineation of this theory is beyond the scope of this discussion, for its is a grandiloquent effort that includes the renaming and redefining of many psychoanalytic concepts. Rado saw psychological health as effective adaptation. Building on the work of Hughlings Jackson, Sherrington, and others, Rado posited four hierarchical levels of psychic integration; the most primitive was the hedonic (essentially the pleasure principle), followed by the emotional (consisting of emergency and welfare emotions), emotional

thought, and rational thought (1956a). At the center of these psychic structures stood an "action-self," and treatment involved encouraging self-reliance (and hence the active disruption of a regressive transference neurosis) and the reduction of emergency emotions in favor of welfare emotions (1956b, 1956c).

Rado's papers from this radical period repeatedly speak of the new "science" of adaptational psychodynamics, which Rado boldly claimed had supplanted Freud's "Classical Theory," but he made no mention of competing ego psychologies or neo-Freudian psychologies (1953, p. 254). Careful pragmatic examination of discrete aspects of psychoanalysis mostly fell before Rado's desire to support his claim for his theory as *the* overarching system which had supplanted Freud's. In the process, Rado at times made rash claims, drew up extravagant charts, and stretched far into speculation (e.g., 1958). At the same time, from his psychobiologic vantage point, Rado could see things which his confreres did not: for instance, he presciently described how biologic genotype and psychodynamics interact in the schizotypal (1956d), and he mapped out theoretical pharmacologic strategies for treating drug addictions (1957).

Of course, it is no secret that Rado's attempt to replace classical psychoanalysis with adaptational psychodynamics failed. We do not speak of reporting and nonreporting processes, emergency actions, and parentifying behaviors, but of conscious and unconscious processes, defenses, and transferences; we do not speak of reparative and reconstructive treatments, but of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. I have tried to give a larger historical context for Rado's failure. But it is hard not to suspect that he also helped bring this failure upon himself. His irrepressible need to rename all the flora and fauna in the psychoanalytic forest at times makes the reader feel that he is engaged in an elaborate, not always heuristically valuable game. Rado's idea of creating a value-free language for psychoanalysis was then, and remains, a laudable idea, one whose time may be coming again as cognitive scientists become interested in the unconscious. But as Rado himself showed in his first published paper, written some forty years before Thomas Kuhn, Richard Rorty, and the like, a scientific discipline is not just built around shared methods and truths. It is, like any community, built upon a shared set of assumptions and a communal discourse (1922). After 1933, Rado seems to have had little patience for such communal concerns; his attempt to change

psychoanalytic language lock, stock, and barrel facilitated his rejection by his own discursive community.

The Sandor Rado who helped found the Columbia Center in 1945 was still near his peak, but soon it would become increasingly clear that he had been marginalized within the American Psychoanalytic Association and the International Psychoanalytical Association. Rado's reign at Columbia was marked by this outsider status; he spent a good deal of energy vigorously denouncing the authoritarian and cultish in the mainstream psychoanalytic community. Ironically, at the same time, Rado himself displayed a good deal of dogmatism and authoritarianism (Kravis, 1995; Roazen and Swerdloff, 1995, p. 4). And yet it would be shortsighted to use this irony to dismiss the significance of Rado's dissent. In Cold War Eisenhower America, during an orthodox reign in American psychoanalysis, Rado hotly denounced authoritarian educational structures and espoused open inquiry in psychoanalysis. His rhetoric on intellectual liberty may have been self-serving, but such rhetoric has a way of taking on a life of its own, helping to sustain a crucial ideal, a sorely neglected communal ethos. That is perhaps the final irony. Sandor Rado—the man who seemed to disdain the distorting influences of tradition and community while heroically upholding the value of the scientist's quest for truth—in the end may be remembered for helping to agitate for a more open tradition and community, while his scientific "truths" seem to have been forgotten.

The biographer Elisabeth Young-Bruehl (1994) recently wrote that psychoanalysis is a science that has had its Newton, but not its Einstein. In striving to be the psychoanalytic Einstein, Rado came up short. But Rado's life work should not be judged by this failure alone. Read his early papers, and you will find before you a clinical intelligence comparable to Abraham's. Read his middle period critiques, and you will find, not the dated, tautological assertions that mar a good deal of psychoanalytic writing in the 1940's and 1950's, but rather original, not infrequently brilliant intellectual inquiry. While some have claimed Rado committed intellectual suicide with these missives, we might also ask in this context to what extent the Otto Fenichels of the psychoanalytic world did not commit intellectual suicide by relegating their creativity, originality, and insight to a submissive need not to make waves, while secretly circulating their "dangerous" ideas to a few silent allies (Jacoby, 1983). Lastly, read Rado's

adaptational psychodynamics as a grandly ambitious and stimulating attempt to formulate a common empirical language for clinical psychoanalysis and researchers in the sciences. Read these later writings, too, in their more extravagant moments, as the hand-waving of a drowning man.

REFERENCES

BURNHAM, J. C. (1968). *Psychoanalysis and American Medicine, 1894-1918: Medicine, Science and Culture.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

FREUD, S.(1926). Inhibitions, symptoms and anxieties. *S.E.*, 20.

HALE, N. G., JR. (1971). *Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1867-1917.* New York/Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995.

——— (1995). *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917-1985.* New York/Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

HARTMANN, H. (1939). *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation.* Translated by D. Rapaport. New York: Int. Univ. Press, 1958.

JACOBY, R. (1983). *The Repression of Psychoanalysis: Otto Fenichel and the Political Freudians.* New York: Basic Books.

KIELL, N. (1988). *Freud without Hindsight: Reviews of His Work (1893-1939).* Madison, CT: Int. Univ. Press.

KRAVIS, N. (1995). The second death of Sandor Rado. Presented to the meeting of the Association for Psychoanalytic Medicine.

KUBIE, L. S. (1934). Relation of the conditioned reflex to psychoanalytic technique. *Arch. Neurol. Psychiat.*, 32:430-435, 1137-1142.

——— (1951). Some implications for psychoanalysis of modern concepts of the organization of the brain. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 22:21-68.

RADO, S. (1922). The paths of natural science in the light of psychoanalysis. In *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. I.* New York/London: Grune & Stratton, 1956, pp. 3-15.

——— (1926). The psychic effect of intoxicants: an attempt to evolve a psychoanalytical theory of morbid craving. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 25-39.

——— (1927a). An anxious mother: a contribution to the analysis of the ego. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 40-46.

——— (1927b). The problem of melancholia. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 47-63.

——— (1933a). The psychoanalysis of pharmacothymia (drug addiction). In *Op. cit.*, pp. 64-80.

——— (1933b). Fear of castration in women. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 83-120.

——— (1938). Scientific aspects of training in psychoanalysis. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 124-129.

——— (1939). Developments in the psychoanalytic conception and treatment of the neuroses. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 130-138.

——— (1940). A critical examination of the concept of bisexuality. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 139-150.
——— (1942). The relationship of patient to therapist. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 151-152.
——— (1949). An adaptational view of sexual behavior. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 186-213.
——— (1950). Emergency behavior: with an introduction to the dynamics of conscience. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 214-234.
——— (1953). Recent advances in psychoanalytic therapy. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 251-267.
——— (1956a). *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. I.* New York/London: Grune & Stratton.
——— (1956b). Adaptational psychodynamics: a basic science. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 332-346.
——— (1956c). Adaptational development of psychoanalytic therapy. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 347-357.
——— (1956d). Schizotypal organization: preliminary report on a clinical study of schizophrenia. In *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. II (1956-1961).* New York/London: Grune & Stratton, 1962, pp. 1-10.
——— (1957). Narcotic bondage: a general theory of the dependence on narcotic drugs. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 21-29.
——— (1958). From the metapsychological ego to the bio-cultural action self. In *Op. cit.*, pp. 42-48.
——— (1962). *Psychoanalysis of Behavior: Collected Papers, Vol. II (1956-1961).* New York/London: Grune & Stratton.
——— (1969). *Adaptational Psychodynamics: Motivation and Control*, ed. J. Jameson & H. Klein. New York: Science House.

ROAZEN, P. & SWERDLOFF, B. (1995). *Heresy: Sandor Rado and the Psychoanalytic Movement.* Northvale, NJ/London: Aronson.

SCHILDER, P. F. (1935). Psychoanalyse und bedingte Reflexe. *Imago*, 21:50-66. Reprinted: Psychoanalysis and the conditioned reflex. In *Mind, Perception and Thought in Their Constructive Aspects.* New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1942, pp. 153-172.

SHASKIN, D. & ROLLER, W. (1985). *Paul Schilder: Mind Explorer.* New York: Human Sciences Press.

TOMLINSON, C. (1996). Sandor Rado and Adolf Meyer: a nodal point in American psychiatry and psychoanalysis. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 77:963-982.

YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. (1994). A history of Freud biographies. In *Discovering the History of Psychiatry*, ed. R. Porter & M. Micale. New York/Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, pp. 157.

Cornell University Medical College
History of Psychiatry Section
Box 171, 525 East 68 St
New York, NY 10021

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Freud's Wishful Dream Book, Freud. From Youthful Dream to Mid-Life Crisis

Terrence C. Becker

To cite this article: Terrence C. Becker (1998) Freud's Wishful Dream Book, Freud. From Youthful Dream to Mid-Life Crisis, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 499-503, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006054

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006054

BOOK REVIEWS

FREUD'S WISHFUL DREAM BOOK. By Alexander Welsh. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. 145 pp.

FREUD. FROM YOUTHFUL DREAM TO MID-LIFE CRISIS. By Peter M. Newton. New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1995. 297 pp.

Freud's Wishful Dream Book by Alexander Welsh is a work of literary criticism that examines the literary techniques Freud employs in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and places them within the social and literary context of the day. Welsh contends that *The Interpretation of Dreams* is primarily a "wishful" book, "inductive up to a point," but characterized by "arbitrary turnings that Freud takes" that "can best be explained as wishful" (p. ix). The success of the dream book, Welsh asserts, derived in large measure from its pleasingness to the readers of Freud's time. Looking into secrets and revealing them was a theme of popular interest, evident in novels about motives, detection, criminals, and secrets of the past. This genre, Welsh maintains, likely shaped Freud's approach to dreams.

If literary convention favored themes of secrets and detection, social conventions dictated the importance of modesty and the denial of ambition. For Welsh, "*The Interpretation of Dreams* is in some respects an interpretation of ambition; it turns ambition understood as a set of motives to be acted upon into wishfulness, a varied and nearly boundless set of aggressive fantasies more suited to storytelling" (p. x). Ambition was more palatable if it was something you tried to hide even from yourself and had to do with things that happened long ago. Along these lines, Welsh asserts that "modesty—both good manners and the way one regards oneself—prefers to deflect hostility onto childhood" (p. 74). By way of example, he points to Freud's "backdating" (*ibid.*) of murderous wishes in his discussion of dreams that kill. The oedipus complex, from Welsh's perspective, may be seen as growing more from the adult Freud's "modest ambition . . . rather than the other way around" (p. ix).

Welsh is at his best when describing Freud's literary devices. He examines the way Freud crafts an argument to draw the reader to his point of view. Discussing Freud's use of irony, for example, he notes that "any reader who enjoys the irony of opposites has already par-

tially exculpated Freud. Irony exacts complicity; complicity makes allies, binds readers to him" (p. 117). And Welsh rightly takes exception to ways in which the reader is drawn away from a careful consideration of Freud's use of evidence. Welsh also gives us a new look at censorship. He argues that it is difficult to distinguish the psychological mechanism of censorship from restrictions imposed by society in social interaction and that Freud routinely conflated the two. Perhaps most original and intriguing is his view that the frame story of the dream book is a comic romance and that much of the pleasure derived in the reading comes from the repeated comic "falls" of censorship, cast as "ringmaster and clown, first creating and then bungling the act" (p. 99). Time and again, the somewhat personified censorship unsuccessfully keeps wishes from being expressed and unsuccessfully hides these wishes from the observer.

Welsh is critical of Freud's tendency to universalize and his tendency to assert his certainty in the face of uncertain things. He also points to Freud's emphasis on unconscious motives and leads the reader to consider how one may be tempted "to favor strained inference over direct observation" (pp. 131-132). Although Welsh's comments may be addressed to members of fields closer to his own (he is an English professor), psychoanalysts benefit from cautions against the desire to universalize in the heat of theory-building. As some current psychoanalytic writers observe, we may be better able to help our patients when we become less certain. Welsh is thought-provoking regarding the wishful attribution of current emotions to the past to gain a sense of control over them. At points, however, Welsh's inattention to clinical psychoanalysis flattens his portrayal of psychoanalytic ideas. He seems unaware that he is concurring with the practicing psychoanalytic clinician, who often encounters historical explanation used defensively against a fuller recognition of feelings in the moment. As clinicians, we must keep in mind both the defensive use of historical explanation and the temptation to forget the history current emotions do have.

Welsh offers a close reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and a valuable perspective on Freud's literary technique and the literary context of the day. He affirms the importance of context in the development of ideas. He also reminds us to be skeptical of overgeneralization, how evidence is used, and the wish-fulfilling power of theories. I appreciate reminders to our field not to accept, unques-

tioningly, the foundations upon which we rest our practice. It is illuminating to explore how Freud may have been swept into grander generalizing than his observations warranted, perhaps by ambition and the wish to please his audience. Welsh's observations would have had more heft for the practicing analyst if he had further developed his ideas about connections between Freud's approach in the dream book and current psychoanalytic practice.

Peter M. Newton, in his biography, *Freud: From Youthful Dream to Mid-Life Crisis*, offers a new way to view the evolution of Freud's thought. He also educates the reader about a theory of lives, a perspective which encompasses the unfolding of adult development. In the process of accomplishing these goals, Newton paints a very human portrait of Freud and writes a satisfying and enlightening book.

Newton contends that Freud's discovery of psychoanalysis had much to do with his mid-life crisis and transition. Though Newton acknowledges, along with other writers, the impact of the death of Freud's father on the writing of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and Freud's rethinking of his theory, Newton sees the fruits of this period as more related to Freud's mid-life transition. He informs the reader about the developmental forces and the coming to grips with one's limitations occurring around mid-life, and how one's youthful dreams may be folded in with one's mid-life ambitions, or relinquished, during this transition. Newton takes a different perspective from many previous considerations of Freud's development in emphasizing Freud's identity as a clinician. He recognizes Freud's wish to be a scientist and theoretician, but demonstrates that another of Freud's central youthful dreams was to be a great healer. Newton tells us how, in tackling the problem of neurosis, Freud integrated the scientific ambition of his youth with his dreams of healing people. During the time of his mid-life transition and of writing the dream book, Freud recognized the common origins of dreams and of symptoms, and the light this shed on the workings of the mind.

Perhaps the most appealing feature of Newton's book is the view it allows us into Freud's early and mid-life friendships. Drawing heavily from personal correspondence, he shows us how Freud talked with and shared his dreams and aspirations with his friends. Particularly detailed and revealing are the portraits of Freud's friendships with Eduard Silberstein and Wilhelm Fliess. Newton tells us how one may use certain relationships in a developmental way; he calls the persons

with whom one has this sort of relationship "requisite others." The friendship with Fliess provides an example. Newton helps us to "read Freud's letters to Fliess as a record of his ongoing struggles to grow up" (p. xiv). He notes the increase in correspondence with Fliess when Freud was around thirty-six years old, and posits that "Fliess offered the opportunity for a temporary dependence while Freud effected the transition from youth to middle age and from protégé to leader of his profession" (p. 143). We see that when a certain life phase, with its tasks, has been accomplished, the intensity which had earlier characterized a particular friendship may fall away. The letters to Fliess became less frequent when Freud had finished *The Interpretation of Dreams* at age forty-three. Clinicians may find the notion of the "requisite other" of interest not only in terms of Freud's development, but also as a way to think about how various forms of adult development take place.

Another line of thinking raised is the notion that as a man moves into mid-life, he begins to accept his "feminine" side. Here Newton appears to be referring to qualities that the culture identifies as feminine, and which may be suppressed in earlier male development. Newton notes that feminine imagery does not appear in Freud's correspondence until his late thirties, and he offers a number of illustrations of Freud speaking in terms of feminine processes when he describes himself around his mid-life work. Freud speaks of "germinating" ideas and uses imagery of pregnancy. Newton notes Freud's turn from the "hard clinical science of identifying the neurological bases of symptoms" (p. 218) to analyzing the transference. He speculates that Freud's increasing awareness of the clinical implications of the therapeutic relationship reflected his acceptance of the feminine. The book would have benefited from more discussion of why this might take place at this time in a man's life, and clarification of what status Newton thinks this has as a general phenomenon. In what may be a related area, I was intrigued by Newton's description of Freud groping his way into his ideas, waiting for his ideas to form. I would have enjoyed hearing more of Newton's thoughts about why Freud worked this way, and how he allowed his understanding of the mind to deepen. Was this how Freud preferred to conceptualize his thinking when drawn to see his mind as functioning in a "feminine" way, or is this simply a more accurate self-description than one of more directed problem-solving?

Newton fills out the reader's understanding of Freud as both scientist and clinician, and conveys a clearer sense of his wish to be a healer. Small details such as the picture of Freud working on his ideas in hours that he had not filled during his workweek and his concerns about his practice allow the reader to see a great thinker on a human scale. I believe the clinician and nonclinician alike will enjoy Newton's work; if the reader is anywhere near mid-life, his or her enjoyment and appreciation will be even greater.

Both Newton and Welsh write of Freud's ambition and of his dreams. Each brings alive further complexity in Freud's character. To do so, Welsh draws from an analysis of Freud's literary craft and observation of how he was affected by his social and literary context. Newton reflects on how mid-life developmental forces, a different sort of context, shaped Freud's work. Both books illustrate the value and necessity of listening to nonanalyst contributors, to obtain fresh perspectives and to learn new methods for understanding the development of our field.

TERRENCE C. BECKER (SAN FRANCISCO)

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF SIGMUND FREUD AND SÁNDOR FERENCZI, VOL. 2, 1914-1919. Edited by Ernst Falzeder and Eva Brabant. Translated by Peter T. Hoffer. Cambridge, MA/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996. 397 pp.

The second volume of *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi,* with an excellent Introduction by Axel Hoffer, gives us an intimate and moving glimpse of the relationship between Ferenczi and Freud during the years that span Ferenczi's analysis with Freud. Their consistent and very personal exchange, one which never faltered for more than a month or so over the years between 1914 and 1919, offers a rich personal and historical context in which to better understand each man and his impact on the other. At the same time, the influence of World War I on the development of psychoanalysis and its institutions and on the daily lives of its founders is brought before us in a very personal way. During the difficult years of the war, Ferenczi provided Freud with companionship and intellectual support. More practically, he sent him patients and regular shipments of food and helped him find places to summer and to work. Freud

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi

Ellen R. Peyser

To cite this article: Ellen R. Peyser (1998) The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 503-507, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006055

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006055

Newton fills out the reader's understanding of Freud as both scientist and clinician, and conveys a clearer sense of his wish to be a healer. Small details such as the picture of Freud working on his ideas in hours that he had not filled during his workweek and his concerns about his practice allow the reader to see a great thinker on a human scale. I believe the clinician and nonclinician alike will enjoy Newton's work; if the reader is anywhere near mid-life, his or her enjoyment and appreciation will be even greater.

Both Newton and Welsh write of Freud's ambition and of his dreams. Each brings alive further complexity in Freud's character. To do so, Welsh draws from an analysis of Freud's literary craft and observation of how he was affected by his social and literary context. Newton reflects on how mid-life developmental forces, a different sort of context, shaped Freud's work. Both books illustrate the value and necessity of listening to nonanalyst contributors, to obtain fresh perspectives and to learn new methods for understanding the development of our field.

TERRENCE C. BECKER (SAN FRANCISCO)

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF SIGMUND FREUD AND SÁNDOR FERENCZI, VOL. 2, 1914-1919. Edited by Ernst Falzeder and Eva Brabant. Translated by Peter T. Hoffer. Cambridge, MA/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996. 397 pp.

The second volume of *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi,* with an excellent Introduction by Axel Hoffer, gives us an intimate and moving glimpse of the relationship between Ferenczi and Freud during the years that span Ferenczi's analysis with Freud. Their consistent and very personal exchange, one which never faltered for more than a month or so over the years between 1914 and 1919, offers a rich personal and historical context in which to better understand each man and his impact on the other. At the same time, the influence of World War I on the development of psychoanalysis and its institutions and on the daily lives of its founders is brought before us in a very personal way. During the difficult years of the war, Ferenczi provided Freud with companionship and intellectual support. More practically, he sent him patients and regular shipments of food and helped him find places to summer and to work. Freud

deeply influenced Ferenczi personally, psychologically, and in the development of his theorizing. This inequality in the dimensions of the impact each had on the other is reflected throughout their correspondence. In his salutations, Freud writes, "Dear friend," Ferenczi writes, "Dear Professor."

The first period of Ferenczi's analysis with Freud lasted only fifteen to twenty days and began in September 1914, after they had missed their summer get-together for the first time since 1908. Freud, describing himself as in one of his "Lear moods," planned to renew his work. He told Ferenczi, "I don't work easily with you in particular. You grasp things differently and for that reason you put a strain on me" (p. 6). Freud wanted to summer alone. Ferenczi replied that "missing our summer get together depresses me more than I am willing to admit," and "my reason tells me that the manner in which you grasp things is the correct one; still, I can't prevent my fantasy from going its own way (perhaps astray). The result is a mass of ideas that never become actualized. If I had the courage simply to write down my ideas and observations without regard for your method and direction of work, I would be a productive writer . . ." (p. 8). Ferenczi expressed his hope that Freud would help him psychoanalytically. For reasons that their correspondence only allows us to infer, Freud would not. He withdrew early from the analytic relationship, seeming to interest himself only in Ferenczi's relationship with Frau Gizella Pálos. This constellation, in which Ferenczi appealed to Freud for closeness, mutuality, intellectual support and analysis and Freud withheld these, was central in their relationship during these years, including their analytic relationship, and it had a profound effect on Ferenczi's theoretical and technical development. Reading *The Clinical Diary of Sándor Ferenczi*[1] as the companion piece to *The Correspondence*, originally intended by Michael Balint, attests to this.

The letters arranging for Ferenczi's analysis and those that follow his weeks of analysis show us the practical and interpersonal setting in which analysis took place and the sometimes painful consequences of these early, short, and necessarily incomplete psychoanalytic experiences. The second and third periods of Ferenczi's analysis were in 1916. Ferenczi had been promised a leave from his military duty and

[1] Dupont, J., Editor (1985): *The Clinical Diary of Sándor Ferenczi.* Translated by M. Balint & N. Z. Jackson. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1988.

asked Freud to reserve two hours a day. Freud answered, "Since you want it that way—and if your fate permits, I will thus reserve for you two hours a day from the middle of June on. I also hope to see much of you otherwise, and you should at least have one meal with us daily. Technique at least will require that nothing personal will be discussed outside of sessions" (p. 130). For the last period in October, Ferenczi asked Freud to reserve three hours a day and added, "I don't dare ask for four" (p. 140). After these hours, Freud told Ferenczi that the treatment was at an end, but not terminated. Freud thought Ferenczi was using his analysis to avoid acting, by which Freud meant marrying Frau G. Ferenczi proposed to Frau G but tried to continue his analysis as he had earlier, through his letters, long journal-like letters in which he reported his thoughts, dreams, and symptoms in minute detail. He told Freud, "I know I no longer have the right to speak to you as my physician. . . . But I can't refrain" (p. 154). Sadly, he never had and never could. As Judith Dupont, who wrote a very informative paper, "Freud's Analysis of Ferenczi,"[2] pointed out in her Introduction to Ferenczi's diary, the entire relationship between Freud and Ferenczi can be seen as constituting part of the analysis.

Ferenczi's failure of autonomy and initiative in love and work had not been adequately analyzed, and he had to make attempts alone and with whatever help he could get from putting his thoughts and feelings before Freud in his letters. He asked himself, "Why do I get up at night in order to write to you?" Then he answered, "Even in scientific things I have my best thoughts while communicating. This must have a connection with a fact ascertained by you that with me the scientific interests have not been entirely sublimated but are still closely bound to the love object" (p. 157). Ferenczi enacted his relationship to Freud in the form and tone of his letters. He could not tear himself away.

The *Correspondence* offers insight into the development of Ferenczi's theorizing and its motivation. His desperate wishes for mutual openness and acceptance from Freud and the frustration of these wishes in the context of an incomplete analysis contributed to his concern with techniques that would facilitate mutuality, trust, and authenticity in the analytic relationship. In the last year of his life,

[2] Dupont, J. (1994): Freud's analysis of Ferenczi as revealed by their correspondence. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 75:301-320.

Ferenczi wrote in his Diary, "my own analysis could not be pursued deeply enough because my analyst (by his own admission, of a narcissistic nature), with his strong determination to be healthy and his strong antipathy toward any weaknesses or abnormalities, could not follow me down into those depths, and introduced the educational stage too soon."[3]

Ferenczi was able to appreciate and explore the impact of the analyst and the nature of the analytic situation on the analysand, but in his efforts to achieve openness and trust, he seemed unable to stop short of the surrender of his independence as an analyst. His creativity was shaped by his need to pursue his self-analysis through his theorizing and his work with analysands. He knew that he was terrorized by his patients' suffering and had a compulsive desire to alleviate it. Even so, he thought it was crucial to challenge the frustration technique and to attempt to repair trauma in an atmosphere of authenticity, sympathy, and even love. One of his most extreme experiments was with mutual analysis, the first with a woman he hated and feared. He struggled to overcome his ambivalence. The roots in his unresolved transference wishes and conflicts are not hard to imagine. His courage and originality are not hard to see.

Freud is less revealing regarding his theorizing. He emerges in these exchanges as working alone in a profound sense. Freud wrote his major metapsychological works during these years and made a major change in his theory of instincts. His letters give little indication of his theoretical thinking. He writes to Ferenczi, "I am writing the essay 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' and as in all instances I am hoping for your understanding, which has not yet abandoned me in any situation. In it I am saying many things that are quite unclear, out of which the reader has to make the right thing. Sometimes one can not do otherwise" (p. 341). That is all he says of the change in his thinking about instincts.

Freud, despite his reserve, reveals himself in his interaction with Ferenczi. In an apparently flagrant disregard for the principle of neutrality and for his own efforts to differentiate psychoanalysis from suggestion, Freud withdrew from analyzing Ferenczi and used the power of his influence to force him into acting on an intention to marry the woman whom Freud considered the healthy choice. Freud

[3] Dupont, *Clinical Diary*, p. 62.

wrote in a letter to Frau G almost a year after he had ended Ferenczi's analysis: ". . . it was an urgent wish on my part to see you united." And ". . . I have worked on the realization of this wish with the most varied means, directly and indirectly, in friendly intercourse and through the analysis, carefully, so that my preambles would not produce recalcitrance in him, and with blunt demands, in order to bring my influence to bear" (p. 176). Ferenczi was left unanalyzed by Freud for reasons of Freud's own. We are left wondering why Freud did not continue analyzing his dear and valuable colleague and to think about what this meant for and about Freud.

ELLEN R. PEYSER (NEW YORK)

FREUD'S DORA. A PSYCHOANALYTIC, HISTORICAL, AND TEXTUAL STUDY. By Patrick J. Mahony. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1996. 170 pp.

Freud's Dora is a compact powerhouse. Patrick J. Mahony packs into a mere 153 pages the story of Dora's history and of her analysis, and includes corrections of errors in data and translation. He elucidates Dora's background and casts light on the psychodynamics of both patient and doctor. He makes an exciting and tantalizing story even more delightful.

Mahony does not pull punches. He criticizes Freud for his formulations, his technique, the trauma he inflicted on his analysand, and the masculine outlook he imposed on the case. He notes Freud's inconsistencies and errors. He ferrets out Freud's countertransferences and blind spots and their malignant effects.

The readers know the story. Dora was a pawn in the hands of her father, who gave her to Herr K. so that he could have an affair with Frau K. Herr K. in turn molested Dora when she was thirteen (not fourteen, as Freud had said) and he continued his seductive behavior after that. When Dora protested, her father turned her over to Freud to "bring her to her senses." In this corrupt milieu, Dora developed symptoms which expressed her hostile and sexual wishes and also contained defenses against her urges.

Freud, faithful to his method at the time, attempted to make Dora's unconscious conscious, thus exposing the truth about the conspiracy

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Freud's Dora. A Psychoanalytic, Historical, and Textual Study

Jules Glenn

To cite this article: Jules Glenn (1998) Freud's Dora. A Psychoanalytic, Historical, and Textual Study, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 507-509, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006056

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006056

wrote in a letter to Frau G almost a year after he had ended Ferenczi's analysis: ". . . it was an urgent wish on my part to see you united." And ". . . I have worked on the realization of this wish with the most varied means, directly and indirectly, in friendly intercourse and through the analysis, carefully, so that my preambles would not produce recalcitrance in him, and with blunt demands, in order to bring my influence to bear" (p. 176). Ferenczi was left unanalyzed by Freud for reasons of Freud's own. We are left wondering why Freud did not continue analyzing his dear and valuable colleague and to think about what this meant for and about Freud.

ELLEN R. PEYSER (NEW YORK)

FREUD'S DORA. A PSYCHOANALYTIC, HISTORICAL, AND TEXTUAL STUDY. By Patrick J. Mahony. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1996. 170 pp.

Freud's Dora is a compact powerhouse. Patrick J. Mahony packs into a mere 153 pages the story of Dora's history and of her analysis, and includes corrections of errors in data and translation. He elucidates Dora's background and casts light on the psychodynamics of both patient and doctor. He makes an exciting and tantalizing story even more delightful.

Mahony does not pull punches. He criticizes Freud for his formulations, his technique, the trauma he inflicted on his analysand, and the masculine outlook he imposed on the case. He notes Freud's inconsistencies and errors. He ferrets out Freud's countertransferences and blind spots and their malignant effects.

The readers know the story. Dora was a pawn in the hands of her father, who gave her to Herr K. so that he could have an affair with Frau K. Herr K. in turn molested Dora when she was thirteen (not fourteen, as Freud had said) and he continued his seductive behavior after that. When Dora protested, her father turned her over to Freud to "bring her to her senses." In this corrupt milieu, Dora developed symptoms which expressed her hostile and sexual wishes and also contained defenses against her urges.

Freud, faithful to his method at the time, attempted to make Dora's unconscious conscious, thus exposing the truth about the conspiracy

of the two families. Unfortunately, analytic technique and knowledge were not yet well developed. Freud did not recognize that Dora was an adolescent who had to be dealt with cautiously and slowly. Instead, he bombarded her with deep interpretations, thus fortifying her transference picture of him as a seductive, authoritarian, cruel, father-like figure. Dora quit the treatment, escaping from the dangerous analytic situation that she experienced as akin to the dangerous family milieu.

Mahony is brilliant in capturing and exploring Freud's gross and subtle misconceptions, his disruptive emotional reactions to Dora, and his false solution, i.e., that Dora should wed Herr K. while her father married Frau K., thus disposing of Dora's mother. Mahony is skeptical of specific formulations regarding Dora as he notes errors and inconsistencies. Although his critique is usually on the mark, nevertheless, I fault Mahony for his failure to keep to a historical perspective all the time. Nor do I believe that he emphasizes Freud's achievements sufficiently. Freud was able to discover in himself and in his patients the darkest and most frightening emotions and wishes, gradually and with trepidation. He had to overcome his own inevitable blind spots as, step by step, he discovered the workings of the mind in all its conflictual complexity. Mahony incorrectly criticizes Freud for his failure to explicitly refer to overdeterminism at times, even though he acknowledges that overdeterminism was a basic concept for Freud.

Mahony seems to believe that Freud should have made more interpretations, Blos, Erikson, Glenn, and Scharfman to the contrary. They warned that adolescents can be overwhelmed by interpretations which their egos cannot integrate.

Nor does Mahony sufficiently recognize the good Freud did along with the trouble he caused Dora. He joined her in searching for the truth and enabled her to drag the facts about the conspiracy out of the grownups, an important step in her fight against the adults' denial—and hers. Sadly, she interrupted her treatment, and Freud did not allow her to resume it.

Having concentrated on the clinical material, Mahony turns to the text. A professor of English and a renowned psychoanalyst, he is well suited to textual analysis, a job more complex than one would think: Mahony introduces the reader to Freud's original German, Strachey's translation, and Mahony's more literal translation. The author ranges

widely, covering textual analyses of the articles on the Rat Man and the Wolf Man as well as on Dora, and delving into Freud's equation of masculinity with activity and femininity with passivity. (Here Mahony omits the fact that Freud corrected this error in the *New Introductory Lectures.*)

In a brilliant exposition, Mahony shows that Freud, while writing about the obsessive Rat Man, aped traits of his analysand. The Rat Man tended to leave gaps as he spoke, and so did Freud. The gaps represented anal openings which could be penetrated. And the disconnectedness reflected the isolation the Rat Man employed. Similarly, in writing about Dora, Freud emphasized that hysterics have difficulties with the smooth recall of their histories, and he then made errors himself as he reported the analysis. In another of many examples, Mahony demonstrates "textual indications of castration conflict" (p. 122). In the original title, the German word *Bruchstück* (translated as "Fragment") literally means a broken off piece.

Mahony's study is replete with insights, very few of which I have cited. The reader will profit from this multidimensional analysis that casts light on Freud and his patients in a historical context.

JULES GLENN (GREAT NECK, NY)

REMEMBERING ANNA O. A CENTURY OF MYSTIFICATION. By Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen. Translated by K. Olson, X. Callahan, and the author. New York/London: Routledge, 1996. 125 pp.

Professor Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen of the University of Washington, the author of this book, is on the attack. His criticisms are sometimes justified, but his vituperation about events that occurred more than one hundred years ago, and more recent lapses, is not. Among the victims of Borch-Jacobsen's assaults are Freud, Josef Breuer, Ernest Jones, and current analysts who, he says, distort the truth about Anna O.

Anna O., the reader will recall, is the pseudonym for Bertha Pappenheim, the patient whom Breuer treated for a serious hysterical disorder in 1881-1882. She was plagued by muscular spasms, headaches, paresis, disturbances of speech, hallucinations, absences, and depression. Breuer's treatment—a combination of hypnosis to search

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Remembering Anna O. A Century of Mystification

Jules Glenn

To cite this article: Jules Glenn (1998) Remembering Anna O. A Century of Mystification, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 509-511, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006057

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006057

Published online: 27 Jun 2018.

widely, covering textual analyses of the articles on the Rat Man and the Wolf Man as well as on Dora, and delving into Freud's equation of masculinity with activity and femininity with passivity. (Here Mahony omits the fact that Freud corrected this error in the *New Introductory Lectures.*)

In a brilliant exposition, Mahony shows that Freud, while writing about the obsessive Rat Man, aped traits of his analysand. The Rat Man tended to leave gaps as he spoke, and so did Freud. The gaps represented anal openings which could be penetrated. And the disconnectedness reflected the isolation the Rat Man employed. Similarly, in writing about Dora, Freud emphasized that hysterics have difficulties with the smooth recall of their histories, and he then made errors himself as he reported the analysis. In another of many examples, Mahony demonstrates "textual indications of castration conflict" (p. 122). In the original title, the German word *Bruchstück* (translated as "Fragment") literally means a broken off piece.

Mahony's study is replete with insights, very few of which I have cited. The reader will profit from this multidimensional analysis that casts light on Freud and his patients in a historical context.

JULES GLENN (GREAT NECK, NY)

REMEMBERING ANNA O. A CENTURY OF MYSTIFICATION. By Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen. Translated by K. Olson, X. Callahan, and the author. New York/London: Routledge, 1996. 125 pp.

Professor Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen of the University of Washington, the author of this book, is on the attack. His criticisms are sometimes justified, but his vituperation about events that occurred more than one hundred years ago, and more recent lapses, is not. Among the victims of Borch-Jacobsen's assaults are Freud, Josef Breuer, Ernest Jones, and current analysts who, he says, distort the truth about Anna O.

Anna O., the reader will recall, is the pseudonym for Bertha Pappenheim, the patient whom Breuer treated for a serious hysterical disorder in 1881-1882. She was plagued by muscular spasms, headaches, paresis, disturbances of speech, hallucinations, absences, and depression. Breuer's treatment—a combination of hypnosis to search

out significant memories, followed by his patient's talking, during which abreaction occurred—has been evaluated variously by different persons. Breuer described its success. Freud believed Breuer feared Anna O.'s intense transference and his wife's jealousy, which caused him to flee from the therapy of his patient.

Borch-Jacobsen disputes Breuer's statements. He says that Breuer's technique produced many if not all of her symptoms. Further, many of Anna O.'s symptoms were simulated and therefore not truly legitimate. He adds that Anna O. was by no means cured, a fact which has been well known to analysts for at least thirty-eight years. She had to be hospitalized repeatedly after the treatment's termination, but eventually became an outstanding social worker and a pioneer of the European women's liberation movement. The author chastises Freud for criticizing Breuer unfairly for his lack of courage and also for going along with Breuer's assertions. He tears into modern analysts for a code of secrecy that makes it impossible to ascertain the truth. He mentions Harold Blum, the current Director of the Sigmund Freud Archives, but does not point out Blum's and the board's policy of opening the Archives to the public when they can legally and ethically do so.

Perhaps Borch-Jacobsen's most grievous error is his failure to keep things in perspective. He sets out to prove that the modes of therapeutic action advocated in *Studies on Hysteria*, abreaction, catharsis, and the recovery of memories, particularly memories of traumata, are inadequate to explain the data. That is hardly a surprise, however. The case of Anna O. belongs to a period prior to the development of psychoanalysis as a treatment, research method, and theory. Freud built on Breuer's description of his therapy with Anna O. to produce more sophisticated treatments and theories.

Among the theories of the mode of therapeutic action of psychoanalysis now favored is facilitation of change to more adaptive or "normal" compromise formations involving the ego, id, and superego.[1] This may involve a change in the hierarchy of defenses as a result of interpretation and insight. Another factor is the integration of past and present (rather than simply recalling past occurrences), which may be fortified by "working through." Although most analysts

[1] Brenner, C. (1976): *Psychoanalytic Technique and Psychic Conflict.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

assert that interpretation is the mainstay of analytic technique, many others now emphasize the "intersubjective" interaction between patient and analyst. Certainly in psychotherapy, noninterpretive interventions play an important role. They are less significant in psychoanalysis.

It is true that there are some wild therapists who overemphasize the recapturing of memories and reconstruct the past promiscuously and without caution or even good evidence, thus producing "false memories." The author is right in condemning such practice. But competent psychoanalysts make reconstructions judiciously, with great care and with the intent of enhancing insight.

Remembering Anna O. contains several significant criticisms of past theory and practice, but fails to recognize current concepts and technique. Borch-Jacobsen does not attempt to apply current psychoanalytic knowledge to the famous historically important case he studies. He does not even refer to Pollock's significant papers,[2] in which he re-evaluates our understanding of Anna O. in light of present knowledge, attributing many of her symptoms to mourning. Indeed, Borch-Jacobsen does not believe that psychoanalytic theories have merit.

JULES GLENN (GREAT NECK, NY)

MY OWN PRIVATE GERMANY. DANIEL PAUL SCHREBER'S SECRET HISTORY OF MODERNITY. By Eric L. Santner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. 200 pp.

This book contains a critical review of the literature about Daniel Paul Schreber's psychosis and his book, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness,*[1] as well as a highly original and illuminating interpretation showing how Schreber's psychosis reflects and stems from the madness of his own time and his own society. Schreber's *Memoirs* present an account of actual and delusional persecution, hallucinations, and passionate states of erotic pleasure as God's feminine lover.

Santner describes the situations that triggered Schreber's two

[2] Pollock, G. H. (1972): Bertha Pappenheim's pathological mourning: possible effects of childhood sibling loss. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 20:476-493; (1973): Bertha Pappenheim: addenda to her case history. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 21:328-332.

[1] Schreber, D. P. (1903): *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness.* Translated and edited by I. Macalpine & R. A. Hunter. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1955.

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

My Own Private Germany. Daniel Paul Schreber's Secret History of Modernity

Theodore L. Dorpat

To cite this article: Theodore L. Dorpat (1998) My Own Private Germany. Daniel Paul Schreber's Secret History of Modernity, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 511-515, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006058

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006058

assert that interpretation is the mainstay of analytic technique, many others now emphasize the "intersubjective" interaction between patient and analyst. Certainly in psychotherapy, noninterpretive interventions play an important role. They are less significant in psychoanalysis.

It is true that there are some wild therapists who overemphasize the recapturing of memories and reconstruct the past promiscuously and without caution or even good evidence, thus producing "false memories." The author is right in condemning such practice. But competent psychoanalysts make reconstructions judiciously, with great care and with the intent of enhancing insight.

Remembering Anna O. contains several significant criticisms of past theory and practice, but fails to recognize current concepts and technique. Borch-Jacobsen does not attempt to apply current psychoanalytic knowledge to the famous historically important case he studies. He does not even refer to Pollock's significant papers,[2] in which he re-evaluates our understanding of Anna O. in light of present knowledge, attributing many of her symptoms to mourning. Indeed, Borch-Jacobsen does not believe that psychoanalytic theories have merit.

JULES GLENN (GREAT NECK, NY)

MY OWN PRIVATE GERMANY. DANIEL PAUL SCHREBER'S SECRET HISTORY OF MODERNITY. By Eric L. Santner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. 200 pp.

This book contains a critical review of the literature about Daniel Paul Schreber's psychosis and his book, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness,*[1] as well as a highly original and illuminating interpretation showing how Schreber's psychosis reflects and stems from the madness of his own time and his own society. Schreber's *Memoirs* present an account of actual and delusional persecution, hallucinations, and passionate states of erotic pleasure as God's feminine lover.

Santner describes the situations that triggered Schreber's two

[2] Pollock, G. H. (1972): Bertha Pappenheim's pathological mourning: possible effects of childhood sibling loss. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 20:476-493; (1973): Bertha Pappenheim: addenda to her case history. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 21:328-332.

[1] Schreber, D. P. (1903): *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness.* Translated and edited by I. Macalpine & R. A. Hunter. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1955.

breakdowns as a crisis of symbolic investiture. The first breakdown, in 1884, occurred in conjunction with Schreber's failure to be elected to a seat in the legislature; the second, more serious disorder occurred soon after his appointment to an important position as a judge in the Saxon court system.

The author calls Schreber's delusional world his "Own Private Germany" because of Schreber's profound attunement to the crisis he was undergoing and its links with greater societal and cultural crises of his time. The chronic traumas generating Schreber's bizarre array of psychotic symptoms and delusions were the abuses of power to which he had been subjected, first by his father and later by others, including his psychiatrist, Paul Flechsig.

With Schreber there was a breakdown in the transfer of symbolic capital that would have allowed him to assume his mandate within the court system. In the author's opinion, it was this breakdown and its hallucinatory repair that "Freud misread as Schreber's homosexual longings for paternal substitutes, figures bearing phallic attributes and prerogatives" (p. 139).

What links Niederland's[2] contribution with others such as that of Lothane[3] is the concept that Schreber's psychotic illness stemmed more from his exposure to his father's pathogenic abuse of power than from purely intrapsychic conflicts over homoerotic desires. Santner rightly extols Lothane's work in highlighting and documenting the causal role played by biological psychiatry and forensic psychiatry, embodied in the persons of Schreber's two psychiatrists, Paul Flechsig and Guido Weber, in Schreber's symptomatology.

Santner affirms Freud's observation that Schreber had a tendency, typical for his paranoid illness, "toward splitting (the father into God and Flechsig; God into upper and lower God; Flechsig into multiple Flechsig-souls, etc.)" (p. 62). An especially illuminating insight proposed by the author is the view that the entire "plot" of the *Memoirs* revolves around Schreber's anguished efforts to integrate these split-off fathers and to reconcile the sadistic and hateful father with the good father.

[2] Niederland, W. G. (1974): *The Schreber Case: Psychoanalytic Profile of a Paranoid Personality.* Hillsdale, NJ/London: Analytic Press, 1984.

[3] Lothane, Z. (1992): *In Defense of Schreber: Soul Murder and Psychiatry.* Hillsdale, NJ/London: Analytic Press.

Schreber experienced himself as the product of a grotesque metamorphosis of immense proportions in which he was transformed into an object of sublime monstrosity: an unmanned (i.e., feminine) wandering Jew. The author examines the historical background of this complex of identificatory mutation. He notes the striking parallel between Schreber's delusion of bodily transformation and Franz Kafka's story of Gregor's horrific transformation into a despised bug in the story, *The Metamorphosis.*[4]

The author attempts to understand and interpret Schreber's paranoid delusions about Flechsig, and he traces some of them to Flechsig's impersonal and wholly biological approach to psychiatric treatment. He concludes that

> Flechsig's Brain science is the *theory* and Schreber's delusions are the *practice* of the same traumatic collapse of the symbolic dimension of subjectivity, of the gap separating bodily cause and symbolic effect. Schreber's point would seem to be that the elimination of the gap—the attempt to fill it with neuroanatomical knowledge—is nothing short of soul murder (p. 75).

The insights and disguised truths contained in Schreber's writings are also relevant to the abuses of power in contemporary psychiatry and psychoanalysis. What he writes about the soul murder of patients stemming from the exclusively biological approach of Flechsig applies equally well today to the increasing number of psychiatrists who follow a rigid and exclusively biological approach to treatment. Schreber's appeal in his *Memoirs* to theologians and philosophers implies an awareness that the actual causes and meanings of his psychiatric illness are not only inaccessible to the neurobiological approach embodied by Flechsig, but that his prolonged exposure to that approach contributed to his suffering and his disorder.

According to Niederland, many of Schreber's radically distorted bodily ego images could be traced back to his physician father's actual traumatic handling of his son during childhood and especially the body-constricting orthopedic contraptions used on him to *enforce* good posture and to prevent masturbation.

Santner, along with Niederland, Lothane, and others, believes that

[4] Kafka, F. (1915): *The Metamorphosis.* Translated and edited by S. F. Corngold, New York: Bantam, 1986.

Schreber was traumatized by the destructive exposure to particular forms of interpersonal power, in the first case of a paternal nature, in the other, of a more institutional and "scientific" type. The psychopathology that develops in patients as a result of the abuse of power of therapists and psychoanalysts and is most commonly disavowed by the perpetrators of the abuse has been investigated by this reviewer.[5]

Santner's formulations about the unconscious meanings of the *Memoirs* include the contributions made by analysts such as Freud,[6] Lothane, and Niederland, but Santner goes beyond their work in addressing the impact of social and cultural forces on Schreber's psychosis. He expertly reviews Foucault's writings on history, sexuality, and other subjects for insights on the societal stresses and conflicts that both contributed to Schreber's psychosis and were unconsciously represented in his delusions and his *Memoirs*. An important lesson from Foucault's works is that the disciplinary side of Enlightenment culture represents a threat to its political, ethical, and judicial project. Rather than fostering a capacity for independent thought, rather than attuning the body to the subject's own reasons and conscience, systems such as those of Schreber's father (Moritz Schreber) for shaping and controlling the child's development too often end up producing automatons and monstrosities.

The author presents a highly original interpretation of a central dynamic complex in Schreber's delusion, namely, that his anguished cultivation of femininity was intended, above all, for the enjoyment of God. Schreber believed that his sacred duty was to satisfy God's need for constant sexual pleasure, and by satisfying God in this way, he could be assured that God would not abandon or hurt him. My study of Schreber's writings strongly suggests that he unconsciously wanted to sacrifice his masculinity in order to appease a punitive "God" who represented his father and other males in positions of power and authority.

A provocative and startling assertion made by Santner is that he takes seriously Schreber's megalomaniacal claims about making discoveries about the nature of God, the soul, and personality. The

[5] Dorpat, T. L. (1996): *Gaslighting, the Double Whammy, Interrogation and Other Methods of Covert Control in Psychotherapy and Analysis.* New York: Aronson.

[6] Freud, S. (1911): Psycho-analytic notes on an autobiographical account of a case of paranoia (dementia paranoides). *S.E.*, 12.

author writes, "I believe that he has indeed made genuine discoveries about a variety of important matters, above all about matters pertaining to the theological dimension of political and social authority . . ." (p. xii). Santner advances the novel view that Schreber's symptoms are a form of knowledge about profound malfunctions of specific politicotheological procedures. His view is similar to the concept of psychiatric symptoms as primary process communications (unconscious communications).

Psychoanalysts have long known that psychiatric symptoms reflect an individual's history. Santner's unique contribution is in demonstrating the significance of disturbing social and political issues being unconsciously communicated in psychiatric symptoms, such as delusions and hallucinations.

This difficult-to-read book is not user friendly; the dense, overly abstract style retards the reader's comprehension of the text. The many interruptions brought about by using the 45 pages of end-notes break the reader's concentration. Another unnecessary obstacle to the reader's understanding is the frequent use of German and French words that are not translated.

The author provides a new and important method for using psychoanalytic ideas to analyze political and ideological phenomena. Another important contribution made by this book is a more informed view of the dynamic form of social fantasies that in the past have supported totalitarian regimes. The author asserts, "The proliferation of books, articles, conferences, and seminars dedicated to Schreber, which shows no signs of abating, testifies to the revelatory force and productivity . . ." of his *Memoirs* (p. 144).

THEODORE L. DORPAT (SEATTLE)

THE COLORS OF VIOLENCE. CULTURAL IDENTITIES, RELIGION, AND CONFLICT. By Sudhir Kakar. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 217 pp.

One part of the population eats cows, the other honors them as holy animals. How can two peoples with such diametrically opposed beliefs live together in the same space? This conflict is not a problem of India alone or one only social scientists should study. Sudhir Kakar, a psychoanalyst based in Delhi, has written several books on socio-

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

The Colors of Violence. Cultural Identities, Religion, and Conflict

Hendrika C. Halberstadt-Freud

To cite this article: Hendrika C. Halberstadt-Freud (1998) The Colors of Violence. Cultural Identities, Religion, and Conflict, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 515-518, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006059

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006059

Published online: 27 Jun 2018.

author writes, "I believe that he has indeed made genuine discoveries about a variety of important matters, above all about matters pertaining to the theological dimension of political and social authority . . ." (p. xii). Santner advances the novel view that Schreber's symptoms are a form of knowledge about profound malfunctions of specific politicotheological procedures. His view is similar to the concept of psychiatric symptoms as primary process communications (unconscious communications).

Psychoanalysts have long known that psychiatric symptoms reflect an individual's history. Santner's unique contribution is in demonstrating the significance of disturbing social and political issues being unconsciously communicated in psychiatric symptoms, such as delusions and hallucinations.

This difficult-to-read book is not user friendly; the dense, overly abstract style retards the reader's comprehension of the text. The many interruptions brought about by using the 45 pages of end-notes break the reader's concentration. Another unnecessary obstacle to the reader's understanding is the frequent use of German and French words that are not translated.

The author provides a new and important method for using psychoanalytic ideas to analyze political and ideological phenomena. Another important contribution made by this book is a more informed view of the dynamic form of social fantasies that in the past have supported totalitarian regimes. The author asserts, "The proliferation of books, articles, conferences, and seminars dedicated to Schreber, which shows no signs of abating, testifies to the revelatory force and productivity . . ." of his *Memoirs* (p. 144).

THEODORE L. DORPAT (SEATTLE)

THE COLORS OF VIOLENCE. CULTURAL IDENTITIES, RELIGION, AND CONFLICT. By Sudhir Kakar. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 217 pp.

One part of the population eats cows, the other honors them as holy animals. How can two peoples with such diametrically opposed beliefs live together in the same space? This conflict is not a problem of India alone or one only social scientists should study. Sudhir Kakar, a psychoanalyst based in Delhi, has written several books on socio-

psychological topics. *Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality* deals with male-female relations, religion, and the subordinate position of women, except as mothers of sons. *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* explores the interface between culture, upbringing, and psyche. *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, based on anthropological fieldwork, explores the diverse modes of healing and ideas on what causes mental and physical pain in the Hindu and Muslim subcultures of India.

The present work is based in part on demanding and often risky fieldwork, exploring the minds of the victims as well as the perpetrators. The riots in Hyderabad in December 1990 form the starting point. These events are placed in their cultural, sociological, historical, and psychological contexts. In this city, founded by a Muslim king with a Hindu mistress in 1589, cooperation used to be the norm. Today the Muslim population has dwindled to a mere ten percent, occupying the poorest area of the inner city and experiencing themselves as beleaguered victims.

Kakar writes in an engaging personal style, not pretending, as many social scientists do, that he is merely a neutral observer of objective facts. He is honest enough to admit the painful fact of his own excitement, as a young boy, during ethnic riots at the time of Partition. The least understood and most dramatic trait in human nature is lust in harming the helpless. Kakar turns to Melanie Klein to explain how aggression can get into contact with sexuality to create excitement. He invokes the inner world of children, whose revengeful feelings of hatred remain harmless as long as their physical strength is nil. To cut off breasts, to castrate, to burn alive, to kill mothers together with their unborn babies, all this is in the realm of "normal," albeit sadistic, infantile fantasy. The emotions during riots get heated by ethnic, religious, and nationalistic fervor. The physical experience, the bodily closeness of the mob, can easily lead to collective emotional extremes of anger and fear. Regression of conscience and loss of personal boundaries of the excited participants are the results.

Kakar makes clear how attacks on collective narcissism, which threaten the identity of the group, lead to violence. The closer two people live together, the more difficult it becomes to define the differences and to safeguard identity. Since Partition, the boundaries between Hindus and Muslims have been firmly re-established by nationalists using the differences of their respective history and religion

to define and divide cultural identities. Cleanliness laws, how food is treated, which food is eaten, are examples of important differences between groups. Often the narcissism of minor differences (Freud), like clothing, hair style, eating with the left or the right hand, serves to uphold group identity and create the Outsider. When people feel threatened, they will use these differences, duly exaggerated by demagogues, as arguments to attack the Other and Otherness. The honor of the in-group must be saved at all cost. The dignity, the narcissism of the Other must be destroyed by all available means. Although these conflicts are called ethnic, the people concerned often have identical forebears. However, seeking outside support, Muslims in India prefer to derive their ancestry from Turkey, Persia, and the Arabian peninsula. They not only have become the poorest part of the population, they often were Untouchables before, who converted to Islam as a way to step out of the caste system.

Kakar argues that ethnic violence cannot be stoked by politicians alone, nor derived solely from economic reasons if unaccompanied by the proper psychological motivation. The experience of the Self—"who am I, where do I belong, what is the status of my group?"—is central for the feeling of identity. Elaborate interviews on the most sensitive subjects and intimate experiences of victims as well as perpetrators on both sides serve as Kakar's evidence. Violence is not the work of psychopaths, sexual misfits, battered children, or people with a narcissistic personality disturbance, but of people who feel they have to defend the honor of the group to which they belong. The leaders, "the warriors," chosen as boys to receive an education in traditional Indian wrestling, come from poor families. Their training gives them the right to more and better food and obliges them to live a life of asceticism and celibacy. They receive their moral instruction and supervision from a "guru." Wrestling is "a meeting of muscles and morals," a conservative and traditional way of life. The wrestler is against modernity and sexuality. He is egalitarian and feels it to be his moral duty to help individual people in trouble and the struggling community at large. These warriors are fighting a rightful crusade, committing an act of purification, defending their faith in a just war. Kakar even managed to administer the *Giessen Test* to them and found that they tend to be authoritarian and can have an underlying depressive streak to their personality. Nevertheless, they do not fit Hannah Arendt's "banality of evil." They are exceptional if also fright-

ening individuals: "born" leaders, with special gifts, charms, and intellectual capacities.

The narcissistic equilibrium of the poor, the masses living in urban slums, has suffered from modernization and globalization depriving them of old values and certainties. They have lost their ties to the land, their traditional culture, a stable society, religion, and morals. Their community having dissolved, their way of life and trade have changed in a bureaucratic and impersonal modern world. Not knowing where they belong, they feel powerless and helpless, becoming easy prey for fundamentalists. "Cultural memory," the imaginary basis of a people's identity is easily exploited. The Other, who might have been my neighbor a week before, becomes my enemy. He is depicted as inhuman, the devil, all that is bad and despicable. It seems right to destroy him after he has become the "reservoir" (Vamik Volkan) of my own unwanted strivings. Empathy is lost when the victim is totally helpless. Not being an agent of his own fate, like the tragic person, he becomes pathetic. Kakar's book opens with a piece of self-analysis describing his reactions to the photo of a badly wounded little girl. And although the picture haunts him, he discovers he lacks empathy. "I must defend myself against her pathos. It is far easier for me to pity her. Pity is distant."

Through the ages there have been periods of conflict between Muslims and Hindus, as well as more peaceful times. The chances for peaceful coexistence seem to dwindle ever more. The inability to mourn losses suffered on former occasions of violence accumulate the need for revenge, transmitted from generation to generation, in a never ending spiral of violence since Independence. "Few doubt that if corruption, lawlessness, marauding caste armies and the breakdown of government does prevail, then India will make what happened in Yugoslavia look like a picnic."[1]

This is an important book about an important subject. It is well written and invites the reader to have a closer look at the social and psychological problems of today's world. I recommend it warmly to the interested lay person as well as to psychoanalysts and other mental health professionals.

HENDRIKA C. HALBERSTADT-FREUD (AMSTERDAM)

[1] Dalrymple, W. (1997): Caste wars. *Granta*, Spring. 57:183.

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

A Different Kind of Listening. My Psychoanalysis and Its Shadow

Kimberlyn Leary

To cite this article: Kimberlyn Leary (1998) A Different Kind of Listening. My Psychoanalysis and Its Shadow, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 519-522, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006060

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006060

A DIFFERENT KIND OF LISTENING. MY PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ITS SHADOW. By Kim Chernin. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1995. 215 pp.

Few of our colleagues openly discuss their own treatment experiences in print. This is remarkable, given the degree to which the personal analysis is among the core experiences of the analyst's own training. Occasionally, an analyst will include a brief vignette from his or her own analysis to make a specific, usually well-delimited point, but the convention by and large is that the analyst's analysis remains outside our public professional discourse.

Kim Chernin's *A Different Kind of Listening: My Psychoanalysis and Its Shadow* situates itself within this gap. The book—an account of the author's twenty-five years as an analytic patient of three different analysts—is a provocative and disquieting work. At its center is a haunting lament about the limits of analytic listening and, from Chernin's point of view, the limitations of each of her analysts. The book is at once a piece of autobiography and a meditation on analytic change. With each analysis representing a distinctive psychoanalytic *Zeitgeist* (e.g., classical, ego-psychological, neo-Kleinian), the book is also a highly readable intellectual history of the development of psychoanalytic thought.

Chernin is an accomplished writer: *A Different Kind of Listening* is exceedingly well written. She is also a psychotherapist and has positioned herself on the outskirts of the psychoanalytic communities in the San Francisco Bay area where she works. She has not sought formal psychoanalytic training but nonetheless offers herself as a "psychoanalytic listener" to her clients. She is appreciative of analytic history, well versed in clinical theory, and fully at home with the postmodern metier of contemporary psychoanalysis. Rejecting the view that analysis is a "treatment" for "illness," Chernin describes her own analytic efforts as a "non-interpretive art" involving a collaborative storytelling. The analyst learns the language of another's self-expression and puts aside her own voice in favor of the client's. For Chernin, this means that the analyst no longer interprets in any traditional, intersubjective, or even social-constructivist sense but by listening helps the unheard voices of the client's self to find a language. Chernin is notably vague on the specifics of this approach and offers little technical information that conveys how this work would

be accomplished. What is clear is that her turn to the "different kind of listening" of her title is, in large measure, a response occasioned by disappointment and anger with her own analyses and her frustrated yearnings for something more from her analysts.

Chernin's book upturns the usual form of psychoanalytic case studies: here the analysts remain anonymous (although all are probably identifiable by those familiar with the analytic communities in San Francisco). Chernin, the patient, constructs the analyst, and it is also Chernin who has the final word. Despite her disappointment, her analysts nevertheless emerge as generous and creative clinicians, each with a considerable investment in Chernin and her well-being. At the same time, it is clear that Chernin feels that each analyst had his or her own opinions, biases, and preferences about what constitutes good adaptation and the best means to analytic cure. Sometimes these were openly communicated to Chernin, sometimes not. All the same, Chernin's narrative resonates with the awareness that through the analysis she became acquainted with the fundamental strengths and vulnerabilities of each of her analytic partners. *A Different Kind of Listening* thus illustrates anew the way in which the analyst is never really anonymous to the patient but is always communicating aspects of his or her self whether or not the analyst recognizes this or owns up to it.

At the start, Chernin likens the writing of a book to the process of an analysis, noting that "the point of undertaking either book or psychoanalysis is to bring it to a fully legitimate close" (p. xxxiv). Her own assessment is that she benefited greatly from each of her analytic explorations. The reader can observe in her account the slow accretion of what we commonly think of as structure as well as the oscillations between insight and experience that make up the fabric of an analysis.

Chernin is frank—but not outright confessional—about the trials of her early life and their subsequent dislocating effect on her sense of self and identity. She believes that she used her analyses to construct new and more enduring self-configurations to challenge and sometimes replace those that were dysfunctional, distressed, and, at times, quite disorganized. Throughout she interrogates the construct of "multiple selves" currently popular in contemporary theorizing, shedding more light on the conundrums of this construct than anything I have previously read. As she sees it, these emergent selves are

also the undoing of each of her analyses: "this hidden structure would repeat itself three times . . . the presence of a disturbing symptom, the emergence of a new experience of self, its exclusion from the analysis, its eventual (mysterious) eruption into the analysis, at which point the analysis would dramatically come to an end" (p. 48). The last version of self to emerge is Chernin's psychoanalytic self. At the book's conclusion, she has moved away from her clinical analysts as centers of her psychic gravity and turned toward an analyst with whom she consults about her own clients and with whom she is developing her new kind of listening. The analytic reader is likely to wonder about the half-life of this self as Chernin approaches the consultant with the same rush of enthusiasm and idealization that marked the start of each of her analyses.

One can take issue with the particular resolution that Chernin reaches with respect to her discontent with analysis. Some will undoubtedly consider it a narcissistic settlement, and others will conclude that she is unanalyzable. At the same time, Chernin's turn to a different kind of listening actualizes a piece of our analytic history: the founding of a separate psychoanalytic school is a familiar way in which analysands and analysts have expressed their dissatisfactions with their psychoanalytic experiences. Chernin's book offers a public version of the disappointment that perhaps every analysand faces privately. The fate of a treatment depends on a great many things, including the way in which the idealizations we bring to the analysis as well as the idealizations encouraged by the analyst are ultimately managed. I expect that few of the personal solutions achieved by most of us could bear the kind of close examination Chernin invites by writing of her own treatment, although I suppose much could be learned by more such scrutiny.

In the end, Chernin's book leaves the reader thinking about the important role that hope plays in analytic treatment. Each of Chernin's analysts, in his or her own unique way and in accord with the particulars of his or her theory, managed to mobilize in Chernin the hope that her pain and fragmentation could be ameliorated and even healed. It makes sense to assume that this hope sustained and even drove the treatments to a critical degree. It is also conceivable that this same hope—when its ambition was only incompletely realized—became part of the shadow that fell over each analysis and drove her on to the next. Chernin's narrative raises the question of whether an

analyst can ever really give what the patient wants or needs. Perhaps at our very best, we give what we have available to give to our patients and hope that it will meet some part of the patient's need. For most of us and for most of our patients, this is enough. For Chernin, it was not.

KIMBERLYN LEARY (ANN ARBOR, MI)

MOTHERING. TOWARD A NEW PSYCHOANALYTIC CONSTRUCTION. By Silvia Vegetti Finzi. Translated by Kathrine Jason. New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1996. 196 pp.

Silvia Vegetti Finzi's book develops contemporary ideas on mothering toward an imaginative view of feminine creative impulses that a woman may develop throughout her life cycle. With two clinical examples of young girls from her psychoanalytic practice, she illustrates the difficult passage from the status of being a little girl to that of a mature woman. Using familiar theories of Freud and Lacan, she shows that the gradual internal change and acquisition of a sexual identity entail the relinquishment of omnipotence. Every step forward in maturation also implies a loss in parts of the self.

The transformation from a little girl to a woman in traditional theory requires a long and complex elaboration in which there are four fundamental moments: the disappearance of the imaginary phallus, the full body becoming concave, recognition of the complementary selves, and the integration of the reproductive process into the body image. "Phallic castration" repeats an earlier experience of loss, such as birth and weaning. The writings of women analysts in particular, transcending Freud's earlier ideas, do much to contradict these early views. For example, the notion of the imaginary phallus can be much disputed.

Each reviewer finds a particular subject in a book under consideration that arouses a particular interest. This reviewer found the section in Finzi's book on classical myths especially striking. The ancient Greek myths and legends are thoughtfully discussed, used as illustrations of Finzi's theme, and even elaborated into a dimension of the unknown, a halo of magic. The new life is developing mysteriously within the mother's body and, since it is unseen, it may be the focus of the mystic fantasies and wishes which every woman experiences

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Mothering. Toward a New Psychoanalytic Construction

Dinora Pines

To cite this article: Dinora Pines (1998) Mothering. Toward a New Psychoanalytic Construction, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 522-523, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006061

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006061

analyst can ever really give what the patient wants or needs. Perhaps at our very best, we give what we have available to give to our patients and hope that it will meet some part of the patient's need. For most of us and for most of our patients, this is enough. For Chernin, it was not.

KIMBERLYN LEARY (ANN ARBOR, MI)

MOTHERING. TOWARD A NEW PSYCHOANALYTIC CONSTRUCTION. By Silvia Vegetti Finzi. Translated by Kathrine Jason. New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1996. 196 pp.

Silvia Vegetti Finzi's book develops contemporary ideas on mothering toward an imaginative view of feminine creative impulses that a woman may develop throughout her life cycle. With two clinical examples of young girls from her psychoanalytic practice, she illustrates the difficult passage from the status of being a little girl to that of a mature woman. Using familiar theories of Freud and Lacan, she shows that the gradual internal change and acquisition of a sexual identity entail the relinquishment of omnipotence. Every step forward in maturation also implies a loss in parts of the self.

The transformation from a little girl to a woman in traditional theory requires a long and complex elaboration in which there are four fundamental moments: the disappearance of the imaginary phallus, the full body becoming concave, recognition of the complementary selves, and the integration of the reproductive process into the body image. "Phallic castration" repeats an earlier experience of loss, such as birth and weaning. The writings of women analysts in particular, transcending Freud's earlier ideas, do much to contradict these early views. For example, the notion of the imaginary phallus can be much disputed.

Each reviewer finds a particular subject in a book under consideration that arouses a particular interest. This reviewer found the section in Finzi's book on classical myths especially striking. The ancient Greek myths and legends are thoughtfully discussed, used as illustrations of Finzi's theme, and even elaborated into a dimension of the unknown, a halo of magic. The new life is developing mysteriously within the mother's body and, since it is unseen, it may be the focus of the mystic fantasies and wishes which every woman experiences

during pregnancy. It may happen that in some cases the fantasies of the perfect child exist, and the actual child is at a constant disadvantage in comparison to the imagined predecessor. The child is hounded by an unexpressed maternal judgment of inadequacy. Thus, the inexhaustible maternal expectations may become the foundation of a difficult relationship between those expectations and reality.

These ideas are carried beyond the normal conception of a child to include new methods of conception, mainly artificial insemination and all the new methods of fertilization which are now being used to break the old ideas to which we were all captive. Today, lesbians can become mothers, and the traditional ideas of conception and family life are being destroyed by the use of science and technology. These are mighty steps to be overcome in the face of new advances. Such ideas are fertile and will inevitably lead to further developments. Finzi's book is a step in this direction, although much of what she writes might well be controversial. However, controversy leads to progress in thought.

DINORA PINES (LONDON)

WHAT MEN WANT: MOTHERS, FATHERS, AND MANHOOD. By John Munder Ross. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1994. 242 pp.

Ross has been studying fathers for the last twenty years. In his tour de force on the Laius complex, he directed attention to the father in the Oedipus myth, something neglected by Sophocles and by Freud. Not only did he emphasize the need to look at the father, whom he saw as the ultimate bad parent, but he was also able to offer a persuasive argument about why Freud himself had to focus on the son and not on the father.

The title of this book is, of course, a takeoff on Freud's What does a woman want? Ross attempts to study male development, especially from the standpoint of fatherhood, aggression, and heterosexual love. He contrasts the girl's wish for a phallus with the male's envy of the woman's capacity to bear children. Men wish to be like women, to bear children, to be passive, feminine, to avoid the dangers of violence somehow associated with being male. Borrowing from Erikson,

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

What Men Want: Mothers, Fathers, and Manhood

Samuel Weiss

To cite this article: Samuel Weiss (1998) What Men Want: Mothers, Fathers, and Manhood, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 523-525, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006062

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006062

during pregnancy. It may happen that in some cases the fantasies of the perfect child exist, and the actual child is at a constant disadvantage in comparison to the imagined predecessor. The child is hounded by an unexpressed maternal judgment of inadequacy. Thus, the inexhaustible maternal expectations may become the foundation of a difficult relationship between those expectations and reality.

These ideas are carried beyond the normal conception of a child to include new methods of conception, mainly artificial insemination and all the new methods of fertilization which are now being used to break the old ideas to which we were all captive. Today, lesbians can become mothers, and the traditional ideas of conception and family life are being destroyed by the use of science and technology. These are mighty steps to be overcome in the face of new advances. Such ideas are fertile and will inevitably lead to further developments. Finzi's book is a step in this direction, although much of what she writes might well be controversial. However, controversy leads to progress in thought.

DINORA PINES (LONDON)

WHAT MEN WANT: MOTHERS, FATHERS, AND MANHOOD. By John Munder Ross. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1994. 242 pp.

Ross has been studying fathers for the last twenty years. In his tour de force on the Laius complex, he directed attention to the father in the Oedipus myth, something neglected by Sophocles and by Freud. Not only did he emphasize the need to look at the father, whom he saw as the ultimate bad parent, but he was also able to offer a persuasive argument about why Freud himself had to focus on the son and not on the father.

The title of this book is, of course, a takeoff on Freud's What does a woman want? Ross attempts to study male development, especially from the standpoint of fatherhood, aggression, and heterosexual love. He contrasts the girl's wish for a phallus with the male's envy of the woman's capacity to bear children. Men wish to be like women, to bear children, to be passive, feminine, to avoid the dangers of violence somehow associated with being male. Borrowing from Erikson,

he sees a sublimated maternalism as crucial to the positive identity of a man.

A boy of two or three years of age begins to identify with his father, but with a feeling of loss and resignation. In this view, the power residing in the phallus can be seen as defensive against the feeling of powerlessness in the face of maternal power—quite a turnaround from traditional Freudian theory.

In reviewing his study on Laius, Ross begins to focus on an almost inherent hostility that a father bears his son. This position seems to be a very important point that Ross stresses in attempting to achieve a balance between the son's erotic and competitive issues with the father and the father's similar issues with the son.

Man's preoccupation with penetration and performance is seen by Ross as largely defensive against the feminine wish. The phallic illusion is an attempt to disidentify from the mother. The intense masturbation of the adolescent boy is aimed at convincing him of his phallic wholeness.

The author then tries to tackle the enigma of mature sexuality. Can mature romantic love further development rather than simply be a repetition of earlier modes? Ross goes on to characterize Freud's own fear of passion and his need to interpose intellectualization as a brake on intense affect: to substitute word-presentations for thing-presentations. Ross feels that in many ways this has become a model for psychoanalysis—to avoid and be fearful of the intense affect associated with passion. Ross himself becomes almost rhapsodic in depicting the intensities of love passion as described by poets and writers and by myth, but only rarely by psychoanalysts. Romantic love is a late adolescent phenomenon, and Ross raises interesting questions about why it does not survive adolescence for so many individuals.

Ultimately, this heterosexual romantic love in the male involves an abandonment of the father and an internalization of the woman's feminity. Ross places major importance on the role of romantic love in the individuating process and in character development.

Apparently because of his central thesis, Ross makes few references to the oedipal mother. I believe that his theories are not meant to be in opposition to traditional Freudian theory but are meant to be an addition to it.

Ross writes with passion about what he thinks men want. But, as he concludes, life is very complex, and there are multiple determinants

that direct our romantic fantasies and determine our identifications. Nevertheless, this book is an intriguing and challenging addition to our evolving theories of male psychology.

SAMUEL WEISS (CHICAGO)

NECESSARY ILLUSION: ART AS WITNESS. By Gilbert J. Rose, M.D. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc., 1996. 148 pp.

Gilbert Rose can be no stranger to readers within the psychoanalytic world who have had an abiding interest in the overlapping spheres of psychoanalysis and art (he has been a contributor for over thirty years). In this small book, he begins by reviewing and summarizing his earlier work and then goes on to add a dimension that is of particular interest to this reviewer. I should like to focus my comments on the notion of art as *witness*, which Rose introduces in a series of delightful anecdotes at the beginning of this book and to which he returns in his efforts to theorize a psychoanalytic take on aesthetic response. The idea of "witnessing" as well as that of rhythm as a structuring feature of works of art are not unrelated notions. The first is quite challenging, although, as I will argue, incomplete in the way Rose has formulated it in these pages, and the second is an interesting reworking of ideas he had developed previously in *The Power of Form* (1980) and *Trauma and Mastery in Life and Art* (1987).

Rose claims here that "the completed work of art may be used as an ambient context for creating an illusion of a witnessing presence to one's own emotions" (p. 114). This seems at first blush a curious reversal of the usual way of thinking about art, namely, that it is we, the spectators, who are witnesses to the artist's project, the work of art. Rose's point, however, if I understand him correctly, is that in experiencing works of art with depth and emotional resonance, we may feel affirmed in our sense of self (hence, witnessed by them) and at the same time opened (by their witnessing) to new ways of experiencing our selves. Rose would not, however, want to go as far with this general notion as Roland Barthes who claims, "The text is a fetish object, and this fetish desires me. The text chooses me,"[1] for Rose

[1] Barthes, R. (1975): *The Pleasure of the Text.* Translated by R. Miller. New York: Hill & Wang, p. 27.

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Necessary Illusion: Art as Witness

Ellen Handler Spitz

To cite this article: Ellen Handler Spitz (1998) Necessary Illusion: Art as Witness, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 525-528, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006063

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006063

that direct our romantic fantasies and determine our identifications. Nevertheless, this book is an intriguing and challenging addition to our evolving theories of male psychology.

SAMUEL WEISS (CHICAGO)

NECESSARY ILLUSION: ART AS WITNESS. By Gilbert J. Rose, M.D. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc., 1996. 148 pp.

Gilbert Rose can be no stranger to readers within the psychoanalytic world who have had an abiding interest in the overlapping spheres of psychoanalysis and art (he has been a contributor for over thirty years). In this small book, he begins by reviewing and summarizing his earlier work and then goes on to add a dimension that is of particular interest to this reviewer. I should like to focus my comments on the notion of art as *witness*, which Rose introduces in a series of delightful anecdotes at the beginning of this book and to which he returns in his efforts to theorize a psychoanalytic take on aesthetic response. The idea of "witnessing" as well as that of rhythm as a structuring feature of works of art are not unrelated notions. The first is quite challenging, although, as I will argue, incomplete in the way Rose has formulated it in these pages, and the second is an interesting reworking of ideas he had developed previously in *The Power of Form* (1980) and *Trauma and Mastery in Life and Art* (1987).

Rose claims here that "the completed work of art may be used as an ambient context for creating an illusion of a witnessing presence to one's own emotions" (p. 114). This seems at first blush a curious reversal of the usual way of thinking about art, namely, that it is we, the spectators, who are witnesses to the artist's project, the work of art. Rose's point, however, if I understand him correctly, is that in experiencing works of art with depth and emotional resonance, we may feel affirmed in our sense of self (hence, witnessed by them) and at the same time opened (by their witnessing) to new ways of experiencing our selves. Rose would not, however, want to go as far with this general notion as Roland Barthes who claims, "The text is a fetish object, and this fetish desires me. The text chooses me,"[1] for Rose

[1] Barthes, R. (1975): *The Pleasure of the Text.* Translated by R. Miller. New York: Hill & Wang, p. 27.

asserts that "The artwork, itself, however, does not reach out; it assimilates without accommodating" (p. 116).

In addition, Rose would not, so it seems, be comfortable with the elision of his notion of witnessing with that of narcissistic completion. In one exemplary anecdote, he describes an actor friend who felt generally miserable until he went onstage and performed to great audience acclaim. Rose interprets these alternating states as due to "the absence in my friend of a reliable internal witness to act as a structural factor of internal object constancy" (p. 5), rather than in terms of, say, a narcissistic deficit disorder which would conceive the acting and external praise as a means of temporarily completing him psychically. Rose, if I read him correctly, is, by giving this anecdote, implicitly asking his reader to make an analogy here between his friend's condition and that of the beholder of works of art, in that they may experience something similar, that is, a kind of repleteness and satisfaction.

It strikes me that these other tangential notions, namely, the work of art as choosing its beholder, and the work of art as serving temporarily to complete its beholder, although implicitly disavowed by Rose, would have added considerably to his contribution, as would Nelson Goodman's work[2] on the dynamics of aesthetic experience and the cognitive functions of emotion. Rose's idea of witnessing lacks a cumulative dimension, by which I mean that I do not think he believes it is a process that builds upon itself. In other words, the actor friend who feels inflated after an admired performance will probably sink into gloom once again and be unable to integrate his good feelings of success with his sense of self in ways that could save him from extreme unhappiness in between his stage appearances.

By analogy, the witnessing of the work of art, a painting, say, that provides us with feelings of being affirmed, inspired, moved, or even saddened to the point of wanting to turn away, is not an experience that lasts, according to Rose. It is strong, positive, and meaningful, but ephemeral. But even the analogy implied here is problematic. Can we assume that to perform a work of dramatic art and to behold a work of visual art do not count very differently in the emotional register? Surely, this is a point that requires attention, for if the assumption is false, then the theory itself is eviscerated. If analogies

[2] Goodman, N. (1976): *Languages of Art.* Indianapolis: Hackett.

across subject positions and across artistic media prove facile or untenable, then to build a theory upon such analogies will constitute a serious blunder. The problem is one which has prompted reflection on the part of every would-be theorist of general aesthetic response, even well before Lessing's *Laocoön*,[3] and which has found no solution here.

In any case, if we were to consider the possibility of joining Rose's idea of witnessing to that, say, of Goodman's, we might begin to develop a theory of aesthetic response that could incorporate an educative dimension, a theory, in other words, with the capacity to account for situations in which exposure to works of art does bring, over time, a gradual amelioration of the extremes and a strengthening of the sense of self, an internalization, that is to say, of the good object. Contemporary aesthetic response theory that works with notions of desire and two-way traffic seems, however, beside the point for Rose, but I wonder whether a process-oriented theory might not serve the data better. In any case, I would argue, on the basis of my own research,[4] that such an approach would be well worth further investigation.

The notion of a "witness," moreover, occurs ubiquitously in the discourses of several fields beyond psychoanalysis and aesthetics, fields such as law, historical studies, and anthropology, among others. How might these other constructions of the term both complicate and enrich our understanding of the witnessing function when we seek to understand the response to works of art? Such an interdisciplinary approach might yield fascinating results and augment the account provided in this book. Rose, in fact, presents anecdotes that could well have given rise to further theorization.

As one who works on the margins of several disciplines, I cherish the ongoing project of bringing them together and believe that, in these waning years of the twentieth century, writers on psychoanalysis must, for the sake of survival, speak to a wider audience. To claim serious attention on the part of informed readers outside the realm of clinical psychoanalysis, however, requires attention to work being done beyond the purview of the psychoanalytic world (see, for ex-

[3] Lessing, G. E. (1766): *Laocoön.*

[4] Spitz, E. H. (1994): *Museums of the Mind: Magritte's Labyrinth and Other Essays in the Arts.* New Haven/London: Yale Univ. Press.

ample, Nancy Chodorow on psychoanalysis and anthropology, Yale University Press, forthcoming). Writing not from exclusive confinement within the limits of the consulting room, the psychoanalytic author must venture forth and write, at least occasionally, from a carrel in the open stacks of a great library, so that the ways of knowing endemic to other disciplines become familiar and the conditions for meaningful cross-disciplinary conversation be established. For the psychoanalyst writing on cultural issues especially, it may be necessary to redefine the role of authorship so that it includes participation in an imaginative collaboration or dialogue within a community of scholars, critics, and scientists, both psychoanalytic and otherwise, living and deceased, who are and have been engaged—but from varying perspectives—with similar problems.

As a faithful follower of Rose's work from my initial happy encounter with it in the early 1980's, when I was a graduate student in aesthetics at Columbia, I welcome this, his latest book, and I look forward to witnessing his forthcoming contributions which, I hope, will reflect a hearty engagement in print with others of us who work on the very same issues that have long fascinated him.

ELLEN HANDLER SPITZ (STANFORD, CA)

The Psychoanalytic Quarterly

ISSN: 0033-2828 (Print) 2167-4086 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/upaq20

Abstracts

To cite this article: (1998) Abstracts, The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 67:3, 529-538, DOI: 10.1080/00332828.1998.12006064

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.1998.12006064

Published online: 27 Jun 2018.

ABSTRACTS

PHILOSOPHY

Abstracted by Marcia Cavell.

Deconstructing Dreams: The Spandrels of Sleep. O. Flanagan. **The Journal of Philosophy.** XCII, 1995. Pp. 5-28.

Flanagan's main goal is the understanding of consciousness, which he thinks requires a method that not only grants equal respect to phenomenology (first-person reports of experience), psychology, cognitive science, and neuroscience, but that also takes evolutionary biology and anthropology into account. Drawing on all these considerations, Flanagan presents what he calls a double aspect model of dreaming. He maintains that dreams, or the subjective experiences that we have while asleep, have no interesting biological or evolutionary function, and that dreams can nevertheless be useful in the project of self-understanding. The author makes the following argument. Mentation occurs during both REM sleep and non-REM sleep. The latter is more or less continuous with waking thought, while REM mentation, both phenomenologically and neurologically, is radically different, in fact, closer to psychosis. The cortex attempts to do with REM mentation what it always does, namely, make sense of stimuli; so it more or less successfully tries to fit these stimuli into the narrative structures that are already in place, structures that have to do with the dreamer's self-representations and her or his ongoing life concerns. It follows that even in REM dreams the cortex is expressing what is uniquely on a person's mind.

Flanagan points out that this view leaves room for dream symbolism and even for something similar to the distinction between manifest and latent content. His conclusion, then, is that while dreaming does not serve some evolutionary purpose, we, as creatures to whom self-understanding is important, have ingeniously devised methods of putting dreams and dream interpretation to use. "Spandrels serve functions even though they are sequelae of the design the architect is focused on putting in place. Being a spandrel does not make something non-functional." So also with dreams.

Freud's Dream: A Complete Interdisciplinary Science of Mind. Patricia Kitcher. Boston: The MIT Press, 1995.

This important book also happens to be a fine companion piece to the articles by Flanagan (abstracted above) and Glymour (abstracted below). Kitcher begins by remarking that, increasingly, researchers hold that progress in understanding

human cognition will come only from an interdisciplinary approach that draws on psychology, neurophysiology, computer science, linguistics, and anthropology. Since Freud's own methods were interdisciplinary, Kitcher takes Freud's work as a good case study in what an interdisciplinary science should and should not do.

At crucial points in the formation of his theory, Freud drew for support on a hypothesis from a neighboring field. For example, his theses about the importance of sexuality assume the concepts of instinct and neuronal action from biology and neurology; his structural theory needs faculty psychology; his ideas about primary process mentation and the universality of the oedipus complex lean on Lamarck and the biological assumption that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Though all these borrowed ideas were credible in the early years of Freud's theorizing, they became gradually less so, until by the end of his life virtually all had been abandoned by the specialists in the respective fields. Kitcher's point is that though such borrowing is essential to an interdisciplinary approach, the borrower must be alert to developments in the field from which he/she is borrowing, and must be ready to revise his or her theories when necessary. Freud heeded neither of these cautions and, regarding Lamarck, even explicitly refused to accept the damaging evidence.

Kitcher presents a devastating critique, all the more so for its measured tone; her aim is not to damn psychoanalysis but to learn from its failures. The book strengthens my own suspicion that psychoanalytic theory as it is still being taught is out of date, and that there is an ever-widening gap between clinical practice and the "science" which is assumed by many psychoanalysts to support the practice.

Following are three abstracts of articles from the book, *Philosophical Problems of the Internal and External Worlds: Essays on the Philosophy of Adolf Grünbaum*, edited by J. Earman, et al. (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

The three articles are in the book section entitled, "Philosophy of Psychiatry." This section contains three other articles that are of potential interest to psychoanalysts: "Philosophers on Freudianism," by E. Erwin, pp. 409-461; "Isomorphism and the Modeling of Brain-Mind State," by J. A. Hobson, pp. 489-509; "Psychoanalytic Conceptions of the Borderline Personality, a Sociocultural Alternative," by T. Millon, pp. 509-527.

(Another article of note by E. Erwin is "The Logic of Psychoanalytic Explanations: A Reply to Nussbaum," in *Phil. Soc. Crit.*, 1994, 20:103-108.)

On a Contribution to a Future Scientific Study of Dream Interpretation. R. Sand. Pp. 527-547.

Sand distinguishes Freud's theory of dream interpretation from a much older, traditional theory, traceable as far back as the Greek philosopher Zeno (4th century b.c.). Freud's theory focuses on the latent dream content; it claims that dreams are caused by repressed wishes, and that the form which a dream takes is

the result of censorship together with certain laws of primitive mental functioning. These Freudian claims are at odds with contemporary work in neurophysiology and dream research. In contrast, the traditional theory focuses on the manifest content and makes no causal claims; it uses the manifest content to illumine themes and problems on the dreamer's mind. The traditional rather than the Freudian theory, Sand suggests, points in the direction of future research, and is in any case the theory to which, overwhelmingly, clinical practice conforms.

It strikes me that the difference between a classic Freudian approach to dream interpretation and the approach Sand suggests is part of a much more pervasive difference between traditional psychoanalytic theory in general and ongoing clinical practice. The terrain on which psychoanalytic theory-building should take place may lie in taking systematic notice of this gap.

The Dynamics of Theory Change. M. Eagle. Pp. 373-409.

Morris Eagle asks the following questions about the prevailing movements in psychoanalysis: 1) What does the theory claim? 2) How did it come to occupy the place it does on the contemporary psychoanalytic scene? 3) What is its evidential basis? and 4) What is the warrant for its etiological claims about psychopathology? Eagle contends that neither object relations theory nor Kohutian self psychology escapes Adolf Grünbaum's fundamental criticisms of Freud in *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis.* Like Freudian theory, current theories maintain a causal connection between infantile events, repression, and present symptoms for which clinical experience does not give sufficient warrant.

As the title of his essay suggests, Eagle addresses the question of how theoretical changes occur in psychoanalysis. His discussion of this question begins by noting that new theories are often formulated to account for particular pathologies: e.g., object relations theory and self psychology for the schizoid and narcissistic disorders, respectively. Yet self psychology rejects virtually all the tenets central to traditional Freudian theory. The interesting question, then, is why self psychology is accepted as a "psychoanalytic" theory at all. Eagle believes that one explanation has to do with political factors; the other with the tendency among contemporary psychoanalysts to define psychoanalysis solely in terms of treatment setting and technique.

How Freud Left Science. Clark Glymour. Pp. 461-489.

How did the Freud who began his career as a cognitive scientist with a computational theory of the mind become the leader of a movement now widely regarded today as a marginal science? Glymour remarks that the point of asking this (tendentious) question is not to debunk Freud—though that will inevitably be the result—but to give warning "how easy it is to give up the search for truth . . . Freud is a moral lesson." Glymour traces Freud's career through the two early

accounts of the etiology of neuroses, his giving up of the seduction hypothesis (which, Glymour notes, Freud did officially only ten years after his initial troubled letter of 1896 to Fliess), his subsequent, disingenuous attempts to conceal his doubts about his own clinical methods, his worries about "experimenter effects" which he managed to submerge, and finally to *The Interpretation of Dreams.* By the end of this period Freud had replaced with a caricature the scientific methods he had learned early on from the physiologists. In *The Interpretation of Dreams,* Freud enunciated four good criteria for formulating a theory of dreams, none of which he himself observed (as Glymour points out). He concludes that Freud left the scientific community sometime after 1910, in the sense that he no longer published in scientific journals that were not run by his disciples, nor attended scientific meetings that were not organized by psychoanalysts.

Psyche. Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse und ihre Anwendungen. L, 1996.

The following abstracts from Psyche are reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

The Development of the Affect System. Ulrich Moser and Ilka von Zeppelin. Pp. 32-84.

The authors show that the development of the affect system commences with affects of an exclusively communicative nature. These regulate the relationship between subject and object. On a different plane they also provide information on the feeling of self deriving from the interaction. Affect is seen throughout as a special kind of information. One section of the article is given over to intensity regulation and early affect defenses. The development of cognitive processes leads to the integration of affect systems and cognitive structures. In the preconceptual concrete phase, fantasies change the object relation in such a way as to make unpleasant affects disappear. Only at a later stage do fantasies acquire the capacity to deal with affects. Ultimately, the affect system is grounded on an invariant relationship feeling. On a variety of different levels it displays the features typical of situation theory and the theory of the representational world, thus making it possible to entertain complex object relations. In this process the various planes of the affect system are retained and practiced. Finally, the authors discuss the consequences of their remarks for the understanding of psychic disturbances and the therapies brought to bear on them.

Working through the Nazi Past: Germany's Psychoanalytic Community. A Distant View from Close Quarters. Martin Wangh. Pp. 97-122.

Taking both a personal and a general perspective, the author sketches the sociohistorical circumstances leading to the destruction of psychoanalysis in Germany between 1933 and 1945. In so doing he looks at the attitudes and responses evinced by those "Aryan" analysts who believed it to be possible to "rescue" psychoanalysis from Hitler's grasp without forfeiting any of its central convictions.

Then Wangh takes Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich's pioneering work, *The Inability to Mourn*, as a starting point for a reconstruction of the revolt staged in the late seventies and early eighties by the younger generation against their analytic parents and their continuing silence about the past—a revolt that took place not least in the pages of *Psyche*. Central to Wangh's remarks is a concern with the working out of persistent feelings of shame, guilt, and success (or failure) in the attempt to overcome and/or integrate them. Finally, the author advances a suggestion as to how the emotional—and verbal—barriers between the descendants of the victims and those of the perpetrators could be removed.

Sigmund Freud and Hans Blüher in Hitherto Unpublished Letters. John Neubauer. Pp. 123-148.

In the years 1912 and 1913 there occurred an epistolary encounter between the founding father of psychoanalysis and the young Hans Blüher who had been active in the *Wandervogel* movement, a German youth movement with strong traditionalist and nationalist leanings. Their correspondence centered around the evaluation of male homosexuality, a point on which Freud and Blüher were not in entire agreement. In his introduction Neubauer outlines the intellectual nub of this debate and sketches Blüher's later career and his gradual transformation into a biologistically motivated anti-Semite completely and utterly disowned by Freud.

A Discussion of Music and Use of the "Name-of-the-Father" in Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier." Sebastian Leikert. Pp. 218-243.

The author tries to develop an understanding of music based on the difference between the two systems of writing in music and in language. Music offers no fixed connection between signifier and signification as they are brought about in language by sequences of letters. Therefore, the "Name-of-the-Father," whose recognition guarantees psychic stability, cannot be introduced into the discourse of music. *The Well-Tempered Clavier* by Johann Sebastian Bach shows how the composer reacts to this dilemma. In a difficult situation both in his own life and in the history of music, Bach uses a cryptographic device: he interweaves his own name B-A-C-H with the score and thereby replaces the missing "Name-of-the-Father."

Suspended Attention, Models and Theories in the Psychoanalytic Perception Process. Harmuth König. Pp. 337-375.

The perception process taking place in the mind of the analyst in the psychoanalytic situation is a constant oscillation between the temptation to be guided too much by theory and the dangers of trusting to feelings and intuition alone. In order to avoid the pitfalls of this Scylla and Charybdis situation and with a view to reconciling empathy and knowledge in such a way as to provide optimal access to the patient's unconscious, the author draws upon a model devised by Bion. König

claims that Bion's model, an intermedium between affect and cognition, achieves the integration of evenly suspended attention and theory-guided perception by taking account of the patient's experiential objects while at the same time allowing scope for cognitive activity, a process which Bion calls "intervening phase." König then briefly recounts a case study illustrating the possibility of achieving interpretations that combine both empathy and knowledge.

Child Masturbation—A Genetic Viewpoint. With Special Reference to Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa. Ralf Binswanger. Pp. 644-670.

The author examines the functions of child masturbation in the development of narcissism and distinguishes a demarcation function, a compensation function, and a function serving to establish autonomy. In Binswanger's view, certain reactions to child masturbation on the part of parents may affect the interactive relationship between the child and the parent representing the primary object in such a way as to thwart or to undermine these functions. The result is the appearance of masturbation substitutes in the form of certain symptoms. Binswanger distinguishes "horrified," "liberal," and "eroticized" reactions by parents, relating the first to compulsion neurosis, the second to obesity, and the third to anorexia/bulimia. The author illustrates his hypotheses with copious references to cases from his own practice.

Beyond the Pleasure Principle—Reading and Re-reading. Elfriede Löchel. Pp. 681-714.

The concept of the death instinct developed by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and since then more ignored than debated, is approached by the author from a specific angle. By tracing Freud's quest for the "Beyond" (which he ultimately gave the name of "death instinct") and spelling out the contradictions and inconsistencies that come to light in the process, she demonstrates that these latter are not grounded in the concept but in the nature of the subject itself, in other words, that the "Beyond" is a rhetorical *mis-en-scène* inscribed into the text. With reference to the subtle meanings of the there/not-there game and the interplay between the notions of eros and death instinct, Löchel shows that the assumption of a death instinct is an inner-theoretical necessity which Freud did not, however, have the metalinguistic resources to handle. The author contends that if there are sexual and life instincts, there must also be something beyond. Representation needs the death instinct as something representation-less in the same way as writing needs an empty page. The death instinct—by no means a purely conceptual imperative—is the price that has to be paid for psychic representation.

Abandonment to the Inanimate Object. On the Conceptual and Diagnostic Definition of Addiction. Roland Voigtel. Pp. 715-741.

In contrast to the widespread arbitrariness to be detected in the use generally made of "addiction" as a diagnostic category in psychiatry and psychoanalysis, the author attempts to delineate an addiction mechanism and a specific conflict underlying addiction. After summarizing existing psychoanalytic theories of addiction—none of which have any criteria for discriminating it from other narcissistic neuroses—and identifying the basic structure they have in common, Voigtel introduces the model of abandonment to the inanimate object as an attempt to come to terms with the narcissistic deficit. The addict abandons himself/herself passively to the inanimate object (the addictive agent) in the hope that it will assuage feelings of powerlessness and desertion and bring about a state of happiness and well-being. The addictive conflict consists in the fact that by means of this referral to an inanimate object—a representation of the mother experienced as frustrating in early childhood—a wish for dependency can be both acted out and fended off.

Author of 119 Circular Letters: Otto Fenichel, the Historiographer of the Psychoanalytic Movement, 1934-1945. Johannes Reichmayr and Elke Mühlleitner. Pp. 742-753.

The authors outline the difficult situation of the international psychoanalytic movement after the National Socialist takeover in Germany, with special reference a) to the situation of analysts in exile, and b) to the theoretical and political conflicts and controversial internal policy issues dividing the psychoanalytic movement in general. Otto Fenichel's achievement in this period was to send regular circular letters to many of the scattered and isolated psychoanalysts living in exile, thus keeping them in touch with one another and also informing them of ongoing theoretical debates and the controversies over policy issues affecting the psychoanalytic society and the movement as a whole. It is thus more than justified to describe Otto Fenichel posthumously as the historiographer of psychoanalysis during the years of National Socialist rule.

The Power of Fantasy and the Fantasy of Power. Freud and the Politics of Religion. José Brunner. Pp. 786-816.

This study examines Freud's writings on the psychology of religion. The author demonstrates that Freud's initial motivation in discussing the analogy between religion and neurosis was to substantiate his theory of the meaningful nature of compulsive neurotic symptoms. With *Totem and Taboo,* however, Freud's perspective changed. His intention from then on was to discuss religion with a view to casting light on humankind's relationship to power. Brunner identifies two genealogies of religion posited in Freud's work. In *Totem and Taboo* the deity is a

form of compensation for the loss of a protecting father. In *Moses and Monotheism* divinities are seen as a compensation for the loss of an authoritative political structure. Brunner suggests that Freud believed implicitly in the enlightening potential of the sciences and their ability to break the absolute power of religious fantasy and the human's fantasies of omnipotence. The author takes issue with Freud's assumption that a position born of this attitude must necessarily be the preserve of an elite; in taking this line of thought Freud was not only neglecting socioeconomic factors but also forgetting that scientific activity itself is in part the product of anxiety impulses.

The Bible between Literary Interpretation and the Analytic Process. Harmut Raguse. Pp. 817-835.

Is psychoanalytic Bible interpretation a confirmation of the old dogma of the multiple meaning of the Scriptures? Raguse demonstrates that recent psychoanalysis no longer sets out to uncover hidden meanings inherent in the text but rather to construct a new meaning on the basis of the pragmatics of oral speech and its intended effect. This approach can also be applied to the interpretation of written texts, as is demonstrated by discussion of Thomas Mann's novella *Das Gesetz* (*The Law*) and the last book of the New Testament, the Revelation of St. John the Divine.

Exploding the Triangle? Psychoanalytic Observations on Incest. Juan Eduardo Tesone. Pp. 836-849.

After a brief review of the treatment of incest in the Bible, in mythology, and in anthropology, the author underlines the significance of the incest *taboo* for the symbolic organization of the family, in contradistinction to actual instances of incest and the destructive effect they have on oedipal triangulation and its structural implications. With reference to the father-seducer, the author delineates the psychology of incest. Incestuous fathers are characterized by a specific megalomanic form of narcissism which violates the limits of the object and displays a self-destructive quality vitiating the entire structural cohesion of the family.

Sublimation—A Borderline Concept. Joel Whitebook. Pp. 850-880.

Despite its controversial standing in psychoanalytic discussion and the absence of a coherent theoretical foundation, the concept of sublimation is indispensable in that it encompasses issues bearing on a reconciliation of the tensions between intrapsychic and extrapsychic (Ricoeur), psychic imagination and social imagination (Castoriadis), sexuality and spirituality, and reason and instinct (Loewald). The author attempts to counteract this theoretical deficit by giving the discussion a philosophical dimension. Proceeding from a discussion (and rejection) of Kant's distinction between genesis and validity, he draws upon the term sublima-

tion to posit a connection between genetic material and cultural objects, illustrating his ideas with reference to Picasso's *Guernica.*

Fatherless Society, Instinct, Subject. On Jessica Benjamin's Critique of Central Psychoanalytic/Sociopsychological Categories. Hans-Joachim Busch. Pp. 881-901.

In Benjamin's view, the present discontents of our civilization are rooted not in the repression and cultural disintegration of instincts but in an unreconciled relationship between the sexes precluding the kind of intersubjective acceptance and recognition from which genuine reciprocity and a mutually caring attitude spring. Busch concedes that Benjamin's critique of classical psychoanalytic social psychology from Freud through Horkheimer/Adorno, Marcuse, and Mitscherlich to Lorenzer does in fact pinpoint a blind spot, i.e., the failure of socialization theory to give the mother-daughter relationship anything like the same prominence as the genealogy of father and son. At the same time, however, he reminds Benjamin that the theory of instincts, the intrasubjective approach fundamental to psychoanalysis, and the theorem of the fatherless society are not of themselves distortions born of patriarchal thinking but represent rather a workable basis for investigating the reasons for the discontents engendered by civilization.

Psychoanalysis and Politics. Cornelius Castoriadis. Pp. 902-915.

Proceeding from Freud's dictum about the three "impossible" professions—psychoanalysis, teaching, and politics—the author charts the latitudes and longitudes of the specific domain in which both psychoanalysis (as work on the autonomy of the individual) and politics (as work on the autonomy of societies) meet and condition one another. He contends that there can be no individual autonomy without the existence of an autonomous society which practices a form of collective self-reflection enabling it to see through the laws by which it lives. By the same token, there can be no social autonomy without individual subjects giving free rein to their imagination rather than suppressing and controlling it. Freud's precept that where there was id there should be ego is supplemented by the author's suggestion that it is equally necessary to ensure that where ego is there should also be id.

Pecuniary Pathologies and the Debt Trap. Compulsive Buying: A Neglected Topic in Psychoanalysis. Rolf Haubl. Pp. 916-953.

Although money is not an infant wish (Freud), it is still the objective of most of our strivings. After all, as Goethe put it: "This metal can be transformed into anything." With capitalism at the apogee of its evolution, the opportunities and the prestige of individual members of society will be measured largely in terms of the financial clout that they command. So far, psychoanalytic theory has given relatively little attention to the phenomenon of money and the way we handle it.

This is surprising, given that the consumer society more or less forces individuals to react irrationally to the magic of money. This results in behaviors which are frequently downright pathological, one of them being the tendency to run up enormous, unmanageable debts. Haubl first gives an account of existing psychoanalytic theories of money, proceeding from there to point up the social roots and psychosocial causes of the irrational attitude toward money, a "commodity" which is invariably in short supply. In the second part of his article, the author presents a case history showing that pathologies bound up with money and consumer behavior are an expression of autonomy conflicts. The victims of these conflicts are frequently women, as they have special difficulty in achieving autonomy in what is still very much a male-oriented society.